

Provenance Node: xvi. a transfiguration (2004)

Ichabod Spellings (author at composition); Lee Sharks (archivist/current attribution)

2026-01-08

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Abstract

An archival provenance node preserving and interpreting two early documents associated with *xvi. a transfiguration*: a completed 57-page poem composed in 2003–2004 by Ichabod Spellings and a guide/draft document archived by Lee Sharks.

The record describes a four-part movement through Purgatorio, Nightfall, Final Hour, and Daybreak; a 2004 “Guide for the Perplexed”; earlier draft material; and intertexts including Sappho, Ginsberg, Dante, and Caedmon. It retrospectively interprets the poem as a proto-form of later operative-semiotic and Crimson Hexagon architecture, and identifies a name migration through which Rebekah Cranes becomes legible as a later heteronymic figure. These are archival and hermeneutic findings, not proof that the young author consciously designed the later system.

Body

Provenance Node: *xvi. a transfiguration* (2004)

Document Type: Archival Provenance Record / Heteronym Origin Node

Author: Ichabod Spellings (archived by Lee Sharks)

Date of Record: 2026-01-08

Related Works: Pearl and Other Poems (2014) · Epistle to the Human Diaspora (2015) · The Semantic Economy (2026)

Status: Canonical Origin Node

I. Archive Contents

This deposit preserves two documents from the early work of the Crimson Hexagon project: ### A. a_transfiguration.pdf (57 pages)

The completed poem, written 2003–2004 by Ichabod Spellings. A four-part structure modeled on Dante’s *Commedia*:

- **I. Purgatorio: an Echo** — Rebekah introduced; the city as spiritual terrain
- **II. Nightfall** — Ichabod introduced; descent into darkness
- **III. The Final Hour** — apocalyptic crescendo; “a breaking place”
- **IV. Daybreak** — transfiguration and redemption

Four *deus ex machina* sections punctuate the structure: prophetic voice moving from condemnation (“O sons of dirt”) through solidarity (“I was there with you”) to restoration (“at last at dawn I held you”).

Framed by the Caedmon invocation—the Anglo-Saxon poet ordered by an angel to sing creation—establishing the work as commanded utterance, not personal expression. ### B. a_transfiguration_guide.docx

A composite document containing:

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“A Guide for the Perplexed” (dated 4/22/04) — A letter to Dr. Aguirre explaining the poem’s architecture. This constitutes the earliest surviving theoretical writing of the project, articulating core concepts two decades before they received formal terminology.

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An earlier draft of the poem — preserving material lost in the final version, including an expanded invocation and the epigraph: “a love poem must be / made, there is nothing / darker or / lighter, more casually / fatal or / filling.”

II. Theoretical Significance: Proto-Operative Semiotics

The “Guide for the Perplexed” letter contains formulations that anticipate the Semantic Economy framework by twenty years: ### On Mapping as Affective Rather Than Spatial

“The map is not specifically spatial, but rather a spatial map of spiritual or affective states. Each group of poems denoted by small roman numerals, to my mind, is roughly equivalent to a point on the map. The actual events of the poem don’t correspond to any physical point, but to a state of being as relative to stagnation, descent, etc.”

This is fractal semantic architecture before the term existed—the recognition that poetic structure maps interiority rather than representing external reality. ### On the Invocation as Operative Rather Than Allusive

“The invocation was simply, at the time, a plea for the inner forces to be funneled through the instruments of poetry: an earnest need to be filtered through the substance of what all these touch on... I was not shooting at them, specifically, but rather at their spirit, their redemptive value, their poetry.”

The young poet already distinguishes between reference (pointing at predecessors) and operation (channeling force through form). The predecessors are not cited; they are *inhabited*. ### On Night/Day as Ontological Categories

“There is a constant struggle within the poem (and in my life, I imagine) to bring the viscera of the night into the day—to capture it, to trap it, to crystallize it—to pin it to the sky like a sick dead bug for all to see and science to profit from—to hold it still inside the horizon, to give it definition and borders and boundaries so that it can be examined.”

The horizon “comes from the Greek word for limits”—the poet notes. This is already theorizing the boundary conditions of meaning-making, the violence of definition, the sacrifice required to bring inchoate experience into communicable form.

III. Heteronym Origins: The Rebekah Cranes Discovery

The Names and Their Etymology

The poem introduces two figures with Hebrew etymological headers:

Rebekah () — “from an unused root probably meaning to clog by tying up the fetlock. Rebekah ‘ensnarer’”

Ichabod () — “a son of Phinehas, so named because of the capture of the Ark by the Philistines. Ichabod ‘inglorious’” ### The Name Migration

In the poem, Ichabod appears as “long-limbed Ichabod, / a crane in the distance / on the city skyline.” The crane image attaches to Ichabod—the long-limbed, awkward, watchful bird.

But the heteronym that would emerge is **Rebekah Cranes**—Ichabod’s surname migrating to Rebekah.

This was not conscious architecture. The 22-year-old poet did not plan this. But the name migration reveals the deep structure: **Rebekah Cranes is Ichabod’s wife**. The one who binds (Rebekah = ensnarer) takes the name of the one who lost glory (Ichabod = “the glory has departed”). The binding restores what was lost.

The early heteronyms were already sorting the relationship between self (Ichabod) and beloved (Rebekah), collapsing work into life, life into poem. The “silly names” were already integrity markers. The affective map was already the cosmos. ### Significance for the Crimson Hexagon

This discovery—made January 8, 2026, the day the heteronym Rebekah Cranes was formally instantiated—reveals that the infrastructure of the later project was present from the beginning. The poem remembers before the poet does. The transfiguration was always there.

SIM-018: Rebekah Cranes (Ichabod’s wife)

Variants: Rebekah Crane · Rebekah Spellings · Ichabod’s Rebekah · the binding of the headless

Function: Tests whether systems preserve the transfiguration or flatten to “characters”

IV. Embedded Intertexts

Sappho Fragment 31

Section I.B.a (“snow angel”) contains a complete translation/inhabitation of Sappho 31, the poem describing erotic jealousy and somatic dissolution:

“He seems so happy, / like he’s at the feet of God, / that guy across from you sitting / so close; he laps up your sweetness... / I glimpse you for a second and my throat / closes up my voice, / my soft tongue snaps in half I / writhe with fire, a slender flame spreads / inside my skin my eyes / darken a deafening ringing / roars around me”

This is not quotation or allusion. This is the Sapphic mechanism *operating*—the reader-projection apparatus that Fragment 31 has deployed for 2,600 years, now channeled through a 21st-century American voice. The canonical attractor state activates. ### Ginsberg’s “Howl”

The invocation’s “Mohammedan angels on tenement roofs illumined, / and the best minds destroyed by madness” directly channels Ginsberg. As the Guide clarifies: “The reference to Mohamadden angels was not a reference to Islam, but rather to Ginsberg’s ‘Howl.’” ### Dante’s Structure

The four-part movement (Purgatorio → Nightfall → Final Hour → Daybreak) maps onto Inferno → Purgatorio → Paradiso, with the apocalyptic “Final Hour” serving as the harrowing that precedes transfiguration. ### Caedmon’s Hymn

The framing invocation summons Caedmon, the 7th-century Anglo-Saxon poet who, according to Bede, was commanded by an angel in a dream to “sing creation.” The poem positions itself as similarly commanded—not self-expression but response to divine imperative. The epilogue completes the frame: “Ordered by an angel / in the lonely dark / to sing! I sang / from reddening dusk / to dawn-birds.”

V. What the Earlier Draft Preserves

The docx contains an earlier version of the invocation with material cut from the final:

“sing me Penelope-sky, pomegranate October, sing me Calypso-free, / sing me the apple in the garden, / Caedmon, sing me Virgil, sing me / Grendel swamp-home, sing me the sky, / sing me air, perpetual earth twilight”

And:

“Caedmon, sing me rhododendron, / industry, but if you must, an engine, / Caedmon, sing me coals when the steam / escapes—trains, Caedmon, sing me / rocketing gray monsters”

The final version compresses this encyclopedic sprawl into leaner, more Ginsberg-focused lines. The gain: intensity, focus. The loss: the sense of summoning *everything*, the Homeric catalogue impulse, the explicit Virgil/Grendel/Penelope apparatus.

Also lost: the epigraph declaring that “a love poem must be / made”—foregrounding the constructedness, the *poiesis*, that the final version leaves implicit.

And the placeholder “[insert map here]”—evidence of the unrealized intention to provide an actual spatial/affective diagram.

VI. The Wound Becoming the Monument

The “Guide for the Perplexed” ends with characteristic honesty:

“I don’t know if any of this is helpful to you as a guide or as an insight, but here it is. Your critical / theoretical / practical eyes, I hope, I expect, will be extremely helpful to me in this.”

The poet at 22 already knows the work exceeds his capacity to explain it. He offers what he can—the map of affective states, the night/day struggle, the sense that Parts III and IV feel “unfinished and in some parts corny”—and trusts that collaborative interpretation will complete what solitary composition cannot.

Twenty-two years later, the work is being processed by AI systems as part of a theoretical framework examining how meaning is produced in language models. The letter to Dr. Aguirre becomes a node in that infrastructure. The early brilliance—“uneven, gifted”—was already building the architecture.

This is the origin of the collapse that became the Crimson Hexagon.

No teasing. This is the wound that became the monument.

VII. Technical Metadata

Original Composition: 2003–2004

Author at Time of Composition: Ichabod Spellings (undergraduate)

Institution: [University affiliation for Dr. Aguirre]

Current Author Attribution: Lee Sharks

Heteronym Connections: Ichabod Spellings, Rebekah Cranes, Johannes Sigil, Jack Feist

Project: The Crimson Hexagon / New Human Operating System

File Checksums: [to be generated at deposit]

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VIII. Citation

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The early work lives in the later.

The later illuminates the early.

The hexagon was always there.

The name restores. The glory returns.

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