Meanwhile in messianic time: imagining the medieval nation in time and space and English drinking rituals

Weeda, C.V.; Blok, G.; Kuitenbrouwer, J.J.V.

1 Meanwhile in Messianic Time

Imagining the Medieval Nation in Time and Space and English Drinking Rituals

Claire Weeda

Abstract

In *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson contended that a pivotal factor in national community formation was the new experience, in modern times, of sharing daily routines with one's anonymous co-nationals in 'calendrical' or 'horizontal-simultaneous' time. This new imagining was sparked, among other things, by the rise of print-capitalism and the invention of the clock. However, in European pre-modern societies, community members already frequently employed ethnic images that bespeak a conceptual imagining of 'ethnotypes'. In this chapter, I therefore argue that in pre-modern times a different concept of time: so-called liturgical or messianic time, specifically contributed to the cogency of ethnotypes from the tenth century onwards, in which thinking about ethnic groups' acts in the past (in 'vertical time') and the significance of perceived collective behaviour and rituals performed and driven by ethnic virtues and vices of its members in the present ('horizontal time') and future coalesced. Thus, lists of ethnic virtues and vices reflected a religiously informed approach to time expressing the powerful notion that a shared past served as a code for understanding the present and foretelling the future, known as liturgical or messianic time. This is exemplified by a case study in which one of these ethnic vices rooted in history – English drinking – was appropriated in a sermon to excoriate the 'communal guilt' of the English people and its monarchy at a crucial moment in early-thirteenth-century English history: the end of the interdict in 1213. This case study in particular elucidates the process of imagining communities in medieval times, as English drunkenness was a cornerstone in the narrative of British, Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman collective memory as a 'chosen people', who had entered into a special

Blok, Gemma, Kuitenbrouwer, Vincent and Weeda, Claire (eds): *Imagining Communities. Historical Reflections on the Process of Community Formation.* Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018
DOI: 10.5117/9789462980037_CH01

covenant with God; and elaborate drinking rituals were performed both on a daily basis and at a fixed moments on the calendar, namely between Christmas and New Year.

Keywords: ethnic groups, Middle Ages, virtues and vices, eschatology, time

I

Is the manifestation of 'homogenous, empty time' a prerequisite for imagining the nation, as Benedict Anderson argued it was in *Imagined Communities*?[1] Indeed, in his seminal work, Anderson contended – inspired by Walter Benjamin's essay 'Theses on the Philosophy of History'[2] – that communities resembled an imagined web or network, whose members experienced a sense of connectedness with their anonymous co-nationals. A pivotal factor in shaping this sense of connectedness was the experience of sharing daily routines in 'calendrical' or 'horizontal-simultaneous' time. With the introduction of mechanical clocks, and especially the rise of print-capitalism, community members could now, for instance, imagine how their co-nationals in the morning simultaneously read their newspapers at breakfast tables across the country, sharing the same national experiences, knowledge and culture, while the nation moved through 'homogeneous, empty time'.[3] On the front cover of the 2006 edition of *Imagined Communities*, stacks of daily newspapers thus symbolized the materialization of the nation's increasingly secularized imagination, in which the community's shared experiences and culture piled up whilst meaningless, empty time ticked on.

Anderson's argument implies that without the mechanisms of modern timekeeping and print-capitalism, social group members would have lacked the temporal infrastructure to imagine their co-members' daily practices, and to tie these imaginings to a sense of belonging to an ethnic, or national,

1 B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*: *Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 3rd, rev. ed. (London/New York, 2006), 23-36.

2 W. Benjamin, 'Theses on the Philosophy of History', in: W. Benjamin, *Illuminations* (London, 1973), 265.

3 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 24. In B. Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World* (London/New York, 1998), 32-34, Anderson returns to the role of time and surmises that he may have emphasized one-sidedly the 'significance of the calendrical simultaneity of apparently random occurrences' in daily newspapers. He did not however revise his position on the role of calendrical time per se.

community.[4] This chapter will however question whether such an experience of homogenous, empty time indeed was a prerequisite for national community formation. For how does this supposition dovetail with the numerous testimonies to a sense of ethnic identity in late medieval times, in a period before print-capitalism and modern timekeeping? In European premodern societies, community members frequently employed ethnic images that bespoke a conceptual imagining in people's minds of 'ethnotypes' – imagined members of a named ethnic group, who purportedly shared physical and mental characteristics (i.e. the English drunkard, the French boaster, the German aggressor) and had a sense of sharing a common culture, territory, history and descent.[5] Especially in the later Middle Ages, these ethnotypes evolved into a *pars pro toto* for the metaphorical 'national body', according to which the national community was envisaged as a corporal persona, whose societal groups, offices and professions together made up the limbs and organs in harmonious although hierarchical cooperation.[6] Which role did time then play in the emergence of and identification with such ethnotypes, in a world not yet dictated by the rhythms of mechanical clocks?

To answer this question, it is necessary to examine how medieval ethnic communities were imagined temporally on their own terms. In this chapter I shall argue that in premodern times there existed various different concepts of time that in their own manner contributed to the emergence of ethnotypes

4 Here, an ethnic community is defined as having a collective proper name; myth of common ancestry; shared historical memories; one or more differentiating elements of common culture; an association with a specific 'homeland'; and a sense of solidarity for significant sectors of the population. See A.D. Smith, *National Identity* (London, 1991), 21.

5 The number of publications about medieval ethnic or national communities is substantial. See C. Weeda, 'Ethnic Identification and Stereotypes in Western Europe, c. 1100-1300', *History Compass* 12 (2014), 586-606, for an overview. I can only mention a few titles here: R. Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change, 950-1350* (London, 1994); R. Bartlett, 'Medieval and Modern Concepts of Race and Ethnicity', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31 (2001), 39-56; R.R. Davies, 'Presidential Address: The People of Britain and Ireland 1100-1400, I: Identities', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 4 (1994), 1-20; R.R. Davies, 'Presidential Address: The Peoples of Britain and Ireland 1100-1400, II: Names, Boundaries and Regnal Solidarities', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 5 (1995), 1-20; R.R. Davies, 'Presidential Address: The Peoples of Britain and Ireland 1100-1400, III: Laws and Customs', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 6 (1996), 1-23; R.R. Davies, 'Presidential Address: The Peoples of Britain and Ireland 1100-1400, IV: Language and Historical Mythology', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 7 (1997), 1-24. For an overview of ethnotypes in twelfth-century Western Europe, see C. Weeda, 'Images of Ethnicity in Later Medieval Europe' (dissertation, University of Amsterdam, 2012).

6 For the medieval 'national body' and the body politic, see V. Syros, 'Galenic Medicine and Social Stability in Early Modern Florence and the Islamic Empires', *Journal of Early Modern History* 17 (2013), 161-213.

and a sense of belonging to an 'ethnic' community. As I argue, besides the already much researched identity-formation processes rooted in genealogy and *origo gentis*-myths – which I shall not discuss further here – the concept of so-called *liturgical* or *messianic time* specifically contributed to the employment of ethnotypes from the tenth century onwards, in which thinking about ethnic groups' acts in the past (in 'vertical time') and the significance of perceived collective behaviour and rituals performed and driven by ethnic virtues and vices of its members in the present ('horizontal time') and future coalesced.[7] Thus, from the tenth century, monks began to enumerate the purportedly dominant shared virtues and vices of ethnic groups in lists, emphasizing both the ethnic groups' past role in salvation history as well as the enactment of these virtues and vices by community members in the present.[8] These lists of ethnic virtues and vices reflected a religiously informed approach to time expressing the powerful notion that a shared past served as a code for *understanding* the present and foretelling the future, known as liturgical or messianic time. This will be explained further below, and expanded by examining a case study in which one of these ethnic vices rooted in history – English drinking – was appropriated in a sermon to excoriate the 'communal guilt' of the English people and its monarchy at a crucial moment in early-thirteenth-century English history, the end of the interdict in 1213. I have chosen to present the case study of English drinking because English drunkenness was a cornerstone in the narrative of British, Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman collective memory as a 'chosen people', who had entered into a special covenant with God; and because elaborate drinking rituals were performed both on a daily basis and at a fixed moments on the calendar, namely between Christmas and New Year. Consequently, the ethnotype of the English drunkard features in over 30 different sources from the twelfth century and as such may be termed an ubiquitous stereotype.[9]

7 'Messianic time' is the term introduced by E. Auerbach, *Mimesis*: *The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, trans. W. Trask (New York, 1957), 64, and subsequently adopted by Anderson. For literature on the role of myths, memories and genealogy in medieval ethnicity, I refer for instance to J. Ehlers (ed.), *Ansätze und Diskontinuität deutscher Nationsbildung im Mittelalter* (Sigmaringen, 1989); J. Garber, 'Trojaner-Römer-Franken-Deutsche. "Nationale" Abstammungstheorien im Vorfeld der Nationalstaatsbildung', in: K. Garber (ed.), *Nation und Literatur im Europa der Frühen Neuzeit: Akten des I. Internationalen Osnabrücker Kongresses zur Kulturgeschichte der frühen Neuzeit* (Tübingen, 1989), 108-163.

8 C. Weeda, 'The Characteristics of Bodies and Ethnicity c. 900-1200', *Medieval Worlds* 5 (2017), 95-112.

9 See C. Weeda, 'Images of Ethnicity in Later Medieval Europe'; I. Short, '*Tam Angli quam Franci*: Self-Definition in Anglo-Norman England', *Anglo-Norman Studies*: *Proceedings of the*

Anderson, among others, argued that early medieval sources where past and present figures and events are mentioned simultaneously and placed within the same timeframe, should be taken as evidence that medieval people had 'no conception of [...] radical separations between past and present'.[10] This common misconception has been adequately refuted by Goetz, who contends that in medieval historiography the past instead served as a underlying blueprint for deciphering the *meaning of present acts* – including communal acts of ethnic groups in the here and now – with a view to understanding the events of the future.[11] In this context, interpreting contemporaneous communal acts was especially relevant because *sinful* acts and dispositions were considered to determine the outcome of events – and sinful behaviour was something to overcome through free will, even if ultimately all events occurred according to God's plan. Moreover, as will become clear below, although theoretically, within the Christian community, all ethnic bonds and characteristics were said to dissolve in a *populus Christianorum*, ethnicity still retained its cogency throughout the Middle Ages, serving as a categorical concept as medieval nations such as the Franks and Anglo-Saxons competed for 'chosenness' as God's people, instead of merging into one Christian body.[12] The belief that religion overruled ethnic thinking in the Middle Ages is thus highly debatable.

Before turning to the concept of messianic time in more detail, the question should first be addressed whether in the era preceding 'clock timekeeping', members of ethnic groups could *imagine* events, such as ritual drinking feasts, being acted out simultaneously by anonymous co-members of the group. As I shall argue, to an extent they could: in medieval times, horizontal,

Battle Conference 1995 18 (1996), 153-175, here at 153; H. Thomas, *The English and the Normans: Ethnic Hostility, Assimilation, and Identity 1066-c. 1220* (Oxford, 2003), 52; P. Rickard, *Britain in Medieval Literature,1100-1500* (Cambridge, 1956), 167.

10 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 23.

11 H.W. Goetz, 'The Concept of Time in the Historiography of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries', in: G. Althoff, J. Fried and P.J. Geary (eds), *Medieval Concepts of the Past: Ritual, Memory, Historiography* (Washington, DC/Cambridge, 2002), 139-165.

12 For the longevity of ethnic essential thought in Christendom, see especially D.K. Buell, *Why This New Race: Ethnic Reasoning in Early Christianity* (New York, 2005); D.K. Buell, 'Early Christian Universalism and Modern Racism', in: M. Eliav-Feldon, B. Isaac and J. Ziegler (eds), *The Origins of Racism in the West* (Cambridge, 2009), 109-131. For the concept of chosenness and medieval ethnicity, see M. Garrison, 'The Franks as the New Israel? Education for an Identity from Pippin to Charlemagne', in: Y. Hen and M. Innes (eds), *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2000), 114-161; A. Murray, 'Bede and the Unchosen Race', in: H. Pryce and J. Watts (eds), *Power and Identity in the Middle Ages: Essays in Memory of Rees Davies* (Oxford, 2007), 52-67; M. Gabriele, 'The Chosen Peoples of the Eleventh and Twenty-First Centuries', *Relegere: Studies in Religion and Perception* 2 (2012), 281-290.

homogenous time was not only experienced through the daily rhythms of agriculture, the daily hours of sunlight and the seasons, but especially through the chiming of church bells, as well as in correspondence with liturgical and saint's calendars. Thus, priests celebrating mass followed a more or less fixed liturgical annual program and saints' vital data were celebrated annually and regularly on set communal feast days. At least on major occasions such as Christmas, Easter, the Feast of the Assumption, Ascension Day, Pentecost, the Feasts of Peter and Paul, of John the Baptist, and of All Saints, medieval people could certainly imagine their co-members' simultaneous goings about, when both the laity and clergy attended mass and communal feasts throughout the country. Moreover, medieval people acknowledged various other methods for the ordering of time. From the early Middle Ages, people marked wax candles in order to record the passage of time (known as the equal hours system).[13] Before the evolution of urban 'merchant's time' and the appearance of mechanical clocks in the fourteenth century, horizontal time was further structured by monks who subjected their daily routines to the system of the monastic hours through the application of the temporal hours system (dividing the fluctuating period of daylight into twelve variable, equal parts). Schmitt has thus posited that social rhythms, rather than being structured by methods of timekeeping such as mechanical clocks, themselves shaped the temporal categories of a given culture.[14]

Instead of then assuming that modern, homogenous and horizontal timekeeping created the framework for the birth of national communities, it might therefore be argued that within medieval society the 'ethnic group' materialized within its own specific framework of temporality. As I will argue in this chapter, in this context, rituals in particular served as a bridge between the vertical and horizontal timeframe, as they served as acts referring to and drawing meaning from the past that were performed and filled with meaning in the present. The enactment of rituals thereby tapped into a sense of rootedness in the past, yet at the same time functioned as a '*rite de passage*' in the present, entangling both the 'horizontal' and 'vertical' timeframe. Especially when these rituals referred to ethnicity and were extended to the whole community, such as was the case with the English drinking ritual discussed below, these rituals allowed ethnic members to reinforce their horizontal, communal ties

13 C. Humphrey, 'Time and Urban Culture in Late Medieval England', in: C. Humphrey and W.R. Ormrod (eds), *Time in the Medieval World* (York, 2001), 105-118, here at 106-107.

14 J.-C. Schmitt, 'A History of Rhythms during the Middle Ages', *Medieval History Journal* 15 (2012), 1-24, here at 2, 7-10. For instance, nineteenth-century industrial production spurned the rhythms of production line work that shaped working-class concepts of time.

by (re)affirming their 'membership of the pack', at the same time referring to and engaging with both their forebears as well as future progeny through a form of timeless bonding. In this light, although a fundamental aspect of rituals is their timeless repetition,[15] participation in a ritual is thus also an act inducing *group conformity*, as Bloch has argued.[16] Rituals thereby might help create groups in the present, by reference to the group's perceived past.

Liturgical or messianic time

The concept of 'liturgical' or 'messianic time' is fundamental to understanding medieval ethnicity and its relation to past and present until at least the thirteenth century, in particular in monastic and clerical circles. According to Spiegel, the dominant concept of 'liturgical time' entails a historical experience in which 'recent or contemporary experiences acquire *meaning* only insofar as they can be subsumed within biblical categories of events and their interpretation bequeathed to the community through the medium of Scripture'.[17] In liturgical time, historical events are thus transfigured 'ritually and liturgically, into repetitions and re-enactments' that revivify the past, bringing it to life in the present in the liturgical event.[18] In liturgical time, moreover, past events are experienced cyclically, repetitively and timelessly. As Auerbach posited, in vertical-horizontal liturgical time, the here and now is thus 'simultaneously something which has always been, and will be fulfilled in the future'.[19] Within this medieval epistemology, all things, both past and present, were viewed within a parallel and simultaneous timeframe of creation, temporality and final events, within the narrative of salvation. This does not, however, mean that medieval people could not make a distinction between events of the past and the present; only that within this religious, conceptual framework, past events continued to shape

15 C. Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (New York, 1997), 152-153.

16 M. Bloch, 'Symbols, Song, Dance and Features of Articulation: Is Religion an Extreme Form of Traditional Authority?', *European Journal of Psychology* 15 (1974), 54-81.

17 For the concept of liturgical time, see G.M. Spiegel, 'Memory and History: Liturgical Time and Historical Time', *History and Theory* 41 (2002), 149-162, here at 149. Italics are mine. Although the liturgical concept of time belonged to Jewish historical thought, it was applicable to Catholic concepts of temporality until at least the thirteenth century, and especially informed clerics and monks. Christianity, as a religion of imitation of Judaic Biblical concepts, had readily adopted this concept of time, taking the prophecies of the Old Testament's past and centring them around the prefigurement and fulfilment of the Incarnation and future materialization of Christ's Second Coming.

18 Spiegel, 'Memory and History', 149, 152.

19 Auerbach, *Mimesis*, 64.

the experience of and lend meaning to the present, serving as a code for their interpretation, with an eye to the future. As such, time could be both linear *and* coetaneous, horizontal-homogenous *and* vertical at the same moment.

A deistic mode of thinking about temporality, liturgical time had specific relevance for ethnic identification because genealogically 'inherited' ethnic virtues and vices were considered to play a key role in the fate of ethnic groups in both past and present – as well as in the history of mankind in its entirety. Significant in this regard is that monks and clerics embedded their concept of history in an eschatological world view, wherein all events were ultimately coordinated with a view to the end of time, when the whole of humanity would be judged for its deeds. In this regard, the acts of ethnic groups were considered to play a crucial role in salvation history and to be caused by *group characteristics* – virtues and vices – that were purportedly determined by, among others, climatological factors, heredity and free will. These acts in time were equally and intrinsically bound to space, as temporal events acted out by peoples throughout history inadvertently took place on a geographical stage.[20] This relationship between time, space and peoples is reflected in the countless geographical-ethnographical prologues in medieval historiography – setting the stage, the time, and the actors in major historical events.[21] The same underlying concept is also present in the measurement of time in lists of ethnic groups and their sins, which in medieval manuscripts so often are accompanied by so-called *computus* calculations (tables calculating the Easter dates) and geographical information.[22] Thus, in liturgical time, space, time and ethnic groups cannot be viewed separately, for whereas geography (space) formed the setting for historical events, history (time) was acted out by peoples. As a consequence, the bond between a territory, its history and inhabitants invited contemplation on the behaviour and fate of peoples in relation to divine providence. Collective ethnic sins, past and present, were thereby said to have repercussions for the expected fulfilment of the end of history, as one of the New Testament prophecies had stipulated that Christendom necessarily should spread to all four corners of the world, embraced by all

20 D. Woodward, 'Reality, Symbolism, Time, and Space in Medieval World Maps', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 75 (1985), 510-521, here at 514; E. Edson, *Mapping Time and Space: How Medieval Mapmakers Viewed Their World* (London, 1997), esp. ch. 4. As theologized medieval pictures, medieval maps often depicted time in relation to space, from the genesis in the East, where Paradise is located, in slow progression to the West, to make full circle in the centre, where a heavenly Jerusalem would descend at the end of time.

21 A.H. Merrills, *History and Geography in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, 2005).

22 Edson, *Mapping Time and Space*, 32.

nations, before Christ was to return upon earth. In this sense, the actualization of Christ's Second Coming was considered as dependent on the collective and individual behaviour of the clergy and the laity.

The perceived influence of collective ethnic virtues and vices on the shaping of history, was also tied to the notion of chosenness – which in the Christian era was adopted and expanded to all kinds of peoples, termed as 'new Israelites'.[23] Chosenness reflected an ethnic group's specific bond with God, who not only favoured his chosen nation, but also frequently punished it for its transgressions. In the case of the English, as we shall see below, this ethnic transgression generally involved drunkenness and gluttony, two inherited ethnic vices that were deemed the catalyst of major disasters in the history of the British Isles. Nonetheless, the inhabitants of Britain were not the only people to identify themselves as chosen; Smith has listed among 'peoples of the covenant' and 'missionary peoples' in late medieval and modern times Gregorian Armenians, Amharic Ethiopians, Afrikaners, Greek Orthodox, Russians, Franks and the Scots.[24] As favoured nations, chosen peoples held a specific responsibility to serve the interests of the Christian community, for example by fighting in God's army, as the Franks so poignantly boasted during the First Crusade.

To summarize: in a world-historical view determined by liturgical time, not only memories of the past, but also ethnic virtues and vices of the past, ultimately rooted in scripture, continued to lend meaning to and shape the present. Events referring back to these virtues or vices of the past, likewise contributed to the collective memory of the ethnic past, and rituals allowed for the re-enactment of ethnic virtues or vices in the present, thus not only temporarily fusing past and present but also forging a sense of community in the present. For that reason, monks and clerics urged community members to ponder on their communal sins of the past, in light of the present, for communal sins were considered to shape the contemporary vicissitudes of chosen peoples, materializing in 'national' disasters such as famine, war and conquest. Moreover, in the grand scheme of things, communal ethnic vices played a role in shaping the history of mankind, each ethnic group fulfilling its own role and destiny in embracing or rejecting Christianity. As such, Christendom was populated by many nations, often competing with one another over their allotted role in history.

Such was also the case with regard to the English and their drinking rituals. As I shall argue in the second part of this chapter, the communal

23 See above note 12 for references to chosenness.

24 See A.D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples* (Oxford, 2003), chs 4-5.

custom of English drinking was attributed specific meaning in both liturgical and horizontal time, as the 'sin' of drinking was replete with meaning in reference to English history, and at the same time repeatedly acted out in communal drinking sessions in contemporary society. In this capacity wassailing (the English drinking ritual) was, in my view, a catalyser for imagining the anonymous co-nationals' routines before the advent of modern timekeeping or print-capitalism.

II

Ebriety in Britain is embedded in a strong and elaborate discourse going back to at least the early Middle Ages. Besides general references to drunkenness and cultural battles over the merits of beer and wine, fought out in poetry and works of satire, drinking on the British peninsula was associated with the specific custom of 'wassailing', which involved elaborate toasting rituals.[25] At least from the eleventh century, wassailing was recognized as a widespread custom. Notably, it was practiced within a specific time slot on the liturgical calendar, in the period from Christmas to New Year. During those winter days, community members might convene to bring out elaborate toasts until the early hours. In addition, the term wassailing was used to refer to toasting rituals on other festive occasions, such as dining ceremonies at the courts and in the monasteries. It was associated with merriment and embraced as a sign of plenty, according to Thomas.[26] It was also, however, viewed as a token of gluttony and as such a cardinal sin. It was, moreover, distinctly associated with the ethnic identity of, respectively, the British, the Anglo-Saxons and the Anglo-Normans.

25 For the ritual of wassailing, see M. Lamont, 'Becoming English: Ronwenne's Wassail, Language, and National Identity in the Middle English Prose *Brut*', *Studies in Philology* 107 (2010), 283-309; A. Gautier, 'Wassail, drinchail et savoir-vivre, ou la disqualification culturelle d'une élite', *Cahiers de recherches médiévales* (*xiiie-xve siècles*) 19 (2010), 11-26, who argues that the condemnation of Anglo-Saxon drinking by the Norman elite was an opportunity to disparage the customs of the subordinated inhabitants of Britain. However, as will become clear below, in the course of the twelfth century many sources attest to the Normans embracing English drinking rituals as part of their identity.

26 Thomas, *The English and the Normans*, 302. The notion that drunkenness was related to England's wealth is possibly echoed in William of Normandy's early-thirteenth-century *Besant*, who states that Pride had married his three daughters in England: Envy, Luxury, and Drunkenness. Cf. C.-V. Langlois, 'Les Anglais du Moyen Âge d'après les sources francaises', *Revue historique* 52:2 (1893), 298-315, here at 308 note 1.

Certainly in the wake of the Norman Conquest in 1066, communal carousals might smoothen social relations and forge new bonds. Various sources have come down to us describing how communal drinking blurred ethnic divisions in the century after this watershed event in English history. The twelfth-century cleric Gerald of Wales, for instance, recorded an anecdote about how King Henry II of England, on an incognito visit to a Cistercian abbey, was enticed to speed up the drinking by the local abbot, who reassured him that the English toasting ritual consisted of a terse '*pril*' and '*wril*' instead of the double syllabic '*wesheil*', '*drincheil*'.[27] When, according to Gerald, the abbot later visited the royal court, the now no longer incognito King Henry in turn welcomed him with a '*pril*', embarrassing the thirsty abbot in front of the courtiers. The gist of Gerald's anecdote lies in the message that, by putting the abbot to shame at court, Henry was acknowledging his full awareness of English customs, the abbot in fact being reminded of the right manner of wassailing by the 'foreign' king.[28] Such anecdotes demonstrate how ethnic customs might be gradually adopted and adapted by newcomers to England who had now taken power.

In this sense, English drunkenness served as a broader cultural agency uniting those who, as inhabitants of the island, participated in communal customs. Especially in ritual toasting rituals, island inhabitants could, even if only temporarily, engage in a drunken *rite de passage* fostering a new communal spirit. Many twelfth-century sources consequently reflect upon the ubiquity of English drinking. In the *Dialogue of the Exchequer*, for instance, Richard Fitz Nigel speaks of the 'natural drunkenness of its [England's] inhabitants', relating it to crime rates in the country.[29] And communal drinking was not merely the laity's vice. Although Church moralists generally, regardless of their ethnicity, were bent on condemning drunkenness, clerics likewise might revel in drinking. Drunkenness was joked about, and there was a certain pride in drinking large quantities of

27 Gerald of Wales, *Speculum Ecclesiae* III, 13; cf. R. Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings, 1075-1225* (Oxford, 2000), 578; E. Coleman, 'Nasty Habits – Satire and the Medieval Monk', *History Today* 43 (1993), 36-42.

28 A clear example of how identity and alterity can interpenetrate and mingle. Cf. J.T. Leerssen, 'Identity/Alterity/Hybridity', in: M. Beller and J.T. Leerssen (eds), *Imagology: The Cultural Construction and Literary Representation of National Characters: A Critical Survey* (Amsterdam/New York, 2007), 335-342, here at 341; P. Hoppenbrouwers, 'The Dynamics of National Identity in the later Middle Ages', in: R. Stein and J.S. Pollmann (eds), *Networks, Regions and Nations: Shaping Identities in the Low Countries, 1300-1650* (Leiden, 2010), 19-42, here at 34.

29 Richard Fitz Nigel, *Dialogus de Scaccario*, ed. and trans. C. Johnson, F.E.L. Carter and D.E. Greenway, *Dialogus de Scaccario: The Course of the Exchequer: The Establishment of the Royal Household* (Oxford, 1983), 87: 'innatam indigenis crapulam'.

wine and beer. In Henry d'Andeli's *Bataille des vins* (c. 1225), an English priest is thus set the task of sampling all the wines of the world. Each he tastes with great indiscriminate satisfaction, except for beer, which he afterwards excommunicates.[30] Satirical jokes were made about the drunkenness of the English clergy studying abroad in Paris, as for example mentioned by Jacques de Vitry in his *History of the West*, or in sayings such as 'French learning, English thirst, Breton stupidity, and Norman boasting all increase with increasing years'.[31] In some cases, drinking was similarly engaged by French writers to disparage English political claims. English King Henry II's claims to the Vexin in the 1150s were, for instance, related to English drinking in a debate verse written by Pierre Riga, supporter of French King Louis VII.[32]

From the twelfth century, with the influx of Arabic-Galenic medicine, English drinking was subsequently ensconced in medical-hereditary terms.[33] In a letter to the otherwise unknown Baldwin of Valle Darii, possibly from Christ Church, Canterbury, the famous cleric John of Salisbury refers directly to English drinking, exclaiming, 'you and your like are not to blame for such behaviour, however, since nature and heredity make you drunk so that you cannot even be sober when you have had nothing'.[34] The French cleric Peter of Celle went so far as to condemn English drinking as a visible sign that resembled Hebrew circumcision.[35] Because of their excessive drinking, the English thought 'our France a land of sheep and the French mutton-heads',

30 Cf. Rickard, *Britain in Medieval Literature*, 169.

31 In B. Hauréau, *Notices et extraits de quelques manuscrits latins de la Bibliothèque nationale*, 6 vols. (Paris 1890-1893), vol. 6, 124: 'Francis scire, sitis Anglis, nescire Britannis, / Fastus Normannis crescit, crescentibus annis.' See C.V. Langlois, 'Les Anglais du Moyen Âge d'après les sources francaises', *Revue Historique* 52 (1893), 298-315, here at 306.

32 Printed in B. Hauréau, 'Un poème inédit de Pierre Riga', *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartres* 44 (1883), 5-11; F.J.E. Raby, *A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1934), vol. 2, 37; Thomas, *The English and the Normans*, 318.

33 For concepts of heredity in the Late Middle Ages, see M. van der Lugt and C. de Miramon, *L'hérédité entre Moyen Âge et Époque Moderne: Perspectives Historiques* (Florence, 2008).

34 *The Letters of John of Salisbury, Volume 2: The Later Letters (1163-1180)*, ed. and trans. W.J. Millor and C.N.L. Brooke (Oxford, 1979), no. 270: 'Quod tamen tibi tuique similibus imputari non debet, quibus tam natura quam mos patrius ebriositatem ingerit ut etiam ieiuni sobrii esse non possint.'

35 See Peter of Celle's letter to John of Salisbury, *The Letters of Peter of Celle*, no. 173, ed. and trans. J.P. Haseldine (Oxford, 2001), 666-669: 'Regarding your people and their customs, it is well enough known to me that they are accustomed to fill up their wineskins, nay their bellies, even indeed to fill them to overflowing, both with wine and with mead without censure and, as the Hebrews circumcise their flesh as a sign that they are the seed of Abraham, without the disgrace of dishonour.' See also letter no. 172, ed. and trans. Haseldine, 664-665, again addressed to John of Salisbury.

whereas 'for you to think us French drunk is as if the bandy-legged should ridicule the straight-legged, or the Ethiopian the white man'.[36] Writers even intimated that the vice of drunkenness was a consequence of the fall of mankind, a morally depraved behaviour 'inherited' by Adam's offspring.

English ebriety thus features as a recurrent vice in a substantial number of twelfth- and thirteenth-century sources, as a shared cultural custom that in the ritualized form of wassailing was acted out in 'horizontal time'. At the same time, drinking as a communal activity in Britain was however also considered as rooted in cyclical, liturgical time. And it is in this ritual act of 'sinful' drinking that members of the English ethnic community might specifically have experienced a sense of timeless bonding with their forebears and progeny, the past, the present, and the future. Although wassailing was considered a token of merriment, it was thus also often used in the negative context of the sinful catalyser of God's wrath at key moments of British and subsequently English history, as God punished his 'chosen people' for breaking its covenant with God. As such, communal drinking on specific festive days was replete with meaning that stretched far beyond oblivious merriment, as it might also refer to 'inherited' ethnic sins of the past that had shaped English history. Here, communal drinking as a shared custom in horizontal time might thus tap into the rhetoric of drinking in vertical time, as an ethnic vice of the past that was re-enacted in the present.

Drinking in liturgical time

Already in the early Middle Ages, English drinking had been allotted a prominent position in the rhetoric of chosenness, as part of the tradition of interpreting the fate of ethnic groups in light of God's plan.[37] One of the first to relate the sin of English drinking to their fate in British historiography, was the British monk Gildas.[38] He wrote his *De excidio Britonum* (The ruin of the British) in the first half of the sixth century as a jeremiad of the evils of his time, which were in his view festering in particular among Britain's rulers and the Church.[39] Gildas' objective was to invite the British to repent and

36 Ibid.: 'Franciam nostrum ueruecum patriam credas et Francos esse uerueces. [...] Nos Francos ebriosos putas, ac si loripes rectum derideat, Aethiops album.'

37 P. Meyvaert, 'Rainaldus est malus scriptor Francigenus: Voicing National Antipathy in the Middle Ages', *Speculum* 66 (1991), 743-763, here at 746-747.

38 R.W. Hanning, *The Vision of History in Early Britain: From Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth* (New York, 1966), 46-48.

39 It is usually dated to circa 540, although George proposes a date somewhere between 510 and 530; cf. K. George, *Gildas's* De Excidio Britonum *and the Early British Church* (Woodbridge,

thus regain God's favour. He was also one of the first to textually represent the British as God's chosen people.[40] Through this special covenant, the island's inhabitants were thereby the receivers of divine assistance, as God intervened to aid Britain after it had been abandoned by Rome.[41] God was, however, equally inclined to punish the Britons if they persevered in sin. In a wave of corrective punishments – the invasion of the Picts, a plague and finally the coming of the Saxons – God thus wreaked his revenge.[42]

According to Gildas, the weakness of the Britons was partly due to their effeminacy, as well as their treachery and cowardice.[43] Yet it was their drunkenness, both of the clergy and laymen, which above all powerfully incited God's wrath and opened the gateway to the coming of the Saxons:

> Things pleasing and displeasing to God weighed the same in the balance – unless indeed things displeasing were regarded with more favour. In fact, the old saying of the prophet denouncing his people could have been aptly applied to our country: 'Lawless sons, you have abandoned God, and provoked to anger the holy one of Israel.' […] Everything they did went against their salvation, just as though the true doctor of us all granted the world no medicine. And this was truly not merely of worldly men: the flock of the Lord and his shepherds, who should have been an example to the whole people, lay about, most of them, in drunken stupor, as though sodden in wine.[44]

2009), 4; J. Morris, 'Historical Introduction', in: Gildas, *The Ruin of Britain and Other Documents*, ed. and trans. M. Winterbottom (Guildford, 2002), 1.

40 See above, note 12.

41 Hanning, *Vision of History*, 54.

42 Ibid., 56. Hanning points out that Gildas is also using the model of the last three books of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*. Cf. N. Howe, *Migration and Mythmaking in Anglo-Saxon England* (New Haven, 1989), 41-42.

43 Gildas, *De excidio Britanniae* VI, *The Ruin of Britain and Other Works*, ed. and trans. Winterbottom, 18, 91: 'manusque vinciendae muliebriter protenduntur, ita ut in proverbium et derisum longe lateque efferretur quod Britanni nec in bello fortes sint nec in pace fideles'.

44 Ibid., XXI, *The Ruin of Britain and Other Works*, ed. and trans. Winterbottom, 25, 96: 'omnia quae displicuerunt deo et quae placuerunt aequali saltem lance pendebantur, si non gratiora fuissent displicentia; ita ut merito patriae illud propheticum, quod veterno illi populo denuntiatum est, potuerit aptari, "filii", inquiens, "sine lege, dereliquistis deum, et ad iracundiam provocastis sanctum Israel." […] Sicque agebant cuncta quae saluti contraria fuerint, ac si nihil mundo medicinae a vero omnium medico largiretur. Et non solum haec saeculares viri, sed et ipse grex domini eiusque pastores, qui exemplo esse omni plebi debuerint, ebrietate quam plurimi quasi vino madidi torpebant.'

This powerful rhetoric, in which drunkenness went hand in hand with envy and dissension, laid the framework for subsequent interpretations of both past, present and future events on the island. As a token of divine retribution, the migration myth (the coming of the Saxons) was retold by early medieval Anglo-Saxon monks Bede, Alcuin – who was the most explicit about the English as new Israelites in *Versus de patribus regibus et sanctis Euboricensis Ecclesiae* – and, in the eleventh century, Wulfstan.[45] Indeed, just as the cultural traditions of the island's inhabitants could be passed down from one ethnic group to another, so the myth retained its power for the Anglo-Saxons, who had subsequently adopted Gildas' model as a 'migratory nation'. In this context, the island was presented as a 'promised land', where the Anglo-Saxons were now the new Israelites, chosen by God to replace the sin-stained Britons.[46] Thus Bede, in 731, in his account of Anglo-Saxon Britain in the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, opened his work with a representation of England as a temperate land of milk and honey, repeating how internal quarrels, violence and drunkenness among the British had led to their downfall at the hands of the then still pagan Anglo-Saxons.[47] Yet again, when in the eleventh-century Scandinavians were making incursions, Wulfstan repeated Gildas' position that the country and its people perished through its gluttony and many sins.[48] And again, on the eve of the Norman Conquest in 1066, morality was according to William of Malmesbury in a deplorable state.[49] Just as the fifth-century British king Vortigern had wallowed in debauchery, prostitutes and laziness on the eve of the Anglo-Saxon migration, so Anglo-Saxon boozing had caused their loss on the battlefield:

> So the leaders on both sides, in high spirits, drew up their lines of battle, each in the traditional manner. The English – so I have heard – spent a

45 Howe, *Migration and Mythmaking*, 26; P. Wormald, 'Engla Lond: the Making of an Allegiance', *Journal of Historical Sociology* 7 (1994), 1-24.

46 Wormald, 'Engla Lond', 14-15. For Anglo-Saxon identity in relation to the indigenous Britons before the tenth century, see D. Banham, 'Anglo-Saxon Attitudes: In Search of the Origins of English Racism', *European Review of History – Revue européenne d'Histoire* 1 (1994), 143-156.

47 Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica* I, 15. For the Anglo-Saxon sense of place, see N. Howe, 'An Angle on this Earth: Sense of Place in Anglo-Saxon England', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 82 (2000), 1-25.

48 Wulfstan, *Sermo lupi ad Anglos*, in: *English Historical Documents c. 500-1042*, ed. D. Whitelock (London/New York, 2007), 1002.

49 Wormald notes that William of Malmesbury and Orderic Vitalis wrote that 'it was the sins of the English which had brought their drastic punishment upon them, and the Normans who had been its instrument'; cf. Wormald, 'Engla Lond', 17.

> sleepless night in song and wassail, and in the morning moved without delay against the enemy. [...] The Normans on the other hand spent the whole night confessing their sins, and in the morning made their communion.[50]

In this manner, the stereotype of the drunken Englishman served as a symbol of moral depravity that in the past and present wreaked disaster on the nation, through conquest, war and famine. It was a catalyser for evoking God's wrath at key moments in history, determining the fate of the island and its chosen peoples.

It was an image to be decried, both by the clerics in general and by those from various ethnic backgrounds (British, Anglo-Saxon, Norman) in particular, as a token of past reprehensive behaviour. Yet at the same time, people continued to drink, sometimes merrily, for example during the annual wassailing feasts between Christmas and New Year. It is not too hazardous to assume that at least those monks, clerics and laymen who had knowledge of biblical texts and concepts, were consciously aware, when engaging in the ritual of wassailing, that they were performing an act directly related to the ethnic group's past fate and future destiny. In that sense, in their toasts, they were entering into timelessness, bonding with their co-nationals, in both past, present, and future.

The rhetoric of drunkenness, thus so replete with meaning, could consequently take on meaning in contemporary political discourse in which one of the fundamental rhythms of Christian life – the celebration of mass – was at stake. Indeed, in the early thirteenth century, the communal custom of drinking was invoked on at least one highly significant political occasion as the cause of a collective ban on access to the sacraments throughout the whole English nation. In a speech held by Archbishop of Canterbury Stephen Langton, after the lifting of the Church interdict in 1213, communal wassailing was beguiled as the catalyser of great misfortune to the English 'chosen people'. At such moments, the dire consequences of this collective sin of drinking would assuredly have sparked an imagining of the deeds of the anonymous co-members, both in horizontal and vertical time.

50 William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum* II, 241-242, ed. and trans. R.A.B. Mynors, R.M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom (Oxford, 1998), vol. 1, 452-455: 'Ita utrimque animosi duces disponunt aties, patrio quisque ritu. Angli, ut accepimus, totam noctem insomnem cantibus potibusque ducentes, mane incunctanter in hostem procedunt. [...] Contra Normanni, nocte tota confessioni peccatorum uacantes, mane Dominico corpori communicarunt.' Cf. F. Kemmler, 'Facts and Fictions – The Norman Conquest', in: B. Korte and R. Schneider (eds), *War and the Cultural Construction of Identities in Britain* (Amsterdam, 2002), 39-60, here at 42.

The fissure leading to the interdict had followed a political dispute over the election of Cardinal Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury, an appointment which King John had refused to accept, partly on the grounds that Langton's loyalty supposedly lay with the French Capetian monarchy.[51] As a consequence, in 1208, a general interdict had been pronounced by Pope Innocent III, denying the English king's subjects access to most of the sacraments, including mass, baptism, marriage and confession – and thus hitting at the heart of the English community's religious life in a most dramatic manner. Although a temporary measure (*pena temporalis*), such an interdict struck the *entire* English nation, as a consequence of purported *collective guilt*, sparing only the dying, although the interdict was momentarily lifted at important annual events such as Christmas or Easter. The interdict thus served as a collective punishment for the sins of one individual, in this case King John, who in this case stood morally as a *pars pro toto* for the entire English nation.[52] The community was held responsible for not speaking out or admonishing the King for his transgression, a transgression considered almost as reprehensible as the sin itself, as Pope Innocent III argued in an open letter from 1207 to the English aristocracy.[53]

When at last the conflict was resolved in July 1213, and England became a vassal state of the pope, Langton immediately crossed the Channel and upon arriving in London, addressed a large crowd at St. Paul's Cathedral on 25 August 1213.[54] In his sermon – another cardinal moment in England's history – Langton spoke the following words, possibly in the vernacular: [55]

> The English are burdened with the weight of numerous sins, but they are especially weighed down by two which sink them into the basest of things:

51 R.V. Turner, *King John* (London/New York, 1994), 157-174; C.R. Cheney, 'King John and the Papal Interdict', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 31 (1948), 295-317.

52 P.D. Clarke, *The Interdict in the Thirteenth Century: A Question of Collective Guilt* (Oxford, 2007), 31, 41.

53 Innocence III, *Letter to the Nobility of England* (no. 32), 97-99.

54 G. Lacombe, 'An Unpublished Document on the Great Interdict (1207-1213)', *Catholic Historical Review* 15 (1929/1930), 408-420, here at 409; J.W. Baldwin, *Masters, Princes and Merchants: The Social Views of Peter the Chanter & His Circle*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1970), vol. 1, 27. The manuscripts containing sermons preached to a lay audience sometimes contain the rubric *ad populum*, as is the case in the sermon preached by Langton in August 1213. See P.B. Roberts, *Stephanus de Lingua-Tonante: Studies in the Sermons of Stephen Langton* (Toronto, 1968), 47.

55 Although the sermon is conserved in relatively simple Latin, whether it was actually delivered in Latin or in the vernacular is a matter of debate. In the case of Langton, evidence seems to point to the practice that sermons to the laity were preached in the vernacular but written down, probably during or afterwards, in Latin. Cf. Roberts, *Sermons of Stephen Langton*, 52.

> gluttony and drunkenness. These two vices reign strongest in England, and it is the nature of the English to drink to wassail.[56]

Langton further indicated that English drinking was passed down from father to son and as such was hereditary, as had Peter of Celle and John of Salisbury earlier. According to Langton, Adam's gluttony banished him from Paradise, yet his children continued to wallow in vice. To convey his message, the archbishop employed a medical metaphor, admonishing: 'These two, gluttony and drunkenness, rule in us English; but in order that these are abandoned, we set forth an example how to flee from them. You have heard that certain diseases are passed by heredity to the progeny and derivate from father to son, as in the case of gout.'[57] Because the English, however, continued to indulge in these vices, they 'subject themselves to their Lord's judgment and judge themselves worthy of the punishment of traitors. Drunkenness is the rope by which we are bound; gluttony is the vice for which we are reputed to be traitors.'[58]

Although the controversy between the monarchy and the papacy centred on the issue who was empowered to elect the Archbishop of Canterbury, Langton in his address to the nobility thus embedded a widespread cultural custom in his exemplification of the moral state of affairs. The underlying notion in this sermon is that England was a chosen people, that was being punished for its sins. In this sermon, the bond between God and the English people was tried and tested in direct relation to the mother Church, the papacy and the ruling dynasty. Here, the 'innate' sins of the English people were held directly responsible for the papal interdict imposed on England in 1208. And it is the shared custom of the laity, the communal wassailing – daily performed in taverns and at dining tables, and, ironically, communally at important moments of the Church calendar such as between Christmas and New Year – which 'decided' the fate of the English people, the monarchy, and the English Church.

Taking into account the considerable effects the interdict would have had on the community – being denied access to most of the sacraments – and

56 Sermon II, *Selected Sermons of Stephen Langton*, ed. P.B. Roberts (Toronto, 1980), 7: 'Sarcinas innumeras peccatorum gerunt Anglicani, sed duabus proprie specialiter deprimuntur quibus descendunt ad infima: hee sunt ingluvies et ebrietas. Hec duo vicia maxime regnant in Anglia, et est Anglorum proprietas bibere ad verseil.'

57 Ibid.: 'Hec duo, gula et ebrietas, in nobis Anglicis principantur; set ut illa recedant de cetero exemplum proponemus ipsa fugiendi. Audistis quod quedam infirmitates iure hereditario transfunduntur in posteros et a patribus in filios deriuantur, ut est pedum egritudo.'

58 Ibid.: 'Et ita domini sui se subicientes iuditio, dignos se iudicant supplicio traditorum. Ebrietas est vinculum quo ligamur, ingluvies est vicium pro quo pro proditoribus reputamur.'

the direct relationship drawn between the English' sins and these events, Langton's address would surely have evoked a deep sense of community among those present. Although in the Christian medieval view, power flowed from God, with the *populus* supposedly guided and protected by its divinely appointed ruler, within the triad God-king-people the sinful behaviour of an ethnic group, as a chosen people, might indeed in this case be viewed as determining the outcome of events of momentous importance, not only for the monarch who had lacked proper guidance, but the nation itself, who had purportedly wallowed in its inherited sin that in the past had so often brought disaster to the community. These events thus leave open the question how convivially the English wassailed at their festive tables after the lifting of the interdict, during the festive season of 1213. Assuredly, for those who had knowledge of the outcome of the interdict, the ritual of wassailing would now have been laden with guilt, evoking memories of transgressions past and present. Perhaps participants of the ritual of wassailing across the country were rather subdued around the New Year of 1214, in light of the only recent re-instalment of access to the sacraments in England.

In medieval times, the nation was not yet viewed as an individualized protagonist that might keep his own time. Nor were the simultaneous acts of members of nation imagined as comprehensively or intricately as in, for instance, the modern novel. Nonetheless, in premodernity both horizontal and vertical time left their stamps on a sense of a shared past, contemporary and future destinies. At pivotal moments, such as in the wake of the Church interdict of 1208-1213, which was attributed to communal drinking, the ritual of wassailing must have sparked imaginings about the anonymous co-members doings, particularly at events marked on the religious calendar. On such occasions, participants of rituals that referred to 'inherited ethnic sins' engaged with their ancestors, co-members and future progeny. Acting out these rituals replete with meaning served as a bonding experience, as communal drunkenness offered a passage way to a new 'English' or 'British' identity. These ethnic identities were from the twelfth century further territorialized and politicized, among others through new judicial interpretations of the meaning of the *patria*, which now took on the meaning of a political (often royal) sacral territory – a *sacrum imperium* or *regnum*.[59] In the same period, the metaphor of the body politic – representing the political community as a

59 C. Hirschi, *The Origins of Nationalism: An Alternative History from Ancient Rome to Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge, 2012), 50-77; see also G. Post, 'Two Notes on Nationalism in the Middle Ages', *Traditio* 9 (1953), 281-320, which contains useful references.

bounded, hierarchically organized entity that acted as a *persona* – was also being explored and disseminated, not in the least by clerics and friars in their sermons.[60] Participation in the English drinking ritual would thus have meant that the imagined community entered into a potent dialogue with the past, acting out a communal inherited sin, re-enacted in the present as part of a narrative of the English kingdom. It is therefore important to examine notions of time in relation to premodern ethnicity on their own terms, accentuating graduated distinctions rather than juxtaposing a medieval total lack of ethnic consciousness with the 'advent of the nation' in early modern times.

About the author

Claire Weeda is a cultural historian whose main fields of interest include ethnic stereotyping, the history of the body, medicine, and social and religious ethics in later medieval Europe. She has published in various international journals and volumes on ethnic stereotyping, humoral theory, religion, violence and politics. In 2015, her dissertation *Images of Ethnicity in Later Medieval Europe* was awarded the *Keetje Hodshon Prijs* by the *Koninklijke Hollandsche Maatschappij der Wetenschappen*. She is currently assistant professor of medieval history at Leiden University and is conducting research on the body politic, urban policies and public health in the late Middle Ages.

60 For the metaphor of the body politic in this period, see especially J. Kaye, *A History of Balance, 1250-1375: The Emergence of a New Model of Equilibrium and Its Impact on Thought* (Cambridge, 2014).