

Architecture, Liturgy and Processions: Bishop Grosseteste's Lincoln and Bishop Poore's Salisbury

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This paper is concerned with alterations to the cathedral and city of Lincoln undertaken during the episcopate of Bishop Grosseteste (1235-53) compared to the development of the city and cathedral of Salisbury begun under Bishop Richard Poore (1217-28, and Bishop of Durham 1229-37), and how these modifications may relate to Grosseteste's written oeuvre as well as the processional, liturgical and administrative innovations of the period.

Introduction

Grosseteste's life from his birth in Suffolk (c.1170) to his death in 1253 corresponds to a period of significant change in the theological world and the urban topography of the middle ages. From around the time of Thomas-à-Becket's assassination in 1170 until the completion of Thomas Aquinas' *summa theologica* circa 1272 the world of theology was relatively open and diverse, but also occasionally dangerous. In England the former date represents the heightening of the rift between *sacerdotium et regnum* culminating in the papal interdict and the signing of Magna Carta in 1215—which itself led to several power struggles—and the latter, the formalisation of much Catholic theology which survived virtually intact until the Reformation. During this period, the newly condoned mendicant orders began to encroach upon the urban domain of the secular cathedrals that in turn were competing for the souls of the rural population with the fading claim of the old monastic orders. And, at the same time, all of these religious institutions were challenging the king's “sword of earthly power” within a feudal system stretched to the limit by the emerging artisan class congregating in the growing urban centres.

Different cities, overseen by different bishops and cathedral chapters dealt with these changes in different ways. In Lincoln it appears that the original relationship between the canons of the cathedral and king's representatives in the castle did not deteriorate, and as a result neither building was removed from the protection afforded by the old Upper City walls.¹ However, at the beginning of the thirteenth century in the diocese of Salisbury the cathedral, situated in the hill-fort of Old Sarum, was perceived as "... nothing less than the Ark of the Covenant in the Temple of Baal ..."² and as a consequence, the clerics left this royal defensive enclosure and built a completely new cathedral and city on land owned by the bishop in the valley to the south of the old site.

Although these changes to the urban environment in both cities appear dissimilar, they were not completely inconsistent. Indeed, during the thirteenth century both chapters compiled new liturgies—Lincoln's thirteenth-century *Consuetudinarium de divinis* written by one of Grosseteste's successors, Richard of Gravesend (1258-79) sometime after 1250 and Salisbury's *Consuetudinarium* written by Richard Poore (d.1237) sometime before 1220—which included new descriptions of various processions. Both chapters adapted their liturgy in the light of contemporary theological trends emerging from twelfth-century France introduced to the English discourse by Cardinal and Archbishop Stephen Langton (1150-1228), amongst others, who had studied in Paris under Peter the Chanter (1130-97).

¹ Lincoln cathedral was located within the Roman walls as a result of Archbishop Lanfranc's Council of London of 1075 where it was required that all cathedrals be located in towns.

² "Quid domini domus in castro nisi federis archa in templo Báálim." Line from Henry D'Avranches' poem written around the time of the new foundation. For a discussion on this source see Christian Frost, 'The Symbolic Move to New Sarum', *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine* (2005): pp. 155-64.

In Salisbury, Bishop Poore and canon Elias of Dereham (d.1245)—two of the most important members of the chapter responsible for the development of the new cathedral and the city—and Edmund of Abingdon (1174-1240)—the future archbishop of Canterbury and saint present in the role of Treasurer—were all educated at the University of Paris under the guidance of Stephen Langton and it appears that Langton helped shape their attitude to pastoral care as well as influence their ideas on the future role and form of the church within their diocese. Robert Grosseteste, although more difficult to place exactly in Paris or Oxford prior to the early thirteenth century does display similar influences,³ evidenced by his early association with the Franciscans and his close relationship with his Oxford colleague Edmund of Abingdon who had been treasurer at Salisbury. We know little of Richard of Gravesend who wrote the new Consuetudinary for Lincoln either before or during his time as bishop, apart from the fact that he accompanied Grosseteste on his final trip to Lyon in 1250 suggesting close political, filial and spiritual allegiances.⁴

All of these scholars built their understanding of theology on Ambrose and Augustine, as well as more contemporary figures such as Peter Lombard (1100-60), but they were “...more moral or pastoral, rather than systematic theologians.”⁵ For example, Langton’s desire to adapt traditional forms of service in the light of sympathetic attitudes to the new social hierarchies emerging in the latter part of the twelfth century is evident in his sermon commenting upon Judges 3:31; recounting the story of how Samgar killed six hundred Philistines with a ploughshare while Ehud dispatched only one with a sword:

³ James McEvoy, *The Philosophy of Robert Grosseteste*, (Oxford: 1986), p. 7.

⁴ James McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste*, (Oxford: 2000), p. 43.

⁵ Maurice Powicke, *Stephen Langton*, (London: 1965), p.54.

See! This makes clear that the preacher should not always use polished, subtle preaching, like Ehud's sword, but sometimes a ploughshare, that is rustic exhortation. Very often a popular story is more effective than a polished, subtle phrase. Ehud killed one man only with a two edged sword, Samgar six hundred with a ploughshare; so, whereas the laity are easily converted by rude, unpolished preaching, a sermon to clerks will draw scarcely one of them from his error.⁶

Armed with this call to utilise “rustic exhortation” in their mission to convert the laity, it is likely that their attitude to places suitable for preaching would also have required reconsideration because these new ideas meant that traditional hierarchies of the spiritual and earthly realms established within the iconography of church buildings would no longer be adequate for every church rite; the cathedrals were home to the “sword of spiritual power” and were established centres for worship, learning and wealth, but the towns within which they were situated were far more diverse. Amidst displays of inconsistent legislature and extremes of wealth and poverty the urban topography also accommodated local mythologies, figures of popular faith and traditional rites that often pre-dated the Christian hegemony. Consequently, it was the conditions of these multi-valent settings that were open to the most radical realignments under the influence of contemporary theological ideas.

In Salisbury, this tendency is easier to recognise as the city and cathedral were built from scratch and historiographic portraits of Bishop Poore offer no challenge to the idea of a reforming cleric in the manner of Langton's metaphor. However, an evaluation of Lincoln is not so straightforward. In 1236, soon after Grosseteste's election as bishop, he wrote a

⁶ George Lacombe & Beryl Smalley, ‘Studies on the Commentaries of Cardinal Stephen Langton’, *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Âge*, 5 (1930), p. 173.

letter prohibiting the celebration of the *festum stultorum* or “Feast of Fools” practiced annually in the cathedral on the feast of Christ’s Circumcision.⁷ This proscription formed part of a greater campaign by the new bishop to cleanse the cathedral chapter of its apparent corruption and bad practice—described by Grosseteste in another letter of the same year.⁸ This apparent intolerance to local practices coupled with the fact that any changes implemented in Lincoln would be overlaid on an already established urban hierarchy makes any evaluation of the changes to the city much more difficult. It may be that this early turmoil set Grosseteste’s reforming agenda for the duration of his episcopate, making it more focussed on the control of his clergy rather than the alteration of the cathedral and the city. Or this may have been a brief period of reorientation followed by a different phase of rule, prioritising different themes. In order to evaluate these, and other, questions relating to the See of Lincoln under Grosseteste, alterations to the city and the cathedral which occurred at this time first need to be established in relation to the broader themes of his reforming agenda.

Grosseteste and the Cathedral

Following the comprehensive destruction of Lincoln Cathedral during an earthquake in April 1185, Bishop Hugh (1186-1200) and his successors began its reconstruction.⁹ By the time Grosseteste took control as bishop the whole eastern end, possibly including a couple of bays of the western transepts, was complete. During most of this period of the reconstruction Grosseteste had important roles elsewhere in the country. During the Papal

⁷ Robert Grosseteste, Letter XXXII, in Luard, H.R. (ed), *Roberti Grosseteste Epistolae*, Rolls Series 25, (London, 1861).

⁸ Grosseteste, Letter XXII.

⁹ Peter Draper, *The Formation of English Gothic: Architecture and Identity*, (London: 2006), p. 127.

Interdict (1208-13) he is likely to have been abroad studying theology, and soon after his return took up the post of Chancellor to the University of Oxford, later (from 1229) becoming the first lecturer to the Franciscans there. It is true that Oxford at this time was situated within the diocese of Lincoln and that he held a minor prebend in Lincoln,¹⁰ but it is difficult to imagine that the dean and chapter or the bishop would have sanctioned a major role for him in any work that was being planned for the cathedral.

Little remains of the eastern end of the cathedral dating from this period because, following Grosseteste's death in 1253, it was demolished to make way for the new square ended Angel Choir which was finally completed around 1280 (Figure 1). Foundations of this earlier polygonal apse were uncovered in 1885 and convincing reconstructions of the cathedral from this period have been made, notably by Peter Kidson in 1986 and John Baily in 1991. It is possible—based on Grosseteste's connection to the Franciscans and his familiarity with the writings of St Bernard of Clairvaux¹¹—that the implementation of the later square eastern end of the Angel Choir may have been planned during his episcopate. However, as it was built after his death during the episcopate of Richard of Gravesend (1258-79)—also responsible for the only surviving consuetudinary from Lincoln—it would be difficult now to determine his exact input and whether it was influenced by his

¹⁰ Grosseteste, Letter VIII.

¹¹ Folke Nordström, 'Peterborough, Lincoln, and the Science of Robert Grosseteste: A study in Thirteenth-Century Architecture and Iconography', *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (Dec., 1955): p. 247.

philosophical, cosmological or liturgical preferences or more directly as a response to contemporary architectural trends.¹²

With respect to the vaulting of St Hugh's Choir (Figure 9), influences on the structure and dating are also difficult to determine precisely. Although St Hugh's Choir—including the “crazy” vaulting which exhibits the first example of the use of a tierceron and ridge rib in England—is likely to have been completed many years before, in 1239 the main tower collapsed and destroyed sections of the choir vaults, as well as sections of the transepts, which were repaired during Grosseteste's episcopate.¹³ Nordström, building on Panofsky's attempts to link architecture and scholasticism, argues that much of the double arcading evident within the cathedral (and all of the St Hugh choir vaults) were replaced during this period and that as a consequence it is possible to link the strange asymmetrical vaults of the choir and the treatment of the walls with the bishop's ideas on optics and perspectival illusionism.¹⁴ Hendrix, writing in 2011, attempts to build on this theory, albeit less explicitly. However, this task is fraught with difficulty. Frankl, writing in 1962 discounts the theory of Grosseteste's involvement with the vault design suggesting that even if they were totally reconstructed during this period they were built as copies of the original vaults planned in 1192 and executed around 1210.¹⁵ In support of this theory

¹² For the influence of Cistercian architecture in England see Christian Frost, *Time Space and Order: The Making of Medieval Salisbury* (Oxford: 2009), p. 122, and Peter Draper, ‘Architecture and Liturgy’ in Jonathan Alexander and Paul Binski (eds), *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England 1200-1400*, (London: 1987), p. 85.

¹³ Peter Kidson, ‘St Hugh's Choir’, *Medieval Art and architecture at Lincoln Cathedral*, (Leeds: 1986), p. 38.

¹⁴ Nordström, ‘Peterborough, Lincoln, and the Science of Robert Grosseteste’, p. 266.

¹⁵ Paul Frankl, ‘Lincoln Cathedral’, *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (Mar., 1962), p. 34.

Binski suggests that the syncopated layered walls of Lincoln which are used to argue for the utilisation of optical theory in the construction are discounted by similar occurrences at Chichester and Guisborough from around 1190, arguing this is more of a;

... revitalisation of the Romanesque taste for interlocked arch forms ... brought about by renewed attention to the ultimately classical language of outdoing and inexpressibility (innumerability, boundlessness) encountered in the Latin encomiastic tradition.¹⁶

In sum, current opinion seems to favour the theory that the work on St Hugh's Choir following the collapse of the tower comprised mainly repairs (with perhaps the exception of the most western section of the vault).

Binski also agrees with Kidson and Frankl's earlier dating for the choir vaulting and therefore discounted Grosseteste's possible participation in this particular "stylistic" innovation at Lincoln. Throughout the thirteenth century there was much building activity at the cathedral but it is difficult to ascertain the exact dates of the conception as well as the construction of many of the elements. For example, even though for many the construction of the innovative tierceron vault of the nave vault can safely be placed within Grosseteste's episcopate (Figure 6),¹⁷ Frankl attributes the date of the design to be nearer 1220-25.¹⁸ Pevsner goes as far as to say that the nave was actually more or less complete by 1230-35¹⁹

¹⁶ Paul Binski, *Becket's Crown: Art and Imagination in England 1170-1300*, (London, 2004), p. 60.

¹⁷ Draper cites the donation of timber from 1235-1245 as the main argument for dating it thus. Draper, *The Formation of English Gothic*, p. 137

¹⁸ Paul Frankl, *Gothic Architecture*, revised by P. Crossley (London: 2000), p. 147 & 187.

¹⁹ Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire*, (London: 1989), p. 465

and also suggests that the date of the crossing vault as seen now is from the fourteenth century, constructed following the enlargement of the tower.²⁰

The main west front was also completed following the collapse of the tower along with the southern entry to the cathedral into the western transept, the Galilee Porch c.1240-1250 (Figure 4).²¹ Pevsner, along with others, has argued that this new porch could have been built by Grosseteste to aggrandise, in architectural form, the bishop's visitation procession coming from his palace to the south. However, the location of this entry is very similar to the southern porch at Old Sarum (completed by Bishop Roger c.1138) which had a significant role in other processional rites; such as during the Palm Sunday Procession when it was the main portal used for the exit of the Relics and Sacrament during the service; or during the Rogation processions as the primary exit from the church.²² Both entrances are placed on the south side of their respective cathedrals facing the main body of the town. In Salisbury there is a similar significant entry to the cathedral but it is to the north rather than the south, facing the town but on the opposite side of the building from the bishop's palace. It is difficult to draw any conclusions from this small sample but it does mean that some aspects of the development of the cathedral during Grosseteste's episcopate could relate to liturgy as well as politics; the developments allowing for a greater symbolic representation of the processional liturgy in the fabric of the cathedral.

²⁰ Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire*, p. 458 & 469

²¹ But even here there are disagreements with David Stocker suggesting a date nearer 1255 for the Galilee Porch. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire*, p. 460.

²² This is also the case at Malmesbury but not at Wells.

However, the degree to which Grosseteste would have participated in the development of any aspect of the cathedral would also have been dependent on his relationship with the dean and chapter who administered many of the rites. Grosseteste was not their first choice for the post and it may be that they accepted him as a compromise candidate on the grounds that they thought his well-known work as a teacher and cosmologist would leave little time for him to interfere with the day to day running of the diocese and so leave them in charge of the See. They discovered to their cost that he was not as indifferent to the duties of the post as they had anticipated. His attitude to the See as a whole is well documented and his displeasure with the performance of the chapter, as well as many of the priests spread about his diocese, led to a feud that lasted for most of his episcopacy

In conclusion, according to much current scholarship, it appears that Grosseteste's potential role in the development of the cathedral is unclear but unlikely to have been significant. As Kidson points out:

... Grosseteste was *persona non grata* in his own cathedral. It is extremely unlikely that the canons of Lincoln circa 1240 had read Grosseteste on light and vision ... [and] would have done Grosseteste the recondite honour of placing over their heads an arrangement of ribs that would remind them forever of someone they cordially hated.²³

But even given this feud, what is the likelihood that he would have been interested in affecting the development of this most rarefied of buildings? Given his apparent theological focus on the pastoral care through "rustic exhortation" it is perhaps unlikely that Grosseteste himself would have countenanced more work on what was already a sumptuous

²³ Peter Kidson, 'Architectural History' in *A History of Lincoln Minster*, Dorothy Owen (ed), (London: 1994), p. 31.

and highly articulated place for worship. The suggestion that the Gallilee porch may have been added to support liturgical innovation in relation to the town may be, in the end, the strongest argument for Grosseteste's involvement in at least one part of the development of the cathedral fabric. Whether it was designed for the cathedral processions or for the bishop's own visitation rites—which were also processional in character—its creation on the threshold to the cathedral suggests that the relationship of the building to the city as manifested in the processions of the bishop and chapter may be, as in Salisbury, a major factor in the development of the urban layout along with the increasing importance of the mendicants—particularly the Franciscans—within new instances of public worship.

Grosseteste, the Franciscans and the city of Lincoln

Following Grosseteste's appointment as bishop of Lincoln he began a programme of visitations throughout his See, including the cathedral, to ascertain the state of his diocese. From the outset this policy was resisted by the dean and chapter—who administered many of these parishes—on the grounds that the day to day running of the diocese was their concern. A brief description, by Grosseteste, of the form of these visits reveals some of the key issues.

When I became a bishop I believed it to be necessary to be a shepherd of the souls committed to me, whose blood would be required of me at the Last Judgement unless I used all diligence in visiting them as Scripture requires.²⁴ After this I began to go about my diocese, into each of the rural deaneries, causing the clergy of each deanery to be summoned together at certain times in certain places, and warning the lay people to appear on the same days, for the confirmation of their children, to hear the word of God preached and to make their own confessions. When all

²⁴ McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste*, p. 56.

were assembled I myself preached the word of God to the clergy and a friar preacher or minor spoke to the laity and afterwards four friars heard confessions and assigned penances. When on that and the next day I had finished confirmation I and my clerks went on with inquiries, corrections, and reforms, as fitting for a visitation.²⁵

One can immediately picture from this fragment the image of the bishop arriving at rural parishes previously not troubled by outside interference. Many of the customs he would have observed, such as the blessing of bread, cakes and bacon—which included significant payments to the church and its attendants—had remained an important part of their local Easter festivals. Although it may have been because of these payments that the programme of construction at the cathedral had been able to continue for many years, it would appear that this sort of “corruption” of feasts was the issue that the canons wanted to conceal and Grosseteste wanted to “correct”. The sight of the bishop’s procession arriving at rural parishes with at least four Franciscan or Dominican Friars and possibly some other clerks must have been as shocking and unsettling for the unsuspecting villagers as it was for the local clerics, especially given the proto-inquisitorial character of his agenda.

In order to fulfil the requirements of these visitations, and the programme which underpins them, Grosseteste brought more friars to the diocese and, his reign as bishop saw a disproportionate increase in the number of friaries founded in Lincoln, building on an already well-established allocation (Figure 17). **Insert Figure 17. Plan of the city of Lincoln circa 1250 indicating the locations of the friaries.** This meant that although,

²⁵ Dorothy Owen, *Church and Society in Medieval Lincoln*, (Lincoln: 1971), p. 32. Original Latin in Maurice Powicke and Cheney (eds), *Councils and Synods with other Documents relating to the English Church II, 1205-1313*. Vol I, (Oxford: 1964), p. 265.

following the mid-thirteenth century, many more friaries were founded in England, Lincolnshire was already well provided for. (see table 1)

Table 1: The foundations of Dominican and Franciscan Friaries in relation to Grosseteste's time as a bishop²⁶

	Lincolnshire			England			Total
	Before 1235	Whilst Bishop	After 1253	Before 1235	Whilst Bishop	After 1253	
Dominican Friaries	2	4	2	10	18	32	60
Franciscan Friaries	5	4	3	24	25	32	81

Over the next centuries, following the implementation of the visitations, the religious landscape adapted further and the “administrative machine” fine-tuned by Grosseteste was to remain practically in the same form until the Reformation and beyond with the Franciscans often going on to support and participate in many of the surviving local customs and festivals.²⁷

Within Lincoln, the original grant of the land for the Franciscan friary adjacent to the guildhall had been confirmed by the king in 1231 but it was following Grosseteste's enthronement that the development of their site commenced in earnest—beginning with the occupation of the Guildhall itself in 1237.²⁸ This acquisition was accompanied by a building programme that appears to have included a large infirmary as well as a church. And, their success in the city under Grosseteste meant that they were in a position to

²⁶ Table based on figures in David Knowles and Neville Hadcock, *The Medieval Houses of England and Wales*. (Bristol: 1971).

²⁷ Owen, *Church and Society in Medieval Lincoln*, p. 20.

²⁸ Francis Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*, (Cambridge: 2008), p. 207.

expand further following his death where "... the original friary church was being replaced (probably by something larger) in the period between the late 1260's and the early 1280's."²⁹

The Dominican friary was established in 1238, also during the early years of Grosseteste's bishopric, and although their relationship with the city folk was relatively cordial, it seems that "the Dominicans, in some places and at certain times, were the least popular" due to their "combative and provocative behaviour."³⁰ However, this problem does not appear to have been the case with the other mendicants present in the city; the main conflict Grosseteste had to deal with was the disagreement he had with his own chapter, not problems with the Franciscans or the other orders, or their relationship with the city as a whole. In fact, it is likely that the arrival of the Franciscans improved his relationship with the people of the city because many of the friars brought in to strengthen the pastoral care of the community were far more adept at preaching to the masses than the clerics already in post throughout his diocese. Dorothy Owen writes that:

Grosseteste had insisted in his statutes that all parish priests were to know and expound frequently to their people the elements of the faith, and to explain the Gospels after the Divine Office was finished, but it seems probable that many of the parish priests of this time were incapable of such exposition. It was not until the friars were firmly established in the country that the sermon as a vehicle for the instruction of the layman became an established part of the life of the parish church.³¹

²⁹ David Stocker, 'The Remains of the Franciscan Friary in Lincoln: A Reassessment', *York Archaeological papers in honour of MW Barley*, (York: 1984), p. 137.

³⁰ Owen, *Church and Society in Medieval Lincoln*, p. 91.

³¹ Owen, *Church and Society in Medieval Lincoln*, p. 109.

In the same way that the Salisbury chapter of Richard Poore and Edmund Rich (Later archbishop and saint) looked to the sacramental teachings of Stephen Langton to bring their Christian message to the populace at large, Grosseteste and the Franciscans were clearly preaching to their worshippers much more effectively than previous regimes, engaging syncretically with many of the local festivals, not condemning them. From this evidence it appears that Grosseteste's dislike of many customs may have been more associated with the particular corruption of the clergy rather than the structure of the feasts as such.

Both at Salisbury and Lincoln the evidence for early settlement of the mendicants suggests that the reforming agenda of Langton *et al* was beginning to have an effect on preaching as well as the quality of the urban environment. Richard Poore, bishop of Salisbury from 1217, indicated his support for the mendicants by establishing a friary on land he gave to the Franciscans as early as 1228 (Figure 18).³² **Insert Figure 18. Plan of the city of Salisbury during the thirteenth century indicating the parish boundaries and the locations of the friaries** And Robert Grosseteste, who was the First Lector of theology of the Franciscan Convent in Oxford from around 1229, was a close ally of both the Franciscans and the Dominicans from well before his election as bishop of Lincoln in 1235. Grosseteste, Poore and Langton all operated within this challenging intellectual environment and although they all related to it in slightly different ways their support for the newly condoned mendicant orders, particularly the Franciscans, suggests some

³² W.H. Jones. *Fasti Ecclesiae Sarisberiensis* (1879), 50. From a contemporary account in *Sarum Charters and Documents*, ed. W.R. Jones and W.D. Macray (1891), 269.

continuity of thought. A description of Salisbury and the changes they underwent during their reconstruction of the city during this critical period offers an interesting comparison and a clearer insight into the possible implications these ideas may have had on the built environment of Lincoln.

Time and order in Salisbury in the early thirteenth century

The city of Salisbury, including the cathedral and the Close, was constructed on land owned by the bishop in one period from *circa* 1220 to *circa* 1270. The primary layout of the city, cathedral, Close and the three city churches were ordered with respect to the processional rites of the cathedral—particularly the Rogation processions which annually circumnavigated the city visiting the three city parish churches as well as the original foundation processions which began at Old Sarum Cathedral and ventured south onto the newly consecrated land (Figure 19).³³ **Insert Figure 19. Plan of the city of Salisbury showing the route of the third Rogation Procession.** The impact of these events on the layout of Salisbury—and other cities in general—is overlooked by most contemporary academics who have written on the subject because it is difficult to prove empirically. However, enough of the medieval plan of Salisbury still exists to allow an evaluation of this proposition and, coupled with contemporary documents that describe the form and content of the significant processions, a reasonably accurate topographical reconstruction of the events can be made.

The topographical relationships are first visible in the relationship to the old city. The original foundation of Old Sarum was established under Bishops Hereman and

³³ See Frost, *Time, Space and Order*.

Osmund from 1075 onwards and when moving to the new site, the thirteenth-century chapter wanted to honour their antecedents as well as the location of the original cathedral. This was done in part by transferring many of the numerological and geometrical relationships inherent from the cathedral at Old Sarum to the new site³⁴ but also by organising a significant ceremony to celebrate the translocation of the early bishops' remains to the new building. This early procession, along with the initial excursion to consecrate the land prior to the construction of the cathedral, seems to have played some part in the topographical and temporal orientation of the so called "grid iron" section of the urban plan. Later, the annual Rogation processions that left the cathedral Close and ventured into the new street layout to visit the three original city churches developed these relationships further. The placement of one of these churches, the Church of St Thomas-à-Becket, across the old north-south route to Harnham Bridge forms another interesting narrative, explicitly diverting the original path to Old Sarum, and resulted in the forging of a new connection with the city through the landscape. In orchestrating this, the founders appear to have been interested in establishing a new relationship orientated towards the superseded remains of the old city only insofar as the new foundation was to be identified with the memory of St Osmund. And, like the other relationships established, these connections were only made explicit during the processions, introducing critical themes relating to time as well as place into the urban realm. Following on from this recognition it appears likely that the themes set up by these processions would have continued into the Close and the cathedral offering a very different understanding of the hierarchy of medieval

³⁴ See Thomas Cocke and Peter Kidson, *Salisbury Cathedral – Perspectives on the Architectural History*, (London: 1993), pp. 37-91.

representation inside, as well as outside the buildings. If this is the case then it can be argued that the physical configurations of the city established a complex set of relationships that revealed the real extent of the temporal horizons open to the medieval burghers. This paper is not the place to set out this claim as it has been done elsewhere but it is worth noting that St Augustine's threefold explication of time which comprised the present of past things – *memoria*; the present of present things – *contuitus*; and the present of future things – *expectatio*, also resonates with the three Rogation processions preceding the feast of the Ascension, and their annual repetition added a different aspect to the temporality—linking themes related to history (the incarnation and foundation) and nature (creation and renewal) to those of eternity (enfolding the beginning and end of time).

In the following centuries, this natural, biblical and historical narrative underpinning the processional ordering of the city appears to have eventually become too articulated to remain contained within church ceremonial and, as a result, evolved into the Corpus Christi and mystery plays of the fourteenth century which became celebrations of civic pride as much as expressions of Christian devotion.

The Sarum Rite used at Salisbury has some similarities with the rites used at Lincoln which were derived from the rites used at Rouen and although the impact of these evolving processions on the fabric of Lincoln may be more difficult to determine than at Salisbury, because all of these “uses” utilised processions within the liturgy as a means of revealing aspects of temporal and topographical order, it is very likely that some traces may remain.

Processional Ordering and the Liturgy at Lincoln

There is not much evidence of the exact nature of all the processions at Lincoln because no complete *Processionale* survived the Reformation. However, the fact that it is recorded as being derived from Rouen³⁵ allows some conjecture as to its form in relation to other better documented processions—particularly those from Salisbury (Figure 20). **Insert Figure 20. Plan of the city of Rouen indicating the stations for the Palm Sunday Procession.** However, there a clear description of the thirteenth-century procession for Sundays and Feasts in Lincoln cathedral described in the *Liber Niger* written in the time of bishop Richard of Gravesend (1258-1279):

There will be first 3 clerks carrying three crosses preceded by a lesser clerk bearing the holy water and sprinkling it. In the second row will be the two candle bearers carrying candles alight upon a stand. Thirdly two incense bearers with thuribles in their hands, fourthly three little [lesser] clerks bearing relics. In the fifth place goes a sub-deacon bearing before his breast the text of the Gospels, its binding silvered or gilded and having a crucifix and Mary and John. Sixthly the deacon bearing the silver or gilt cross before him and in the seventh place goes the celebrant with his two servers.³⁶

This description bears striking resemblance to the woodcut illustrating the form for the procession at Christmas in Salisbury from the *Processionale ad Usum Insignis ac Praeclarae Ecclesiae Sarum*, edited by W.G. Henderson from the edition published in Rouen by Morin in 1508 (Figure 21). **Insert Figure 21. Woodcut indicating the format of the Christmas Day procession at Salisbury from *Processionale ad Usum Insignis ac***

³⁵ Christopher Wordsworth, *Notes on the Medieval Services in England, With and Index of Lincoln Ceremonies*, (London: 1898), p. 143.

³⁶ Owen, *Church and Society in Medieval Lincoln*, p. 107.

Praeclarae Ecclesiae Sarum, edited by. W.G. Henderson from the edition published in Rouen by Morin in 1508. The Liturgy from Rouen is extremely dynamic and there is some evidence that the liturgy from Lincoln was equally demonstrative, with even the workmen of Lincoln cathedral recorded as observing thirty seven feasts a year—not including the most significant twelve which surrounded Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. This theatrical liturgy would clearly have had an influence on aspects of the cathedral design and construction—as evidenced in the circular pieces of stone embedded in the cathedral pavement (similar to the Cosmati work in Rome at churches such as Santa Maria in Cosmedin) which may have indicated the different positions of the clergy during cathedral processions. However, the evidence cannot be assessed directly as these stones were destroyed in 1782 when the grave slabs in the cathedral were removed³⁷ (around the same time that similar vandalism was undertaken at Salisbury).³⁸ Beyond this apparent architectural stage blocking of the clergy the exact influence that the processional liturgy had on the fabric of the cathedral is again difficult to ascertain. Historians looking at the processions in Lincoln have often made the same errors in translation and interpretation as have been made in analysis of Salisbury. For example, they suggest that the *Gloria Laus et Honor* was sung over the west entrance³⁹ when in fact it must have been sung elsewhere—

³⁷ Albert Kendrick, *Lincoln Cathedral and See, History and description of its fabric and a list of Bishops*, (London: 1922), p. 91.

³⁸ Christopher Wordsworth, *Consuetudinarium Ecclesiae Lincolnensis tempore Richardi de Gravesend, Episcopi*, (Exeter: 1885), p. 91. James Wyatt rearranged most of the gravestones and demolished much of the original pavements at Salisbury in the early 1780s. See Anthony Dale, *James Wyatt*, (Oxford: 1956), p. 102ff.

³⁹ Owen, *A History of Lincoln Minster*, p. 118.

possibly at the western exit from the Close at the arch to Bailgate (*ad portam ballii*)⁴⁰ where palls or cloths were hung out—creating a similar staging to Rouen where the whole city was utilised as symbolic structure. They appear also to have misread the descriptions in the liturgy which clearly distinguish between church door (*ostia*) and Close gate (*porta*). This means that it is likely that, as in Salisbury, the Rogation processions left the cathedral through the southern portal, the Galilee Porch, on their way to a church in the city or the surrounding landscape (Figure 22).⁴¹ **Insert Figure 22. Plan of the Cathedral and Close at Lincoln circa 1250.**

In Salisbury, the desire to accommodate the growing urban population and their particular requirements had a significant effect on the structure of the new city, and if Grosseteste began to adapt the traditional rogation rites at Lincoln as a response to similar conditions then the new southern portal would have been a timely and necessary addition to the ceremonial ordering of the cathedral. Although it is not possible to confirm these ceremonial enhancements the fact that, at Lincoln, the various mendicant orders had a growing role in the cathedral rites—including processions and visitations—supports this interpretation of the broadening of the festal calendar which may have suggested the need for an additional significant portal. This growing contribution of the mendicants to popular feasts is also confirmed by fourteenth-century reports where, for example, the Franciscan

⁴⁰ Wordsworth, *Consuetudinarium Ecclesiae Lincolnensis*, p. 91. Item dominica palmarum debent preparare sedes canonicorum ubicumque procession fiat et debent pendere pallam ad portam ballii uel alibi cantabitur a pueris, Gloria laus, p. 292.

⁴¹ Item die cinerum et per.v. dies apud locum stationis scilicet die palmarum et maiori letania et tribus diebus rogationum quando solempnes extra ecclesiam fiunt processiones.

convent at Boston was celebrated for its Corpus Christi plays, and at Grantham where the Franciscans went in front of the Corpus Christi Procession organised by the city guild of that name.⁴² This recognition of their role in the festal calendar of the city alongside their sacramental practice, which seems to have had some resonance with Grosseteste's own aims, does suggest that they may have been heavily supported by the bishop during his reign and well integrated into urban religious life.

Conclusion: Grosseteste and temporal order.

It is clear that the exact dating of particular parts of Lincoln cathedral is problematic and opinions vary widely as to the possible influence Grosseteste may have had on the construction. It is equally difficult to assess the impact he may have had on the fabric of city of Lincoln as well as the large areas of land of his See. As far as the cathedral is concerned, although there was substantial periods of construction during his episcopate, apart from the Galilee Porch, the work appears to be mainly repairs or the completion of fragments of building conceived before his elevation, the control of which may have been more under the guidance of the dean acting as what Gunther Bandmann called the "*Bauherr*."⁴³ However, it does seem likely that Grosseteste may have had some influence on the development of the broader environment of Lincoln even if the impact of this may have been more transient and intangible. This is equally difficult to prove but, given the antagonistic relationship between the dean, chapter and bishop, it would have led to a comfortable separation of respective activities; the dean and chapter developing their

⁴² Owen, *Church and Society in Medieval Lincoln*, p. 85ff.

⁴³ Gunther Bandmann, *Early Medieval Architecture as Bearer of Meaning*, (New York: 2005), p. 9.

church—the cathedral—and the bishop, his pastoral responsibilities in his diocese as a whole.

Within the city Grosseteste's influence would have been visible in the processional ordering emanating from the cathedral on feast days and at other times during his visitation processions to sites beyond the city limits. But it would also have been manifested in the increased visibility of the mendicant orders throughout the city. However, even here, the precise impact of these aspects of his regime on the urban structure of Lincoln is difficult to identify. In Lincoln as in Salisbury, beyond the well-documented, similar, sacramental beliefs of Grosseteste and Poore and their sympathy for the Franciscans, little is known of the particular influence of the mendicants in public places of the thirteenth century. We know they arrived in Salisbury and Lincoln soon after the Fourth Lateran Council officially sanctioned them and that in both cities the Franciscans settled just inside the city boundary whereas the Dominicans settled just outside. But as nothing remains of the friaries in Salisbury any assessment of the significance of the Franciscans and Dominicans in relation to the primary order of the city is challenging. And even though in Lincoln the participation of the friars in the cathedral ceremonies;⁴⁴ their documented residence at the bishop's palace; their role in the later production of Mystery plays; and their preaching all over town in the various markets, public places, and in the cathedral, indicates a high degree of integration, what residue this generated within the urban fabric is also difficult to ascertain and well beyond the scope of this paper.

⁴⁴ Friars were recorded preaching at the cathedral in 1306. Owen, *Church and Society in Medieval Lincoln*, p. 86.

Grosseteste could not completely re-plan the city to accentuate new “moralist” tendencies and therefore had to integrate any changes within an already well-established ceremonial and civic ground. In the first instance he achieved this by orchestrating the gift of the Guildhall to the Franciscans and then by supporting the expansion of their accommodation on the adjacent site, as well as by integrating them into the rites of visitation and pastoral care undertaken throughout his diocese. In relation to these concerns McEvoy describes his episcopate thus:

The central motif of his episcopate was the personal responsibility of the bishop for the pastoral care of every soul in his diocese, to be discharged through every means at his disposal: the education and appointment of worthy pastors; the conscientious correction of abuses; the pastoral visitation of the cathedral chapter, as well as the monasteries and the deaneries of his diocese; the encouragement and the pastoral employment of the mendicant orders of Dominicans and Franciscans; the publication of numerous pastoral writings; and the example of his own preaching.⁴⁵

This does not sound like a bishop who would be particularly focussed on developing an even more articulated iconography of light and geometry in his cathedral that already manifested many of these themes. In fact it suggests a bishop interested participating actively within the life of his See. Therefore, although it may be possible to argue that some of Grosseteste’s ideas are traceable in the fabric of Lincoln cathedral, it is in reality unlikely that Grosseteste had anything to do with them. Indeed, given his apparent response to the conditions in which he discovered his diocese, it may be that his earlier work on optics and

⁴⁵ McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste*, p. 30.

light metaphysics were more influenced by gothic architecture elsewhere rather than the other way around.

However, what this portrait of Grosseteste, the city, and cathedral does indicate is that his apparent distaste for the Feast of Fools and his engagement with other active or “operative” aspects of his duties should perhaps be reassessed. The liturgy used at Lincoln would certainly have been familiar to Grosseteste from Rouen and elsewhere in France and he would have known that the form of the Feast of Fools comprised a social revolution in which power or impunity were temporarily conferred upon those ordinarily in subordinate positions. The idea of the feast was not to undermine the correct order of things but to reinforce them by showing that when order is inverted, chaos ensues, and through this anarchy people renew their faith in the orthodox church hierarchy. The fact that throughout Europe very little documentation survives which describes these subversive feasts—excepting the occasional trope or prose indicating their form or structure within breviaries and missals—cannot be cited as proof of lack of support from the Church at this time. It is likely that the variation and unpredictability of the activities associated with this type of structured anarchy were an important part of its dramaturgy but again, the exact impact this may have had—permanently or temporarily—on the fabric of the cathedral and the city of Lincoln is difficult to determine. Nevertheless, when Grosseteste witnessed the feast in the context of widespread abuse and disorder occurring at Lincoln, this reversal of power and status, played out within the familiar sacred environment of the cathedral and diocese, was clearly problematic.

Looked at in this broader cultural setting, Grosseteste’s intense displays of righteousness against his clergy are perhaps a little more complicated. They could be

symptomatic of a consistent belief in a strict ecclesiastical hierarchy where his role, and that of his chapter, was to serve and not be served by the community, where "... authority serves its subjects whose salvation, temporal and eternal, is its *raison d'être*."⁴⁶ But this does not necessarily discount the celebration of feasts that appear to subvert this hierarchy. We should perhaps view the inversions of order inherent in the Feast of Fools alongside the ritual form taken by his visitations, which mimicked the liturgical processions of the cathedral, because they all offered opportunities for mediation designed to make visible the hierarchy of which everyone was a part. Along with the other processions into the city and beyond, these events were the first stage of a development designed, amidst the new pastoral concerns of the age, to bring the activities of church to the changing conditions of the thirteenth-century city and make the relationship of God to the inhabitants of the city more evident.

If the temptation to prioritise different aspects of Grosseteste's output is resisted then one can perhaps see his broad interests in terms of both the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa* of his episcopacy. He seems to have understood the act of being a bishop as a form of *operatio* in all his duties, both active and passive, and hence perceived his work was close to God in its imitation of the original creative act:

For when, by the inspiration of the grace of God, we are made (*eficimur*) a new creature, and when we are helpers and co-workers with God in this, we are a kind of origin (*inicium*) of this

⁴⁶ McEvoy, *The Philosophy of Robert Grosseteste*, p. 31.

creation and we bear a very clear trace of resemblance to the operation (*operacionis*) that is creation.⁴⁷

For Grosseteste, *Operatio* was an “active principle” critical to his understanding of Creation and the mimetic aspects of ritual through which he articulated his ministry. As a consequence, Van Deusen suggests that:

Grosseteste’s discussion of *operatio* also develops a distinction within his own intellectual milieu, that is, a rational, multifaceted theory of performance which he carefully delineates from closely related concepts such as *actus*, *vita activa* and *productio*.

For Grosseteste, the mimetic qualities of the rituals undertaken within the cathedral and the city most clearly embodied the essential meaning of Creation and order—both in terms of time and place— through acts of “separation and conjunction ... accomplished through the process of performance.”⁴⁸

So it is not surprising then that even given Grosseteste’s proscription, there is record of the Feast of Fools still being practiced in Lincoln as late as 1390 some 150 years later. And beyond, throughout Europe these events were prevalent as late as the fifteenth century, referred to at the Council of Basle in 1435 where they were finally forbidden by the church

⁴⁷ Robert Grosseteste, *On the Six Days of Creation: A translation of the Hexaëmeron*, Translated by C.F.J. Martin, (Oxford, 1996), p. 247. Cum enim gracie Dei inspiracione efficitur nova creatura, cum simus in hoc Dei coadiutores et cooperatores, sumus quoddam huius creacionis inicium, et operacionis que creacio est gerimus manifestissimum imitatorium vestigium. Robert Grosseteste, *Hexaemeron*, Richard Dales (ed.), (Oxford, 1982), p. 242.

⁴⁸ Nancy Van Deusen, *Theology and Music at the Early University: The Case of Robert Grosseteste and Anonymous IV*, (Leiden: 1995), p. 108. Unde cum nos possimus ratione et intellectu a suo subiecto lucem dividere, multo fortius Deus potest hoc abinvicem nutu suo secundum actum existendi separare et post separacionem coniungere ... Ibi enim secundum vocem Psalmiste: *Vox Domini intercidebat flammam ignis*. Habebat enim ignis ille in rubo virtutem operantem a claritate, ardendi autem virtutem habuit vacantem. *Hexaëmeron*, ed Dales, p. 200.

as a whole. The persistence of the feast in Lincoln alongside many of Grosseteste's administrative innovations suggests that once the corrupt activities of the clergy had been suppressed Grosseteste, along with other later bishops, condoned the feast—or at least tolerated it—amidst a festive calendar rich in representational and mediative possibility. In the light of this observation, and coupled with the fact that Grosseteste's pastoral agenda would have involved the support and elaboration of this and many other feasts and processions throughout the diocese, in the end it may be the case that rather than any particular additions to the fabric of the cathedral and city, Grosseteste's legacy in Lincoln was more evident through the “intangible” world of the religious activity outside the cathedral, bringing new opportunities for mediation into a largely extant urban setting through the introduction of new processions and other forms of festal praxis.

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