

RALEIGH LECTURE ON HISTORY

FROM PARIS TO THE PARACLETE: THE  
CORRESPONDENCE OF ABELARD AND  
HELOISE

By DAVID LUSCOMBE

*University of Sheffield*  
*Fellow of the Academy*

*Read 1 December 1988*

ABELARD was not a Parisian nor a Frenchman. None the less, the duchy of Brittany, and especially the county of Nantes into which he had been born in 1079, was increasingly open to and taking part in opportunities of all kinds opening up in France.<sup>1</sup> Breton clergy went to the schools of Anjou to study; and sometimes they returned to occupy and to reform Breton bishoprics.<sup>2</sup> Abelard himself from the mid 1090s attended the schools of Tours and Loches and Angers<sup>3</sup> and like his fellow Breton Robert of Arbrissel, the founder of the abbey of Fontevraud, he went on to Paris in search of further opportunities to study; and, like Robert too, Abelard eventually became an abbot.<sup>4</sup> He remained throughout his life in touch with his Breton homeland—his *patria*—returning there in illness,<sup>5</sup> and when his mother Lucy

<sup>1</sup> N.-Y. Tonnerre, 'Le comté nantais à la fin du XI<sup>e</sup> siècle', *Abélard en son temps. Actes du colloque international organisé à l'occasion du 9<sup>e</sup> centenaire de la naissance de Pierre Abélard (14–19 mai 1979)* (Paris, 1981), pp. 11–20.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 18–19: Budic, bishop of Nantes; Marbod, bishop of Rennes, 1096–1123; Baudri of Bourgueil, archbishop of Dol, 1107–1130.

<sup>3</sup> Roscelin of Compiègne, *Epistola ad Abaelardum*: '... Turonensis ecclesia vel Locensis, ubi ad pedes meos magistri tui discipulorum minimus tam diu resedisti...' J. Reiners (ed.) *Der Nominalismus in der Frühscholastik. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und der Theologie des Mittelalters*, 8 (Münster, 1910), pp. 63–80, here p. 65. There is circumstantial evidence that suggests that Abelard studied at Angers under Master Ulger: see L. M. de Rijk, in the introduction to his edition, *Petrus Abaelardus. Dialectica* (Assen, 1956; second edition 1970), pp. xix–xx.

<sup>4</sup> Tonnerre, 'Le comté nantais', pp. 19–20.

<sup>5</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. J. Monfrin (Second edition, Paris, 1962), p. 65, ll. 65–9.

entered religion,<sup>6</sup> entrusting Heloise to his sister during her pregnancy in 1116,<sup>7</sup> placing his son Astralabe with this same sister for his upbringing,<sup>8</sup> dedicating his *Dialectica* to his brother Dagobert,<sup>9</sup> accepting election around 1125/7 as abbot of the monastery of Saint-Gildas de Rhuy in the diocese of Vannes on the southern, Atlantic coast of the duchy<sup>10</sup> and in this role playing a part in the affairs of the duchy, and appearing from time to time in the entourage of Conan III, the count of Nantes and duke of Brittany.<sup>11</sup>

Heloise's family, which is less well known than Abelard's, belonged to the nobility of the Paris region.<sup>12</sup> Her uncle Fulbert was a canon of Notre-Dame<sup>13</sup> and she was educated in the nearby convent of Argenteuil.<sup>14</sup> There is reason to think that she belonged on her father's side to a branch of the Beaumont family, or of the closely related family of Montmorency-Bantelu, and that she had on her mother's side Chartrain connections.<sup>15</sup> The Montmorencys were dominant in the Val d'Oise, and the advowson of the convent of Argenteuil was in the hands of one of their number; they were neighbours, and by no means harmonious ones, of the abbots of Saint-Denis.<sup>16</sup>

In the earliest years of the twelfth century Paris was still a dilapidated crumbling city largely confined to an island on the

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. p. 67, ll. 155-8.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. p. 74 ll. 391-9. For the date see R.-H. Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', *Abélard en son temps*, pp. 21-77, here p. 56, n. 1.

<sup>8</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, p. 79, l. 559.

<sup>9</sup> *Dialectica*, ed. de Rijk, pp. 142, l. 15; 146, l. 23; 535, l. 7.

<sup>10</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum* ed. Monfrin, p. 98, ll. 1234-9.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. p. 106, ll. 1511-16. Abelard witnesses, as abbot of Saint-Gildas, a charter granted by Conan III to the abbey of Notre-Dame of Le Ronceray at Angers on 15 March 1128. See P. Marchegay, *Archives d'Anjou*, Vol. 3 (Angers, 1854), pp. 259-60, 288-9; also (and I owe this reference to the kindness of Dr Michael Jones of the University of Nottingham) H. Guillotel, *Recueil des actes des ducs de Bretagne, 944-1148*. Paris, Faculté de droit, thèse, 1971, pp. 414-16. Abelard may have been encouraged by his continuing connections with the Breton nobility to accept the abbacy; see further J. Verger, 'Abélard et les milieux sociaux de son temps', *Abélard en son temps*, pp. 107-131, here pp. 111-12 and 127 n. 5.

<sup>12</sup> Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', pp. 75-7.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. pp. 75-6 and p. 56 n. 1.

<sup>14</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, p. 79, ll. 573-6.

<sup>15</sup> Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', pp. 76-7.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. p. 76; T. G. Waldman, 'Abbot Suger and the Nuns of Argenteuil', *Traditio*, 41 (1985), pp. 239-72.

Seine.<sup>17</sup> Louis VI, at the start of his reign in 1108, was hemmed in by the counts of Meulan and Corbeil, and by the lords of Montmorency. But, following the sack of the city by the count of Meulan in 1111, he established a *ville neuve* on the right bank of the Seine in a vigorous drive to promote settlement and commerce. On the left bank in 1113 Louis officially founded the new abbey of Saint-Victor; hitherto a lonely hermitage, it quickly grew to be a notable centre for scholarly clergy.<sup>18</sup> The east of the Cité itself had been dominated by the vast, ruinous basilica of Saint-Etienne while further to the east arose the more recent church of Notre-Dame. To the north of these lay the cloister and most of the canons' houses. Apart from the dean, the chanter and the chancellor, the chapter comprised three archdeacons, three priest-canons, three deacons, three subdeacons and three acolytes. The bishop himself occupied a palace to the south of the cathedral, close to the Petit Pont. And in the years before (or in) 1116 Louis VI fixed the boundaries of the close.<sup>19</sup>

Abelard was not brought up here, but he came as a mature student around the year 1100 to complete an education that had been pursued largely in the valley of the Loire. The state of the school in Paris at the time is obscure. But Bishop Guillaume, who died in 1102, had been a pupil of that famous teacher, bishop Ivo of Chartres, as was Galo, his successor as bishop in Paris from 1104.<sup>20</sup> These two bishops heralded a period of rapid growth for the school;<sup>21</sup> increasing numbers of students were to come and to breed conflicts, a climax being reached perhaps after Abelard had left Paris and in the 1120s when bishop Gerbert suspended Master Gualo from teaching in the close and moved the school

<sup>17</sup> Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', pp. 21–52. L. Halphen, *Paris sous les premiers capétiens (987–1223)* (Paris, 1909), pp. 5–15, 23–5.

<sup>18</sup> J.-P. Willems, 'Saint-Victor au temps d'Abélard', *Abélard en son temps*, pp. 95–105.

<sup>19</sup> Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', pp. 28–30. On Paris in the reign of Louis VI see too Bautier, 'Quand et comment Paris devint capitale', *Bulletin de la société de l'histoire de Paris*, 105 (1978), pp. 17–46, here pp. 36–9.

<sup>20</sup> A. L. Gabriel, 'Les écoles de la cathédrale de Notre-Dame et le commencement de l'université de Paris', *Huitième centenaire de Notre-Dame de Paris* (Paris, 1967). Bibliothèque de la Société d'histoire ecclésiastique de la France, pp. 141–66, here pp. 145–8.

<sup>21</sup> On this growth see R. W. Southern, 'The Schools of Paris and the School of Chartres', R. L. Benson and G. Constable with Carol D. Lanham (eds), *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 113–37, here pp. 119 *et seq.*

away from the canons' properties and closer both to his palace and to the Petit Pont which leads to the *rive gauche*. Henceforth external pupils, such as Abelard himself had been, were no longer to lodge in the canons' houses.<sup>22</sup>

A battle of ideas unquestionably took place in Paris between Abelard and his master William of Champeaux in the early 1100s<sup>23</sup> but personal alliances and quarrels were also involved and the politics of the royal court bore closely upon them.<sup>24</sup> Stephen de Garlande, from 1105 the royal chancellor, was like William an archdeacon and had houses in the close,<sup>25</sup> and when Abelard first set up school, not in Paris but at the *castrum* and royal residence of Melun, he had the support of powerful figures.<sup>26</sup> When after a short while he moved away from Melun—and the reason for this may well have been a rift between Stephen and the king—he took his teaching to the little town of Corbeil, closer to Paris, but in the hands of Count Odo who was opposed to the king.<sup>27</sup> Nor need it be a coincidence that, when shortly afterwards (and perhaps still in 1105) Abelard returned home to Brittany, for reasons of health, the de Garlandes, in alliance with Milo of Troyes, were fighting the Rocheforts who had taken prince Louis into their keeping. Only when the cloud of disgrace was lifted from the de Garlandes, probably in 1108, did Abelard see fit to return from Brittany to France<sup>28</sup>

1108 is also the year in which William of Champeaux took the habit of a regular canon and resigned his archdeaconry to join the new community at Saint-Victor on the left bank. This followed the accession to the throne of Louis VI and a reversal in 1107 of alliances in the royal court leading to William's exclusion

<sup>22</sup> Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', pp. 31, 66–7; Southern, 'The Schools of Paris', pp. 120–1.

<sup>23</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, pp. 64, l. 31–p. 67, l. 154. Abelard criticizes William's view of predication in his *Introductiones parvulorum (Super Topica Glossae)* ed. M. dal Pra, *Pietro Abelardo. Scritti filosofici* (Rome, 1954), pp. 271, l. 38–273, l. 35. See L. M. de Rijk, *Logica modernorum*, Vol. 2, Part I (Assen, 1967), pp. 183–6, 203–6. Also, de Rijk in the introduction to his edition of Abelard's *Dialectica*, p. xxi.

<sup>24</sup> Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', pp. 54, 61–2.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 54, 60–1, and (for Stephen's houses) p. 29 n. 7.

<sup>26</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, pp. 64, ll. 45–9, 55. Cf. Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', pp. 61–2.

<sup>27</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, p. 64, l. 61–p. 65, l. 65. Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', p. 62.

<sup>28</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, p. 65, ll. 65–81. Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', p. 62.

from royal favour.<sup>29</sup> The Parisian basin was in the grip of military operations. Gui de Rochefort lost the seneschalship—which had given him command of the royal army—and was replaced by Anseau de Garlande. Stephen de Garlande was restored to the royal chancellorship.<sup>30</sup> And the new archdeacon, Gilbert, who succeeded William, attempted to install Abelard in the episcopal school of Paris, but he failed to overcome the influence of William over bishop Galo who imposed another nominee.<sup>31</sup> So Abelard went back to Melun and to the royal court<sup>32</sup> and then came to the Mont Sainte-Geneviève to the south of Paris where Stephen was dean of the abbey. It was on the lands or in the church of Sainte-Geneviève that Abelard taught around 1109 and 1110.<sup>33</sup> He finally secured appointment as master in Paris only after the resignation of William's successor and after William left Paris to become bishop of Châlons in 1113.<sup>34</sup> There followed at least three undisturbed years of teaching in the cathedral close<sup>35</sup> until the course of his relationship with Heloise and his brutal emasculation led him, probably in 1117/18, to put his wife back into the convent of Argenteuil and to place himself under the rule of abbot Adam at the royal monastery of Saint-Denis.<sup>36</sup>

These ructions are evoked very sketchily in the letter now universally known under the title of *Historia calamitatum*.<sup>37</sup> Until

<sup>29</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, p. 65, ll. 70–80. Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', pp. 62–3. A letter written by a German student, and recording William's change of position, contains the remark that before he left his archdeaconry William was 'fereque apud regem primus'—'almost the chief adviser to the king'. P. Jaffé, *Bibliotheca Rerum Germanicarum*, Vol. 5 (Berlin, 1869), p. 286.

<sup>30</sup> Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', p. 62.

<sup>31</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, p. 66, ll. 104–16. Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', p. 63.

<sup>32</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, p. 66, ll. 117–18. Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', p. 63.

<sup>33</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, p. 66, l. 127–p. 67, l. 132. Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', pp. 63 and 55 n. 4.

<sup>34</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, p. 67, ll. 132–161, p. 70, ll. 241–3. Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', p. 55 n. 6.

<sup>35</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, p. 70, ll. 241–3. Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', p. 55, n. 8.

<sup>36</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, p. 79, l. 573–p. 81, l. 641. Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', p. 56, n. 1.

<sup>37</sup> In two MSS the letter is introduced by the words: 'Abaelardi ad amicum consolatoria' (Monfrin, p. 60). The title 'Historia calamitatum' appears in one MS (Rheims 872) and there only as a secondary title. See J. T. Muckle, 'Abelard's Letter of Consolation to a Friend (*Historia Calamitatum*)', *Mediaeval Studies*, 12 (1950), pp. 163, 175 n. 2.

William of Champeaux finally left Paris, the account is largely couched 'in the terminology of a military operation aimed at the academic capture of the stronghold of Paris'.<sup>38</sup> The frequent metaphors employed of assault and battle, of siege and camps, of occupation and retreat, gain significance when we take into account the close connections between the clerical and military struggles in royal France.<sup>39</sup> At precisely the time that Abelard taught on the Mont Sainte-Geneviève, and prepared there for his assault on the cathedral school, Roger count of Meulan in March 1111 raided the Cité from the *rive droite*, sacked the royal palace and cut the bridges across the Seine.<sup>40</sup> This bragging martial language is not the least of reasons for reading the text as an acceptably contemporary document.<sup>41</sup>

As much can be said too of the account of Heloise. It is believable, even so long before the invention of safe methods of artificial contraception, that Heloise should have insisted that she preferred the freedom of concubinage to the tie of wedlock.

<sup>38</sup> R. W. Southern, 'The Schools of Paris', p. 122.

<sup>39</sup> For the following terms in the *Historia calamitatum*, see Monfrin's edition: 'assultus' (p. 65, l. 65); 'disputationum nostrarum conamina' (p. 65, l. 82); 'a civitate recessisset' (p. 66, l. 125); 'locum nostrum . . . occupari' (p. 66, ll. 128–9); 'scolarum nostrarum castra posui, quasi eum obsessurus qui locum occupaverat nostrum' (p. 66, l. 130–p. 67, l. 132); 'quasi militem suum quem dimiserat ab obsidione nostra liberaturus' (p. 67, ll. 135–6); 'conflictus disputationum' (p. 67, l. 145); 'in his bellis . . . nostris' (p. 67, l. 147).

<sup>40</sup> Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', pp. 41, 55 n. 5, 63.

<sup>41</sup> Among recent scholars who are convinced that the *Historia calamitatum* was not written by Abelard mention must chiefly be made of H. Silvestre, 'L'idylle d'Abélard et Héloïse: la part du roman' in *Académie Royale de Belgique. Bulletin de la classe des lettres et des sciences morales et politiques*, 5<sup>e</sup> série, 71 (1985), pp. 157–200. This is reproduced and extended in a German version entitled 'Die Liebesgeschichte zwischen Abaelard und Heloise: der Anteil des Romans' in *Fälschungen im Mittelalter. Internationaler Kongress der Monumenta Germaniae Historica, München, 16.–19. September 1986, Teil V: Fingierte Briefe, Frömmigkeit und Fälschung, Realienfälschungen*. Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Schriften, Band 33 (Hanover, 1988), pp. 121–65. Abelard's authorship of the *Historia calamitatum* was accepted as likely by John F. Benton in the same volume, 'The Correspondence of Abelard and Heloise', pp. 95–120 (see p. 98). In an earlier paper Benton could not find any significant arguments against Abelard's authorship of the *Historia*, 'A reconsideration of the authenticity of the correspondence of Abelard and Heloise', R. Thomas (ed.), *Petrus Abaelardus (1079–1142). Person, Werk und Wirkung*. Trierer Theologische Studien, 38 (Trier, 1980), pp. 41–52 (see p. 49). In 1972 Benton had launched a celebrated assault against Abelard's authorship of the work, 'Fraud, fiction and borrowing in the correspondence of Abelard and Heloise', *Pierre Abélard, Pierre le Vénérable*. Colloques internationaux du centre national de la recherche scientifique, no. 546 (Paris, 1975), pp. 469–511.

Heloise is represented in the *Historia* as one who wanted to reject the marriage bond and who, desperately as well as forcefully, turned St. Jerome's arguments against marriage in directions Jerome never intended.<sup>42</sup> In the first of her letters Heloise writes that the name of wife might seem more sacred or more binding, but sweeter would always be the word friend, even that of mistress or concubine.<sup>43</sup> This sentiment, coming from a woman, at a time when concubinage was not socially disreputable but when the prohibitions of clerical marriage and other laws of marriage were still being sharpened, is not so daringly original nor so old-fashioned as to be implausible. To many concubines it was an advantage to keep their clerical partners well away from marriage.<sup>44</sup>

Another persistent objection to the contemporary character of the *Historia* is that the quotations it contains from the Bible are put in a form not invented before the thirteenth century.<sup>45</sup> In

<sup>42</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, pp. 75, l. 425–79, l. 558, esp. p. 78, ll. 545–9. Cf. P. Delhay, 'Le dossier antimatrimonial de l'*Adversus Jovinianum* et son influence sur quelques écrits latins du XIIe siècle', *Mediaeval Studies* 13 (1951) pp. 65–86.

<sup>43</sup> Letter 2, J. T. Muckle (ed.) 'The Personal Letters between Abaelard and Heloise,' *Mediaeval Studies*, 15 (1953), pp. 47–94, here p. 70, l. 30–p. 71, l. 33, and especially p. 71, ll. 2–4; P.L. 178 (= *P. Abaelardi Opera omnia*, ed. J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Vol. 178, Paris, 1855), cols. 184C–185C, esp. 184D. I have numbered the letters in the collected correspondence continuously from one to eight, two being the letter from Heloise which follows the *Historia calamitatum*.

<sup>44</sup> In his book, *The Medieval Idea of Marriage* (Oxford, 1989), Professor Christopher Brooke explores the problems created in the eleventh and twelfth centuries by the ideal of celibacy and examines examples of clerical concubines and their dynasties, unwilling nuns, and family opposition to entry into the religious life. D. Fraioli, 'The importance of satire in Jerome's *Adversus Jovinianum* as an argument against the authenticity of the *Historia Calamitatum*', *Fälschungen im Mittelalter*, 5, pp. 167–200, argues that the misapplication in the *Historia* of Jerome's satire against marriage (Heloise appears to be in favour of free love, not of virginity or celibacy) is unlikely to represent Heloise's real arguments and is intentionally ridiculous and comic. Fraioli's argument seems to founder on her unwillingness to accept, in the light of evidence of continuing concubinage in clerical circles during Heloise's lifetime, that Heloise could have been serious. Silvestre, 'L'idylle', pp. 194–5; 'Die Liebesgeschichte', pp. 159–60, believes that Peter the Venerable (G. Constable (ed.), *Letters* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967) Vol. 1 pp. 303–8) would not have praised Heloise so highly if these views were really hers. One might counter that Peter the Venerable would not have praised Abelard so highly if he was really a heretic. . . .

<sup>45</sup> This objection was put by J. F. Benton in 'Fraud, fiction and borrowing', pp. 495–6 and again in 'A reconsideration of the authenticity', p. 43. Benton was followed by Silvestre, 'L'idylle', p. 178; 'Die Liebesgeschichte', p. 143.

particular, in evoking Abelard's shame on becoming a eunuch and therefore unclean, the Book of Deuteronomy is quoted: 'An eunuch . . . shall not enter into the church of the Lord.'<sup>46</sup> The reference given in the *Historia* to chapter 21 is (we might presume) a simple error for chapter 23 where the passage is now found, but the objection is that such an error could not have been made until after the early thirteenth century when Stephen Langton devised a new system of chapter numberings, whereupon this passage was included for the first time in a chapter numbered 23. The objection is, however, groundless, not because of the possibility that copyists of the extant MSS (which are all later than Stephen Langton) may have sensibly adjusted the text to a new system,<sup>47</sup> nor because of the possibility that the quotation was interpolated during the thirteenth century into an earlier copy,<sup>48</sup> but because of the fact that the supposedly new system was not wholly new. In some twelfth-century Bibles, this particular passage in Deuteronomy is quite clearly in a chapter numbered 23.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, p. 80, ll. 620–2.

<sup>47</sup> A possibility I mentioned in *Peter Abelard*. The Historical Association, General Series 95 (London, 1979), p. 27.

<sup>48</sup> A possibility suggested by G. Orlandi, 'Minima Abaelardiana. Note sul testo dell'*Historia calamitatum*', *Res publica litterarum*, 3 (1980) pp. 131–8, here 132–3.

<sup>49</sup> I have looked at dated MSS in the British Library and at MSS from the Abbey of Bury St. Edmunds in the University Library in Cambridge. In the dated MSS I have seen in the British Library the chapter containing the passage in Deuteronomy is numbered as follows:

CIIII (in the text), XXIIII (in the margin)—Add. 14788, f. 102v, from l'Abbaye du Parc, Belgium, 1148;

CVII (in the text), XXIII (in the margin)—Add. 17737, f. 110r, Belgium, c. 1155;

CVII—Add. 28106, f. 70va from Stavelot, Belgium, 1094–7;

CVII—Harley 2798, f. 76rb, from Arnstein, Germany, 1172;

XCVIII—Harley 2803, f. 87rb, from the Middle Rhineland (Worms), 1148

For information on these MSS see A. G. Watson, *Catalogue of Dated and Datable MSS c.700–1600 in the Department of MSS, The British Library* (The British Library, 1979), Vol. 1, pp. 39, 51, 70, 128, 129. In the case of the Bibles in the Library of Cambridge University I have relied on M. R. James's judgements of their date. Copies of the book of Deuteronomy (e. g. Cambridge University Library, li. iii. 18) were not always divided into chapters in the twelfth century, and in some MSS the numberings were added by later hands. But copies in which the chapter divisions were added in the twelfth century place the passage in question either into chapter XXIII (e. g. Pembroke College, Cambridge, MS 53; also in MS 211, although in this MS



From this point in the *Historia* we may compare what other writers of letters had to say. Before the end of 1118 prior Fulk of Deuil addressed a stunning letter to Abelard.<sup>50</sup> The Benedictine priory of Deuil, the priory which fostered Odo the historian of the second Crusade, lay about 5 km away from the abbey of Saint-Denis, and beneath the fortress of Montmorency. From there the Bouchard branch of the Montmorency family wielded power. From the height of their castle and 10 km to the south west Argenteuil can be seen. In his letter Fulk offers both consolation to Abelard on his wounds and congratulations on becoming a monk. Fortune is indeed fickle, for by his fame as a teacher Abelard had attracted crowds of pupils, but he had then fallen into debauchery;<sup>51</sup> and his castration, which led to his conversion, was a benign act of providence. So Abelard should stop moaning about his wounds and should thank God that he is now a monk. Yet Fulk complains that he still takes on pupils and still spends his earnings on women, so much so that he is now beggared. And in addition to this he wishes to impoverish his monastery by launching an expensive appeal to Rome against the leniency of the punishments meted out to those who had castrated him. Fulk is unbelievably spiteful. He admits that it will damage the good name of the monastic order if he writes down the moral failings of a fellow monk, but he luridly writes about Abelard's visits to prostitutes. The Montmorencys had no love for the abbey of Saint-Denis; there is malicious irony in Fulk's appeal to Abelard not to wreck the finances of his opulent

the chapter numbers may have been added subsequently) or into chapter CVII (e. g. Pembroke College, Cambridge, 52). See M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Pembroke College, Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1905), pp. 51, 50, 193, Benton, 'The Correspondence of Abelard and Heloise', p. 99, n. 9 came to write that Bibles in the twelfth century showed a variety ('great inconsistency') in their chapter numbers and that Abelard himself had no standard practice when citing passages from the Bible. But Benton gave no examples of pre-Langton Bibles when making his suggestion or when withdrawing it.

<sup>50</sup> Epist. XVI in P.L. 178, 371–6. A fragment of this letter was printed from two MSS by D. Van den Eynde, 'Détails biographiques sur Pierre Abélard', *Antonianum*, 38 (1963), pp. 217–23, here p. 219; for a third MS see H. Silvestre, 'Pourquoi Roscelin n'est-il pas mentionné dans l'*Historia calamitatum*?', *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, 48 (1981), pp. 218–224, here p. 221, n. 8.

<sup>51</sup> The evidence concerning Abelard's sexual conduct or misconduct is rich in discrepancies; for a brief commentary with further references see Silvestre, 'L'idylle', pp. 175–6; 'Die Liebesgeschichte', pp. 139–40.

house by appealing to Rome.<sup>52</sup> Nastiness masquerades as charitable guidance, but the Montmorencys had an interest in protecting Fulbert and his niece if they were, as is very possible, family relatives. According to the *Historia* Fulbert's brutal action was taken in conjunction with his family, with his *consanguinei seu affines*.<sup>53</sup> Vengeance was collective and Fulk writes to ward off the consequences. So he exaggerates Abelard's lasciviousness to condone or at least to mitigate the crime of castration and to plead that the perpetrators have been punished enough. They too had been castrated; the man accused of organizing the crime had denied involvement yet he had had his possessions confiscated. The judicial officials have already been severe and certainly Fulbert's name disappeared for a while from the lists of the canons of Paris.<sup>54</sup> Fulk does not mention Fulbert's name nor that of Heloise, but he writes on account of their affinity.

Roscelin of Compiègne is a second witness.<sup>55</sup> He has been called the leader of the nominalist school in France and Abelard had become his pupil around 1092, at a time when Roscelin's

<sup>52</sup> Abelard also challenged the prestige of the abbey of Saint-Denis by raising questions concerning the life and identity of its patron. His letter 11 to abbot Adam (E. R. Smits [ed.], *Peter Abelard. Letters IX–XIV* [Groningen, 1983], pp. 249–55 and P.L. 178, 341–4), written in or before 1122, explored these questions; according to the *Historia calamitatum* (ed. Monfrin, pp. 89–91, ll. 941–1016) they had caused a bitter rift between Abelard and his fellow monks. E. Jeaneau, 'Pierre Abélard à Saint-Denis', *Abélard en son temps*, pp. 161–73, has put the two accounts of the quarrel into perspective and has explained Abelard's change of mind very satisfyingly. See also E. R. Smits, pp. 137–53. On one mistake conveyed in the letter see H. Silvestre, 'Aratus pour Arator: un singulier lapsus d'Abélard', *Studi medievali*, 3a serie 27 (1986), pp. 221–4.

<sup>53</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, p. 79, ll. 578–9. As J. Verger has written: 'le châtement d'Abélard, ce n'est pas la vengeance aveugle d'un homme bafoué, c'est la faide collective et rituellement organisée d'un clan à qui on a ravi une femme'. Verger adds (but this is less clear in the *Historia*, ed. Monfrin, p. 79): 'Et Abélard lui-même, avant de se réfugier à Saint-Denis, semble bien avoir tenté avec ses amis de se venger à son tour de l'affront reçu', 'Abélard et les milieux sociaux de son temps', pp. 107–131, here p. 120. The *Historia*, ed. Monfrin, p. 80, depicts scenes of public sympathy for a humbled Abelard rather than of mounting revenge.

<sup>54</sup> See *Histoire général de Paris. Cartulaire général de Paris . . .* by R. de Lasteyrie, I (Paris, 1887), nos. 174, 175 (both dated 1117). Of all the documents dating to Fulbert's time as subdeacon of Notre-Dame and issued from the chapter these two alone contain the names of two, not three, subdeacons.

<sup>55</sup> The latest edition is that of J. Reiners in *Der Nominalismus . . .* (cited at n. 3 above) pp. 63–80. On Roscelin see too R. W. Southern, *Saint Anselm and his Biographer* (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 77–82.

excursions into theology had been put under investigation at a council at Soissons and were also heavily criticized by Anselm of Bec.<sup>56</sup> Of Roscelin's writings, and of those of other contemporary philosophers in the schools, we still know very little indeed,<sup>57</sup> and perhaps through this and similar facts the next generation of masters after Roscelin has appeared to modern historians to show an undeserved degree of originality.<sup>58</sup> Abelard, in his surviving writings on logic, appears to us to be in constant debate with rather shadowy teachers, with William of Champeaux in Paris and with Ulger and Vasletus and Roscelin in the schools by the river Loire.<sup>59</sup> His criticisms are almost invariably destructive,<sup>60</sup> none the less he owed to some of these masters an incalculable, and never admitted, debt of stimulation. Roscelin's letter to Abelard is a rare and valuable exception to the paucity of the evidence we have on masters in the French schools before about 1120.

In writing this letter before the council of Soissons<sup>61</sup> Roscelin exhibits three moods in turn: controlled fury, earnest reasoning and unbridled slanderousness. Abelard had allegedly written to

<sup>56</sup> Anselm, *Epistola de incarnatione verbi*, ed. F. S. Schmitt, *S. Anselmi Cantuariensis archiepiscopi Opera omnia*, 2 (Edinburgh, 1946), pp. 21–3. Luscombe, 'St. Anselm and Abelard', *Anselm Studies*, 1 (1983), pp. 208–10.

<sup>57</sup> F. Picavet, *Roscelin: philosophe et théologien d'après la légende et d'après l'histoire* (Paris, 1911), pp. 139–41, printed a text entitled *Sententia de universalibus secundum magistrum R.* This had earlier been published by B. Hauréau in *Notices et Extraits de quelques manuscrits latins de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, 5 (Paris, 1892), pp. 325–8. Picavet (pp. 43–4) believed it to be written by a pupil of Roscelin. J. Marenbon has recently supported this suggestion, *Early Medieval Philosophy (480–1150). An Introduction* (London, 1983), pp. 134–5—and he has added the comment: 'Abelard perhaps learned more from his early master than he liked to acknowledge'. A letter by Walter of Honnecourt to Roscelin was published by G. Morin in *Revue bénédictine*, 22 (1905), pp. 172–5. And an epigram of Roscelin is printed in P. Jaffé, *Bibliotheca rerum Germanicarum*, 5 (Berlin, 1869), p. 187, n. 98. B. Geyer's brief account of Roscelin's teaching and career remains useful, *Die Patristische und Scholastische Philosophie*. F. Ueberwegs Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie, 2 (11th edn, 1927), pp. 206–9.

<sup>58</sup> J. Jolivet, *Arts du langage et théologie chez Abélard*. Etudes de philosophie médiévale, 57. 2nd edition (Paris, 1982), p. 338. Cf. Southern, *Saint Anselm* p. 78: 'the new secular masters . . . are one of the great new unchronicled phenomena of the time'.

<sup>59</sup> See Abelard, *Dialectica*, ed. de Rijk, introduction, pp. xix–xxi.

<sup>60</sup> In the *Dialectica* ed. de Rijk, pp. 554, l. 37–555, l. 9, Abelard rejects one of Roscelin's opinions on 'totum' and 'pars' as *insana*.

<sup>61</sup> For this date see D. Van den Eynde, 'Les écrits perdus d'Abélard', *Antonianum*, 37 (1962), pp. 467–80, here 468–9. Also Benton, 'Fraud, Fiction and Borrowing', p. 487; Luscombe, 'St. Anselm and Abelard', p. 208.

the canons of Tours saying that their church was a pit and that even in that Roscelin was a disgrace, for he was a condemned heretic who had insulted the great and the good such as Anselm of Canterbury and Robert of Arbrissel. In reply Roscelin says he will defend not himself but his fellow canons. In fact he defends only himself. To Abelard's indignities he makes no concessions: Abelard used to be promiscuous with his tail, he writes, but now that he has rightly lost it he has taken to pricking with his tongue like a poisonous snake.<sup>62</sup> On the other hand Roscelin can call on witnesses to vouch for his own good name; they are witnesses who are prepared to affirm his readiness to correct mistakes he may have made in teaching. He had not been condemned, he writes; wherever he goes, in Tours or in Loches where Abelard had once sat at his feet, in Besançon where he is a canon, or even in Rome itself, he is always welcomed and honoured.<sup>63</sup> As for Anselm and Robert, wise and holy though they be, they are not infallible.<sup>64</sup>

What Roscelin has to say about Anselm leads him into the second part of his letter.<sup>65</sup> Few topics dominate the landscape of medieval thought more than that of the omnipotence of God. In later centuries the nominalist party was to enlarge to the limit the horizon of what is possible to God; that school was to replace fixed laws of nature with varieties of possible worlds. But already by 1067 Peter Damian had claimed for God the kind of all-powerfulness which could alter the history of past events, which could restore virginity to a woman or undo the founding of the city of Rome.<sup>66</sup> Anselm had seen danger here, for such a God might do away with the Incarnation and might not be bound even to preserve truth.<sup>67</sup> Roscelin faced this problem and it is central to the development of Abelard's speculations also, but he rejected Anselm's argument that everything done by God, including the incarnation of Christ, is done for a necessary

<sup>62</sup> Reiners, p. 64.

<sup>63</sup> Reiners, p. 65.

<sup>64</sup> Reiners, p. 66.

<sup>65</sup> Reiners, pp. 67-77.

<sup>66</sup> Peter Damian, *Letter on the Omnipotence of God*, A. Cantin (ed.), *Sources chrétiennes*, 191 (Paris, 1972), e.g. 2 (pp. 386-90), 6 (pp. 406-10).

<sup>67</sup> Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, 2, 17, F. S. Schmitt (ed.), *S. Anselmi Opera omnia*, 2 (Edinburgh, 1946), pp. 122-6; also R. Roques in *Sources chrétiennes*, 91 (Paris, 1963), pp. 426-38.

<sup>68</sup> Reiners, pp. 67-8.

reason. God was completely free to choose how to act.<sup>68</sup> About that Abelard was to develop extensive doubt.<sup>69</sup>

Then Roscelin returns to personal abuse.<sup>70</sup> He seems to know facts: indeed he writes that the facts are known 'from Dan to Bersabee' (1 Kings 3:20). Abelard had betrayed the trust of the noble Fulbert, canon of the church of Paris; he had violated his brilliant niece, when she was entrusted to him for tuition, by teaching her the art of fornication. 'The God of revenge' (Psalm 93:1) justly removed from him the offending part of his body. His flight to Saint-Denis had been made easy by an indulgent abbot, and so he returned to teaching, using his earnings to support his mistress. This libel is linked to fact. Abelard did teach after his monastic profession around 1117-18 and probably continued to keep in touch with Heloise;<sup>71</sup> before this, according to the second letter to Heloise attributed to him in the collected correspondence, he admits having yielded to passion with her in the refectory in Argenteuil.<sup>72</sup> The close of Roscelin's letter contains the most biting criticism: Abelard is no longer a monk because he is now teaching; nor is he any longer a cleric or a layman. There is no name left for him, not even Peter. For a masculine name loses its meaning once its subject changes gender. As a house which loses its roof and its walls is no longer a house, so the name of a man who loses his masculinity no longer applies. And as Roscelin is attacking an incomplete man he will leave his letter incomplete also.

It had an awful sequel. Not the least of the calamities that loom so large in the *Historia* is Abelard's trial for heresy at Soissons in 1121. Before this happened Abelard wrote to the bishop and clergy of Paris to say, on the strength of a report by a student, that Roscelin was vomiting accusations over a work on

<sup>69</sup> Luscombe, 'St. Anselm and Abelard', pp. 208-10.

<sup>70</sup> Reiners, pp. 77-80. H. Silvestre, 'Pourquoi Roscelin n'est-il pas mentionné', pp. 218-24 draws attention to words and phrases in Roscelin's account of Abelard's affair with Heloise that are similar to those found in the *Historia calamitatum* written well over ten years later. See also Silvestre, 'L'idylle', pp. 176-7; 'Die Liebesgeschichte', pp. 140-1. These similarities do not convincingly prove that the *Historia* was forged. The accumulation of written evidence, which suggests that these incidents were much debated, was likely to result in the development of a common stock of expressions; verbal coincidences of this kind are hardly surprising. Abelard in any case would have remembered Roscelin's letter very well.

<sup>71</sup> On this date see Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', p. 56, n. 1.

<sup>72</sup> Letter 5, Muckle (ed.), 'The Personal Letters', p. 88; P.L. 178, 205C.

the Holy Trinity in which Abelard refuted the heresy for which Roscelin had been criticized earlier at Soissons. He therefore requests a meeting with Roscelin in the presence of other catholics.<sup>73</sup>

Abelard's letters to Tours and to Paris together with Roscelin's letter to him leave no doubt that their relationship lasted over twenty years and that their long-running disputes covered many issues. Abelard's condemnation in Soissons in 1121 was at least in part a sequel to Roscelin's own trial there in 1092. But he is never named in Abelard's treatise or even in the letter to the bishop. And these omissions have been overlooked by critics who, having noticed that Roscelin is named by Abelard in his *Dialectica*,<sup>74</sup> are puzzled by the lack of mention of him in the *Historia*.<sup>75</sup> Yet Abelard clearly wrote his treatise on the Trinity to refute Roscelin: 'Answer me, Abelard demands, you cunning dialectician, you wormlike sophist . . . How do you account to those who taught you, to whose traditions you are indebted . . .'<sup>76</sup> And so on. Abelard's authorship of the *Historia* is supported, not weakened, by its silences when these same silences are loudly echoed in his other works.

No doubt in appealing to the bishop and clergy of Paris Abelard hoped to obtain personal support. For the bishop was Gilbert, a former royal chancellor, who had earlier succeeded William of Champeaux as archdeacon. And it was he who had first attempted to establish Abelard in his own place in the school.<sup>77</sup> Gilbert had become bishop in 1116 and his archdeacons

<sup>73</sup> Letter 14, ed. Smits, pp. 279–80 and P.L. 178, 355–8. For comments on the letter see Smits, pp. 189–202. The *opusculum* is Abelard's *Theologia 'Summi boni'*, ed. H. Ostlender, *Peter Abaelards Theologia Summi Boni*. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und der Theologie des Mittelalters, XXXV. 2–3 (Münster, 1939). New edition by C. J. Mews, *Petri Abaelardi Opera Theologica*, 3. Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Mediaevalis, XIII (Turnhout, 1987), pp. 83–201. For the argument against Roscelin and the reaction to Abelard see Mews, pp. 41–6, 54–7; Luscombe, 'St. Anselm and Abelard', pp. 208–13.

<sup>74</sup> Abelard, *Dialectica*, ed. de Rijk, pp. 554, l. 37–555, l. 2. Note the comparison between *res/partes* and *domus/paries, tectum, fundamentum*; this corresponds to the close of Roscelin's letter to Abelard, ed. Reiners, p. 80, ll. 16–18.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Silvestre, 'Pourquoi Roscelin n'est-il pas mentionné', p. 221; Silvestre, 'L'idylle', pp. 176–7; 'Die Liebesgeschichte', pp. 140–1.

<sup>76</sup> *Theologia Summi boni*, II. 75, ed. Mews, p. 140. Cf. II. 76–7 (p. 140); also Mews, introduction, pp. 68–9 and 41–6. Mews notes (pp. 42–3) that in later versions of the *Theologia* these anonymous attacks on Roscelin are omitted altogether.

<sup>77</sup> Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', p. 63 and pp. 54–5. Cf. *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin p. 66, ll. 104–8 where Gilbert is not named.

then included his successor as royal chancellor, Stephen de Garlande.<sup>78</sup> We know that Fulbert was probably in disgrace.<sup>79</sup> Abelard must have calculated that support would be forthcoming. But if it did, it was not enough and his prospects in Paris were doomed.

The Benedictine abbey of the Paraclete lay far away in the diocese of Troyes, 8 km east of Nogent-sur-Seine, on the edges of Quincey and Saint-Aubin, and by the little stream of the Ardusson.

The site was occupied by Abelard in 1123 after he finally withdrew from the monastery of Saint-Denis.<sup>80</sup> There he built an oratory in honour of the Trinity but he changed the name to that of the Paraclete because—as he wrote—having come as a refugee lacking hope, he found there through the grace of God a little consolation.<sup>81</sup>

After his departure to take up the abbacy of Saint-Gildas de Rhuys by about 1127, and after the closure of the nunnery of Argenteuil in 1129, Abelard gave this oratory to Heloise and to the nuns who were with her. On 28 November 1131 at Auxerre Pope Innocent II confirmed Heloise and the sisters in possession, and the privilege was renewed in 1135 at Pisa.<sup>82</sup> In 1133 Count Theobald of Troyes, always a sympathetic friend,<sup>83</sup> recorded

<sup>78</sup> Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', p. 64.

<sup>79</sup> See above p. 256.

<sup>80</sup> Benton, 'Fraud, fiction and borrowing', pp. 489–91 argued that the Paraclete was founded as a mixed or double monastery for men and women before 1121 on land belonging to the abbey of Saint-Denis. Later Benton in 'A reconsideration', pp. 46–7, withdrew his argument that the foundation was made before 1121 or even before 1129. Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', p. 57 gives 1123 as the year in which Abelard installed himself on the spot that was to become the Paraclete. See the *Historia Calamitatum*, p. 92, ll. 1038 *et seq.*

<sup>81</sup> Abelard defends his dedication against criticisms of its novelty in *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, pp. 94–7, ll. 1120–95. His argument is reminiscent of his statements in his *Theologia* of the appropriation to each divine person of a special though not exclusive 'operatio'.

<sup>82</sup> *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, pp. 98–100, ll. 1229–1320. On the privileges granted by Pope Innocent II see J. Barrow, C. Burnett & D. Luscombe, 'A Checklist of the Manuscripts containing the Writings of Peter Abelard and Heloise', *Revue d'Histoire des Textes*, 14–15 (1984–5), nos. 416, 417.

<sup>83</sup> Theobald is gratefully mentioned in the *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, p. 91, ll. 987–91, 996 *et. seq.* Theobald appears as a benefactor in Abelard's *Carmen ad Astralabium*, ed. J. M. A. Rubingh-Bosscher (Groningen, 1987), p. 157, ll. 921–2 and in a story concerning Abelard told by Peter the Chanter, *Verbum abbreviatum*, c.46 (P.L. 205, 146 BC).

grants made to the nuns by one Galo and his wife Adelaudis.<sup>84</sup> The sisters were exempted by King Louis VI in 1135 from payment of all royal customs and they were granted tithes by Archbishop Henry of Sens in 1136.<sup>85</sup> The convent thus survived the early, critical stages of foundation.<sup>86</sup>

In the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, growing numbers of women apparently entered the religious life. Robert of Arbrissel and Norbert of Prémontré both attracted women by their preaching. The Premonstratensian canons for a time accepted women into their order. Fontevraud also accepted women. The Cistercians, who grew very numerous, did not do so before the thirteenth century but many houses of women unofficially adopted Cistercian customs. Thus, Gilbert of Sempringham sought the aid of Bernard, the Cistercian abbot of Clairvaux, when drawing up a constitution for his new order of nuns. Indeed, when Alexander, bishop of Lincoln, founded the Gilbertine priory of Haverholme, he commented c.1139 that the nuns were following 'the life of the monks of Cîteaux as far as the strength of their sex allowed'.<sup>87</sup> The Paraclete too preferred

<sup>84</sup> Barrow, Burnett, Luscombe, 'A Checklist', no. 426; cf. no. 432 (dated 1146).

<sup>85</sup> Barrow, Burnett, Luscombe, 'A Checklist', nos. 427, 428. Other grants made in the lifetime of Heloise are listed here, nos. 418–25, 429–31, 433–41. On the buildings erected for the convent see R. Louis, 'Pierre Abélard et l'architecture monastique: l'abbaye du Paraclet, au diocèse de Troyes', *L'architecture monastique: Actes et travaux de la recherche franco-allemande des historiens d'art, 1951*, Numéro spécial du Bulletin des relations artistiques France-Allemagne (Mayence), mai, 1951, 8 pp. C. Waddell, *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary and the Paraclete Breviary*, Cistercian Liturgy Series, 3 (Gethsemani Abbey, Trappist, Kentucky 40051, 1985), 1, pp. 313–18, reconstructs the general plan of the Paraclete oratory and cloister quadrangle from the Book of Burials which survives in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale MS français, 14410, ff. 5r–28r, a late thirteenth-century MS which has been edited by Boutillier du Retail and Piétrésson de Saint-Aubin in *Obituaires de la Province de Sens, IV. Diocèses de Meaux et de Troyes* (Paris, 1923), pp. 388–403. Waddell draws attention to similarities between Cistercian abbey plans and that of the Paraclete.

<sup>86</sup> In Sermon 30, appealing for funds for the Paraclete, Abelard declared that the monastery was not founded by a rich man and was not well endowed. It was a new and tender plantation which needed the support of alms in order to grow, P.L. 178, 564–9, here 568D–9C.

<sup>87</sup> S. Thompson, 'The Problem of the Cistercian Nuns in the Twelfth and Early Thirteenth Centuries', in D. Baker (ed.), *Medieval Women*. (Oxford, 1978, Studies in Church History, Subsidia I), pp. 227–53, here p. 251. Also J. Burton, *The Yorkshire Nunneries in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries* (University of York, 1979, Borthwick Papers, 56), p. 4.



many Cistercian customs but not without being urged by Abelard to entertain his own ideas.

Already in the second letter of the collection Heloise complained that in the precarious early days of the new plantation Abelard had not offered comfort. Her complaint was largely personal. Here and again in letter 4 Heloise protests her unquenched love, sexual passion and religious insincerity.<sup>88</sup> She was troubled by Abelard's failure to comfort her either by word when they were together or by letter when they were apart. But the criticism included a more collective significance since Heloise's present community was Abelard's own foundation and as its head she wanted his guidance. She was anxious that one so well-read in spiritual literature, the sole creator of her community, should share his knowledge with his daughters.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>88</sup> For some other examples of erotic frankness on the part of men and women in religious life in the eleventh and twelfth centuries see Peter Dronke, *Women Writers of the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 84–92; also Luscombe, 'The Letters of Heloise and Abelard since "Cluny 1972"', in R. Thomas (ed.), *Petrus Abaelardus (1079–1142)* (Trier, 1980, *Trierer theologische Studien* 38), pp. 19–39, here pp. 21–2; and for 'model' letters see D. Schaller, 'Erotische und sexuelle Thematik in Musterbriefsammlungen des 12. Jahrhunderts', *Fälschungen im Mittelalter*, 5, pp. 63–77. Many examples of letters of this time dealing with love and sex, in as well as out of religious contexts, and ranging from the disgusting to the respectable, are brought together by H. M. Schaller, 'Scherz und Ernst in erfunden Briefen des Mittelalters', *Fälschungen im Mittelalter*, 5, pp. 79–94, here pp. 86–93.

<sup>89</sup> Heloise seems to have made two complaints here in Letter 2. One relates to her own earliest days as a nun immediately following her unwilling separation from Abelard: '... non mediocri admiratione nostrae tenera conversationis initia tua iam dudum oblivio movit quod, nec reverentia Dei, nec amore nostri nec sanctorum patrum exemplis admonitus fluctuantem me et iam diutino moerore confectam, vel sermone praesentem vel epistola absentem consolari temptaveris', Muckle (ed.), 'The Personal Letters', p. 70; P.L. 178, 184B; also: 'Dic unum si uales cur, post conversionem nostram quam tu solus facere decrevisti, in tantam tibi negligentiam atque oblivionem venerim, ut nec colloquio praesentis recreer, nec absentis epistola consoler', Muckle (ed.), 'The Personal Letters', p. 72; P.L. 178, 186B. The other arises from the need of nuns of the Paraclete for guidance from their founder: 'Huius quippe loci tu post Deum solus es fundator, solus huius oratorii constructor, solus huius congregationis aedificator ... Satis ex ipsa feminei sexus natura debilis est haec plantatio et infirma ... Quid tuae debeas attende ... Quot autem et quantos tractatus in doctrina vel exhortatione seu etiam consolatione sanctarum feminarum sancti patres consummaverint et quanta eos diligentia composuerint, tua melius excellentia quam nostra parvitas novit'. Muckle (ed.), 'The Personal Letters', pp. 69–70; P.L. 178, 183C, 183D, 184A, 184B. C. Waddell, *The Paraclete Statutes. Institutiones nostrae*. (Gethsemani Abbey, Trappist, Kentucky 40051, 1987, Cistercian Liturgy Series, 20), pp.

Already, then, in her first letter, personal though it is, Heloise draws attention to the task of providing a body of teaching and usages suitable for the new foundation. In reply Abelard indicated that if her experience at Argenteuil needed to be supplemented at the Paraclete with additional guidance and writings from himself, Heloise should write to him to say what she wanted.<sup>90</sup> In the event, in letter 6 Heloise presented her requests at length,<sup>91</sup> and in letters 7 and 8 Abelard met her requests and delivered to her both a treatise on religious women and a Rule.

The Rule is long, provocative and radical; in particular it emphasizes, as Heloise had encouraged Abelard to do, that the weaker sex needs the help of the stronger. Therefore a convent of women should be supported by a monastery of men, and the two communities should be united. As it was right for women to be

51-3 appears to emphasize the latter at the expense of the former; and so, it may be thought, do I on the pages which follow here, but for a highly perceptive analysis of Heloise's personal position see Brooke (cited in no. 44 above). H. Silvestre, 'L'idylle', pp. 173-4; 'Die Liebesgeschichte', pp. 136-7, draws attention to the problem of why, during the course of Abelard's visits to the Paraclete, Heloise failed to learn about the *Historia calamitatum*, which contains so much comment about herself. No definite answer is available, but the following sequence of developments (if true) would not entail 'une duplicité assez incroyable' nor put into question Abelard's authorship of the *Historia*: 1. Visits by Abelard to the Paraclete (Monfrin, p. 105, ll. 1477-88). 2. Composition of the *Historia*. 3. Heloise's chance discovery of the text of the *Historia* (letter 2). 4. Correspondence between Abelard and Heloise (letters 3-8).

<sup>90</sup> 'Quod si nunc tanta diligentia tuis provideas filiabus quanta tunc sororibus satis esse credimus ut iam omnino superfluum doctrinam vel exhortationem nostram arbitremur. Sin autem humilitati tue aliter videtur, et in iis etiam quae ad Deum pertinent magisterio nostro atque scriptis indiges, super his quae velis scribe mihi ut ad ipsam rescribam prout mihi Dominus annuerit'. Letter 3 ed. Muckle 'The Personal Letters', p. 73; P.L. 178, 187BC. Pace Silvestre, 'L'idylle', pp. 165 n. 15, 174-5, 'Die Liebesgeschichte', pp. 129 n. 15, 137-8, the *Historia* is not the only evidence of Heloise living at Argenteuil after separating from Abelard. See, in conjunction with the passage just cited, letters 4 and 5, ed. Muckle, 'The Personal Letters', pp. 79, 88; P.L. 178, 195A, 205C. Of arguments or evidence to support Silvestre's suggestion that Heloise lived with Astralabe in a private house, not at Argenteuil, I know none.

<sup>91</sup> Heloise's authorship of letter 6 was rejected by Benton, 'A reconsideration', pp. 41-52, here pp. 50-1. Benton's argument—which was (largely) that a quotation from Augustine, *De bono coniugali*, was lifted word for word, error for error, from Abelard's *Sic et non*, q. 130—is followed and supported by Silvestre, 'L'idylle', pp. 185-6, 'Die Liebesgeschichte', pp. 150-1. But it is well answered by P. Dronke, *Women Writers of the Middle Ages*, pp. 140-3. Dronke (here pp. 127-34) examines the letter closely.

governed by men, and wrong for women to be governed by a woman, the Rule develops the argument in favour of a male abbot presiding over the abbess and her sisters<sup>92</sup>

In a further communication, which is not included in the manuscripts containing the letter collection but which was addressed to the nuns of the Paraclete,<sup>93</sup> Abelard urged them to understand that the monastic ideal is an intellectual one. Here, as so often, he follows in the wake of St. Jerome who had been an advocate of scholarship to the celibate Christian ladies of fourth-century Rome. The Paraclete nuns likewise should devote themselves to the study of the Bible. And, as the Bible cannot be adequately understood in translation, they should become proficient—like Heloise—in the three languages of Scripture, namely Latin, Greek and Hebrew.<sup>94</sup> This address to the community may have been written as a letter, but (like a number of other letters by Abelard) it lacks a salutation and a valediction.<sup>95</sup> The suggestion has been made that it is the last part, accidentally detached, of the Rule.<sup>96</sup> For the text of the Rule ends abruptly with mention of Jerome, and of women he supervised, and this is the topic developed in the address. But the theme of the three

<sup>92</sup> Letter 8, T. P. McLaughlin (ed.), 'Abelard's Rule for Religious Women' in *Mediaeval Studies* 18 (1956), pp. 241–92, here p. 259; P.L. 178, 276AB. Cf. Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, p. 105, ll. 1464–88; also letter 6, J. T. Muckle (ed.), 'The Letter of Heloise on the Religious Life and Abaelard's First Reply', *Mediaeval Studies*, 17 (1955), pp. 240–81; here pp. 243 and 253; P.L. 178, 214C, 226BC.

<sup>93</sup> Ed. Smits, pp. 219–37; P. L. 178, 325A–336A. On the MS of the letter and its earlier edition in 1616 see Smits, pp. 49–69; and on its content see Smits, pp. 113–120.

<sup>94</sup> Ed. Smits, pp. 231, 233, ll. 299, 308–9, 360–4. Smits pp. 115–18 accepts the possibility that Heloise knew at least some Greek as well as Latin. For general tributes to Heloise's knowledge of letters see *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, p. 71, ll. 284–8, and Peter the Venerable, *ep.* 115 ed. G. Constable, *The Letters of Peter the Venerable* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), 1, at pp. 303–4.

<sup>95</sup> Van den Eynde, 'Chronologie des écrits d'Abélard à Héloïse', *Antonianum*, 37 (1962), pp. 337–49, here pp. 342–3 calls it 'une espèce de mémoire, que les éditions appellent *Epistola*, mais qui, en réalité, est une exhortation adressée directement aux soeurs'. The letter collection constitutes a united corpus and it offers little encouragement to expect to find any detached extra pieces. See Monfrin in the introduction to his edition of the *Historia calamitatum*, p. 60; also Monfrin, 'Le problème de l'authenticité de la correspondance d'Abélard et d'Héloïse', *Pierre Abélard—Pierre le Vénérable*, pp. 409–24, here pp. 416–17. Moreover, letter 9 is not the only 'letter' attributed to Abelard which lacks both a *salutatio* and a *valedictio*; others are letters 12 and 13.

<sup>96</sup> Waddell, *Institutiones*, pp. 55–6.

Biblical languages does not form a strong link with the Rule or with the earlier correspondence, which contains general exhortations to study Scripture, and indeed to follow Jerome, but not specifically to study Latin, Greek and Hebrew.<sup>97</sup> And to these general exhortations there was apparently a positive response. Letters 3 and 8 in the collected correspondence ask Heloise and the sisters to present their wants and requests about Scripture.<sup>98</sup> And the nuns apparently did so, for outside the collected correspondence we have a letter from Heloise saying that she and her sisters were indeed following his advice to study Scripture and were following the example that Jerome had given.<sup>99</sup> This is evidence, not conclusive but none the less suggestive, in favour of the presence at the Paraclete in Abelard's lifetime of a copy of at least letter 3 or letter 8. Heloise's letter is intimate in its address, as she calls Abelard *dilecte multis, sed dilectissime nobis* ('beloved by many but most loved by us'). But she is chiefly writing on behalf

<sup>97</sup> Van den Eynde, 'Chronologie', p. 342, notes that the theme of the study of the three Biblical languages in letter 9 does not form a strong link with letters 1–8 or with the Rule. (The Rule, which is not part of letter 8, only adopts the second personal plural at the very end and at the point where Jerome is introduced, ed. McLaughlin, p. 292; P.L. 178, 314B). It does, however, appear in the Pentecost Sermon, 18 (P.L. 178, 505–12) where reference is made to the sisters of the Paraclete (507B) and to their need to know the three languages in which the Scriptures were written (511–12). See D. Van den Eynde, 'Le recueil des sermons de Pierre Abélard', *Antonianum* 37 (1962), pp. 17–54.

<sup>98</sup> 'Sin . . . in iis etiam quae ad Deum pertinent magisterio nostro atque scriptis indiges, super his quae velis scribe mihi ut ad ipsam rescribam prout mihi Dominus annuerit', letter 3, Muckle (ed.), 'The Personal Letters', p. 73; P.L. 178, 187C. ' . . . imitamini saltem et amore et studio sanctarum litterarum beatas illas sancti Hieronymi discipulas Paulam et Eustochium quarum precipue rogatu tot voluminibus ecclesiam praedictus doctor illustravit', letter 8, McLaughlin (ed.), 'Abelard's Rule', p. 292; P.L. 178, 314B.

<sup>99</sup> Heloise's letter prefaces the *Problemata* (P.L. 178, 677–730, here 677–8). The letter lacks a salutation and valediction; the title given to the work in the MS of Simon de Plumetot is: *Solutiones Problematum heloissae per Petrum Abailardum* (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, lat. 14511, f. 18r. Cf. E. R. Smits, *Peter Abelard. Letters IX–XIV*, p. 51). The *Problemata* are not especially concerned with problems of translation or of language and Van den Eynde ('Chronologie', pp. 340–4) sees the *Problemata* (rather than letter 9) as the continuation of letters 2–8. Letter 9 and the *Problemata* survive and are found together in a single MS of the fifteenth century, Paris, Bibl. nat. lat. 14511; here the text of the *Problemata* precedes that of letter 9. See Barrow, Burnett, Luscombe, 'A Checklist', no. 146, p. 217. The date of the *Problemata* cannot be established with any certainty; C. Mews, 'On dating the works of Peter Abelard', *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge*, 51, Année 1985 (1986), pp. 73–134, here p. 132, suggests c.1137–8.

of his spiritual daughters, gathered together (as she writes) in his oratory, to present a petition, which consists of forty-two questions raised by the sisters in the course of their studies. To these mainly exegetical questions Abelard provided answers which were collected along with the original questions so as to make a small book prefaced by Heloise's letter. Since the Middle Ages it has borne the title, *Problems of Heloise*. Some questions reflect the personal preoccupations of Heloise as we find them expressed in the collected letters,<sup>100</sup> and the final question must surely have been placed last by Heloise herself since it enquires of Abelard whether it is ever sinful to do what one's lord commands. In letter 2 Abelard was reproached for commanding Heloise to go into the religious life, which she did, though not out of the love of God; the same question of how to live a life that has not been chosen, here included in the *Problems* sent by Heloise, lies at the heart of letter 2 and letter 4.<sup>101</sup>

Another reflection of the importance attached to study of Scripture is a letter accompanying Abelard's commentary on the opening of the Book of Genesis.<sup>102</sup> Again the tone is personal as he fondly addresses his sister Heloise, once dear in the world, now most dear in Christ. And he emphasizes that she has pressed him to send an exposition.<sup>103</sup> Two versions of the Commentary

<sup>100</sup> See P. Dronke, 'Heloise's *Problemata* and *Letters*: Some Questions of Form and Content', R. Thomas (ed.) *Petrus Abaelardus*, pp. 53-73, here pp. 60-1; Dronke, *Women Writers of the Middle Ages*, pp. 134-9. Dr Dronke draws attention especially to problems concerning guilt, repentance and consent.

<sup>101</sup> *Problema Heloissae XLII* (P.L. 178, 723-30). Heloise repeatedly writes of Abelard's command to her in her letters. See for example letter 3, Muckle (ed.), 'The Personal Letters', p. 72 ('non religionis devotio sed tua tantum pertraxit iussio'); letter 4, Muckle (ed.), 'The Personal Letters', p. 81 ('tua me ad religionis habitum iussio, non divina traxit dilectio'); P.L. 178, 186C, 197D. As Dronke writes ('Heloise's *Problemata*', p. 58): 'it is hard to read this final *Problema* without perceiving an echo of the anguished reproach Heloise had made Abelard in her second letter'. Cf. Dronke, *Women Writers of the Middle Ages*, p. 137.

<sup>102</sup> P.L. 178, 731-2. A new edition prepared by Mary Romig and revised for publication by myself and others is to appear in the series, *Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis*. Mews, 'On dating', pp. 118-20, suggests that the Commentary was written soon after 1132/3.

<sup>103</sup> 'Supplicando itaque postulas et postulando supplicas, soror Heloissa, in seculo quondam chara, nunc in Christo charissima quatenus expositionem horum tanto studiosius intendam quanto difficiliorem esse constat intelligentiam, et spiritaliter hoc tibi et filiabus tuis spiritalibus persolvam. Unde et rogantes vos rogo ut, quia me rogando ad hoc compellit, orando Deum mihi efficaciam impetretis . . . Quam nunc quidem expositionem ita me vestrarum instantia precum aggredi cognoscatis . . .', Letter-preface to the Commentary on the *Hexameron*, P.L. 178, 731C-2C.

survive, the one sent to Heloise being perhaps an elaboration of a shorter philosophical commentary on the six days of creation, now turned into a more spiritual work to suit a religious community.<sup>104</sup> Abelard weaves together moral and mystical exegesis within a literal, historical frame; the six days of creation become a mirror of the ages of the world and of the path of the human soul.<sup>105</sup>

In another letter to Heloise, Abelard writes that he is sending sermons, written at her request, for her and for her spiritual daughters gathered together, as he writes, in our oratory.<sup>106</sup> They follow the ordering of the feasts from the beginning of man's redemption. He mentions as a related fact that he has recently composed a book of hymns and sequences on her request.<sup>107</sup> The hymns survive as do three accompanying letters to Heloise,<sup>108</sup> addressed again as his sister, and to the other sisters at the Paraclete.<sup>109</sup> In the first of these he cites some lines from an

<sup>104</sup> For details see Barrow, Burnett, Luscombe, 'A Checklist', no. 286. In the forthcoming edition of the Commentary by M. Romig *et al.* (*Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis*), C. Burnett demonstrates the relationships between the shorter and the longer versions.

<sup>105</sup> E. Kearney, 'Peter Abelard as Biblical Commentator: A Study of the *Expositio in Hexaemeron*', R. Thomas (ed.), *Petrus Abaelardus*, pp. 199–215.

<sup>106</sup> PL. 178, 379–80. Again Abelard writes affectionately to Heloise, 'mihi quondam in saeculo chara, nunc in Christo charissima: in carne tunc uxor, nunc in spiritu soror, atque in professione sacri propositi consors'. For MSS of the sermons see Barrow, Burnett, Luscombe, 'A Checklist', no. 304—but we did not indicate that there is no MS extant with the letter-preface. L. J. Engels suggests that the collection of sermons was put together between 1129/30 and 1135/6, '*Attendite a falsis prophetis* (Ms. Colmar 128, ff. 152v/153v). Un texte de Pierre Abélard contre les Cisterciens retrouvé' in *Corona Gratiarum, Miscellanea* . . . E. Dekkers, Vol. 2 (Bruges and the Hague, 1975), pp. 195–228, here p. 221.

<sup>107</sup> 'Libello quodam hymnorum uel sequentiarum a me nuper precibus tuis consummato . . .' P.L. 178, 379–80. Mews, 'On dating', p. 131 suggests that the date of composition lies between about 1132 and 1137.

<sup>108</sup> In the Brussels MS., Bibliothèque royale, 10147–10158, ninety-six of the hymns are copied and are divided into three sections, each of these being introduced by its own preface in the form of a letter to Heloise. See Barrow, Burnett, Luscombe, 'A Checklist', nos. 23 and 291. Editions of the Paraclete hymnal are those of G. M. Dreves, *Petri Abaelardi Hymnarius Paraclitensis* (first published Paris, 1891, but reprinted at Bologna in 1970 with an introduction by G. Vecchi) and of J. Szövérfy, *Peter Abelard's Hymnarius Paraclitensis*, 2 vols. (Albany, N.Y. State, 1975). None of the editions is definitive. See C. Burnett, 'Notes on the Tradition of the Text of the *Hymnarius Paraclitensis* of Peter Abelard', *Scriptorium*, 38 (1984), pp. 295–302.

<sup>109</sup> 'Ad tuarum precum instantiam, soror mihi Heloisa, in saeculo quondam cara, nunc in Christo carissima . . .', Preface to the first *libellus* of hymns, Szövérfy (ed.), *Hymnarius*, Vol. 2, p. 9. ' . . . nostrum saepe ingeniolium,

otherwise unknown letter from Heloise giving her view that in the Latin and the Gallican church the use of hymns has become unsatisfactory.<sup>110</sup> Abelard replies by reinforcing her arguments in a manner which reminds us of his prologue to the *Sic et non*: he insists on the need to stick to authentic and accurate texts, not to use incorrect translations of the Psalms or hymns by uncertain authors or hymns with corrupt versification. So persuaded is he by Heloise that he has written his new hymns to fill the gaps caused by the defective traditions to which she has drawn attention.

His collection contains 133 newly written hymns. They are a striking collection and embrace much of salvation history.<sup>111</sup> Book one has Sunday and week-time hymns which celebrate the divine work of creation. They offer parallels with Abelard's Commentary on Genesis: the night hymns treat in detail the work of the six days of creation, the day hymns offer allegorical and moral interpretations of this work. Night and day respectively correspond to the obscurity of Old Testament history and to the understanding brought by the New Testament revelation.<sup>112</sup> One melody was composed for the night hymns and one

dilectissimae Christi filiae, multis precibus pulsavistis, addentes insuper, quibus de causis id necessarium vobis videatur, vestrae iam petitioni, prout Dominus adnerit, ex parte parvimus', Preface to *libellus* 2, ed. cit., Vol. 2, p. 81. '... sorores carissimae Christoque dicatae, quarum maxime precibus hoc opus aggressus sum', Preface to *libellus* 3, ed. cit., Vol. 2, p. 169. On these prefaces see Szövérfy, *Hymnarius*, Vol. 2, pp. 30–35.

<sup>110</sup> The length of the passage or passages cited from Heloise's lost letter is not altogether certain. Szövérfy, *Hymnarius*, Vol. 1, p. 9 includes less than three lines within inverted commas. Waddell, *Institutiones*, p. 53, states that 81 lines (in his forthcoming edition) are a 'direct quotation' but that they may contain the ideas of Abelard. The quotation seems to consist in fact of those sentences written in the first person plural and to present a '*rationem*' offered by Heloise (p. 9, l. 4 up); much of what follows summarizes (but does not quote) Heloise's further '*rationes*' (p. 13, l. 6 up).

<sup>111</sup> The best exposition of the plan of the hymn books is that of Szövérfy, *Hymnarius*, Vol. 1. Waddell, *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary and Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 1, pp. 357–9 points out the paucity of melodies provided by Abelard and the gaps in the hymnal which provides no hymns for the seasons of Advent or Lent or much of Passiontide.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. L. Engels, 'Abélard écrivain', *Peter Abelard. Proceedings of the International Conference, Louvain, May 10–12, 1971*. (Leuven, 1974, *Mediaevalia Lovaniensia*, Series I/Studia II), pp. 12–37, here p. 21. '... qui nocturni sunt, suarum opera feriarum contineant, diurni autem ipsorum operum allegoricam seu moralem expositionem tradant. Atque ita factum est, ut obscuritas historiae nocti, lux vero expositionis reservetur diei', Abelard, preface to *libellus* 2 of the Hymns, ed. Szövérfy, *Hymnarius*, Vol. 2, p. 81.

for those of the day.<sup>113</sup> Book two, the hymns for solemn feasts, is concerned with the mysteries of Redemption; book three with the court of heaven, with the Virgin, and with the saints in glory. There is evidence here of Abelard's personal experiences for he includes hymns in honour of the patrons of the monasteries he had lived in, Saint-Denis, Saint-Ayoul and Saint-Gildas.<sup>114</sup>

Now this additional correspondence between Heloise and Abelard—the letters accompanying and prefacing the books of hymns and sequences, the Biblical problems, the *Hexameron* commentary and the sermons—is closely connected to their collected correspondence—the eight letters which begin with the *Historia* and conclude with the Rule for the abbey. Both this correspondence and the collected correspondence must be considered together and cannot be considered apart, for they constitute in their entirety a single achievement, that of providing the abbey in effect with a corporate strategic and operational plan. It is precisely the evidence of the careful attempts to arrange and introduce the books of hymns, the Problems, the Commentary and the collection of eight letters beginning with the *Historia* and ending with the Rule, and it is precisely the contrast that these carefully mounted arrangements offer to the unstable texts of several of Abelard's principal works for other readers—his heavily revised *Theologiae*, the varying texts of the *Sententiae* from his 'school', the differing versions of his *Sic et non*—that suggests most strongly that the collected correspondence was prepared and arranged under the very eyes of those who proposed, composed and arranged the books of hymns and sermons and expositions for the Paraclete. The making of the collected correspondence cannot be reasonably detached from this wider, distinct activity on behalf of the abbey of the Paraclete.<sup>115</sup>

<sup>113</sup> Preface to *libellus 2*, Szövérfy (ed.), *Hymnarius*, Vol. 2, p. 81. The daytime melody alone has been identified; it has been edited on a number of occasions, e.g. by B. Stäblein, *Monumenta Monastica Medii Aevi. Hymnen (I)* (Kassel, 1956), pp. 324–5, Melody 590; and by L. Weinrich, 'Peter Abelard as Musician—I', *The Musical Quarterly*, 55 (1969), pp. 295–312, here p. 302.

<sup>114</sup> Nos. 105–6 (St. Denis), 107 (St. Ayoul), 119 (St. Gildas), Szövérfy (ed.), *Hymnarius*, Vol. 2, pp. 218–22, 241–3.

<sup>115</sup> If it be wondered whether I have overdrawn a contrast between carefully preserved 'stable' Paraclete texts and carelessly copied 'instable' school works, I should wish to add (i) that the survival of some hymns uniquely in the Chaumont MS, Bibliothèque municipale 31 does not detract from the fact that, in the incomplete Brussels MS, Bibliothèque royale 10147–10158, ninety-six hymns are arranged into books and introduced by three



Some have argued that the Paraclete adhered to statutes or Institutes of its devising, and that it set aside, or else failed ever to adopt, the Rule which concludes the correspondence of Heloise and Abelard.<sup>116</sup> These Institutes survive in one of the earliest MSS containing the letter collection, the Troyes MS which itself was copied either at the Paraclete or in one of its dependent houses.<sup>117</sup> They are followed in this MS by other texts of diverse origin but also all concerning convents of women.<sup>118</sup> As D. Van den Eynde showed, these documents form a collection which cannot have been formed before the 1230s. Their first part, however, which consists of the Institutes, aims to establish uniform observances for all the dependent houses of the Paraclete and may date from the lifetime of Heloise. It displays parallels with the Rule of Abelard but it is also manifestly in conflict with the Rule in requiring stricter practices of abstinence

prefaces addressed to the Paraclete; (ii) that while the prologue to the *Sic et Non* appears in a largely similar form in the different MSS, the texts which follow are very different from one MS to the other, and rival the texts of the *Theologia* and the *Sententiae* in their variety and even confusion. These works offer nightmares to their editors (as well as to their readers) on account of the varieties of corrected drafts, alternative arrangements and readings which the MSS present. See the following editions in particular: *Peter Abailard, Sic et Non: A Critical Edition* by B. B. Boyer & R. McKeon (Chicago, 1976–77); E. M. Buytaert (ed.) *Petri Abaelardi Opera theologica, II. Theologia Christiana; Theologia Scholarium (recensiones breviores)*, (Turnhout, 1969, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, XII); E. M. Buytaert & C. J. Mews (eds), *Petri Abaelardi Opera theologica, III. Theologia 'Summi boni'; Theologia 'Scholarium'* (Turnhout, 1987, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, XIII). A new edition of the *Sententiae* of Peter Abelard (by C. J. Mews *et al.* in the University of Sheffield) is in active preparation. On these *Sententiae* see C. J. Mews, 'The *Sententiae* of Peter Abelard', *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, 53 (1986), pp. 130–84. For information on the MSS of these works see Barrow, Burnett, Luscombe, 'A Checklist'.

<sup>116</sup> 'The most striking feature of the rule in the correspondence is that it was not followed at the Paraclete', wrote J. F. Benton, 'Fraud, fiction and borrowing', p. 474.

<sup>117</sup> The Troyes MS, Bibliothèque municipale 802 is described by Monfrin (ed.), *Historia calamitatum*, pp. 9–18; see here pp. 11–13. The Institutes follow the Rule in this MS; as Monfrin observes, 'ce texte peut apparaître comme un complément de la règle d'Abélard'.

<sup>118</sup> The *Institutes* are printed in P.L. 178, 313C–317B; the texts that follow (from 'Ex concilio Triburiensi, cap. 10' onwards) on columns 317B–326A are not strictly part of the Institutes. See D. Van den Eynde, 'En marge des écrits d'Abélard. Les "Excerpta ex regulis Paracletensis monasterii"', *Analecta Praemonstratensia*, 38 (1962), pp. 70–84. Also J. F. Benton, 'The Paraclete and the Council of Rouen of 1231', *Bulletin of Medieval Canon Law. New Series* 4 (1974), pp. 33–8.

and fasting. As it is questionable that Heloise would have quashed a Rule which she requested herself, having challenged on behalf of the weaker sex conventional practices regarding food and drink, Van den Eynde thought it possible that the Institutes were drawn up after the death of Heloise in 1164. Benton, however, dated the Institutes to the lifetime of Heloise; moreover he removed the Rule from the 1130s to the 1280s.<sup>119</sup> Very recently Fr. Chrysogonus Waddell has demonstrated the direct indebtedness of the Paraclete to the usages of the Cistercian order.<sup>120</sup> He writes: 'the author of *Institutiones nostrae* has utilized the abridged, thematically arranged version of the Cistercian General Chapter statutes as found in copies of the Order's customary dating before the recension of around 1147.'<sup>121</sup> He provides a transcription of the relevant material using the oldest MS, Trent, Biblioteca comunale, 1711; and he dates this MS to c.1136/40.<sup>122</sup> He rejects the possibility that the Paraclete borrowed statutes from the Norbertine or Premonstratensian nuns who themselves adopted Cistercian material.<sup>123</sup> On this basis he concludes that the Institutes 'almost certainly' date to an early period in the history of the convent during the lifetime of Heloise (d.1164).<sup>124</sup> As for the Rule of Abelard, that was one of the principal sources used in the Institutes. The Institutes are a very brief document summarizing characteristic features of the observances of the order of the Paraclete.<sup>125</sup> They incorporate material from this Rule on clothing, beds and bedding—material that does not come from other sources such as Benedict, Cîteaux or Prémontré.<sup>126</sup> But they set Abelard aright on matters of diet and authority: his most unconventional ideas,

<sup>119</sup> For the similarities and the differences see D. Van den Eynde, 'En marge des écrits d'Abélard: Les "Excerpta ex regulis Paracletensis monasterii"', *Analecta Praemonstratensia*, 38 (1962), pp. 70–84; Benton, 'Fraud, Fiction and Borrowing', pp. 503–6. Benton focused especially (pp. 474–8) upon two themes: the double monastery for men and women and the regulations governing abstinence.

<sup>120</sup> C. Waddell, *The Paraclete Statutes. Institutiones nostrae. Troyes, Bibliothèque Municipale Ms 802, ff. 89r–90v. Introduction, Edition, Commentary*. (Gethsemani Abbey, Trappist, Kentucky 40051, 1987, Cistercian Liturgy Series, 20).

<sup>121</sup> *The Paraclete Statutes*, p. 64. On these Cistercian statutes, see here pp. 62–3.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.* Appendix II, pp. li–lv.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 64–5.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 200–2.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 36–7. The edition occupies only pp. 9–15 here.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.* p. 87, 92–3, 199.

such as the allowance of meat and the provision of a male superior, are not taken up.<sup>127</sup>

If the *Institutes* are the work of Heloise, however, is it conceivable that, having begged for a Rule from Abelard and having received it, she would set it aside on such key points as these? The divergences are in fact largely on points proposed to Abelard by Heloise in letter 6. Abelard's Rule was not ignored at the Paraclete, but after being shorn of some notable eccentricities it served as one of the principal texts utilized when writing the *Institutes*.<sup>128</sup> And, as Fr. Waddell suggests, the redactor of these is probably Heloise who, far from subserviently following the Rule in every detail, freely adapted it,<sup>129</sup> but turned as well to Cîteaux and its practices for further ideas.<sup>130</sup> Many convents of the time adopted some Cistercian usages.<sup>131</sup> The Paraclete statutes particularly follow the general arrangement of the Cistercian statutes of c.1136.<sup>132</sup> If Fr. Waddell is right, the contention that the Paraclete or Heloise would not have repudiated the Rule of its founder, and that this Rule was not written by Abelard, loses its sting.

It matters more to the authenticity of this Rule and of the collected correspondence which precedes it than that other writings by Heloise and Abelard should be consistent with it than that the Paraclete rejected or abandoned part of it as unsuitable for use. For the many tensions within and between religious foundations both old and new, occasioned substantial debate and many changes of policy. In letter 12 of his uncollected correspondence Abelard entered a lively area of dispute and inveighed against an unnamed representative of the modern regular canons in defence of the greater dignity of the older monastic way of life.<sup>133</sup> For the Paraclete, we have direct evidence of a clash between Abelard's

<sup>127</sup> Ibid. pp. 94; 99–102.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid. pp. 32–6, 199. On p. 40 Fr. Waddell hesitates to describe either Abelard's Rule or the Cistercian *Instituta* as 'sources' of the Paraclete statutes since the author of the latter adapted rather than borrowed from these.

<sup>129</sup> *The Paraclete Statutes*, p. 202.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid. pp. 199–200,

<sup>131</sup> Ibid. pp. 64, 200.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid. pp. 67, 200.

<sup>133</sup> Letter 12, ed. Smits, pp. 257–69; P.L. 178, 343–52. No medieval MS of this letter survives and the document lacks a salutation and a valediction (Smits, pp. 100–1). In content it shows some similarities with the *Historia calamitatum*, letter 6 and letter 7, the sermon *Adtendite* and Sermon 33. For comments on letter 12 see Smits, pp. 153–72. Also, L. J. Engels, 'Adtendite a falsis prophetis', pp. 195–228 (e.g. pp. 205, 216, 217).

monastic principles and those of the Cistercians, and we can relate this disagreement to what might be seen as a 'Cistercianization' of the Paraclete as early as the early 1130s. For there survives a letter which Abelard wrote to Bernard of Clairvaux between about 1131 and 1135,<sup>134</sup> on the occasion of a criticism made by Bernard and reported by Heloise of the unusual wording of the Lord's Prayer in use in the Paraclete. From this letter we learn that Bernard had visited the Paraclete. And there is little doubt, in view of what Abelard wrote about the Lord's Prayer elsewhere in one of his sermons,<sup>135</sup> that this wording (supersubstantial bread as in Matthew 6:11, in place of daily bread as in Luke 11:3) was his considered preference and formed a part of his wider, unconventional prescriptions for the convent. Abelard responded with a counter attack on the unconventional usages of the Cistercian order.

In addition to this polemical letter we have other official evidence of the development of the Paraclete way of life. The Institutes and Abelard's Rule have been mentioned. But there is too the evidence of the Paraclete Ordinary or Ordinal, written in the late thirteenth century in Old French. This is preceded in the MS, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, français 14410, by the Paraclete Necrology or Book of Burials which gives obits and indicates burial sites; and it is followed by a directory or order of processions.<sup>136</sup> And finally we have the Breviary of the Paraclete

<sup>134</sup> Letter 10, ed. Smits, pp. 239–47. There are no medieval MSS of this letter, the earliest MS being c. 1600. This MS also contains other letters written by and to Abelard; see Smits, pp. 70–6. On the argument of the letter and on the light it sheds on the relationships between Abelard and Bernard see Smits, pp. 120–36. The sermon *Adtendite* (mentioned in the last note) includes another strong attack by Abelard on the Cistercians.

<sup>135</sup> Sermon 14. P.L. 178, 491 AC, 493 D–494 D. See Smits, p. 206, n. 33.

<sup>136</sup> Ed. C. Waddell, *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary* (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale Ms français 14410) and the *Paraclete Breviary* (Chaumont, Bibliothèque Municipale Ms 31), 3 vols in 5 parts (Gethsemani Abbey, Trappist, Kentucky, 1985, 1983, Cistercian Liturgy Series, 3–7). Vol. 1 (1985) contains an introduction and commentary; Vol. 2 (1983) contains an edition of the Ordinary. The order of processions is also edited there in Vol. 2 on pp. 112–24. The Book of Burials is not edited there but it is discussed in Vol. 1 on pp. xiv, 313–18, and was partly edited by A. Boutillier du Retail & P. Piétrisson de Saint-Aubin, *Recueil des historiens de la France. Obituaires de la province de Sens, IV, Diocèses de Meaux et de Troyes* (Paris, 1923), pp. 404–30. See J.-L. Lemaître, *Répertoire des documents nécrologiques français* (in *Recueil des historiens de la France. Obituaires*, 7), Vol. 1 (Paris, 1980), p. 520, no. 1096.

together with a Calendar which is found in a manuscript of the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century.<sup>137</sup>

These are late documents and they cannot tell us how rapidly the Paraclete first adopted Cistercian practices, but they do show how much and also how little of Abelard's own provision withstood the passage of time. Cistercian influences are dominant. Although Abelard had taken exception in letter 10 to one result of Bernard's visit to the Paraclete, he granted that it had been an occasion of supreme joy and encouragement to the sisters and to Heloise. Bernard had been received by them not like a man but like an angel.<sup>138</sup> Furthermore, within a decade of his strongly fought campaign in 1140 denouncing Abelard as a heretic, Bernard could still write to Pope Eugenius on behalf of Heloise herself.<sup>139</sup> Yet some of Abelard's written offerings did survive in use and much is revealed in these texts. Indeed, Abelard's preoccupation with the needs of the Paraclete seemingly had no limit. And Heloise's many requests were not in vain.

Especially worthy of mention are the clusters of antiphons, responsories and hymns apparently selected and arranged by Abelard for the offices of Holy Week and for the feast of the Transfiguration.<sup>140</sup> Also we find in the collects which invoke the graces of the Holy Spirit and in a collect concerning St. Philip the Deacon an idiosyncratic formula which is exactly the same as that found in the collects which Abelard, in letter 3 of the

<sup>137</sup> Chaumont, Bibliothèque municipale MS 31, ed. C. Waddell, *The Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 3 in 3 parts (Gethsemani Abbey, Trappist, Kentucky, 1983, Cistercian Liturgy Series, 5-7). On the MS see Barrow, Burnett, Luscombe, 'A Checklist', no. 196. On the Calendar see Waddell, *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary and Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 1, pp. 319-36.

<sup>138</sup> Ed. Smits, p. 239.

<sup>139</sup> Letter 278, *S. Bernardi Opera*, Vol. 8, ed. J. Leclercq & H. Rochais (Rome, 1977), p. 190. The letter is dated (*ibid.*) to 1150. A solemn privilege of Eugenius III, dated Châlons, 1 November 1147, confirmed to Heloise, abbess, and the sisters of the monastery of the Holy Spirit the possessions of their house. Barrow, Burnett, Luscombe, 'A Checklist', no. 420.

<sup>140</sup> C. Waddell, *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary and the Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 1, pp. 354-6, 361-3. Fr. Waddell has identified compositions which are not Cistercian and which are not known in non-Paraclete sources and which therefore appear to be probably by Abelard and part of his broader contributions to the development of the Paraclete offices. The identification of individual pieces cannot always be certain and much of the Paraclete office is Cistercian, but the general picture drawn by Fr. Waddell is plausible—and a very remarkable feat of dedicated and enthusiastic scholarship.

collection, asks the nuns to use when praying for himself.<sup>141</sup> From mentions in the Ordinal we see too that some of Abelard's sermons were still required to be read in the refectory.<sup>142</sup> Then again, in the selection of biblical lessons to be read on feastsdays, there is ample evidence that a *leconnier* or lectionary used by the nuns conformed to the prescriptions of the *maistre* or master as stated in his Rule.<sup>143</sup> Furthermore, though the Cistercian hymnal was used, Abelard's hymns were also sometimes incorporated.<sup>144</sup> Perhaps the reason why he had criticized the early Cistercian hymnal so freely in letter 10 was because it was already in use at the Paraclete.<sup>145</sup>

In his letter accompanying the gift of sermons Abelard mentions not only hymns but also sequences written at Heloise's request.<sup>146</sup> These have proved difficult to identify but two have

<sup>141</sup> See Waddell, *The Paraclete Statutes*, pp. 137–9, and *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary and the Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 1, pp. 377–9, 369–70 and pp. 353–4. The collects are edited by Waddell in *The Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 3C, pp. 401–2; Vol. 3B, p. 258 ll. 4–6. For letter 3 see Muckle, 'The Personal Letters', p. 76; P.L. 178, 191B–192A. Waddell, *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary and the Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 1, pp. 209–10 and 378, compares the close of Abelard's Sermon 31 on St. Stephen and 'other deacons who serve saintly widows' (P.L. 178, 573AB), and also the close of Sermon 32 on St. Stephen (P.L. 178, 582A), with the collect on the feast of St. Philip (*The Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 3B, p. 258, ll. 4–6).

<sup>142</sup> Waddell, *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary and the Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 1, pp. 383–7. Some of the references in the Ordinal are unmistakable e.g. 'Les sermons au mestre', 'les sermons maistre pierre', Waddell (ed.), *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary*, Vol. 2, pp. 24', ll. 12–13, 57', l. 20, 40', l. 13.

<sup>143</sup> Waddell, *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary and the Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 1, pp. 364–7. In his Rule Abelard enjoined the nuns to divide the Old and New Testaments into lessons so that comprehensive provision is made for the needs of the whole year, McLaughlin (ed.), 'Abelard's Rule', p. 263; P.L. 178, 281C. Waddell's attribution to Abelard himself of the biblical lessons indicated in the Ordinal is perhaps too definite, but the recommendation of the Rule is largely met in the Ordinal. The term 'leconnier' is used in the Ordinal, Waddell (ed.), *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary*, Vol. 2, pp. 64', l. 29, 68', l. 8.

<sup>144</sup> Waddell, *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary and the Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 1, pp. 356–9. Also, Waddell, *The Paraclete Statutes*, p. 141. Abelard's cycle of Sunday and weekday hymns did not survive in use at the Paraclete.

<sup>145</sup> Waddell, *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary and the Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 1, p. 358, has established that all thirty-four hymns of the first recension of the Cistercian hymnal before its revision c.1140/7 are found in the *Paraclete Breviary*. For Abelard's derision of Cistercian hymnody, following the criticism by Bernard of Clairvaux of the wording of the Lord's Prayer adopted at the Paraclete, see letter 10, ed. Smits, p. 245; P.L. 178, 339BC.

<sup>146</sup> P.L. 178, 379–80.

been found with their music<sup>147</sup> and a third has been suggested.<sup>148</sup> The most interesting of these is an Easter sequence, the *Epithalamica*, which echoes Abelard's Easter sermons and Easter hymns and which evokes the passage from the anguish of death to the joy of the morning of the Resurrection:

I did cry but now I laugh.  
At night I cried, at dawn I laughed.  
I cried in the night; I laughed in the morn.<sup>149</sup>

In these and in many other ways the Paraclete conserved in use elements of the founder's legacy.

Just as it seems to have been a mistake to consider that the Paraclete statutes discredit Abelard's authorship of the Rule, so too the differences between the way of life followed later at the Paraclete and the ostensible intentions of the founder do not provide a firm basis for doubting the genuineness of the latter. Many of the recommendations found in the Rule, and many of the hymns composed for the convent, did not survive in use; they may never have been adopted. On the other hand, Abelard's sermons and hymns and the collected correspondence including the Rule have proved a guide to the detection in the Paraclete office books of traces of these materials as well as of other related

<sup>147</sup> Waddell, *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary and the Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 1, pp. 347–50. The two identified sequences are an Easter sequence, *Epithalamica*, mentioned in the Ordinal, Waddell (ed.), *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary*, Vol. 2, p. 31', l. 12 and an All Souls sequence, *De profundis*, mentioned in the Ordinal, ed. cit., p. 100', l. 9. On these see Waddell, *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary and the Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 1, pp. 125–6 and pp. 298–9 respectively. The texts accompany Abelard's *Planctus* 'Dolorum solatium' in the Paris MS, Bibliothèque nationale, nouvelle acquisition latine 3126; on this MS see M. Huglo, 'Un nouveau prosaire nivernais', *Ephemerides liturgicae*, 71 (1957), pp. 3–30 and especially p. 18. The sequences were printed from other sources by G. Dreves and others in *Analecta Hymnica* (Leipzig, 1886–1922), 8: 45–46 and 10: 54.

<sup>148</sup> This is the St. John sequence, *Eya karissimi* mentioned in the Ordinal, Waddell, (ed.), *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary*, Vol. 2, p. 48', l. 27. See Waddell, *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary and the Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 1, pp. 183–4, 350. The text was printed from other sources in G. Dreves *et al.*, *Analecta Hymnica*, 44: 163.

<sup>149</sup> *Iam rideo, quae iam fleveram.*

*Nocte flevi, mane risi,  
Flevi nocte, risi mane.*

Waddell, *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary and the Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 1, p. 126.

biblical readings, antiphons and sequences.<sup>150</sup> These traces are relatively few in number; they are dwarfed by more powerful Cistercian influences during much of the liturgical year. But the fact that they can be found at all in later documents provides a strong reason for accepting that Abelard was the guiding spirit in the composition of a wide range of works addressed to the Paraclete, not excepting the Rule.

We may never know how or when or under whose eyes the collected correspondence was arranged and acquired the form which it has. There seems to be no necessity to believe that any of the pieces that are included in the collection were touched up or rewritten, lengthened or shortened, altered or forged, by a third party. The problem we are left with, and may never dispel, is that of knowing whether the letters were at first written for dispatch, separately and successively, with each provoking a reply and further correspondence until Abelard met Heloise's requests in full; or whether the collection arose from a compact between Heloise and Abelard jointly to share, compose and exchange their thoughts, experiences and principles in fictive correspondence. The boundary between fact and fiction, between reality and art, is not firm in either case and cannot be certainly drawn.

The late John Benton sampled evidence of a statistical sort based on word frequencies, use of quotations and patterns of phrasing. He was led by this to believe that an onus of argument

<sup>150</sup> Waddell, in *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary and the Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 1, pp. 389–90, has drawn attention to the special features, proper to the Paraclete, of the Holy Week offices in which antiphons and responses probably by Abelard and also his hymns figure prominently. See Waddell, *The Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 3A, pp. 122–40. Abelard's hymns continue to be in use especially during the octave of Easter and at Pentecost, *The Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 3A, pp. 141–9, 169–74. On Abelard's possible role in writing antiphons see Waddell, *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary and the Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 1, p. 362. As regards the sermons, Fr. Waddell suggests, on the basis of the audience addressed in the surviving sermons, that over sixteen of the thirty-five sermons by Abelard were addressed to the nuns of the Paraclete. Their contents covered the whole of salvation history from the Annunciation to Pentecost and they formed an arranged collection but have not been printed in this form in P.L. 178, 379–610 and only a few are mentioned in the Paraclete Ordinal. In addition Abelard's Sermon (or Sermons) for the feast of the Assumption was required to be read in the refectory (Sermon 26, P.L. 178, 539–46). See Waddell, *The Old French Paraclete Ordinary and the Paraclete Breviary*, Vol. 1, pp. 239, 384–7. The fate of the sermons is analogous to that of Abelard's hymns: some survived in use, according to the evidence of the Paraclete Ordinal and Breviary; many did not.



now lies on those who favour dual authorship of the collected correspondence: similarities of vocabulary, erudition and style bind together texts supposedly written by a couple who markedly lacked opportunities for personal contact.<sup>151</sup> But Benton's arguments seem reversible: Heloise and Abelard did communicate with each other; their many shared ideas and phrases, carried forward from one letter to another, do nothing to make dual authorship impossible, or even unlikely, and do everything to suggest *correspondence*. Decisive proof of single authorship of the collected correspondence has no more been found than decisive proof of two distinctive prose styles, one for Abelard and another for Heloise. To take one example, the *cursus* or cadences found in the letters (including some of the uncollected ones) has led Dr Dronke to the belief that Heloise's epistolary style does differ to some degree from Abelard's because in her letters there is a 'frequent conjunction of the *tardus* and *velox* cadences with elaborate rhyme, both within sentences and at sentence-endings'.<sup>152</sup> Heloise even more than Abelard preferred slow to swift cadences but the differences between them are not so strong as to determine authorship.

There are questions here to raise of all the letters attributed to Heloise and Abelard, not simply of those found in the collected correspondence. It is as much of a problem to know in what circumstances the *Problemata* of Heloise—with their forty-two questions and answers—were first arranged and introduced, not by a letter from Abelard returning his replies but by a letter from Heloise to him. It is no less difficult to penetrate the circumstances of the composition, arrangement and dispatch of sermons to the Paraclete; unspecified sermons are introduced by a letter from Abelard in answer to Heloise's request to him to prepare sermons for the convent. By contrast, the plan and arrangement of the three books of hymns, each introduced by a letter by Abelard, and all, according to him, composed to meet the request of Heloise and her sisters, is clearer. These collections of problems, sermons and hymns suggest similarities with the collected

<sup>151</sup> J. F. Benton (†), 'The correspondence of Abelard and Heloise', *Fälschungen im Mittelalter*, 5, pp. 95–120.

<sup>152</sup> Peter Dronke, 'Heloise's *Problemata* and *Letters*: Some Questions of Form and Content', R. Thomas (ed.), *Petrus Abaelardus*, pp. 53–73, here p. 55. These arguments are amplified by Dronke, *Women Writers of the Middle Ages*, Chap. 5. An unpublished paper on this same subject written by Professor Tore Janson is mentioned by Benton, 'The Correspondence of Abelard and Heloise', p. 100 and n. 11.

correspondence: Heloise's letters in the collected correspondence also contain requests and letter 7 and the Rule also contain answers to her requests. Letter 6, in particular, raises so many questions as to bear comparison with the *Problemata*. Questions of motive, initiative and authorship, whenever they are raised of the collected correspondence, should be raised also of the remaining correspondence outside the collection, and the hypotheses proposed should at least be tested in the light of all the letters.

Abelard's trial and condemnation for heresy at the church council held in Sens in 1140 generated more letters. Attacks began in 1136 or 1137<sup>153</sup> and may be associated with an attempt by Abelard to return to teaching at Paris and possibly with the eclipse of his patron, Stephen de Garlande, on the death of King Louis VI on 1 August 1137.<sup>154</sup> Having left his Breton abbey for good shortly after 1132, he had perhaps tried then (or even earlier) to become abbot superior of the Paraclete. Whether we suppose that by 1136/7 he had failed to establish permanent residence there, had seen his proposals for the observances of the Paraclete diluted by the community, and had decided to try to regain a position in Paris but failed to do so; or whether we conjecture that he felt himself sufficiently free to combine and to intersperse with trips to the Paraclete brief performances as a teacher in 1136/7 and again in 1139/40,<sup>155</sup> it remains a fact that John of Salisbury declared that Abelard's return to Paris was disappointingly short<sup>156</sup> and that within a few years Bernard of Clairvaux was to criticize him not only as an abbot without monks, but also as a monk without a rule.<sup>157</sup> These acid remarks, which belittle the no longer resident abbot of an unruly Breton monastery, may possibly also conceal the knowledge that Abe-

<sup>153</sup> Walter of Mortagne, *Epistola ad Abaelardum*, ed. H. Ostlender (Bonn, 1929, *Florilegium patristicum*, 19), pp. 34-40. For the date see L. Ott, *Untersuchungen zur theologischer Briefliteratur der Frühscholastik* (Münster i.W., 1937, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und der Theologie des Mittelalters*, 34), pp. 240-1.

<sup>154</sup> Bautier, 'Paris au temps d'Abélard', p. 77.

<sup>155</sup> For Abelard's last stay in Paris before retiring to Cluny see the circumstantial comments of John of Salisbury, *Historia pontificalis*, ed. and trans. M. Chibnall, Nelson's (now Oxford) Medieval Texts (Edinburgh, 1956), pp. 63-4.

<sup>156</sup> John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon*, II. 10, ed. C. C. J. Webb (Oxford, 1929), p. 78.

<sup>157</sup> Bernard of Clairvaux, letters 193, 331, 332, *S. Bernardi Opera*, Vol. 8, ed. J. Leclercq and H. Rochais (Rome, 1977), pp. 44, 269, 271.

lard had failed to recreate at the Paraclete the community of male monastic scholars that he had once briefly had there before the coming of the sisters, and that in addition he no longer could hope to persuade others to accept his Rule. In response to his teaching in Paris, Walter of Mortagne addressed a letter to him raising a number of theological points of concern and asking Abelard to satisfy him that his concern was misplaced.<sup>158</sup> No direct reply has been found, but as the next few years passed, efforts were made by others to drive Abelard into retracting his errors. When these failed, very heavy pressure was brought to bear on the French bishops to have him formally silenced.<sup>159</sup>

Eventually nineteen accusations were brought to a council held at Sens.<sup>160</sup> Against such charges Abelard wrote furiously. He addressed an open letter—submissive in manner—to the church at large, admitting that like everyone he is fallible, formally disclaiming heresy, methodically declaring his agreement with the opposite of each of the charges.<sup>161</sup> The best copy of this much travelled letter is found in a MS which also contains the letter of Walter of Mortagne, and reasonably so, because Abelard took up specific points raised by Walter who had begun the hue and cry.<sup>162</sup>

For Bernard of Clairvaux was prepared a disastrously long letter of which only fragments now remain.<sup>163</sup> It represents an attempt to filibuster a complete answer to each of the charges one by one. In addition Abelard sent round to his supporters and

<sup>158</sup> Walter of Mortagne, *Epistola ad Abaelardum*, ed. Ostlender. On this letter see Ott, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 234–66.

<sup>159</sup> Luscombe, *The School of Peter Abelard*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, Second Series, Vol. 14 (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 105–10.

<sup>160</sup> C. J. Mews, 'The Lists of Heresies imputed to Peter Abelard', *Revue bénédictine*, 95 (1985), pp. 73–110.

<sup>161</sup> Abelard, *Confessio fidei 'universis'*, P.L. 178, 105–8; new edition by C. S. F. Burnett, 'Peter Abelard, *Confessio fidei "Universis"*: a critical edition of Abelard's reply to accusations of heresy', *Mediaeval Studies*, 48 (1986), pp. 111–38. See P. Zerbi, 'San Bernardo di Chiaravalle e il concilio di Sens', *Studi su S. Bernardo di Chiaravalle nell'ottavo centenario della canonizzazione. Convegno internazionale—Certoza di Firenze, novembre 1974* (Rome, 1975), pp. 49–73.

<sup>162</sup> Burnett, 'Peter Abelard, *Confessio fidei "Universis"*', pp. 117–19.

<sup>163</sup> Abelard, *Apologia contra Bernardum*, ed. E. M. Buytaert, *Petri Abaelardi Opera Theologica*, Vol. 1 (Turnhout, 1969, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, XI), pp. 341–68. Previously edited by P. Ruf and M. Grabmann, 'Ein neu aufgefundenes Bruchstück der Apologia Abaelards', *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philos.-hist. Abteilung*, 5 (1930).

sympathizers a letter in which again he blamed Bernard bitterly and asked his friends to rally to his support.<sup>164</sup>

Nor was Heloise overlooked. To her he addressed another Confession of faith, one altogether more personal than the open one addressed to all the faithful.<sup>165</sup> It survives in incomplete form embedded within a tract written by Berengar, a staunch supporter of Abelard who mercilessly and satirically derided Bernard and his machinations.<sup>166</sup> But the mood of Abelard's letter to Heloise was desperate. Once more he proclaims his belief that philosophy and logic need not separate one from Christ<sup>167</sup> but his old confidence was deserting him, as it did after Soissons in the 1120s.

Old age, infirmity, a religious calling and learning are four reasons offered by Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny, to Pope Innocent II to persuade him to permit Abelard, after his condemnation and also after his reconciliation with Bernard, to live out his last days at Cluny.<sup>168</sup> To Heloise a few years later

<sup>164</sup> Abelard, *Epistola contra Bernhardum abbatem*, ed. J. Leclercq in 'Etudes sur S. Bernard et le texte de ses écrits', *Analecta sacri ordinis cisterciensis*, 9 (1953), pp. 104-5; also ed. R. Klibansky in *Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies*, 5 (1961), pp. 1-27, here 6-7. See also J. Leclercq, 'Autour de la correspondance de S. Bernard, I. La lettre des évêques de France au sujet d'Abelard', *Sapientiae Doctrina. Mélanges de théologie et de littérature offerts à Dom Hildebrand Bascour* (Leuven, 1980), pp. 185-92. On Bernard's role in procuring the condemnation of Abelard see P. Zerbi, 'San Bernardo di Chiaravalle e il concilio di Sens'.

<sup>165</sup> Abelard, *Confessio fidei ad Heloissam*, P.L. 178, 375-8; C. S. F. Burnett, *Confessio fidei ad Heloissam—'Abelard's Last Letter to Heloise? A Discussion and Critical Edition of the Latin and Medieval French Versions'*, *Mittelalterliches Jahrbuch*, 21 (1986), pp. 147-55.

<sup>166</sup> Berengar, *Apologeticus*, P.L. 178, 1857-70, at 1862A (but printed at 375-8). New edition by R. M. Thomson, 'The Satirical Works of Berengar of Poitiers: An Edition with Introduction', *Mediaeval Studies*, 42 (1980), pp. 89-138, here pp. 117-18.

<sup>167</sup> 'Nolo sic esse philosophus ut recalcitrem Paulo. Nolo sic esse Aristoteles ut secludar a Christo', P.L. 178, 375C, or better in Thomson, 'Satirical Works', pp. 117-18.

<sup>168</sup> Letter 98, ed. Constable, Vol. 1, pp. 258-9. Cf. Constable's notes in Vol. 2, pp. 164-5; also P. Zerbi, 'Remarques sur l'*Epistola 98* de Pierre le Vénéral', *Pierre Abélard—Pierre le Vénéral*, pp. 215-34. (Reprinted with minor corrections under the title 'In Cluniaco vestra sibi perpetuam mansionem elegit. Petri Venerabilis *Epistola 98*' in Zerbi, *Tra Milano e Cluny. Momenti di vita e cultura ecclesiastica nel secolo XII* [Rome, 1978, Italia sacra, Studi e documenti di storia ecclesiastica, 28], pp. 373-95.) Peter the Venerable wrote two letters 'ad Petrum quendam scholasticum', nos. 9-10, ed. Constable, Vol. 1, pp. 14-17. They try to persuade one Peter to turn away from the schools

abbot Peter sent the master's body together with a public absolution and a promise to try to help Astralabe obtain a prebend.<sup>169</sup> Earlier, after Abelard's death, he wrote to her to boost her morale and to fire her with confidence in her role as a leader of women.<sup>170</sup> Abbot Peter knew Heloise well and understood the development of her life, as the whole letter shows. Even though Cluny, and Cluny's nunnery of Marcigny, did not possess her, he was sure that she, who had put behind herself the pleasures and trifles of this life, would prove to be a leader in the army of the Lord. Peter called to mind Deborah who inspired the Israelites. In this way Peter obliquely, and perhaps deliberately, countered Abelard's discouraging belief that a woman should not rule.<sup>171</sup>

*Postscript:* After correcting and returning the proofs of this lecture two further volumes have reached me from Fr Waddell and an opportunity has kindly been created for me to mention them: Chrysogonus Waddell, OCSO, *Hymn Collections from the Paraclete. Volume I: Introduction and Commentary. Volume II: Edition of Texts.* Cistercian Liturgy Series, 8 and 9 (Gethsemani Abbey, Trappist, Kentucky 40051, 1989 and 1987).

and from philosophy and to embrace the spiritual life. The identification of this Peter with Abelard is (as Constable, Vol. 2, pp. 101–2, notes) uncertain; it is challenged by Zerbi, 'Remarques', p. 216.

<sup>169</sup> Letter of Heloise to Peter the Venerable, among the Letters of Peter the Venerable, no. 167, ed. Constable, Vol. 1, pp. 400–1 (notes in Constable, Vol. 2, pp. 209–10); and Peter's reply, no. 168, ed. Constable, Vol. 1, pp. 401–2 (notes at Vol. 2, p. 210).

<sup>170</sup> Letter no. 115, ed. Constable, Vol. 1, pp. 303–8 (notes in Vol. 2, pp. 177–8). This letter is a reply to a lost letter from Heloise. The passages exhorting Heloise to show leadership as a woman are found on pp. 304–5; see especially p. 305: '... nec omnino apud mortales insolitum est feminas feminis principari nec ex toto inusitatum etiam praeliari, ipsos insuper uiros ad praelia comitari'. Peter the Venerable commends the examples especially of Penthesilea among the Amazons and of Deborah among the Jews; and he expresses the wish that he could speak with Heloise on this: 'Dulce michi esset diu tecum de huiusmodi protrahere sermonem, quia et famosa eruditione tua delector, et praedicata michi a multis religione tua longe magis allicior' (Vol. 1, pp. 305–6). There then follows Peter's unforgettable account of Abelard's humility as a monk.

<sup>171</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, p. 105, ll. 1464–76; Abelard, Rule, ed. McLaughlin, 'Abelard's Rule', p. 259. In letter 7, in the course of his encomium of holy women, Abelard briefly acknowledges Deborah (Judges 4:9) for compensating for the failings of men, Muckle (ed.) 'The Letter of Heloise on the Religious Life and Abelard's First Reply', *Mediaeval Studies*, 17 (1955) pp. 240–81, here p. 269; P.L. 178, 243D. Cf. Abelard, *Hymn*, 125, stanza 3, J. Szövérfy (ed.), *Peter Abelard's Hymnarius Paraclitensis*, 2, pp. 258–9.