ARTHURIAN LITERATURE

XXXI

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VI

TRISTAN AND ISEULT AT THE CATHEDRAL OF SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA

Joan Tasker Grimbert

Santiago de Compostela in north-western Spain is not a locale that we normally associate with the Tristan legend, and yet Tristan and Iseult make their appearance in the cathedral there twice during the Middle Ages, at two different times and in two different media. In the cathedral museum can be found a marble column – one of three salvaged from the original Romanesque façade – containing sculpted images that one prominent art historian, Serafín Moralejo, has identified as Tristan (and possibly Iseult). These images predate the earliest extant Old French poems and testify to a very early penetration of the legend into Galicia.[1] How and why these secular images came to be incorporated into the religious programme of the Romanesque façade of the cathedral is the subject of the first part of this essay.

At the beginning of the fifteenth century, the lovers make another appearance in the cathedral at Santiago, via the Icelandic *Saga af Tristram ok Ísodd* (*c.* 1400). In that text, once Tristram leaves Cornwall, he departs for his homeland (Spain), becomes king and marries Ísodd the Dark. After incurring a mortal wound in combat in 'Jakobsland' (Galicia), he dies and is eventually buried with Ísodd the Fair in 'the largest cathedral in the land'. The question of how and why Santiago de Compostela came to play such a significant role in the Icelandic version of the Tristan legend is explored in the second part of this essay.[2]

[1] The earliest poems (Béroul's *Roman de Tristran* and Thomas of Britain's *Roman de Tristran*), composed in Anglo-Norman, date from the last quarter of the twelfth century. For a survey of the legend from the twelfth century to the twentieth century, see *Tristan and Isolde: A Casebook*, ed. J. T. Grimbert (New York, 1995; repr. 2002), pp. xiii–cxviii, with a plot summary on pp. xviii–xx.

[2] My interest in this fascinating topic was sparked by a three-week course proposed by

Tristan and Iseult on the Romanesque Façade of the Cathedral

The column containing the images from the Tristan legend is from the twelfth-century Romanesque façade (*c.* 1105–10) that once graced the north portal of the cathedral.[3] It depicts three scenes, the most evocative of which appears in the lower register. It shows a young man lying in a rudderless boat asleep or in a faint, grasping a notched sword in his right hand (Figures 1a, 1b). It was Serafín Moralejo who first proposed identifying the figure as Tristan.[4] As we recall, it is precisely because of the notched sword that the Irish princess Iseult, who has taken in and

the Consejería de Educación of the Embassy of Spain that took place in Santiago in July 2009. Taking as its theme various aspects of the pilgrimage route (history, art, music, food, literature and film), it was taught in part by José M. Andrade Cernadas and Therese Martin. I am profoundly grateful for their continuing interest, encouragement, numerous bibliographical suggestions and comments on earlier drafts. My heartfelt thanks go as well to Juan Miguel Zarandona, who organized a memorable 'Grail' excursion in July 2013 that took a group of us to many of the sites in northern Spain that are mentioned in this article (Estella, Sangüesa, San Millán de la Cogolla and San Juan de la Peña). Finally, I would like to thank Carol J. Chase, Marianne E. Kalinke and Alison Stones, for their sage counsel.

3 On the discovery of elements from the old north portal, see S. Moralejo, 'La primitiva fachada norte de la Catedral de Santiago', in *Patrimonio artístico de Galicia y otros estudios: homenaje al Prof. Dr. Serafín Moralejo Álvarez*, ed. A. Franco Mata, E. Romero-Pose and J. Williams, 3 vols. (Santiago, 2004), I, 21–46 (first publ. in *Compostellanum* 14 (1969), 623–88), and 'Saint-Jacques de Compostelle. Les portails retrouvés de la Cathédrale romane', in *Patrimonio artístico de Galicia*, I, 101–10 (first publ. in *Dossiers de l'Archéologie* 20 (1977), 87–103). See also M. Durliat, *La Sculpture romane de la route de Saint-Jacques: Conques à Compostelle* (Mont-de-Marsan, 1990), pp. 342–5.

4 For a complete description of the 'Tristan column', with excellent photographs of the images, see S. Moralejo, 'Fuste historiado con leyenda épica (Tristán?), Portada norte de la Catedral de Santiago, 1105–1110', in *Santiago, Camino de Europa. Culto y Cultura en la peregrinación a Compostela* (Santiago, 1993), pp. 382–4. Other articles by Moralejo relative to the column are 'Artes figurativas y artes literarias en la España Medieval: románico, romance y roman', in *Patrimonio artístico de Galicia*, II, 55-60 (first publ. in *Boletín de la Asociación Europea de Profesores de Español* 17, 32–33 (1985)); 'Artistas, patronos y público en el arte del Camino de Santiago', in *Patrimonio artístico de Galicia*, II, 21–36 (first publ. in *Compostellanum* 30 (1985), 395–430); 'Le origini del programma iconografico dei portali nel Romanico spagnolo', in *Patrimonio artístico de Galicia*, II, 121–35 (first publ. in *Wiligelmo e Lanfranco nell'Europa romanica, Atti del convegno, Modena 24-27 ott. 1985*, ed. R. Bussi (Modena, 1989), 35–51); and 'Column Shaft Decorated with Putti Gathering Grapes', item 92 in *The Art of Medieval Spain, a.d. 500–1200* (New York, 1993), pp. 212–13. Moralejo's thesis has been embraced by A. Stones, 'Arthurian Art since Loomis', in *Arthurus Rex, II*, Acta Conventus Lovianiensis 1987, ed. W. Van Hoeke, G. Tournoy and W. Verbecke (Leuven, 1991), pp. 21–78 (pp. 32–3); and M. Whitaker, *The Legends of King Arthur in Art* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 92–3.

healed the man she believes to be a minstrel, realizes that not only is he a knight, but he is the very one who slew her uncle, the Irish champion Morholt.[5] Moralejo admits that the notch in the sword could possibly be due to simple deterioration, but we might well ask ourselves why the sculptor would have displayed the weapon so prominently if he had not intended to depict Tristan's notched sword.[6]

The aquatic environment is replicated in the scene on the middle register.[7] According to Moralejo, it depicts the wounded hero as swollen and sick and attended by a maiden, who, evidently endowed with miraculous curative powers, kneels solicitously before him. A spurt of venom issues from the mouth of a serpent. Moralejo plausibly relates this scene to the episode in which Iseult discovers Tristan in a faint from the poisonous flames emitted by the dragon which, we are told, let out a loud roar as the knight thrust his sword into its heart. In the scene depicted in the upper register of the column, a warrior with a coat of mail tries to defend his warhorse from the attack of birds of prey. Moralejo believes this image is reminiscent of the fact that in the legend the dragon attacks and destroys Tristan's horse, but he notes that here and elsewhere the sculptor allowed himself to transform and moralize the plot nucleus of the legend,

[5] Stephanie Cain Van d'Elden underscores the importance of the notched sword when she identifies as specific to the Tristan corpus the bath scene in which Iseult recognizes Tristan as her uncle's slayer; 'Specific and Generic Scenes in Verse *Tristan* Illustrations', in *Visuality and Materiality in the Story of Tristan and Isolde*, ed. J. Eming, A. M. Rasmussen and K. Starkey (Notre Dame, IN, 2012), pp. 269–98 (p. 272). But the notched sword is usually seen only in the bath scene. Martine Meuwese points out that we know of no other scene in medieval art that depicts Tristan lying in a boat holding an upright sword, much less one that is notched; 'Silent Witnesses: Testimonies of Tristan throughout Europe', in *'Li Premerains vers', Essays in Honor of Keith Busby*, ed. C. M. Jones and L. E. Whalen (Amsterdam, 2011), pp. 291–305 (p. 294).

[6] Meuwese, 'Silent Witnesses', who finds the Tristan identification problematic, in part because it lacks an inscription, believes that the notch is probably due to erosion and is thus unintentional (pp. 294–5). Like Stones, however, Whitaker, *King Arthur in Art*, asserts that the sword is 'unmistakably nicked' and that the figure is 'unmistakably' Tristan, although she sees him more generally as a Christ figure: 'Suffering and dying, he journeys according to God's will, finally reaching Ireland, which was the Celtic Otherworld in Welsh myths such as *The Spoils of Annwfn*. His prominent sword and shield recall St. Paul's allusion to spiritual arms [Ephesians 6. 15–17]' (pp. 90 and 92–3).

[7] It is this aquatic environment in part that led F. Prado-Vilar to propose that the artist meant to depict, not Tristan, but rather a 'Christ-like Ulysses' facing Scylla and the Sirens; the figure at the base of the column would be 'the sleeping hero sailing in the ship of salvation towards his celestial homeland – an image that performs a dual purpose, acting as a visual exegesis both in the context of the mythology of Ulysses, who was to arrive sleeping on the shores of Ithaca, and in that of the hagiography of Saint James, whose body was carried in a ship from the port of Jaffa to Galicia'; '*Nostos*: Ulysses, Compostela and the Ineluctable Modality of the Visible', in *Compostela and Europe: The Story of Diego Gelmírez* (Milan, 2010), pp. 260–9 (p. 267).

1a. Santiago de Compostela, cathedral: Tristan figure on marble column formerly on north portal of Romanesque cathedral, currently preserved in Cathedral museum

1b. Drawing by Serafín Moralejo, *Santiago, Camino de Europa*, p. 382

1c. Santiago de Compostela, cathedral: Tristan and Iseult on marble column formerly on north portal of Romanesque cathedral, currently preserved in Cathedral museum

incorporating various motifs from his repertory of models and his robust imagination. The moralizing can be seen in the addition of various figures that frame the three scenes – for example, an eagle pursuing a devil in the first, the devil and sirens in the second. In any case, as Julia Walworth notes, art historians long ago abandoned the attempt to link images with specific texts, a trend that had dominated earlier art criticism. In a seminal article published in 1975, Hella Frühmorgen-Voss stressed that pictorial and textual works are really independent responses to the Tristan story, adding that it is important to consider the type of work and function for which it was made.[8]

The portal on which the Tristan figures once appeared is known as the Puerta Francigena (or French Portal) because it was the endpoint of the famous *via francigena*, the French pilgrimage route. We do not know the exact details recounted in the oral tales that were circulating at the beginning of the twelfth century and that may have been carried from

[8] H. Frühmorgen-Voss, 'Tristan und Isolde in mittelalterlichen Bildzeugnissen', *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte* 47 (1973), 645–63; J. Walworth, 'Tristan in Medieval Art', in *Tristan and Isolde: A Casebook*, ed. Grimbert, pp. 255–99.

the British Isles and France by the numerous pilgrims who journeyed to Santiago. We can reasonably assume, however, that the devils, sirens and serpents – if they played a part in the stories the sculptor heard – were put to a religious use in a portal programme that was primarily focused on original sin. In an effort to explain why the sculptor depicted a popular secular hero on this portal, Moralejo recalls that in the early vernacular biblical play *Le Jeu d'Adam* (or *Ordo Representationis Ade*), the account of the drama of the Fall of man and the hope of his redemption is followed by a sermon reprimanding the spectator for being more interested in the exploits of Roland and Olivier than in the true epic of Christ's passion.[9] According to Moralejo, the sketch of the popular Tristan legend that appears on the Puerta Francigena with its moralizing gloss could possibly respond to a similar intention in contrast.

As if to admit that his analogy with the *Jeu d'Adam* is purely speculative, Moralejo concludes that in any case the motif of the navigation of a wounded hero in a rudderless boat could not have failed to be of interest, as *simile dissimile*, in a sanctuary that had welcomed the body of its patron saint transported by a similarly marvellous vehicle. The reference is, of course, to the legend according to which St James's martyred body was miraculously translated from Jerusalem to Galicia, in the space of six days, in a rudderless boat guided only by the hand of God. The *translatio* of his mortal remains is recounted in Book III of the compilation known as the *Codex Calixtinus* or the *Liber sancti jacobi*.[10]

But Moralejo's observation suggests to me another interpretation – the possibility that the sculptor did not mean for us to see Tristan as a secular figure *in contrast* to the religious figure of St James, but rather as a hero *quite similar* to the cathedral's patron saint whose aid was often invoked in the battle against the infidel. This theory gains credence when we note that Tristan is portrayed on the column as lying lifeless in the boat *not*

[9] Moralejo, 'Fuste historiado', 384. 'Plus volentiers orreit chanter / Come Rollant ala juster / E Oliver son compainnon, / Qu'il ne ferrait la passion / Que suffri Crist a grant hahan / Por le pecchié que fist Adam' (He would more willingly hear one sing of how Roland went off to joust with his companion Olivier than of how Christ suffered with great pain for the sin that Adam committed); *Le Mystère d'Adam (Ordo representactionis Ade)*, ed. P. Aebischer (Geneva, 1964), ll. 967–72 (my translation).

[10] The *Codex Calixtinus*, so-named because substantial parts of it were falsely claimed to be the work of Pope Calixtus II, is a five-part compilation of texts and music relating to the cult and shrine of St James and designed specifically to promote it. The earliest part of the work is dated to *c.* 1135. Although it is sometimes referred to as the *Liber sancti jacobi*, M. C. Díaz y Díaz reserves that designation for the hypothetical archetype, which he believes was in existence ten years earlier; 'El *Codex Calixtinus*: Volviendo sobre el Tema', in *The* Codex Calixtinus *and the Shrine of St. James*, ed. J. Williams and A. Stones (Tübingen, 1992), pp. 1–9; idem, 'El Liber sancti iacobi', in *Santiago. La Europa del peregrinaje*, ed. Robert Plötz et al. (Barcelona, 1993), pp. 39–55.

with his sword and harp, as the earliest extant versions of the legend would lead us to expect, but rather with his sword, shield and warhorse. In medieval art, as in a medieval literature, Tristan is presented variously as a lover, a musician and a warrior. At Santiago, he is clearly portrayed as a warrior, ready to do battle, ready to combat not just serpents and dragons in Ireland or the giant-like Morholt (another kind of unholy monster) in Cornwall, but all enemies of the Christian faith, especially in Spain, which St James was thought at one point to have evangelized and protected from its enemies.[11] Although the more aggressive figure of St James the crusader – and indeed Moor-slayer (*Santiago matamoros*) – did not actually emerge until some time after 1123 when Pope Calixtus II made it unambiguously clear that he considered the wars in Spain to be crusades, the pilgrims who flocked to St James's tomb well before the twelfth century certainly saw the saint as their protector.[12]

The carved images from the old Romanesque portal of the cathedral that Moralejo has identified as Tristan are like none other that we have seen so far of the Celtic hero in medieval art. The scene that appears to have been the best-known representation of Tristan was the Orchard Rendezvous, in which the lovers can be seen on either side of the pine tree that conceals the eavesdropping King Mark, casting a disapproving eye on the scene below.[13] This image owes its popularity, no doubt, to its compositional similarity to depictions of the Fall, where Adam and Eve stand on either side of the Tree of Knowledge in which the serpent lurks.[14] If we move from single scene images of the legend to narrative cycles, however, we see that medieval artists were very much drawn to the episodes of the legend in which Tristan is presented as a warrior

[11] On the fascinating conflation (by artists) of the legends concerning St James's evangelization of Spain and the miraculous *translatio* (translation) of his remains from Jerusalem on a stone or in a stone boat, see S. Moralejo, 'Santiago y los caminos de su imaginería', in *Patrimonio artístico de Galicia*, II, 285–91 (first publ. in *Santiago, la Europa del peregrinaje*, ed. Plötz et al., pp. 75–89).

[12] On the evolution of St James from evangelist to Moor-slayer, see F. Márquez Villanueva, *Santiago: trayectoria de un mito* (Barcelona, 2004), pp. 183–222; and K. E. van Liere, 'The Missionary and the Moorslayer: James the Apostle in Spanish Historiography from Isidore of Seville to Ambrosio de Morales', *Viator* 37 (2006), 519–43. My thanks to José Andrade and Therese Martin for suggesting these references.

[13] Walworth, 'Tristan in Medieval Art', pp. 279–83.

[14] Ibid., p. 280. See D. Fouquet, 'Die Baumgartenszene des *Tristan* in der mittlealterlichen Kunst und Literatur', *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 92 (1973), 360–70; and M. Curschmann, 'Images of Tristan', in *Gottfried von Strassburg and the Medieval Tristan Legend: Papers from an Anglo-American Symposium*, ed. A. Stevens and R. Wisbey (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 1–18 (pp. 7–17). See the stunning depiction of Adam and Eve on a capital in the Collegial of Saint-Pierre and Saint-Gaudens (Gascony) in Durliat, *Sculpture romane*, p. 299 fig. 305.

– the one in which he combats the giant-like Morholt to rid Cornwall of the odious obligation to pay tribute to Ireland, and the one in which he slays the dragon ravishing Ireland. This preference is particularly obvious in the three embroidered hangings from Kloster Wienhausen in Lower Saxony. Julia Walworth states that Norbert Ott, on examining the earliest of these hangings (*c.* 1300–10), concluded that of the twenty-two individual scenes shown, eight depict the fight with Morholt and six concern the combat with the dragon and the revelation of Tristan as the true dragon-slayer at the Irish court.[15] Walworth identifies as the main thematic message of these (and other) tapestries 'Tristan as a model knight, delivering his country from a feared oppressor'.[16] In the same way, the artist who carved the images at Santiago chose to allude precisely to those two episodes and to present Tristan primarily as a giant-slayer and a dragon-slayer fighting for a noble cause.

It should be noted that the Tristan figures identified by Moralejo are not mentioned in the description of the cathedral contained in 'The Pilgrim's Guide', Book V of the *Codex Calixtinus*. The guide's author is, understandably, much more interested in describing the religious figures. He does specify that there are six columns (some of marble and some of stone) at each of the two entrances to the north portal, but he then concentrates on describing the tympanum, which is primarily focused on original sin. He adds that 'around it, in truth, have been sculpted many images of saints, beasts, men, angels, women, flowers and other creatures' too numerous to describe or characterize.[17] It is not difficult to imagine how, given such a diversity of figures, Tristan and Iseult might easily have found a place.

Tristan's appearance on one of the marble columns of the original north portal of the cathedral seems even less surprising when we consider the number and variety of secular figures depicted on the façades of Romanesque churches, particularly in western Europe. At Santiago the scenes described by Moralejo recall Tristan's victories over the giant-like Morholt and the Irish dragon, and on other Romanesque buildings we see

[15] Walworth, 'Tristan in Medieval Art', p. 272; N. Ott, 'Tristan auf Runkelstein und die übrigen zyklischen Darstellungen des Tristanstoffes. Textrezeption oder medieninterne Eigengesetzlichkeit der Bildprogram', in *Runkelstein: Die Wandmalereien des Sommerhauses*, ed. W. Haug (Wiesbaden, 1982), pp. 194–239 (p. 206).

[16] Walworth, 'Tristan in Medieval Art', p. 275.

[17] 'Ibidem vero circum circa, multe immagines sanctorem, bestiarum, hominum, angelorum, feminanum, florum, ceterarumque creaturarum sculpuntur, quarum essenciam et qualitatem pre magnitudine sua narrare non possumus'; *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela: Critical Edition.* II: *The Text: Annotated English Translation*, ed. P. Gerson, A. Shaver-Crandell, A. Stones and J. Krochalis, 2 vols. (London, 1998), pp. 72–3.

secular figures also fighting against unholy adversaries in the same way as their biblical counterparts, St James, St Michael and St George. In the pages that follow I examine a selection of these intrepid warriors, who – whether fictional, historical or a combination of both – have, like Tristan, attained mythical status.

Slayers of Dragons, Serpents and Giants

Sigurd the Dragon-slayer

Depictions of slayers of dragons, serpents and giants, both secular and biblical, can be found on the façades of many Romanesque churches along the pilgrimage routes in France, Italy and Spain. Several such figures appear on the spandrels and archivolts flanking the main (southern) portal of Santa Maria la Real de Sangüesa (Navarre).[18] It was William Anderson[19] who first identified the warrior figure in the top right-hand corner of the right spandrel as Sigurd the dragon-slayer (of the *Saga of the Völsungs*), killing the dragon Fafnir using an upward thrust of his sword, as he is instructed to do in the *Saga*. Depicted just below the dragon-slayer is a blacksmith working at his forge (Figure 2).[20] Struck by the juxtaposition of the two images, Anderson theorized that the blacksmith was Sigurd's foster-father, Regin, who forged the hero's sword Gram, for he noted the striking resemblance between this figure and the same representation on wood panels found in stave churches in Norway, especially the portal of Hylestad.[21] Ulrich Müller claimed in 1995 that this identification had been widely discussed and commonly accepted,[22] and some scholars actually

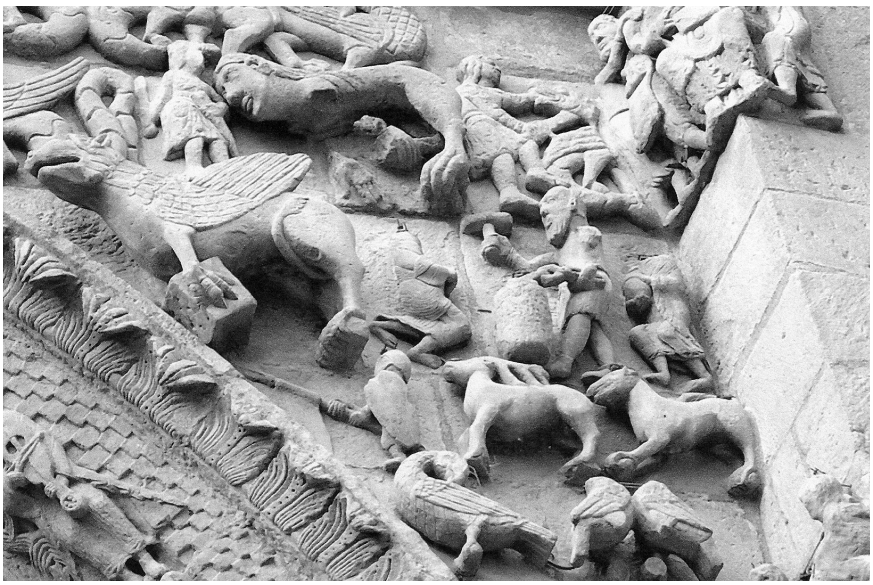
[18] Since there is some disagreement among scholars regarding the precise identity of a couple of these figures, I have tried to summarize the arguments put forward on both sides.

[19] W. Anderson, 'Internationalismen i konsten under 1100-talet', *Tidskrift för Konstvetenskap* 1 (1926), 33–4. The theory is sometimes attributed to A. K. Porter, who quickly signalled his agreement in his very influential book *Spanish Romanesque Sculpture* (repr. New York, 1969 [1928]).

[20] The story of Sigurd was extremely well known in Scandinavia during the early Middle Ages and became that of Siegfried in the thirteenth-century *Nibelungenlied.* See J. L. Byock, *The Saga of the Volsungs: the Norse Epic of Sigurd the Dragon Slayer* (London, 1999), which has an excellent introduction on the legend's very early origins and its spread throughout Europe. For the section of the *Saga* that recounts these particular incidents, see pp. 63–6.

[21] The church, which dates from the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, was destroyed in the seventeenth century, but the intricate wood carvings from the doorway are preserved in the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo.

[22] U. Müller, 'Nibelungen-Rezeption am Pilgerweg nach Santiago? Das Portal von "Santa Maria la Real" im nordspanischen Sangüesa', 3. in *Pöchlarner Heldenliedgespräch;*



2. Sangüesa: Santa María le Real: right-hand spandrel of southern façade: Sigurd the dragon-slayer and Regin the blacksmith

identified other images (on the left spandrel) that they said were also inspired by the Sigurd saga, again relating them to analogous images found all over Scandinavia.[23]

Anderson's theory has, however, been challenged. In a section of her 1997 dissertation, Beatrix Müller describes the theory (which she attributes to Kingsley Porter) and advances various arguments against it.[24] She claims that the scenes that Porter (and others) have identified as being inspired by the Sigurd saga are scattered over the two spandrels and are not even by the same mason. The images on the left spandrel and the

Die Rezeption des Nibelungenliedes, ed. K. Zatloukal (Vienna, 1995), pp. 147–55. My thanks to Stephanie Cain Van d'Elden for this reference.

[23] See especially C. Milton Weber, 'La Portada de Santa María la Real de Sangüesa', *Principe de Viana* 76–7 (1959), 139–86; and B. de la Serna, 'Las sagas nórdicas y su posible vinculación con el arte escultório de Santa María la Real de Sangüesa', *Principe de Viana* 144–5 (1976), 399–418.

[24] B. Müller, 'Santa María la Real, Sangüesa (Navarra). Die Bauplastik Santa Marías und die Skulptur Navarras und Aragóns im 12. Jahrhundert. Rezeptor, Katalysator, Innovator?' (unpublished dissertation, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, 1997), pp. 71–4 ('Eine Darstellung der nordischen Sigurdsage am Portal von Santa María?'); idem, 'La arquitectura plástica de Santa Maria la Real de Sangüesa', *Principe de Viana* 208 (1996), 247–82.

blacksmith image on the right one were carved by Leodegarius, whereas the 'Sigurd' image was added some fifteen to twenty years later by the workshop of the Master of San Juan de la Peña. Moreover, she finds unconvincing the comparison with the Hylestad carvings because those panels are intertwined. But Hylestad is not the only place in Scandinavia where Sigurd's story is depicted. According to Blanca de la Serna, there exist about forty examples of scenes from the saga, nine in medieval Sweden, one each in Russia, Denmark and northern England and twenty-eight in Norway and on the Isle of Man. Depicted on church portals and baptismal fonts, chests, furniture and Runic stones, they appear in all different arrangements. De la Serna herself is convinced that the images on the portal at Sangüesa are indeed scenes from the saga.

As a last counter-argument, Müller states that the motifs in question at Sangüesa are all widely disseminated within European Romanesque sculpture and are the usual Christian motifs of the fight between good and evil. The (well-known) fact that the dragon-slayer is a common motif in Romanesque sculpture, however, only makes Sigurd's presence on the spandrel more fitting. De la Serna theorizes that the master sculptors who knew of the legendary stories of pagan heroes so popular in Europe simply Christianized them.[25]

In their book on the iconography of this church, Alicia Ancho Villanueva and Clara Fernández-Ladreda Aguadé do not mention the Sigurd identification, no doubt because they do not subscribe to it.[26] They discuss the dragon-slayer simply in the context of the other figures on the two spandrels that show warriors combating dragons, serpents and other monsters and surmise that the figures all represent the battle between good and evil and vice and virtue. The only one of these warriors that they name (tentatively) is David, shown on horseback crushing Goliath, depicted as a gigantic figure lying under the horse's hooves, and indeed David is the biblical equivalent of secular dragon-slayers such as Sigurd and Tristan.[27]

The latest scholar to weigh in on this much-debated topic is José Luis García Lloret, author of a study on the workshop of San Juan de la Peña. Unlike Beatrix Müller, he does not seem troubled by the change in workshops at Sangüesa. He states that the workshop of San Juan de la Peña carried out and completed the iconographic programme of the first mason, Leodegarius. García Lloret notes that the dragon-slayer appears in other

[25] De la Serna, 'Sagas nórdicas', p. 417.

[26] A. Ancho Villanueva and C. Fernández-Ladreda Aguadé, *Portada de Santa Maria de Sangüesa. Imaginario románica en piedra* ([Pamplona], 2000), pp. 44–5. They are clearly aware of the 'Sigurd' identification, since they list in their bibliography Milton Weber, de la Serna and B. Müller.

[27] Ibid.

sites associated with this workshop – and in exactly the same posture. But because at Sanguësa the figure's placement just above that of the blacksmith appears 'premeditata' (premeditated), he believes it possible that the sculptor may indeed have had the Sigurd saga in mind, although he cautions that blacksmiths who aid heroes in Scandinavian and other northern sagas are fairly frequent.[28]

García Lloret's attitude towards the Sigurd identification is circumspect indeed – with good reason, no doubt. But if we cannot be sure that this Nordic hero did battle in Spain, there are plenty of other dragon-slayers (some secular but most biblical) on buildings in northern Spain, especially along the pilgrimage routes. Here they evoke the struggle against not only Satan but also the Moors.

Moor-slayers: St James and St Isidore

In arguing that the artist who depicted the 'Santiago Tristan' as a warrior expected the pilgrims who entered the cathedral by the Puerta Francigena to make the connection with St James's combat for the Christian faith, we must consider briefly how the popular conception of this saint evolved over time from evangelizer to warrior-saint. Spanish Baroque painters (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) were particularly enamoured with the concept of St James as a Moor-slayer, but, as mentioned above, this warlike image did not really emerge until the first third of the twelfth century. The sculpture of the saint on horseback with raised sword and standard that appears on the tympanum of a transept in the cathedral of Santiago has been thought by some to be the earliest depiction of *Santiago matamoros*. It is sometimes called the *timpano de Clavijo*, because many believe that it celebrates St James's miraculous intervention in the legendary Battle of Clavijo (834), which assured the triumph of Ramiro I of Asturias over the Moors. In gratitude for the apostle's divine aid, Ramiro I supposedly instituted the *voto de Santiago*, a tax on agricultural production that was to be paid to the saint's church. This battle never actually took place, however, and the so-called 'Diploma of Ramiro I' was forged by the canon Pedro Marcio shortly after 1150, but it reveals what the canon and his circle wanted people to believe about Santiago at that time.[29]

[28] J. L. García Lloret, *La escultura románica del Maestro de San Juan de la Peña* (Zaragoza, 2005), pp. 241–3. This scholar attributes the 'Sigurd' theory to Milton Weber; he does not mention the studies by B. Müller or Ancho Villanueva and Fernández-Ladreda.

[29] The charter also served very well the beneficiaries (archbishop, cathedral chapter, music chapel and Royal Hospital of Santiago), for they continued to collect the tax

The belief that St James had been responsible for the victory of the Asturian over the Moors in 834 did much to promote the saint as a Moor-slayer, but the image on the 'Clavijo tympanum' does not show him in that guise. He is simply *Santiago caballero*, and not 'a contemporary, militant Saint James, with the mangled bodies of Muslim soldiers beneath his horse's hooves', as one scholar claims.[30] On closer inspection it is clear that there is no one underfoot; rather, the only figures besides the horseman are on either side, and they are clearly in an attitude of prayer (Figure 3).[31]

When the image of *Santiago matamoros* did emerge in the mid-twelfth century, it quickly became the archetype of the warrior saint in Spain, but St Isidore was also portrayed in that way. In 1063 Ferdinand I, emperor of León-Castile, had Isidore's remains moved from their original resting place in Seville to the church that he had rededicated to the bishop of Seville, the basilica of San Isidoro in León. John Williams observes that this translation 'effectively established the cult of Saint Isidore who was converted from the literary figure whose encyclopedic *Etymologiae* could be found in almost every monastic library in Europe into a healer, a miracle worker and eventually a warrior saint who assisted in the Reconquest of Spain'.[32] The many images of Isidore that appear in or on the basilica show him in his well-known guises as scholar and bishop, but there are several that show him as a warrior. Since *Isidoro matamoros* was created on the model of *Santiago matamoros*, these depictions are all late. The only medieval one is the famous *Pendón de Baeza* (end of thirteenth century/fourteenth century) where Isidore appears on horseback, wearing his bishop's vestments and mitre; he wields a sword in one hand and a Visigothic cross in the other.[33] The link with St James is assured by the emergence, from a cloud above, of the arm of St James holding a sword. The other images of *Isidoro matamoros* all date from the eighteenth century. Most can be seen on the painted vaults of the refectory. No doubt the most striking

even after the fraud was discovered at the end of the sixteenth century, until the tax was abolished in 1808. On the 'Diploma of Ramiro I', see F. López Alsina, *La Ciudad de Santiago de Compostela en la Alta Edad Media* (Santiago de Compostela, 1988), pp. 42-3. On the 'voto', see O. Rey Castelao, *El Voto de Santiago, claves de un conflicto* (Santiago de Compostela, 1993). For these references I am grateful to José Andrade.

30 See, for example, J. D. Dodds, 'Islam, Christianity, and the Problem of Religious Art', in *The Art of Medieval Spain, a.d. 500–1200*, pp. 27–37 (p. 36).

31 My thanks to Therese Martin for pointing this out to me and for sending me the image that appears here as fig. 3.

32 J. W. Williams, 'León and the Beginnings of the Spanish Romanesque', in *The Art of Medieval Spain, a.d. 500–1200*, pp. 167–73 (p. 168).

33 See the detailed description and discussion on dating in *Maravillas de la España medieval. Tesoro sagrado y monarquía*, ed. I. G. Bango Torviso ([Valladolid], 2001), item no. 16, 'Pendón de San Isidoro o Estandarte de Baeza'.

3. Santiago de Compostela, transept: *Santiago caballero on "timpano de Clavijo"*

and visible image appears as an eighteenth-century addition to the façade of the basilica; it depicts an equestrian figure dressed as a bishop riding roughshod over the enemy. All of these bellicose depictions of the church doctor recall the legend according to which Isidore appeared to Alfonso VII in a dream, promising to aid him in his battle against the Moors at Baeza in 1147. Entering the field mounted on a white charger, the good bishop ensured that the Christians would be victorious. The source of this legend is the *Miraculis Sancti Isidoro*, a defence of Isidore written by the historian Lucas de Tuy, canon of San León between 1221 and 1239, who simply copied the miracle of St James's intervention at Coimbra in 1064 and applied it to Alfonso VII in his siege of Baeza.[34]

Just as Isidore, the father of the Spanish Church before the conquest, is a potent symbol of pre-conquest Spain, the basilica of San Isidoro de

[34] E. Fernández González, 'La iconografía isidoriana en la Real Colegiata de Léon', in *Pensamiento medieval hispano*: *Homenaje a Horacio Santiago-Otero*, ed. J. M. Soto Rábanos, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1998), I, 141–81 (pp. 171–81). See also Márquez-Villanueva, *Santiago*, pp. 197–8.

León recalls the combat with Islam in both its history and its architecture. An earlier church was destroyed following the conquest of the area by Al-Mansur Ibn Abi Aamir (938–1002), and the main portal of the present sanctuary, the Puerta del Córdero (Portal of the Lamb), depicts a scene that is unusual for a tympanum. It is the sacrifice of Isaac, who was delivered on the basis of his father's faith: by Abraham's covenant with God, the people of Isaac's line were assured their ultimate victory. Because Isaac's half-brother Ishmael was considered the progenitor of the Arabs, the reconquest of Spain is recast here as a crusade.[35]

Charlemagne and Roland

In this survey of secular warrior figures associated with the propagation of the Christian faith as slayers of giants, dragons or Moors, Charlemagne and Roland are crucial, since they are associated with the spread of Christianity and the crusade against Islam in Spain. They are particularly pertinent to our theory about the logic of placing an image of Tristan at Santiago because their legend became intertwined with that of St James as early as the twelfth century.[36] Although they were secular figures, they took on the aura of saints as their fame increased, owing in great part to the huge popularity of the *Historia Karoli Magni et Rotholandi*, which recounts Charlemagne's exploits in Spain. The *Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle*, as it is most often called because it purports to be the work of Turpin, archbishop of Rheims, was incorporated as Book IV into the *Codex Calixtinus* at the time the codex was put together in the twelfth century.[37] The *Chronicle* begins with St James's appeal to Charlemagne to come to Spain to liberate the saint's shrine from the Saracens. The emperor responds to the call and remains in Spain to combat the Moors in three battles where he owes his victory directly to St James's aid. At the end of the *Chronicle*, St James appears to Turpin, who dies shortly after Charlemagne, to assure him that although he and the emperor did not die in Spain, they deserved the same status as the martyrs alongside

[35] J. W. Williams, '*Generationes Abrahae*: Iconografía de la Reconquista en Léon', in *El tímpano románico. Imágenes, estructuras y audiencias*, ed. R. Sánchez Ameijeiras and J. L. Gabriel y Galán (Santiago de Compostela, 2003), pp. 155–80.

[36] On the links between the legends of Charlemagne and St James, see especially *El Pseudo-Turpin, lazo entre el culto jacobeo y el culto de Carlomagno*, ed. K. Herbers, Actas del VI Congreso Internacional de Estudios Jacobeos (Santiago de Compostela, 2003); and S. López Martínez-Morás, *Épica y Camino de Santiago: en torno al Pseudo-Turpin* (La Coruña, 2002). My thanks to José Andrade for these references.

[37] In 1619 it was removed from the *Codex* on the pretext that its author was not Calixtus II, but rather Archbishop Turpin. The motivation for this decision may have been the predominant role that a non-Spanish sovereign took in the Reconquista.

whom they had fought. This particular version of the *Chronicle* dates to 1135–40 and was clearly adapted to the needs of the *Codex Calixtinus*, which sought to attract pilgrims to Santiago,[38] but the earliest version of the work was probably composed in northern France between 1116 and 1145 (most likely around 1120–30).[39] Well before that, however, legends about Charlemagne and Roland were circulating orally. The earliest extant mention of Roncesvaux in a Spanish document is contained in the so-called *Nota Emilianense* inscribed on a margin of the Códice emilanense 39, which is currently housed in the Real Academia de la Historia.[40] Found originally in the monastery of San Millán de la Cogolla, this document, which has been dated to the third quarter of the eleventh century, represents an important Spanish intermediary between Einhard's *Vita Karoli Magni* (*Life of Charlemagne*, early ninth century) and the oldest extant (Oxford) version of the *Chanson de Roland* (early twelfth century) and shows that the French epic tradition was known in Spain at the time. As the legend of Charlemagne's and Roland's exploits spread orally throughout western Europe in the tenth and eleventh centuries, so too did the fame of St James, inciting more pilgrims to set out. 'The Pilgrim's Guide', Book V of the *Codex Calixtinus*, identifies Roncesvaux as a prominent site along the *camino francés*, as well as Blaye, which houses the relics of Roland, characterized here as a veritable martyr, gravely wounded and dying of thirst. The Guide also mentions Bordeaux, where Roland's companions, including Olivier, Ogier and Garin, are buried.

Charlemagne is the real protagonist of the *Pseudo-Turpin*, which differs considerably from the *Song of Roland*, in part because the emperor is an active and energetic military leader, unlike the hoary figure who – with the exception of the episode in which he confronts and defeats the emir Baligant – dominates the famous epic. Although Roland plays a secondary role, he does come to the fore in his combat against the giant Ferragut, champion of the Moors, sent to confront the Franks by the emir of Babylon with a huge army of Turks. Medieval illustrators portrayed episodes involving the colourful Ferragut with great relish, in part because,

[38] J. Subrenat, '*Laudatio Turpini.* Simples réflexions sur la *Chronique du pseudo-Turpin*', in *Le* Livre de Saint-Jacques *et la Tradition du* Pseudo-Turpin, *Sacralité et Littérature*, ed. J.-C. Vallecalle (Lyon, 2011), pp. 69–85.

[39] See the introduction to C. Meredith-Jones's critical edition, *Historia Karoli Magni et Rotholandi ou Chronique du Pseudo-Turpin* (Paris, 1936). For the sources on which the Pseudo-Turpin drew, see B. Gicquel, 'La genèse européenne du *Pseudo-Turpin* et l'évolution du mythe rolandien', in *Pèlerinages et croisades* (Paris, 1995), pp. 37–46.

[40] The Spanish philologist D. Alonso discovered the text in the margin of the Codex Emilianense and published it along with his study, *La primitiva épica francesa a la luz de una nota emilianense* (Madrid, 1954).

having insisted on fighting the Christian knights only in single combat, he would simply pick up his opponents and carry them off to his prison. He finally meets his match when confronted by Charlemagne's nephew and, since Roland is a giant-slayer like Tristan, it is worth noting that the young knight pleads with his uncle to allow him to confront Ferragut, just as the inexperienced Tristan begs his uncle Mark for the privilege of defending Cornwall against the threat of Morholt, the robust undefeated Irish champion who is said to have the strength of four men.

Roland eventually defeats the pagan giant by thrusting his sword (or the giant's own knife, depending on the version) into Ferragut's one vulnerable spot, which he has learned is his navel.[41] The scene describing the fatal blow, the most popular of the entire Roland iconography, is one that appears on an historiated capital of the building along the pilgrimage route known as the Palacio de los Reyes de Navarra in Estella San Miguel, which, as Therese Martin argues, was built in the 1160s.[42] There are actually three scenes from this episode depicted on different sides of this capital, which is located on the south façade of the palace.[43] The most prominent side (facing south) shows the climax of the duel, and an inscription on the abacus informs us in no uncertain terms of the identity of the two combatants and that of the artist, an unknown sculptor calling

[41] See the description of this episode and various images depicting it in D. D. R. Owen, *The Legend of Roland: a Pageant of the Middle Ages* (London, 1973), pp. 167–82.

[42] T. Martin, 'Sacred in Secular: Sculpture at the Romanesque Palaces of Estella and Huesca', in *Spanish Medieval Art, Recent Studies*, ed. C. Hourihane (Tempe, AZ, 2007), pp. 89–117.

[43] See Martin's detailed description of the three sides of this capital, 'Sacred in Secular', pp. 104–13. See also R. Lejeune and J. Stiennon, *La Légende de Roland dans l'Art du Moyen Age*, 2 vols., 2nd edn (Brussels, 1967), ch. X: 'Roland et Ferragut à Estella, Brioude, Tarragone et Salamanque', I, 92–6, II, plates 62–4. The identification of Roland and Ferragut at Estella is undisputed. The same cannot be said for Lejeune and Stiennon's assertion that the warriors on the frieze on the southern side of the western portal of the cathedral of St Pierre at Angoulême (1105–15) are Roland and Charlemagne battling Marsile and Turpin, respectively ('Le linteau d'Angoulême et la *Chanson de Roland*', I, 29–42; II, plates 15–18). A. Tcherikover believes that a secular interpretation (of the combats on this lintel) at Angloulême is 'generally plausible' but that a more specific one alluding to the *Chanson de Roland* 'seems somewhat strenuous'; *High Romanesque Sculpture in the Duchy of Aquitaine, c. 1090–1140* (Oxford, 1997), p. 151 n. 37. In '*La Chanson de Roland* dans le décor des églises du XII^{e} siècle', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 40, 160 (1997), 337–72 (pp. 350–6), D. Kahn also criticizes the Lejeune/Stiennon interpretation but does believe that the images are from the *Roland* because of the presence of Charlemagne's *oriflamme* between the first and second image.

himself Martin of Logroño.[44] The first two moments of Roland's combat with Ferragut are depicted on the sides of the capital to the left and right of the climactic scene. On the left, Ferragut, carrying a round shield[45] and mounted on horseback, is heading into combat; on the right, the giant is depicted on foot wielding a battle axe against Roland, also on foot carrying an oblong shield (Figure 4). It is interesting that in this second 'preliminary' scene the mason slants the figure of Ferragut in a way that allows him to show his gigantic size; moreover, he gives free rein to his imagination in depicting his facial characteristics and hair, which make him appear frighteningly 'other', rather than truly Moorish, as is often the case in medieval epic. For the central scene recording the final moment of the combat, Ferragut and Roland appear to be of equal size, and they are both mounted nobly on horseback, although the Moor seems to be losing his balance as his lance breaks against the shield of his adversary, who thrusts his lance into the giant's navel (Figure 5). As Therese Martin observes, this depiction departs from the *Pseudo-Turpin*, where Roland is on foot when he thrusts his sword (or knife) into Ferragut's navel, since both of their horses have been slain. She further notes that whereas this dramatic moment is depicted in high relief on the capital, in low relief between the two horsemen appears 'Ferragut's decapitated body and head, teeth bared and eyes bulging, shown falling to the ground'.[46] According to the *Pseudo-Turpin*, Ferragut is said to have descended from Goliath, and this representation of his death in low relief recalls that of his ancestor, who was decapitated by David after being struck down by him.[47]

Martin goes on to examine another set of historiated capitals on the same façade, which she sees, along with the Roland/Ferragut capital, as integral elements of the palace's decorative programme. The second capital depicts sinners being dragged off to hell, 'represented by a boiling cauldron stoked by demons'.[48] The link between this capital and the depiction we see of the Last Judgement on so many Romanesque façades, including that of the church of San Miguel in Estella (see below), is clear.

[44] The inscription appears on two registers on the front of the abacus, but for lack of space the last three letters of 'Logronio' are placed on the right side of the capital:

FERA	MARTINUS	ROLLAN
GUT	ME FECIT	DE LOGRO NIO

[45] It is possible that this image is another Moor following Ferragut into battle, because the shield that he carries, though round, has a different design from the one on Ferragut's shield in the final scene.

[46] Martin, 'Sacred in Secular', p. 113.

[47] On this point, Martin cites M. Ruiz Maldonado, 'Algunas reflexiones sobre el Roldán y Ferragut de Estella (Navarra)', *Boletín del Seminario de Estudios de Arte y Arqueología* 50 (1984), 401–6 (p. 404).

[48] Martin, 'Sacred in Secular', p. 113.

4. Estella: Palacio de los reyes: capital with Ferragut and Roland combating on foot

5. Estella: Palacio de los reyes: capital with Ferragut and Roland combating on horseback

It underscores the idea that Roland's battle against the giant Ferragut is, like Sigurd's against the dragon and Tristan's against both the giant-like Morholt and the dragon, a variation on the representation of the combat of good vs. evil.

Since the *Pseudo-Turpin* was composed at a time when the *Chanson de Roland* was already quite popular, the author was obliged to include the battle of Roncesvaux, although he made a few significant changes, one of which is pertinent to our discussion: Roland actually kills King Marsile rather than simply severing his right arm as he does in the *Chanson*, and it is specified that when Marsile dies, his soul is carried down to hell, no doubt to establish a contrast with the fact, already stated in the *Chanson*, that Roland's soul is carried up to heaven by St Michael. This detail resonates with the depiction of warriors battling the enemy on the many Romanesque portals that feature the Last Judgement on their tympana. Indeed, on the lower left side of the north portal of San Miguel in Estella (1187–96), St Michael appears in his dual function: on the left he is trampling a serpent, and on the right he is weighing souls while a demon attempts to tamper with the balance so as to plunge the souls into hell, shown here, significantly, as the mouth of a monster (Figure 6). Similarly, at the cathedral of St-Lazarus in Autun, consecrated in 1130, the Last Judgement on the tympanum of the west portal depicts St Michael weighing souls while the devil tries to manipulate the balance in his favour.[49] On the west portal of the Saint-Foy abbey church at Conques (1140), sinners are being directed into the jaws of Hell, represented here as a huge dragon mouth. A similar scene is depicted on the tympanum of the south façade of Santa María la Real at Sangüesa: on the right are the damned entering the open mouth of the monster, which Villanueva and Fernández-Ladreda identify as the Leviathan, associated in the Old Testament with hell.[50]

[49] There is a literary counterpart to this image at the end of the *Pseudo-Turpin*. After receiving signs indicating that Charlemagne has died, Turpin sees a company of knights heading for Aix. One knight, 'blacker than a Moor', says they aim to get the emperor's soul and carry it off to hell. But on their way back, they report that St James intervened and put into the balance all the stones of churches that Charles had founded, which, with all the wood, ornaments and gold, weighed more than any evil he had done.

[50] Villanueva and Fernández-Ladreda, *Portada de Santa María de Sangüesa*, p. 20. According to J. Baschet, the iconographic motif of the 'gueule d'enfer' (jaws of Hell), seen as early as the ninth century in England, became generalized in the twelfth century. In France it soon became the obligatory way of representing hell; *Les Justices de l'au-delà. Les représentations de l'Enfer en France et en Italie (xii^{e}–xv^{e} siècles)* (Rome, 1993), p. 279. My thanks to Carol Chase for this reference.

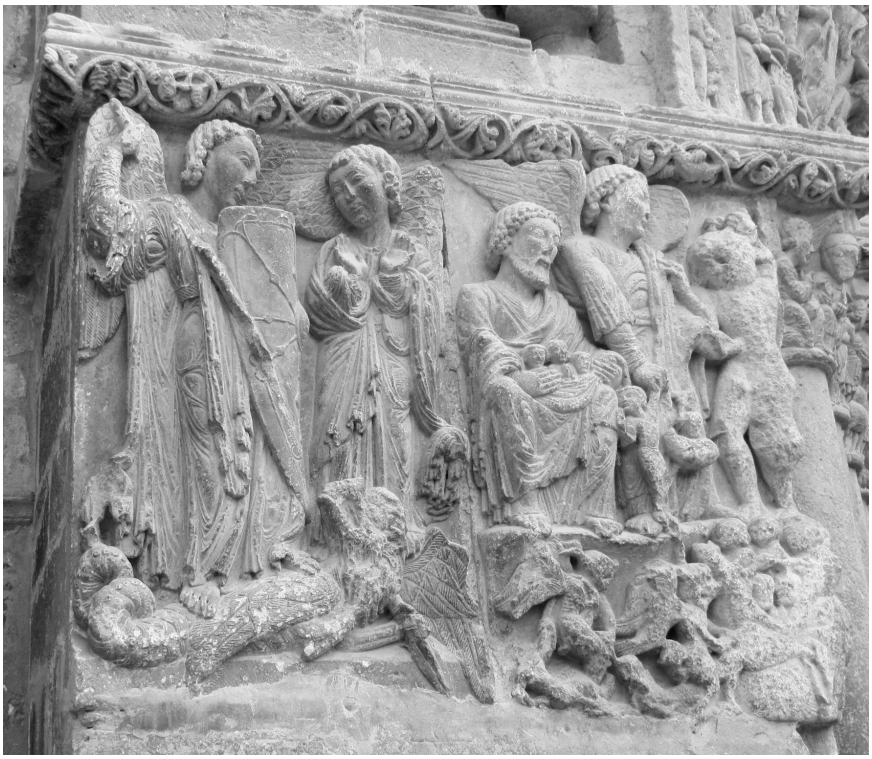
King Arthur, San Geminiano, St George

Before concluding our discussion of profane figures depicted on Romanesque buildings, we should note that a very striking juxtaposition between secular and religious heroes combating giants/dragons/devils is be found on the side portals of the cathedral of Modena. The archivolt of the northern flank of the cathedral, the Porta della Pescheria, has long been known as the site of one of the earliest sculpted representations of Arthurian figures, the names of whom are clearly inscribed along the top edge of the arch. A distressed Guenevere is shown in the centre to the left of her abductor, the giant Mardoc. From the left approach three mounted knights with lances extended: an unidentified man, then Lancelot, then Arthur, who is met by the churl Burmaldus exiting the castle to confront them with his battle axe. On the right we see Carradoc leaving the fortress on horseback to meet the charge of three more mounted knights – Gauvain, Galeschn (?) and Kay.[51] Jeanne Fox-Friedman has noted how this famous narrative echoes the parallel one found on the lintel of the southern flank, the Porta dei Principi, where the cathedral's patron saint, Geminiano, is depicted coming to the rescue of another distressed woman, the Byzantine emperor's daughter, whom the devil has possessed in retribution for the saint's rejection of him.[52] Establishing a further parallel with the attempt to rescue Jerusalem during the First Crusade, Fox-Friedman evokes the eyewitness accounts of crusaders who claimed to have seen St George just prior to battle. This insight becomes more significant in our discussion of dragon-slayers when we recall the famous legend according to which St George rescued the daughter of the king of Silene, Libya from the dragon that was ravaging the town.

From this survey we can conclude that the number of warriors depicted as combating a monstrous enemy on the Romanesque façades of sanctuaries located along the pilgrimage routes to Santiago de Compostela offers real support for Moralejo's claim that the figures who appear on the column of the old Romanesque façade of the cathedral show Tristan – in scenes that recall his two most important military victories. In the image where he is grasping the notched sword and in the one where he has apparently fainted from the fumes of a dragon, we see reflected two important episodes in which Tristan triumphs over a monstrous adversary who threatens the land, and they are two combats that would have resonated with a medieval audience, accustomed to seeing figures such

[51] See R. S. Loomis and L. Loomis, *Arthurian Legends in Medieval Art* (New York, 1938), pp. 32–6 and figures 7 and 8.

[52] J. Fox-Friedman, 'Messianic Visions. Modena Cathedral and the Crusades', *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 25 (Spring, 1994), 77–95.



6. Estella, Church of San Miguel, relief with St. Michael slaying the serpent and weighing souls on Judgment Day

as St Michael and St George battling demons. It makes sense, too, that stonemasons thought to use popular secular heroes such as Tristan, Sigurd and Roland to engage viewers while turning their attention to the very important subject – regularly presented on Romanesque façades – of the battle between good and evil, virtue and vice. In fact, Deborah Kahn, in her article on the depiction of the *Chanson de Roland* in twelfth-century churches, cites the use by preachers, in exempla and sermons, of references to secular heroes such as Charlemagne, Roland and Olivier for the courage they displayed in service to Christianity. These inspirational references were meant both to instruct and entertain the faithful.[53]

Recalling Moralejo's theory that the Tristan figures at Santiago were meant to remind pilgrims that they should be less interested in the exploits of popular heroes than in the epic of Christ's passion, we see here how

[53] Kahn, '*Chanson de Roland*', p. 372.

the Church recognized that such noble and courageous figures could be seen as embodying Christian virtues. Even popular sinners were put to use. As strange as it may seem at first, episodes from the *Roman de Renart* are also depicted on Romanesque church façades in France (on a tympanum of Saint-Ursin at Bourges, on a capital of St-Lazare at Autun), Germany and Italy, including on the lintel of the Porta della Pescheria (Modena) just below the Arthurian figures discussed above. Yet they too are *exempla* enlisted in the service of the combat between good and evil, vice and virtue, since they warn the faithful to beware of the wily fox, whose diabolically seductive traits were well known.[54] Because the earliest extant fables concerning Renart in Latin (Nitard's *Ysengrimus*) and French date from the mid and late twelfth century, respectively, the presence of these characters on Romanesque façades is further proof of the crucial role played by orality in the transmission of these popular legends.

The Transmission of Legends of Secular Heroes

What were the routes by which these legends were transmitted? How did the stonemasons know about the secular heroes whose images they carved on the façades of Romanesque churches in western Europe? How did these legends arrive in Santiago, Sangüesa, Estella and Modena? We know that north-western Spain (along with Catalonia) was one of the two main portals by which the Tristan legend entered the Iberian Peninsula, largely – it has long been thought – through the influence of early French and Occitan oral and written works.[55] Moralejo surmises that it was the early French and British pilgrims who brought the Tristan legend to Santiago. He cites the reference made in the *Codex Calixtinus* to the huge diversity of nationalities represented among the pilgrims, all bringing their stories and songs;[56]

[54] See N. Le Luel, 'L'âne, le loup, la grue et le renard: à propos de la frise des fables du tympan Saint-Ursin de Bourges', *Reinardus: Yearbook of the International Reynard Society* 18 (2005), 53–68. The frieze is the only element left of the tympanum of this twelfth-century church, which was destroyed during the Revolution; it has been inserted into the wall around the gardens of the Prefecture.

[55] See, e.g., H. L. Sharrer, 'Spain and Portugal', in *Medieval Arthurian Literature: A Guide to Recent Research*, ed. N. J. Lacy (New York, 1996), pp. 401–49. More recently, J. Condé de Lindquist, 'Rethinking the Arthurian Legend Transmission in the Iberian Peninsula', *eHumanista* 7 (2006), 72–85, has examined four possible agents of transmission of the Arthurian legend, generally: the Vikings, the Plantagenets, the pilgrims to Santiago, and the Norman and Aragonese rulers of southern Italy before the Sicilian Vespers war (1282).

[56] Moralejo, 'Origini del programma iconografico', p. 132. For this famous passage, which is found in the *Veneranda Dies* sermon and clearly exaggerates the universal character of the pilgrims, see *Liber Sancti Jacobi 'Codex Calixtinus*', ed. and trans. A.

and, as we have seen, 'The Pilgrim's Guide' identifies Roncesvaux and Blaye as two of the most important shrines along the French route. French scholars are familiar with Joseph Bédier's famous dictum 'Au commencement était la route' (At the beginning was the [pilgrimage] road), according to which the oldest extant version of the *Chanson de Roland* was composed by minstrels who accompanied the pilgrims on their trip from France to Spain, and although his theory about the composition of that particular work has been discredited, there is no doubt that pilgrims played a key role in the transmission of this and other popular legends, well before they were transcribed in the twelfth century.[57]

Brian Tate points out that sixth- and seventh-century Irish monks practised the pilgrimage as an important ascetic exercise. According to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, three Irishmen set out from Ireland to see King Alfred, choosing a rudderless boat because they desired, for the love of God, to live in permanent pilgrimage. The practice was considered one of the basic penitential categories because of its severity, and it can be said that these Irish monks began a tradition – that of the penitential pilgrimage – that anticipated those of the crusades. In 1095 when Pope Urban II launched the First Crusade, he declared that all crusaders would have complete remission of their sins.[58] Given the Anglo-Saxon enthusiasm for pilgrimages to European sanctuaries, there is no doubt that pilgrims began visiting Compostela shortly after the *inventio* (discovery) of St James's tomb in the early ninth century. The earliest pilgrims on record made the trip in the last quarter of the eleventh century. They were Normans living in England, a significant fact, for Norman pilgrims were the most likely to know the Tristan legend, since oral tales circulated in the British Isles and Brittany before the twelfth century, and the earliest extant Tristan poems are preserved in Anglo-Norman. Many of these pilgrims travelled by sea, which was faster and safer than by land. Since Galicia was one of the places where a boat could dock on its way to the Mediterranean, pilgrims who were heading for Jerusalem on crusade tended to make a stop at Compostela to visit St James's tomb, often proceeding on from there to

Moralejo, C. Torres and J. Feo (Pontevedra, 1992), pp. 198–201. For a critical reading of the passage, see J. M. Andrade, '¿Viajeros o peregrinos? Algunas notas criticas sobre la peregrinación a Santiago en la Edad Media', forthcoming in *Minius*.

[57] J. Bédier, *Les Légendes épiques: recherches sur la formation des chansons de geste*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1908–13). E. Mâle, who was much influenced by Bédier, devoted two chapters of his celebrated study (first published in 1922) to the enrichment of twelfth-century iconography along the pilgrimage routes in Italy and in France and Spain; *Religious Art in France. The Twelfth Century. A Study of the Origins of Medieval Iconography* (Princeton, NJ, 1978), pp. 246–315.

[58] B. Tate, 'Las Peregrinaciones marítimas medievales desde las Islas Británicas a Compostela', in *Santiago, Camino de Europa*, pp. 161–79 (pp. 161–2).

Rome. Santiago was to prosper in large part because of Galicia's strategic location along both the Mediterranean trade routes and the pilgrimage routes.[59]

The twelfth century witnessed the largest wave of both English and French pilgrims. The work of rebuilding the cathedral in the Romanesque style of the great pilgrimage churches of south-western France was initiated by Diego Peláez, bishop of Iria between 1070–71 and 1088. In 1094 the official see of Galicia was transferred from Iria to Santiago, and in 1100 Diego Gelmírez became the city's second bishop. In 1104 he obtained the privilege of wearing an archbishop's pallium on all major liturgical feasts, and in 1120 Pope Calixtus elevated his see to archiepiscopal rank.[60] It was then that Santiago expanded its influence, with Gelmírez playing a key role in attracting pilgrims to the city; it is he who is credited with promoting the compilation of the *Codex Calixtinus* with its pilgrim's guide, which highlights the French pilgrimage routes and was probably written or compiled by one or more Frenchmen.[61] The elaboration of the *Codex* took about forty years and, significantly, coincided more or less with Gelmírez's long episcopate.[62]

The Vikings are also credited with a possible role in the legend's spread to Spain. They raided the Iberian Peninsula in 844, 858–61, 966–71 and 1008–38. They even dreamed of establishing a second Normandy in Galicia from which they might easily reach North Africa and the other Mediterranean lands.[63] Initially, they came mostly as raiders and pillagers, but since they were among the first Scandinavians to convert to Christianity, they soon began coming for religious reasons.[64] From the

[59] D. Lomax, 'Los peregrinos ingleses a Santiago', in *Santiago. La Europa del peregrinaje*, ed. Plötz et al., pp. 373–83 (pp. 373–4). See also C. M. Storrs, *Jacobean Pilgrims from England from the Early Twelfth Century to the Late Fifteenth Century* (Santiago de Compostela, 1994).

[60] On this protean figure, see the fascinating study by R. A. Fletcher, *St. James's Catapult. The Life and Times of Diego Gelmírez of Santiago de Compostela* (Oxford, 1984). The *Historia Compostellana* was written under Gelmírez's supervision to extol his many achievements. See the edition by E. Falque Rey (Turnholt, 1988) and her Spanish translation, *Historia Compostelana* (Madrid, 1994).

[61] For the probable authors or compilers of the twelve extant manuscripts of the Guide, see A. Stones and J. Krochalis, 'Qui a lu le *Guide du pèlerin* de Saint-Jacques?', in *Pèlerinages et croisades*, pp. 11–36.

[62] Although many assume that Gelmírez ushered in the golden age of pilgrimages, the documentation is too limited to justify defining this period as such. See Andrade, '¿Viajeros o peregrinos?'

[63] V. Almazán, *Gallaecia scandinavica: introducción ó estudio das relacións galaico-escandinavas durante a Idade Media* (Vigo, 1986), p. 21.

[64] C. Krötzl, 'Del Mar báltico a Santiago de Compostela. Peregrinajes et influencias culturales', in *Santiago. La Europa del peregrinaje*, ed. Plötz et al., pp. 385–91.

ninth to the eleventh century, these enterprising Northmen, given their widespread presence in England, Scotland, Ireland and Normandy, could well have been familiar with the oral versions of the Arthurian legends, including the Tristan legend, and could have brought their tales to Spain.[65] It is even more probable that they conveyed their knowledge of the Scandinavian sagas, thus accounting for the possible presence of Sigurd on the façade of Santa María la Real de Sangüesa. Although most of the sagas were not written down until the thirteenth century, they had circulated orally much earlier, and the *Saga of the Völsungs* was particularly well known.

The Cathedral of Santiago in the Icelandic Saga af Tristram ok Ísodd

Just as pilgrims from France and the British Isles were no doubt primarily responsible for the materialization of the Tristan images on the northern Romanesque portal of the cathedral of Santiago, it may well be the countless pilgrims, returning to Scandinavia from Galicia, who account for the appearance of Santiago in a large number of Scandinavian sagas. The names of Santiago or Galicia feature in no fewer than sixteen sagas. Three sagas dedicate substantial parts to St James, including the *Karlamagnús saga*, whose ten branches are compiled from a number of different sources, including the *Pseudo-Turpin*, the *Chanson d'Apremont*, the *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*, the *Chanson de Roland* and the *Moniage Guillaume*. Four of the Scandinavian sagas devote just a few chapters to St James, and nine make only sporadic mention of him or of Galicia.[66]

The Icelandic *Saga af Tristram ok Ísodd* (*c.* 1400)[67] falls into the last category, but the appearance of Santiago de Compostela is very striking indeed, and this work is the only one of the Tristan tales of northern Europe in which Spain, Galicia and Santiago play a significant role. In most versions of the legend, Tristan spends his exile in Brittany or the British Isles, and, although in the work on which the Icelandic *Saga* appears to be based – the Old Norse adaptation of Thomas of Britain's poem – Spain is one of the countries he visits before settling in Brittany,

[65] Condé de Lindquist, 'Rethinking the Arthurian Legend Transmission', 74–7.

[66] Almazán, *Gallaecia scandinavica*, pp. 270–1. The bulk of E. F. Halvorsen's *The Norse Version of the Chanson de Roland* (Copenhagen, 1959) is a comparative study of Branche VIII of the *Karlamagnús saga* with the Oxford version of the *Chanson de Roland*.

[67] *Saga af Tristram ok Ísodd*, ed. P. Jorgensen and trans. J. Hill, in *Norse Romance*, ed. M. E. Kalinke. *I. The Tristan Legend* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 241–92.

he does not remain there. In the Icelandic *Saga*, however, the two main poles of attraction for Tristram are actually Spain and England.

Tristram is born in Spain of King Kalegras and Blenziblý, who share a passion that prefigures their son's own with Ísodd, including the couple's death within days of each other and their burial side-by-side in a stone coffin. Tristram spends his first nine years in Spain before an invading king captures him and sells him to pirates, who, failing to ransom him as they had hoped, eventually abandon him on a reef off the coast of England. From there he swims to land and presents himself at the court of his uncle, King Mórodd (as Mark is called), where he is joyfully welcomed into the royal household. He continues his knightly training and soon becomes the king's champion. When King Engres of Ireland invades England, Tristram meets him in combat and slays him. Nevertheless, he is severely wounded when a piece of Engres's sword lodges in his head. The narrator notes that it seemed likely that the piece would not come out 'nema guð allsvaldandi sendi honum þann lækni, er beztr er í allri veröldunni' (266) (unless Almighty God sent him the best physician in the world) (267). That physician turns out to be Engres's daughter, Ísodd, after Tristram arrives in Ireland. He needs the princess's skills a second time during this stay when he defeats a dragon that is ravishing the land and becomes infected by the poison from the segment of the beast's tongue that he has cut off and preserved in his pouch. Although this feat wins him the king's daughter, he proposes to offer her to his uncle, despite her objections and those of her mother, Queen Flúrent.[68] Flúrent prepares a special drinking horn for use by Ísodd and Mórodd on their wedding night, and although it is not specified that it contains a love potion, when the two young people consume its contents they fall madly in love and delay their return to England by three months.

Tristram and Ísodd's time in the English court follows roughly the same pattern as in the French and German versions, with the king refusing to believe that they have betrayed him until, returning from church one day, he catches them together in his bed. Following a seven-day exile in the forest, after which Mórodd, convinced of their innocence, invites the lovers to return to court, Tristram attempts to end his affair: while leading the English army against that of the invading heathen King Fúlsus, he promises to give up his dalliance with Ísodd if God grants him the victory. When Tristram hears the heathens musing that their opponent is the devil, considering how much harm he is doing them, he replies that he is doing it

[68] The original 'bride quest' episode, conflated here with Tristram's first visit to Ireland, is considerably altered. After being offered Ísodd's hand, Tristram returns to England to propose that his uncle marry the princess. When Mórodd readily agrees, Tristram goes back to Ireland to fetch her.

'allt fyrir frúinnar sakir' (282) (all for the sake of the lady) (283). In view of his vow to give up Ísodd, the lady in question may well be the Virgin rather than his lover, as most scholars have assumed. Geraldine Barnes notes that 'Tristram's pledge to God before the battle with Fúlsus and his victories over aggressively heathen opponents – Fúlsus, for example, is condemned by the narrator as *heiðinn sem hundr* (280) (heathen as a dog) (281), his forces invoke Mahomet, and his soul goes to hell – endow him with some Crusader qualities'.[69]

It is shortly afterwards that Spain again becomes the theatre for Tristram's exploits. He returns to his homeland where King Benðsus has seized power along with two earls and raised an army against Tristram, who nevertheless defeats them and is awarded both the land and the earls' sister, Ísodd the Dark. According to the narrator, it is said that Tristram only gradually gives up thinking about Ísodd the Fair, and his wife senses that she is not in full possession of his love. Nevertheless, the couple apparently consummate their union, for after three years Tristram's wife produces a son, Kalegras. Tristram is greatly esteemed in Spain, and eventually answers an appeal for help from Tristram the Stranger, causing him to travel west with his namesake to 'Jakobsland' (Galicia). As Barnes notes, two of the seven brothers against whom the hero is engaged to fight have names (Ayad and Dormadat) that lead one to believe that he and his companion are combating Saracens.[70] Thus, Tristram, already a giant- and dragon-slayer as he appears in the earliest extant versions of the legend, is transformed in this episode into a genuine Moor-slayer. Tristram comes out of this combat mortally wounded and, as in Thomas's poem, he sends for his lover and dies of despair when his wife informs him, untruthfully, that the ship he is awaiting has black 'awnings' (the sign in this saga that his beloved is not on board). Arriving too late to heal her lover, Ísodd the Fair dies of grief. The Icelandic *Saga* follows the lead of the early French and German poems, where the lovers are interred either in the same coffin or in separate ones, sometimes on opposite sides of a church; however, here they are buried in what could only be the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela:

> Síðan váru þau flutt ok grafin at þeiri höfuðkirkju, er mest var í landinu. Ok stóðu menn mjök daprir yfir þeira grefti, fyrir hörmuligt líflát, er þau biðu. En hann var greftr fyrir norðan en hún fyrir sunnan. Þá rann sinn lundr upp af leiði hvárs þeira með hinum fegrsta ávexti, ok þar til óxu viðirnir at þeir mættuz yfir kirkjuburst. Þá vöfðuz limar<nar> saman, ok svá hátt óxu

[69] G. Barnes, 'The Tristan Legend', in *The Arthur of the North. The Arthurian Legend in the Norse and Rus' Realms*, ed. M. E. Kalinke (Cardiff, 2011), pp. 61–76 (p. 72).
[70] Ibid.

> viðirnir í lopt upp, at varla hafa menn sét hærri tré. Ok standa þar þessir viðir enn, til marks at Tristram fífldi ekki Ísodd hina fögru fyrir illsku sakir við Mórodd kóng, frænda sinn, heldr fyrir þat at sjálfr guð hafði þeim skipat saman af sinni samvizku. En fyrir þá sök þá Tristram ekki Ísodd hina fögru af Mórodd kóngi, at hann unni honum hins bezta raðs, ok mátti hann þó fyrir engan mun við sköpunum vinna.
>
> (Afterwards they were carried out and buried in the cathedral, which was the greatest in the land, and men stood very sadly over their tombs because of the tragic death they had suffered. He was buried on the north side and she on the south. Then a tree with the most beautiful fruit sprang up from each of their graves and the branches grew until they met above the roof of the church. Their limbs entwined and the branches grew so high that men have scarcely seen higher trees, and these trees are still standing there as a sign that Tristram did not beguile Ísodd the Fair out of malice towards his kinsman Mórodd but rather because God Himself in His wisdom had destined them for each other. And the reason why Tristram did not accept Ísodd the Fair from King Mórodd was because he wanted him to have the best match, and yet he was by no means able to withstand the fates.)[71]

We may well wonder how it is possible for this famous pair of adulterous lovers to end up buried in such a prestigious symbol of Christianity as the cathedral of Santiago. It may be partly because Tristram does appear to be something of a crusader, but the answer may also lie in the progressive Christianization of the Tristan legend in Scandinavia. According to the prologue of *Tristrams saga ok Ísondar*, in 1226 King Hákon Hákonarson of Norway (r. 1217–63) commissioned a cleric, Brother Robert, to compose a version in Old Norse of Thomas of Britain's *Roman de Tristran*.[72] By proposing the translation of French courtly literary works, King Hákon wished to refine the taste and mores of the Norwegian court where ecclesiastics set the tone. It was members of this circle who had been trained in France who undertook these 'translations', which included adaptations of some of Chrétien de Troyes's romances.[73]

[71] *Saga af Tristram ok Ísodd*, ed. Jorgensen, pp. 288–9.

[72] Because this prologue appears only in the two seventeenth-century manuscripts in which the romance is preserved, but not in the earlier fifteenth-century fragment of the work, some scholars believe that it was added later, but S. Tómasson, 'Hvenær var Tristrams sögu snúið?', *Gripla* 2 (1977), 47–78, has offered convincing evidence of a thirteenth-century dating for the work as a whole.

[73] J. Kjær, '*Tristrams saga ok Ísöndar* – une version christianisée de la branche dite courtoise du "Tristan"', in *Courtly Literature: Culture and Context*, ed. K. Busby and E. Kooper (Amsterdam, 1990), pp. 367–77. For a concise discussion of King Hákon's crucial role in importing Arthurian romance into Norway, see M. E. Kalinke, 'The

Moreover, Hákon, whose status as king was eventually confirmed by the papal legate, was, in the view of many, an ideal, even 'saintly' king. Shortly after his death, his son commissioned a royal biography/saint's life known as *Hákonar saga Hákonarsona*. Adam Oberlin calls it 'the first depiction of a Norwegian king according to continental modes of *rex iustus* and divine selection', explaining that this saga presents the picture of a king who was both Christian and courtly: 'Ordained by God and crowned in the presence of a papal legate, as well as a lover of the popular literature of his day, Hákon shows a fondness for falconry and other court pastimes, enjoyment in the pageantry of well-outfitted processions, graciousness in the face of uncivil enemies, and a constant reliance on God's mercy.'[74]

Under these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that the Norwegian redactor chose to tone down the theme of adultery and to present King Mark as the representative of God – wise, merciful and worthy.[75] He also has Tristram's parents marry in a legal, Church-sanctioned ceremony rather than eloping. When Tristram and Isönd are living in the forest in exile, they do not worry about finding sustenance, so confident are they that God will grant them nourishment enough. The Christian cast given to this version appears very clearly in the pious ending that the Norse adapter appends to Thomas's poem. Indeed, whereas the most shocking element of the Old French poems is the way the lovers engage in their adulterous passion without apparent remorse, in the Norwegian saga, Isönd, before dying, prays to God for forgiveness. She reminds him that he saved all mankind, including Maria Magdalena, and begs him to be merciful and forgive sinners like her. Although Tristram's jealous wife has them buried on separate sides of the church in order to keep them apart, trees spring up from the two graves and intertwine above the gable of the church. The author adds: 'Ok má því sjá, hversu mikil ást þeira á

Introduction of Arthurian Literature in Scandinavia', in *The Arthur of the North*, ed. Kalinke, pp. 5–21 (pp. 9–13).

74 A. Oberlin, '"Translating" Tristan: *Hákonarsaga* and the Possibilities of *Translatio*', *Tristania* 25 (2009), 49–68 (pp. 54–5). Oberlin goes on to demonstrate the possible influence exercised by the Tristram saga on *Hákonarsaga*. In his '*Vita Sancti, Vita Regis*: The Saintly King in *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*', *Neophilologus* 95 (2011), 313–28, Oberlin endeavours to show the pervasive influence of hagiographical themes and argues that 'the saga's portrayal of the king as a saintly figure serves to compare him to the greatest Christian kings of the preceding centuries, even if only within the memorialization of the text itself and not in later memory' (p. 313).

75 Kjær, '*Tristrams saga ok Ísöndar*', pp. 371–2. As Kalinke, 'Introduction of Arthurian Literature in Scandinavia', p. 12, notes, since the Arthurian romances and courtly lays that were translated in Hákon's court had as their focus a strong king, they clearly had a didactic function.

milli verit hefir' (222) (By this we can see how great the love between them had been) (223).[76]

As we saw in our earlier discussion of the Icelandic saga, the author took the pious ending of the Norwegian saga and further embellished it, not only by choosing the cathedral of Santiago as the lovers' final resting place and by stating that God had actually destined them for each other, but also by explicitly putting a positive interpretation on Tristram's relationship with his uncle, which is unusually complex. Indeed, earlier in the Icelandic saga, the king, upon meeting his bride-to-be, actually suggests that his nephew and she would be better matched, given her age, adding: 'en ek ann þér allvel konunnar ok ríkisins' (276) (and I freely grant you the lady and the kingdom) (277). The hero courteously demurs, however, telling him he does not want to be king while his uncle is able to reign, and, as we have seen, the author explains at the end of the poem that Tristram wanted his uncle to have the best match. The youth's apparent lack of interest in Ísodd has fuelled speculation that this work is actually a satire,[77] but Tristram's attitude also makes the lovers seem less guilty and more worthy of being buried in the cathedral of Santiago.[78] Another surprising change wrought by the author of the Icelandic *Tristram* is the mention that King Mórodd eventually leaves on pilgrimage to the Holy Lands, where he ends up living out his life as a holy hermit in Jerusalem. It is also to Tristram's credit that, given his progeny (Kalegras Tristramsson is a model king), he is celebrated at the end of the saga as a dynastic founder.[79]

[76] *Tristrams saga ok Ísöndar*, ed. and trans. P. Jorgensen, in *Norse Romance. I. The Tristan Legend*, ed. Kalinke, pp. 23–226.

[77] See P. Schach, 'The *Saga af Tristram ok Ísodd*: Summary or Satire?', *Modern Language Quarterly* 21 (1960), 336–52; idem, 'Tristrams *Saga ok Ýsoddar* as burlesque', *Scandinavian Studies* 59 (1987), 86–100.

[78] Although homosocial bonds can be seen in French Arthurian traditions, M. E. Kalinke argues that the way in which the Icelandic author has reworked the romantic triangle to put more emphasis on the homosocial bond between Tristram and his uncle is an indication of acculturation – adaptation of the legend to Icelandic literary traditions; 'Female Desire and the Quest in the Icelandic Legend of Tristram and Ísodd', in *The Grail, the Quest, and the World of Arthur*, ed. N. J. Lacy (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 76–91. Kalinke acknowledges her debt to her doctoral student, K. Lurkhur, who attributes this emphasis to the influence specifically of the family sagas or *Íslendingasögur*. See Lurkhur's article, 'Tristan in the Old Icelandic Tradition', *Tristania* 25 (2009), 69–94.

[79] Barnes, 'The Tristan Legend', p. 73. The Christianization of the legend in the north is also underscored in the haunting Icelandic ballad, *Tristrams Kvædi* (The Poem of Tristram), which was influenced by the Old Norse saga and was probably in circulation by the time the Icelandic saga was composed. It describes the lovers' very Christian burial, attended by priests with candles, hymns and bells. The bodies are carried into the church, placed in a holy cell and lowered into stone sepulchres from which spring

The prominent role that Spain plays in the Icelandic saga is quite surprising. One possible explanation is that King Hákon, who sought closer relations with Alfonso X el sabio (a candidate for becoming the Holy Roman Emperor), arranged a marriage between his daughter Kristín and infante Felipe (Alfonso's brother). In *Hákonar saga*, composed *c*. 1260, the Icelandic biographer Sturla Þorðarson describes Kristin's journey to Spain and her reception at the royal courts both of King Jaime of Aragon and Alfonso of Castile.[80] Given the large role played by Iceland in preserving Norwegian literature, it is not surprising that there were many Icelanders present at the court of a man like Hákon, who sought to present the image of a powerful monarch celebrated for his promotion of European culture and his connections with other powerful leaders.

Conclusion

In this essay, we have seen the startling appearance of Tristan on the Romanesque façade of the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, and we have noted the cathedral's unexpected presence in the Icelandic *Tristram* saga. These conjunctions of the Tristan legend and the cathedral can be explained by the remarkably close contacts that existed between north-western Spain and the rest of northern Europe throughout the Middle Ages, owing in large part to the numerous pilgrims who travelled by sea or land from as far away as Finland to pray at the shrine of St James. The Apostle was much revered from the earliest times in the seafaring communities of Ireland and Brittany, which felt a great affinity for Galicia ('little Gaul').[81] The kings of León-Castile, the only ones granted the title of emperor, in recognition of their links to the Visigothic realm, maintained exceptionally close ties with France, particularly with the abbots of Cluny.[82] The Romanesque art of northern Spain owes a tremendous debt

two trees that are joined in the middle of the church. See *Tristrams Kvædi*, ed. and trans. Robert Cook, in *Norse Romance. I. The Tristan Legend*, ed. Kalinke, pp. 227–39. It is preserved in four versions in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century manuscripts.

[80] Kalinke, 'The Introduction of the Arthurian Legend in Scandinavia', p. 14. My thanks to Marianne Kalinke for suggesting this explanation for Spain's prominent role in the Icelandic saga.

[81] D. Péricard-Méa, 'La Prédication de Saint-Jacques en Irlande et en Bretagne', in *Pèlerinages et croisades*, pp. 67–82.

[82] As S. Moralejo notes, Ferdinand's son, Alfonso VI, 'chose the Leonese abbey of Sahagún for his family pantheon and made it the head of a broad monastic empire reformed along French lines. In 1080 the Cluniac monk Bernard d'Auch (later archbishop of Toledo) was put in charge of Sahagún itself, which became the Saint-Denis and Cluny of the kingdoms of León and Castile'; 'On the Road: the Camino de

to French models, especially those provided by Sainte-Foy in Conques and Saint-Sernin in Toulouse, which were on the French pilgrimage route.[83] The architects of the cathedral at Santiago (whose names, Bernard and Robert, indicate that they were French) drew on stylistic features of the great pilgrimage churches of western France in Tours, Limoges and Toulouse, as well as the abbey church of Cluny.

One of the clearest proofs of the bonds forged between France and Spain in Compostela can be found in the celebrated Charlemagne window at Chartres cathedral. Dated between 1210 and 1220 and based on events recounted in the *Pseudo-Turpin*, it is an excellent illustration of the intertwining of the legends of Charlemagne and St James found in the *Codex Calixtinus*, depicting the emperor principally as an energetic Christian crusader and builder of churches. The lower register concerns Charlemagne's campaign in the Orient in response to Constantine's call to combat the Saracens in Constantinople. The second and third registers are devoted to the emperor's campaign in Spain: in the right-hand panel of the second register, St James appears to Charlemagne in a dream, asking him to liberate his tomb from the Moors; in the left-hand panel, the emperor gazes at the Milky Way, which St James has assured him will serve as a guide. In the central panel, Charlemagne is shown setting out for Spain, praying and taking a city in Spain. The window also includes panels depicting Charlemagne's victory over the pagan king Aigolant and others before leaving Spain. The central panel of the next register celebrates Roland: he is shown trying to break his sword and sounding the olifant as the body of the giant Ferragut lies in two pieces at his feet. This description follows that of Mary Jane Schenck, who plausibly establishes the dominance of Charlemagne over Roland by assigning more panels to the emperor than had previous scholars and contends that the window is based on a vernacular version of the *Pseudo-Turpin*. The intertwining of the Carolingian and Jacobean legends at Chartres is further highlighted by the existence of a window devoted to St James that is very similar to the Charlemagne window, which, however, is given pride of place.[84]

In view of the extraordinary ties between France and Spain outlined in this article, it is curious that neither of the Spanish prose versions

Santiago', in *The Art of Medieval Spain, a.d. 500–1200*, pp. 174–83 (p. 179). See also M. Defourneaux, *Les Français en Espagne aux XI^e^ et XII^e^ siècles* (Paris, 1949).

[83] See Durliat, *Sculpture romane*, pp. 15–41, where he summarizes the influence that he studies in more detail in the second part.

[84] M. J. Schenck, 'Taking a Second Look: Roland in the Charlemagne Window at Chartres', *Olifant* 25, 1–2 (2006), 371–85; idem, 'The Charlemagne Window at Chartres: Visual Chronicle of a Royal Life', *Word and Image: A Journal of Verbal/Visual Enquiry* 28, 2 (2012), 135–60. See also *The Old French Johannes Translation of the Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle*, ed. R. N. Walpole (Berkeley, CA, 1978).

of the legend of Tristan and Iseult, which date from the late fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, transplants the legend to Spain nor – unlike the Icelandic *Tristram* saga – gives Spain a larger role. These works, which both derive ultimately from the same non-extant version of the thirteenth-century French Prose *Tristan* that spawned the Italian *Tristan*s, retain for the most part the same place-names as in the French work.[85] Even in the part of the *Corónica nuevamente emendata y añadida del buen cavallero don Tristán de Leonís y del rei don Tristán de Leonís el joven su hijo 1534* (Newly Revised and Expanded Chronicle of the Great Knight Tristan de Leonis and of his Son, King Tristan of Leonis the Younger 1534) that tells the story of the lovers' offspring, Tristán and Yseo, the son accedes to the thrones of Cornwall and Leonís. However, he does marry the infanta María and arranges his sister's marriage with his brother-in-law, King Juan of Spain,[86] details that suggest an attempt at long last to appropriate the legend and plant it firmly in Spanish soil.

[85] See J. T. Grimbert, 'The "Matter of Britain" on the Continent and the Legend of Tristan and Iseult in France, Italy, and Spain', in *A Companion to Arthurian Literature*, ed. H. Fulton (Oxford, 2009), pp. 145–59 (pp. 154–7).

[86] *Tristán de Leonís y el rey don Tristán el joven, su hijo, 1534*, ed. M. L. Cuesta Torre (México, 1997). It is curious that the Icelandic *Tristram* also includes a genealogy that extends the hero's story two generations into both the past and the future. After Tristram's death, King Mórodd sends to Spain for his grand-nephew, Kalegras Tristramsson, and hands the English throne over to him. Kalegras later marries the daughter of the emperor of Saxland by whom he has two sons and a daughter. But of Spain nothing more is said.