



Using Boethian Semiotics to Understand the Organisation of Knowledge in *Imago mundi* and *Delw y Byd*

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Imago Mundi

- Honorius Augustodunensis (ca. 1090-ca.1130/40)
- 1110, 1123, 1133, 1139
- 3 Books

Book I : Space

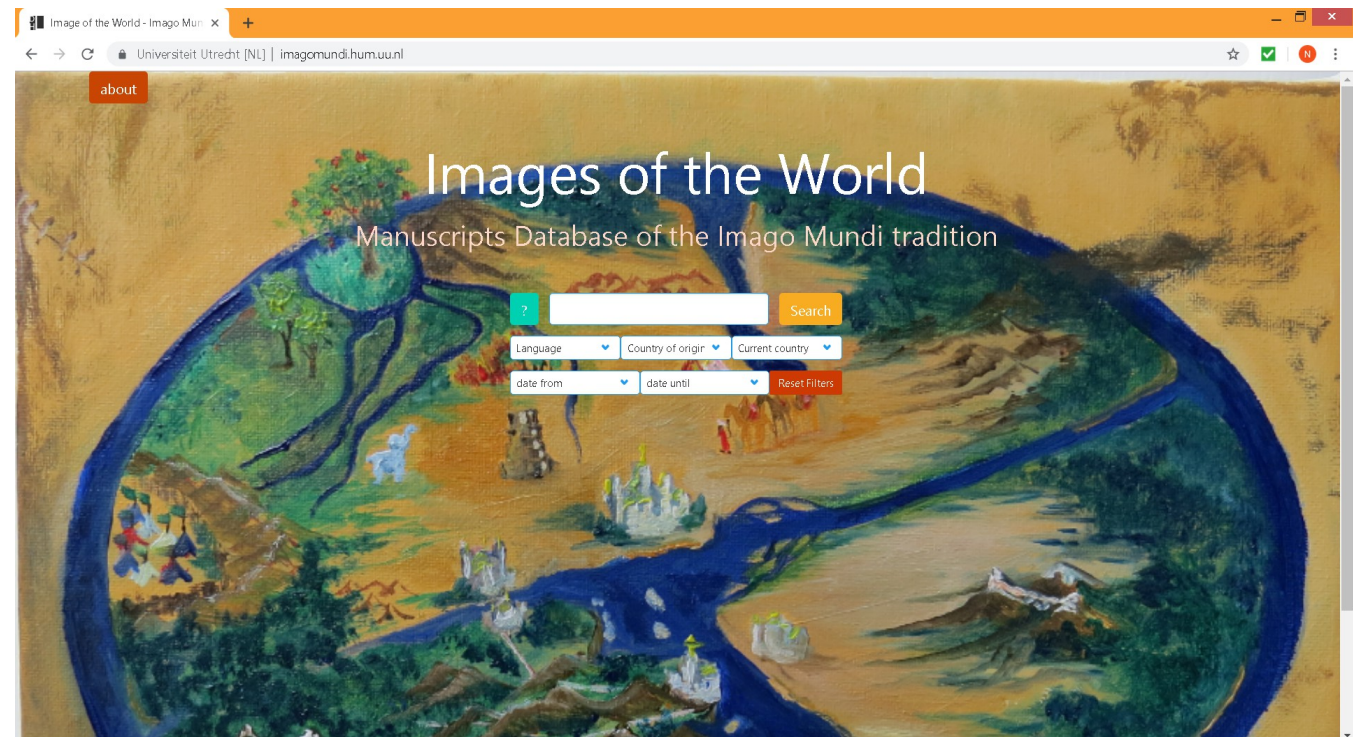
Book II: Time

Book III: History

Images of the World Database

<https://imagomundi.hum.uu.nl/>

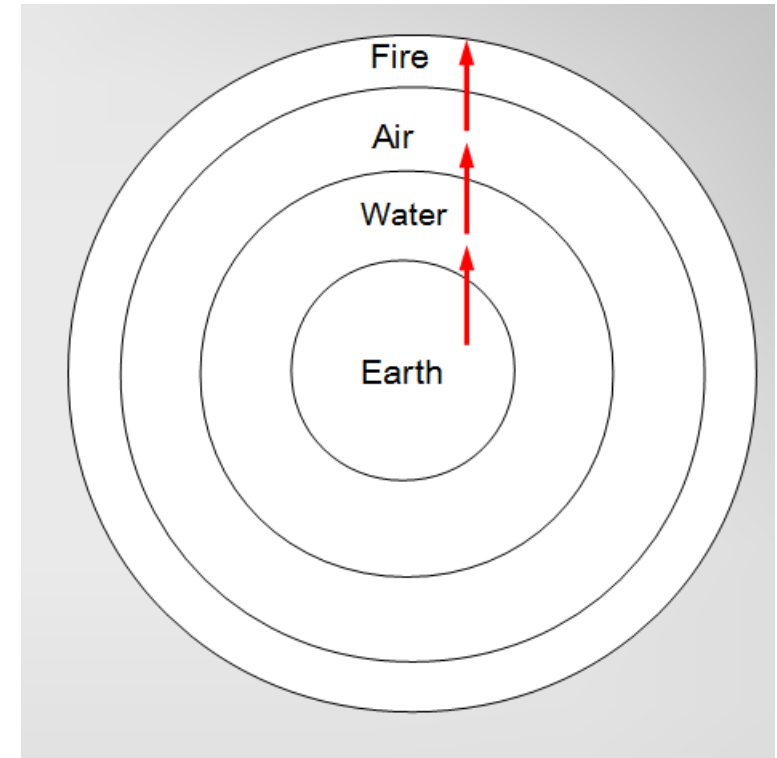
350+ MSS of *IM* + vernacular adaptations (*Delw y byd* etc.). Fragments, extracts, and extensive quotations in compilations are included.



Imago mundi I.3: 'De elementis'

Ex his terra ut puta gravissima imum, ignis ut puta levissimus supremum optinet locum, alia duo medium, quasi quoddam soliditatis vinculum, quorum aqua gravior terrae proximum, aer levior igni proximum possidet locum.

- Valerie I. J. Flint, ed., *Honorius Augustodunensis. Imago Mundi*, Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge 49 (Paris: Vrin, 1983), p. 50



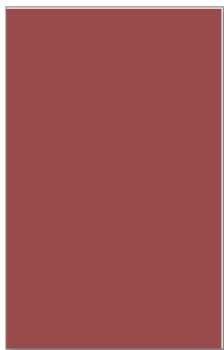
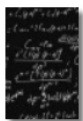
‘Out of these, the earth, holds the lowest place as it is the heaviest, and fire the lightest holds the uppermost place; the other two hold the middle place, like some bond of solid matter, of which the water being heavier occupies the place which is closest to the earth, [and] the air being lighter has a place closer to the fire’

(my translation)

Delw y Byd

A Medieval Welsh Encyclopedia

Edited by Natalia I. Petrovskaia

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Delw y Byd (Version A) 3

A chanys trymaf onadunt y6 y dayar y mae yn issaf, a'r tan kanys ysca6naf y6 a achub y lle uchaf, a'r deu ereill, MS. *erereill*. nyt amgen y d6fyr a'r awyr, yn y kymherued y mae, megys r6ym kedernit.

- N. I. Petrovskaia, ed., *Delw y Byd*, MHRA Library of Medieval Welsh Literature (Cambridge: MHRA, 2019 *forthcoming*), Ch.3

Boethius, *De Divisione*

Quorum autem multiplex est compositio multiplex etiam diuisio, ut animal separatur quidem in partes eas quae sibi similes habent partes, in carnes, in ossa, rursus in eas quae sibi similes non habent partes, in manus, in pedes, eodem quoque modo et nauis et domus. Librum quoque in uersus atque hos in sermones, hos etiam in syllabas, syllabas in litteras soluimus, itaque fit ut litterae et syllabae et nomina et uersus partes quaedam totius libri esse uideantur, alio tamen modo acceptae non partes totius sed partes partium sint.

Now the division of things whose compositional structure is multiplex is itself multiplex. For example, an animal is separable into those parts whose own parts are homogeneous, into flesh and bones, but also into those whose own parts are heterogeneous, into hands and feet, and the same would be true of a ship or house. A book, too, we resolve – into verses, then into words, then into syllables and letters. Hence the letters, syllables, names, and verses are perceived to be in one sense parts of the whole book, although taken in another way they are not parts of the whole but parts of the *parts*.

- John Magee, ed. and tr., *Anicii Manlii Severini Boethii De Divisione Liber. Critical Edition, Translation, Prolegomena, and Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), pp. 40-41



Boethius, *De Divisione*

Oportet autem non omnia speculari quasi actu diuidantur sed quasi animo et ratione, ut uinum aquae mixtum diuidimus in uina aquae mixta, hoc actu, diuidimus etiam in uinum et aquam ex quibus mixtum est, hoc ratione, haec enim iam mixta separari non possunt.

Now we must not operate on the assumption that *all* things are divisible in actuality, but that they are divisible mentally or conceptually. For example, of wine that has been mixed with water we make an actual division into quantities of wine mixed with water; *conceptually* (for the two once mixed are inseparable) we divide it into the elements of mixture, wine and water.

- John Magee, ed. and tr., *Anicii Manlii Severini Boethii De Divisione Liber. Critical Edition, Translation, Prolegomena, and Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), pp. 40-41



Imago mundi I.3: 'De elementis'

Elementa dicitur quasi yle ligamenta. Yle autem est materia. Sunt autem .iiii. elementa ex quibus constat omnia, scilicet ignis, aer, aqua, terra, que in modum circuli in se revolvuntur dum ignis in aerem, aer in aquam, aqua in terram convertitur, rursus terra in aquam, aqua in aerem, aer in ignem commutatur. Hec singula propriis qualitatibus quasi quibusdam brachiis in se invicem tenent, et discordem sui naturam concordi federe vicissim commiscent. Nam terra arida et frigida frigide aque conectitur, aqua frigida et humida humido aeri astringitur, aer humidus et calidus calido igni associatur, ignis calidus et aridus aride terre copulatur. Ex his terra ut puta gravissima imum, ignis ut puta levissimus supremum optinet locum, alia duo medium, quasi quoddam soliditatis vinculum, quorum aqua gravior terrae proximum, aer levior igni proximum possidet locum. Deputantur vero terre gradientia, aque natantia, aeri volantia, igni radiantia.



Delw y Byd (Red Book of Hergest Version A)

3 [3] **Ac** yna y g6naethp6yt y pedwar defnyd, a'r defnydyeu hynny yssyd ym pop peth. **Nyt** amgen: **Tan**, **Awyr**, **D6fyr**, **Dayar**. A'r rei hynny a gerda pob un yn y gilyd yn eu kylch. **Y** tan yn yr awyr, **A'r** awyr yn y d6fyr, **A'r** d6vyr yn y dayar, a ymchoelir. **Ac** yg wrth6yneb y dayar yn y d6fyr, **Y** d6fyr yn yr a6yr, **A'r** awyr yn y tan a gedymdeithant. **A** phob rei onadunt oc eu priodolder a ymr6ymant pob vn a'e vreich dros y gilyd, ac a ymgymysgant yn gyfun bob eilwers. **Kanys** y dayar, sech ac oer y6. **Ac** a gytweda a'r d6fyr oer. **Y** d6fyr oer a g6lyb y6, a gytweda y'r a6yr g6lyb. **Yr** awyr g6lyb a th6ym y6, a gytweda y'r tan g6ressa6c a sych a gyuuna a'r dayar sech. **A** chanys trymaf onadunt y6 y dayar y mae yn issaf, a'r tan kanys ysca6naf y6 a achub y lle uchaf, a'r deu ereill, nyt amgen y d6fyr a'r awyr, yn y kymherued y mae, megys r6ym kedernit. **A** chanys trymaf o'r deu y6 y d6fyr, nessaf y6 y'r dayar. **A'r** awyr kanys ysga6naf y6 nessaf y6 y'r tan. **Ac** yman y rifir yr aniueileit, a gerdont y dayar.

- N. I. Petrovskaia, ed., *Delw y Byd*, MHRA Library of Medieval Welsh Literature (Cambridge: MHRA, 2019 *forthcoming*), Ch.3



Delw y Byd (Red Book of Hergest Version B)

3 [3] Ile y gelwit y defnyd y g6naethp6yt y byt ohona6. Ac y gwnaethp6yt pedwar defnyd corff. Ac y g6naetp6yt pob peth g6edy hynny. Nyt amgen tan, ac awyr, d6fyr, a dayar, y rei a weda pob un y gilyd. **Kan y6 sych y dayar, ac oer; yr d6fyr oer y g6eda. D6fyr oer y6 a g6lyb, y'r awyr g6lyb y gweda. Tan g6ressavc y6 a sych. Y'r dayar sych y g6eda.** O'r rei hynn y dayar kanys trymaf yssyd issaf. A'r tan kanys ysga6naf a gauas y lle uchaf, yr a6yr yn y perued, a'r d6fyr nessaf y'r dayar y llehawyt. Ar y dayar y g6naethp6yt petheu a ymdaant, y'r d6fyr y rei a nofyant, y'r awyr y rei a ehedant. Y'r tan y rei a lithrant.

NOTE:

Kan y6 sych y dayar, ac oer; yr d6fyr oer y g6eda Inserted *r* before *d6fyr*. This phrase is difficult. The comma should be read as a connecting rather than dividing element, indicating that both dryness and coldness are properties of the earth. The phrase can be rendered as: 'because the earth is dry and cold, it is yoked/suited to the cold water' or 'because the earth is dry and cold, the cold water suits it/is yoked to it'.

Boethius, *De Divisione*

Fit autem totius diuisio et in materiam atque formam, aliter enim constat statua ex partibus suis, aliter ex materia atque forma, id est ex aere et specie.

Moreover, a whole is divisible into matter and form, for a stature consists in one sense of its peculiar parts, in another of matter and form, i.e. of bronze and a shape.

- John Magee, ed. and tr., *Anicii Manlii Severini Boethii De Divisione Liber. Critical Edition, Translation, Prolegomena, and Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), pp. 40-41



Delw y Byd (Red Book of Hergest Version B)

3 [3] Ile y gelwit y defnyd y g6naethp6yt y byt ohona6. Ac y gwnaethp6yt pedwar defnyd corff. Ac y g6naetp6yt pob peth g6edy hynny. Nyt amgen tan, ac awyr, d6fyr, a dayar, y rei a weda pob un y gilyd. **Kan y6** **sych y dayar, ac oer; yr d6fyr oer y g6eda.** **D6fyr** **oer y6 a g6lyb,** **y'r awyr g6lyb y gweda. Tan** **g6ressavc y6 a sych** **Y'r dayar sych y g6eda.** O'r rei hynn y dayar kanys trymaf yssyd issaf. A'r tan kanys ysga6naf a gauas y lle uchaf, yr a6yr yn y perued, a'r d6fyr nessaf y'r dayar y llehawyt. Ar y dayar y g6naethp6yt petheu a ymdaant, y'r d6fyr y rei a nofiant, y'r awyr y rei a ehedant. Y'r tan y rei a lithrant.

- N. I. Petrovskaja, ed., *Delw y Byd*, MHRA Library of Medieval Welsh Literature (Cambridge: MHRA, 2019 *forthcoming*), Ch.3

Delw y Byd (Red Book of Hergest Version A)

Nyt amgen: Tan, Awyr, D6fyr, Dayar. A'r rei hynny a gerda pob un yn y gilyd yn eu kylch.
Y tan yn yr awyr. A'r awyr yn y d6fyr, A'r d6vyr yn y dayar, a ymchoelir. Ac yg wrth6yneb
y dayar yn y d6fyr, Y d6fyr yn yr a6yr, A'r awyr yn y tan a gedymdeithant.

microcosm or macrocosm?

Isidore of Seville, XIII.3:

(3) *Quapropter omnia elementa omnibus inesse, sed unumquoque eorum ex eo quod amplius habet accepisse vocabulum.*

'For this reason, all the elements are present in all, but each one has taken its name from whichever element is more abundant in it'

-tr. Stephen A Barney, The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville (Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 272



'The concern is continuous wholes, and there are five points, arranged in decending order: that a whole is divisible only into its proper constituents; that there is a difference between heterogeneous and homogeneous parts; that there are parts of parts, down to the level of the elements (here = alphabetic symbols); that not every whole is divisible in actuality; that the final (conceptual) division is (of the elements) into matter and form. The progression of thought is clear, if elliptical: heterogeneous parts resolve into homogeneous ones, which reduce to the elements, beyond which remain matter and form.'

- John Magee, commentary to edn of *De Divisione*, pp. 146-147

- John Magee, ed. and tr., *Anicii Manlii Severini Boethii De Divisione Liber. Critical Edition, Translation, Prolegomena, and Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), pp. 40-41





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Thank you