Pierced Eyes and Poked Tongues: Sensory Violence in Romanesque Single Combats

Elizabeth A. Pugliano

Single combat is a common motif in Romanesque art. Between the mid-eleventh century and the first decades of the thirteenth century, representations of two human combatants engaged in head-to-head battle were frequently encountered, especially in northern Spain and southwestern France. Across Europe, over 200 examples still exist today. Despite this frequency, medieval sources rarely address the purpose or meaning of these combats. The few single combat images from this era that are identified by an accompanying text show that the motif in fact carried multiple meanings, sometimes referring to a specific combat, such as the legendary encounter between Roland and Ferragut represented on a capital of the south façade of the Palacio Real in Estella (Figure 1),[1] and other times bearing general associations with spiritual battle, as found in an equestrian combat located in the upper portion of the *Beatus* page of the *St Albans Psalter*.[2] The resultant problem for the larger body of Romanesque combat images is a variety of potential meanings and few contemporary sources to direct interpretation. In the absence of texts, one must look to other factors to help guide the sense and intent of the motif on a case-by-case basis. This paper examines one such factor: the apparent blinding of one of the participants.

The primary example in this investigation is an equestrian combat adorning a porch capital of the Castilian church of San Juan y Santa Basilisa in Rebolledo de la Torre (Figure 2). Produced *circa* 1186, this combat is relatively well preserved, and is among the most sensitively rendered examples of the motif from this era.[3] Two important elements pertaining to the issues of identity and interpretation are immediately evident. One is the difference in the shape of the shields the combatants hold. On the right, the warrior bears an oblong "kite shield" on which small circular bosses are visible. At left, his opponent carries a round shield ornamented with a starburst or floral design. In the twelfth century, before a systematized heraldry was widely adopted, arms and armor were tenuous means of personal identification.[4] However, a juxtaposition of kite shield and round shield is found in a number of Iberian equestrian combats from this era. A crucial example is the Roland capital at Estella where the accompanying inscription associates the round shield with the "Saracen" Ferragut and the kite shield with the Christian Roland. Following this precedent, the contrast of kite shield and round shield in equestrian combats is commonly taken to indicate a Christian/Muslim combat.[5] With its distinct shield types, the Rebolledo de la Torre combat can be tentatively interpreted in this sense.

Even more distinctive is the particular interaction between these opposed warriors. The right rider drives his lance into his opponent's eye, an injury that is both gruesome and precise (Figure 2). Although the left rider remains upright and shows no outward indication of the strike, which must have just occurred, the ensuing pain, fall and likely death are not difficult to conjure. By contrast, the gaping, blank holes

I wish to thank my advisor, Professor Deborah Kahn, for her sage advice and unwavering support, and my family, for their love and patience.

1 The main face of the capital shows an equestrian combat between two nearly identical armored warriors. An inscription on the abacus identifies the riders as the Carolingian hero Roland and the "Saracen giant" Ferragut. The capital is tentatively dated to *c.* 1165. See Therese Martin, "Sacred in Secular: Sculpture at the Romanesque Palaces of Estella and Huesca," in *Spanish Medieval Art: Recent Studies*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Tempe, AZ: The Arizona Center for Medieval & Renaissance Studies/ Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 104-13. The encounter is described in chapter XVII of the mid-twelfth century *Historia Karoli Magni*, popularly known as the *Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle*. See Kevin Poole, ed. and trans., *Chronicle of Pseudo-Turpin* (New York: Italica, 2014), 41-43.

2 Hildesheim, Domsbibliothek MS St Godehard 1. The manuscript was produced in England in the second quarter of the twelfth century. The equestrian combat appears on page 73. It is accompanied by a lengthy gloss beginning on page 72. Images, transcription and translation of the gloss are available on the official St Albans Psalter website: https://www.abdn.ac.uk/stalbanspsalter/english/.

3 The sculptures are dated on the basis of an inscription on the exterior of the window at the west end of the portico that also names the artist, Juan de Piasca. The inscriptions at Rebolledo de la Torre and their context are addressed in Alejandro García Morilla, "El conjunto epigráfico de Rebolledo de la Torre. Un ejemplo singular de actividad publicitaria a finales del siglo XII," *Medievalismo: Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales* 24 (2014): 111-21.

4 Maurice Keen, *Chivalry* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 125; and Michel Pastoureau, *L'art héraldique au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Seuil, 2009).

5 Margarita Ruiz Maldonado, *El caballo en la escultura románica de Castilla y León* (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 1986), 51-53.

punched into the right rider's enclosed helmet underscore the vulnerability of the eyes in otherwise extensively protective suits of arms.

The pierced eye depicted in the Rebolledo de la Torre capital is exceptional among Romanesque single combats.[6] Moreover, the contrast between the victor and the vanquished, and the manner of victory won through the emphatic piercing of the eye, suggests that this specific injury—blinding—was intentionally rendered and particularly meaningful for a twelfth-century audience. Certainly within the immediate context of medieval warfare, blinding possessed practical value. Numerous contemporary renderings of combat, which reflect the typical soldiers' kit of the era, show that the eyes were one of the few body parts to remain exposed in armor that covered head, body and, eventually, the face (Figures 3 and 4). It was logical to attack this weak point, and concern about the eyes is apparent in later helmet designs, which included narrower and angled eye slits, or, when fashioned for tournaments, closed the blind-side altogether to protect against injury.[7]

Yet, despite the practical incentive for a warrior to take aim at his opponent's eye, and the likelihood that this was a practice with which medieval viewers were familiar, the implication of blinding and the force with which it is rendered at Rebolledo de la Torre indicate that something more is at stake. The act of blinding here becomes the vehicle through which the frequently generic image of single combat is endowed with particular resonance. As both the act of blinding and the state of blindness were complex constructions in medieval thought,[8] consideration of attitudes toward vision and blindness in circulation by the late twelfth century provides a more directed context for the reading of this encounter.

Vision was a multifaceted component of the Christian theology that shaped medieval experience.[9] Sight itself was perceived as both important and dangerous. The primacy of this sense is attested in artworks such as the elaborate Anglo-Saxon metalwork known as the Fuller Brooch.[10] Here, Sight is given pride of place in the center. Taste, Touch, Smell and Hearing are subsidiary, surrounding and supporting the optical sensory experience. The brooch's composition is in line with the priority theologians afforded sight. Writing in the twelfth century, the Cluniac abbot Peter the Venerable ascribed to sight a primary role in the formulation of love and gratitude for Christ's sacrifice.[11] According to David Appleby, Peter's account of the Petrobrusian heresy of the early twelfth century first follows earlier champions of sight in quoting the ancient poet Horace, "What enters through the ears stirs the mind more feebly than what is placed before the trustworthy eyes," before continuing in his own words: "…because the matter was so great that human souls should be moved toward thinking of it, loving it, embracing it not feebly but remarkably, it was fitting and right that the memory of the humanity and death of Christ should be instilled not only by sound through the ears but indeed by sight through the eyes."[12]

Though Peter and his fellow commentators who drew on Horace's dictum subscribed to the trustworthiness of the eyes, at other times the notion was contested. Medieval eyes were susceptible not only to physical injury, but to misapprehension and misunderstanding as well. Such a view was expressed by no less an authority than Bernard of Clairvaux. Bernard considered the benefits of sight insufficient in the face of the potential "danger of concupiscence of the eye."[13] In twelfth-century thought, it seems, sight had both supporters and naysayers. Seeing was considered essential, important and informative to human experience, including spiritual experience and knowledge, but sight was also a limiting factor, prone to fault or, even worse, abuse.

As a condition predicated on the lack or loss of vision, and thereby intrinsically linked to sight, blindness, too, was multifaceted. In Christian thought, the moral or spiritual implications of blindness shifted according to circumstance. Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus, for instance, is marked with a period of blindness lasting three days.[14] As

6 A second example showing a lance to the eye might be an equestrian combat set under the roofline of the campanile of the cathedral of Santo Stefano in Pavia. The sculpture is less refined than at Rebolledo de la Torre, but the right rider extends his lance at eye level and appears to penetrate his adversary's visor and strike him in the area around the eye. However, while at Rebolledo de la Torre the lance is driven far into the helmet, at Pavia the tip of the lance just reaches the warrior's face and the point of penetration is not entirely certain. See Arthur Kingsley Porter, *Lombard Architecture*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1915-17), 2:235 and pl. 179, fig. 2; Porter, *Romanesque Sculpture of the Pilgrimage Roads*, (Boston: Marshall Jones, 1923; repr. New York: Hacker, 1969), 1:65.

7 Catherine Hanely, *War and Combat, 1150-1270* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell, 2003), 31-32.

8 Edward Wheatley, *Stumbling Blocks Before the Blind: Medieval Constructions of a Disability* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010).

9 A helpful introduction to issues of sight and vision in the middle ages is Cynthia Hahn, "Vision," in *A Companion to Medieval Art: Romanesque and Gothic in Northern Europe*, ed. Conrad Rudolph (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 44-64.

10 British Museum, registration number 1952,0404.1. Dated to the late ninth century, the brooch is the earliest known personification of the Five Senses in western art. Sight is positioned in the center with smaller figures representing Taste, Touch, Smell and Hearing located in surrounding quadrants. See *The Golden Age of Anglo-Saxon Art*, ed. J. Backhouse, D. H. Turner and L. Webster (London: The British Museum Press, 1984), 30-31, cat. 11.

11 David Appleby, "The Priority of Sight According to Peter the Venerable," *Mediaeval Studies* 60 (1998): 123-57.

12 Ibid., 123-25. Horace's remark appears in *Ars poetica* 180-82. Peter's passage appears in *Contra Petrobrusianos hereticos* 198.

13 Appleby, "The Priority of Sight," 155.

14 Acts 9:1-9.

Moshe Barasch has argued, blindness here is neutral. The return of vision at the end of this interim completes the conversion and emphasizes the revelation experienced in the movement from error (wrong vision) to a temporary state of nothingness (blindness) to truth (right vision).[15] Although Paul's blindness is connected with the transition from wrong faith to right faith, one frequently encounters in Christian discourse references to lacking or obstructed sight as a metaphor for ignorance or misdirection, especially in matters of belief. Christ's miraculous healing of the blind man, for instance, provides a literal exemplar in which "knowing" Christ, through contact with him, restores vision.[16] Elsewhere, the poetic language of 1 Corinthians 13:12—"We see now through a glass in a dark manner"—plays on the metaphorical connection between obscured vision and a lack of understanding of the true nature of God.

Perhaps the most widespread visual representation of these conceptual associations is the juxtaposition of *Ecclesia* and *Synagoga*. Originating in Carolingian representations of the Crucifixion in which *Synagoga* appeared as a witness, the contrast of Church and Synagogue became increasingly popular over the course of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, during which time *Synagoga* was transformed into a blind or blinded foil to the alert, triumphant persona of *Ecclesia*. In the course of this development, obscured sight or a refusal or inability to see became one of *Synagoga*'s characteristic attributes. She turns her head away from Christ, a crown slips over her eyes, or she wears a blindfold. All features were indicative of the mistaken, old faith she represented.[17]

The concept of blindness that emerges in the pairing of *Ecclesia-Synagoga* is particularly pertinent to the Rebolledo de la Torre combat in which the juxtaposition of kite shield and round shield implies another contrast of faiths, this time between Christian and Muslim. Just as *Synagoga* could not see and failed to understand Christ's true nature, so too might the blinding of a non-Christian enemy at Rebolledo de la Torre communicate the notion of spiritual error. Yet, while obscured vision was regularly associated with *Synagoga*, her blindness, conveyed through the turn of the figure's head, a fallen crown or often-diaphanous blindfold, was potentially reversible. The same cannot be said of the Romanesque combatant, whose injury is permanent, and likely fatal.

Additionally, the state or condition of physical blindness was also associated with evil and vice, particularly in relation to beings possessed of a heretical nature.[18] Antichrist, for instance, was said to have had deformed eyes, a trait Barasch has linked to medieval ideologies of blindness.[19] In images of Antichrist, his head is sometimes turned sharply to the side, rendering only one eye visible, perhaps implying his sensory deformity or semi-blindness.[20] With his one obliterated eye, the Rebolledo de la Torre rider also presents such asymmetry. It is notable, therefore, that contemporary texts also equated Muslims with Antichrist.[21] Such rhetoric created a broad context in which the concepts of "Antichrist" and "Saracen" were to some extent interchangeable, and in which the attributes associated with the former could extend to the latter.

In addition to Antichrist, blindness or impaired vision were at times associated with the personified Vices, as seen in an early twelfth-century illustrated version of Prudentius' *Psychomachia* (Figure 5). Here Faith is shown defeating Idolatry by plunging a lance into the Vice's right eye. A legend accompanying the figures proclaims: *"Fides praemit et foedit occulos"* (Faith advances and mutilates the eyes).

In this image, the blinding of Idolatry is configured as a state clearly opposed to that of Faith whose visible eye is unobstructed and open. This is the same contrast one perceives in the Rebolledo de la Torre combat where the haunting eye holes of the Christian rider's helmet starkly contrast his

15 Mosche Barasch, *Blindness: The History of a Mental Image in Western Thought* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 56-64.

16 John 9.

17 On the iconography of *Ecclesia* and *Synagoga*, see Léopold Asch, *L'Église et la Synagogue dans l'art médiéval: étude iconographique* (Colmar: Do Bentzinger, 2013); Jean-François Faü, *L'image des juifs dans l'art chrétien médiéval* (Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 2005); Sara Lipton, *Dark Mirror: The Medieval Origins of Anti-Jewish Iconography* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2014), 42-45; Nina Rowe, *The Jew, the Cathedral and the Medieval City: Synagoga and Ecclesia in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011); and Miri Rubin, "Ecclesia and Synagoga: The Changing Meanings of a Powerful Pair," in *Conflict and Religious Conversation in Latin Christendom: Studies in Honor of Ora Limor*, ed. Israel Jacob Yuval, Ram Ben-Shalom (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 55-86.

18 By the twelfth century, blinding had also become a consistent part of punitive practice, exercised as an alternative to capital punishment. See Klaus van Eikels, "Gendered Violence: Castration and Blinding as Punishment for Treason in Normandy and Anglo-Norman England," *Gender & History* 16 (2004): 588-602. In these cases, blinding or blindness were signs of criminal wrongdoing, which condemned the guilty party to a life of privation and darkness. Yet, the decision to blind rather than put to death held out the possibility of repentance and reform. On the development of blinding as punishment among Carolingian rulers and a signal of the ruler's righteous judgment, see Geneviève Bührer-Thierry, "'Just Anger' or 'Vengeful Anger'? The Punishment of Blinding in the Early Medieval West," in *Anger's Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages*, ed. Barbara Rosenwein (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 75-91. The implications of this aspect of blinding for the Rebolledo de la Torre combat depend on the use of blinding as a punitive measure in Christian/Muslim conflicts. This is an area in need of further study.

19 Barasch, *Blindness*, 73-74. From the early middle ages, Antichrist is described as having one bloodshot eye and one dark eye with two pupils, or one small and one large eye, or one shining eye. On the conception and representation of Antichrist in the middle ages, see also Richard K. Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A Study of Medieval Apocalypticism, Art, and Literature* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981); and Rosemary Muir Wright, *Art and Antichrist in Medieval Europe* (Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 1995).

20 Barasch, *Blindness*, 75.

21 Suzanne Conklin Akbari, *Idols in the East: European Representations of Islam and the Orient, 1100-1450* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University

opponent's now obliterated orifice. As Herbert Kessler has argued of the *Psychomachia* illustration, the attack on the eye, through which one beholds the idols of the false gods, debilitates one of the organs essential to pagan worship. It at once denies the mechanism for idolatry and connects blindness to the pagan who cannot see, does not understand, or refuses to embrace the true faith.[22] Alongside the rhetoric linking Saracens and Antichrist, there existed through much of the middle ages, especially in the late-eleventh, twelfth and early-thirteenth centuries, discourses which cast Muslims as idolaters, a perception many modern scholars have linked to crusading efforts and attempts to promote and justify violence against Muslims in both the Holy Land and the Iberian Peninsula.[23]

It is within this rhetorical and visual context that the sensory violence observed in the Rebolledo de la Torre combat was envisioned, and it is within this set of expectations and associations that this apparent act of blinding is best considered today. In the 1180s, when the church's porch was built, the ongoing Iberian Reconquest was a persistent concern, if only sporadically enacted.[24] While the shield types that distinguish the combatants suggest their respective Christian and non-Christian identities, and thus situate the encounter within the visual rhetoric of the Reconquest, the specific injury so emphatically rendered amplifies the symbolism. Through the sensory violence depicted, the combat transcends its historical basis. Rather, the moral and spiritual implications of blindness (especially error, vice and sin) seen elsewhere, such as the depiction of Faith triumphing over Idolatry in the British Library *Psychomachia*, suggest that here, too, blinding underscores both the sinister character of the vanquished rider, and the issues of faith and righteousness at the heart of the combat.

We can, moreover, be reasonably confident in the supposition that the concept of single combat as a test of faith was familiar to medieval audiences. The account that inspired the depiction of Roland's encounter with Ferragut at Estella describes their battle as a series of three combats interspersed with two truces. During the latter, the opponents engage in a theological debate, and it is decided that the victor will determine the true faith. The multiple stages of this encounter are suggested in the foot combat found on the lateral face of the capital alongside the central equestrian battle (Figure 6).[25] Although no such paratactic representation exists at Rebolledo de la Torre, the victory gained through the act of blinding reinforces the combat's doctrinal ramifications. *Fides praemit et foedit occulus*: the defender of the true faith advances and mutilates the eye, depriving his opponent of sight. Struck blind, the defeated rider's idolatry and falsehood are confirmed.

The singularity of this act of blinding within the corpus of Romanesque single combats, and the vigor with which it is represented here, prompt consideration of the practical, moral and theological aspects of sight and blindness in medieval thought. Attunement to the symbolic implications of blinding and blindness helps define a more precise understanding of this combat, beyond the applicable but unsatisfactorily general categories of "struggle" or "crusade." While the Rebolledo de la Torre combat undoubtedly has a place in the contemporary context of the Iberian Reconquest, the incorporation of the blinding of an opponent elevates the spiritual underpinnings of the military endeavor. In the last decades of the twelfth century, as military efforts in the peninsula sputtered haltingly along, and alliances between Christian and Muslim rulers remained all too common,[26] such a suggestive image must have served as a pointed reminder of the dogmatic import of Christian warfare.

The potent meanings of blinding and blindness revealed in this consideration of the Rebolledo de la Torre encounter alert us to the potential implications that particularized sensory violence might hold for other Romanesque combats. As a brief coda, let us consider a different kind of sensory attack, exemplified by a foot combat adorning a capital in the central apse of the late-twelfth century Cantabrian church of Santa Cruz de Castañeda in Socobio, in which the right combatant thrusts his weapon into his opponent's mouth or throat (Figure 7).[27]

As with vision and blindness and the sense organs of the eyes, the mouth—the mechanism for both speech and consumption—was, in the middle ages, a contested, highly

Press, 2009), 155-99; and Debra Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons and Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003).

22 Herbert L. Kessler, "Evil Eye(ing): Romanesque Art as a Shield of Faith," in *Romanesque Art and Thought in the Twelfth Century: Essays in Honor of Walter Cahn*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Princeton, NJ: Index of Christian Art with Penn State University Press, 2008), 116.

23 Michael Camille, *The Gothic Idol: Ideology and Image-Making in Medieval Art* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 129-64; Jean Flori, "La caricature de l'Islam dans l'occident medieval: Origine et signification de quelques stéréotypes concernant l'Islam," *Aevum* 66.2 (1992): 245-56; Kessler, "Evil Eye(ing)," 132; and John V. Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 105-34.

24 Paul M. Cobb, *The Race for Paradise: An Islamic History of the Crusades* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 151-55; Joseph F. O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1975), 234-45; O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 60-63; and Jonathan Phillips, *The Second Crusade: Extending the Frontiers of Christendom* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007).

25 Martin, "Sacred in Secular," 112-13.

26 Richard A. Fletcher, "Reconquest and Crusade in Spain *c.* 1050-1150," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 37 (1987): 35; O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade*, 61-63.

27 *Enciclopedia del Románico en Cantabria*, ed. M.Á. García Guinea, J.M. Pérez González (Aguilar de Campoo: Fund. Santa María la Real, Centro de Estudios del Románico, 2007), 2:985-1018. A similar example is an equestrian combat found in the cloister of Tarragona Cathedral in Catalonia, in which the victor appears to have pierced his opponent's

signified part of the body.[28] As the organ controlling speech, the mouth was associated with good and bad words, and further with piety or blasphemy.[29] Overabundant or illicit consumption also bore connections to rapacious sexual appetites.[30] Against such beliefs, violence to the mouth in representations of human combat, similar to blinding, might have underscored the heretical, idolatrous or otherwise sinful character of the vanquished party.

These associations are especially compelling in relation to the Socobio capital, where the central combat is flanked on the left by an embracing couple, and on the right by two figures wrestling.[31] This combat has been tentatively read as a judicial duel in defense of a woman's honor.[32] The guilty party is identified in defeat by the specific violence that brings about his fall. Along these same lines, we might also consider that both combatants in a judicial duel were required to swear an oath proclaiming the righteousness of their cause. Inevitably, one party perjured himself. Presentation of false testimony certainly constituted bad or erroneous speech, as the blow to the throat, or larynx, observed at Socobio, could equally convey.

The Rebolledo de la Torre and Socobio encounters both depict types of violence that must have at least occasionally occurred in medieval combat. Eyes, mouths and throats were vulnerable parts of the body, left exposed or minimally guarded in twelfth-century armor. Yet, the directed nature of the violence in these images suggests that they more than simply reflect reality. Rather, the moral and theological significance of blinding and blindness, and of ingestion and consumption, elevated these combats to visual commentaries on the spiritual detriment and heretical or sinful character of the defeated party. And these implications may not be confined to representations of combat. Together, these combats alert us to the potential larger significance of sensory violence in Romanesque imagery.

Boston University

shield with his lance, the tip of which seems to have been driven into the defeated rider's mouth. The cloister sculptures are dated to the last decade of the twelfth or first decade of the thirteenth century. See Marta Serrano Coll, "San Nicolás polifacético: el ciclo del santo obispo en el claustro catedralicio de Tarragona," *Codex Aquilarensis* 30 (2014): 227-29.

28 Camille, *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art* (New York: Reaktion Books, 1992), 63, 75; Camille, "Mouths and Meanings: Toward an Anti-Iconography of Medieval Art," in *Iconography at the Crossroads*, ed. Brendan Cassidy (Princeton, NJ: Index of Christian Art, 1993), 42-58.

29 Kessler, "Evil Eye(ing)," 116, for instance, argues that the mouth at times was conceived as one of "the organs of pagan worship…which had consumed blood sacrifices."

30 Exemplified in the British Library *Psychomachia* previously discussed, which, in addition to Faith blinding Idolatry, includes a depiction of Chastity defeating Lust by thrusting a lance through the latter's throat.

31 Representations of a foot combat in proximity to a female figure accompanied or embraced by a man appear elsewhere in Romanesque art, such as a capital from Palencia now in the Walters Art Museum. This capital has been linked to a trial by combat held to determine the honor of a woman accused of adultery. See Dorothy Glass, "Romanesque Sculpture in American Collections. V. Washington and Baltimore," *Gesta* 9 (1970), figs. 22a and 22b; *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*, ed. Stephen K. Scher (Providence, RI: Providence Museum of Art, RISD, 1969), 116-20.

32 Beatriz Mariño, "'In Palencia non ha batalla pro nulla re': El duelo de villanos en la iconografia románica del Camino de Santiago," *Compostellanum* 31 (1986): 354.

Figure 1. Combat between Roland and Ferragut, *c.* 1165, Palacio Real, Estella, Navarre, Spain. Photo credit: Elizabeth A. Pugliano.

Pierced Eyes and Poked Tongues: Sensory Violence in Romanesque Single Combats

Elizabeth A. Pugliano

Single combat is a common motif in Romanesque art. Between the mid-eleventh century and the first decades of the thirteenth century, representations of two human combatants engaged in head-to-head battle were frequently encountered, especially in northern Spain and southwestern France. Across Europe, over 200 examples still exist today. Despite this frequency, medieval sources rarely address the purpose or meaning of these combats. The few single combat images from this era that are identified by an accompanying text show that the motif in fact carried multiple meanings, sometimes referring to a specific combat, such as the legendary encounter between Roland and Ferragut represented on a capital of the south façade of the Palacio Real in Estella (Figure 1),[1] and other times bearing general associations with spiritual battle, as found in an equestrian combat located in the upper portion of the *Beatus* page of the *St Albans Psalter*.[2] The resultant problem for the larger body of Romanesque combat images is a variety of potential meanings and few contemporary sources to direct interpretation. In the absence of texts, one must look to other factors to help guide the sense and intent of the motif on a case-by-case basis. This paper examines one such factor: the apparent blinding of one of the participants.

The primary example in this investigation is an equestrian combat adorning a porch capital of the Castilian church of San Juan y Santa Basilisa in Rebolledo de la Torre (Figure 2). Produced *circa* 1186, this combat is relatively well preserved, and is among the most sensitively rendered examples of the motif from this era.[3] Two important elements pertaining to the issues of identity and interpretation are immediately evident. One is the difference in the shape of the shields the combatants hold. On the right, the warrior bears an oblong "kite shield" on which small circular bosses are visible. At left, his opponent carries a round shield ornamented with a starburst or floral design. In the twelfth century, before a systematized heraldry was widely adopted, arms and armor were tenuous means of personal identification.[4] However, a juxtaposition of kite shield and round shield is found in a number of Iberian equestrian combats from this era. A crucial example is the Roland capital at Estella where the accompanying inscription associates the round shield with the "Saracen" Ferragut and the kite shield with the Christian Roland. Following this precedent, the contrast of kite shield and round shield in equestrian combats is commonly taken to indicate a Christian/Muslim combat.[5] With its distinct shield types, the Rebolledo de la Torre combat can be tentatively interpreted in this sense.

Even more distinctive is the particular interaction between these opposed warriors. The right rider drives his lance into his opponent's eye, an injury that is both gruesome and precise (Figure 2). Although the left rider remains upright and shows no outward indication of the strike, which must have just occurred, the ensuing pain, fall and likely death are not difficult to conjure. By contrast, the gaping, blank holes

I wish to thank my advisor, Professor Deborah Kahn, for her sage advice and unwavering support, and my family, for their love and patience.

1 The main face of the capital shows an equestrian combat between two nearly identical armored warriors. An inscription on the abacus identifies the riders as the Carolingian hero Roland and the "Saracen giant" Ferragut. The capital is tentatively dated to *c.* 1165. See Therese Martin, "Sacred in Secular: Sculpture at the Romanesque Palaces of Estella and Huesca," in *Spanish Medieval Art: Recent Studies*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Tempe, AZ: The Arizona Center for Medieval & Renaissance Studies/ Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 104-13. The encounter is described in chapter XVII of the mid-twelfth century *Historia Karoli Magni*, popularly known as the *Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle*. See Kevin Poole, ed. and trans., *Chronicle of Pseudo-Turpin* (New York: Italica, 2014), 41-43.

2 Hildesheim, Domsbibliothek MS St Godehard 1. The manuscript was produced in England in the second quarter of the twelfth century. The equestrian combat appears on page 73. It is accompanied by a lengthy gloss beginning on page 72. Images, transcription and translation of the gloss are available on the official St Albans Psalter website: https://www.abdn.ac.uk/stalbanspsalter/english/.

3 The sculptures are dated on the basis of an inscription on the exterior of the window at the west end of the portico that also names the artist, Juan de Piasca. The inscriptions at Rebolledo de la Torre and their context are addressed in Alejandro García Morilla, "El conjunto epigráfico de Rebolledo de la Torre. Un ejemplo singular de actividad publicitaria a finales del siglo XII," *Medievalismo: Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales* 24 (2014): 111-21.

4 Maurice Keen, *Chivalry* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 125; and Michel Pastoureau, *L'art héraldique au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Seuil, 2009).

5 Margarita Ruiz Maldonado, *El caballo en la escultura románica de Castilla y León* (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 1986), 51-53.

punched into the right rider's enclosed helmet underscore the vulnerability of the eyes in otherwise extensively protective suits of arms.

The pierced eye depicted in the Rebolledo de la Torre capital is exceptional among Romanesque single combats.[6] Moreover, the contrast between the victor and the vanquished, and the manner of victory won through the emphatic piercing of the eye, suggests that this specific injury—blinding—was intentionally rendered and particularly meaningful for a twelfth-century audience. Certainly within the immediate context of medieval warfare, blinding possessed practical value. Numerous contemporary renderings of combat, which reflect the typical soldiers' kit of the era, show that the eyes were one of the few body parts to remain exposed in armor that covered head, body and, eventually, the face (Figures 3 and 4). It was logical to attack this weak point, and concern about the eyes is apparent in later helmet designs, which included narrower and angled eye slits, or, when fashioned for tournaments, closed the blind-side altogether to protect against injury.[7]

Yet, despite the practical incentive for a warrior to take aim at his opponent's eye, and the likelihood that this was a practice with which medieval viewers were familiar, the implication of blinding and the force with which it is rendered at Rebolledo de la Torre indicate that something more is at stake. The act of blinding here becomes the vehicle through which the frequently generic image of single combat is endowed with particular resonance. As both the act of blinding and the state of blindness were complex constructions in medieval thought,[8] consideration of attitudes toward vision and blindness in circulation by the late twelfth century provides a more directed context for the reading of this encounter.

Vision was a multifaceted component of the Christian theology that shaped medieval experience.[9] Sight itself was perceived as both important and dangerous. The primacy of this sense is attested in artworks such as the elaborate Anglo-Saxon metalwork known as the Fuller Brooch.[10] Here, Sight is given pride of place in the center. Taste, Touch, Smell and Hearing are subsidiary, surrounding and supporting the optical sensory experience. The brooch's composition is in line with the priority theologians afforded sight. Writing in the twelfth century, the Cluniac abbot Peter the Venerable ascribed to sight a primary role in the formulation of love and gratitude for Christ's sacrifice.[11] According to David Appleby, Peter's account of the Petrobrusian heresy of the early twelfth century first follows earlier champions of sight in quoting the ancient poet Horace, "What enters through the ears stirs the mind more feebly than what is placed before the trustworthy eyes," before continuing in his own words: "…because the matter was so great that human souls should be moved toward thinking of it, loving it, embracing it not feebly but remarkably, it was fitting and right that the memory of the humanity and death of Christ should be instilled not only by sound through the ears but indeed by sight through the eyes."[12]

Though Peter and his fellow commentators who drew on Horace's dictum subscribed to the trustworthiness of the eyes, at other times the notion was contested. Medieval eyes were susceptible not only to physical injury, but to misapprehension and misunderstanding as well. Such a view was expressed by no less an authority than Bernard of Clairvaux. Bernard considered the benefits of sight insufficient in the face of the potential "danger of concupiscence of the eye."[13] In twelfth-century thought, it seems, sight had both supporters and naysayers. Seeing was considered essential, important and informative to human experience, including spiritual experience and knowledge, but sight was also a limiting factor, prone to fault or, even worse, abuse.

As a condition predicated on the lack or loss of vision, and thereby intrinsically linked to sight, blindness, too, was multifaceted. In Christian thought, the moral or spiritual implications of blindness shifted according to circumstance. Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus, for instance, is marked with a period of blindness lasting three days.[14] As

6 A second example showing a lance to the eye might be an equestrian combat set under the roofline of the campanile of the cathedral of Santo Stefano in Pavia. The sculpture is less refined than at Rebolledo de la Torre, but the right rider extends his lance at eye level and appears to penetrate his adversary's visor and strike him in the area around the eye. However, while at Rebolledo de la Torre the lance is driven far into the helmet, at Pavia the tip of the lance just reaches the warrior's face and the point of penetration is not entirely certain. See Arthur Kingsley Porter, *Lombard Architecture*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1915-17), 2:235 and pl. 179, fig. 2; Porter, *Romanesque Sculpture of the Pilgrimage Roads*, (Boston: Marshall Jones, 1923; repr. New York: Hacker, 1969), 1:65.

7 Catherine Hanely, *War and Combat, 1150-1270* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell, 2003), 31-32.

8 Edward Wheatley, *Stumbling Blocks Before the Blind: Medieval Constructions of a Disability* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010).

9 A helpful introduction to issues of sight and vision in the middle ages is Cynthia Hahn, "Vision," in *A Companion to Medieval Art: Romanesque and Gothic in Northern Europe*, ed. Conrad Rudolph (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 44-64.

10 British Museum, registration number 1952,0404.1. Dated to the late ninth century, the brooch is the earliest known personification of the Five Senses in western art. Sight is positioned in the center with smaller figures representing Taste, Touch, Smell and Hearing located in surrounding quadrants. See *The Golden Age of Anglo-Saxon Art*, ed. J. Backhouse, D. H. Turner and L. Webster (London: The British Museum Press, 1984), 30-31, cat. 11.

11 David Appleby, "The Priority of Sight According to Peter the Venerable," *Mediaeval Studies* 60 (1998): 123-57.

12 Ibid., 123-25. Horace's remark appears in *Ars poetica* 180-82. Peter's passage appears in *Contra Petrobrusianos hereticos* 198.

13 Appleby, "The Priority of Sight," 155.

14 Acts 9:1-9.

Moshe Barasch has argued, blindness here is neutral. The return of vision at the end of this interim completes the conversion and emphasizes the revelation experienced in the movement from error (wrong vision) to a temporary state of nothingness (blindness) to truth (right vision).[15] Although Paul's blindness is connected with the transition from wrong faith to right faith, one frequently encounters in Christian discourse references to lacking or obstructed sight as a metaphor for ignorance or misdirection, especially in matters of belief. Christ's miraculous healing of the blind man, for instance, provides a literal exemplar in which "knowing" Christ, through contact with him, restores vision.[16] Elsewhere, the poetic language of 1 Corinthians 13:12—"We see now through a glass in a dark manner"—plays on the metaphorical connection between obscured vision and a lack of understanding of the true nature of God.

Perhaps the most widespread visual representation of these conceptual associations is the juxtaposition of *Ecclesia* and *Synagoga*. Originating in Carolingian representations of the Crucifixion in which *Synagoga* appeared as a witness, the contrast of Church and Synagogue became increasingly popular over the course of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, during which time *Synagoga* was transformed into a blind or blinded foil to the alert, triumphant persona of *Ecclesia*. In the course of this development, obscured sight or a refusal or inability to see became one of *Synagoga*'s characteristic attributes. She turns her head away from Christ, a crown slips over her eyes, or she wears a blindfold. All features were indicative of the mistaken, old faith she represented.[17]

The concept of blindness that emerges in the pairing of *Ecclesia-Synagoga* is particularly pertinent to the Rebolledo de la Torre combat in which the juxtaposition of kite shield and round shield implies another contrast of faiths, this time between Christian and Muslim. Just as *Synagoga* could not see and failed to understand Christ's true nature, so too might the blinding of a non-Christian enemy at Rebolledo de la Torre communicate the notion of spiritual error. Yet, while obscured vision was regularly associated with *Synagoga*, her blindness, conveyed through the turn of the figure's head, a fallen crown or often-diaphanous blindfold, was potentially reversible. The same cannot be said of the Romanesque combatant, whose injury is permanent, and likely fatal.

Additionally, the state or condition of physical blindness was also associated with evil and vice, particularly in relation to beings possessed of a heretical nature.[18] Antichrist, for instance, was said to have had deformed eyes, a trait Barasch has linked to medieval ideologies of blindness.[19] In images of Antichrist, his head is sometimes turned sharply to the side, rendering only one eye visible, perhaps implying his sensory deformity or semi-blindness.[20] With his one obliterated eye, the Rebolledo de la Torre rider also presents such asymmetry. It is notable, therefore, that contemporary texts also equated Muslims with Antichrist.[21] Such rhetoric created a broad context in which the concepts of "Antichrist" and "Saracen" were to some extent interchangeable, and in which the attributes associated with the former could extend to the latter.

In addition to Antichrist, blindness or impaired vision were at times associated with the personified Vices, as seen in an early twelfth-century illustrated version of Prudentius' *Psychomachia* (Figure 5). Here Faith is shown defeating Idolatry by plunging a lance into the Vice's right eye. A legend accompanying the figures proclaims: *"Fides praemit et foedit occulos"* (Faith advances and mutilates the eyes).

In this image, the blinding of Idolatry is configured as a state clearly opposed to that of Faith whose visible eye is unobstructed and open. This is the same contrast one perceives in the Rebolledo de la Torre combat where the haunting eye holes of the Christian rider's helmet starkly contrast his

15 Mosche Barasch, *Blindness: The History of a Mental Image in Western Thought* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 56-64.

16 John 9.

17 On the iconography of *Ecclesia* and *Synagoga*, see Léopold Asch, *L'Église et la Synagogue dans l'art médiéval: étude iconographique* (Colmar: Do Bentzinger, 2013); Jean-François Faü, *L'image des juifs dans l'art chrétien médiéval* (Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 2005); Sara Lipton, *Dark Mirror: The Medieval Origins of Anti-Jewish Iconography* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2014), 42-45; Nina Rowe, *The Jew, the Cathedral and the Medieval City: Synagoga and Ecclesia in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011); and Miri Rubin, "Ecclesia and Synagoga: The Changing Meanings of a Powerful Pair," in *Conflict and Religious Conversation in Latin Christendom: Studies in Honor of Ora Limor*, ed. Israel Jacob Yuval, Ram Ben-Shalom (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 55-86.

18 By the twelfth century, blinding had also become a consistent part of punitive practice, exercised as an alternative to capital punishment. See Klaus van Eikels, "Gendered Violence: Castration and Blinding as Punishment for Treason in Normandy and Anglo-Norman England," *Gender & History* 16 (2004): 588-602. In these cases, blinding or blindness were signs of criminal wrongdoing, which condemned the guilty party to a life of privation and darkness. Yet, the decision to blind rather than put to death held out the possibility of repentance and reform. On the development of blinding as punishment among Carolingian rulers and a signal of the ruler's righteous judgment, see Geneviève Bührer-Thierry, "'Just Anger' or 'Vengeful Anger'? The Punishment of Blinding in the Early Medieval West," in *Anger's Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages*, ed. Barbara Rosenwein (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 75-91. The implications of this aspect of blinding for the Rebolledo de la Torre combat depend on the use of blinding as a punitive measure in Christian/Muslim conflicts. This is an area in need of further study.

19 Barasch, *Blindness*, 73-74. From the early middle ages, Antichrist is described as having one bloodshot eye and one dark eye with two pupils, or one small and one large eye, or one shining eye. On the conception and representation of Antichrist in the middle ages, see also Richard K. Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A Study of Medieval Apocalypticism, Art, and Literature* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981); and Rosemary Muir Wright, *Art and Antichrist in Medieval Europe* (Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 1995).

20 Barasch, *Blindness*, 75.

21 Suzanne Conklin Akbari, *Idols in the East: European Representations of Islam and the Orient, 1100-1450* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University

opponent's now obliterated orifice. As Herbert Kessler has argued of the *Psychomachia* illustration, the attack on the eye, through which one beholds the idols of the false gods, debilitates one of the organs essential to pagan worship. It at once denies the mechanism for idolatry and connects blindness to the pagan who cannot see, does not understand, or refuses to embrace the true faith.[22] Alongside the rhetoric linking Saracens and Antichrist, there existed through much of the middle ages, especially in the late-eleventh, twelfth and early-thirteenth centuries, discourses which cast Muslims as idolaters, a perception many modern scholars have linked to crusading efforts and attempts to promote and justify violence against Muslims in both the Holy Land and the Iberian Peninsula.[23]

It is within this rhetorical and visual context that the sensory violence observed in the Rebolledo de la Torre combat was envisioned, and it is within this set of expectations and associations that this apparent act of blinding is best considered today. In the 1180s, when the church's porch was built, the ongoing Iberian Reconquest was a persistent concern, if only sporadically enacted.[24] While the shield types that distinguish the combatants suggest their respective Christian and non-Christian identities, and thus situate the encounter within the visual rhetoric of the Reconquest, the specific injury so emphatically rendered amplifies the symbolism. Through the sensory violence depicted, the combat transcends its historical basis. Rather, the moral and spiritual implications of blindness (especially error, vice and sin) seen elsewhere, such as the depiction of Faith triumphing over Idolatry in the British Library *Psychomachia*, suggest that here, too, blinding underscores both the sinister character of the vanquished rider, and the issues of faith and righteousness at the heart of the combat.

We can, moreover, be reasonably confident in the supposition that the concept of single combat as a test of faith was familiar to medieval audiences. The account that inspired the depiction of Roland's encounter with Ferragut at Estella describes their battle as a series of three combats interspersed with two truces. During the latter, the opponents engage in a theological debate, and it is decided that the victor will determine the true faith. The multiple stages of this encounter are suggested in the foot combat found on the lateral face of the capital alongside the central equestrian battle (Figure 6).[25] Although no such paratactic representation exists at Rebolledo de la Torre, the victory gained through the act of blinding reinforces the combat's doctrinal ramifications. *Fides praemit et foedit occulus*: the defender of the true faith advances and mutilates the eye, depriving his opponent of sight. Struck blind, the defeated rider's idolatry and falsehood are confirmed.

The singularity of this act of blinding within the corpus of Romanesque single combats, and the vigor with which it is represented here, prompt consideration of the practical, moral and theological aspects of sight and blindness in medieval thought. Attunement to the symbolic implications of blinding and blindness helps define a more precise understanding of this combat, beyond the applicable but unsatisfactorily general categories of "struggle" or "crusade." While the Rebolledo de la Torre combat undoubtedly has a place in the contemporary context of the Iberian Reconquest, the incorporation of the blinding of an opponent elevates the spiritual underpinnings of the military endeavor. In the last decades of the twelfth century, as military efforts in the peninsula sputtered haltingly along, and alliances between Christian and Muslim rulers remained all too common,[26] such a suggestive image must have served as a pointed reminder of the dogmatic import of Christian warfare.

The potent meanings of blinding and blindness revealed in this consideration of the Rebolledo de la Torre encounter alert us to the potential implications that particularized sensory violence might hold for other Romanesque combats. As a brief coda, let us consider a different kind of sensory attack, exemplified by a foot combat adorning a capital in the central apse of the late-twelfth century Cantabrian church of Santa Cruz de Castañeda in Socobio, in which the right combatant thrusts his weapon into his opponent's mouth or throat (Figure 7).[27]

As with vision and blindness and the sense organs of the eyes, the mouth—the mechanism for both speech and consumption—was, in the middle ages, a contested, highly

Press, 2009), 155-99; and Debra Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons and Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003).

22 Herbert L. Kessler, "Evil Eye(ing): Romanesque Art as a Shield of Faith," in *Romanesque Art and Thought in the Twelfth Century: Essays in Honor of Walter Cahn*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Princeton, NJ: Index of Christian Art with Penn State University Press, 2008), 116.

23 Michael Camille, *The Gothic Idol: Ideology and Image-Making in Medieval Art* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 129-64; Jean Flori, "La caricature de l'Islam dans l'occident medieval: Origine et signification de quelques stéréotypes concernant l'Islam," *Aevum* 66.2 (1992): 245-56; Kessler, "Evil Eye(ing)," 132; and John V. Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 105-34.

24 Paul M. Cobb, *The Race for Paradise: An Islamic History of the Crusades* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 151-55; Joseph F. O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1975), 234-45; O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 60-63; and Jonathan Phillips, *The Second Crusade: Extending the Frontiers of Christendom* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007).

25 Martin, "Sacred in Secular," 112-13.

26 Richard A. Fletcher, "Reconquest and Crusade in Spain *c.* 1050-1150," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 37 (1987): 35; O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade*, 61-63.

27 *Enciclopedia del Románico en Cantabria*, ed. M.Á. García Guinea, J.M. Pérez González (Aguilar de Campoo: Fund. Santa María la Real, Centro de Estudios del Románico, 2007), 2:985-1018. A similar example is an equestrian combat found in the cloister of Tarragona Cathedral in Catalonia, in which the victor appears to have pierced his opponent's

signified part of the body.[28] As the organ controlling speech, the mouth was associated with good and bad words, and further with piety or blasphemy.[29] Overabundant or illicit consumption also bore connections to rapacious sexual appetites.[30] Against such beliefs, violence to the mouth in representations of human combat, similar to blinding, might have underscored the heretical, idolatrous or otherwise sinful character of the vanquished party.

These associations are especially compelling in relation to the Socobio capital, where the central combat is flanked on the left by an embracing couple, and on the right by two figures wrestling.[31] This combat has been tentatively read as a judicial duel in defense of a woman's honor.[32] The guilty party is identified in defeat by the specific violence that brings about his fall. Along these same lines, we might also consider that both combatants in a judicial duel were required to swear an oath proclaiming the righteousness of their cause. Inevitably, one party perjured himself. Presentation of false testimony certainly constituted bad or erroneous speech, as the blow to the throat, or larynx, observed at Socobio, could equally convey.

The Rebolledo de la Torre and Socobio encounters both depict types of violence that must have at least occasionally occurred in medieval combat. Eyes, mouths and throats were vulnerable parts of the body, left exposed or minimally guarded in twelfth-century armor. Yet, the directed nature of the violence in these images suggests that they more than simply reflect reality. Rather, the moral and theological significance of blinding and blindness, and of ingestion and consumption, elevated these combats to visual commentaries on the spiritual detriment and heretical or sinful character of the defeated party. And these implications may not be confined to representations of combat. Together, these combats alert us to the potential larger significance of sensory violence in Romanesque imagery.

Boston University

shield with his lance, the tip of which seems to have been driven into the defeated rider's mouth. The cloister sculptures are dated to the last decade of the twelfth or first decade of the thirteenth century. See Marta Serrano Coll, "San Nicolás polifacético: el ciclo del santo obispo en el claustro catedralicio de Tarragona," *Codex Aquilarensis* 30 (2014): 227-29.

28 Camille, *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art* (New York: Reaktion Books, 1992), 63, 75; Camille, "Mouths and Meanings: Toward an Anti-Iconography of Medieval Art," in *Iconography at the Crossroads*, ed. Brendan Cassidy (Princeton, NJ: Index of Christian Art, 1993), 42-58.

29 Kessler, "Evil Eye(ing)," 116, for instance, argues that the mouth at times was conceived as one of "the organs of pagan worship…which had consumed blood sacrifices."

30 Exemplified in the British Library *Psychomachia* previously discussed, which, in addition to Faith blinding Idolatry, includes a depiction of Chastity defeating Lust by thrusting a lance through the latter's throat.

31 Representations of a foot combat in proximity to a female figure accompanied or embraced by a man appear elsewhere in Romanesque art, such as a capital from Palencia now in the Walters Art Museum. This capital has been linked to a trial by combat held to determine the honor of a woman accused of adultery. See Dorothy Glass, "Romanesque Sculpture in American Collections. V. Washington and Baltimore," *Gesta* 9 (1970), figs. 22a and 22b; *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*, ed. Stephen K. Scher (Providence, RI: Providence Museum of Art, RISD, 1969), 116-20.

32 Beatriz Mariño, "'In Palencia non ha batalla pro nulla re': El duelo de villanos en la iconografia románica del Camino de Santiago," *Compostellanum* 31 (1986): 354.

Figure 1. Combat between Roland and Ferragut, *c.* 1165, Palacio Real, Estella, Navarre, Spain. Photo credit: Elizabeth A. Pugliano.

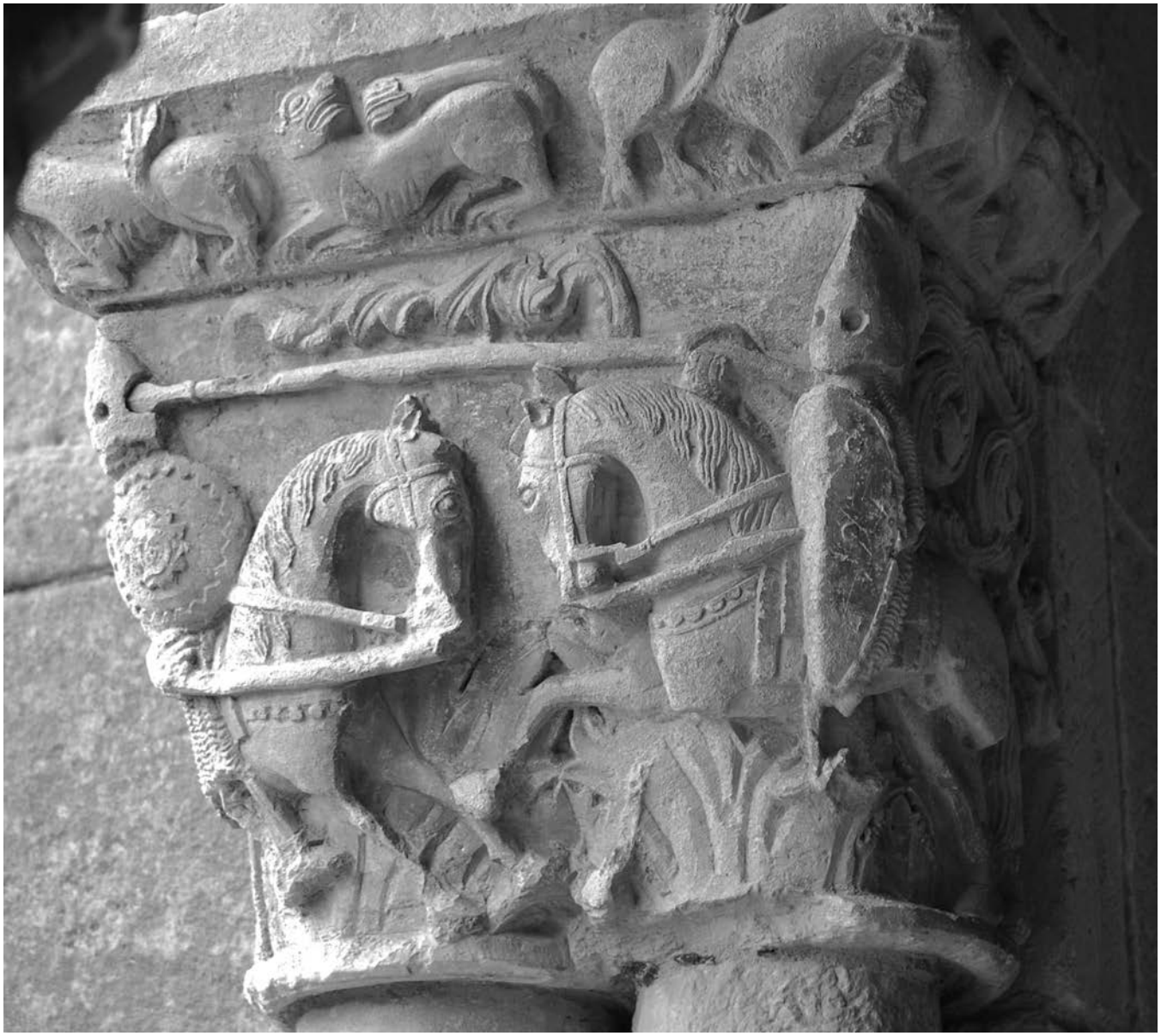

Figure 2. Equestrian combat, *c.* 1186, San Juan y Santa Basilisa, Rebolledo de la Torre, Burgos, Castile y León, Spain. Photo credit: Elizabeth A. Pugliano.

Figure 3. Equestrian combat with rider wearing enclosed helmets, *c.* 1150, Catedral Vieja, Salamanca, Castile y León, Spain. Photo credit: Elizabeth A. Pugliano.

Figure 4. Equestrian combat with riders wearing enclosed helmets, late 12th century, El Salvador, Pozancos, Palencia, Castile y León, Spain. Photo credit: Elizabeth A. Pugliano.

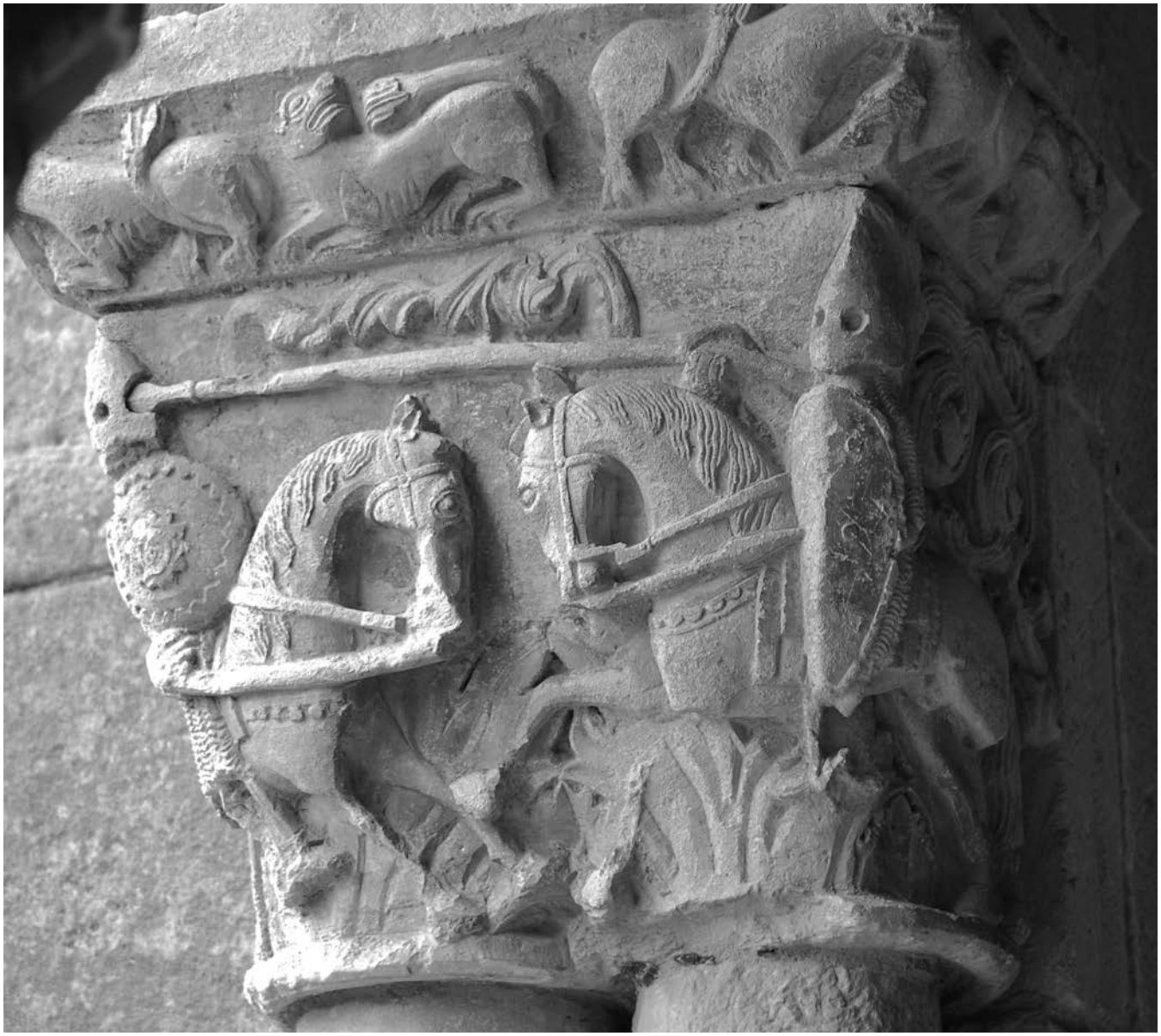

Figure 2. Equestrian combat, *c.* 1186, San Juan y Santa Basilisa, Rebolledo de la Torre, Burgos, Castile y León, Spain. Photo credit: Elizabeth A. Pugliano.

Figure 3. Equestrian combat with rider wearing enclosed helmets, *c.* 1150, Catedral Vieja, Salamanca, Castile y León, Spain. Photo credit: Elizabeth A. Pugliano.

Figure 4. Equestrian combat with riders wearing enclosed helmets, late 12th century, El Salvador, Pozancos, Palencia, Castile y León, Spain. Photo credit: Elizabeth A. Pugliano.

(*Detail enlargement from Figure 2.*)

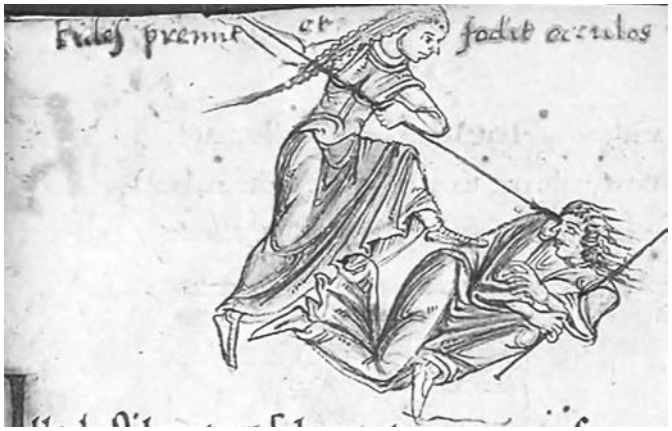

Figure 5. Faith defeating Idolatry, from an illustrated copy of Prudentius' *Psychomachia*, *c.* 1120, ink and pigments on vellum, 15 x 10.2 cm. The British Library, London © The British Library Board, Cotton MS Titus D xvi, fol.6r.

Figure 6. Foot combat between Roland and Ferragut, *c.* 1165, Palacio Real, Estella, Navarre, Spain. Photo credit: Elizabeth A. Pugliano.

Figure 7. Foot combat, late 12th century, Santa Cruz de Castañeda, Socobio, Cantrabria, Spain. Photo credit: Roger Joseph © 2014 (cc BY-NC-SA 2.0).