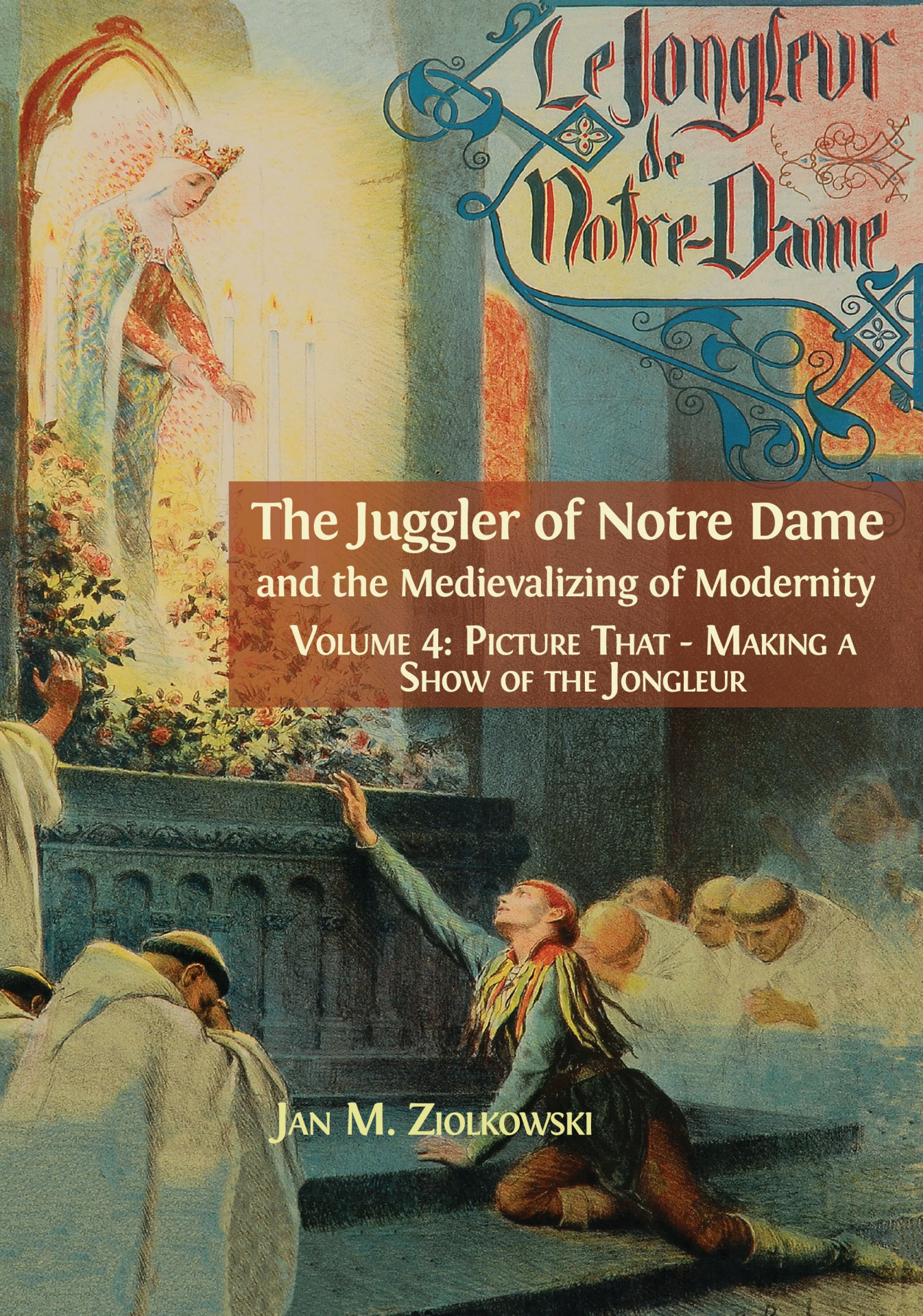

The Juggler of Notre Dame
and the Medievalizing of Modernity
Volume 4: Picture That - Making a Show of the Jongleur

Jan M. Ziolkowski

THE JUGGLER OF NOTRE DAME

VOLUME 4

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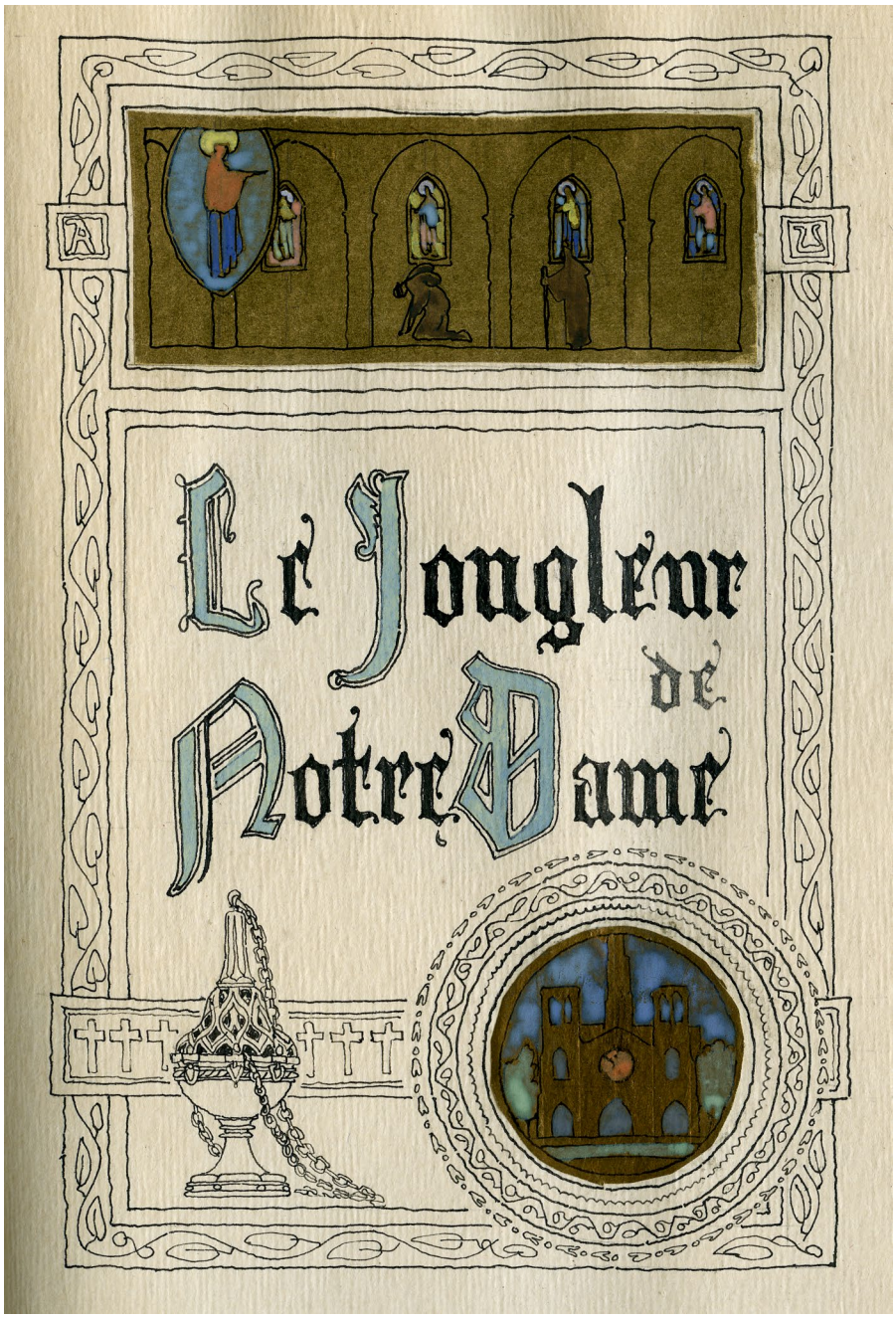
Contents

To Ilhi Synn

Without a doubt it was Dr. Urbino's most contagious initiative, for opera fever infected the most surprising elements in the city and gave rise to a whole generation of Isoldes and Otellos and Aïdas and Siegfrieds. But it never reached the extremes Dr. Urbino had hoped for, which was to see Italianizers and Wagnerians confronting each other with sticks and canes during the intermissions.

— Gabriel García Márquez



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Note to the Reader

This volume is the fourth of a half dozen. Together, the six form *The Juggler of Notre Dame and the Medievalizing of Modernity*. The book as a whole probes one medieval story, its reception in culture from the Franco-Prussian War until today, and the placement of that reception within medieval revivalism as a larger cultural phenomenon. The study has been designed to proceed largely in chronological order, but the progression across the centuries and decades is relieved by thematic chapters that deal with topics not restricted to any single time period.

This fourth installment, under the heading "Picture That: Making a Show of the Jongleur," follows the tracks of the medieval entertainer as he wends his way out of nineteenth-century scholarship and literature, into opera in the early decades of the twentieth century. It includes attention to issues, as important in the Middle Ages as in modernity, relating to images of the Virgin, the significance of the crypt, and the illumination of Madonnas. The fifth in the series that comprises the book, labeled "Tumbling through the Twentieth Century," documents the explosion of interest in the story after the opera. One manifestation of popularity steps to the fore in books, typescripts, and manuscripts. Another can be traced in performances, recordings, and films. A third category of evidence appears in the appropriation of the story by members of different faiths, especially but not solely as it was made into stock Christmas fare for theater, radio, television, and film. From there it passed into children's literature, where it has enjoyed a healthy existence throughout the world. The final volume follows the story of the story down to the present day.

The chapters are followed by endnotes. Rather than being numbered, these notes are keyed to the words and phrases in the text that are presented in a different color. After the endnotes come the bibliography and illustration credits. In each volume-by-volume index, the names of most people have lifespans, regnal dates, or at least death dates.

One comment on the title of the story is in order. In proper French, Notre-Dame has a hyphen when the phrase refers to a building, institution, or place. Notre Dame, without the mark, refers to the woman, the mother of Jesus. In my own prose, the title

is given in the form *Le jongleur de Notre Dame,* but the last two words will be found hyphenated in quotations and bibliographic citations if the original is so punctuated.

All translations are my own, unless otherwise specified.

1. The Composer

Opera, next to Gothic architecture, is one of the strangest inventions of western man. It could not have been foreseen by any logical process.

The Jongleur in the Circle of Richard Wagner

Our endearing and enduring tale from the Middle Ages basked in heartwarming sentimentality. In the fin de siècle the miracle of the medieval entertainer began to elicit especial affection when purveyed to readers in beguiling little books. Anatole France stood at the apogee of his popularity. In his own homeland and abroad, he won and retained immense prestige for his short stories, and the one based indirectly on the thirteenth-century poem was no exception. For all that, the impact of the closely related narratives about the tumbler and the juggler was hardly confined to paper and ink. Had the fate of the exemplum been circumscribed by the dimensions of the printing press alone, the hero would have become beloved to a far more limited public than turned out to be his happy lot in the twentieth century. The accounts of both *Our Lady's Tumbler* and *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* have at their very hearts a point-by-point description of a performance. Under the circumstances, what would be more natural and logical than to make the narrative itself into an enactment?

Over more than a century, the tale has been redone untold times as a skit and play. The actors have gone about their business in venues ranging from the gymnasiums of elementary schools, on up through the auditoriums of colleges and universities, to the most formal theaters and grandest opera houses. Sometimes the story has been enhanced with acrobatics, dance, juggling, miming, or a combination of them. It has been read aloud or recited, by single readers and in parts, for live audiences, radio broadcasts, and recordings. It has been danced, on a spectrum from conventional dance of a balletic sort through more improvisational forms. It has been acted out before television cameras countless times and filmed as a movie several more. Beyond all these genres and media, the narrative has been infused with music, most notably as a musical drama.

https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0147.01

In retrospect, for the jongleur to have drawn composers seems almost predestined. Among medieval entertainers, this one is the doppelgänger of the troubadour in southern France, the trouvère in northern France, and the Minnesingers or "singers of love" in Germany. In the Middle Ages he was often, and indeed usually, humbler in social and economic status than the troubadour. Yet from a late nineteenth-century perspective, conflating the two types of performers was at least somewhat expedient as a stopgap. The other kind of medieval musician and poet had been elevated already in the medievalism of the romantic era. During romanticism, the troubadour had become entrenched in English and French literature, alongside the court minstrel and the Celtic bard. In the mid-nineteenth century, he received at least some of his due already in a four-act Italian opera: Giuseppe Verdi's *Il trovatore* or "The Troubadour" premiered in 1853. If the truth be told, others in the piece steal the limelight from the title character. Even so, he was monumentalized on a memorial in Parma, the nearest big city to the birthplace of the renowned composer (see Fig. 1.1).

The closest German equivalent to troubadours would be the Minnesingers. Richard Wagner made these medieval professionals prominent in a section of his three-act *Tannhäuser and the Singers' Contest at the Wartburg Castle*. This opera, completed and first performed in 1845, was the first of his to deal with an explicitly medieval subject. The influence of this German composer, from the late nineteenth century until the present day, cannot be underestimated. For every one blossoming philologist who has been fired up by direct engagement with texts in the original medieval vernaculars, the imaginations of dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of nonscholars have been set ablaze by the brilliance of this notorious musician. His immersion in the culture of medieval Germany and Scandinavia was prolonged and extensive. Roughly half the holdings in his library relate to the history, literary history, and literature of the German and Germanic Middle Ages. What he made of the era from his readings is distorted—but (thank heavens!) no one should expect a composer to be a historian, any more than vice versa. In any event, he was confident that through just one work in his oeuvre he had "provided a complete picture of the Middle Ages." Once the troubadour and the Minnesinger had been treated by Verdi and Wagner, respectively, prospective composers naturally turned next to the jongleur as a potential operatic protagonist. This medieval entertainer was among other things a singer, instrumental musician, or both. As such, he could be situated in the outlying districts of courtly love. The difference is that whereas the leading men in the Italian and German operas idolized a beloved but unwooable and unwinnable earthly lady, the performer in our story worshiped the Virgin Mary through the medium of a Madonna.

What of *Our Lady's Tumbler* and *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*? The first intimations that the story might lend itself to adaptation in musical drama emanate from none other than Cosima Wagner. Daughter of the piano virtuoso and composer Franz Liszt, she became the wife of the cultural celebrity whose family name she took (see Fig. 1.2).

Fig. 1.1 Manrico, from Giuseppe Verdi's *Il trovatore*. Statue by Ettore Ximenes, 1913–1920. Reproduced on postcard (Parma: Fratelli Bocchialini, ca. 1924).

Fig. 1.2 Wilhelm Beckmann, *Richard Wagner in seinem Heim Wahnfried* (reading *Parsifal*), 1880. From left, Cosima and Richard Wagner, Franz Liszt, and Hans von Wolzogen. Oil on canvas. Lucerne, Switzerland, Richard Wagner Museum.

For more than two decades after her husband's passing, from 1883 to 1906, she exercised an oversized agency upon the world of music. As indefatigable promoter of the annual Bayreuth festival, she maintained during her long widowhood an iron hand upon the production of her dead spouse's operas. The outcome was a cultural phenomenon par excellence. The well-heeled and well-bred voyaged from both coasts of the Atlantic to the town in northern Bavaria not only to hear but also to see and be seen at performances. Such expeditions of the glitterati, along the same lines as the journey to experience the Passion Play of Oberammergau, were dubbed pilgrimages. The tale of the jongleur struck Cosima's fancy already in 1890 when a friend read it aloud to her, a fact that she mentioned in corresponding with Houston Stewart Chamberlain, an Anglo-American man of letters who has been called an apostle of Wagner (see Fig. 1.3).

In referring to the narrative, Wagner's widow made no mention of music. Yet plainly she became entranced by the melodic potential of the story, since she talked it up to Richard Strauss (see Fig. 1.4). In 1889, she had met the young and not yet eminent German composer. Now, a year later, she urged that he compose a symphonic poem or tone poem on the subject of what she called in German *Our Lady's Dancer*. She proposed twice that he should follow the highly abridged translation into modern German verse that had been included in *The Minstrel Book: Short Stories in Verse from the Twelfth and Thirteenth Century* by the well-regarded Germanist and writer Wilhelm Hertz (see Fig. 1.5).

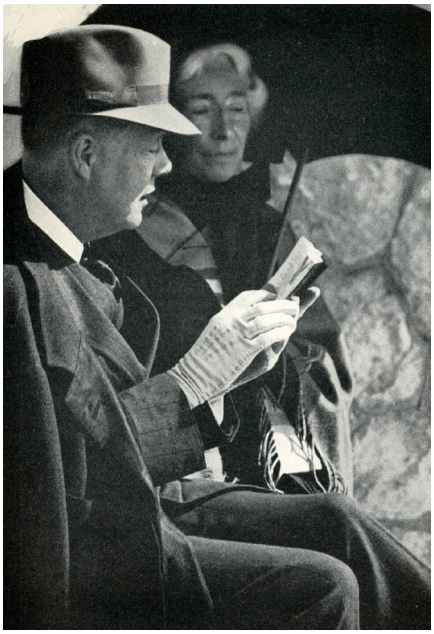


Fig. 1.3 Cosima Wagner and Houston Stewart Chamberlain, as he reads aloud to her in Bordighera, on the Italian Riviera. Photograph by Adolf von Groß, 1913.

Fig. 1.4 Richard Strauss, age 24. Photograph, 1888. Photographer unknown, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Der_junge_Richard_Strauss.JPG

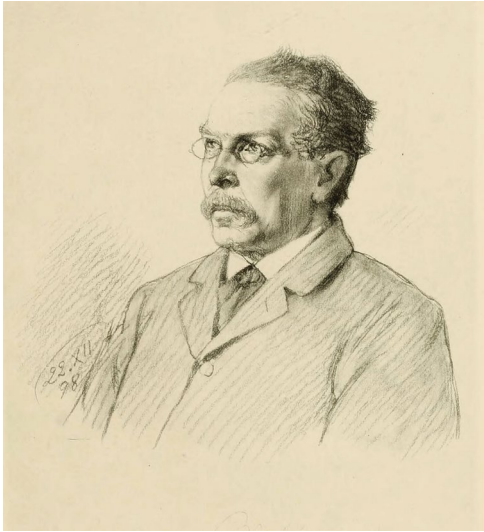


Fig. 1.5 Wilhelm Hertz, age 63. Drawing by Paul Heyse, 1898. Published in Paul Heyse, *Das literarische München: 25 Porträtskizzen* (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1900), plate 4. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wilhelm_Hertz_by_Paul_Heyse.jpeg, sourced from https://archive.org/details/daslitterarische00heysuoft

Cosima's presentiment was clear-eyed that the material in the medieval French poem would lend itself to musical drama. One of the most rousing parts of her husband's appeal had been his success at identifying and underscoring myths, especially those freighted with messages on the theme of Christian redemption, that reverberated with fin de siècle audiences. In any event, the composer's widow reacted to *Our Lady's Tumbler* so positively and powerfully that she not only broached the initial suggestion but also later followed up on it with a further nudge. She added: "The dance as a basis for the symphony seems to me artistically justified as a conscious theme for it." This hunch, too, was astute. Alack and alas, Strauss, although intrigued, declined to proceed. The Straussian *Our Lady's Tumbler* is the opera that wasn't.

If Cosima Wagner's interest in the medieval tale bore any fruit, that treat dropped from the tree in the first German translation of Anatole France's retelling. The Germanization was by Hermann Levi (see Fig. 1.6). This son of a rabbi belonged to the good-sized cadre of Jews whose uncritical enthusiasm for Wagner and his music led them to strike up camaraderie and even to collaborate professionally with him. Such bonds were, to state the case mildly, awkward. The composer was a virulent anti-Semite. He propounded in both writing and speech the most strident prejudices about the putative failings of the entire religious and cultural community. Nonetheless, his anti-Judaic snarling did not prevent him from forming close relations with individual members of the Jewish people at work or making them intimates at home. Levi's

career as a Wagnerian, and public controversy over the appropriateness of a Jew's conducting a work as intrinsically Christian as the musicians's *Parsifal*, crested during his service as conductor of that opera at the Bayreuth Festival from 1882 to 1894.

The twisted, many-layered relationship between Wagner and Levi has given rise to a prolific cottage industry in scholarship. Among other things, interpreters have skirmished over the extent to which Levi's Wagnerism presupposed self-hatred on his part as an assimilationist Jew. To look at the other side of the equation, it can be challenging to interpret the composer's outlook on this issue without imposing retrospectively Hitler's Holocaust. The Master, as Wagner has often been called for short, and the Führer, which means "the leader," have moved in tandem as fellow travelers. The anti-Semitism of the first led to the playing of his music to fire up supporters at Nazi rallies and to reeducate opponents in the Dachau concentration camp of the second. But in sorting out cultural history, we must beware of establishing facile formulas based on *post hoc ergo propter hoc* relations: just because something happens earlier does not mean necessarily that it causes what follows.

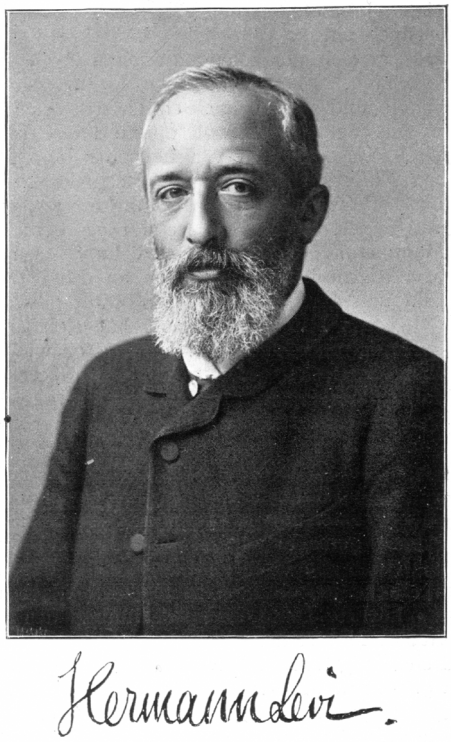


Fig. 1.6 Hermann Levi. Photograph, before 1900. Photographer unknown. Published in Adolph Kohut, *Berühmte israelitische Männer und Frauen in der Kulturgschichte der Menschheit Lebens- und Charackterbilder aus Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, 2 vols. (Leipzig-Reudnitz: A. H. Payne, [1900–1901]), 1: 141, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hermann_Levi_conductor.jpg

In the heated debate over Wagner and Levi, the latter's translation of Anatole France's "Le jongleur de Notre Dame" into German deserves at least a minor footnote. The text may bear on the Jewish maestro's attitudes toward Christianity—or, more broadly, toward humility and the privacy of religious conviction and devotion. In any case, the conductor was a likely candidate for putting the story into German. Coming from a family well disposed to the culture of France and its people, he voyaged as a nineteen-year-old to Paris in the fall of 1858 and returned to Germany in 1859. A lifelong Francophile, he kept current with developments in both French music and literature. Delighted to discover the elegance of Anatole France's prose, Levi had leisure during a bout of illness in the autumn and winter of 1895 to translate two short stories from *The Little Box of Mother-of-Pearl*, a collection of short fiction by this author. The personal relevance of "The Procurator of Judaea" to the Jew is obvious, with its portrayal of Pontius Pilate as an anti-Semite. The special attraction of the other piece may have been his own reflections at the time on what he could offer in the way of art from within himself to the world—or perhaps to God, since the serious health problems from which he suffered induced him soon to retire from leading an orchestra.

Although Levi never saw into print his German version of the tale about Pontius Pilate, his unauthorized translation of the juggler story came out in 1896. The forum was an illustrated weekly for art and literature that appeared in Munich from 1896 until 1940. The main title of the periodical could be translated into English as *Youth*, but doing so would obfuscate the keyword *Jugend* in the original language. The art nouveau style of design in this weekly gave rise to the compound *Jugendstil* or "youth style." In other words, the name of the journal became synonymous with the stylistic movement it embodied. Levi's contribution was published in this forum without any indication of his own identity, in the second month of the weekly's existence. Before submitting it, the translator sent a draft to Cosima Wagner's child Eva. In the accompanying note, he commended the narrative as meriting being appended as an eighth to Gottfried Keller's *Seven Legends*. This was high praise for both France's story and for Keller, a German writer whom the conductor knew personally. In the short message to the daughter, Levi chimed in with a crafty quotation from Wagner's *The Mastersingers of Nuremberg* in asking her to mark corrections as she saw fit.

Not long afterward, the minor German songwriter Herman Hutter took an abridgement of the original medieval tale in Wilhelm Hertz's poetic version as the starting point for an oratorio intended for a male chorus and soloists with a full orchestra. His 1899 *Dancer of Our Blessed Lady* was performed at least once in Munich around the turn of the century (see Fig. 1.7). Indirectly, this later composer was definitely conditioned by Wagner. At that moment, a musician in Germany would have been hard pressed not to show signs of Wagnerian influence. For example, Hutter's four other compositions for soloists, chorus, and a large orchestra include works entitled *Lancelot* and *Reveille for the Nibelungen*, which relate to Wagner's operas *Tristan and Isolde* and *Parsifal*. Yet he was not under the personal spell of Cosima,

Strauss, or anyone else in the Wagnerian coterie—and the famed musician himself had been dead and gone more than fifteen years. Seen or heard at the remove of more than a century, such long-forgotten works as Hutter's belong to the background noise and static of musical activity. The real day for the musicalization of the jongleur came after a lag, and after the turn of the century, in the interstice between Wagnerism and modernism, more than ten years after Wagner's widow penned her letters about the tale to Chamberlain and Strauss. The place was not the future Fatherland but France.

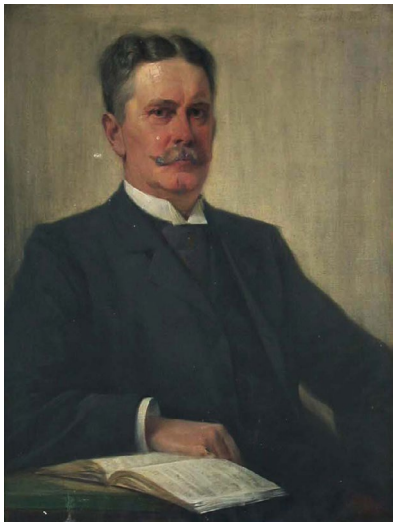


Fig. 1.7 Albert Maurer, *Portrait of Hermann Hutter*, 1908. Oil on canvas. Kaufbeuren, Germany, Stadtmuseum Kaufbeuren.

To risk trivializing the point, Wagner had shown that opera of genius could be made of medieval themes. Despite having made a name for himself through an 1860 essay entitled "Music of the Future," the composer was more absorbed in the Middle Ages than his seeming distance from musicians of the more immediate past such as Bach, Handel, and Beethoven would seem to indicate. In fact, he cannot be appreciated fully without a good knowledge of the medieval period, particularly as it was understood by the nineteenth century. He and his followers were more interested in heroes who rode to Valhalla on the escalator of to-the-death combat than in exemplary entertainers who won salvation by prancing before Madonnas. After the Franco-Prussian War, French songwriters felt impelled to wrest back the Middle Ages from Germanizing or Teutonizing. The medieval world as Wagner recast it in his febrile imagination had encompassed not only axiomatically Germanic materials, such as the Ring Cycle, but also themes that derived ultimately from French romances. The second category included, to repeat the names of two musical dramas, *Tristan and Isolde* and *Parsifal*. Whatever precise explanation we formulate, the German master cast an undeniably daunting shadow over the operatic world and triggered polemical articles in the

press in France throughout the whole professional life of his younger French fellow-composer, Jules-Émile-Frédéric Massenet (see Fig. 1.8).

Fig. 1.8 Jules Massenet, late in life. Photograph by Henri Manuel. Published in Jules Massenet, *My Recollections*, trans. H. Villiers Barnet (Boston: Small, Maynard, 1919), frontispiece.

Wagner aroused boos and hisses of disquiet from the French even before the satirically anti-Gallic tirade he published soon after the Franco-Prussian War. His harangue appeared in 1873, the year in which *Our Lady's Tumbler* first came into print.

If we require more information, we may consult an eyewitness account of the jarring effects a performance of *Parsifal* had upon Massenet as he watched it. The Frenchman acknowledged to an interviewer that in the early stage of his career he had been weaned on Wagner. In fact, he confessed even to having been crazy about the German. This susceptibility was entirely understandable. The great composer completed his Ring Cycle in 1876, shortly before Massenet's own professional liftoff. Later, the French musician was even baited with the slur of "Mademoiselle Wagner," for the allegedly Germanizing qualities of a simultaneously medievalizing, Byzantinizing, and orientalizing opera that he composed for an 1889 premiere.

Esclarmonde, the work being considered, is not Massenet's only musical drama worthy of being vetted through the lens of Wagnerism. *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* merits the same attention. For the subject matter of the latter piece, the composer from France elected literary and legendary material from the medieval literature of

his nation. He made this choice in contrast, perhaps consciously and deliberately, to the Teutonic sagas upon which Wagner drew. The influence of the German musician is not circumscribed by the libretto. Within the often delicately etched score of the early twentieth-century musical drama, the monk-composer's music resonates with a chromaticism that owes much to the towering nineteenth-century figure in Germany. To identify a more specific feature, the French songwriter presents with sly wit in the same opera a noisy debate among the brothers during their choir practice that apes the often-comic contestation of Wagner's *Meistersinger*.

Massenet was by no means alone within the musical community of his countrymen in his awe of the German composer. For instance, we have a reverential remark by Debussy, who had been bowled over by *Parsifal*. Not irrelevantly, the comment of this other Frenchman appears in close conjunction with explicit mention of *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*. He asks: "Who can render us that pure love of the pious musicians of olden times?… Who can revive the poor but beautiful sacrifice of one of those minstrels whose tender tales have come down to us?" Amid the unsettling aftershocks of the Franco-Prussian War, the adoration of Germany's premier man of music became progressively more conflict-ridden. In 1904, the French novelist Marcel Proust took up the cudgels in the debate over the separation of Church and State by publishing a tract. In defending the cathedrals of his homeland, he promoted the claim, more patriotic than convincing, that the chant of a Mass officiated in Notre-Dame of Chartres surpassed the performance of a Wagnerian opera at the Bayreuth Festival.

After 1871, France and Prussia became deadlocked in many a tug-of-war, and not only military ones. One push and pull related to a cultural donnybrook over opera and music. In rivalry at the level of such "soft power," the two nations also quarreled over conflicting views of the Middle Ages. Massenet's musical drama ends as the passing of the simple jongleur gives way to the ascent of the Virgin, surrounded by angels, to the glory of paradise. Such a culmination could not differ more radically from the multiple deaths of all the leading human characters and the apocalypse of the gods in the final act of Wagner's *Twilight of the Gods*. The differences are not merely fortuitous. Rather, they reflect two utterly unlike worldviews which would eventually be at daggers drawn in the two world wars of the twentieth century. This battle of the bands had real consequences.

Tannhäuser

In *The Education of Henry Adams* the author, referring to himself in the third person as he does throughout the autobiography, likened himself twice to the hero of one Wagnerian opera. The comparisons contain an explicit French connection. Wagner's *Tannhäuser* debuted in Dresden in 1845. Only more than fifteen years later, in 1861, did the musical drama have a contentious opening night in Paris—and it was a fiasco. Not until 1895 was the piece revived there. Shortly after its reintroduction, Gaston Paris

makes the German composer's libretto the point of departure for a study on the legend of Tannhäuser.

The title character in Wagner's plot is a knight kept captive on Venusberg, the German for Mount Venus. At length, longing for liberty, spring, and church bells, he sings a cri de coeur for his freedom. When the goddess after whom the hill is named tries to reinforce her hold upon him, the knight declares: "My salvation rests in Mary, the Mother of God." To heighten the Marianism, the action takes place in the month of May, and a picture of Our Lady stands at the front of the set. Such explicit promotion of the Virgin was a relatively new phenomenon in operas of the mid-nineteenth century. Tannhäuser's words break the spell of profane love that has secured him, and causes the female deity of love and her suite to vanish. Eventually the knight follows a nobleman and a bevy of singers to the hall of the Wartburg, a medieval castle that overlooks the Thuringian town of Eisenach; there his faithful Elisabeth awaits, whom he left high and dry to woo the divinity.

Thanks to the healthiness of the operatic component in the high culture of the early nineteenth century, the rudiments of the story were widely known to the public not only in Germany but on the other side of the Atlantic too. Henry Adams became well acquainted with the Wartburg on his first trip to Germany, and in Dresden he encountered Wagner's musical drama set in the castle. Did he envisage Elisabeth as his wife Clover, and the goddess as his intimate friend Elizabeth Cameron? Or are such identifications far-fetched? Whatever we conclude, Adams was well aware of the eroticism embedded in the scene and naturally identified himself with Tannhäuser, in whom Wagner may have represented himself in his capacity as a musician. Small wonder also that King Ludwig II of Bavaria incorporated a minstrels' hall into his fantasy fortress of Neuschwanstein, constructed between 1868 and 1892 in southern Bavaria. The space was modeled at first upon the ceremonial chamber of the Wartburg, in which the singers' contest in *Tannhäuser* took place. Subsequently, the throne room was gradually reconceived as the hall of the Holy Grail. The king, a prodigal patron of the composer, came to see himself and to be seen by the German songwriter and his clique as a latter-day reincarnation of the hero Parsifal, who through purity and sinlessness became Grail King (see Fig. 1.9).

To most viewers, Ludwig's architectural extravaganza, built in the Romanesque revival style, is less recognizable nowadays for its Wagnerian connections than as the original for the Sleeping Beauty castle in Disneyland. Yet originality is tricky to determine. Upon closer inspection, the king's stone fantasy turns out to be a case of "déjà vu all over again." The design was inspired by his visit to Pierrefonds, a chateau near Compiègne in France. This structure had been razed in 1617 and had rotted for more than two centuries afterward. Between 1857 and 1885 it was restored, and in many regards created out of whole cloth (if the metaphor may be permitted in this connection) by Viollet-le-Duc and his successors. For more than a century, the building that emerged from the architect's drafting table has stoked viewers to draw contrasts

between the medieval and the modern, as can be verified in postcards that set off the wedding-cake stonework of the country house against the technological novelty, at least at the time, of a dirigible blimp or railroad (see Figs. 1.10 and 1.11).

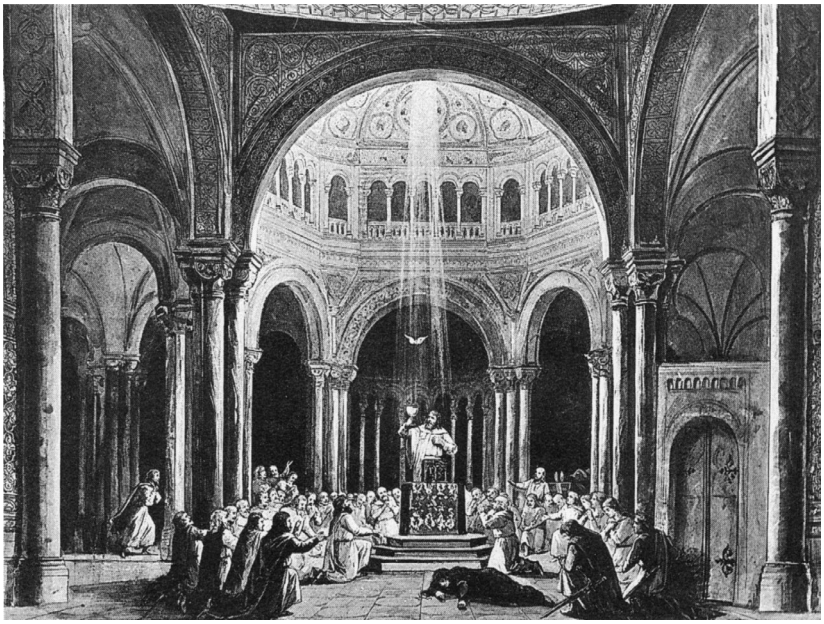


Fig. 1.9 Stage design for Act 3 of Wagner's *Parsifal*. Drawing by Paul von Joukowsky, 1882, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Parsifal_1882_Act3_Joukowsky_NGO4p119.jpg

Fig. 1.10 Postcard of a Clément-Bayard airship flying over Château de Pierrefonds (Pierrefonds, France: G. Duclos, 1904).

Fig. 1.11 Postcard of Château de Pierrefonds, pond, and train station (Paris: Lévy et Neurdein Réunis, ca. 1920–1932).

The intuition behind this visual compare-and-contrast in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries seems conveniently to ignore the newness of the country mansion itself, and instead to construe the battlements and turrets as forming the opposite of innovations that were then contemporary.

Disneyland could be faulted for being pseudo and unreal, inauthentic and insincere—anachronistic. Guilty as charged. At the same time, it could be esteemed for conjuring up what is felt to be the best of the past as a relief from modernity. The Disney theme park in Southern California is a third link in a chain that begins with Pierrefonds and then adds Neuschwanstein. Putting the paradigmatically American destination in this context deepens our understanding. Consequently, we appreciate better how the nostalgic distortion of the Middle Ages is nothing new at all. On the contrary, the phenomenon has appeared and reappeared across time for centuries and across space from one continent to another.

The Mount Venus episode was taken in many directions (see Fig. 1.12). One extreme romanticized the scene in a medievalesque way. In this guise, the world is seen through pastel-colored lenses, with all the minstrels and the innocence often associated with the medieval era. In it, too, the devotion to the Roman love goddess looks not radically dissimilar to adoration of the Virgin Mary. Another pole of interpretation and staging to which the scene was subjected bordered on soft-core erotica or even pornography (see Fig. 1.13).

Fig. 1.12 Postcard of a parade float from the Hudson-Fulton Celebration, to commemorate the tercentennial of Henry Hudson's discovery of the Hudson River and the centennial of Robert Fulton's commercial use of the paddle steamer. Tannhäuser in Venus's cave (New York: Redfield Brothers, 1909).

Fig. 1.13 Postcard of Josef Aigner's *Tannhäuser in the Venus Grotto*, Mural in the Study, Neuschwanstein Castle (Stuttgart: Farbenphotographische Gesellschaft, early twentieth century).

In a painting in the Neuschwanstein castle and images deriving from it, the grotto looks nothing like the crypt to which the performer in *Our Lady's Tumbler* would retreat for his devotions, or the replicas of Lourdes that have been reconstructed at the University of Notre Dame, as elsewhere. On the contrary, it resembles the faux cave that King Ludwig had constructed in the landscape garden surrounding his Linderhof Palace in southwest Bavaria. The completely artificial Venus Grotto there contained arc lights powered by two dozen dynamos that could illuminate it in changing colors.

In the depiction, the cavern is depicted as rife with naked putti, bow-and-arrowless Cupids. The spectator cannot help but notice the more titillating full-frontal nudity of Venus and her attendants. In this representation, the only clad figure is Tannhäuser himself, who rests his cheek on his hand and gazes pensively across the bare abdomen of the voluptuous goddess. If the context were an art studio full of budding artists, we could talk about the practice in studio classes that has been known in the jocular jargon of undergraduates as "crotch watching." The middle ground between the two pictorial extremes of cloying romanticism and seamy eroticism would have been occupied by instances in which the opera was staged. Those too left a mark upon the visual arts (see Fig. 1.14).

Fig. 1.14 "Tannhäuser im Venusberg." Woodcut by Richard Bong after painting by Friedrich Stahl, ca. 1890. Published in *Moderne Kunst: illustrierte Zeitschrift* 7.18 (ca. 1890): plate 59.

The Medievalesque Oeuvre of Jules Massenet

The composer has captured the
simple, naïve, eminently spiritual
feeling of those times and the result
is a delicately beautiful work of art.

The tale of *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* entered the medium of music as an opera by way not of Wagner but of an archetypical French composer, Jules Massenet (see Fig. 1.15).

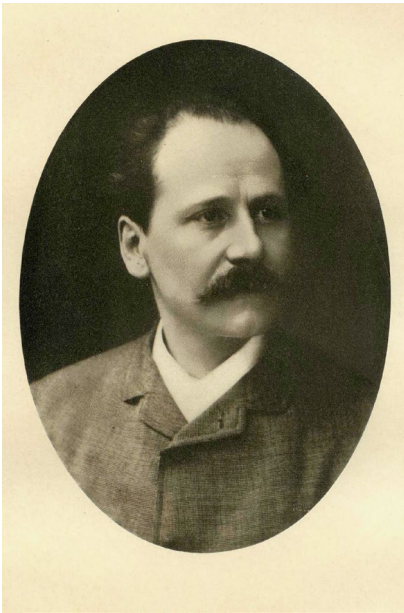


Fig. 1.15 Jules Massenet. Photograph from *A Gallery of Music Masters* (New York: Irving Squire, 1908).

What can we say about this musician from France? First, he was prolific. To his credit he had hundreds of songs, a substantial oeuvre of orchestral, chamber, and solo music, and four oratorios. Despite all this bounty, his reputation rested already then, as it does to this day, on his musical dramas. Massenet rated as the foremost figure in the grand opera for which his nation was famous in the late nineteenth century. In this capacity, he catered to the elite of his day. He made his name on the basis of such works as *Hérodiade* (1881), *Manon* (1884), *Werther* (1892), and *Thaïs* (1894). Musical dramas of these kinds afforded his audiences opportunities to retreat from the sometimes grim and unnerving modernity that surrounded them in real life, offering them fantasy masquerades that often relied on heavy doses of saccharine medievalism. The world around him was littered with signs of the breakdowns to come. All over the place it showed glints of anarchy, communism, and other forms of social change. Yet the

creator of our work was anything but a revolutionary. Rather, he was a centrist who sought to deliver entertainment to as much of the status quo as calculated tact allowed him to seduce. Though often an artist of greater charm than genius, by the premiere of *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* (1902) he was a cultural force to be reckoned with—often criticized and caricatured but never ignored (see Fig. 1.16).

Through music, Massenet achieved a similar status in the belle époque of French culture to that which Gaston Paris and Anatole France attained in scholarship and belles lettres, respectively. The songwriter was born in 1842, the philologist in 1839, and the writer in 1844. Just as Paris and France were inducted into the French Academy, the musician was accorded membership, over his fellow composer Saint-Saëns, in the Academy of Fine Arts. At the point of his election in 1878, he was the youngest person to have received this honor. Eventually he even served as president of the institution. Nor was his mere succès d'estime: his acclaim did not come only from cognoscenti of music. On the contrary, for decades he exercised a near monopoly over the Parisian opera houses through the mass appeal of his creations.

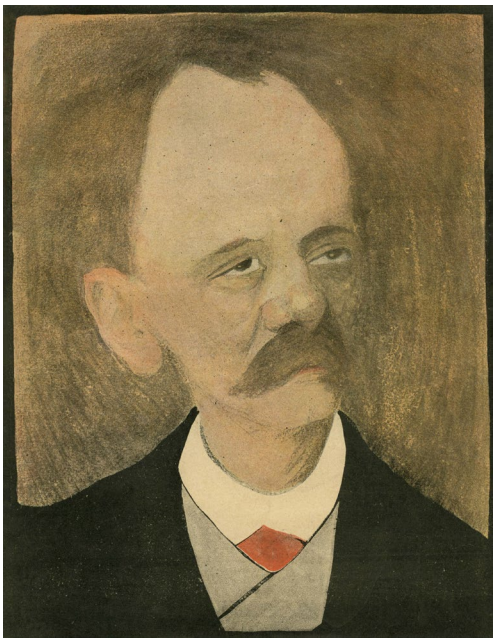


Fig. 1.16 Caricature of Jules Massenet. Illustration by Aroun-al-Rascid [Umberto Brunelleschi], 1902. Published in *L'Assiette au beurre* (September 1902).

Le jongleur de Notre Dame was neither Massenet's first nor last venture into romantic material inspired by the Middle Ages. Although known best for his musical dramas *Manon* and *Werther*, both set in the eighteenth century, his oeuvre in fact encompasses a substantial subset that belongs to the fin-de-siècle, medievalizing revival in music and literature as in architecture. The chapter of his autobiography that deals with

the opera about the jongleur and related ones set in the same era is entitled "In the Midst of the Middle Ages." By this phrase the composer meant mainly that at this point in his life he had immersed himself in librettos with stories set in the medieval period. At the same moment, he alluded to his sporadic attempts to play upon what he understood of the oldest music in Europe to which surviving notation allowed real access, especially plainchant.

Seen in the rearview mirror, "The Virgin" can be interpreted as having taken a first step in this direction. An oratorio-like composition with a French libretto, this recounting of the Virgin's life and afterlife was performed first at the Paris opera in 1880. Its four acts proceed from the Annunciation, through the Marriage at Cana and Good Friday, to the Assumption. Its score bore the impression of a lily. Effectively Mary's logo, the floral symbol associated with her signaled implicitly, or at least not overtly, the topic of this sacred legend (see Fig. 1.17).

Massenet set four operas explicitly in the Middle Ages. *Le Cid* had its first night in 1885, *Esclarmonde* in 1889, *Grisélidis* in 1901, and *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* in 1902. To them could be added *Panurge*, which was not staged until 1913, nearly a year after the composer's death. All these musical dramas deserve at least a glance, if we are to situate *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* in its context within the musician's oeuvre. Together, the fivesome amounted to a brand that could be called Massenet medieval or medievalesque Massenet.

The earliest of the handful, the four-act *Le Cid*, has a libretto in French. The text is based upon the classic five-act tragicomedy by the seventeenth-century tragedian Pierre Corneille. Massenet's story unfolds within what might be called anachronistically a "clash of civilizations" in medieval Spain between Christians and Muslims (see Fig. 1.18). The composer calls the adherents of Islam by the now-discarded term Moors. In the backdrop to the production, architecture evocative of the Middle Ages, both Romanesque and Gothic, signals Westernness and Christianity.

The story of Massenet's 1889 *Esclarmonde* centers upon the eponymous Byzantine empress and sorceress. The opera is enacted in a fantasy world where Byzantine meets medieval—or East meets West (see Fig. 1.19). The prologue, first act, and epilogue take place in Constantinople, while the third and fourth acts play out in France. The title character falls in love with a French knight from Blois named Roland who visits Byzantium. She has been enjoined to remain veiled until she turns twenty, when her husband will be selected through a tournament. Upon hearing that her beloved is on the cusp of marrying, she has him whisked away by sorcery to an island. There she becomes his wife in all but name, with the proviso that he not ask her identity or see her face. After one night together, Esclarmonde returns Roland to his native city to save it from being overrun. When she joins him there after his victory, the archbishop discovers the arrangement between the two of them. Thinking her to be a demon, he exorcises her. After further complications, Roland triumphs in the competition that enables him to marry the heroine openly.

Fig. 1.17 Title page of Charles Grandmougin and Jules Massenet, *La Vierge: Légende sacrée en quatre scènes* (Paris: Ménestrel, Heugel, 1880).

Fig. 1.18 Boabdil the Moor declares war against the king of Castille in Act 2, Scene 4, of Jules Massenet's *Le Cid*. Engraving by Émile Bayard, 1885. Published in *L'Illustration* (December 5, 1885), https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jules_Massenet_-_Le_Cid_2e_Acte,_4e_Tableau_-_L%27Illustration.jpg

Fig. 1.19 Title page of score for Alfred Blau, Louis de Gramont, and Jules Massenet, *Esclarmonde: Opéra romanesque*, illustration by Eugène Grasset (Paris: G. Hartmann, 1889).

For the narrative, the librettists drew upon two medieval French poems. One was the romance *Partonopeus de Blois* from the last third of the twelfth century, the other the early thirteenth-century *chanson de geste* or epic entitled *Huon de Bordeaux*. During the tumult of the Paris Commune that began in mid-March of 1871, one of the writers is said to have taken refuge in the library of Blois. There he chanced upon a copy of *Partonopeus*. Thus, this musical drama too owes its roots to the turn to the Middle Ages—more complex than simply a retreat into them—that followed close behind the Franco-Prussian War. Massenet's *Esclarmonde* was uniquely positioned to have broad impact, and its composer was singled out officially for being a prodigy in the genre, since it was the only opera to premiere during the Universal Exposition of 1889. Its opening night was the very date on which the French President Sadi Carnot presided over the ribbon-cutting for the Eiffel Tower. Like all the rest of the fair, it was intended to showcase before the world the achievements of France on the centenary of the revolution.

Around 1900, Massenet composed *Grisélidis*, a so-called lyric tale (French *conte lyrique*) comprising a prologue and three acts. The ultimate source was the story of patient Griselda (see Fig. 1.20). The account of the browbeating and bullying inflicted upon this young woman is best known to Anglo-American audiences through its appearance in "The Clerk's Tale," one of the *Canterbury Tales*. For all the importance of Chaucer in the English-speaking world, the libretto adheres in large measure instead to an internationally more influential source: the narrative as related in the Italian prose of Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron*. In almost all versions, the tale focuses upon the progressively more bestial ordeals that the noble husband metes out to his long-suffering wife to test her loyalty oath. Among various changes, the librettists of the French opera set the events in fourteenth-century Provence. For extra measure, they also added a demon as a tempter. In Massenet's version, Griselda's spouse makes a wager with the Prince of Darkness that his better half will remain faithful to him while he squares off against the Saracens, as medieval Christians often designated Muslims, especially Arabs. While the husband is absent, the malevolent spirit makes many fruitless efforts to seduce the nobleman's wife. Old Nick, looking like a member of a Blue Man Group who has been run through a vacuum cleaner bag, steals the show with an attitude that qualifies as (and this cannot be open to question) devil-may-care (see Fig. 1.21).

Later would come the posthumously staged *Amadis*. The text reveals its broader context within the medievalizing vogue at the turn of the century by explicitly citing the Pre-Raphaelite British painter Edward Burne-Jones in describing various images (see Fig. 1.22). This musical drama was first performed in Monte Carlo in 1922, nearly a decade after Massenet's death. The composer had begun to work on it far earlier, and he may have done the bulk of the composition immediately after writing the musical drama of concern to us. If so, *Grisélidis*, *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*, and *Amadis* would

have constituted in effect a triptych of medievalesque operas, all composed in the first two years or so of the twentieth century. The text of *Amadis* tells a story based on a Spanish chivalric romance (see Fig. 1.23).

Fig. 1.20 Poster for "Grisélidis: Conte lyrique, par Armand Silvestre et Eugène Morand; Musique de Massenet." Color lithograph on linen after original by François Flameng, 1901.

Fig. 1.21 Lucien Fugère as the Devil in Jules Massenet's *Grisélidis*.
Photograph by Cautin et Berger, 1901.

Fig. 1.22 Edward Burne-Jones, *Love among the Ruins*, 1873. Watercolor, 96.5 × 152.4 cm. Private collection, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Burne-jones-love-among-the-ruins.jpg

Fig. 1.23 Title page of Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo, *Los quatro libros del virtuoso cavallero Amadís de Gaula* (Caragoça [Saragossa]: George Coci Aleman, 1508).

Although the earliest extant form of the original is an edition published in 1508, tales related to the medieval one were recounted and recorded already at the latest by the mid-fourteenth century. As told in the libretto, the narrative, set in Brittany, revolves around the brothers Amadis and Galaor. Separated at birth, they end up dueling over a princess before they recognize each other. Galaor dies before his sibling, now an unwitting fratricide, can piece together that he has fatally wounded his own sibling.

Massenet, seeking an encore of the triumph he had experienced with dramas based on medieval material, had in the wings a second medievalesque opera, set in the fourteenth century as *Grisélidis* had been. The composer apparently trusted that his creation would be a success, since he had the vocal score of *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* engraved even before the musical drama was accepted for performance. The publishing house belonged to Henri Heugel, who mediated to bring about a meeting of the minds between Massenet and Albert I of Monaco. In fact, Heugel's home in Paris provided the venue for a crucial tryout of the work before the Prince. Since acceding to

the throne in 1889, the ruler of the principality had been an enterprising benefactor of the arts and sciences. On June 15, 1901, the Romanian-born Raoul Gunsbourg, director of the Opera of Monte Carlo, clinched the deal by signing a contract with Heugel for the composition. For his pains, Massenet received a tidy sum, and the publisher soon printed the score. Purely by chance, the name of the press, going back to 1842, means in French "The Minstrel."

An unidentified artist designed a title page in an agreeable Gothicizing style, with elaborate floriation. Within a quatrefoil, he framed the Virgin. Our Lady wears a blue and gold head cloth and is crowned with a nimbus, all against a golden background (see Fig. 1.24).

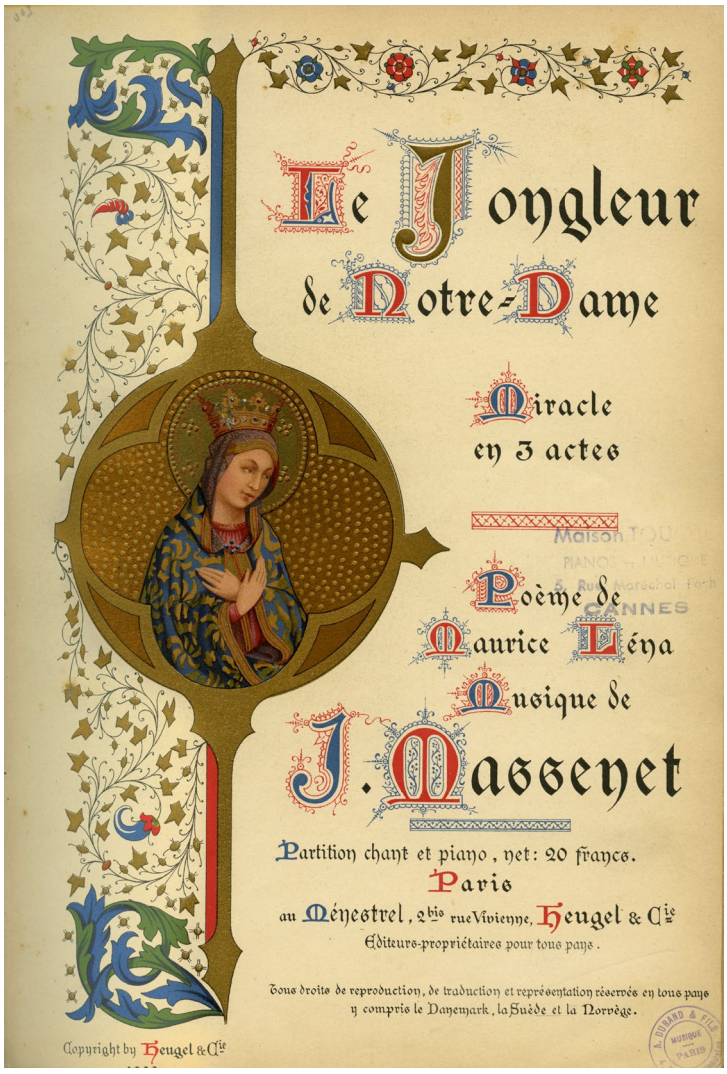


Fig. 1.24 Title page of piano-vocal score for Maurice Léna and Jules Massenet, *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame: Miracle en trois actes* (Paris: Heugel, 1906).

The illustrator indulged in a slight sappiness that verges on kitschiness. For all that, the depiction of Mary evidenced a sensitivity to and understanding of medieval art and iconography. The Middle Ages, especially as monumentalized in missals and other such manuscripts that the late nineteenth century treasured, matched musical drama well. Both codices and operas were multifarious, multifunctional, and multimedia, with the verbal, visual, and musical all melding within them. Thus, Heugel's decision to appropriate all the characteristic fixed features and fine flourishes of a handwritten book from six or seven centuries earlier in presenting a medievalesque opera was not a matter of chance. Rather, it acknowledged a bona fide correspondence between the two media. Not by accident did Gothic revivalism intersect with the Golden Age of opera: drama set to music constituted an ideal form of art in which to bring parchment to life.

The Tall Tale of the Libretto

In his autobiography, Massenet provides the gist for a timeline, in equal measure colorful and undependable, to delineate when and how his collaboration with the librettist for this opera took place. The composer claims that while traveling by rail from Paris to the country, he sifted unopened mail. To his surprise, he found in his hands a mysterious parcel that contained an anonymous manuscript. Normally, he says, he had no appetite for unsolicited librettos sent to him other than by his regular coworkers, and he made a steadfast point of not reading anonymous submissions that came over the transom. Yet despite his initial disinclination to peruse the text, Massenet dipped into it, or so he says. A quick glance turned into much more. He read with engrossment that ripened into stupefaction.

Our own greatest astonishment may be that in relating his version of events, the musician muddles through somehow without ever accrediting the shining light of Anatole France, to whom he or rather a different librettist with whom he collaborated had turned earlier for the composer's 1894 opera *Thaïs*. At this moment in the early twentieth century, everyone in the empyrean of French high culture knew France's tale. At the same time, the future Nobel Prize winner could be a polarizing figure. The composer had good reason not to broadcast his indebtedness to the author, which was obvious anyway. From start to finish, the libretto does not correspond exactly to the very short story. The opera omits the first in the three Roman-numeraled sections of the prose. At the other end, the juggler of the musical composition dies of joy. In France's narrative, the same character (named Barnaby rather than Jean) is left living as events conclude.

What of the poem from the Middle Ages? Did Massenet, Léna, or both also know it or at least of it, perhaps second-hand as mediated through one of the prose adaptations by Félix Brun or the verse of Raymond de Borrelli? As the second act opens, the juggler twice expresses shame at wolfing down "fat meats" and swilling "good wines" without being able in recompense to sing the office in Latin. The tumbler in the original text

frets over taking nourishment within the community without contributing in return. After eventually performing before the Madonna, he is described as resembling in his sweatiness a meat roast, skewered over the fire and oozing fat. The parallel here between the medieval piece of poetry and the modern libretto is mildly suggestive, but subdued.

But let us go back to the legend of the libretto. The composer's alleged bemusement took a fresh turn, or so he contends, when he heard from his concierge that the writer who had dropped off the package wished to remain unidentified unless and until Massenet had agreed to compose the music. The musician asserts that he did not find out the name of the mysterious individual until after he himself had finished the score. At that point, the author unmasked himself as a friend, one Maurice Léna (see Fig. 1.25).

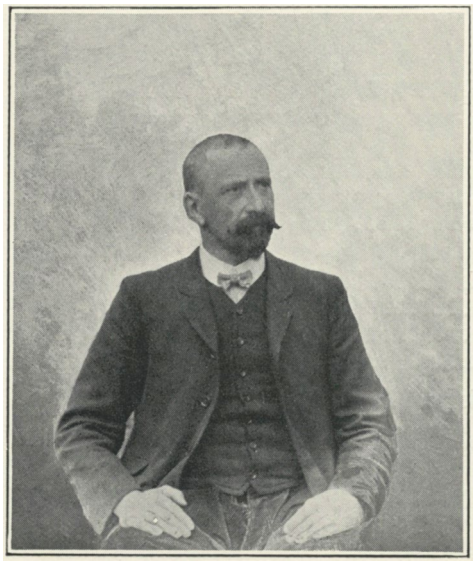


Fig. 1.25 Maurice Léna. Photograph, date and photographer unknown. Published in Louis Schneider, *Massenet: L'homme — le musicien. Illustrations et documents inedits* (Paris: L. Carteret, 1908), 247.

A professor of rhetoric, he eventually relinquished his academic posts, and instead went on to write as a music critic and an author of texts for operas.

In Léna's librettos for various composers, material relating to the Middle Ages stands out. Acutely relevant would be *The Farce of the Vat* (1912), a two-act opéra bouffe that follows a medieval play;

The Damnation of Blanchefleur: Two-Act Miracle (1920); and *In the Shadow of the Cathedral* (1921), which takes place in the great church of Toledo, in Spain. The last-mentioned features before the title page an illustration depicting the interior of just such a house of worship. Plainly visible through an archway stands a sculpture of a crowned woman, as likely as not the Virgin (see Fig. 1.26).

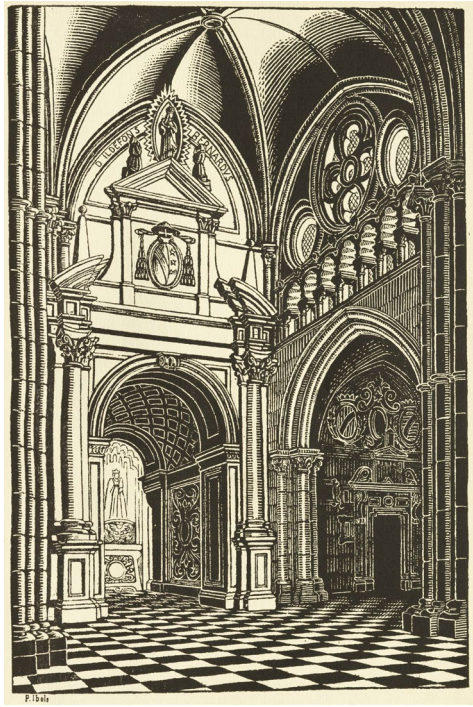


Fig. 1.26 Frontispiece of *Dans l'ombre de la cathédrale: drame lyrique en 3 actes*, poem by Maurice Léna and Henry Ferrare, music by Georges Hüe (Paris: Heugel, 1921).

A last item not to be overlooked is Léna's text for the *Knight of the Barrel*. It is adapted from a medieval French poem that has been regarded as a close relative or companion piece of *Our Lady's Tumbler*.

An obituary celebrated the librettist for having "retained in the depths of his tender and limpid heart a love for the France of old—medieval, religious, chivalrous, and full of gaiety." Elsewhere he was singled out "for his scholarship and his habit of delving into medieval legends." He puts both qualities on display in *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*. Massenet himself portrays the writer as "familiarized with the archaism of the Middle Ages." Of course, this perspective neglects to acknowledge that medieval writings would seldom and hardly have been archaic in their own period.

A final factor worth mentioning is that Léna was the poet of "Fourvières," itself devoted to the Mother of God, which Massenet set to music in 1893. The title refers to a district of Lyon, the location of the basilica named Notre-Dame. A gilt statue of Mary stands on the northwest tower of the church (see Fig. 1.27). In turn, the Golden Virgin constitutes the center in the Festival of Lights that occurs annually on December 8, when the Lyonnais display lighted candles at their windows. Against the backdrop of Léna's other verse and librettos, it would be almost profitless to imagine a person with better credentials for the subject matter of *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*. He was just the librettist for a story both medieval and Mariocentric.

Massenet's chronology of the opera's composition and completion is probably as fanciful and far from the truth as his convoluted account of how its text was consigned to him. Although he reports having composed the musical drama in the spring of 1900, he is on record as having met Léna one year earlier while summering in Égreville (see Fig. 1.28).

Fig. 1.27 Postcard of the statue of the Virgin atop the Basilica of Notre-Dame de Fourvière, Lyon (Paris: L. V. et Cie, early twentieth century).

Fig. 1.28 Jules Massenet at his home at Egreville. Photograph, ca. 1900. Photographer unknown. Published in Jules Massenet, *My Recollections*, trans. H. Villiers Barnet (Boston: Small, Maynard, 1919), between pp. 44 and 45.

Presumably the musician undertook work from 1899 into 1900. Apparently, he finished the score for song and piano in September 1900, and polished off the full orchestration not too much later.

Back to the summer get-together of composer and librettist. Massenet fabricates further by maintaining that he had no keyboard in his country home. In fact, the musician did have an instrument tucked away in the house, although he may have kept it secreted from public view so as to avoid being importuned by callers to perform. Alternatively, he may have screened off the device as a prank directed particularly at

Léna, after having invited the writer to call upon him in his country house so as to hear the music of *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* for the first time.

Massenet reminisces that for want of a piano he had to duck into a deserted church to bang out the notes for Léna on a harmonium there. The composer claims to have been initially deterred by religious fear from activating the foot-operated bellows of the pump organ; he felt that on the day of the month when Léna visited, secular song would have been especially out of place in a sacred setting. In the end, the music won out and he played. Thus, he implies that the very tension latent in the medieval form of *Our Lady's Tumbler* still holds, between the simplicity of lay devotion and the strictures of sanctimonious clerics.

Fig. 1.29 "The Feast of the Assumption in Boulogne: The Procession in Honour of the Virgin." Drawing by Paul Renouard, 1899. Published in *The Graphic*, September 30, 1899, 452–53.

To intensify the colorful, and faulty, picture, Massenet pretends that this entire episode happened by a stroke of luck on the eve of the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven. The dogma holds that at the conclusion of her earthly life the Mother of God was taken up, body and soul, into heavenly glory. The festivity takes place on August 15. Although the Catholic Church did not make the doctrine official until 1950, this point in the calendar was marked far earlier by popular parades and celebrations as well as by being designated a public holiday (see Fig. 1.29). The festival holds special contextual relevance to the opera, since it also provides the occasion on which the second act is set.

The first act transpires on May Day. The date is doubly well timed. In the first place, it allows for the folklore and folksiness associated with that feast. For instance,

to mark the special holiday the young people are shown dancing the *bergerette*, an old French shepherds' dance. Secondly, it coincides with the start of the "month of Mary." Anatole France coordinated with this timing the publication in magazine form of his short story. Massenet's opera does not advert directly to the period of the year, but significantly the lay brother who returns to the monastery from shopping has bought not only food and drink for the brethren but also many flowers for the Virgin (see Fig. 1.30). The springtime atmosphere and the Mother of God go logically together.

In the end, the two most cogent points of orientation in the composition are naturally music and text. Three manuscripts of them are extant, the definitive one produced by a professional copyist (with rewrites in the hand of Massenet and others), but the earliest is a holograph by the composer himself. Both the notes and the words give evidence of a serious effort to make gestures that would be true to the Middle Ages—or at least to what the medieval period was thought to be. In combination, the sounds and words render the musical drama by far the most successful long form of the tale about the jongleur. *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* may be criticized for being the bloated and padded form of a short story. All the same, both the musical and the verbal accretions to the nub of this simple tale stand out for their variety as well as their quality. The opera gives listeners and viewers Massenet at his very best.

Fig. 1.30 Lucien Fugère as "Boniface" in Jules Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*. Photograph, 1904. Photographer unknown. Published on the front cover of *Musica* 3.21 (June 1904).

The Middle Ages of the Opera

> Did you ever hear of this juggler, Jean, who lived in Cluny some time in the fourteenth century, in the days when mediaeval architecture was quite the most modern art of building?

The librettist Léna, although reflecting around two decades after the opera premiered, reveals a wide-ranging familiarity with the modern reception of the medieval story. He touches upon the *editio princeps* by Wendelin (or Wilhelm) Foerster, as well as the mentions of the poem by Gaston Paris and others that led to its enshrinement in manuals and anthologies. Among late nineteenth-century retellings, he shows awareness of the poem by Raymond de Borrelli and the prose by Anatole France. The latter he qualifies as a little masterpiece. The original from the Middle Ages he presents in terms by now familiar: its rhythm is "naïve," the fabliau has an "ingenuous" narrative style, the culminating episode in it is a "delightful vignette in the primitive manner." By the time of these reflections the belle époque had been dispelled forever by World War I, but a half century of reactions to *Our Lady's Tumbler* had left too long and deep a mark to be forgotten or overlooked.

In the text Massenet, or rather the writer who collaborated with him, intervened in major and minor ways. To take one example, the composer reportedly insisted on representing the Virgin in the form of a statue, as opposed to a painting; perhaps he did so in order to avoid any semblance of belaboring a motif he had employed already at the climax of *Grisélidis*. In the earlier opera, the triptych that forms the title character's oratory flies open to reveal an image of Saint Agnes holding in her arms Loys. This is the son who was wrested from her by the devil (see Fig. 1.31). At least as sometimes staged, the miracle occurs amid brilliant illumination. First Griselda claps the boy to her breast, and then her husband and she, with the child sandwiched between them, pledge each other everlasting love. To make the pandemonium true to the word, the Evil One obtrudes suddenly through a cranny in the wall. Wearing a monk's habit and carrying a staff, stooped, he complains of feeling old, and vows to become a hermit.

The musician had his way, in this instance, and turned up his nose at the substitution of a painted depiction. As a result, consistent with the medieval poem and Anatole France's short story, the musical drama retains the Madonna in the round. As described in the first act, the abbey has a statue of the Virgin over the main door. A second image of Mary, painted by the monastery's designated painter and placed on the altar, is mentioned later. This one becomes the object of the jongleur's special reverence, and is irradiated eventually by a supernatural brightness.

Fig. 1.31 Mary Garden as Grisélidis in Jules Massenet's *Grisélidis*. Photograph by the Byron Company, New York, 1910. Published in *Theatre Magazine* 11.109 (March 1910), 92.

In another matter, though, Massenet's preference did not prevail. He wished to shift the action from the the Order of Saint Benedict in the cloister of Cluny, where Léna placed it, to the Cistercian environs of Clairvaux. The composer was not motivated by any special fidelity to the medieval French poem. Rather, his thought was that the garb of the white monks would have a more luminous effect than the black of the Benedictines. An additional incentive to eschew the dark hue could well have been that black was polarizing in France, because of its associations with the clergy. In Stendhal's famous 1830 novel *The Red and the Black*, the colors stand for the red of military uniforms and the black of the clerical costume in contemporary France. In *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* the eventual solution came in a compromise, setting the action in the famous center of the Cluniac reform but draping the monks in white robes. Neither Saint Benedict nor Saint Bernard would have approved this bastardization, in which the brethren in a monastic foundation of one order are clothed in the habit of the other. Contrary to all proverbial wisdom, black is made white. As a result, in the first act the jongleur is dressed in the garments of an entertainer, and in the second in a Cistercian's robe, while in the third he strips away the monastic attire to reveal his professional outfit once again. If the change suits the careful tightrope that artists in late nineteenth-century French culture had to walk between the Catholic Church and secularism, it compounds the sense that the monastery of Massenet and Léna is no more real than the make-believe Gothic edifices that Viollet-le-Duc placed in his equally imaginary medieval municipality of Clusy.

In everyday life, Cluny sits in Burgundy between the Saône and the Loire rivers. The choice of this venue as a setting might at first seem curious. The abbey was notable as trendsetter for the reformed monasticism of the tenth and eleventh centuries in the West that was named after it. The interchangeable expressions "Cluniac Reform" and "Benedictine Reform" have become conventional. The relocation of the story in the libretto had an unintended irony, since it replaced the monastery most emblematic of Cistercianism with the cloister at the heart of the order's chief rival, namely, reformed Benedictinism. More than a half millennium later, the institution acquired melancholy fame for having undergone thorough destruction after the French Revolution. Its ruins, and its ruination, became an object of fascination in the nineteenth century. In 1898, the town there even became the locus of a major festivity to celebrate the medieval past. Specifically, the jubilee commemorated the nine hundredth anniversary of the inauguration, by Abbot Odilo of Cluny, of the feast known as All Souls' Day. Although too late to have affected Massenet or Léna in the conception of the opera about the jongleur, the millennium of the foundation in 1910 further enlarged the circle of audience members who were aware of the cloister and its historical significance (see Fig. 1.32).

The resonances of the abbey as it had been in the Middle Ages were heightened steeply in the 1830s and 40s. In 1832, the first museum of medieval art was established in the Hôtel de Cluny in Paris. In 1843, the collection and site were acquired by the French state. In the intervening centuries, the institution has been restructured as the National Museum of the Middle Ages (see Fig. 1.33).

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS, SEPT. 17, 1910.– 411

"ST. LOUIS" AT CLUNY: THE MILLENARY OF THE BENEDICTINE ABBEY.

THE HISTORICAL PAGEANT SHOWING THE ENTRANCE OF LOUIS IX. INTO THE ABBEY PRECINCTS.

1. ST. LOUIS ENTERING THE BENEDICTINE ABBEY OF CLUNY.
2. BLANCHE OF CASTILE AT CLUNY.
3. THE PROCESSION PASSING THROUGH THE STREETS OF CLUNY, SHOWING BOWMEN.
4. THE PROCESSION PASSING THROUGH THE STREETS, SHOWING BEARERS OF BELLS AND MACES.
5. ST. LOUIS (LOUIS IX.) ARRIVING AT CLUNY.
6. PAGES.
7. INNOCENT IV. BLESSING LOUIS IX.

Cluny has just celebrated the millenary of the foundation of its famous Benedictine Abbey, once the greatest edifice of its kind in Europe, and surpassed among cathedrals only by the old St. Peter's, which was a few feet larger. The monks were expelled from it in 1789; and it is now in ruins. A feature of the millenary celebrations was a historical pageant representing the entrance of St. Louis into the Abbey precincts when he came on a visit to Pope Innocent IV.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRANGER.

Fig. 1.32 Photographs from Cluny's millenary celebration in 1898. Published in *The Illustrated London News*, September 17, 1910, 411.

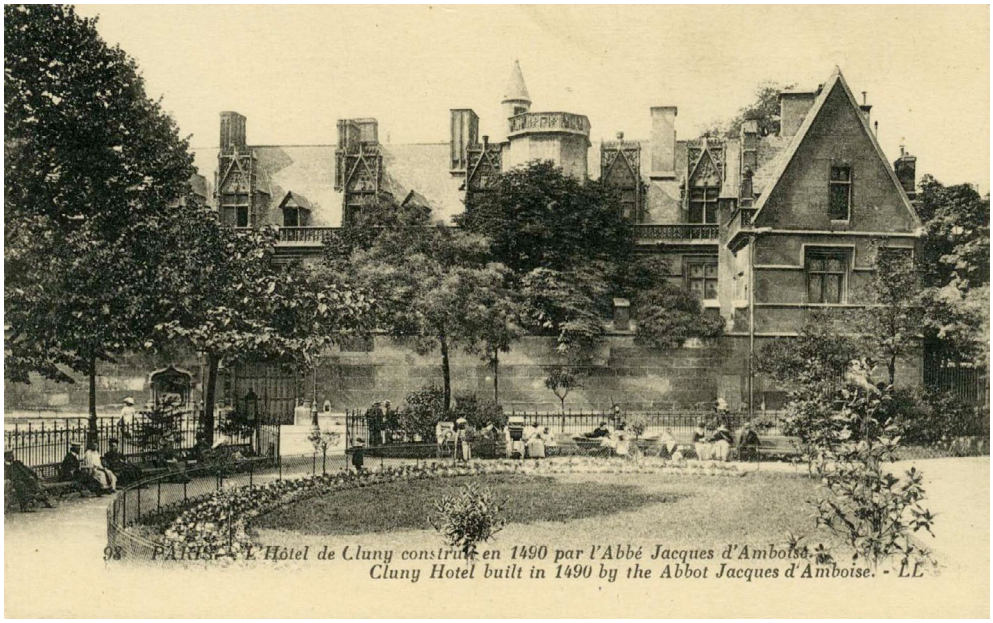


Fig. 1.33 Postcard of the Hôtel de Cluny, Paris (Paris: Lévy et Neurdein Réunis, early twentieth century).

These buildings may constitute the foremost specimen of medieval civic architecture that survives in the City of Light. Although today without any substantial artifacts to memorialize its former role as the town house of the abbots, the complex has long kept the name of the cloister in the public mind. Furthermore, people would have had reason to associate Cluny with Mary and Madonnas. Naturally enough, the sculptural holdings of the facility in the French capital encompass representations of the Virgin and Child that would have been known through their display, as well as by being widely publicized through postcards in the early twentieth century (see Figs. 1.34 and 1.35).

The libretto for the early performances of Massenet's opera in New York and Chicago refers to Cluny as a suburb of Paris. The reference must be to the museum, since even as the crow flies, the municipality with the onetime monastery is located 200 miles from the big city. In the early years of the twentieth century the actual ruined abbey, more remote from the capital, may have held special appeal by virtue of being still largely a blank canvas. On it the librettist could ply his verbal paintbrush without constraint—and with the romance of ruins to add momentum to the wistfulness for the imagined beauty, simplicity, and difference of times (and spirit) lost that has often pulled people toward the Middle Ages. Interest in Cluny had been piqued, but the thoroughgoing campaign of architectural and archaeological investigations at the site lay decades in the future. A photograph was widely disseminated of the American architectural historian who conducted the later dig. It depicts him in an enclosed trench at the dilapidated abbey (see Fig. 1.36).

Fig. 1.34 Postcard of a sixteenth-century Franco-Flemish statue of Virgin and Child, Musée de Cluny, Paris (early twentieth century).

Fig. 1.35 Postcard of an early sixteenth-century French statue (Champagne school) of Virgin and Child, Musée de Cluny, Paris (early twentieth century).

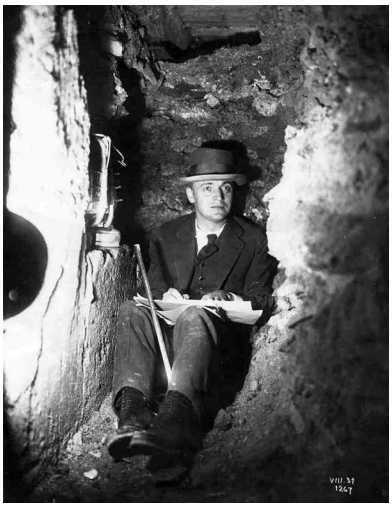


Fig. 1.36 Kenneth John Conant excavates Cluny Abbey. Photograph, ca. 1931. Photographer unknown. Image courtesy of the Medieval Academy of America. All rights reserved.

Just beyond view, we can picture pickaxes, shovels, sifters, trowels, and other tools of the trade. Yet we should not let ourselves get carried away by our overactive imagination. A ditch is not an underground chamber, and no association between Cluny and crypts has ever been drawn. In the long meantime, the spadefuls excavated have long since been backfilled.

Even the sounds of *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* are studded with self-styled medieval features. A recent description of the opera makes the synesthetic statement that "the score has the exquisite colors of stained glass." Indeed, the music is translucently, if not transparently, medievalesque. Léna reported that while working cheek by jowl on the musical drama, he and Massenet consulted a young Benedictine monk to ensure that the pair got right their allusions to medieval chant. In the waning years of the nineteenth century other French composers had followed through on similar impulses. In a three-part oratorio, Massenet himself had resorted already to effects drawn from Gregorian chorale. Entitled *La terre promise* (in English, The Promised Land), the piece's French libretto was based on texts from the Vulgate Latin Bible. Its first performance took place in 1900, in the appositely ecclesiastical venue of Saint-Eustache church in Paris (see Fig. 1.37).

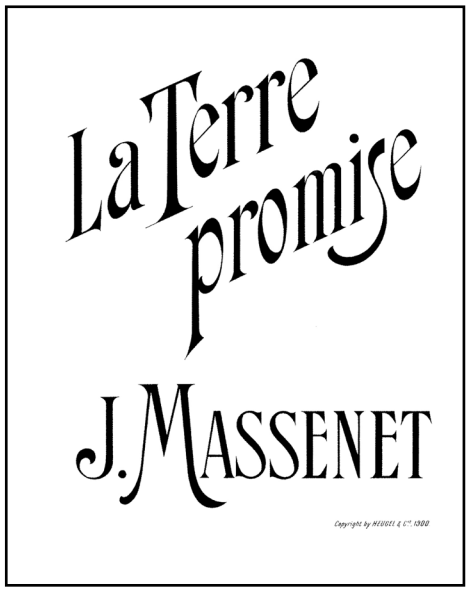


Fig. 1.37 Title page of vocal score. Jules Massenet, *La terre promise* (Paris: Heugel, 1900).

Interestingly, the composition anticipated *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* in containing no role for a woman, apart from a soprano voice to represent God.

When all is said and done, we should not go as far as to make optimistic assumptions about how punctilious Massenet managed to be in medievalizing. He was a composer, not an aspiring reconstructor or performer of early music. He made no bones about

his skepticism regarding the potential relevance of learned investigation to inventive minds. His autobiography contains a revealing anecdote about an encounter he had with an unidentified specialist in medieval literature, whom he regarded as a dull and dreary pedant. When the musician was immersed in working on the medievalesque *Grisélidis*, the researcher presented him with a copy of an in-depth study. In turn, Massenet passed on the monograph to his friend, the painter Gérôme (see Fig. 1.38).

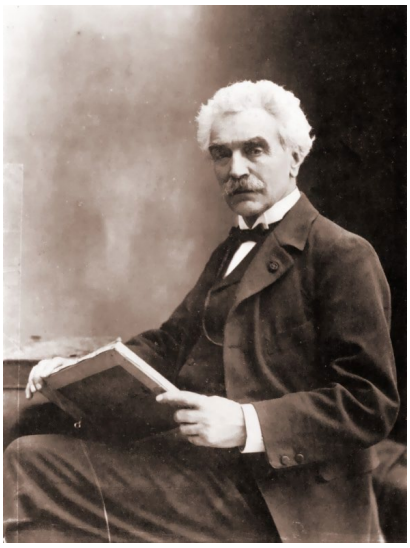


Fig. 1.38 Jean-Léon Gérôme. Photograph by Nadar (pseudonym for Gaspard-Félix Tournachon), date unknown.

When the philologist sought reactions to the work, the artist told the poor fellow: "How pleasantly I fell asleep while reading your book yesterday!" This persiflage is said to have satisfied the medievalist: the scholar failed to detect that his precious publication was being held up to ridicule. On the one side stood the erudite but imperceptive literary critic, in the dark that all his efforts occasioned nothing but longueur. On the other smirked the creative souls of the musician and painter. Those capable of bridging the divide between the humanities and arts have often been far too few.

Incorporating Gregorian features in the opera makes sense. At the time, the Catholic Church itself was both making a return to monastic chant and being urged to open up at least a little to the music of the theater. The nineteenth century saw a liturgical revival. At its heart was what could be called a restoration or even a renaissance of the monophony used in the liturgy. This chant contrasted strongly with the prevailing polyphony of classical music, in which individual melodies combine to harmonize. The resuscitation of plainchant owed largely to medievalizing reforms undertaken by the black-hooded monks of Solesmes in France. The guiding spirit in these refinements was Dom Prosper Guéranger, a romantic medievalist and medievalizer

who reestablished Benedictine monasticism in France after the hiatus imposed by the French Revolution. The school of singers and the studies and publications of the monastery that grew out of his efforts exercised, and to this day continue to project, influence far outside the bounds of their cloister.

This abbey captivated the fancy of those who visited it. Even those not physically present at Solesmes could be induced to envisage the complex as it would look on a moonlit night, as pictured in a nocturne (see Fig. 1.39).

Fig. 1.39 Postcard advertising Moka Leroux, with Benedictine abbey of Solesmes by moonlight. Photograph by Atelier of Joseph Malicot, Sablé-sur-Sarthe, ca. 1901–1907.

While sipping a cup of piping hot mocha, they could imagine a rhapsody in brew as the soothing sounds of plainsong pinged softly across the waters of the river. The English controversialist G. K. Chesterton, who cranked out books on Thomas Aquinas, Francis of Assisi, and Geoffrey Chaucer, referred not too much later to the sundry strata or substrates that underlie the average modern person's preconceived ideas about the Middle Ages. The first perspective he isolated was "The Old Romantic View, with its wandering knights and captive princesses. According to this, the Dark Ages were not so much dark as lit exclusively by moonlight." This is precisely the vantage point from which we peer at the cloister in this old postcard.

More than any of Massenet's other often easy-listening operas with their late romantic style, his musical drama about the jongleur nods to what were felt then to be the distinguishing characteristics of medieval song itself. The historical music movement and the *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* tradition intersect later at many points, in Henry Adams and Aileen Tone, W. H. Auden and Charles Turner, and Peter Davies, among others. Medievalesque operas from the Golden Age are mostly now long forgotten, but we have inherited vogues that they helped to launch, among them the trend to study and perform early music. Though the compositions of this

French composer from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century would never be mistaken for belonging truly to the Middle Ages, the orchestration gives listeners today a good idea of how he imagined the voices and instruments of the era might have sounded. It captures a moment when medievalist musicology was pushing ahead to breakthroughs facilitated by philology and historicism. It plays upon qualities of both liturgical and folk music that were felt to be medieval. In addition, it is infused with elements of late-medieval motets.

How, specifically, does the composer break the sound barrier? The style of *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* is in general more diatonic than elsewhere in his works. On the ecclesiastical side, we can detect reverberations of chant and counterpoint, churchlike phrases and cadences, even melismas and responsive singing, with hints of liturgical modes. The successive intervals of fourths have been regarded as characteristically medieval. Less technically, the opera even includes a scene that depicts a kind of choral dry run.

In instrumentation, the orchestra relied upon old devices that had been seldom used in then-recent musical dramas. Notably, it featured the *viola d'amore* or viol, chalumeau, and portative organ. The use of the viol is particularly apt (see Figs. 1.40 and 1.41).

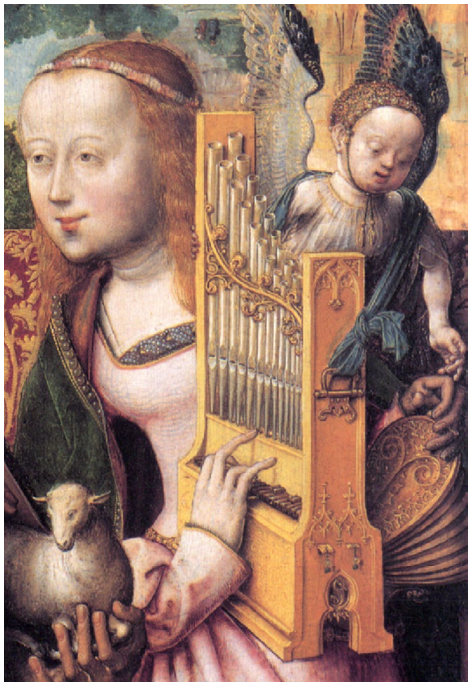


Fig. 1.40 Saint Cecilia and a portative organ. Detail from Meister des Bartholomäus-Altars, *Kreuz-Altar*, ca. 1490–1495. Tempera on wood. Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Portativ.png

Fig. 1.41 "Viola d'Amore." Illustration by William Gibb, 1888. Published in Alfred J. Hipkins, *Musical Instruments, Historic, Rare, and Unique: A Series of Fifty Plates in Colours* (Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black, 1888), plate 27.

The instrument has the unusual quality of having two separate courses of strings. The upper set of seven is bowed. Though not touched directly by the bow, the lower, often also consisting of seven, vibrates sympathetically. The resulting sound qualifies as exotic to those whose ears are accustomed to more standard orchestration. The exoticism is corroborated by orientalism, since the *viola d'amore* is thought to have originated in the East. But in Massenet's day, the foreignness may have been ascribed more to chronological than geographical distance, as the viol was viewed as a legacy of the Middle Ages.

In the libretto, the medieval musical device called the *vielle* or *viele* is mentioned. Its fiddle-like sounds are audible even before the jongleur Jean himself sidles on stage. The near homophony in French between the monosyllable of his name and the first syllable of the noun for his profession underscores his role: *Jean* calls to mind his métier of *jon*gleur. He carries his *vielle* and his juggler's paraphernalia as he girds his loins to amuse the townspeople. Even after becoming a monk, Jean persists in wearing a performer's vest under his habit. In one sense this underclothing could evoke a hair shirt. Then again, it anticipates unintentionally the practice that Clark Kent enacts when he sheds his office attire to reveal Superman's caped skinsuit underneath. In

any event, Jean strums his *vielle* during his routine for the Virgin. Thus, the depiction of a violin at the base of the statue in the sole surviving miniature that illustrates a manuscript of the thirteenth-century French *Our Lady's Tumbler* foreshadows much that came later in the representation of the character. True to the jongleur from the Middle Ages, the operatic one was often performed as a jack-of-all-trades but master of none who juggled and fiddled.

In the libretto, Léna's portrayal of the professional's repertoire reveals an acquaintance, albeit somewhat rusty and not always sure, with medieval vernacular literature. The entertainer favors especially epics, the short songs known as *chansons de toile* or "songs of cloth," and the French equivalents of the Latin lyric and parodic poems often called Goliardic. Despite this relative meticulousness about the nitty-gritty of literature from the Middle Ages, Léna's text divulges only one scant clue that he consulted either the thirteenth-century vernacular original or Brun's paraphrase of it in late nineteenth-century French. In the second act, the name part comments mournfully upon his inability to earn his keep. The performer in *Our Lady's Tumbler* voices a similar guilt.

In the opera, the jongleur is presented at the outset as somewhat feckless. He first offers his prospective audience of feast- and market-day townsfolk their choice from a menu of selections extracted from the epics known as *chansons de geste*. Jean volunteers to sing a few lays. One is of Roland, the leading character of the eponymous *Song of Roland*, and the horn called Oliphant that this tragically heroic nephew of Charlemagne, more no-blow than no-show and certainly not blowhard, declined to sound until too late, when he and his sidekicks were ambushed by Saracens in the debacle at Roncevaux (see Fig. 1.42). The musical offerings also include an unspecified song of Charlemagne himself, and another of Bertha of the Big Foot (see Fig. 1.43), the unforgettable name (as distorted in later legend) of the Frankish queen Bertrada of Laon. In the tale that took shape around her, an impostor usurps her place of honor as the bride of Pepin the Short, Charlemagne's father. As chance would have it, the entertainer proposes to sing also of Pepin himself. Finally, he volunteers to make music about Renaud de Montauban, another man of the hour from the time of Charlemagne (see Fig. 1.44).

The townsfolk will have none of the straightforward heroism. Instead, they prefer the blasphemy of a drinking song that burlesques elements of the liturgy, at least by mentioning them. Finally comes the alleluia of wine, a nod to the many chants that begin and end with Hebrew polysyllabic formulas. One would search in vain for actual travesties from the Middle Ages that intersect directly with any of those that materialize in the libretto. Similarly, these melodies assume only general awareness of their medieval antecedents. In any case, the prior in Massenet's opera is enraged at having such strains resound within the precincts of the monastery, especially in proximity to the Madonna. Revealingly, Jean appeals directly to this very image when the same leader apprehends him.

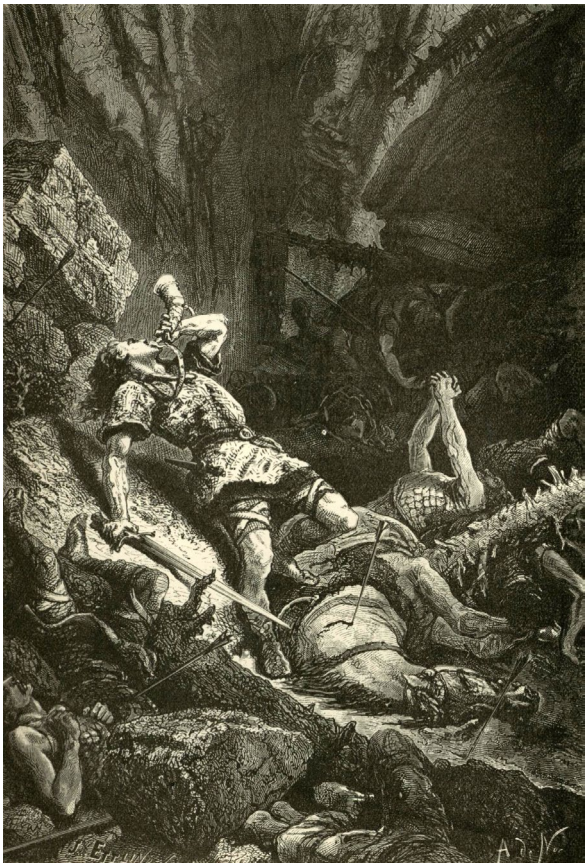


Fig. 1.42 The death of Roland at Roncevaux. Illustration by Alphonse-Marie-Adolphe de Neuville, 1883. Published in François Guizot, *The History of France from the Earliest Times to the Year 1789* (London: S. Low, Martson, Searle & Rivington, 1883), 219.

Fig. 1.43 Eugène-André Oudiné, *Bertrada of Laon*, 1848. Marble sculpture. Paris, Jardin du Luxembourg. Photograph by Marie-Lan Nguyen, 2008, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bertrada_of_Laon_Jardin_du_Luxembourg.jpg. CC BY-SA 3.0.

Other types of medievalesque content are incorporated within the larger operatic framework. In the third act, the librettist gives a deft flourish of learning. In performing before the effigy of the Virgin, the jongleur offers three pieces that refer knowledgeably to the poetry of medieval France. Two are anonymous weaving songs from the genre known as *chansons de toile* or "songs of cloth" (or "fabric"). Women are supposed to have sung ditties of this kind as they toiled at the loom. The third is a portion of the dramatic piece entitled Play of Robin and Marion. This last reference is all the subtler for not identifying precisely either the title or the author—but scholars then and now would have no trouble pinpointing both. Said to be the earliest secular play in French with music, the theatrical work was written in the Picard dialect around 1282 by Adam de la Halle, a poet extraordinaire from the second half of the thirteenth century. It was adapted for performance at least twice in nineteenth-century France (see Fig. 1.45).

Fig. 1.44 "Renaud helps to build the Cathedral." Engraved illustrations by Fred Mason, 1897. Published in William Caxton and Robert Steele, trans., *Renaud of Montauban* (London: George Allen, 1897), 240.

Fig. 1.45 Illustration after C. Bugdar. Front cover of Adam le Bossu, *Le Jeu de la Feuillée et le Jeu de Robin et Marion*, trans. Ernest Langlois, vol. 1 of *Poèmes et récits de la Vieille France*, ed. Alfred Jeanroy (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1923).

Most *chansons de toile* get underway with a short tale of a woman who is far from her paramour or who is entrapped in an infelicitous marriage to a grizzly old man but has a hunky young lover. As a rule, such songs end in amorous bliss. The tune the jongleur has in mind to open his little show is an exception. Its heroine, named Belle Doette, after catching wind of her beloved's death, founds a monastery to which she retires. But after belting out the initial line of the air, Jean comes clean that he has forgotten the rest. Instead, he moves on to what is claimed to be the incipit of another admired piece in the genre, this one the "song of Erembourg."

Sage Wisdom

A pungent touch of medieval-seeming lore surfaces in the "Legend of the Sage." This disarmingly simple account constitutes a legend within a legend, a miracle within a miracle. It is sung to the Mary-oriented jongleur by the people-oriented cook, the portly Boniface, and it gives Jean the idea for offering a juggling performance as an act of homage to the Virgin. The narrative derives from one of many apocrypha and legends that help to round out the skimpy details about the Mother of God known from the Gospels. The "lovely little idyll" about the herb plant is probably the most hailed tune in the score of the whole opera. In its story line, it follows a text that was

published in a volume entitled *Legendary Feasts*. In the transmission of the account, the 1866 book may have been the neck of an hourglass. Before it the story of the sage may have circulated mainly orally, whereas afterward it may have been disseminated ever more rampantly through Catholic devotional literature of various sorts. For instance, it surfaced as the cover feature in illustrated French-language weeklies aimed at young Catholic schoolgirls from conservative bourgeois families in the immediate aftermath of World War II (see Figs. 1.46 and 1.47).

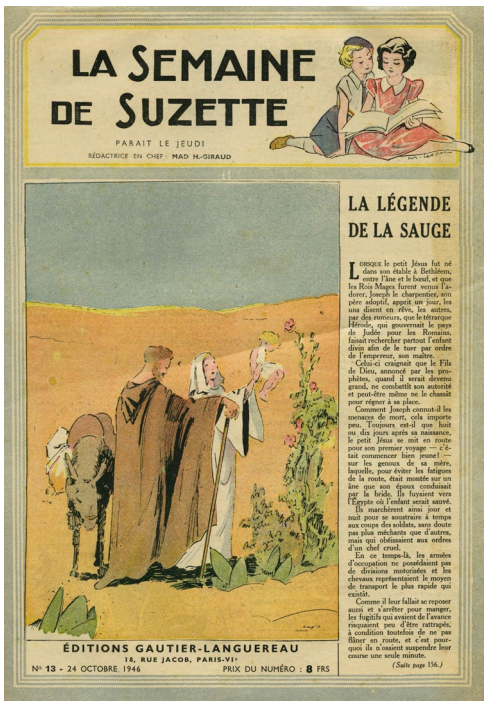


Fig. 1.46 Front cover of *La Semaine de Suzette*, no. 13, October 24, 1946.

Fig. 1.47 Front cover of *Bernadette: Illustré catholique des fillettes*, no. 8, January 26, 1947.

The tale occupies a minor niche among legends that have proliferated around the Nativity, especially since the ascendance of Christmas as a religious holiday from the late nineteenth century to the present day. Applied to this narrative, "legend" serves not in a loose sense, referring to the myth-like distortion of ostensibly real people or facts, but rather in its strict hagiographic one. Specifically, it denoted a saint's legend, often based on historical fact, but intended for edification. Such narratives were read aloud in preaching or even performed in plays to move monks and clerics to meditation, lay folk to piety or pilgrimage.

The "Legend of the Sage" deals with one episode that supposedly happened during the flight from Egypt. The Holy Family had left Bethlehem to escape the slaughter of the innocents by Herod. While fleeing the bloodbath, Joseph once had to go off by

himself to a village for water. Mary remained unattended with the infant Jesus and donkey. Suddenly, she heard the heart-stopping bellowing of Herod's soldiers on horseback and the clumping hoof beats of their mounts as they pursued her. Panicking at the clip-clop, she sought refuge as best she could in roadside brush. First, the Virgin requested but was denied sanctuary by a rose in bloom, because the haughty flower feared that the crimson of its dress would be defiled. Since then, as punishment the plant has borne thorns. Next, she asked a clove to protect her, but was similarly slighted. From that time on, the bush has had fetid blooms. In this most unrosy situation, and far from being in clover, she made a final overture to the humble herb, which agreed to safeguard the mother and child by creating a canopy of blossoms for them. Herod's cavalrymen passed by, and the Child was saved. The legend thus has ingrained within it the social message that the fanciest and most expensive item is not necessarily the best. Likewise, the story bears out a kind of flowery correlative to the idiom "a friend in need is a friend indeed."

In Massenet's opera, the tonalism of the "Legend of the Sage" imitates medieval monody. The theme returns tunefully in the "mystic pastoral" with which the last act opens. Not only musicians but even amateurs of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries displayed enthusiasm for the songs of the Middle Ages (or at least for what they thought typified such melodies), which they sought to transcribe, perform, and appreciate. For instance, in his final years Henry Adams expended considerable effort upon music from the period. Answering the popular interest, composers, too, embraced the voices and instruments from those long-ago centuries. Massenet had a share in this vogue, to judge by *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*. Even apart from whatever dimensions of the "Legend of the Sage" may be deemed medievalesque, the tune attracted commendation from contemporary critics. One, calling it "the gem of the work," punned on the aroma of the herb and its flowers as he overpraised it.

Juggling Secular and Ecclesiastical

> A surprising thing, I would never have believed that the mysticism would be understood so well by blasé and irreligious people! This proves that piety is less dull than you might imagine.

Politically, Massenet was in general republican and laical. Further, he even voiced cautious contempt for the goody-goody pseudopiety and downright sanctimony that his audiences demanded. In 1873, he reportedly went so far as to observe: "I don't believe in all this creeping Jesus business, but the public likes it, and we must always share the opinion of the public." The customer is always right: if operagoers wanted religiosity, he stood ready to proffer it. Nothing would give grounds for inferring that he struck as unwelcoming a stance toward clerics and Catholicism as did for instance his contemporaries Anatole France or Émile Zola. The libretto of his opera

about the jongleur is coated with at least a thin gloss of religious belief. In the sorely disunited culture of his day, he took care to the end that neither side should have any cause to bristle at his musical dramas. His pains paid off. Shortly after his death, a contemporary issued a piece with the title "Massenet, Religious Musician?" in which the writer assured his readers of the composer's staunch Catholic faith.

The opera premiered just three years before 1905, when the law on the Separation of the Churches and the State established secularism definitively in France. In the tense and divisive stretch leading up to the passage of the legislation, Massenet would have had good reason to steer clear of the fault line. He abstained from taking either a strongly pro-ecclesiastic or anti-clerical stand within his operas: too many people in his audience could have been slighted either way. Instead, he struck all sorts of poses that could have led partisans to suspect him of supporting one or the other faction. Yet he always took these stands with a light irony that left open the door to deniability either way. This strategy enabled him to satisfy both extremes, while disguising what he believed or felt.

The musician experimented with many major movements that shaped operatic subject matter during his lifetime, such as orientalism and hispanism, romanticism and Wagnerism, and fairy tale. In 1894 he made a foray into the type of realism or naturalism in Italian musical drama that in musicology goes by the name of verismo. Whatever we call it, this manner attempted to achieve in opera what the naturalism of authors such as Zola had done in the novel. In his veristic musical drama on *The Girl from Navarre* (see Fig. 1.48), Massenet depicts the unsophisticated religiosity of Anita, the title character. The young woman wears a necklace with a little lead figurine of the Virgin. She prays to it for the safety of her boyfriend and smothers it in kisses when he returns, and after he dies, it saves her—like the pocket Bibles that legend holds have blocked bullets—when she tries to stab herself. The composer's stance vis-à-vis this simple soul and her religious beliefs and practices could be regarded as relaxed ridicule, condescending nostalgia, or both. In treating the jongleur, he appears in a similar way to poke affectionate fun at both the secular and the ecclesiastical—the unchecked superstition of the crowd and the hyperbolic asceticism of the monastery. Yet the chaffing is never anything but gentle.

Massenet was soft on *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*. Though he reputedly harbored especially positive feelings for whatever work he had composed most recently, his warmth and pride in this musical drama abided long after he had written it. A loyal camp follower maintained that the French composer nurtured a genuine predilection for the drama of the juggler. As another friend reported, the musician claimed this opera to be the apple of his eye because he had given the most of himself to it. A couple of years before his death, he wrote: "Thérèse is my heart, *Le jongleur* is my faith."

A definitive judgment about Massenet's views on religion lies beyond our reach. In fact, they may have fluctuated over the decades of his career, since he would have had every reason to be deliberately inconclusive on the topic of faith. To focus on his attitude toward the Virgin, in his autobiography he describes having brought back

to France, as a keepsake from his three years as a young man supported by a Prix de Rome in the Eternal City, a wooden image of Mary (see Fig. 1.49).

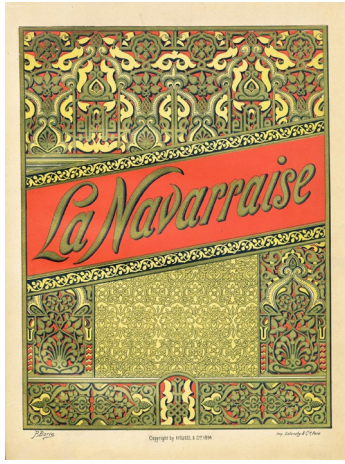


Fig. 1.48 Front cover of Jules Massenet, *La navarraise* (Paris: Heugel, 1894). Illustration by P. Borie, 1894.

Fig. 1.49 Jules Massenet. Photograph, 1863–66, in Rome, Villa Medici. Photographer unknown. Published in Jules Massenet, *My Recollections*, trans. H. Villiers Barnet (Boston: Small, Maynard, 1919), frontispiece.

A cursory inventory of artworks in his home that was compiled when he was fifty years old mentions a full-size reproduction of Raphael's Sistine Madonna. Like a treasured icon in a shrine, the photograph "remained lighted all night." At least from the retrospective stance of his memoirs, it would seem that while laboring over the score of *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* the composer had identified with the jongleur in gaining the support of the Virgin.

Inconsistently, but understandably, Massenet was attracted to the Middle Ages—or at least to the conceptions of them that pervaded his cultural environment. More than a quarter century before composing *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*, he averred in a letter that he loved cathedrals, despite living in a republican country. Among his objections to the Christian religion, he disliked that it destroyed beautiful classical sculpture, with its gods like Jupiter, Venus, Mercury, and Bacchus. Still, the late medieval period, when "the marvelous cathedrals arose," brought relief by reinstating a balance between two kinds of belief—in beauty and in God.

To risk unpardonable anachronism, the composer might have had a meeting of the minds with the appreciably younger François Mauriac, if the two men had ever had a chance to sit down and swap stories about the religion of their youth and the images of the medieval period with which it had left them (see Fig. 1.50).

Fig. 1.50 François Mauriac. Photograph by Henri Manuel, early twentieth century.

The later French author, a Nobel laureate like Anatole France, had a moment of yearnfulness about his early days. In his own equivalent of a madeleine-induced reverie, he recalled a veritable rainbow of blue Madonnas, pink Sacred Hearts, and chocolate-brown Saint Josephs. Whatever religious views the composer held deep within himself, his opera contributed greatly to redeeming the Gothic great church from the discoloration of fin-de-siècle decadence that it had acquired. He made the case for a bright Middle Ages to negate the dark one that others advanced before and after him.

By crafting an opera of the jongleur and his miracle, Massenet made a move worthy of a mastermind. Among other things, the tale afforded him a golden opportunity to set his composition within a monastery and a cathedral-like Gothic edifice. Music, both vocal and instrumental, had been implicit in the story from its very beginning.

For example, recall the fiddle laid before the Virgin and Child in the bas-de-page of the only illuminated medieval manuscript of *Our Lady's Tumbler*. Equally important, the setting lends itself handsomely to the very nature of sound.

William R. Lethaby, who left a major mark upon the Arts and Crafts movement (as well as upon early modernism), drew an apt analogy between Gothic architecture and acoustics. According to the English architect and architectural historian, the best of cathedrals is so truly high-strung that it will emit a note when a mason taps one of its pillars. We have the phrase, almost a rhetorical question, "if these walls could talk." Abbeys are about silence, both mandated and elected, while great houses of worship are about the interplay among utter stillness, hushed murmuring, choral song soaring aloft, and, in due course, crashing organ notes. Since music is itself about an interaction between sound and its absence, pulsation and pauses, what better place could be contrived for staging an opera than the spiritual echo chamber of a Gothic church?

Despite the asceticism that the cloister might seem to presume, the musical drama allows scope for the sense of taste too. The first wine-soaked words that Jean belts out in the second act have about them something supremely secular. If anyone wanted an antisumptuary component, this would be it: "The food is good in the monastery, for me who used not to eat often. I drink good wine; I eat rich foods. A glorious day!" (see Fig. 1.51).

Fig. 1.51 Lucien Fugère and André Allard as monks in Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*. Photograph by Henri Manuel, 1904. Published in Louis Schneider, *Massenet: L'homme – le musicien. Illustrations et documents inédits* (Paris: L. Carteret, 1908), 252.

At issue here is not the metaphoric chewing of the cud assumed by the monastic practice of meditative rumination, but instead an altogether different sort of snack food for thought washed down with alcohol. If generalizing about a devotion to fine dining may be permitted, this synoptic evaluation is prototypically Gallic. It constitutes a rudimentary rating system, anticipatory of the asterisks that a Michelin Guide assigns to various niveaux of gourmet restaurants. Later, the ever bonhomous and often wise chef consoles the dejected Jean, opining that a command of Latin and of the fine arts is not essential for monkish success. This Boniface, whose very name means appropriately "good fate" in Latin, rings a change in culinary terms upon the saying "a picture is worth a thousand words": "a capon, cooked to a turn, is worth a thousand poems." He is a sculptor in nougats, a painter in creams, and the repasts he whips up are succulent symphonies. In appealing to the fresh recruit, he makes the final point that the denizens of a monastery may eat to their hearts' content. They are all hearty trenchermen, and he has the girth to show it. Only after what could be taken as a light jab at gourmand monks who swill and swallow like pigs does Jean float the idea that the glory may be wrapped up in religion rather than gastronomy.

In the Middle Ages, a person who was Latinate was often, by the very nature of the learned tongue at the time, literate in educational attainment and clerical in social station. In the line quoted a moment ago, the jongleur Jean laments being Latin-less and therefore unequipped to perform monastic orations verbatim, since in the medieval West worship was transacted in the language of learning. The librettist Léna conveys the Latinity of medieval Catholicism mainly through word-for-word quotations of liturgical and devotional texts. Thus, the blessing of their food at the breakfast that concludes the first act is a platitude. Likewise stock are the verses from the hymn to the Virgin that the musician monk has composed and that he directs his brethren to sing to the abbey's patron saint. At one point the prior, by quoting a tag from Virgil, adds to the mix the luster of knowing classical Latin.

The jongleur dies a prolonged death. While expiring, he is soothed by the canticle and attended by angels. The stagily overdone manner of his decease contrasts with the greater self-restraint shown when the medieval poet, Borrelli, and Anatole France recount this scene in their variants of the narrative. They give the hero no famous last words. At the same time, the entertainer's closing utterance in the opera must have brought, as it may well continue to bring, a studied smile to the lips of those listeners with a love of the learned tongue. In view of the prestige that the performer (like others) attaches to the dead language, he takes joy in being granted, by a sort of soulful telepathy, access to the Vulgate Bible, worship, and theology. Grinning as he nears his ecstatic end, he exults, "At last I understand Latin." The heavens fly open, as divinely aromatic scents waft in and quivering wings of seraphs flutter over him. But exactly why is the expiring entertainer rewarded with the crowning light that belonged to the Virgin? What does the miracle mean? Is the halo in recompense for his piety? Or is it for an artistic talent that has only belatedly been recognized and certified?

Among musical dramas by Massenet, this one was likeliest to be greeted with approbation by social conservatives in the Church of his day. Even so, it had features that rubbed prigs the wrong way. Thus, the "alleluia of wine" was deemed to be sacrilegious, while the pinch of anti-clericalism in Massenet's measured mockery of the monks' predilection for good cuisine also elicited a smidgen of criticism. Whether in spite or because of such aspects, the opera remained especially dear to the heart of its composer and his family. As we have seen, he is reported to have written, more than a little ambiguously, "*Le jongleur* is my faith." This statement, penned in his hand and autographed, was posthumously worked into a brief text surrounding his portrait on a black-rimmed card that was made available for friends and admirers on the morning after his demise.

Le jongleur de Notre Dame does not seem to espouse any overt nationalism. When Massenet and Léna composed it, their country was not as desperate for reaffirmation as it had been a quarter century earlier, after the drubbing of the Franco-Prussian War. The musician had revealed a patriotic streak at the time of the hostilities and especially during the Siege of Paris, when he had served in the National Guard patrolling the city ramparts. Now he articulated a message of hope for the humble, but within a vehicle that manages to be at once learnedly lofty and lightly legendary.

Massenet makes the theme of the jongleur distinctively his own, within the frame of reference both of musical drama and of the legend itself. The individualization begins even with the designation of the opera. The title takes wholesale that of Anatole France's story, but appends to it the generic marker "miracle." This specification tops off a free-spirited fancifulness and fecundity in nomenclature in which the composer had indulged for more than a decade. He labeled the 1889 *Esclarmonde* a "romantic opera," the 1894 *Thaïs* a "lyric comedy," the 1895 *Amadis* a "legendary opera," the 1899 *Cendrillon* or "Cinderella" a "fairy opera," and the 1901 *Grisélidis* a "lyric tale." If we extend our optics beyond the operatic, we find that already in 1875 Massenet wrote a four-part oratorio entitled *Eve: Mystery Play*. This type of composition approaches being a short musical drama, and involves orchestra, choir, and soloists who play distinct characters and sing arias. Although customarily a piece in this genre lacks props and costumes, it may be performed in a church. In fact, the very word *oratorio* derives from the Italian for "pulpit." This *mysterium* presents the story of the first woman as known from Genesis. Almost in the manner of a mystery play from the Middle Ages, the account follows her from the creation, through the temptation and the sharing of the fruit, to the fall. The title page of the original score brings home the medieval connection through the floral embellishments that flank the verbal indication of the title and composer (see Fig. 1.52).

In the 1902 *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*, the term "miracle" functions as shorthand for "miracle play," a medieval genre of stage representation loosely related to morality and mystery plays. The designation signaled that Massenet had stepped even further away from the sweeping scale and purview of historical epic as in

the *grand opéra* of *Le Cid*, and moved instead toward the supernatural and even the fantastic. His medievalesque composition is inarguably an opera, although one that has characteristics like a scenic oratorio. The resonances of the generic label were not lost upon Massenet's contemporaries. Taking loving pains, a reviewer of the premiere explained to readers:

> In the Middle Ages, people gave the name of *miracles* to pious, strange, and moving legends that took shape in the shadow of Marian sanctuaries, particularly around Notre-Dame of Paris and of Chartres. Their typical feature is that the Virgin always intervenes, with a miracle of tender pity.

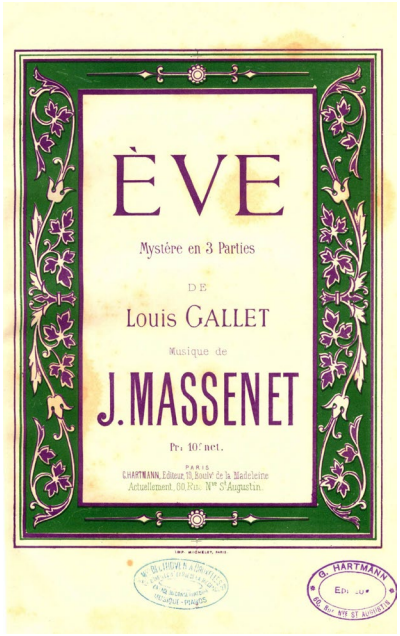


Fig. 1.52 Front cover of Louis Gallet and Jules Massenet, *Ève: Mystére en 3 parties* (Paris: G. Hartmann, 1880).

An English libretto refers to the piece as a "miracle drama," and the initial rundown says that it "is based upon the old medieval Miracle plays that flourished up to the middle of the sixteenth century."

The three-act "miracle" by Massenet stands out as the only major lyric work of the period to be set from beginning to end in a monastery. In this case, the institution under discussion is the Benedictine abbey of Cluny. The lead character should be a clarion tenor. He plays, as in the short story by Anatole France, a not overwhelmingly successful jongleur. In the opera the protagonist—as in neither the medieval poem nor the late nineteenth-century prose fiction—is named Jean. His repertoire includes conjuring, song, and dance. In the first act this poor fellow is bullied and badgered by a market-day crowd into singing an impious song. This alleluia to wine has a

refrain that pairs Bacchus and Jesus, Venus and the Virgin Mary. To make matters worse, the performance plays out on the plaza in front of the monastic institution. Consequently, the entertainer is hectored by the prior: if he does not mend his ways, he faces damnation (see Fig. 1.53).

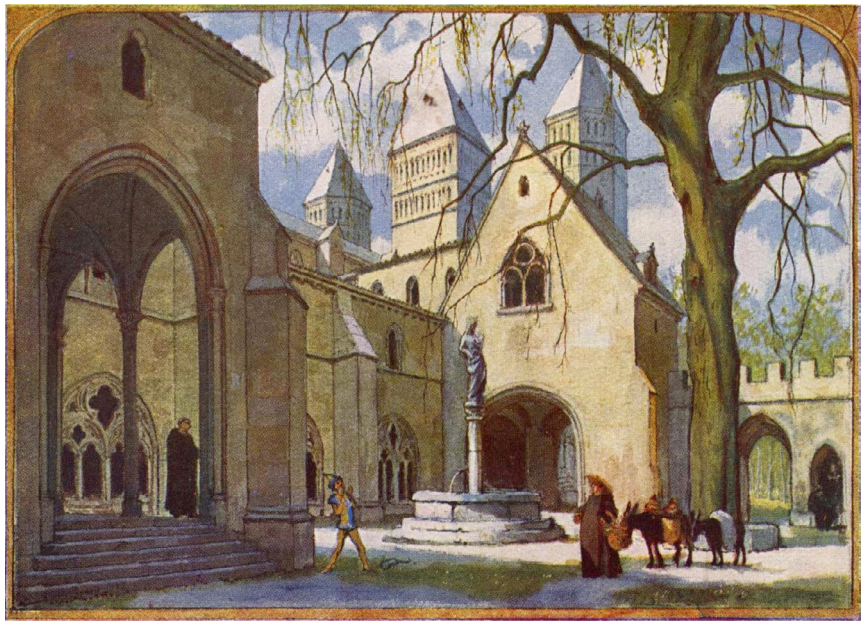


Fig. 1.53 Set design for Act 1 of Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*. Illustration by Aleksandr Nikolaevič Benua [Alexandre Benois], before 1904. Published in Jules Massenet and Maurice Léna, *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame (Il giullare di Nostra Signora): Miracolo in tre atti* (Paris: Heugel / Milan: Edoardo Sonzogno, 1905), between pp. 4 and 5.

Jean's unassuming repentance moves the official to invite him to join the order. At first, the new arrival is indisposed to forgo the freedom of movement he enjoyed earlier as a footloose performer. Contemplating the prospective loss of a life that has offered him a blank check to do as he pleases, he sings what has often been the best-known aria of the opera, "O liberté m'amie" ("O beloved freedom"). The topic of freedom calls to mind, by way of contrast, the aria in Wagner's opera in which Tannhäuser expresses his hunger for liberty, spring, and church bells. At the same time, this prospective fresh convert is drawn, ultimately irresistibly, by the creature comforts of monastic life. The prospect of attaining corporeal satiety by consuming food entices him as much as that of achieving spiritual salvation by practicing religion. How could he remain proof against the seductions of comestibles and potations? Unable to withstand, he forsakes his former profession and becomes a monk.

The second act is set inside the cloister, as the brethren brace themselves to celebrate the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Heaven, on August 15 (see Figs. 1.54 and 1.55).

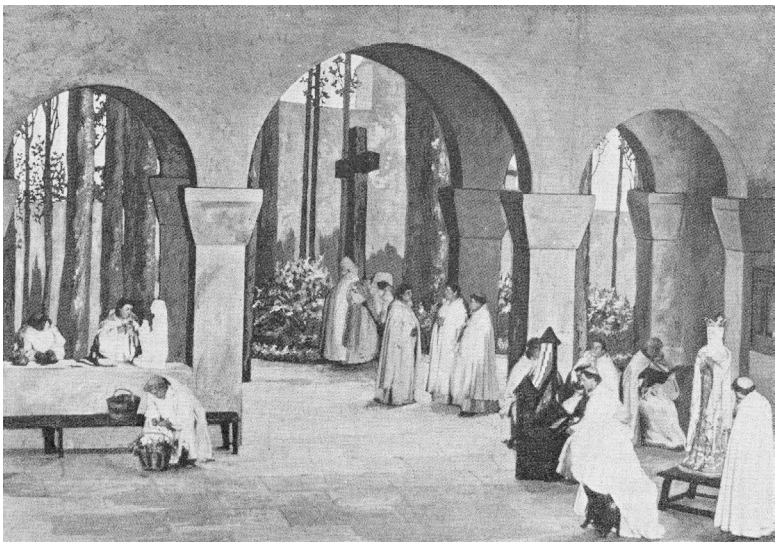


Fig. 1.54 Monks celebrate the Feast of the Assumption, Act 2 of Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*. Photographer unknown. Paris, Opéra-Comique, 1904.

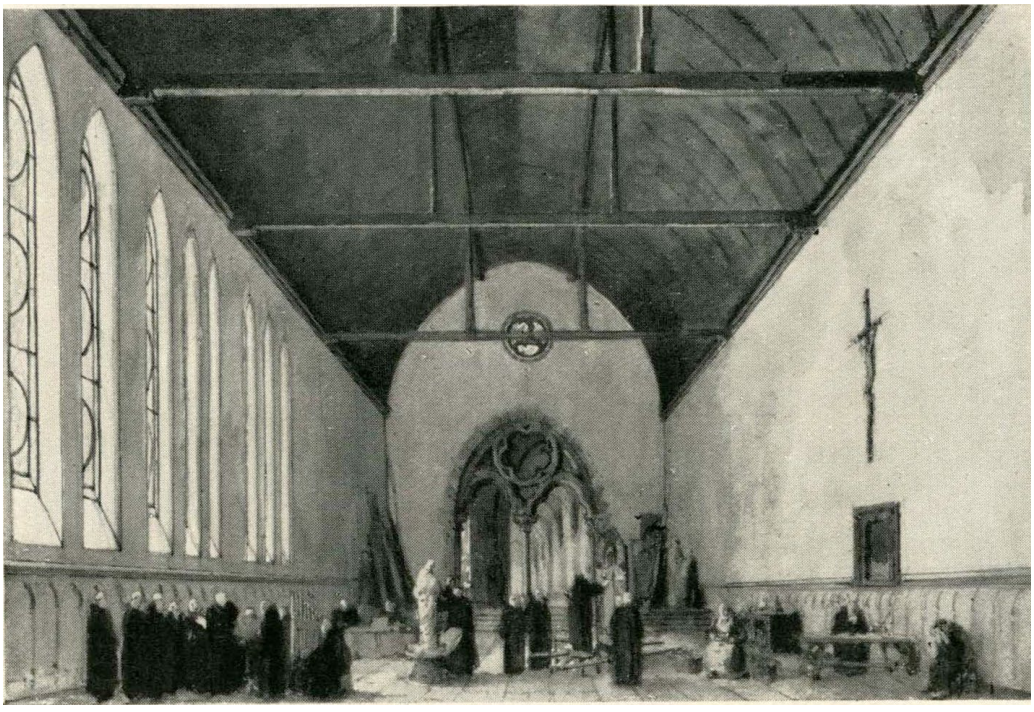


Fig. 1.55 Set design for Act 2 of Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*. Illustration by Aleksandr Nikolaevič Benua [Alexandre Benois], before 1904. Published in Jules Massenet and Maurice Léna, *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame (Il giullare di Nostra Signora): Miracolo in tre atti* (Paris: Heugel / Milan: Edoardo Sonzogno, 1905), 21.

Cenobites who are respectively a musician, a painter, a sculptor, and a poet first work on finishing their offerings to the Virgin and eventually debate over which of their gifts will mean the most to her. Jean confesses his unworthiness, in that he knows no Latin and lacks any skill comparable to theirs. Shakespeare included already in *Twelfth Night* the saying that "the hood does not make the monk." This proverb, well established in the Middle Ages, codifies the reality that monastic spirit consists in much more than the mere outward trappings of monkishness. The bon vivant brother Boniface implies the possibility that a more modest gift may prevail. With sonorous intonation, this culinary contemplative croons the legend in which the humble sage plant conceals the infant Jesus during the flight into Egypt and thereby merits the special favor of his mother Mary.

In the third and final act, Jean sneaks into the chapel to offer homage in song and dance to the freshly painted image of the Virgin (see Fig. 1.56). (The nature of the likeness is left sufficiently ambiguous in the libretto that in the premiere in Monte Carlo a painting was employed in this scene, whereas in the production in Paris a statue served the purpose instead.) Unbeknownst to the former jongleur, the monk who is a painter spies on him from behind a pillar as the onetime entertainer frees himself from his monastic habit and strikes a few chords on his hurdy-gurdy. At that point, the artist slips away to warn the prior and his fellow brethren. As the would-be onlookers file into the place of prayer to watch, Jean concludes a wild jig.

The holier-than-thou brothers are outraged. Before they can chastise the newcomer, he collapses in exhaustion. At that juncture, Boniface points out that the animated effigy of the Virgin bends toward the jongleur and offers him her blessing. After receiving absolution from the head of the monastery, the erstwhile street performer dies, as a celestial choir choruses his praises. Perhaps more than any other preceding version of the tale, Léna's libretto for the opera by Massenet signalizes the theme of humbleness. It also plays up the similarities between the entertainer and Christ, when the latter was pitted against religious (as well as secular) authorities.

During the exoneration, the prior utters by way of benediction a pianissimo adaptation of the sixth of the eight beatitudes of Jesus: "Blessed are the humble, because they will see God." Anatole France drew his story to a close in similar fashion. The superior in his tale pressed his face to the stone floor, saying "Blessed are the humble, because they will see God," and the other monks replied "Amen!" as they kissed the ground. Humility, once again associated with the Gospels, is the gist of *Our Lady's Tumbler*, as the medieval story is highlighted more than a century after Massenet in a French reader intended for the classroom. In the libretto, the French adjective to convey diffidence or meekness is *simple*. On the topic of the last-mentioned quality, a critic writing in 1922 observed:

> This verse from the Gospel serves as epigraph to this work. Never has simplicity been better wrought, and we should take good care to repeat after François de La Rochefoucauld: "Affected simplicity is a subtle form of imposture."

Fig. 1.56 Set design for Act 3 of Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*. Illustration by Aleksandr Nikolaevič Benua [Alexandre Benois], before 1904. Published in Jules Massenet and Maurice Léna, *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame (Il giullare di Nostra Signora): Miracolo in tre atti* (Paris: Heugel / Milan: Edoardo Sonzogno, 1905), 32.

More than merely a quotable quote, simpleness in the form of submissiveness is the overriding theme of the opera. Specifically, the musical drama portrays a simple and humble man. From the medieval tale, the main message was that displaying devotion to the Virgin leads to a miracle not granted to the more learned artistry of the other monks. The jongleur alone elicits an apparition of the Virgin, and only he is exalted to heaven through her instance.

Supplementing the simplicity of Jean is that of the monk Boniface (see Fig. 1.57), a character who is an innovation of Léna's libretto rather than a holdover from either the medieval poem or Anatole France's short story. The cook declares his own simplicity, a quality he cultivates deliberately for sake of the Virgin. The great-bellied gastronome comes on scene mounted on the back of a donkey saddled with two side baskets. One of these panniers contains flowers intended for "Madame Marie," and the other victuals and bottles destined for the "servants of Madame Marie" (see Fig. 1.58). Alongside simplicity, another quality that has been discerned for nearly a century in both the protagonist and the whole libretto is artificial naïveté. A reviewer commented already in 1902 that *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* was "a naïve and charming legend of the Middle Ages." The leading character, in two of his chief characteristics, overlaps with virtues

thought to have been typically feminine. These types of rectitude were embodied in the Virgin, namely, chastity and humility. She was positioned perfectly to supply a quality understandably deficient in him, which is to say, maternal forgiveness.

Fig. 1.57 Lucien Fugère as Boniface in Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*. Photograph by Cautin et Berger, 1904. Published on the front cover of *La Revue théâtrale*, nouv. sér, 13 (1904).

Fig. 1.58 Boniface on a donkey, in Act 1 of Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*. Photograph by Henri Manuel, 1904. Published in Louis Schneider, *Massenet: L'homme — le musicien. Illustrations et documents inédits* (Paris: L. Carteret, 1908), 250.

Massenet ends his composition with a succession of Latin exclamations, very much in medieval style, that may be translated into English as "Thanks be to God! / In bliss! / Amen." The ending may be certified as optimistic in more than one way. The jongleur, who was mocked and marginalized, has become exalted and central. By extension French composer as well has won admiration and, if he is seeking it, salvation. After all, he has crafted all the music for the juggler's self-empowerment through performance. Once the last syllables and notes of the heavenly fantasy have died down, the final words printed are his name, the location of the home where he completed the composition, and the year of completion.

The Jongleur of Monte Carlo

Le jongleur de Notre Dame may have been conceived initially for performance at the Opéra Comique in Paris. At the time, Massenet was the most frequently performed of French opera composers. Yet he had begun to have tensions with both its general administrator, Albert Carré (see Fig. 1.59), and its music director, André Messager (see Fig. 1.60).

Fig. 1.59 Albert Carré. Photograph by Nadar, 1900.

Fig. 1.60 André Messager, age 68. Photograph by Agence Meurisse, 1921, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Messager_Andr%C3%A9_compositeur_1921.jpg

Owing to the falling out, the musical drama about the medieval minstrel became the first of more than a half dozen operas by the French musician to premiere in the opera house of Monte Carlo. The setting may seem incongruous: the jongleur who gives up all his worldly possessions belts out his heart in the gambling capital of Europe, nowadays known to mass audiences mostly as a stylishly louche location that recurs in James Bond novels and movies. The place evokes not monasteries and their trappings but roulette wheels, gambling chips, croupier's rakes, and card tables covered in green baize.

Although now at best a dark horse, *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* has a right to be rated as one of the greatest triumphs in music from the earliest years of the twentieth century. Massenet's abandonment of Paris was a thumping coup for the Principality of Monaco, a tiny enclave at the eastern extremity of the French Riviera. Thanks to his ties with the head of the opera house and with Prince Albert I, the premiere of the opera about the jongleur began a stretch during which Monte Carlo was for the composer what Bayreuth had been and remains even today for Wagner.

Imagine the opening night, the air thick with anticipation that did not turn to ashes in anyone's mouth. Notwithstanding the extreme mismatch between the content and the nature of the setting, the opera was a rousing success from its first night on

February 18, 1902. Not a sour note was to be heard. Afterward, the audience raised the roof. The elegant crowd broke into one standing ovation after another for the composer. We can picture the ladies in their best gowns, and the men in true top form, in top hats or stovepipe ones, topcoats, starched shirts, studs and cufflinks, and tails. The diapason of thunderous applause, shouts of the French equivalents of "hooray" and "huzzah," and calls of "Bravo, bravo!" culminated when Prince Albert mounted the stage. The ruler went beyond just felicitating Massenet to pin on his chest the Grand Cross of the Order of Saint Charles, the second most prestigious honor that the constitutional monarchy could award, amid the spectators' deafening whoops of "Long live the Prince!" and "Vive Massenet!"

The venue was the Salle Garnier, as the house was known (see Fig. 1.61). The six hundred–seat theater, formally named the Orchestre national de l'Opéra de Monte-Carlo, became a pivot point in the campaign to peddle Monaco as a cultural center (see Fig. 1.62).

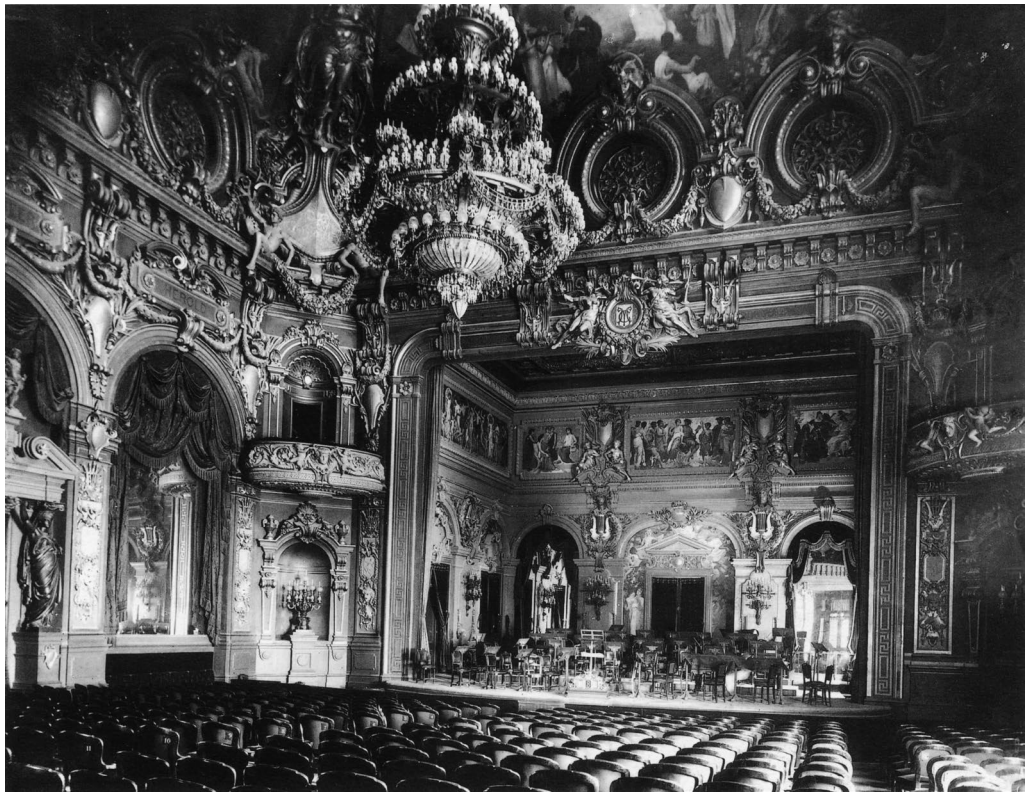


Fig. 1.61 Auditorium and stage of the Salle Garnier, Monaco. Photograph by Jean Gilletta, ca. 1879, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Monte_Carlo_Casino_theatre_interior_1878-79_-_Leniaud_2003_p78.jpg

Fig. 1.62 Advertisement for Monte-Carlo, Monaco from the French railway company PLM. Lithograph by Alphonse Mucha, 1897.

Le jongleur de Notre Dame was performed relatively early in a golden age for the Opéra. During an extraordinarily long and accomplished directorship, Raoul Gunsbourg had charge of the house from 1893 to 1951 (see Fig. 1.63). Memory of its salad days has lingered in Monaco even to the present day. The image remains of men in tails or dinner jackets and top hats, women in frilly evening dresses that make a froufrou whenever they move. Nearly eighty years later, the heyday was even memorialized for philatelists (see Fig. 1.64). A multicolored, one-franc postage stamp suggests how the narrative as recounted in the opera fuses the story of the tumbler with other tales of jongleurs. Massenet's leading man is depicted with a *vielle* in hand, like the performers in the story of Petrus Iverni of Rocamadour or the miracle of the Holy Candle of Arras.

Fig. 1.63 Raoul Gunsbourg. Engraving by Henri Brauer, 1913.

Fig. 1.64 Detail of first day cover envelope with detail of postage stamp of the juggler before the Virgin (Monaco, 1979).

The account of the juggler has been given musical expression many times since, but this *opéra comique* has been without doubt the most enduring. At no time was it rated more glowingly than in the twentieth-century half of the belle époque, from 1890 to 1914, which followed its opening night in Monaco. The musician's career framed the Third Republic, and he himself epitomized the era. *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* may be seen as emblematic of the medievalizing trend that formed one major strain of the times. In 1921, the hanger-on and self-proclaimed "disciple" Raymond de Rigné published often fantastic and always fawning recollections of Massenet, commencing his hagiography with an anecdote about a supposed intimate whose comrades had vaunted this "miracle" above the composer's other operas. The (possibly imaginary) friend was himself overcome by the same musical drama, commenting over-appreciatively:

> I heard then Le jongleur!… That day I communed with the soul of the French who had raised our cathedrals and Sainte-Chapelle: I regained the soul of my race, the precise, measured, concise, and limitless soul.

In experiencing the performance, this sycophant sounds chords of rapturous atavism which are in their own way reminiscent of Henry Adams's writing on Norman cathedrals.

After premiering in a few other European cities, *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* was put on belatedly in Paris for the first time on May 10, 1904 in the Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique (see Figs. 1.65 and 1.66).

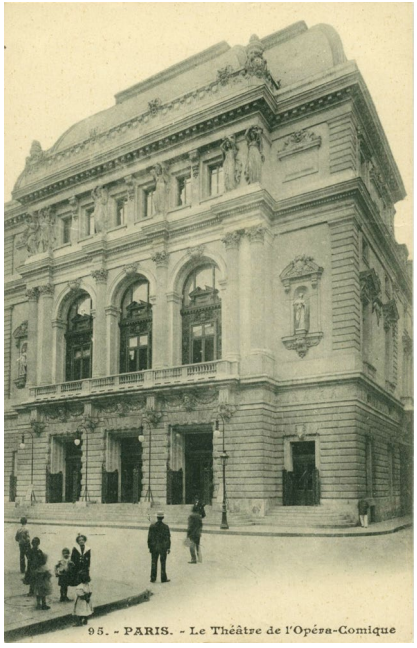


Fig. 1.65 Postcard of the Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique (Paris, early twentieth century).

Fig. 1.66 Singing monks in Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*. Photograph by Henri Manuel, 1904. Published in Louis Schneider, *Massenet: L'homme — le musicien. Illustrations et documents inédits* (Paris: L. Carteret, 1908), 254.

Adolphe Maréchal reprised the role of Jean. No recordings were made of the original performances, but we can hear later ones of both Maréchal as Jean and Lucien Fugère (who created the role in Paris) as Boniface. In 1904, the piece was presented forty-five times after its opening night, more than other such famous musical dramas of the period as Georges Bizet's *Carmen*, Gustave Charpentier's *Louise*, or Massenet's own *Manon*. For Catholics, the year was an especially good one for the opera. It marked the fiftieth anniversary of the 1854 papal bull *Ineffabilis Deus*, in which Pope Pius IX defined and proclaimed the doctrine of the Virgin's Immaculate Conception. Even the month of November had a strong formal association with Mary in the Church. Within less than a decade after opening in Monaco, *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* had been staged on four continents. It would carry the story worldwide, corroborating and extending the impact of Anatole France's story. The juggler went global, and the globalization had commercial aspects.

Jean, Bénédictine, and Selling Gothic

According to a measurement that calls for a breathalyzer, one token of the opera's success resulted from an elaborate liquor advertising campaign that was conducted in the first decade of the twentieth century. The stage was set much earlier, in the wake of the Franco-Prussian War. The herbal Bénédictine came into its own commercially after 1876, when the company that manufactured it was instituted as a public limited company. In the 150 intervening years, there is no tallying the cordial glasses and snifters that have been poured brimful with the liqueur as digestif or nightcap, or pegging the number of shots that have gone into mixed drinks.

In the late nineteenth century, mass-manufactured beer, ale, and spirits were sometimes brewed in facilities designed to fulfill a dual function as tourist attractions. This general tendency intersected with the market-driven medievalism of the day. In one sense, the smell of change was in the air (and in the spume): brewing and distillation on this level were new developments. In another, the businessmen wished to dress their enterprise in a cloak of old-time respectability. As the production of alcoholic drinks became an ever bigger business, manufacturers and marketers endeavored to conjure up an atmosphere that lies quaintly behind the times. In this case, that meant monkishness and medievalness. In many countries this effort paralleled, at the high-water mark of the Gothic revival, the custom of packaging such varied consumer items as pickles, pepper sauce, and ink in so-called cathedral bottles (see Fig. 1.67).

Fig. 1.67 Cathedral-style pickle jar, late nineteenth century. Photograph by Steve Young Jr., date unknown. Image courtesy of Steve Young Jr., Coast to Coast Antiquities. All rights reserved.

These vessels Gothicized the products of industrialization. This glassware embodies what has been called the "enchantment of technology."

In the case of Bénédictine, construction of a showcase factory began in 1881–1882 in Fécamp, the Norman town where the greenish-yellow libation has always been produced. The facility was designed as a grandiosely massive, faux medieval abbey (see Fig. 1.68). The éclat of the neo-Gothic edifice, dreamt up by one Camille Albert, a designer follower of Viollet-le-Duc, helped to finesse the inconvenient truth that the concoction had at best an exceedingly tenuous relation to the Benedictine brothers. The distillery served as both a tourist destination and marketing tool (see Fig. 1.69).

Fig. 1.68 Postcard of Palais Bénédictine, Fécamp, France (ca. 1907).

Fig. 1.69 Advertisement for Bénédictine Liqueur. Design by Charles Maillard, photographs by Jean Lecerf Fils, 1905. Published in *Femina* (1905), v.

The so-called Palais Bénédictine contains a museum, which the founder of the company established to house real and supposed archaeological remains of the black monks that had been assembled from the town and region, alongside artworks both collected and commissioned. One of its principal attractions is the Gothic Room, with medieval and pseudomedieval artifacts and decor.

The firm's founding father was a wine merchant by the highfalutin name of Alexandre Le Grand—in English, Alexander the Great. The official story of the company holds that in 1863 the entrepreneur (see Fig. 1.70) lighted upon sets of instructions for medicinal and herbal concoctions, reputedly recorded in a simple cookbook more than three and a half centuries earlier, in 1510, by a Benedictine brother who jotted down the recipes of home-brew remedies. Setting up shop with the necessary substances, Le Grand began brewing the concoctions in beakers, alembics, and retorts. To honor its supposed monastic originator, he gave the name Bénédictine to the liqueur that resulted from his experiments with one of these elixirs. Whatever we are persuaded to believe about the ultimate origins of the spirits, however, monks have at no time played any role in its manufacture by the present-day company. Although the label bears the initials *D.O.M.*, to stand for the Latin phrase *Deo Optimo Maximo* ("To God, most good, most great"), the sheen of religiosity has no basis in any affiliation with monks, the Catholic Church, or any other denomination.

Fig. 1.70 Henri Gauquié, *Statue of Alexandre-Prosper-Hubert Le Grand*, 1900. Palais Bénédictine, Fécamp, France. Photograph by Wikimedia user Gordito1869, 2010, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Alexandre_Le_Grand.jpg. CC BY-SA 3.0.

Le Grand's greatest genius lay in marketing. Even after his death in 1898, the maker of Bénédictine remained committed to strategic advertising. As the business concern sought to vend its product, it turned to notables of the time from all walks of life. It had their likenesses registered by a French caricaturist of the period, the highly regarded Sem (see Fig. 1.71).

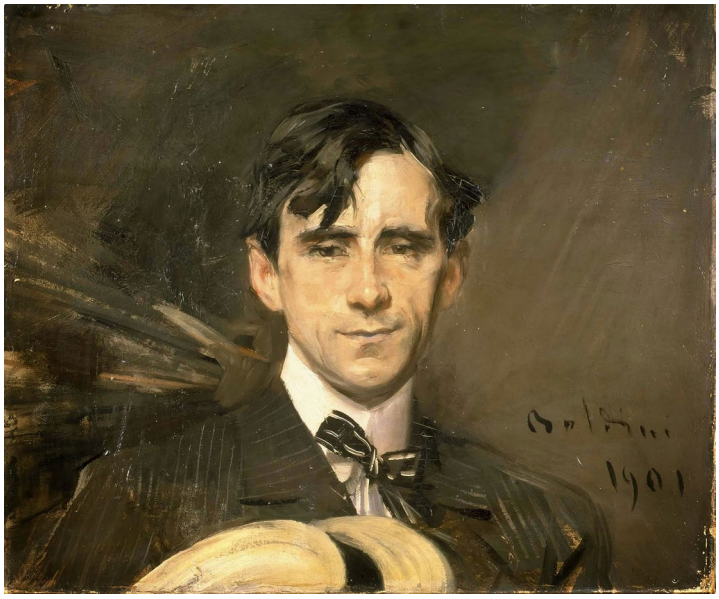


Fig. 1.71 Giovanni Boldini, *Portrait of Sem (Georges Goursat)*, 1901. Oil on canvas. Milan, private collection.

At the same time, it solicited from them one- or two-line endorsements of the cordial's potability. Among the galactic figures commemorated was Massenet (see Fig. 1.72), who was portrayed tickling the ivories with evident animation. Atop the instrument—with no coaster to be seen, but within easy reach—an elegant cordial-glass containing more than a thimbleful of Bénédictine stands at the ready. In the handwritten testimonial reproduced beneath the caricature of him, the composer commends the strong and sweet liqueur to sophisticated palates. He invokes cheekily the protagonist of the opera, on behalf of the finished article he is plugging: "I am sure that the Benedictines in the days of *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* would drink the exquisite Bénédictine liqueur as we happily have it even today."

This kind of mischievous irreverence about religion within a commercial context would have raised no eyebrows at the time. As confirmation, we have an advertisement for a flavorful tonic. This "Mariani Wine," to translate the French brand name *Vin Mariani* literally, had been marketed first in 1871 by its inventor, the Corsican pharmacist and chemist Angelo François Mariani, who aimed to exploit the health potential of its main active ingredient, cocaine. Before the stimulant's addictive effects

were recognized, trafficking in the drug was legal: everything seemed to taste better when laced with it. A confirmed bibliophile, Mariani in promoting his over-the-counter nostrum took advantage of all that was offered by cutting-edge photomechanical processes. A design made in 1899 plays upon the element "Maria" that is contained within the tonic-maker's name. By the same token, it refers to the title of a Latin orison that resembled the "Hail, Mary." The painter has a scantily clad female angel write "Salve Maria… ni" (see Fig. 1.73). A postcard from 1910 makes a similar play, with the French for "Glory to Mariani" as a legend to a woozy-looking angelic horn player who blows her instrument while swimming a languid celestial backstroke (see Fig. 1.74).

Fig. 1.72 Caricature of Jules Massenet. Illustration by Sem, before 1909. Published in Sem, *Célébrités contemporaines et la Bénédictine* (Paris: Devambez, 1909).

Fig. 1.73 Postcard of an angel and advertising Vin Mariani tonic (Edouard M. G. Dubufe, 1899).

Fig. 1.74 Postcard of an angel and advertising Vin Mariani tonic (Edouard Toudouze, 1910).

In both, religion is pressed into service to merchandise a social and sexual lubricant. An even more ham-fisted attempt to monetize Marianism and cash in on Lourdes can be detected in the alcoholic beverage Salettine. Crass commercialization is hardly an invention or innovation of the twenty-first century.

In the Middle Ages, *Our Lady's Tumbler* had its fullest and in fact its only demonstrable circulation in France. In the decades around 1900, the most influential literary and musical expressions of the tale were both also French, thanks to Anatole France and Jules Massenet. Yet both the medieval tale and *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* attained their broadest distribution in the United States. This diffusion came about as elements of Massenet's musical drama were disseminated both directly and indirectly via media that at the time were developing with dizzying rapidity. The narrative spread only because it was perceived to have an inherent value that rendered it an indispensable item in the canon of what a properly cultured cosmopolite should know. In other words, it earned a niche within what would now be called cultural literacy. Not long before the opera opened in the Big Apple, the *New York Times* first summed up the tale and then sounded off: "If you have never heard of these things then it is really and truly your duty to read of them, for they are marvels of which no man should be ignorant." No sitting on the fence here! The premiere in Gotham City took place on November 27, 1908, the day after Thanksgiving, in the lead-up to Christmas. One century and a few years later, most people feel no less dutiful, even though they are unaware of *Our Lady's Tumbler* and its brood of descendants. Fill them in, and let the newsrooms of local dailies know that the story still matters.

The Musician of Women

Purportedly, the libretto of *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* was delivered anonymously for Massenet's consideration. In reviewing the text, the composer professed wonderment first at the projected cast for the opera. The list of characters had no part for a female except for the Virgin, who by design is at a loss for words (see Fig. 1.75).

Fig. 1.75 "La Vierge." Photograph by Henri Manuel, 1904. Published in Louis Schneider, *Massenet: L'homme – le musicien. Illustrations et documents inédits* (Paris: L. Carteret, 1908), 256.

He had achieved repeated success in operas in which all the main roles belonged to women—after all, he lived in the era of the diva, and he grasped the need to maximize their appeal. In the music as well as the drama of his operas, the composer underscored the importance of both the female principal and the feminine principle. This emphasis was bound up with the Frenchness of his operas, as opposed to the Germanness of (to name the most obvious counterexample) Wagner.

In fact, Massenet was reputed to be a woman's composer and musician. In French the phrases imply that what a "man's man" would represent to men, he as an artist did to the other sex. The sneering latent in such observations was entrenched within a few years of the celebrity's death, if not earlier. His music was similarly conventionalized as "feminine," which in the culture of the day meant charming but fluffy, frothy, and featureless. The proud composer was faulted for womanly proclivities that belonged to the misogyny and gender-stereotyping of the time. He was brushed off by the most powerful arbiters and initiators of high culture as an effeminate voluptuary. In their eyes, he catered to female sensuality and mawkishness, indiscipline and illogicality. A journalist insinuated damningly, with an implication of womanizing, that the French musician could not write a successful opera except when besotted, and even perhaps entangled in the infidelities of an affair, with the diva he foresaw for the leading role. The detractors who faulted the composer for musical philandering were onto something. Of his twenty-six operas, only one—*Le jongleur de Notre Dame*—does not have a woman as the essential soloist. (Massenet showed a predilection for feminine voices, or maybe for other aspects of the fair sex, at least to judge by one substantive indicator: more than half of his operas, fourteen, are named after their heroines, and a female is the central protagonist of nine more.)

By the tactic of composing a musical drama without a female lead, Massenet made a deliberate feint to throw his attackers off balance. His traducers mocked him for being a composer for ladies and insinuated that his works could not meet (forgive me) the stiff standards of men. In response, he would raise the bar for himself by refraining from having any woman at all in the story of the jongleur. According to one critic, "Massenet, piqued by the frequently repeated assertion that his muse was only at his command when he depicted female frailty, determined to write an opera in which only one woman was to appear, and she was to be both mute and a virgin!" In setting to music an entire dramatic work that lacked a part for a prima donna, or any romantic interest in its story line, the French musician took a calculated risk while making a conscious statement. The preponderance of operagoers that sustained him was female. Most of the males who attended as spectators may well have done so out of a drooling desire to see as much as they could of divas whose carefully nurtured image was an all-important factor in the whole experience of opera. To mince no words about minxes, the men in the audience may have shown up mostly for the sex appeal of the female singers, whose roles often necessitated being exiguously clothed. Under all these circumstances, having no leading lady on stage, and no high-pitched voice except one singing in the wings, were moves that required no small brazenness.

Was Massenet allowing himself a feeble twitch of insubordination against the market and prevailing tastes? In this case, he could have been staking out a space for himself as an artist, to prove that he felt no obligation to toe the line in satisfying his viewers and auditors. In doing so, he could have fended off the lashes of criticism that had been cracked against him periodically in the press. In 1894, *La Silhouette* published an unsparing caricature that mocked "Monsieur Massenet's bland pastry-making and Mademoiselle Sanderson's sugar-candy notes" (see Fig. 1.76).

Fig. 1.76 Caricature of Jules Massenet and Sibyl Sanderson. Drawing by Charvic, 1894. Published in *La Silhouette* (March 1894), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Massenet-sanderson-p%C3%A2tisserie.jpg

The accompanying illustration depicts the "National Oven of Music," about to receive on a peel—the paddle that bakers use for sliding their goods in and out of the oven—a cake labeled *Thaïs*. Atop the confection, the composer fingers the keyboard and stares raptly at his prima donna as she poses on the piano.

Alternatively, the musician may have reasoned that the overarching power of the Madonna would suffice to inform the musical drama with whatever bare (or well-covered) minimum of femininity was needed. In support of this second interpretation, he reminded himself "that the most sublime of women, the Virgin, was bound to sustain me in my work, just as she showed herself charitable to the repentant Juggler." It could be argued that whereas in his other operas Massenet had pursued themes of romantic love between women and men, in this one he turned from the human and earthly to the divine and ethereal. His topic remained hot-blooded, but the object of the passion was unearthly, even spectral.

A third, drastically different explanation would be that the very centrality of Mary within the composition all but guaranteed that the role of the fair sex within it would be slimmed down. Feminist theology has reasoned that the cult of the Virgin has been entangled with the repression of women and the curtailment of their lives.

The All-Male Cast

What, I exclaimed to myself, a piece
without a role for a woman, except
for the mute apparition of the Virgin!

By being set in a monastery, the musical drama *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* as originally conceived possessed an unusual trait in its roster. The makeup of its company is anything but checkered: it is all-monk—and on that account all-male. Earlier experiments had been made to devise operas without female voices. To gaze back deep into operatic history all the way to 1807, the *Joseph* of the French composer Étienne Méhul, about the biblical figure from the Book of Genesis and his brothers, called only for male singers. Outside the genre, the librettist Maurice Léna may have been influenced by the maleness of one play: like Massenet's opera, the four-act *The Cloister* too has a cast made up entirely of men. The drama was by the Belgian symbolist poet Émile Verhaeren, a contemporary of the better-known Maurice Maeterlinck (see Fig. 1.77).

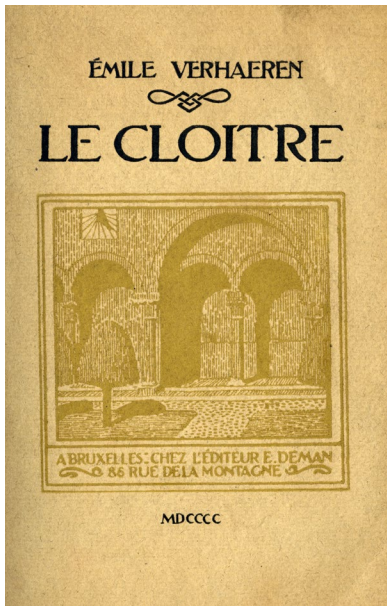


Fig. 1.77 Frontispiece and title page of Émile Verhaeren, *Le cloître: Drame en quatre actes*, illustration by René Pottier (Paris: Éditions G. Crès, 1926).

Based on its author's actual experiences among Trappists near Chimay in the early 1880s, *The Cloister* has features that to at least one reviewer of the English translation anticipated Massenet's composition. Whereas *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* presents "only the fragrance and beauty of monastery life," Verhaeren's theatrical work throws back the curtain upon much harsher scenes. The smells in this piece sometimes stink. Its protagonist is a monk who insists fanatically upon being punished for a youthful

felony. Unsatisfied by the original absolution, he seeks further humiliation. Eventually he fractures the structure and order within the religious community to the point where the brethren must revisit the very essence of their nexus with the whole world.

Whether the resemblance to Verhaeren's piece was coincidental or ran deeper, the self-imposed challenge of casting *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* without the so-called fair sex carries musical consequences. In stark contrast, the list of characters in Massenet's three-act "miracle" comes close to being all-male. Only two angelic voices can be sung by females, and even these singers would have been offstage and unviewed. The Virgin herself is voiceless, experienced only as a blaze of light; she is brilliant, but not as a singer. The opera is a strictly manly and deep-voiced production, in which women are to be heard seldom and not seen at all. The choice is deliberate: the sweet-sounding melodist sought in a single stroke to face the music and to deflect sharpshooting that he was soft and sensuous—a lady's man in music as in life.

On this occasion, Massenet opted for asceticism in the very content of his drama, as well as, after a fashion, in its music. From a musical standpoint, the dearth of space for sopranos in the opera about the jongleur has come to be regarded by some as a flaw. In the early reception, the near absence of soprano or alto voices and the utter invisibility of female singers were disparaged as perhaps being unwelcoming to women in the audience. A black-and-white poster by the Moravian-born artist Mucha to advertise the opening night of *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* offers a fanciful portrayal of a supposed patron—and contrasts utterly with the entirely masculine stage presence she would have witnessed (see Fig. 1.78). As a journalist posed the question in 1904, "There is no role for a woman, except in the choruses; what are the ladies going to say about this neglect on the part of their favorite master?"

The French musician showed a propensity to cast female characters as the leads in his musical dramas. This prejudice accorded with his personal reputation for being particularly solicitous of women. A broader context may have been his reputed womanizing with the divas of his operas. An etching depicts the composer in a rehearsal of his *Manon* (see Fig. 1.79). The scene is set in a sumptuous drawing room. The only men apart from the composer are truly marginalized, the most so a figure lurking in the shadows stage left, on the landing of a staircase above. Massenet, although musically the accompanist, is the cynosure of the tableau. Sure-fingered, he holds court at the piano, amid a semicircular harem of admiring and even adoring ladies. One lady on each side of him holds the pages of the score attentively, two behind him lean forward all ears and eyes, and the whole group manages to appear at the same moment intent and languorous, at his beck and call. Such scenes, although more practical in nature and setting, must have been common throughout Massenet's life, as he played on the ivories to well-rounded prima donnas the parts he had composed for them (see Fig. 1.80). By chance, we have from decades later a photograph that reprises the scene, the divas a touch more matronly but the dynamics much the same (see Fig. 1.81).

Fig. 1.78 Advertisement for Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*.
Illustration by Alphonse Mucha, 1902.

Fig. 1.79 Jules Massenet rehearsing *Manon* with Sibyl Sanderson and other female companions. Engraving by Charles Baude after drawing by Albert Aublet, 1888.

Fig. 1.80 Jules Massenet plays the piano, surrounded by admirers. Photograph, date and photographer unknown. Universum, Leipzig.

Fig. 1.81 Jules Massenet plays a piece from *Ariane*. Photograph by Photo Musica, before 1908. Published in Louis Schneider, *Massenet: L'homme – le musicien*. Illustrations et documents inédits (Paris: L. Carteret, 1908), 286.

In the painting Sibyl Sanderson, megastar of *Manon*, stands with her head almost haloed, set against a display of knives on the wall behind her. Less than a decade after the exhibition of this artwork in a salon, this same American diva took under her wing a soprano—Mary Garden—who would change fundamentally the course that *Our Lady's Tumbler* would follow in its reception, particularly in the New World. Not fifteen years later, the mentee would herself be feted as the leading lady of *Manon* (see Fig. 1.82).

Fig. 1.82 Postcard of Mary Garden in Massenet's *Manon* (Virgilio Alterocca, ca. 1905).

Massenet had made of the tale a musical drama that in many regards was a summa of nineteenth-century features, with an ironizing romanticism being a major constituent. The resultant masterstroke merited the warm applause it elicited on its opening night: it brought down the house. With the perspicacity of hindsight, *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* seems ultimately old-fashioned. Like most of the musican's oeuvre, the opera qualifies as skillfully rearguard rather than shatteringly avant-garde.

The composer himself would die on August 13, 1912, only a decade after the work premiered. In the same year, Henry Adams published the second private printing of *Mont Saint Michel and Chartres*. Although younger than the historian by four years,

and although the American was himself anything but a radical, the Frenchman was much less forward-looking and much more inward-turned in his perspective on the world. His piece might have disappeared full bore from public consciousness even in France, or never really have entered it at all in the United States and elsewhere, had it not been for the insistence of a single singer. The irony, given that the musical drama lacked a real female presence, was that the vocal artist who pushed Massenet's work into prominence was a woman.

In both its medievalism and its anachronism, *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* spoke very much to the climate and audiences of the belle époque. Neither fitted well with the brutally modern atmospherics of World War I. In general, Massenet's standing declined precipitously with the march of time. Although during his lifetime, to great acclaim, he had made the middle ground between artistry and recreation his own, after his death that space for compromise soon faded from view. What is considered the finest art varies from one decade and century to the next, but perhaps less so than that which is felt to provide mere entertainment.

This opera of Massenet's was even less well suited to the very different, swiftly evolving circumstances of the 1920s in France and the United States. If it remained a vibrantly successful crowd-pleaser, at least in the New World, through the end of the first quarter of the twentieth century, that outcome owes to a bit of tinkering that enabled the composition to be perceived as at once nostalgically old and bracingly modern. The same paradox typical of collegiate Gothic architecture in the United States held true of this medievalesque musical drama. Neo-medievalism coexisted with modernism, sometimes clashing in opposition, but often hanging in deliberate and knowing counterpoise.

2. The Diva

I don't want realism. I want magic! Yes, yes, magic! I try to give that to people. I misrepresent things to them. I don't tell truths. I tell what ought to be truth.

—Blanche DuBois, in Tennessee Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire*

Mary Garden Takes America

It is hardly too much to say that the engagement of Mary Garden marks the beginning of a new operatic era in America.

By having no role for a female soloist, Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* occupied an exceptional and even unique place within his operatic oeuvre. Despite this anomaly in the original score, the opera's lasting international renown, especially but not exclusively in the United States, owes everything to one female. Who was this wonder woman? In her era, she rated as the equivalent of a top pop star and media darling today. She was arguably the most famous diva of her era, as much for the juicy tidbits of the painstakingly cultivated and scripted scandals that she made to swirl around her as for the timbre of her voice and verve of her playacting. In pursuing her objectives, she took no prisoners.

If in this book individuals should be accorded space proportionate to their impact on the destiny of the story, this one would have a claim to at least as many pages as anyone else—beyond the anonymous poet of the fabulous French original from the Middle Ages, and perhaps too even beyond Anatole France. If the juggler became a juggernaut in America and in many other parts of the world for longer than the first half of the twentieth century, he has one above all others to thank. The glow of this onetime superstar may have faded, but it once burned blindingly bright.

But let me not prolong the coy suspense. This person was called Mary Garden (see Fig. 2.1).

https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0147.02

Fig. 2.1 Mary Garden. Photograph by Herman Mishkin, before 1905.

What a moniker! Talk about *nomen omen*, when a person bears the given name of the Virgin and a family one that also carries Marian associations. A Latin title for the Mother of God refers to her as *hortus conclusus*. Metaphorically, the simultaneous fertility and undisrupted virginity of Jesus's female parent render her an "enclosed garden." By a happy coincidence, the diva was dubbed "the little Garden" in French—*la petite Garden.* The words *garden* and *jardin* have a resemblance, not coincidental, that would not have been lost upon many. Later the soprano came to be known in America altogether un-horticulturally as "the Divine Mary" and, particularly in Chicago, as "Our Mary." In 1912, a music critic gave a précis of the changes this singer had inspired in Massenet's monastic stag opera, and why the shapeshifting had been all to the good. By having the composer alter the part of the boy-juggler, she enhanced the work's chances of remaining popular, or even growing more so, by imparting fresh variety and interest to it. She delivered on this potential by approaching her task "in the right spirit of picturesque feeling and romance." She gave the story springier and shapelier legs.

Yet matters were not quite as friction-free and straightforward as the reviewer supposed, especially when it concerned relations between Garden and Massenet. An earlier journalist had treated the the consequences of the gender-bending more sensationally. His article ran above photos of the French musician and Sibyl Sanderson, and two of Garden herself. Its headline howled—and it was a prolonged

shriek, requiring more than one deep breath to be enunciated from beginning to end—"Angry at an American Prima Donna. Mary Garden Rouses the Ire of Paris because She Profanes a Sacred Opera by Assuming the Role of a Man in a Work Where Women Are Barred." The story of the jongleur's sex change is sufficiently complex and interesting that it deserves to be told systematically.

The polymorphous Mary was an operatic first lady par excellence, even larger than life in her self-presentation. She could be fairly called the most famous singer in the France of her day, and the greatest living exponent of French opera in the world. For all that, we must take care not to leap to any conclusions about her nationality. She was in fact Scottish, born in Aberdeen. As a small child, she relocated with her family to the United States. Eventually her immigrant parents put down roots in Chicago, though she did not acquire US citizenship until 1924. Before then, she lived for considerable stretches in France. After beginning her musical instruction in the Midwestern metropolis, she received support from a benefactor there which enabled her to undertake further training in Paris. Because of a scandal in her personal conduct, she alienated her patron and slipped into adversities. Nonetheless, thanks to a series of felicitous developments, she ascended in a whirlwind to the status of a demigoddess in France. Eventually she retired to Scotland, where she died.

Garden owed some breaks early in her career to sheer luck in the lottery of life. Others arose from the selfless kindness and charity of a fellow American soprano. Sibyl Sanderson, Californian by birth, enjoyed stardom in the City of Light that rested on a tripod of physical beauty, acting talent, and vocal range (see Fig. 2.2).

Fig. 2.2 Trade card of Sibyl Sanderson as Esclarmonde
(Paris: Chocolat Guérin-Boutron, 1910).

If the three feet of the trivet needed a fourth, it would be her humanity. For all these reasons and more, she became the darling of opera-goers. She was generous-hearted and openhanded, almost to a fault, and not nearly as lucky in love or marriage as she may have deserved. Both her family and William Randolph Hearst's intervened to derail their teenage courtship. Had they been allowed to wed, what would have issued from their different tastes in medievalization is interesting to contemplate.

When Massenet composed the medievalesque and Byzantinesque *Esclarmonde*, he designed specifically for her the "note heard round the world," taking one aria to G above high C. This stratospheric tone, well within the zone of ear-piecing and glass-shattering, was the highest pitch ever asked of a singer. She called this cadenza her "Eiffel Tower," a metaphor that juxtaposed the spanking-new steel icon with the chivalric romance acted out in the opera. The pairing resembled that of the iron lattice structure and Notre Dame. As happened again and again in this part of the nineteenth century, medieval met modern. To complete the nexus of Massenet and Sanderson within the musical drama, the libretto was dedicated to her.

The soprano was the toast of Paris, until the deadly duo of dipsomania and drug addiction felled her at the age of thirty-eight. The medical examiner diagnosed cirrhosis and pneumonia, among various other ailments, as the causes of her death. Years before this final collapse, she had intervened crucially to rescue Mary Garden. The younger Scottish-American singer, apparently after becoming pregnant out of wedlock, lost the financial backing from a Chicagoan on which she had relied for support during her studies in Paris. During the ensuing crisis, she hitched her wagon to a star. The fading older celebrity supplied funds to save her compatriot from a hand-to-mouth existence. Perhaps more important, she offered mentorship to give her protégée much-needed connections. Sanderson seems also to have been her close confidante.

Beyond good fortune and a munificent mentor, Garden's rise reflected her own indomitable drive and endurance. She came along at a point in the development of opera when circumstances particularly favored a singing actor of her caliber. The right diva for the right moment, she had a good voice, a magnificent sense of color and phrasing, and an extraordinary forte for characterization. By the same token, she had skill in crafting her image, panache in packaging and presenting her personality and plans to journalists and general readers, and whatever else is required to establish and master the mystique of female and feminine sexuality. In a colorized transparency that was the silent-movie equivalent of a trailer for her second film, she was even sold explicitly as "the world's greatest dramatic actress and most vital feminine personality" (see Fig. 2.39). On stage, she acted however professional advancement dictated. Yet let there be no confusion: at no point in life did she play an ingenue, on the boards or off. Opportunity knocks but once, and she had her ears peeled for it.

One happy turn of events in the star-making process took place at the Opéra Comique in Paris on April 10, 1900. After an established singer fell ill, Garden stepped in as understudy. Not one to suffer from butterflies, she played with stunning success

in the title role as Louise in Gustave Charpentier's musical drama by that name. Another jackpot was being designated as the leading woman in Debussy's *Pelléas and Mélisande*, which premiered on April 30, 1902. This performance catapulted her to fame, and the character of Mélisande with her long and lavish tresses became part of her stock repertoire for years to come (see Fig. 2.3). The French composer constructed his opera obsessively on the basis of the symbolist play by the same name (see Fig. 2.4). Although the theatrical work is not set explicitly in France in the Middle Ages, Maurice Maeterlinck's *Pelléas and Mélisande* exudes an atmosphere redolent of medieval legends and romances. Notably, the Belgian playwright directed that the dresses should be in a medievalesque style and should bring out the figures of the characters as in a painting by Hans Memling, a so-called Flemish primitive of the fifteenth century (see Fig. 2.5).

Fig. 2.3 Mary Garden as Mélisande. Photograph by Davis & Eickemeyer, 1908.

Fig. 2.4 Maurice Maeterlinck. Photograph by Charles Gerschel, before 1923. New York, New York Public Library Archives.

Fig. 2.5 Hans Memling, *Virgin and Child with Saints Catherine of Alexandria and Barbara*, early 1480s. Oil on wood, 68.3 × 73.3 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. Bequest of Benjamin Altman, 1913.

The imprint of the Middle Ages within the opera closely related to the play is worth underlining. Garden's role in the musical drama stamped her operatic career ineffaceably, as is manifest already in Debussy's affectionate and possessive practice of referring to her ever thereafter by the nickname of "my Mélisande." The composer's enchantment with her in this guise can be easily appreciated from newspaper reports (see Fig. 2.6). The feedback from audiences to her performances as this character left no room for doubt: everyone loved her.

Fig. 2.6 Mary Garden as Mélisande. Photograph by Davis & Eickemeyer, 1911. Published in *The Theatre Magazine* (February 1911).

Oscar Hammerstein I

> In the annals of music in America, the name of Oscar Hammerstein will be inseparably associated with that of Jules Massenet.

Mary Garden made a further splash in Paris in 1901 in parts such as the lead in Massenet's *Manon* (see Fig. 2.7). Flushed with success, she ventured to add London to the arc of her career, but she never met with much fortune there. Her route to fame in the English-speaking ambit would come through the United States. She made an outsized contribution by splicing her own manner of modern opera onto the New World and perhaps even in Americanizing the French style in the process. Until her arrival, the repertoire had come mainly from Italy, as too had most of the divas. The

delivery that these singers cultivated was a study in contrast between vocal fluidity and corporeal rigidity.

Intrepid, flamboyant, and egotistical, Oscar Hammerstein I earned a well-deserved reputation as a theater impresario. Despite much counsel to the contrary, he was determined to import into his adoptive land French musical drama, with its emphasis on dramatic enactment. By doing so, he intended to vie full on with the Italocentric Metropolitan Opera Company, which had been founded in 1880 and had its first performance in 1883. Since building the Harlem Opera House in 1889, the German-born Jewish immigrant had cut a wide swath through the cultural life of New York City. To his adversaries, he was nothing more than a vulgar huckster. Yet with his showmanly skills, he rekindled the popularity of opera across the United States. In the process, he brought the art before thousands upon thousands who would not otherwise have had access to it. In 1906, this hero of hype and prince of promo went head-to-head with the rival company by opening his eighth theater, the second Manhattan Opera House.

Through the end of the belle époque, the North American public of opera-loving consumers benefited immensely from the rivalry between the two houses. Across the continent, the cutthroat competition between the Metropolitan and the Manhattan resulted in an extraordinary proliferation of performances, some by newly established permanent companies, others by subsets of those groups on tour. Amid all the variety, Massenet's operas *Thaïs*, *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*, *Hérodiade*, *Sapho*, and *Grisélidis* constituted vertebrae in the spinal column of the entrepreneur's repertory, especially when gauged by the box-office returns and the critical acclaim they achieved.

In 1907, Hammerstein acted assertively to construct the bridgehead for realizing his ambitions. In the process, he relied upon Mary Garden more than upon anyone else (see Fig. 2.8). The relationship of these two hot-tempered individuals was volatile, even combustible—a powder keg not surprising in view of the strong-minded character and equally intense appetite for ballyhoo that both possessed. She was then thirty years old and of the essence in his adroit exploitation of the star system. Already a seasoned trouper, she owed her remarkable achievement in part to the supporting cast of long-term colleagues whom she brought with her. At the same time, she made her own way, guided by clear conceptions of what musical drama and a prima donna should be. Her views differed immensely from the Italian style of operatic art that had held sway in America before her advent.

Mary Garden grasped that opera was in equal measure music and drama. Consequently, she aspired not merely to sing beautifully, but also to impersonate dead-on the heroines and heroes she represented when she performed. She sought to achieve the second objective by amalgamating song with acting. In the process, she staked out a spot for herself as a singing actor. Her cultivation of both skills made her vulnerable to quibbling that she could do one better than the other—or one well and the other not at all.

Fig. 2.7 Postcard of Mary Garden in the titular role of Massenet's *Manon* (Terni, Italy: Alterocca, ca. 1919).

Fig. 2.8 Mary Garden and Oscar Hammerstein. Photograph by George Grantham Bain, 1909.

Garden's career lasted for most of three decades. That span of years coincided with the height of operamania in the Western world. The golden age of the genre began in Europe in the mid- to late nineteenth century, and ended in 1930 in the US. Her supernova dimming, she stepped off the boards at the very moment when the curtain fell on that unique period: she retired from the Chicago Opera after the 1930–1931 season. She made performing as Jean the Jongleur her last act, capping her decades as prima donna with a role that had helped to define her as a singer. She went out in a blaze of glory—or jonglery. By design or coincidence, the diva departed at a watershed when modernity and modernism prevailed over medievalism—hard on the heels of

the completion of the new Civic Opera building, a starkly modern landmark built in 1929, and barely preceding that of the collegiate Gothic campus at the University of Chicago, which was constructed between 1892 and 1932. The jongleur was not doomed to die back, but to thrive and not merely survive he or she would need henceforth to find media beyond opera, and a setting beyond any specific iteration of the Gothic revival.

Making a Travesti of Massenet's Tenor

The French composer's resolution not to put a soprano on the stage in the original form of his opera ran remarkably contrary to the tide of his era, for over the course of the nineteenth century in France religion had become progressively more feminized. As men turned away from the faith and worship, women remained attached to them—or grew even more so. Notably, the decision to make the leading man of the opera a female was made not in France but in the United States. The pair of ideas to secure the rights to Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* and to have Mary Garden take the lead may have come from Hammerstein himself, in May or June of 1907. The star's largely ghostwritten autobiography claims that he insisted that she act the principal role *en travesti*—costumed as a male. The operative phrase here conveys the idea that the actor in question would be disguised as a character of the opposite sex.

The role of Jean would have beckoned to Garden for various reasons, one of them being the boyish figure she prided herself on maintaining. Despite her profession that she had no thighs or hips, photographs attest that her shape and weight varied from year to year, and from role to role. She ranged, at least in the physique she coaxed her viewers into believing she inhabited, from streamlined and sylphlike to sultry and sybaritic. A further factor is that already in 1904–1905 Garden had won great kudos and demonstrated considerable vivacity in singing the part of the young page Chérubin in Massenet's opera by that name. Because of her success as Manon, the musician wrote for her this other role—the only one he composed specifically for her (see Fig. 2.9). Whatever the precise reasons, she was a star of many ambitions, and she discerned in the role of the jongleur a spacious field for putting her histrionic talent to a new test.

Both Hammerstein and Garden, with their canny (and uncanny) grasp of audiences and markets, may have divined that changing the lead from a male tenor to a female soprano dressed as a young man would allow them the best of two worlds, old and new. A substantial article appeared in 1908 in the *New York Times* before the long-awaited musical drama was performed at the Manhattan Opera House. Its final sentence underscores the innovation as a cause for self-respect for Americans. Making the character of the medieval entertainer a woman, it said in so many words, took the soft power of high culture in a new direction. On the operatic stage as in architecture, the United States doggedly made the European Middle Ages its own, by usurping them and perhaps even improving on them.

Fig. 2.9 Postcard of Mary Garden (Paris: Vin Désiles, early twentieth century).

The feminization of the role capitalizes on attitudes that had been felt strongly four hundred years earlier by Protestants in the Reformation as they gashed, heaved, and hammered at images of Mary. The iconoclasts fought, in part, because of their own mixed feelings about being brought to heel by women. Out of the same impulse, the reformers raved in misogynist rants against the cult of the Virgin. The Mother of God, in her omnipresence, made Christianity womanly or, seen negatively, effeminate. Not merely on theology but on the arts more globally, she exercised a pervasive domination like the effect that noblewomen had on the game of courtly love.

The feminization and effeminization that Mariocentrism caused and that may have been felt intuitively during the reform period are brought home overtly in Mary Garden's travesty. Her arrogation of the role effectively emasculates the man who is the devotee of Mary, in this case, the Virgin Mary. This alteration of sex was radical. It did violence not just to Massenet and the libretto but also to the very story. In one sense the feminine, in the Mother of God, was a deep-seated presence in the narrative. Yet the only woman in attendance is a more or less unmoving image—and she functions mainly as a supremely passive object upon which to be gazed by a man. Garden never played the Virgin. The soprano's move of assuming the part of the jongleur was masterly, since it completed his identification with Mary. Both the minstrel and the Madonna are miraculous, but (or and?) silent when overseen by men.

Performance *en travesti* may arouse indecent trains of thought. The construction is etymologically identical with *transvestite*, a term coined only in 1910 to denote

one who wears garments custom-tailored to the opposite sex. At the same time, the replacement of a male singer by a cross-dressing female helps to de-emphasize elements that are disturbing or unnerving in the original *Our Lady's Tumbler*. The dancer's ardor as he executes his strenuous maneuvers in his skimpy clothing evokes all sorts of comparisons from across cultures. Both flagellants and dervishes, often scantily clad, frequently portrayed as being "natural men," offer obvious parallels. An early postcard presents one such member of this Sufi religious order improbably as a *homo silvaticus*, a "savage woodsman." Shaggy-haired and bushy-bearded, covered only by a white breechclout, he has been captured not in motion but at rest in a sylvan setting (see Fig. 2.10).

Fig. 2.10 Postcard depicting a "Dervish Arab" (Egypt, ca. 1904).

Closer to home, Marianism has entailed various kinds of physical self-abuse. Tongue-dragging, a very literalist ironing out of tongue-twisting, provides a strikingly slimy and salivary case in point. In southern Italy, women and men have been known to engage in a distinctive form of lingual devotion to Mary: going down on all fours in a house of worship, they give themselves a real licking and lacerate their tongues by pulling them across the pavement from the entrance to the altar. When enough people perform the practice during a given festival, the church floor can be left ribbed with stripes of blood like the tracks of oversized slugs. Freudian explanations can be, and have been, framed for male masochism in devotion to the Virgin. Whatever the validity of such interpretations, the disquiet provoked by the scene in which the jongleur exerts himself before the Madonna may be at least softened by making the man a woman.

In Mary Garden's day the notion of *travesti* may have been less unusual than in many other periods. The supremely famous Sarah Bernhardt, high priestess of histrionics, displayed a persistent predilection for acting across gender lines. In such performances she found a means to loosen the straitjacket of Victorian and Edwardian gender roles and boundaries. Even if absolute freedom from inhibition was impractical, she could at least seize the opportunity to raise the perpetual question of what is feminine and what masculine. The French actor and Mary Garden became bound together in a couple of major ways. For example, the tragedienne was often identified just as "The Divine Sarah," while the Scottish-American earned a similar alias as "The Divine Mary," and was even called "the Sarah Bernhardt of opera." The diva saw Bernhardt, at the age of fifty-six, play the title role of the young Napoleon II of France (see Fig. 2.11).

Fig. 2.11 Postcard of Sarah Bernhardt as "l'Aiglon," 1900 (Paris, ca. 1906).

After the performance, the soprano was allowed backstage, and was even invited to the Divine Sarah's home. The thespian's rendering evidently left an impression, for long afterward the singer kept a picture of Bernhardt in this role in a scrapbook. Garden also claimed to have traveled with Debussy to London in July 1904 to watch a matinee of Maeterlinck's *Pelléas and Mélisande* in which the legendary figure, at the age of sixty, took the male role of Pelléas (see Fig. 2.12).

Fig. 2.12 Sarah Bernhardt as Pelléas in Maeterlinck's *Pelléas et Mélisande*. Photograph by W. & D. Downey, 1905. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sarah_Bernhardt_-_Pelleas_et_Melisandre.png

Sarah Bernhardt's career had taken off in 1869, when she was all of twenty-four. In that year, she acted a breeches role in *Le Passant*, the first play by François Coppée, when it was staged at the Odéon in Paris. The one-act comedy in verse is a kind of duet, with a simple plot. Set in Renaissance Florence, it tells of a romantic encounter. One character is a ravishing courtesan called Silvia, the other a wandering minstrel boy—"The Passerby" of the title—by the name of Zanetto. Bernhardt was cast as the lute-bearing youth (see Fig. 2.13), and her performance won her all but instant and unanimous applause for her voice and grace. Among those who took note of the accolades was Massenet. Already in 1869, he composed the well-received *Zanetto's Serenade*. In 1891, he had recourse a second time to the theatrical work for inspiration (or at least for a title) when composing a piano song that he called *Serénade du Passant* (see Fig. 2.14). To return to 1869, Bernhardt's triumph was short-lived. The brewing Franco-Prussian War and its aftermath disrupted theater as all else in France. Once her career resumed, she assumed star status once again. Any event in which she appeared, she headlined. In her performances, she was felt to resemble a prima donna, and at least two of the dramas in which she achieved prodigious success were made subsequently into operas.

As an operatic performer, Mary Garden defined herself by her acting as much as by her singing. For this reason, she may have identified particularly closely with Bernhardt. The diva's eventual decision to sing, dance, and act the part of Salomé may have been influenced by the common knowledge that the French actor had thought twice about playing the role in Oscar Wilde's original one-act tragedy in 1891 (see Fig. 2.15).

Fig. 2.13 Sarah Bernhardt as Zanetto in François Coppée's *Le passant*. Photograph by W. & D. Downey, 1869. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sarah_Bernhardt_-_Le_Passant.png

Fig. 2.14 Front cover of François Coppée and Jules Massenet, *Sérénade du passant*, 3rd ed. (Paris: Heugel, 1891).

Fig. 2.15 Mary Garden as Salomé. Photograph by Herman Mishkin, ca. 1909. Reproduced as a colorized postcard (Paris: Rigaud, early twentieth century).

The theatrical work was published in the United States in 1894 by Copeland & Day, the Boston firm that four years later brought out the first edition of Isabel Butler's *Our Lady's Tumbler*.

Hammerstein's affinity for Massenet's opera about the jongleur persisted even after April of 1910, when the bell rang to end his four rounds of battling with the Metropolitan. In return for a princely cash settlement of $1,200,000, he lived up to his name by hammering out and signing an agreement to refrain from doing business in the US operatic world for a decade. Renewing his activities across the Atlantic, he opened the London Opera House in 1911. In the first season, he showcased *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* in the repertory, with a woman in the title role (see Fig. 2.16). The promoter's gusto for the musical drama was driven by the almighty dollar (or pound sterling): performance of the composition was a big money-maker. The *Musical Times*, reporting in 1912 on the second season of the Chicago Grand Opera Company, noted that the gross receipts had been eye-popping. The emphasis on box-office income was only reasonable, for the more the new house in the Windy City could profit from old standbys, the easier time it would have coping with the high costs of starting up. Massenet's Marian miracle tops the list of musical dramas in the article. Furthermore, his composition is followed by Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari's *The Jewels of the Madonna* (see Fig. 2.17).

Fig. 2.16 Victoria Fer as the juggler. Photograph by Dover Street Studios, 1912. Published in *The English Illustrated Magazine* 46 (1912): 509. Washington, DC, Library of Congress.

This other opera, which has otherwise little to nothing in common with the French composer's, involves the theft of gems from a statue of the Virgin. It seems unlikely that the decision to mount this production was unrelated to the success of the tale from medieval France, which also had at its nucleus an image of the Madonna.

The change in the lead from male tenor to female soprano, and especially to Mary Garden, explains most of the attraction *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* exercised on a broad public during its heyday. Despite the popularity of the recasting, the author of the original music was reputedly none too happy with the alteration. If the rumor mill ground true, he took the diva's usurpation of the lead by performing *en travesti* as truly travestying his artistic integrity. As a memoirist, Massenet was politic, even silky, in articulating his dissatisfaction with what he had perceived to be a transmogrification of his opera. He was obviously chary of delivering a direct broadside that would give offense to "the dazzling artist who is admired as much in Paris as in the United States." At the same time, he could not check an impulse to snipe and swipe at a sharp-elbowed woman who, in his sexist view, had overstepped. Accordingly, he drew attention to

her womanhood by contrasting her onstage outfit when acting the part of a man with her offstage attire as a female. He would not countenance any crossing of the gender divide, in dressing or anything else: her manning up made him fear being unmanned. To undermine Mary Garden, the composer noted that after stepping off the boards, the singer would doff the mufti of a minstrel and don the *dernier cri* in clothing from the Rue de la Paix—the street in Paris that had long been famous for women's jewelry and haute couture. The allusion was oracular, for in fact eventually the diva would endorse cosmetic products manufactured by a perfumery that was based there (see Fig. 2.18).

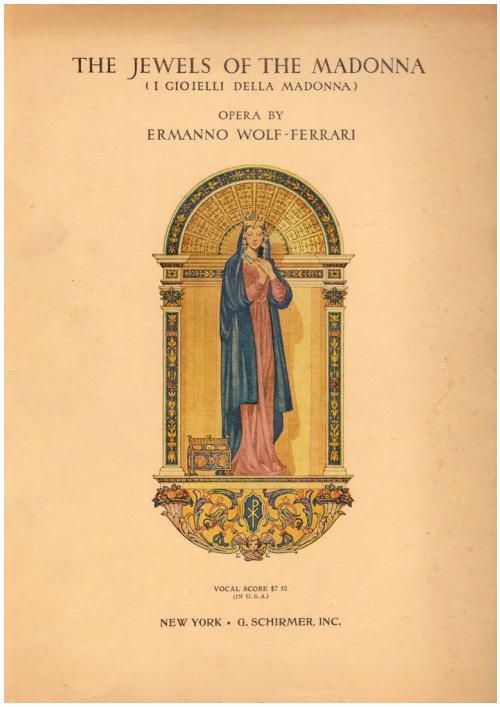


Fig. 2.17 Cover. Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari, *The Jewels of the Madonna (I Gioielli della Madonna)* (New York: G. Schirmer, ca. 1911).

Fig. 2.18 Advertisement for Rigaud perfume featuring Mary Garden (Paris, 1920).

In at least one conversation the melodist seems to have been less restrained than he was in his own written recollections. In an account given by the writer who put his memoirs into English, Massenet told with "voice vehement with indignation and unutterable scorn" how he had little thought when writing the opera that "the monk's habit would ever be disguised in a petticoat from the Rue de la Paix." We can picture him curling his lip at the thought of the famous boulevard, with its modistes and milliners, tangy eaux de toilette and talcum powders, diamond choke collars

and cold creams. (The translator, probably channeling the autobiography's subject, ventured the opinion that "a woman playing a serious and inevitably male character [is] grotesquely absurd.") The feminization may have rankled the musician even more since, as we have seen, he had conceived the opera without roles for women—with manliness aforethought.

Despite all the hunches and hearsay that Massenet opposed the move to make the hero a heroine, he may have not been altogether unenthusiastic about whatever helped bang the drum for his music and ratchet up his fame and income. Years later, when a woman, Victoria Fer, warbled the part of Jean for the first time at the London Opera house, a journalist reviewing her performance claimed to have heard (via Hammerstein's stage director Jacques Coini) that "the French composer admitted to him this summer that if he had to rewrite the music Jean would be a soprano part." At least one other music critic expressed doubt that Garden herself had had much to do with Massenet's change of mind in shifting the role from a tenor. Such third-hand information gleaned from newspapers cannot be rated as very credible. Fake news? Then again, it may indicate that with the passage of a decade, the songwriter eventually became at least reconciled, if not open-armed, to the hit the opera scored with a soprano *en travesti*.

Conceivably, the whole supposed clash between Garden and Massenet was stage-managed to generate a to-do. The soprano, Hammerstein, and others, not excluding the composer, had a vested (and the adjective applies well to a "trousers" role) interest in fanning tabloid-worthy controversy. The adage "there is no such thing as bad publicity except your own obituary" dates to the Gilded Age. Whatever name we give the phenomenon, the singer had a genius for achieving fame by shocking the public. An ingenious engineer of headlines and self-invention, she computed with surgical precision just how much scandalizing was required to attract more potential audience members than her theatrics would disaffect.

The move from tenor to soprano and from male to female brought radical transformations, inflecting not just the nature and balance of Massenet's music but even the very essence of the story. In one sense the feminine has an impactful presence in the narrative already in its medieval form, in the person of the Virgin Mary, however silent the Madonna may be. In another sense, the only lady present in *Our Lady's Tumbler* contributes to the plot mainly by being gazed upon by a man. If we think of the lead character as a stubbly Cistercian lay brother, as in the tale from the Middle Ages, the composer's intense reaction against having him played by a woman is warranted. Yet, as we have witnessed already, neither Massenet nor his librettist went back to the medieval poem itself. Neither endeavored to ground the opera in the fine-grained realities of convent life or Cistercianism. In fact, they resituated the monastery and changed the monastic order. Most relevantly, they followed Anatole France by making the protagonist a rawboned young man.

In the end, historicism seems not to have been an ingredient in the musician's fit of pique. His flash of rancor when Garden insists on refashioning the opera smacks of

threatened masculinity, a man who balks at being pushed by a member of the opposite sex. His offended hauteur suggests that for his self-regard, aspects of both sexuality and gender are at stake: we could cut to the chase and call it what it was—sexism. He has on his mind ladies' underclothes, as well as the uncontrollable creatures who slip into and out of them. The real question for him could be metaphorical: who wears the pants in the family?

To look at the other side, Garden was hardly intent on scoring a point for womankind. She directed most of her efforts not to being a suffragist, and even less a protofeminist, but to reaching goals that were more immediately self-seeking. The irony is to think of the damage that would have been dealt to Massenet's reputation in the United States had she not been adamant about taking on the role of the jongleur. Because of her, the passion for his operas in New York was even termed "Massenetitis" in one of the city's papers, as if the rage were a medical condition. The popularity stemmed mainly from her performances in his *Thaïs* and *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*. We must wonder how much it would have shriveled if she had not been able to counterbalance the eroticism of Thaïs in her harlot phase with the innocence of Jean throughout the vicissitudes of his story.

Massenet's frostiness toward Mary Garden was reciprocated. The diva did not overflow with plaudits for the composer, although during her career she sang more operas by him than by any of his contemporaries. She regarded him perspicaciously as "one of those passive musicians who sacrificed conscience to the inflection of popular theatricalism." By no accident, both Debussy and Strauss today enjoy higher esteem than he does. In contrast to them, Massenet made compromises that rendered his music conventional. In the process, he cemented commercial success in the moment but jinxed the long-term prospects of his work. By choosing the market over art, he made his musical dramas rapidly fading curiosities of their period rather than enduring specimens of virtuosity.

Whatever the limitations inherent in Massenet's operas, Mary Garden could not be deterred from elevating, to the best of her redoubtable abilities, them and any others in which she strutted her stuff. She had her sights set on helping to establish and propagate a new music. Yet she typified her era strikingly in often seeking to be experimental through musical dramas set in late antiquity and the Middle Ages. In what could be termed retro innovation, she attempted to achieve through what we label medievalism what she herself might have styled modernism. However uninstinctive it may seem, by choosing settings at a great chronological distance from her own century, the singer heightened her ability to smash the mold and dispel the mustiness of old-school operatic acting and institute her own novel form of sung theatricality. Through transposition into the past of seemingly better days, she humanized the characters she embodied, while at the same time she electrified the dramatic situations. The medieval period and the jongleur were essential in the unprecedented movements in opera that took hold in the fin de siècle.

Today female celebrities such as pop stars and matinee idols attend closely to their dress whenever making high-visibility public appearances. They drape themselves in outré outfits, both slinkily sequined and skimpily see-through. As an utterly un-camera-shy diva in the early twentieth century, Mary Garden was no different. Through provocative costumes and comments, she waged a concerted campaign to tease exposés from male reporters, thrill audiences, and hike ticket sales along with hemlines of dresses. She liked nothing better than to accesorize the semblance of nudity. To this end, she sought after roles far beyond the saucy soubrettes that would have satisfied lesser ambitions.

Back in the United States for the first time since decamping from Chicago in 1896, Garden made her debut in 1907 at the Manhattan Opera House, which Hammerstein had built one year earlier. The occasion was the American première of Massenet's *Thaïs*, based on Anatole France's 1900 novel by the same name. The action plays out in Egypt under Byzantine rule. A monk endeavors to convert a courtesan named Thaïs. In due course the religious man succumbs to lust. In contrast, the fille de joie reveals her pureness of soul, embodying the commonplace of the whore with a heart of gold.

In the premiere of *Thaïs*, the diva wore a garment of crepe de chine to achieve a calculated immodesty: it skirted the bounds of propriety. According to her self-satisfied account of the proceedings, the audience gasped when she threw off her cloak. The sharp intake of breath was warranted, since she looked as if she had on no clothes underneath: "The dress stuck to my flesh, and because it was of the palest pink it made me look as if I were naked." Surviving photographs confirm that her description exaggerates not an iota: what she is (or isn't) wearing qualifies very nearly as the bare minimum. The outfit leaves little to the imagination: a snapshot looks a lot like a high-resolution image from a full-body scanner (see Fig. 2.19). The American music critic James Gibbons Huneker, joking about the same opera when Garden played its lead role, called it "Thighs." The soprano achieved repute or disrepute as much through carefully calibrated controversy as through her flair in merging skills as a singer and as a dancer. In performing as a courtesan, she took titillation and tantalization to their utmost. Her motions resembled exotic dancing, like a leg show or cancan kickline in a burlesque hall. No doubt Thaïs's steamy movements and simulated nudity lingered in the minds of many attendees far more than did the Egyptian prostitute's post-repentance purity. After turning holy, the harlot was attired luminously in white, like the Cistercian monks in *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* (see Fig. 2.20).

Another part that defined Mary Garden in the US was Salomé. Richard Strauss's one-act opera by that name had its world premiere in 1905, its New York one in 1907 (see Fig. 2.21). The German musical drama, like the French play by Oscar Wilde that preceded it, focused upon a notorious New Testament episode. The title character was the daughter of Herodias and Herod. She obtained the pate of John the Baptist on a plate—the original head on a platter, once the holy man was truly kaput—as a boon in return for cutting captivating capers before her father on his birthday. The routine

that resulted in capital punishment for the prophet and saint was the famous "dance of the seven veils." The soprano took earnestly the balletic element required by the role. Before leaving Paris to premiere in the character of Jean in the United States in 1909, she announced that in preparation for her roles in *Salomé* and *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* she had studied ballet daily.

The libidinous antics and implied nudity made the routine with the veils infamously salacious. For this exhibitionism, Mary Garden wore a gauzy body stocking of "nearly transparent flesh-colored silk," to which she stripped down by shedding layers in a prolonged peek-a-boo (see Fig. 2.22). The form-fitting flimsiness, scantiness, and clinginess of the fabric intensified the sense that the striptease was leading to real nakedness. The head-turning design and draping of the material created, very premeditatedly of course, the illusion that one of her breasts was uncovered (see Fig. 2.23). This effect was even more scandalous because she wore no corset when dancing. Can you imagine? She said of her close-fitting costume: "Men like it because they can't figure out where it ends and I begin." Making her appearance all the brassier, she wore a red wig. The cavorting culminated when she lavished a lingeringly lubricious smooch upon the severed cranium of the martyred saint (see Fig. 2.24).

Fig. 2.19 Mary Garden, as Thaïs, throws off her outer robe. Photograph, 1907. Photographer unknown.

Fig. 2.20 Mary Garden as Thaïs. Photograph by Herman Mishkin, 1907.

Fig. 2.21 Mary Garden as Salomé and Charles Dalmorès as Herod in Richard Strauss's *Salomé*. Photograph by Joseph Byron, ca. 1907. Published in *Theatre Magazine* (March 1909).

Fig. 2.22 Mary Garden as Salomé. Photograph by Herman Mishkin, 1909.

Fig. 2.23 Postcard of Mary Garden as Salomé (Paris: F. C. et Cie, early twentieth century).

The diaphanous wardrobe and tactical use or disuse of it pushed to the very limits, or even beyond the pale, of what was at that point culturally unobjectionable in the United States. An article ran in the *New York Times*: "Mary Garden Makes a Thrilling Salomé: Her Costume for Dance of Seven Veils—It Is Impossible to Describe It Even in Paris." A reporter who witnessed the preview in the French capital before she acted out her not-so-routine routine in the Big Apple commented: "New York may insist on a few more clothes." In Chicago, the sultriness of her unveiling led the directors of the opera company to cut the run short after the soprano refused to tone down either her lines or her poses. The resulting tempest in a teapot (or almost in a clingy wet T-shirt) resonated in the Windy City for many decades afterward—as well as in Milwaukee, where the canceled third show took place instead. In Philadelphia at least four denominations of churches squawked at the prospect of Garden's performing. The only official statement of support came from local nudists, who went overboard in backing her: "Clothes are only shams." What objectors said mattered less than what potential clientele did. Ticket-buyers found Garden and her getups a strong draw. They were willing to pay a premium or even overpay to see as much of her as they could get. Eye candy may be the emptiest of calories, but people spend heavily for the opportunity to add it to their daily intake.

Fig. 2.24 Mary Garden as Salomé, cradling the head of John the Baptist. Photograph, ca. 1911. Photographer unknown.

All the hullabaloo worked only to the benefit of her métier and marketability. Her racy rendition of Salomé made her notorious—and note-perfect notoriety was an advantage that she courted deftly not only when performing this opera but throughout her long professional life. In this case, what has been called "Salomania" ensued. By 1909 she was advertising a silk gown named after the role. The garment had a daring décolletage accentuated still further by additional lace, a couture item for sale downmarket to the grand public (see Fig. 2.25). She chose her roles methodically so that she could be positioned to glamorize products associated with the characters.

Even before *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*, Garden was accustomed to covering (and uncovering) an extensive gamut of roles. Women are often pegged on a spectrum that customarily runs from the whore at one extreme to the virgin at the other. The Scottish-American never played the Mother of God, but she acted often as sinners who in their later lives made a hairpin turn from spiritual putrefaction to embrace piety. In the story of the juggler, she became at least a hallowed devotee of Mary.

The stage-savvy diva oversaw meticulously the minutest details in her performances. In the opera about the juggler, other singers in the company once claimed that Garden went so far as to modify the behavior of the beast of burden that formed part of the

staging. They bruited abroad that she had the truly asinine animal trained to prick up its ears during her arias, but to simulate lassitude when others had the stage. Whether the creature brayed on command is left unsaid. The ass may have stolen the show even without any stellar intervention: it appears almost without fail in photographs of the paunchy Boniface, with *panniers* popping with photogenic flowers (see Fig. 2.26). On the rare occasions when the quadruped was indisposed, Garden would grow irate at being donkeyless. Whether true or not, the tittle-tattle tells us that the singer was viewed as an undisputed prima donna: she could not bear to share the limelight with any other human beings.

Fig. 2.25 Magazine advertisement depicting Mary Garden in a "Gown of Salomé silk!" Rogers & Thompson, 1909.

Fig. 2.26 Charles Gilibert, baritone, as Boniface, with donkey, in Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*. Photograph by Davis & Eickemeyer, 1906. Published in Henry T. Finck, *Massenet and His Operas* (New York: John Lane Company, 1910), plate between pp. 100 and 101.

Selling the Jongleur

Among Mary Garden's many talents, exploiting the fourth estate was one of the most acute. It would be an error to ascribe to sheer vainglory her manipulation of the media circus in the reporters, gossip columnists, and the paparazzi of her day. On the contrary, she deployed her savvy in maintaining or heightening her stature as a public personality—as a diva—to the benefit of the opera companies, operas, and songwriters she was associated with. From his contact with a career that stretched from 1890 to 1940, the impresario and producer Charles L. Wagner (see Fig. 2.27) had plentiful opportunity to study the singer's strengths and weaknesses. He observed shrewdly, with no apparent contradiction, both that she "never was an active publicity hound" and that "she was her own best press agent." Living life in a stage whisper, she fed American journalists and copywriters a steady diet of information and disinformation. Thanks to her care and feeding, the newspapers spread the sort of eyebrow-raising canards about her personal life and physical condition that would intrigue potential audiences without offending them. She never incurred the slightest risk that any phase in her stint as a diva would be underreported.

Beyond being a world-class flack, the soprano was also a worldly-wise businesswoman who made the most of her decades of employment through, to take but one example, product endorsements and tie-ins. The marketing of these items added to the tailwind that made Mary Garden a household name (see Fig. 2.28).

Fig. 2.27 Charles L. Wagner. Photograph by Hostetler Studios, 1919.

Fig. 2.28 Advertisement for Rigaud's "Mary Garden Perfume." Published in *Ladies' Home Journal* (December 1917), 101.

In the novel *Manhattan Transfer* published by John Dos Passos in 1925, one sequence employs the author's stream-of-consciousness technique to give voice to the thoughts of a messenger boy in close quarters with a lady on an overcrowded subway car. In an early description of the sexual perversion known technically as frottage, the young man (truly) laps up the experience of being "pressed up against the back of a tall blond woman who smelled of Mary Garden." The metonymy refers to a scent that was marketed under her name. The promotions for the French fragrance draw no explicit connections with the opera of *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*, but a nexus between the two would not have been out of the question in the brash cross-marketing of the early twentieth century. In 1926, we find purveyed in the United States, in conjunction with Reinhardt's *The Miracle*, a Parisian "miracle perfume" (see Fig. 2.29). The copy features testimony from the female actors who played both leading ladies, the Madonna and the nun. The text styles the scent as "summing up in one exquisite odour the splendor and mystery, the romance and haunting beauty of the play."

In the summer of 1908 the *New York Times* broke the story that *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* would open soon in America. The big event would take place at the Manhattan Opera House on November 27, the day after Thanksgiving. The upcoming spectacle would have the novelty of a soprano who put aside her usual spangles to become the jongleur. By chance, the same issue of the daily also chronicles the arrival of Isadora Duncan (see Fig. 2.30).

Fig. 2.29 Full-page advertisement for Lenthéric's "Miracle" perfume, at back of Oliver M. Sayler, *F. Ray Comstock and Morris Gest Present for the First Time in America the Stupendous, Spectacular Pantomime, the Miracle … Souvenir* (New York: Sackett & Wilhelms, 1926).

Fig. 2.30 Isadora Duncan. Photograph by Arnold Genthe, 1915. Published in Arnold Genthe, *Isadora Duncan: Twenty-Four Studies by Arnold Genthe* (New York: Mitchell Kennerly, 1929), plate 12.

As has been pointed out in passing already, the American-born dancer and the diva were associated with each other by their contemporaries. The two women, like many other female stage personalities of the era, were celebrities cut from fresh cloth. In fact, they embodied a path-breaking feminist ideal that unfolded in the late nineteenth century, and that was even typecast as the "New Woman." Such females were fierce mavericks in their refusal to face strictures set by a male-dominated and -domineered society. Sometimes they cultivated an air of being deliberately nonconformist and outrageous. With time, they proved to be adept (as their profession positioned them well to do) at stage-managing their images, all the while fostering a media-grabbing and career-furthering reputation of being unconventional. They staged many of their best theater pieces far from the footlights, playing transgressively, provocatively, and ambiguously upon their sexuality. The expression "sex goddess" would not enter common parlance until the late 1950s, but these pioneers of prurience truly set the stage for what would later come. They engaged in such cat-and-mouse games not only in the old and established media of the day, such as the newspaper and magazine industry, but also in fledgling ones, such as music recording, radio broadcast, film, and even telegraph. In the case of our star, she was a New Woman performing in a radically New Opera.

A wonderful pairing of Isadora Duncan and Mary Garden appears in a long poem in literary Scots from 1926. In three verses, Hugh MacDiarmid makes loud and clear to the reader's ears the lilt of a fine Scottish brogue, befitting the opera singer's Scottish birth and ancestry. He asks with more than one burr, in a kind of Jazz Age "where are the snows of yesteryear?": "Whaur's Isadora Duncan dancin' noo? / Is Mary Garden

in Chicago still / And Duncan Grant in Paris—and me fou'?" In modern standard English, these lines would read not nearly so euphoniously: "Where's Isadora Duncan dancing now? / Is Mary Garden in Chicago still / and Duncan Grant in Paris—and me too?"

An older coeval of Mary Garden who warrants notice not only for her similar prominence at the time, but also for her different reactions to changes in media, and to alterations in her own stature as an aging woman, is Yvette Guilbert (see Fig. 2.31). Garden knew and studied her, as she did Bernhardt and the renowned Italian stage actor Eleonora Duse (see Fig. 2.32).

Fig. 2.31 Yvette Guilbert. Photograph by Paul Boyer, ca. 1913. Reproduced on postcard (Paris: F. C. et Cie, 1913).

Fig. 2.32 Eleonora Duse. Photograph by Giovanni Battista Sciutto, before 1901. Reproduced on postcard (Venice: Piazza S. Marco, early twentieth century).

All of them belonged to a cohort of females in entertainment who without even always making witting efforts to do so, readied the world for aspects of feminism that are still being parleyed even today in the endless battle of the sexes. In this struggle with men for power, these women at once broke the mold and constructed new ones.

In the first half of her career, Guilbert was a standout as a cabaret performer. During the belle époque, she combined skills as a *diseuse* and *café-concert* singer (see Fig. 2.33). Later in life, from the turn of the century, she segued gradually from floor shows to assorted other interests and achievements as a self-educated scholar. Eventually she concentrated these efforts on performance-based study of medieval song. When all was said and done, she would receive recognition by being admitted as a member of the prestigious "Society for the Oldest French Texts," which had been founded in Paris in 1875 (by Gaston Paris and Paul Meyer, among others). The recognition was well deserved.

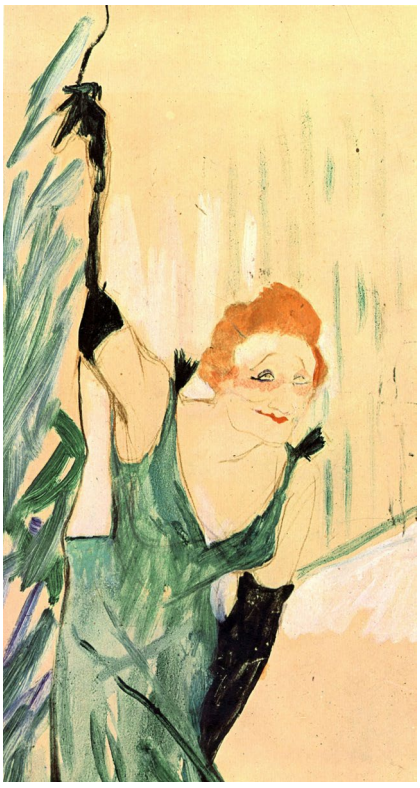


Fig. 2.33 Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, *Yvette Guilbert salue le public*, 1894. Gouache on cardboard, 48 × 28 cm. Albi, France, Musée Toulouse-Lautrec, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Toulouse-lautrec_yvette_guilbert.jpg

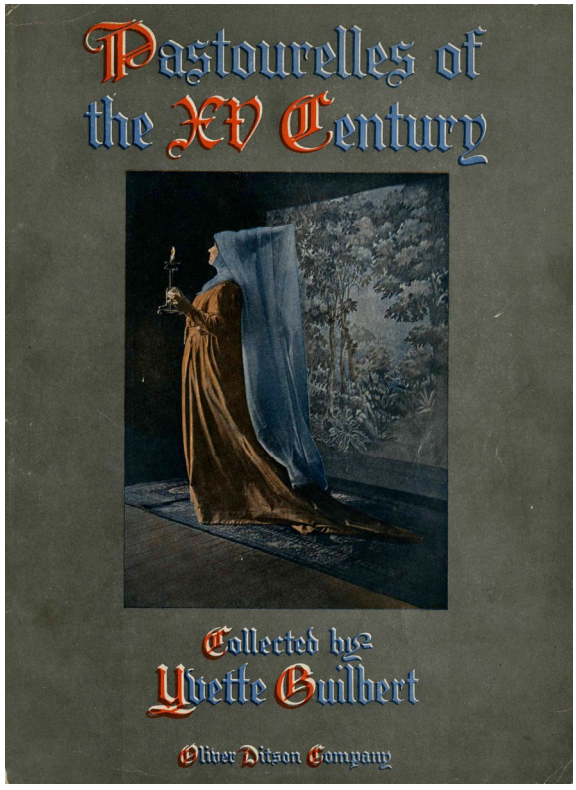


Fig. 2.34 Front cover of Yvette Guilbert, coll., *Pastourelles of the XV Century* (Boston: Oliver Ditson, 1919).

In the mature stage of her post-cabaret career, Guilbert received official permission for a trip to the United States to rally support for the French in World War I. Her patriotic whimsy was to belt out songs supposedly from the days of Joan of Arc while displaying photographs of tapestries saved from the war-torn cathedral of Reims (see

Fig. 2.34). In 1917, she visited campuses, among them those of all-female colleges such as Bryn Mawr and Smith. In these acts, she donned supposed period costumes to lend authenticity to sensational concerts that bore titles such as "The Great Songs of France Reconstructed… from the Literary Monument of the Poets: Trouvères, Jongleurs, and Clerks." Her sole appearance ever as an actor in an English-speaking role was in a melodramatic play about a miracle of the Virgin. A couple of years later, she led a troupe that over a half decade brought medieval theater and music to life on tours in Europe and America.

Garden's characterization of the supremely innocent and sublimely unquestioning Jean never prompted watchdogs to shut down a show of the medieval miracle as the other opera about Salomé had done. Her jongleur would not have offended the most straitlaced and puritanical audience. Even so, the prim and proper role still allowed her plentiful scope for the blend of singing, acting, and dancing for which she was famous. In operatic parlance, the singer who first sings a given role "creates" it. By this measure, the diva as gamine truly re-created Jean, not only by intoning as a female soprano a part meant originally for a male tenor, but also by endowing it with her personal élan.

The original medieval story, the retelling by Anatole France, and its operatic exposition by Jules Massenet—all are about the limitations and powers of performance. In all three, the entertainer grows dissatisfied with merely offering the illusion of alchemy—of accomplishing pseudomarvel rather than authentic miracle. In each, he ends up achieving the reality of thaumaturgy, even if unbeknownst to himself, thanks to the Virgin. For reaching this pinnacle in opera, the jongleur also had another Mary to thank—namely Garden.

Fig. 2.35 Mary Garden as Jean the juggler in Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*. Photograph by Matzene Studio, 1909. Published in Henry C. Lahee, *The Grand Opera Singers of To-day* (Boston: L. C. Page, 1912), frontispiece.

Mary Garden Dances the Role

Despite sound recordings, and all we know about the retailing of Mary Garden through advertising and about her stewardship of her image, we have no way of seeing how she moved when she performed in *Le jongleur de Notre Dame.* We lack direct evidence for how she danced or juggled in the role of Jean. Photographs of her made in these years are stills, capturing her freeze-frame as she holds a hat in one hand and three balls or her *vielle* and bindle stick in the other (see Figs. 2.35 and 2.36).

Fig. 2.36 Mary Garden as Jean the juggler in Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*. Photograph by Aimé Dupont, 1909.

We have no moving pictures of her in the part of the juggler from the silent-film era, and the absence of a cinematic form of the opera with her as the lead may be a mercy.

Mary Garden's time in Chicago matched nearly exactly the silent era of classical Hollywood, which ran from 1917 through the late 1920s. Constantly on the prowl for fresh talent, the film-industry investor Samuel Goldwyn signed on the prima donna to a fat contract. He had such confidence in her potential marketability that he gave her pride of place in a list of the six leading ladies upon whom he staked his fortunes at that juncture (see Fig. 2.37).

Fig. 2.37 Advertisement for Goldwyn Pictures featuring six prominent actresses (including Mary Garden). Poster by Goldwyn Pictures, 1917. Published in *The Saturday Evening Post*, October 27, 1917, 99.

From her perspective as a vocalist, making silent movies would have had the appeal of giving her a chance to earn money double time and rack up publicity while simultaneously resting her voice. At that moment in her career, she was singing so much that it is a wonder she did not go hoarse.

For Goldwyn Pictures Mary Garden made two old-Hollywood films, both literally spectacular duds. They failed resoundingly with reviewers and at the box office. First came *Thaïs* in 1917 (see Fig. 2.38), which has been decreed "one of the most colossal flops in movie history, both artistically and financially." Mannerisms that stood Garden in good stead on the operatic stage translated miserably onto celluloid. She could bat her eyelashes with the best of them, but audiences found her facial expressions and manual

gestures comically overacted. No charm offensive could spare her the consequences. If the movie was meant as a star vehicle, this one turned out to be a hearse.

A year after her first cinematic catastrophe, she exacerbated the disaster in *The Splendid Sinner* (see Fig. 2.39).

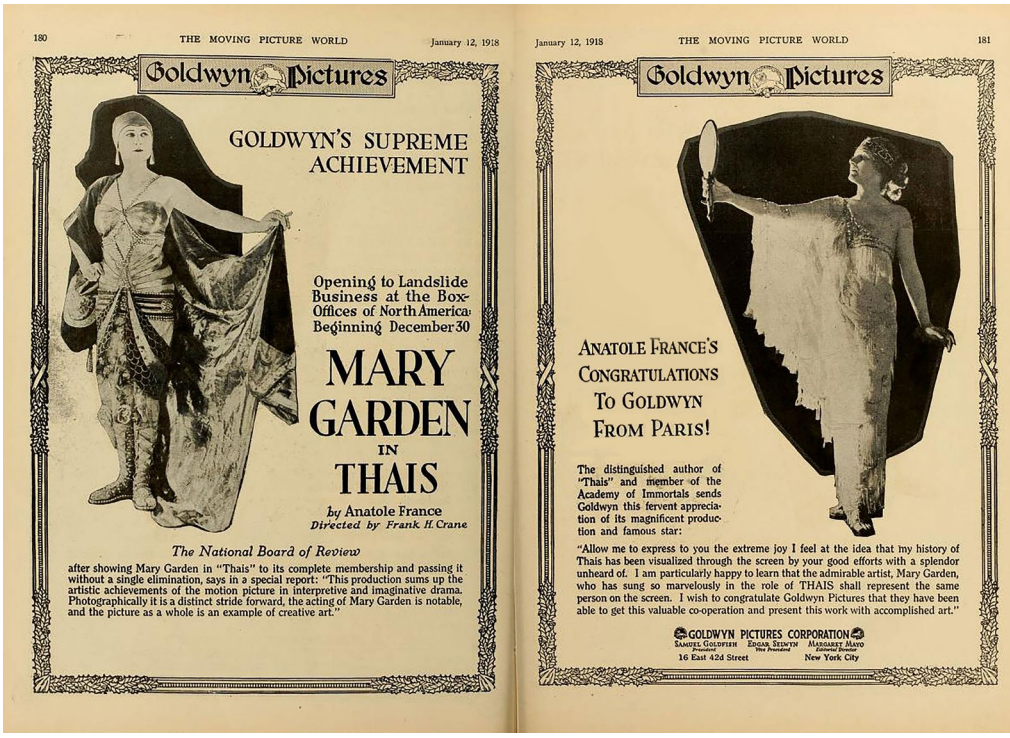


Fig. 2.38 Advertisement for Goldwyn Pictures' *Thaïs* (1917), starring Mary Garden. Published in *The Moving Picture World* (January 12, 1918), pp. 180–81, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Thais.jpg

Garden's second clunker was a short love story in which the female lead goes off to war as a nurse, but ends up as a spy who is apprehended by the Germans and executed by a firing squad. With wicked irony, one critic demolished her staginess in this footage. A shift in tastes had occurred, not without its sad ironies. The singer had made her name in America by abandoning the frozen poses and florid coloratura of Italian-style sopranos who preceded her. Instead, she had emphasized the innovation by conceiving her role as a diva as requiring acting skill as much as vocal talent. Now her manner was taken to be hammy and histrionic. To those who would say that the film foundered for want of the usual upbeat outcome, a reviewer countered: "To the majority of the audiences the fact that Mary Garden as the heroine was shot at sunrise will be an extremely happy ending." This is obviously not the sort of viewing experience that would leave critics ready to roll out the red carpet or spectators with the magic of stardust glittering before their dazzled eyes.

Fig. 2.39 Advertisement for Goldwyn Pictures' *The Splendid Sinner* (1918), starring Mary Garden. Glass slide, 1918.

Although the pair of movies fizzled, the idea of transposing the story of the jongleur from opera to film would not have been wholly misconceived. Garden's cinematic career might have taken a better turn if she had been asked to play the leading role not in *The Splendid Sinner* but instead in another pre-talkie (never made or even considered) called *The Splendid Saint*. In the early days, cinema sought star power wherever stars and stars-to-be were to be found. In the stellar talent search, the most promising hunting grounds were Broadway theaters, the international cinematography entertainment industry, the street, and the operatic stage. A trained performer might make sense as protagonist, since a professional might be equipped for the kinetic potential of moving pictures. The catch was that even for a diva with Mary Garden's brio in acting, musical drama remained a medium in which scenes were largely starchy and stagnant. The silence was truly deafening. The translation into films without soundtracks sacrificed the song and music, but it yielded little of the movement that the camera needed for audience-pleasing results.

In the opera house the juggler of Notre Dame was an unending hit. The role became a staple of Mary Garden's offerings for almost a quarter century once the tenor part was rewritten for her voice. Her appearances as Jean between 1908 and 1931 remain legendary, and contributed inestimably to the subsequent destiny of the tale, especially but not exclusively in the United States. The supposed tell-all account of her life story is notoriously muddleheaded and demonstrably unreliable, but it contains interesting perspectives on her creation and subsequent performance of Jean. If we lend credence to her often romanticized reminiscences in the autobiography, she focused not on the physicality but rather the spirituality of the jongleur as she interpreted him. In fact, she went so far as to contend—how believably is another matter—that her intense

self-identification with this beloved character had major consequences in her own life. To a degree, he put a song, even a hymn, in her heart. For instance, she mused that immersion in playacting as a monk nearly induced her to convert to Catholicism from Episcopalianism and, still more implausibly, even caused her to toy with taking the veil: Sister Salomé? Reverend Mother Manon?

More credibly, Mary Garden asserted that the spirit of the jongleur motivated her to fund a memorial for the World War I dead in the medieval village of Peille, on the Côte d'Azur close by Monte Carlo in southern France. The commemorative statue was placed across a valley from the town, on top of a peak that was flattened for this purpose (see Fig. 2.40). To gain access to the spot, a side road named Mary Garden Avenue was constructed. With funds left over from the construction, a public square was built on the mountainside. In appreciation for her support, the site was called Place Mary-Garden (see Fig. 2.41).

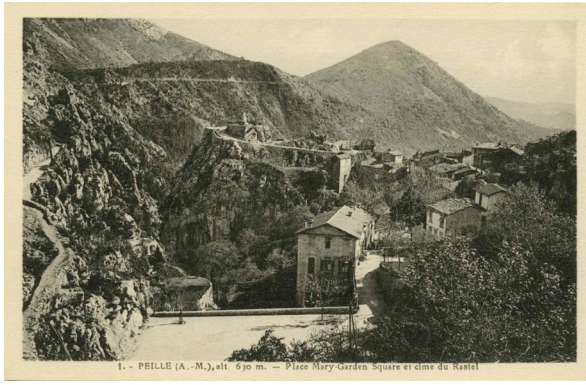


Fig. 2.40 Postcard of Place Mary-Garden in Peille, France (Peille, France: J. Montagne, ca. 1920).

Fig. 2.41 Postcard of Place Mary-Garden in Peille, France (Nice, France: J. Gilletta, ca. 1920).

The entertainer was paramount in Mary Garden's thoughts when she left off singing. She ended on a high note, maybe not as vertiginous as Sanderson's special aria in *Esclarmonde*, but doing what she knew she did best. On January 24, 1931, she stepped off the stage in Chicago after performing in one of her defining roles, as Jean in *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*. She was a perennial favorite in this guise, ever the fair-haired boy to audiences despite not being male at all. In her memoirs, she records a soliloquy she had with herself, or rather with the character of Jean, at the time: "Dear little Jongleur, you've performed all your little stunts. Everything you had you've given to the Virgin. Now your work is done." Continuing her reflections, she claims to have resolved at that moment to take her leave of the city and her profession. She forsook the Windy City, and cabled from Paris: "My career in America is done." Garden had first sung with the Chicago Grand Opera on November 5, 1910, as the company was being founded. After joining the Opera Association of the same city in 1915, she rose to become the company's director for 1921–1922. She reigned as the leading soprano there for two full decades. That spell, during which Massenet's musical drama was a staple in her repertoire, helped to disseminate knowledge of the jongleur throughout the United States. In the Hammerstein years, she played the key role when the opera toured major municipalities. Later in her career, she went on road trips to barnstorm in smaller towns with "best of" performances that would surely have included the old standby of Jean the Jongleur as he did a little two-step or feigned juggling. The medieval minstrel was her star turn.

Garden became immutably associated with Chicago and its Civic Opera House, built in 1929 (see Fig. 2.42).

Fig. 2.42 The Chicago Civic Opera Building at 20 Wacker Drive, Chicago, IL. Photograph, 1929. Photographer unknown.

These decades saw the heyday of the genre in the great metropolis, and the strength of the imprint the singer left there through her enactment of the jongleur would be hard to overestimate or overvalue. More than two decades passed from when she first sang in the role there, on December 7, 1911, to that season- and career-capping performance.

Her characterization of the boy juggler stayed with many Chicagoans. In 1930, a reporter working there published the first biography of Al "Scarface" Capone, the most notorious gangster in US history. In it, the journalist described a top figure in the Chicago underworld in 1924 as resembling Jean in giving the impression of slyness (see Fig. 2.43).

Fig. 2.43 Dean O'Banion. Photograph, before 1924. Photographer unknown.

"Sly" is not an epithet other commentators have applied to this character. Whether the comparison is apt or not, it defies imagination that in today's cultural environment a criminal would be depicted with such specific reference to any opera whatsoever. Yet given the prestige that Garden enjoyed, the allusion made sense at that moment. The likeness seems to be primarily physical. The "odd rolling lurch" that marks the thug's gait may recall the movements of "the divine Mary" or another performer while playing Jean. Then again, the soprano never made a public move that came close to being like the waddle or duckwalk summoned up here. Her aspirations tended more to the balletic.

The Role of Dance

Our Lady's Tumbler, and many adaptations deriving from it, lay emphasis on acrobatics and dance. As a result, people who had been exposed to the tale could be reminded of the medieval tumbler by any display of energetic dancing. For a case in point, consider a soiree in the Swiss canton of Ticino that was recounted by a collector and

historian of art and literature. The two central dramatis personae are a professor of English literature and none other than the Dublin-born and -bred author James Joyce. On this occasion, the two became immersed in an intense discussion of opera and Verdi. Eventually the academic began banging out dance tunes on the piano, at which point the long-limbed writer leapt into motion, galloping from a waltz step of his own devising to a rubbery-legged solo of "wild jumps and kicks." To sum up the episode, the anecdotist invokes the protagonist of our story. To the eyes of this observer, Joyce appeared "part juggling clown and part mystical reincarnation of *Our Lady's Tumbler*."

The hearsay about this very special Irish dancing helps show why the narrative would be conducive to exposition in dance and ballet. Beyond the fact that artistic athleticism is central to the thirteenth-century poem, and appears in many later that the account will resonate with choreographers and their charges: it describes a professional at the delicate and painful career stage when his body has begun to run to seed. The entertainer may be successful, as in the French poem from the Middle Ages, or he may be struggling, as portrayed by Anatole France and many others. In either case, he relinquishes a long performing life when he enlists in the monastery. In many versions, he breathes his last not long afterward.

Experiments in choreographing the juggler would have been made even without Mary Garden's kinetic interpretation of Jean. Remember that Cosima Wagner called attention to the story's potential for balletic alongside musical expression, and recall even more importantly that the opera's libretto provides specific cues for when the jongleur should engage in such motion. The explicit mention of dance is altogether characteristic of Massenet, who was predisposed to find intersections between it and his sung theater: all but six of his operas include an outright appeal for dancing by the characters. True, *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* makes no mention of professional dancers or choreography. Yet the juggler belongs among the richest balletic parts in Massenet's canon—and the composer was sensitive to the role of dance not merely as an enhancement but even as a must-have constituent of opera. The French musical drama makes a positive case for the serious treatment of the medieval entertainer for his capacities as a dancer. Antiquity had had Terpsichore, the muse of dance, but the art's standing had plummeted after the advent of Christianity. Now it rapidly recovered lost ground.

At the start of the first act, the libretto contains the exhortation "let's dance the *bergerette*." The term has often been applied to a kind of pastoral song, but here it refers to a series of bodily movements. In the third act, the opera spotlights the balletic still more vigorously, by calling for a "dance of the jongleur." The entertainer addresses the Madonna, almost as if inviting her to be his ballroom partner. The stage directions stipulate a bourrée (see Figs. 2.44 and 2.45), a type of dance in wooden shoes that originated in the Auvergne and eventually became a movement in classical dance music. The juggler is to step ever more up-tempo, with foot-stamping and exclamations, until he collapses at the feet of the Madonna and prostrates himself. That turns out to have been a good move: clever clogs.

Fig. 2.44 Postcard of the *bourrée* in Auvergne, France (Paris: Lévy et Neurdein Réunis, early twentieth century).

Fig. 2.45 Postcard of the *bourrée* in Auvergne, France (early twentieth century).

With such potential, the tale would inevitably inspire dancers. In an early instance in Europe, Mary Wigman performed "Our Lady's Dancer," under a German title, in Zurich in 1917. She repeated the program with this piece in 1919 in the same Swiss city and later in German ones, including Hamburg and Dresden. This Hanover-born beauty was a pioneer of modern dance. A photograph from a decade and a half later conveys a sense of how she employed the chiaroscuro technique, so characteristic of expressionism (see Fig. 2.46). Another shot may capture her in the sort of medieval-style outfit she would have worn in this specific routine (see Fig. 2.47). Five years afterward the tale directly inspired Max Terpis, the Swiss-born choreographer who studied with

Wigman in Dresden in 1922. In the following year, he was hired to choreograph *Our Lady's Dancer*, based on a play by Franz Weinrich. For his debut Terpis himself took the lead role of Brother Simplicius (see Fig. 2.48).

Another nugget of evidence would be *Our Lady's Juggler* as enacted by the Rambert Dance Company, the oldest dance troupe in Britain. The performances took place from 1930 on. The company archive includes "a red Madonna dress with a gold pattern stenciled at the neckline" that Marie Rambert wore when she played the Virgin in 1930 (see Fig. 2.49). Andrée Howard also made an impression with her beauty and grace as *The Lonely Lady*. In her choreography, the ballet opened with a fizzy scene outside the gates of a Gothic church. The dance, although obviously in a medium quite different from opera, owed much to Massenet as reshaped by Mary Garden (see Figs. 2.50 and 2.51).

Around when the Rambert Dance Company promulgated "Our Lady's Juggler" in Britain, the story was transported to the southernmost reaches of what was then still called the Dark Continent. Dulcie Howes was a dancer, in her time the *prima ballerina assoluta* of South African ballet. She trained in London and plied her trade in England and Europe until returning to her native land in 1930. Thereafter she opened educational institutions. Among more than two dozen original ballets, she choreographed *Le jongleur de Notre Dame: A French Legend of the 14th Century* (see Fig. 2.52).

Fig. 2.46 Mary Wigman, beauty in expressionist chiaroscuro. Photograph by Albert Renger-Patzsch, ca. 1933.

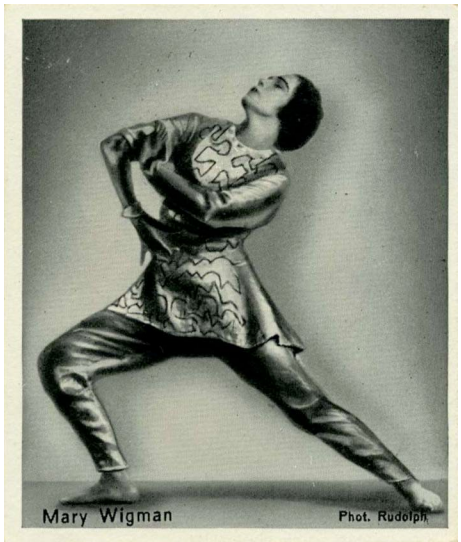


Fig. 2.47 Mary Wigman, in medievalesque costume. Photograph by Charlotte Rudolph, ca. 1933.

Fig. 2.48 Max Terpis as Brother Simplicius in Weinrich's *Our Lady's Dancer* (1923). Photograph by Becker & Maass, 1923.

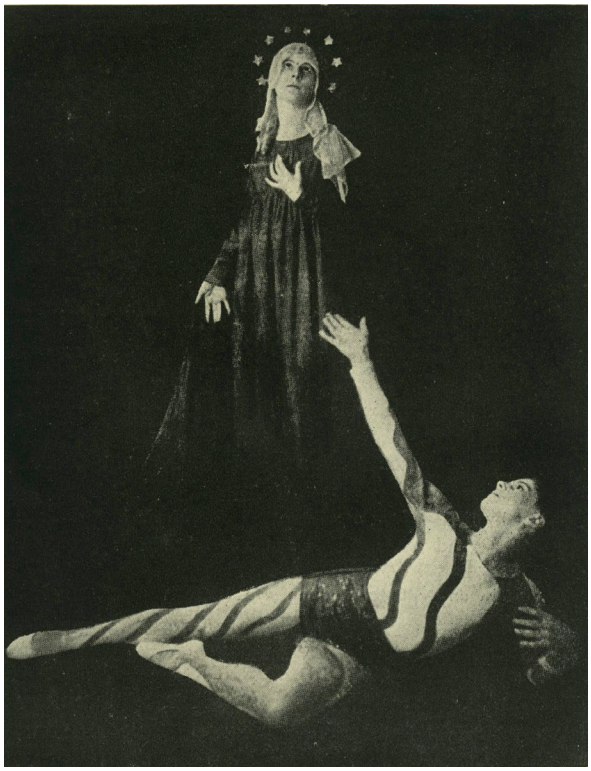


Fig. 2.49 Marie Rambert and Harold Turner in the Rambert Dance Company's performance of *Our Lady's Juggler*. Photograph by Armand Console, 1930.

Fig. 2.50 The Rambert Dance Company's performance of *Our Lady's Juggler*. Photograph by Malcolm Dunbar, 1930s. Courtesy Rambert Archive, London. All rights reserved.

Fig. 2.51 The Rambert Dance Company's performance of *Our Lady's Juggler*. Photograph by Malcolm Dunbar, 1930s. Courtesy Rambert Archive, London. All rights reserved.

Fig. 2.52 Images from Dulcie Howes's *Le jongleur de Notre Dame: A French Legend of the 14th Century*. Fragments from scrapbook of Pamela Chrimes, 1936. Image courtesy of Eduard Greyling. All rights reserved.

The four-part program, with this as its first component, also included in the second position *A Chinese Idyll*. The juxtaposition may have harked back to the nineteenth-century tendency to find analogies between the chronological alienness of the Middle Ages and the geographical one of the orient—chrono- and geoexoticism. In its staging, reviewers rendered tribute to the lighting. The cast was all female, but who can say beyond a doubt whether this reflected a fluke of demographics in the ballet school, or the distant influence of Mary Garden? No matter. The titles mentioned represent but a sampling from a large pool of dance routines that were ultimately an outgrowth from the medieval *Our Lady's Tumbler* and that speak to the vitality of the story in this medium as well, especially from around World War I through the 1930s.

Sexless, Sexy… and What Sex?

Sometimes I wonder why I've never been
crazy about men like so many other women.

In the United States, Mary Garden's cooption of the leading character in *The Juggler of Notre Dame* guaranteed that for decades to come the opera and adaptations of it

into other media were seldom performed any longer with a man in the title role. On a single occasion, Hammerstein succumbed to the bleating of querulous newspaper commentators by reverting to the original custom of having a male impersonate Jean. The one-time retrogression failed abysmally: no one who went through the operatic comparison shopping emerged preferring a tenor to a soprano—or at least to Mary Garden.

The Middle Ages can be played many ways, as can be confirmed simply by looking at the spectrum of associations they attract in mass culture today. The multiplicity of connotations extends even to sexuality. In fact, the sexualizing of the medieval period is nothing new. The eroticism is attested amply in postcards of the early twentieth century—not that it is anything unprecedented or novel there either, since medieval and sex have been paired at least since Gothick fiction, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and other movements in literature and art of the nineteenth century.

One pole captures the ostentatious purity and innocence of two young lasses in quaint garb as they pore over a volume on a lectern (see Fig. 2.53). The qualities of the book slosh into the "reality" of the environment surrounding the women. In fact, the right edge of the vignette is like a floriate border in a manuscript. One of the maids, reminiscent of a Virgin Mary with lilies, holds a shoot of flowers. The antipode to this pair would be another young lady at a reading stand (see Fig. 2.54).

Fig. 2.53 Postcard depicting two medieval young women reading (Berlin: Albrecht & Meister, ca. 1905).

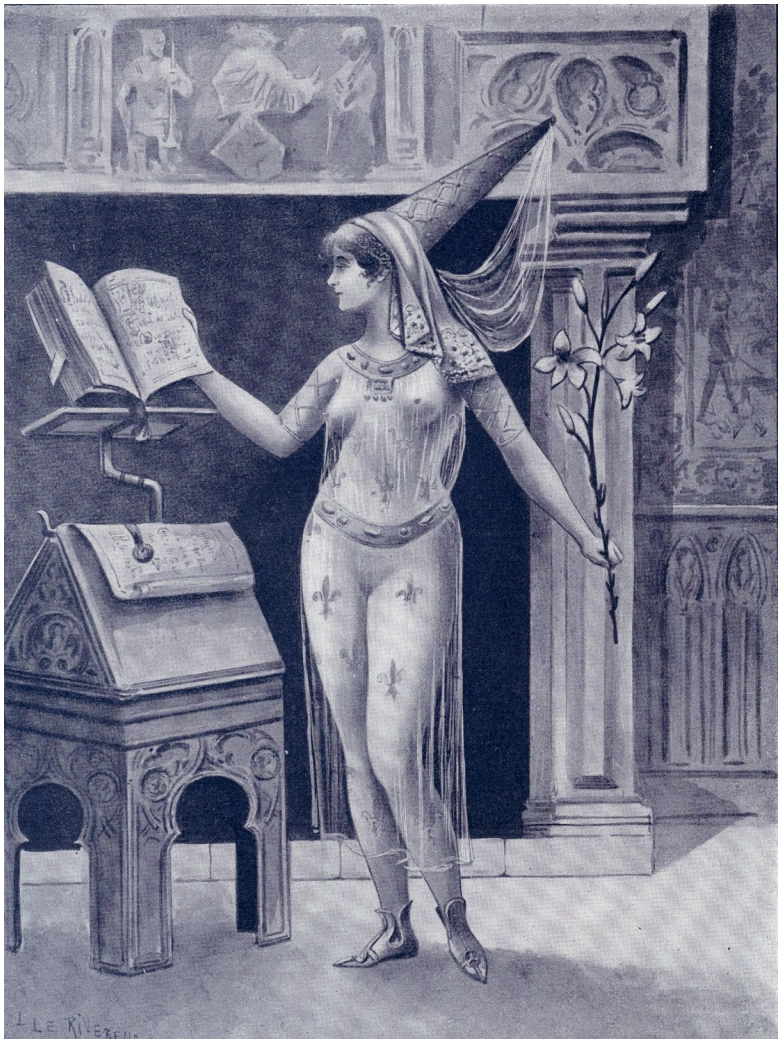


Fig. 2.54 Detail of postcard depicting a medieval woman reading in a see-through chemise (early twentieth century). Illustration from Armand Silvestre, *La chemise à travers les âges. Album inédit*, illustration by Louis Le Riverend (Paris: Didier & Mericant, 1900).

In this fin-de-siècle centerfold captioned "Middle Ages Chemise," we have a head-on view not only of the ornate codex she is inspecting, but of the proto-pinup girl herself. Hubba hubba. The peignoir-like attire of the toothsome wench falls into the category that would today be called negligee, since it allows the viewer-voyeur effortlessly to discern her nipples and pudenda. That seems to be the main idea: the fleurs-de-lis on the fabric are not deployed to cover up any of her private parts, and the maiden, if indeed she still qualifies as such, has an elaborate hennin as her coiffure. The eroticism distracts the onlooker from fretting much over why this nubile nymph would wear such millinery and dressy shoes but little else, why she would read in such a state of undress, or why too she would brandish the trumpet-shaped blooms usually held by

Madonnas. Flippancy aside, this second card gives a glimpse of male-female relations that differ radically from where we aim to arrive today. Then again, news reports are sometimes filled with *Playboy* models. It also puts on show mores far removed from the chaste champion of dance in *Le jongleur de Notre Dame.*

In the words of Mary Garden, "the Jongleur was sexless." This assertion relates to her supposed credo that the part should always be performed by a woman. In her memoirs, she prated about the challenges of succeeding in the pretense herself, because of her associations with less priggish personages in other operas (see Fig. 2.55).

Fig. 2.55 Mary Garden as Salomé. Photograph by Herman Mishkin, ca. 1909. Washington, DC, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

She was divine as the jongleur, but was the divinity nonsexual in nature or the opposite—sensual? Garden's resoluteness about the entertainer's asexuality may not be entirely consistent with the attraction to her that men of the cloth allegedly displayed because of her performances in this guise. Were they nympholepts, pederasts, neither,

or both? A contemporary music critic maintained that the tenors of her day could not pull off the character satisfactorily. Even so, he still suggests that her womanliness could not help but manifest itself when she took on the part as a soprano. A minor and possibly preplanned wardrobe malfunction may have been involved. Likewise, the pronouncement that the entertainer as Garden played him was sexless does not tally with the homage that she avers at least one famous but unnamed male writer paid out of misplaced homoerotic attraction to her in another trouser role. She may have taken on the job deliberately so as to be the sole representative of her sex among a stage full of men.

When Garden so wished, she could be female sexuality incarnate. Anything but neuter, she had been brought to America by Hammerstein specifically to add a jolt of Parisian ooh la la to New York opera scene. With her hourglass figure, she had the killer looks essential for a femme fatale. What is more, she knew how to hit her chosen bull's-eyes—the eyes of men in the auditorium. She could package herself as enchantress, seductress, temptress, and any of various other words that assonate hissingly in –ess. Even after decades in which English has been purged of feminine nouns, these fossils of earlier attitudes and language remain. In their snakily sibilant splendor, they indicate powers of sexual enticement in which through the ages women have been thought (rightly or wrongly, approvingly or not) to specialize.

Decoding Garden's pert allure presents its own special problems. Was her appeal as a sexy eyeful first and foremost heterosexual, lesbian, gay, or a little of all three? After all, in 1906 she created the role of the possibly homosexual courtesan Chrysis in the opera *Aphrodite*. Then again, she jibbed at the leading role in the 1911 opera *The Knight of the Rose* by Richard Strauss, on the grounds that she found repellent the same-sex romancing in which she would have had to engage. We could accept her final declaration at face value—or we could quote once again from Shakespeare, in this case the famous words from "Hamlet": "The lady doth protest too much, methinks." In keeping with that second chain of reasoning, we could suppose that in her day Garden had every incentive to dissemble her inclinations in sexual and romantic partners, if they did not adhere to the prevailing norms. If so, the times have changed sufficiently to let us help her come out of the closet.

Huneker (see Fig. 2.56), extolling Garden's versatility in shedding the qualities required by one part for those of another, played up her doe-eyed innocence as a gangly, young, and male jongleur. The music critic for the *New York Times* stressed: "in the simplicities of Jean the Juggler of Notre Dame a Mary Garden, hitherto submerged, appears: tender, boyish, sweet, fantastic; a ray of moonshine has entered his head and made of him an irresponsible and yet irresistibly charming youth." At one point the diva's apparent omnipotence prompted the same writer to style her "Mary Garden: Superwoman." Late in her career, as shortcomings in her voice drew more flak than ever, one opera buff defended Garden as Jean for her handling of the role—her knack for counterfeiting skinny and even spindly boyishness.

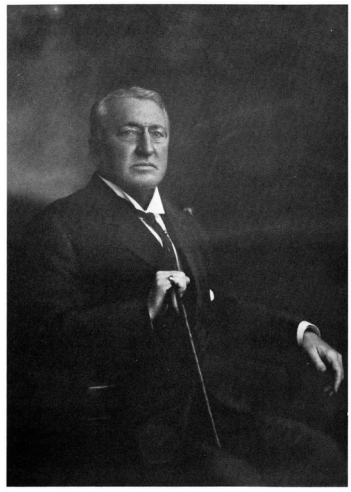


Fig. 2.56 James Gibbons Huneker. Photograph, 1912. Photographer unknown.

Garden professed that she had stood true and faithful to the character of the juggler, because she had endeavored to appear asexual in representing him. Despite this not entirely convincing claim, she brought to her portrayal of him indisputable, and even sexually arousing, femininity. Her womanliness, or at least a quality bordering on cuteness, lurks behind the description of her by the author and photographer Carl Van Vechten as "delightful and adorable Mary Garden, the fragile Thaïs, pathetic Jean." Huneker goes much further when he refers to his favorite soprano as "the winsome little devil!" just before qualifying her taste in costumes as "impeccable" and proceeding posthaste to state categorically: "In the eternal game of making masculine eyes misbehave, she is quite irresistible." We can almost visualize certain male audience members in their loges, with their lorgnettes or opera glasses at the ready, sneaking glances at the diva and being stirred by her androgynous allure. Then again, this is the jongleur we are discussing. Another critic articulates the paradox of her performance in this role nicely. From his perspective, the prima donna did a jaw-dropping job of disguising the catnip of her famously come-hither sexuality, but retained all the same "an ineradicable residuum of herself which was just what the part calls for." A third viewer was relieved to see the role restored to a tenor because of "a false note in her appearance and action in the part; a something feminine that naturally could not be entirely deleted from her impersonation."

It strains credulity to think that the singer could have masked her sexuality altogether, or even would have wanted to do so. Patriotism at having a co-national triumphant on stage was only part of what lured Henry Adams repeatedly to see her at the opera in Paris. Decades earlier he had taken the Church to task for degrading women by establishing as the ideal of feminine character "the modern type of Griselda,—the meek and patient, the silent and tender sufferer, the pale reflection of the Mater Dolorosa." For sure, Mary Garden could come through in the role of

Griselda on stage (see Fig. 1.31). But in general she was a diva who shunned the part of a stoic and unrepining wife, or of the sorrowful mother of Jesus. Instead of such passivity, she preferred musical dramas that had active and even aggressive females in the lead. Besides women, she did not even restrain herself from playing men. In all these performances, she took her vital statistics and made of them what she needed to grab and hold her audience. One model that preceded her had been the Wagnerian soprano, large-bosomed and imposing, but the Scottish-American star was not circumscribed by this single body type or psychology.

Adams's letters blurt out an almost slavering craving for Mary Garden that arose from her physical and sexual intensity. The onetime Bostonian author of *Mont Saint Michel and Chartres* would not have used the noun "sexpot," but that is what the sometimes devilishly Divine Mary was to him. Years later a lecherous Chicago banker explained to a newspaperman that he too went to the opera only for her mouthwatering acting: "I only go when Mary's there, because you know—hm! ha!—she really is good to gaze upon." Such remarks give an extra dimension to the notion of "a night at the opera." Males could go for an evening's entertainment that allowed them to indulge in what would have been otherwise a guilty pleasure.

Mary Garden's attraction as a luscious coquette was not confined to men—but what is certain about her sexuality? Can we be utterly confident that her gender transgressions warrant labeling her a "cultural icon to lesbian opera fans?" Can we go further to bracket her undoubtingly as "the lesbian opera singer Mary Garden?" Sure, she played the lead role in Massenet's *Sapho* (see Figs. 2.57, 2.58 and 2.59).

Fig. 2.57 Mary Garden as Fanny Legrand in Massenet's *Sapho*. Photograph by Herman Mishkin, 1909. Published in *The Theatre Magazine* (May 1910), 61.

Fig. 2.58 Mary Garden as Fanny Legrand in Massenet's *Sapho*. Photograph by Herman Mishkin, ca. 1910.

Fig. 2.59 Mary Garden as Fanny Legrand in Massenet's *Sapho*. Photograph by Herman Mishkin, 1909. Published in Henry T. Finck, *Massenet and His Operas* (New York: John Lane, 1910), facing p. 90.

The story fanned controversy because of its directness about sex and romantic relations—but bear in mind that the central figure in the musical drama is not the ancient Greek poet of Lesbos or anyone associated closely with her. The fictitious Sapho of the late nineteenth century, with only one p to her name, is only loosely related to her namesake of the sixth century before the common era, with two of the same consonants, the archetype (rightly or wrongly) of lesbianism and sapphic love. The principal of the opera is a fictitious character drawn from then-contemporary life, a beautiful and notorious artist's model known professionally as Sapho but called for real Fanny Legrand.

Then again, ample reason exists not to play down too much Garden's attractiveness to other women. The mesmerizing powers that could make female fans go weak in the knees had unhappy fallout in one rabidly reported case. In 1913 a nineteen-year-old named Helen Newby developed an obsession with the singer. After being denied admittance to her heartthrob's hotel room, the teenaged woman scorned gave grim meaning to "diehard," taking her own life on the lawn of her family's house by a gunshot to the head. The prospective Bryn Mawr undergraduate was found dead, clutching a photograph of her idol to her lovelorn heart. One front-page, multi-deck headline, long enough to be a lede, started out in majuscules that blared "MARY GARDEN CRAZE LED GIRL TO SUICIDE—Miss Newby Was Infatuated with the Singer, Whom She Never Met.—SHOT HERSELF IN DESPAIR—Her 'Queen Cleopatra' Refused to See Her Slave—Died with Diva's Picture on Breast" (see Fig. 2.60).

Fig. 2.60 Mary Garden as Cleopatra in Massenet's *Cléopâtre*. Photograph by Moffett Studios, 1919. Published in Carl Van Vechten, *Interpreters*, 2nd ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1920), 198

Does the self-inflicted death of one star-struck teenager prove anything? In the course of time, a special effort may be sanctioned and even warranted to draw the curtain on private matters. Even the sex lives of close contemporaries or friends can be opaque, let alone those of people from the past who have had reason to cover their tracks. The result is that we are left with tenuous scraps. For instance, in the 1920s and 1930s Janet Flanner, the Paris correspondent for the *New Yorker*, was reputedly "a prominent figure in Parisian lesbian circles." As a college student, she had gone devotedly to hear Mary Garden sing. Once again, the evidence is hardly unchallengeable. The predilection of the reporter as a young woman for the opera singer does not automatically and necessarily signify anything. Certainly it does not prove that the prima donna shared the journalist's future preference in sexual partners.

Further confirmation of Garden's appeal as a siren to women comes from Margaret Anderson. The founder of the avant-garde literary magazine *The Little Review* described the atmosphere when she and her partner Jane Heap met the diva as being "charged with an animal magnetism that one rarely has the pleasure of feeling." What kind of beast radiated the magnetic field that the lesbian couple experienced? A feline pull may have inclined Heap to call her cat, definitely not declawed, Mary. Whatever may have inspired the pet name, Anderson also recalled the soprano's presence as "one of the most thrilling human experiences." When asked by Heap "Where did you get such a body?" the leading lady replied snappily, without batting an eyelash, "I don't know. They just gave it to me." Such sallies came easily to the singer, not just when leading on women who took a fancy to her looks and felt a strong chemistry with her. An oft-recounted anecdote has it that when wearing a gown with a deep-diving décolletage, the opera star was asked by an aging gentleman, with impertinent pertinence, what held up the garment. Replying to the likely leering and lascivious old goat, she counterattacked with her usual facility in flirty one-liners, definitely not delivered sotto voce: "Two things, sir. Your age and my discretion." At issue is not what females or males thought of her physique, but what she did with it.

If only we had fuller knowledge of Garden's indiscretions out of the spotlight! Whether the slivers of evidence warrant going so far as to label her a "lesbian icon" remains to be seen. Admittedly, she never took a husband. Yet not marrying, or (for that matter) doing so, scarcely presupposes what sort of partner a person might prefer if offered a completely free choice. Likewise, spinsterhood says nothing about sexual orientation. The prima donna's ghostwritten autobiography gives evidence that she had or at least claimed sometimes to have heterosexual attractions. For example, in its opening she describes a crush she had on her male piano teacher in Scotland. Was this no more than self-serving dissimulation by a schemer who was far too sagacious to jeopardize her career by outing herself?

According to the diva, her status as a lifelong single resulted mainly from the iffiness of romantic happenstance. Elsewhere she expatiated upon this view, which could be translated crudely into present-day terms as bespeaking her choice of professional and personal autonomy over marriage. In this reading, she could have been the girl next door who married her high-school sweetheart but she never met the right person, because she never allowed herself leeway to look and find him (or her). She caps her life history by declaring that her passion and only real romance was opera. All of this is well and good, except for the qualification that she makes haste to append: "But nobody in God's green earth is ever going to believe that."

Why should everyone in the whole wide world doubt that Mary Garden put career ahead of the seductive calls of sexual attraction, marriage, and all the rest? Her candor about her careerism is utterly convincing, until in the final sentence she invokes the universal disbelief her explanation would elicit. She throws the interpretive door open to the inference that she may have had romantic fervor, but kept it out of public

sight. If her tastes had tended in directions that would not have met with common approbation, she could have put a dent or worse in her professional advancement by going public. In one episode, she expresses her rapture over the beauty of Lily Debussy when she sees the composer's wife unclothed from the waist up. Is her reaction to her friend aesthetic, sexual, or both? Was her best playacting off stage, in pretending all the time or some of it to be someone she was not?

The pictorial evidence for at least one personal acquaintance could lead to intriguing speculation. The possible entanglement being discussed may have grown out of Garden's catastrophically bad 1918 film, *The Splendid Sinner*. Since she had spent part of the war as a caregiver, her role in the movie has the semiautobiographical aspect that she acts as a Florence Nightingale. Although her cinematic patients are men, a surviving photograph hints that behind the scenes, her preferences in nursing may have run in another direction (see Fig. 2.61).

Fig. 2.61 Mary Garden and Madge Kennedy. Publicity photograph for *The Splendid Sinner*, 1918.

In this still image, the singer's possessive embrace of Madge Kennedy, who had been brought to Goldwyn Pictures from Broadway, and the rapacious expression on her face, suggest a personal proclivity far beyond the story line of the production. Of course, looks can be deceiving—but this snapshot leaves the viewer wondering about the secret Garden, who might have pursued and preyed upon other women. With her left hand cupping the right breast of her co-star, the health care worker looks very much as if she would like to play doctor.

In 1920, the music critic Huneker published, under the title *Painted Veils*, a roman à clef, his only novel, about the New York opera world. The chief actors in the fiction include a figure who was modeled at least partially upon Mary Garden. This Easter (or "Istar") Brandes is portrayed as romantically involved with a wealthy lesbian who

wears men's clothing. To judge at least by the photographic record, the singer's own taste in fashion does not appear offstage to have tended toward a mannish or even gamin look. Similarly, we have no support for the view that she favored, amorously or otherwise, the sort of women whose predilections for men's attire and other masculine features causes them now and again to be called drag kings. Furthermore, Huneker's biographer decoded Brandes as fusing traits of more than one singing actor, with Olive Fremstad and Sibyl Sanderson both having also contributed elements.

In the end, what are we justified in deducing from the oddments of evidence? At the remove of a century and more, it is easier to verify Mary Garden's image-obsessed egocentrism than to pin down all or even most of the imaginable vagaries of her sexuality. To further her career, she carefully cultivated an air of being off-center. Beyond merely swimming against the tide, she fostered a reputation for being mildly lawless. Within very strict limits, hinting at having sexual tastes outside what were then normative could have seemed advantageous. A synthesis of biographical investigation and gender studies may someday enable a verdict on Garden's erotic appetites—but people and their identities can be inscrutable, even without the intervention of a century and the loss of immediacy that such a length of time imposes.

In any case, Garden singlehandedly associated the juggler with a woman. Yet the female jongleur is not to be muddled with the revealingly buxom, bodaciously clad, castanet-wielding, and eyelash-batting Italian actor Gina Lollobrigida, in the 1956 cinematic version of Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris*. The movie is also known as *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (see Fig. 2.62).

Fig. 2.62 Advertisement for *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, dir. Jean Delannoy (1956). Lobby card, ca. 1956.

In fact, the classic novel and Massenet's opera, as well as the original story from the Middle Ages, have long been occasionally and understandably conflated. The two accounts complement each other, with equally noticeable similarities and differences. The French fiction tells a long story of its author's making; *Our Lady's Tumbler* a short one after a medieval original. Both tales take place within church buildings that contribute more than mere atmosphere, almost playing the role of animate characters. Both have male leads who are social outcasts or at least outliers, and who are touchingly, blindly devoted to women beyond their reach, with the gibbous gimp idolizing a sometimes lightly clad, full-figured gypsy maiden, and the juggler adulating a chaste virgin who has not an inch of flesh on display beneath the layers of demure clothing that enshroud her from top to toe.

Both the nineteenth-century novel and the thirteenth-century poem in its modern adaptations tend to involve juggling, although the performances are much less central in most popular variants of the original French bestseller than in the Anatole France narrative. In the 1939 film *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* the crowd scene contains a few seconds of ring juggling. Not much later follows a glimpse of ball balancing. Considerably down the line, Esmeralda and Gregoire poise chairs on their chins. The 1996 Walt Disney production of the same story includes one moment of object manipulation at the beginning of the movie, when the gargoyles adjure Quasimodo to attend the Festival of Fools.

At least nineteen operas based on Hugo's *Notre Dame de Paris* were composed in the nineteenth century. Given all this activity by musicians, it comes as no surprise that in 1865 Jules Massenet, early in his career, supposedly began but never completed a lost sketch of a musical drama *Esméralda* that was based on the famous novel. *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame* was thus in a way a thematic homecoming for him.

No lone individual made the medieval tale the minor but strangely ubiquitous fixture that it became in twentieth-century Western culture. If one personage had to be fingered as having been pivotal in widening the ambit of the jongleur, it would be Mary Garden. Scottish-born, but American-raised, she achieved transatlantic star status by performing to equal acclamation in Paris and throughout the United States. A singer who entranced opera-goers, she had the ability and ambition to record a popular hit, in due course California's official state song (see Fig. 2.63). She did not tremble at crossing either genre or gender lines. At one point, the newspapers were even abuzz with the rumor that the American songwriter Irving Berlin wished to compose a jazz opera produced by Mary Garden.

Lastly, as a female fearless in coopting a male role as her own, Mary Garden ensured that the thirteenth-century poem popularized by Gaston Paris, rearticulated as a fin-de-siècle fiction by Anatole France, and made operatic for the Gilded Age by Jules Massenet would remain alive in both America and Europe, known to both masses and elite, with parts in it for both women and men. Garden's own fame has faded with time. Commuters scurrying through the 23rd Street and Broadway station

in New York City may be quizzical, if they even notice, when passing the squares on the wall that represent stagy headgear (see Fig. 2.64). Even if their eyes are drawn down to the tile emblazoned with her name and profession, they may have no idea who "Mary Garden operatic soprano" once was (see Fig. 2.65).

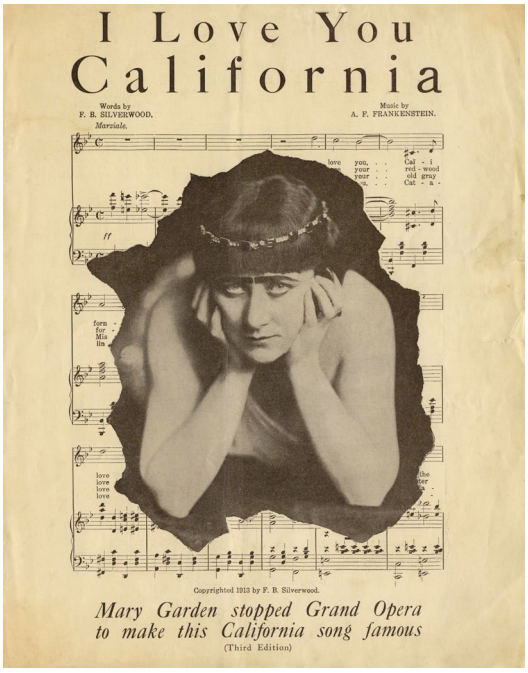


Fig. 2.63 "I Love You California." Cover of sheet music, music by A. F. Frankenstein, lyrics by F. B. Silverwood, 1913.

Fig. 2.64 Subway tiles depicting operatic headdress, 23rd Street and Broadway station, New York. Photograph by Raquel Begleiter, 2014. Image courtesy of Raquel Begleiter. All rights reserved.

Fig. 2.65 "Mary Garden: Operatic soprano." Caption to subway tiles, 23rd Street and Broadway Station, New York. Photograph by Raquel Begleiter, 2014. Image courtesy of Raquel Begleiter. All rights reserved.

This simple ceramic is the most public reminder (and may be the only one) in the Big Apple of a person and personality who was once ubiquitous, her image and name plastered in advertising throughout the West. Yet the jongleur she made hers lives on, in no small part thanks to her own success in playing him.

Mary Garden, being the global newsmaker she crafted herself into being, was ideally positioned to open the floodgates for the minstrel to wash into the developing technologies of radio broadcasting, audio recording, and, albeit unsuccessfully, movies. She migrated him into the first two media herself. The golden age of opera coincided closely with her career—or, to be more specific, its finale came at exactly the point when she stepped away from the stage. She could not change gears to the most successful of other channels for expression, notably silent film, but the power of her persona, personality, and performances propelled others to carry the tale of the juggler where she could not. Stories can lumber their way across time without being created or carried by foremost scholars and artists—but the involvement of Gaston Paris, Anatole France, Jules Massenet, and above all Mary Garden was what shook *Our Lady's Tumbler* and *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* out of their earthbound shuffle and shot them into the stratosphere of mass culture.

The tale retained its bookish and even inkhorn appeal, since established short-story forms continued to be read, and new ones written. But by a strange cultural chemistry the medieval narrative and France's fiction had taken on a verdigris from the opera they had inspired. The interplay shows in the choice made by the young undergraduate men at the University of Notre Dame to make a not-so-subtle inside joke and give their literary journal the punning name *The Juggler of Notre Dame*.

The Jongleur Goes to Notre Dame

One modest but indicative token of Garden's influence can be detected in *The Juggler*, a humor magazine established by three undergraduates at the University of Notre Dame in 1919. The periodical continues to be published down to the present day, with slight adjournments in publication and minor tweaks in title. Still, its heyday ran from its founding through 1934. This stretch of fifteen years corresponds neatly to Mary Garden's Chicago period. It makes solid sense that a character named the Juggler earned favor as an unofficial mascot for a university called Notre Dame.

Over many decades to follow, the opera and its protagonist were seized upon by many other educational institutions. The object-manipulating entertainer was by no means circumscribed exclusively within colleges and schools with religious affiliations or names that tied them in some way to Catholicism or the Virgin Mary. Among the many reasons for the susceptibility of academic establishments to *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* is the similarity between the monastery, as the all-male environment is portrayed in the musical drama, and college life as idealized by students and faculty alike. The monastic community in the medieval poem and its later adaptations has been found especially appealing and relevant within collegiate settings.

Our hero must chart a course among three lives. One he has led before, another is followed by others all around him, and the third he must shape for himself. In effect, he reenacts the optimistic overexcitement and panicky homesickness of a newly arrived freshman. Like a self-doubting college boy (anything but a big man on campus or president of a frat house), he confronts the sundry talents of his companions who have found ways to excel across the gamut of the liberal arts.

Indeed, existence within the walls as envisaged for Massenet by the librettist Léna is almost indifferentiable from college days in America, as nostalgically viewed for much of the twentieth century—even down to being all-male, until the storm surge of coeducation that rolled ashore in the 1960s. The circumstances, anything but gender-neutral, may have lent a special charge to having a woman infiltrate stealthily into the environs. In the prologue of the inaugural run of *The Juggler* that was released for Christmas of 1919, the editors presented their collaborative effort as being a stage performance like the medieval entertainer's.

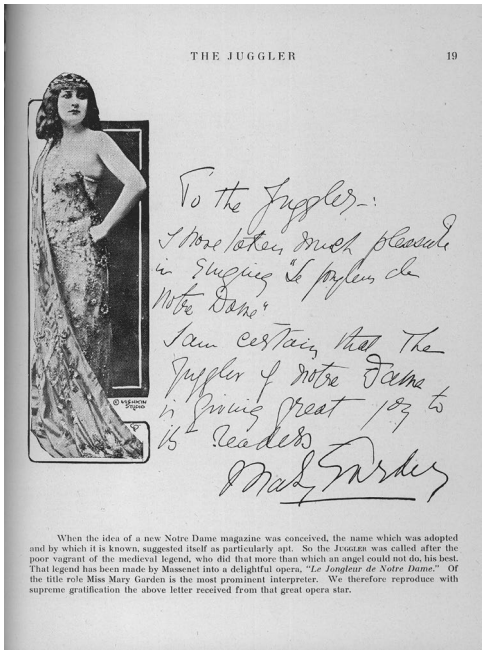
The cover of the groundbreaking issue was illustrated by Vincent F. Fagan, Notre Dame class of 1920. The illustrator remained at the university from 1921 to 1945, eventually became a professor, and ultimately contributed substantially to its collegiate Gothic: once again, the jongleur and this form of architecture went hand in hand. The journal is identified as *The Juggler* (see Fig. 2.66), and this iteration of the publication as "Xmas Performance 1919." The artwork features a bouncy little figure, cartoonlike (think of the Smurfs), sporting a mortarboard, with a book in his right hand and a candlestick in his left. He is darting away from an underdressed woman in high heels who holds a fool's wand: love can besot anyone. Behind the couple hangs what could well be the drapes of a curtain on a stage.

From where would the young men have derived their sense of the juggler of Notre Dame as a theatrical performer? Could they have had an incentive, beyond the usual ones that drive adolescent males, for presenting their mascot in conjunction with a sexually appealing female? Could their use of the noun *suffrage* have been anything but loaded, only a half year after the US Senate's historic vote to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment. This ratification, approving the right of women to vote, had been sought by the women's movement and the activists in it then known as "suffragettes." An answer to at least the first two questions may be forthcoming in the second year of *The Juggler*, where two items are reproduced on one page (see Fig. 2.67). The first is a photograph of Mary Garden, a stock image of her in the role of Salomé, with one shoulder bare in a low-cut gown (see Fig. 2.15). The second is a handwritten note, plainly a response to a fan letter from the college boys, that reads

> To the Juggler-:
> I have taken much pleasure in singing "le Jongleur de Notre Dame"
> I am certain that The Juggler of Notre Dame is giving great joy to its readers—
> Mary Garden

Underneath, the editors explain how they chose the title of their magazine. They mention first the medieval legend, then Massenet's opera, and finally Miss Mary Garden's interpretation of the leading role. Except for omitting the essential stage involving Anatole France, the writers demonstrated an elementary but penetrating grasp of the major stages in the reception history of the juggler down to their day.

Fig. 2.66 Front cover of *The Juggler* 1 (December 1919). Illustration by Vincent F. Fagan, 1919. Image courtesy of the University of Notre Dame Archives. All rights reserved.



THE JUGGLER 19

To the Juggler:
I have taken much pleasure in singing "Le Jongleur de Notre Dame"
I am certain that The Juggler of Notre Dame is giving great joy to its readers
Mary Garden

When the idea of a new Notre Dame magazine was conceived, the name which was adopted and by which it is known, suggested itself as particularly apt. So the JUGGLER was called after the poor vagrant of the medieval legend, who did that more than which an angel could not do, his best. That legend has been made by Massenet into a delightful opera, *"Le Jongleur de Notre Dame."* Of the title role Miss Mary Garden is the most prominent interpreter. We therefore reproduce with supreme gratification the above letter received from that great opera star.

Fig. 2.67 A photograph (by Mishkin) of Mary Garden as the juggler, paired with a handwritten note from the actress to the editors of *The Juggler*. Published in *The Juggler* 1 (December 1919): 19. Image courtesy of the University of Notre Dame Archives. All rights reserved.

The College Woman as Jongleur: Skirting the Issue

From 1926 we have a woman's-eye view of our hero. In that year, an arm of the Young Women's Christian Association printed *The Jongleur's Story: A History and Demonstration of Religious Drama*. The play sits inelegantly in a no-woman's-land between poor pedagogy and poor theater, billing itself as an "illustrated explanation and demonstration of churchly drama." In the cast of characters the author spells out that of the three narrators, one must be a man, while the other two may be women or girls. This threesome serves up, in stilted speech meant to exude an authentically medieval savor, a narrative framework and background about both the tableaux and minstrels. Like many ill-conceived translations of texts from the Middle Ages, this warmed-over adaptation bumbles by imposing archaisms upon the English, instead of recognizing that at the time of composition the language of the original was mainly contemporary. In narrative structure, the story of the juggler is recapitulated principally by the lead in his guise of narrator, with the drama restricted to a single vignette in which the entertainer has died and is revivified by the statue of the Virgin.

Records of performances that took place in the late 1920s and 1930s at Oberlin College offer an expansive look at another theatrical version of the tale, staged in front of the institution's Romanesque revival chapel (see Fig. 2.68).

Fig. 2.68 Postcard of Finney Chapel, Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH (Oberlin, OH: E. A. Stevens, early twentieth century).

These documents do not point to Mary Garden's stage presence itself, but they do bring home the influence she exerted indirectly, through whatever in juggling would be the equivalent of a knock-on effect. The pageant was the brainchild of Frederick B. Artz, a professor interested in medieval literature and folklore, who was best known for his general introduction to the Middle Ages. The theatrical production became elaborate, tapping three college musical groups and drawing upon the talents of the Women's Athletic Association (see Fig. 2.69). The lead was played by Conna Bell Shaw, first as a junior and senior undergraduate and then slightly more than a decade later as the wife of a college employee. To pull off the role, she had to add arrows to her quiver. She took up juggling and acrobatics, since the performance necessitated her juggling three balls, walking on her hands, and turning cartwheels. At the end she swoons before the blindingly illuminated actor who plays the Virgin, as large gatherings of students and others dressed in the garb of medieval monks, ladies, and townsfolk watch in wonderment (see Fig. 2.70).

At around the same time as the Oberlin production was first enacted, an elective class for dancing at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts danced an interpretation of *Our Lady's Tumbler* in 1929. The newspaper report explained: "The setting is that of a medieval cloister, with a chorus of monks, trained in old chants sung in the monasteries." Twenty years later an article heralding the adding of a new course in dance and choreography at Smith singled out as an outstanding entertainment *Our Lady's Tumbler.* This corker was performed at the dedication of a chapel in November, 1937. We may be witnesses to a decades-long tradition, even if sporadic.

Fig. 2.69 Early in *Our Lady's Juggler* Conna Bell Shaw entertains, outside Finney Chapel at Oberlin College. Photograph, June, 1939. Photographer unknown. Image courtesy of the Oberlin College Archives, Oberlin, OH. All rights reserved.

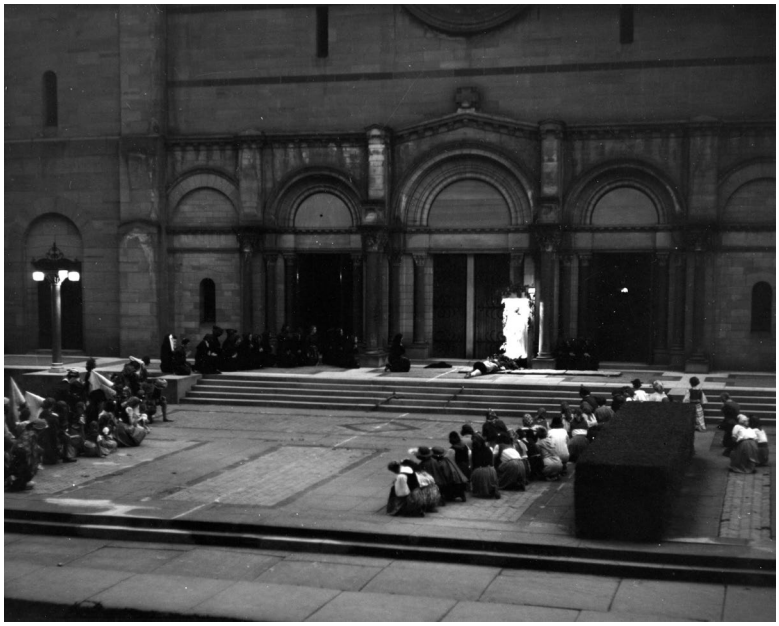


Fig. 2.70 Near the end of *Our Lady's Juggler* Conna Bell Shaw lies sprawled before the brightly lit Madonna, outside Finney Chapel at Oberlin College. Photograph, June, 1939. Photographer unknown. Image courtesy of the Oberlin College Archives, Oberlin, OH. All rights reserved.

In more than a half dozen states from the Midwest to California (see Figs. 2.71 and 2.72), productions of "The Juggler of Notre Dame" were undertaken by a women's modern dance club known as Orchesis, which took its name from a classical Greek word for "dancing" or "dance." The movement that fomented these groups can be traced back to a pioneer of dance instruction named Margaret H'Doubler. She taught physical education at the University of Wisconsin, where in 1918 her students organized a dance club that she called by the now-familiar name. During the lead-up to the 1929 stock market crash and the subsequent depression, she helped to sow throughout the United States such programs for women. In tandem with her teaching methods, she seeded her predilection for the optimism of the "Juggler of Notre Dame."

Fig. 2.71 An Orchesis dancer performs in "The Juggler of Notre Dame" at the University of Oklahoma. Photograph, 1947. Photographer unknown. Norman, OK, University of Oklahoma, Western History Collection. Image courtesy of the University of Oklahoma. All rights reserved.

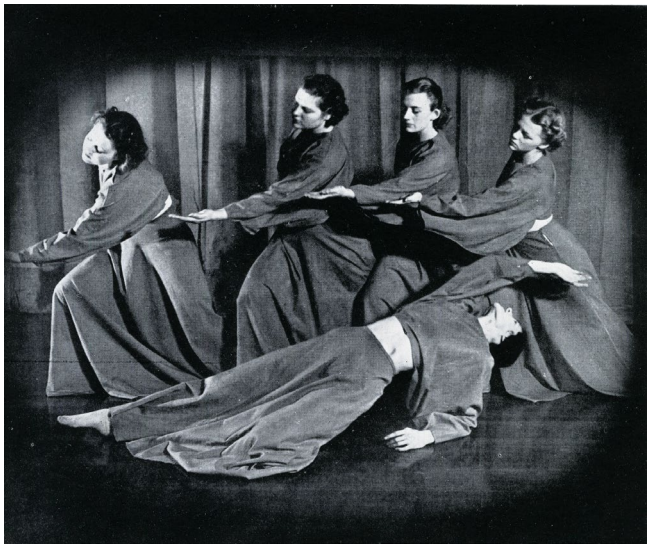


Fig. 2.72 Orchesis dancers perform "The Juggler of Notre Dame" at San Jose State College. Photograph, 1937. Photographer unknown. Published in *La Torre*, ed. Robert Rector (San Jose, CA: San Jose State College, 1937), 126.

The idea of Orchesis was bound up with a new idiom of dance pedagogy which allowed for individual creativity, and arrived at a juncture when physical education for women was being institutionalized. The campaign spread from Wisconsin throughout the United States from the late 1920s on. Although not all the local chapters have survived even in modified and renamed form, some offshoots from the all-but-forgotten century-old rootstock continue to hang on even today. It would be intriguing and even invaluable to ascertain systematically when performances of "The Juggler of Notre Dame" began and stopped at which institutions throughout the country. Although a long shot, an outside chance exists that a heritage of annual Christmastime performances has been maintained unbroken somewhere. In many cases a narrator would provide a résumé of the story for the audience, so that the dance could be wordless. Amateur stagings of this sort had time-honored effects on both entertainers and audiences, and inspired experiments in other media as well. Such productions obviously foreshadowed and influenced what lay ahead in the early years of television. Later we will see that one troupe of former Orchesis members had a hand in early TV broadcasts, both collegiate and professional.

To take another example, a book form of "Our Lady's Juggler" was privately printed for the friends of Adeline and Raymond Lufkin in 1951. The husband in this couple was a commercial artist who won two Newbery Honor awards for his illustrations of children's books. A decade earlier he had created drawings for Oberlin College's annual calendars. One of them was of the chapel in which the 1939 performance had taken place. At the very least Lufkin was in the area at the time, and he could have attended the pageant directed by Artz.

Reports of female athleticism resembling what was dramatized at Oberlin can be harvested elsewhere. The fullest picture emerges from the oral history of a woman who graduated in 1946 from yet another college, in Cleveland, Mississippi. In her interview the alumna recalled a staging that took place in the preceding year:

> One of the sweetest things that I had was of the play that I directed that was written by Evelyn Hammit. It was based on the story of the Juggler of Notre Dame. She changed it from the juggler to the tumbler. Since we had a wonderful girl who did a lot of those acrobatic feats. It was easy to cast her in that part. Ms. Hammit would come to the rehearsal and sit in the audience. She would absolutely cry when she saw the whole thing because we had the parts together. There she was on a pedestal. This white Anglo-Saxon Baptist or whatever she was. She would come down at the end of the play, and Ms. Hammit would just cry because it was just a beautiful, miraculous story.

Some of us today may have grown too apathetic, or unempathetic, to think of twisting open the valves of our waterworks even partway for the sentimentality of *Our Lady's Tumbler*—to recognize the medieval tale as being a tearjerker, when instead we might regard it as schmaltz.

The recollection about 1945 conjures up the Deep South of the United States more than seven decades ago. In the region at the time, race and religion formed even more powerfully defining features than they remain today. More relevantly, the event documented in the oral history adds to the evidence of the spectacles staged at Oberlin. Mary Garden's performances *en travesti*, even in locales where they were not directly known, rendered the feminization of the role a given, rather than an oddity, throughout the United States. The jongleur's association with women made itself evident not only when singing was involved, but in productions of all stripes.

From Opera to Vaudeville

Many other innovations in media of very different sorts were in train. From the vantage point of a century or more later, some of them have become nigh impossible to envision or reconstruct. The opera that Mary Garden had made famous was re-created in various ways in private halls, where the kaleidoscopic entertainments known as vaudeville and burlesque were put on. Similarly, musical and balletic forms of the story proliferated in school gyms and college auditoriums throughout the United States. The connection with music halls is likely to have contributed importantly to the reception of the story, for it divulgated at least a blurry familiarity with the tale among listeners who could not afford to attend a full musical drama, had no access to an opera house, or in any case would not have elected a night at the opera as their natural entertainment.

The many road shows Mary Garden led as a diva emerita would have laid the groundwork for vaudeville acts. On these tours, she faced spectators who might not

have sat through an entire opera gladly even if one had been offered them for free. Back in those days, burlesque performers would ask, "Will it play in Peoria?" She made sure that the highlights of this musical drama did achieve success there. To warm the cockles of her audience's hearts, she pieced together the bravura moments of her most famous performances: we are talking greatest hits. In her reminiscences, she prided herself on the range of recreational fare she purveyed while in the persona of the jongleur. She would dance country style, fiddle, and juggle three balls, all the while hamming it up. Got it (see Fig. 2.73)?

Fig. 2.73 Mary Garden as Jean the juggler in Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*. Photograph by Aimé Dupont, 1909.

In effect, she interjected as an entr'acte within the opera a mini-variety show. And what should we call this little spectacle of song and dance, if not vaudeville? Such humble stagecraft offered a natural home to the medieval entertainer. It transposed into the early twentieth century the acrobatics of tumblers and throwers, contortionists, and juggling alongside both serious and comic song, clowning, ventriloquism, and similar diversion.

How can we substantiate the hypothesis that the tale of the jongleur filtered down from the opera-going set and became diffused to a wider socioeconomic range of more numerous spectators? Small-time newspapers that landed daily on doorsteps throughout America provide bountiful evidence that female performers in humble theaters were touted as "the Mary Garden of vaudeville." As entertainment evolved in the next decade, the corresponding phrase "the Mary Garden of jazz" was employed at least once. The star of vaudeville who made the designation her own was Sophie Tucker, who like Mary Garden herself had a fan base in Chicago (see Fig. 2.74).

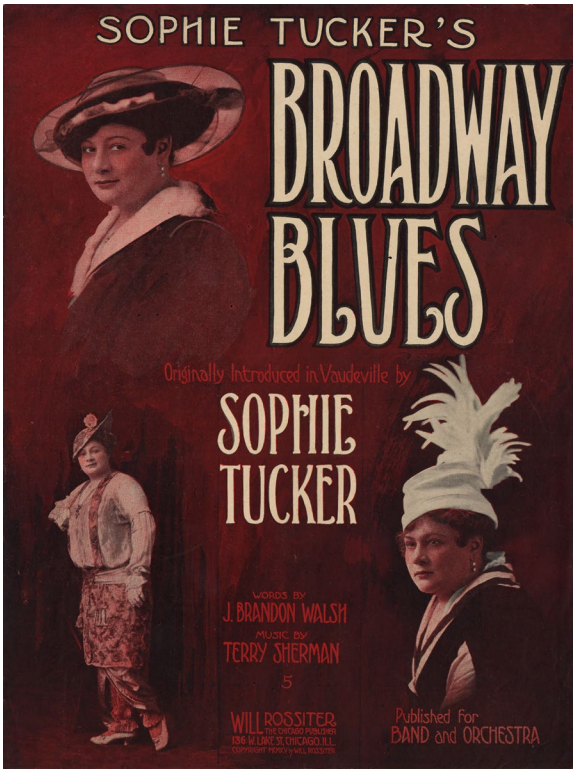


Fig. 2.74 Front cover of *Sophie Tucker's Broadway Blues*, lyrics by J. Brandon Walsh, music by Terry Sherman (Chicago: Will Rosseter, 1915).

This singer and comedian eventually became famed even beyond the United States. Brassy and sassy, she specialized in a mixed repertoire of comic and ribald songs that contributed to her earning the nickname "Last of the Red Hot Mamas." Would the Russian-born performer have sung any arias from Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* as part of her portfolio, or acted out in even an unformed fashion any key episodes from the story? At first blush it may be easier to think of her vamping through songs from steamier and seamier musical dramas than the one about the pure-hearted juggler, but her own aspirations ran toward the operatic. In a fascinating interview conducted around 1911, Tucker refused to be bracketed as merely an imitator and appropriator of African-American singing. Instead, she stressed her ambition to set grand opera to to the choppy rhythm of popular song. After having already established herself long ago as "the Mary Garden of ragtime," she proclaimed herself "the Mary Garden of vaudeville."

The underlying religiosity of the story about the jongleur would have posed no obstacles. At the peak of her vaudeville phase, Tucker became ever more comfortable in acknowledging her Jewishness, peppering performances with Yiddish phrases and more, when the composition of the audience made doing so a reasonable move. "My Yiddishe Momme" became a signature song of hers, when the circumstances were

right. Yet Tucker's ethnic and cultural background did not mandate or stunt her stock of music. If it had, she would never have donned blackface to perform the ragtime songs and the so-called coon songs (now under the cloud of racism) that formed part of the basis for her early triumphs. We must never underrate the nimbleness with which the juggler has over his long career slithered into surprising places, starting with the monastery he enters in the medieval poem itself. From the beginning, he has waged guerilla warfare on behalf of the culturally excluded or out of place. Similarly, we should not discount the openness to his tale that has been demonstrated by artists across denominational boundaries.

The cover of a 1918 playbill for the vaudeville playhouse aims at nothing but gravitas (see Fig. 2.75). It furnishes a tantalizing clue that the juggler did now and again slip into the variety programs of vaudeville acts. On an unnumbered side in the middle of the schedule, top billing goes to "Sophie Tucker, 'The Mary Garden of Vaudeville' and Her Five Kings of Syncopation." We can know exactly what she and her backup group looked like in this year (see Fig. 2.76). The theatrical program assigns each act a letter of the alphabet, and this one contains a capital I, doubling as a column. The information about the headlining performer can almost be missed, sandwiched between advertisements for a bank, listing its assets, and for elastic hosiery that could be fashioned of silk, linen, or cotton according to the customer's preference (see Fig. 2.77). Screw up your eyes and look a little more piercingly. To the left of the pillar perches a woman in medieval garb, with the gaily decorated headgear we call a fool's cap that was worn by jesters and clowns—and jugglers (see Fig. 2.78).

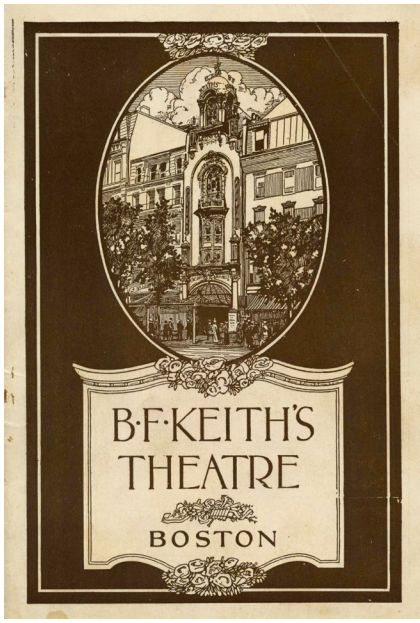


Fig. 2.75 Front cover of theater program for B. F. Keith's Theatre (Boston, 1918).

Fig. 2.76 Cover illustration to sheet music for *Ev'rybody Shimmies Now* (New York: Charles K. Harris, 1918), featuring Sophie Tucker and the "5 Kings of Syncopation."

Since the program contains pages with acts from the letter A through L, and since each one features the same entertainer from the Middle Ages, clowning around, who knows how much to make of this detail? Does it possibly allude to *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*, or not?

Most generations have a chanteuse—an Edith Piaf, a Billie Holliday, a Madonna, a Beyoncé—who seizes hold of the zeitgeist. In the first three decades of the twentieth century, opera occupied a space that would later be filled by film, television, and other media that fused the visual and the aural. Mary Garden, as a preeminent singer who seduced two countries into adoring her, counteracted what could have been the fatal rarefaction that Massenet had courted by imposing upon his composition a male-only cast. It would have been enough if she had merely prevented the story from dying. Instead, she spread it even more widely than it had journeyed previously. On her own, she made the musical drama a standard in the operatic canon of North America, and with a soprano *en travesti* in the main role. Other prima donnas, not all on the same continent, followed her lead.

For all its beauty, live opera in the United States after Mary Garden's diva-dom would dwindle rapidly. Today it remains largely an entertaining refuge for the affluent and culture-hungry. Within the exclusive province of those who love the genre, only a few decades passed after her retirement before Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* withered into being a rarely performed curio, an oddity to enliven a repertory. Yet the indirect impact of the composition on the permeation of *Our Lady's Tumbler* through popular and mass culture has been great.


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Fig. 2.77 Advertisement page. Published in a theater program for B. F. Keith's Theatre (Boston, 1918).

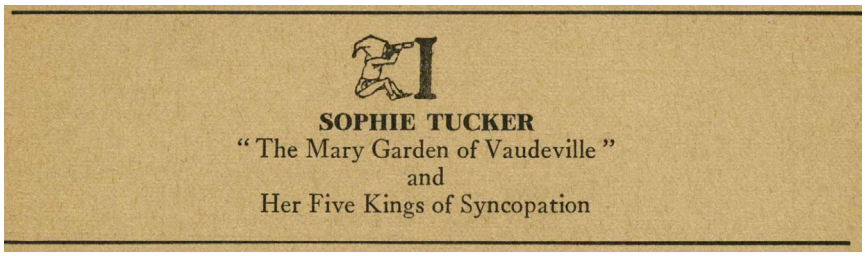
SOPHIE TUCKER
"The Mary Garden of Vaudeville"
and
Her Five Kings of Syncopation

Fig. 2.78 A small jester draws the reader's eyes to the billing for Sophie Tucker, "The Mary Garden of Vaudeville." Detail from a theater program for B. F. Keith's Theatre (Boston, 1918).

The jongleur's ubiquity has had its downsides, as pronounced as his occasional absence from view. The fate of the thirteenth-century poem in France is instructive, since it was there that the narrative was first printed in its original language, first modernized, first revised into new fictional forms, first transmuted into poetry, and first made into an opera, all by the very beginning of the twentieth century. When in 1929 a medievalist assembled a score of Marian miracles for a series devoted to "poems and tales of old France," she was not spoiled for choice. She had to mention the famous old legend of Sister Beatrice. She capped her register with "the exquisite *Tombeur* or *Jongleur de Notre-Dame*." For all that, what she went on to observe about these tales bears noting: "They have been translated for a long time, adapted, transposed sometimes magisterially, even arranged for the stage and set to music. So it has seemed senseless to us to show

them anew in their original simplicity, without any ornament." The front cover of the book depicts a man in medieval garb making obeisance before the Virgin or a Madonna who has her arms outspread, a nimbus above her, and brightness radiating around her (see Fig. 2.79).

Fig. 2.79 Front cover of Myrrha Lot-Borodine, trans., *Vingt miracles de Notre Dame*, ed. Alfred Jeanroy, Poèmes et récits de la vieille France, vol. 14 (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1929). The red-hooded figure and Mary are framed in lancets that scream out both "Gothic!" and "Art Deco!"

The one certainty is that the fellow performing such devotions before her is not our juggler. Mary need not suffer audience fatigue, but the readers, spectators, and auditors of her reactions to petitioners can lose interest if they have been exposed too often to the same narrative.

3. Images of the Virgin

If a person wished to paint you, Virgin, he
would need stars instead of colors, so that
you, as the gate of light, might be painted
with light. But the stars do not yield to the
voice of mortals. Therefore you are delineated
and painted by us with the material that
nature and the laws of painting afford.

—Constantine of Rhodes

First, how would listeners in the Middle Ages have conceived of the performance before the Madonna, if they heard the poem recited or the story retold in a sermon? Then, what would a late nineteenth-century or early twentieth-century reader have thought when perusing the medieval French in translation, Anatole France's story, or Maurice Léna's libretto? Finally, how do we imagine the scene today? What are the acoustics? Do olfactory elements come into play? Is there anything to taste? What can we imagine touching—nothing but cold stone? Yet beyond the other four senses, sight dominates the setting. Through what color lens do we picture it in our mind's eye—is it cerulean blue, cherry red, or both, like the most gorgeous panes of glass from the cathedral of Chartres? Most centrally, how are we to fantasize the image—as natural wood or stone, soot-darkened, or multicolored?

The Power of Madonnas in the Round

The Picard poem constitutes a testament to the vigor and vivacity of figural representation, especially of three-dimensional carvings. The statue in the tale does not stand as an object for aesthetic wonderment, as it might do nowadays in a museum. Nor is it supposed to attract worship as a sacred thing in own right. Rather, it facilitates approach to the divine. The rendition does not objectify Mary so much as it enables imagining the Virgin in her subjective reality. The tumbler finds his way to the Madonna, which is normally kept out of sight. His displays of devotion set in motion a process, until eventually the celestial figure associated with the likeness

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intercedes. Thanks to this mediation, God acts to favor the worshiper. In this account, the steps are shortened, to make the receipt of devotion lead directly into the bestowal of a boon. The sculpture and the heavenly being relate closely to each other. Either it or she can act without any intermediary.

Although the minstrel is the preeminent character, in the original narrative he is anonymous, faceless, and pliant. In contrast, the voiceless cynosure in the narrative of *Our Lady's Tumbler* and almost every single later reworking of it is the wonder-working Madonna. The Mother of God and her living image, if in fact it becomes animate, together constitute the lone female presence in the thirteenth-century poem, France's prose, and Jules Massenet's opera. Mary and her figurative impersonator are more than totems, but less than characters. They are the more striking for expressing themselves solely through inarticulate gesture and action. Despite this limitation, their charisma pervades the miracle and predominates in it.

In communicating through a bodily sign, the Virgin shares a basic trait with the jongleur. He commands no words in Latin, negotiates only fumblingly the social niceties of monastic silence, and has no facility in forming with his fingers the sign language used by the monks. Yet the tumbler possesses a range of expression, in the corporeal idiom, by which he can enunciate his devotion to the highest astral and social plane of heaven. The dialogue between Mary and the dancer takes place not directly, in words, but rather indirectly through physical movements. To all appearances he is not even aware of her side in the exchange. In reciprocation for his worship, she manifests herself in her most human and humane guise, through compassion.

Both the medieval narrative and Anatole France's version—more the first than the second—leave gently ambiguous whether the tumbler or jongleur receives an omen, evident to the choir monks if not to him. The signal emanates either from the Mother of God herself who has descended from heaven, or by proxy through a simulacrum of her that springs to life when inspirited by her. He is consummately active, until his collapse. In contrast, the Madonna behaves as an effigy should act: she does not move a muscle, but stays stock-still like a statue or a stone—which stands to reason, since she may be a stone sculpture.

The ambiguity is understandable. In medieval culture, images of the Mother of God were initially thin on the ground, but especially from the tenth century they proliferated along with the feasts and other hallmarks in the veneration of the Virgin. Not coincidentally, the cult of images and that of Mary soared at exactly the same time, so that the images gained an expressiveness that transcended mere portraiture of a person. Instead, they were treated like real people and even molly- (or Mary) coddled. The facsimiles were regarded as actually animate. Treatment of these living statues included being enthroned, dressed in clothing, and carried in litters. They were often transported from place to place, as the equivalent for the Middle Ages of today's featured celebrities at fundraising events to benefit renovation and building projects

or political campaigns. Finally, they were incorporated into the production of dramas and set up to preside over synods.

The medieval Galician-Portuguese "Canticles of Holy Mary," composed in the thirteenth century during the reign of Alfonso X, contains one of the most arresting episodes in literature, in which a good-looking statue of the Virgin and Child comes across as lifelike. In one miracle, a jongleur who specializes in impersonation, acting on a suggestion of the devil, mimics an image that stands above the city gates of an unidentified municipality in Lombardy. God afflicts the impressionist with a seizure that grotesquely distorts his face and body. The mime, once he has prayed and repented, is healed in a church by the Mother of God, and the bishop delivers a sermon on the wonder. The tale has become known as "The Mimicking Minstrel."

Such circumstances can seem difficult to reconcile with biblical injunctions against the worship of graven images—against idols. The fine line, brought home in Catholic doctrine in catechisms and elsewhere, is that reverence for representations is not idolatrous so long as the adoration is directed to the figures whom the likenesses portray. Worshipers must differentiate between the heavenly prototype and the earthly depiction that represents it. This nuance explains why Mary, the figure or being, differs from a Madonna, the likeness. In Greek Orthodox Christianity, more or less the same distinction is achieved by drawing a line between the Virgin herself and *Panagia*. A feminine adjective meaning "all-holy" in Greek, the epithet is used in referring to icons of the Mother of God. Although theologians and most devout find no obstacle in grasping the contrast, a religious rabbit-hole awaits those who are less subtle or educated, and who might mistake the likeness of Mary for the Mother of God herself. When the symbol is taken wrongly for what is symbolized, the model becomes an idol. Adoration turns into idolatry, and devotion descends to fetishism. To enter the danger zone of crude simplification, we have here the crux—or is that a poor choice of words?—that has led to iconoclasm, both within Catholicism and between it and Protestantism.

Revered images developed retinues of passionate believers, and the passion for the effigies, like the gusto for relics, in turn propelled pilgrimages. Existing cathedrals had good reason, or at least robust financial incentive, to support the development of both veneration and pilgrimage. Paintings and carvings that attracted the faithful could necessitate the construction and expansion of great (and not so great) churches. Many centuries would have to pass before art museums came into existence. In the meantime, places of worship, especially the grandest, offered the main venues in which a broad public could view artworks. This is not to foster any misapprehension that the idea of "art for art's sake" would have been relevant, or even intelligible. The governing conception was that of "art for Mary's sake" as a subset within "art for God's sake." Among the treasures held and sometimes displayed, Madonnas were preeminent.

In Western Europe the twelfth century saw a culmination of aesthetic and formal changes brought about by three-dimensional carvings of the Virgin and Child that in at least some cases could be seen from all sides. Sometimes nearly life-sized, the statues came nearer to seeming truly human than had any other representations for centuries, and among some of their viewers they aroused the thought of real interaction between image and onlooker, almost as one person to another. The radical newness of these sculptures can be all too easily soft-pedaled. Better than any quantity or quality of theology scratched out with pen in ink on parchment, they brought home in their full roundedness the mystery of the Incarnation that forms the heart of Christian belief. Once again, only God was to be adored, but these depictions of others were to be venerated.

The noun *statue* implies by its etymology a standing figure, since it derives ultimately from the Latin verb meaning "to stand." In contrast, these early portrayals are seated. To be specific, Mary is shown cradling her infant son in her lap. *Our Lady's Tumbler* makes no mention of a baby Jesus. By the same token, modern artists who have illustrated the story have frequently depicted the Madonna by herself, with no little one to be seen. Yet when the medieval French poem was written, the norm called for portraying the Mother of God with her babe on her lap or in her arms. The poet had no need to mention the infant, who was a given. The child is present in the earliest extant image that accompanies the juggler story, the manuscript illustration that an illuminator wedged at the foot of a manuscript folio. The presence of the babe in arms, it may be confidently surmised, went without saying at the point when the piece of poetry was composed.

Less certain is whether the Madonna we are to visualize would have been a painted sculpture designed to be carried in processions, a three-dimensional statue intended to be placed and stay put on an altar, or even if the two would have differed much. Whether being moved or standing, the representation would have been displayed with ceremony and stateliness (see Fig. 3.1). The first circumstance would make it all the easier to comprehend why the Madonna would be envisaged as a *deus ex machina*—or rather as the *Mater Dei* or Mother of God who in her supreme mercy is activated through the veneration of her likeness to release help through the angelic machinery of heaven. Yet the collective formality that goes by the word "ceremony" is conspicuously absent from the solo ritual of the tumbler. It is not a specific holiday. No onrushing crowd surges forward to carry the carving on a palanquin. Furthermore, in this instance it is the worshiper, and not the depiction, that moves. The figure becomes animate, but the living being is not borne in any kind of parade.

Although the bas-de-page position of the illumination may be due to the jongleur's lowliness in the social hierarchy of the time, the decision to interpolate the painting at all is probably owed to the presence of the sculpture in the narrative. The statue inspired the painting at least as much as, and probably more than, the tumbler did.

Fig. 3.1 Five white-robed figures, three tonsured and two not, carry a sculpture of the Madonna and Child on their shoulders. *Abrégé des histoires divines*. Miniature, Northeast France. ca. 1300–1310. New York, The Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.751, fol. 63r.

Madonnas in Majesty

> He did not remember his mother, and did not seem quite sure that he had ever had one; he had never seen a woman, nor had he any idea what sort of things women were, or what they looked like. He asked me whether they resembled the pictures of the Panagia, the Holy Virgin, which hang in every church.—Robert, Lord Cuzon, of an adult monk at Mount Athos who had been brought to the monastery as a boy

In the East, a Madonna is known as an "all-holy." A typical pose has the Virgin seated on a throne with the Christ child before her, as if he were himself enthroned on her knees. A representation of this kind went by the full name of "all-holy bringer of victory." The role that such likenesses played in developing images of Mary in the West cries out for further examination. More broadly, the traffic of Marianism from the Greek East into Latin Christendom merits much deeper investigation than it has elicited to date. In statues and stories, relics and rituals, and most other aspects of the cult of the Virgin, continental Europe received much novelty from the Eastern Mediterranean through trade, diplomacy, pilgrimage, crusade, and other means of communication and interchange.

Often painted in multiple colors, less frequently encased in precious metal embellished with jewels, Romanesque wooden sculptures of the Virgin and Child from Western Europe are called "Madonnas in majesty" or simply "majesties." The portion of them representing Mary is designated the "throne of wisdom." The designation alludes to the fact that in these depictions she is understood as constituting a duality: literally, she is the Mother of God, and figuratively, to employ Gospel phraseology, she serves as the seat of the Word made flesh. The Holy Spirit, one of the three consubstantial persons of the Christian Trinity, speaks through and in conjunction with the Word. Because the Word is equated with wisdom, the Virgin is then by the commutative principle the seat of wisdom.

This duality implies that Mary is both ordinary in her humanity and yet extraordinary in her purity. In the first regard, the Mother of God equals in her simplicity the tumbler in his. In the second, she stands separate and superior. Some representations of the enthroned Virgin depict her with tokens of rulership and sovereignty beyond the mere ceremonial chair, such as a diadem or orb. In all cases, the statues possessed a power that can be difficult to appreciate today in the Western world. In Europe and many former European colonies, effigies of the Holy Family remain ubiquitous, despite centuries of secularization. It is easy to lose sight that the portrayal of a human family as an embodiment of the divine, or the humanization of God as a male baby in the lap or arms of his mother, was ever a radical novelty.

Apart from the considerably less entire reliquaries that preceded them, "majesties" were the first stand-alone statues made in the West since antiquity. Such carvings in the round, generally measuring about three feet in height and carved on all sides, existed in western Europe by the mid-tenth century. They reached their apex in quality and quantity in the twelfth century in France, especially in Auvergne, where they were conventionally hewn from single tree trunks. In their very composition, they were organic and unfragmented wholes.

Sculptures of the Virgin Mary may have played a decisive role in the pan-European custom in the Gothic period of dedicating French cathedrals to Notre Dame, or Our Lady. Many churches in question owned such likenesses, many of these portrayals were associated with specific forms of local worship, and many of these cults were disseminated with the help of a limitless literature, in both Latin and the vernaculars, about miracles in which the representations had taken part. The mental image of Our Lady held by many worshipers in great churches would have been first and foremost the diocesan "majesty." Mary would have been equated metonymically with both the carvings and the ecclestiastic edifices that housed them.

Although the origins of these prized sculptures are often not historically verifiable, many legends explain how these objects happened to arrive where they stand or sit today, and how they acquired their present-day physical condition. Collections of Marian miracles, such as that of Gautier de Coinci, abound in wonders that took place in the presence of painted icons and polychrome statues. His *Miracles* gives evidence of the vibrant visual culture that had grown up and matured around depictions and effigies, icons and images, of Mary.

The Virgin as the "throne of wisdom" predominated in the twelfth century. Beyond the carvings of wood that developed special cults and elicited especial veneration, the tympana of cathedrals sometimes focused upon "majesties" in the "throne of wisdom" posture. In the stone sculptures that occupied these spaces, the grouping of Mother and Child could be mainly by itself or within a larger scene depicting the Adoration of the Magi (see Fig. 3.2). The tumbler bears a loose resemblance to the three wise men who often participate in this veneration. Like them, the gymnast engages in physical movement so as to come before the Virgin. Like them, he makes a bodily offering to her in his devotional stances, as an alternative to the words and song of the monks in the choir above him.

What more needs to be said about the appearance of such Madonnine images? Many people nowadays probably encounter carvings and sculptures of the Virgin first and perhaps even exclusively in the medieval galleries of museum collections. Today these representations are often monochrome, usually the color of the stone or wood from which they are made. Many wooden statues of Mary from the twelfth century or earlier have been stripped and scrubbed to show their unpainted and unvarnished natural grain, perhaps in accord with nineteenth- and early twentieth-century presuppositions about the primitivism of the Middle Ages. Yet lingering traces

of pigment tell us that once these very images were polychrome. In effect, popular conceptions of these images as with much ancient statuary, may lead us far astray from their original condition. Where Greek statues and architecture are concerned, we may have a picture of classicism that exaggerates clean and pure marble, but such a premise is out of kilter with the reality when these objects were first put on display in antiquity.

Fig. 3.2 The Virgin on the throne of wisdom, surrounded by the Magi. Stone sculpture, twelfth century. Vézelay, Vézelay Abbey, narthex south entrance.

Viewers may associate simplicity and uniformity of coloration—whether the creaminess of ivory, the grainy warmth of natural wood, or the varied hues of stone—with the Middle Ages. By the same token, they may presume that gaudily and even garishly painted Madonnas of plaster and other low-budget materials are modern developments. For want of familiarity with early polychromatic coloring, Protestants and adherents of other religions may be dumbstruck (and not necessarily approvingly so) at the brightly colored images of Mary in many Catholic churches. In fact, medieval statues would have borne an inescapable resemblance to the humble but overbrightly colored gypsum or wooden representations of the Virgin that have been beloved by the congregations of small parishes worldwide.

The mass manufacture of such Madonnas elicits comment already in the mid-nineteenth century, when John Ruskin gives his readers a cease-and-desist order: they should stop misguidedly foisting modern assumptions upon the Middle Ages. He cites Cimabue specifically. We would be injudicious to suppose, he writes, that the Florentine painter and mosaicist from the second half of the thirteenth century "had

manufactured, as our Gothic Firms now manufacture to order, a Madonna—in whom he believed no more than they. Not so."

To return to polychromy, any dichotomy between medieval whiteness and modern color is illusory. Manuscript illuminations, textual evidence, and physical analysis confirm unanimously that sculptures of Mary from the Middle Ages were often and even usually polychrome, with paint and other pigments applied where the objects' initial monochrome was deemed insufficiently realistic. A rare Gothic instance that preserves many vestiges of its original spectrum is a standing Virgin and Child from late thirteenth-century Île-de-France (see Fig. 3.3).

Fig. 3.3 Unknown artist, *Virgin and Child*, late thirteenth century. Wood sculpture with polychromy and gilding, made in France, 54.61 × 17.78 × 19.05 cm. Washington, DC, Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, BZ.1912.2. Image courtesy of Joe Mills. All rights reserved.

The most famous multicolored carving in this class is an enthroned Virgin and Child from Auvergne that has been dated to the second half of the twelfth century, the so-called Morgan Madonna (see Fig. 3.4).

Fig. 3.4 Unknown artist, *Virgin and Child in Majesty*, ca. 1175–1200. Wood sculpture made in Auvergne, France, 79.5 × 31.7 × 29.2 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1916.

Mary's mantle was once a lapis lazuli blue, darkened by a gray underlayer and adorned with small lozenges of tin leaf (to appear gold). Underneath this outer covering draped a red robe. Like his mother's shawl, the child's overgarment was of the same color, over a dark green tunic with red lining. The throne itself and the small dais on which it rests were painted in a kind of trompe-l'oeil to simulate the appearance of colored marble embellished with precious stones.

What lesson is to be learned from this Virgin and Child? The "thrones of wisdom" in their pristine condition bore a much closer resemblance to the often generic-looking and sometimes gaudily or even tawdrily colored Madonnas that are treasured in unpretentious parochial houses of worship throughout the world today than to the unrelieved white or gray of unpainted or formerly painted stone sculptures in museums and in or on medieval churches.

Much remains to be considered in imagining the appearance of the image in *Our Lady's Tumbler*. As the very construction of the two words suggests, images

and imagination are bound in interdependence. If we seek to visualize how such a sculpture may have been conceived and represented, our very best image of a twelfth-century statue of the Virgin may well be the two-dimensional representation in the so-called Belle Verrière in the south aisle of the choir of Chartres (see Fig. 3.5).

Fig. 3.5 Notre Dame de la Belle Verrière. Stained glass window, twelfth-century core with thirteenth-century framing. Chartres, Chartres Cathedral, south choir. Photograph by Wikimedia user Micheletb, 2016, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartres_-30a-_ND_de_la_belle_verri%C3%A8re_and_its_angel_border.jpg

The French name means "beautiful glass window," and this twelfth-century core, closely surrounded by thirteenth-century angels, lives up to its reputation. The loveliness of the stained glass beggars belief. In it, dark and light Gothic play together, the former in the blues and the latter in the reds and other hues. The sun is both blocked and allowed in, in a tacit demonstration of the Annunciation: the glass acts as an unbroken hymen. In the upper portion of the window, Mary looks directly at us. She wears a mantle in the distinctive *bleu de Chartres* or "Chartres blue," and holds in her lap her son, the young Jesus. Both mother and child are placed against a red background. Directly above them looms the Holy Spirit, descending in the shape of a dove. The general composition loosely resembles that of the bas-de-page preserved in one manuscript of *Our Lady's Tumbler*. The major differences are that in the painting on parchment, the Madonna is seated to the right, robed in red against a blue background, and looking toward an angel with a nimbus rather than having one of her own.

A rich tradition developed of depicting artists as they labored to portray the Virgin and Child, and the images they crafted in the process. For example, the frontispiece of the so-called Lambeth Apocalypse, an illuminated manuscript produced between 1260 and 1275, gives us a snapshot of an artist, a Benedictine monk, painting with a full palette a sculpture of the the Mother of God with her baby (see Fig. 3.6).

Fig. 3.6 A Benedictine monk paints a sculpture of the Virgin and Child. Manuscript illustration from the Lambeth Apocalypse, ca. 1260–1267. London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 209, fol. 2v.

Portraiture of the two had an illustrious pedigree. Saint Luke himself was credited with having been a portraitist of Mary with the infant Jesus (see Fig. 3.7).

Fig. 3.7 Hans Burgkmair, *Saint Luke Painting the Virgin*, 1507. Woodcut, 22.4 × 15.7 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. Rogers Fund, 1921.

Multiple paintings purportedly by the Evangelist survive in both the Greek East and Latin West. The Lucan connection is worth driving home, since it may have laid the foundation for the conventional wisdom that artists, not exclusively painters, enjoyed a special closeness to the Virgin.

For all the support, the images and image-making did not go uncontested. The perturbation about them stretches back many centuries before the Reformation. Dispute over adoration of icons and over its opposite of iconoclasm began in the Greek East, perhaps sparked by contact with Islam, with its ingrained antagonism toward representations—its iconophobia. Whatever the causes, the furor flared into a doctrinal dust storm. Its intensity suffices to be called an iconomachy, or to put the Grecism into unfancified English, a battle of images.

The dispute peaked in the Byzantine world between 754 and 787. In the Latin West, no representative of Charlemagne participated in the Second Council of Nicaea, which took place in the later of the two years just cited. Even so, he commissioned a response to the controversy from among the scholars in his entourage. Their answer is recorded in *Charlemagne's Books*, composed around 790. At one juncture, the treatise poses a thinking exercise or brainteaser that takes as its very point of departure an effigy of the Virgin Mary. Later the author falls back on the apparently nerve-racking possibility that in such a likeness the Mother of God might be mistaken for another female personage from scripture—or even worse, from classical myth.

Like Eastern Christendom, the West decided, at least temporarily, to refute the charge of idolatry and run the risk that legitimate images might be confounded with illicit idols. Ekkehard IV, active during the first half of the eleventh century, recounts a relevant anecdote. This monk and writer of Saint Gall relates that none other than the Virgin herself vindicated the decision miraculously. His account asserts that more than a century earlier, an Irish-born artist and composer had been a brother of the monastery. This Tutilo was so gifted in his artistry that the abbot allowed him the exceptional privilege of working on commissions outside the cloister. Once, he was reportedly carving statues of Mary in Metz when two pilgrims in dire need begged him for alms, which he provided. Later the wayfarers quizzed a nearby cleric about the identity of the lady whom they had seen helping and guiding the sculptor as he went about his business. When asked about the matter, the Irishman was mystified, for to the best of his knowledge he had been alone during his labors. Eventually he discovered, incised upon a leaf of gold upon which he had been toiling, an autograph message from none other than the Mother of God.

The Virgin missed few occasions to demonstrate her commitment to the statues of the Mother of God that represented her. Just as they never turned a deaf ear to petitioners who approached them, so she never neglected the opportunity or the need to protect and favor these images. In many instances, the likenesses contained contact relics that relayed her physical presence from the already remote past to the then-present. These representations were like marsupials or even like Russian dolls, with something analogous to themselves housed within them. A case in point from the second half of the tenth century would be the Madonna witnessed in a reverie by Abbot Robert of Mozat. In an account composed around 984 and preserved in a single manuscript, the text is accompanied by a drawing (Fig. 3.8), picturing the "majesty" of the Virgin and Child that was crafted in 946 for the new cathedral of Clermont under Bishop Stephen II. In the dream, the depiction was not completed by the goldsmith and cathedral architect Alleaume and his younger brother Adam, who had begun the project. Instead, Mary herself brought it to an end. She fended off a cloud bank of demoniacal flies that sought to prevent the goldsmiths from executing their task, and brought in a purifying swarm of bees to dispel the muck deposited by the other, far less salubrious insects.

Even unenlivened, a good Madonna could work miracles for a devoted monk. Take by way of illustration the Virgin of Rupert. A low-relief sculpture, this image is fashioned of so-called coal sandstone that has been gilded, and that still bears tinctures of polychromy. A display piece of Mosan sculpture, the carving has been dated to the mid-twelfth century (see Fig. 3.9). It presents Mary posed on a cushioned seat as she suckles the infant Jesus. Emphasizing the tender-hearted affection that binds mother and child, it shows her supporting in her lap the infant Jesus, who presses her left breast between his hands. Both figures are haloed.

Fig. 3.8 Virgin and Child. Miniature, ca. 984. Clermont-Ferrand, Bibliothèque municipale (Bibliothèque du Patrimoine), MS 145, fol. 130v, col. 1 (detail).

Fig. 3.9 Relief sculpture of the Virgin of Rupert. Coal sandstone sculpture, made in Liège or the Meuse valley, ca. 1150. Liège, Belgium, Musée Curtius, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Li%C3%A8ge,_Grand_Curtius._Vierge_de_Dom_Rupert_(gr%C3%A8s_houiller,_vers_1150).jpg. CC BY-SA 4.0.

The statue was originally located in the monastic church of Saint Lawrence of Liège. Legend maintains that a young Benedictine of this monastery prayed successfully to this Madonna for comprehension of sacred scripture. For centuries, this monk was identified with the learned and prolific exegete Rupert of Deutz, so known after the abbey near Cologne where he was elected abbot in 1121. The facts of his biography clash irreconcilably, however, with the consensus on the chronology of the low relief. Although the Virgin of Rupert cannot have its eponym in Rupert of Deutz, the story still conveys an important lesson about devotion shown by brethren to Madonnas.

Animated Images

In their solemn and sober frontality, the representations known as "majesties" have a serenely unrealistic and priestly stillness about them now. Consequently, it may surprise us to realize how forcefully medieval onlookers were impressed by such images' relative verisimilitude, naturalism, and mobility. Ekkehard IV used the phrase "sitting as if alive" to describe the one in his anecdote. A thousand years ago, the sculptures looked animate to viewers.

To understand the big picture of spectators in the Middle Ages, we must recall the direct gaze that these likenesses level at us, as well as their realism compared to other art of the day. It would be risky to generalize about the typical appearance or treatment of such illustrations solely on the basis of the jeweled and gilded reliquary statue at the abbey of Conques, in southern France. As the only Carolingian "majesty" that has survived, the effigy is unique. Among other distinctive features, it represents not Mary but Faith, a saint purportedly martyred during Roman persecutions of the late third or early fourth century. All the same, this pre-Romanesque sculpture shares with the "thrones of wisdom" the defining characteristic of being enthroned.

Bernard of Angers was schooled at Chartres before becoming a teacher in the place from which he has taken his name. Between 1013 and 1020, he paid three visits to the monastery of Conques. In his *Book of Miracles of Saint Faith* he memorialized not only the wonders wrought by the holy woman, but also his own impressions as an outsider who had not previously seen such a three-dimensional portrayal (see Fig. 3.10). The image, originally encased entirely in gold leaf, might seem utterly unlifelike to some eyes today. Yet despite what might strike us today as a deficit of verisimilitude, the hagiographer found himself discomposed by the portrayal's resemblance to a real person. The sculpture's three-dimensionality made it seem corporeally present, while the gilding had a distinct and to some extent opposite effect of rendering supernatural the being represented.

The reaction that the early eleventh-century schoolmaster of Angers had to the statue's lifelikeness was intensified by his awareness that it enclosed relics of the hallowed woman. Here we need a keen eye for detail, if we are to recognize both similarities and differences that marked the cult of Mary as unique. Remnants of

her were dispersed throughout Europe, and many were squirreled away within relic cavities hollowed out of sculptures. Yet we must give heed: the dogma of the Assumption held that after Virgin died, her body was assumed or taken up into heaven. This doctrine meant that lacking bodily remains from after her death, the faithful were shortchanged of many objects that were common in the cults of other saints.

Fig. 3.10 Statue reliquary of St. Foy de Conques. Wooden sculpture with gold, silver gilt, jewels, and cameos, late tenth–early eleventh century. Conques, Abbey Church of Saint Foy. Photograph by Wikimedia user ZiYouXunLu, 2013, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Statue_reliquaire_de_Sainte_Foy_de_Conques_(cropped).jpg. CC BY-SA 3.0.

In lieu of conventional primary relics from the bones of a holy person, the remains of Mary were secondary and not bodily, but still physical, and many churches claimed confidently to possess such traces of her physicality. To offer only a partial enumeration, locks of her hair and phials of her breast milk that had purportedly been collected during her lifetime were all worth keeping in ecclesiastical treasure chests. Contact relics, which acquired their holiness through having touched the body of the saint, abounded. In this category, items of clothing stand out, such as headdresses and veils, shifts and slips, and girdles. Precious items of all these types could be displayed in the glass-framed shrines known as ostensories or monstrances; shut away in *châsses* or reliquary cases; embedded in fixed locations such as altars to confer holiness and sacred power upon them; or, lastly, they could be sheltered in boxes within sculptures. On important ritual occasions, Madonnas that doubled as reliquaries could be processed, well-groomed and dressed to the nines for the parades in which they took part.

To return to Saint Faith, Bernard's response to the verisimilitude of the statue paled in comparison with the astonishment of common people: "It was an image made with

such precision to the face of the human form that it seemed to see with its keen-eyed gaze the great many peasants seeing it and to grant gently with its reflecting eyes the prayers of those praying before it." The three-dimensionality of such effigies initially ruffled the feathers of some viewers. Before long Bernard rued his own initially incredulous stance about the clad carving: he had mocked the representation by calling it a Diana or a Venus. He went on to tell of a learned companion who was punished for his own disparagement of the piece by experiencing a vision of the holy woman in which she beat him so savagely with a rod that he survived only long enough to relate the apparition.

In legends, those of other faiths are portrayed sometimes as being vehemently hostile to images, such as those of Mary. In anti-Semitic legends, Jews are represented as spitting upon Madonnas, making parodies of votive offerings to them, and inflicting multiple wounds upon them. By nonbelievers more generally, such likenesses of the Virgin, if not destroyed or ignored, will be at best viewed, studied, and admired, as inanimate, insensate, and immobile objects and not as living, feeling, and moving beings. They will be treated as idols would be, not by the faithful but by those who do not put stock in them.

To true believers, the lifelike quality of the "thrones of wisdom," as self-standing statues in the round, was and is intensified by the kinetic quality they achieve when they are processed. The verb just employed denotes the carrying of a cult object in a procession—a march to celebrate a ceremony or festival. Beyond such parades, Saint Faith and her seemingly animate eyes made her a suitable witness to such important proceedings as major financial and forensic transactions. When carvings of this type came to life, they were much more than machine-like automata or robots. In fact, the representations were sometimes operated by those holding them.

Across the gulf of many centuries, the power of processions to suggest the animation of statues is hard to appreciate. If anything, today we are overexposed to three-dimensional representations, and even more to animated images. Although those of us who see a surfeit of motion pictures may be jaded, in many sectors of the world ceremonial marches remain powerful and deeply conservative traditions. A photograph printed in 1927 freezes for the onlooker the parading of a sculpture in Chartres on a Marian feast day. The likeness was known from its usual location as Notre-Dame-sous-Terre. The French name means nothing more or less than "underground Notre Dame" or "Our Lady of Under the Earth." On this holiday the latest incarnation of the cult carving there was brought into the streets and trotted out by the clergy, attired in their starchiest vestments (see Fig. 3.11). The depiction under consideration was a replica of one that during the French Revolution had been seized from its subterranean shrine by a mob and burned. In the nineteenth century, a copy was made of the earlier wooden figure which is still venerated even today. Henry Adams had in mind this kind of celebration and the atmosphere attendant upon it when in *Mont Saint Michel and Chartres* he extended an invitation to inquiring minds:

"If you want to know what Churches were made for, come down here on some great festival of the Virgin, and give yourself up to it; but come alone!"

Statues of this sort could have been trotted out for the performance of Nativity and Epiphany plays, which developed roughly contemporaneously in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. In such pieces of theater the three-dimensional "majesties" may be imagined as being placed in the church, near the altar and also near a temporarily erected manger. There they could serve as proxies for Mary and the Christ child. In another scenario, a real-life actor may have discharged the central role of the Virgin in a living reenactment that would make use of the sculpted Christ child.

One such arrangement would have been adopted in the experiment Francis conducted in a grotto in the Italian hill town of Greccio, in the region of Lazio, on Christmas Eve of 1223. For this realization of the first crèche (or "crib") ever, the poor man of Assisi first set up a feeding trough with hay and then jollied along members of the community to take part. As actors, the locals staged a tableau vivant. Near the altar, a real feeder was erected. Close to both was placed a "majesty," a statue of the Virgin Mary in the round.

The staging simulated the adoration in the stable of Bethlehem following the night of the Nativity. The scene was portrayed prepossessingly in a fresco by Giotto (see Fig. 3.12).

Fig. 3.11 A procession of the Notre-Dame-sous-Terre. Photograph by Meurisse and Harlingue, 1927, from *Le Pèlerin* no. 2621 (1927): 5.

Fig. 3.12 Giotto di Bondone, *Presepe di Greccio*, ca. 1295–1299. Fresco, 230 × 270 cm. Assisi, Basilica superiore di San Francesco d'Assisi.

Everyone took part in the drama, playing Mary, Joseph, and the infant Jesus, clustered around a crib together with an ass, an ox, and shepherds, all of them in the flesh. Today the pope of the Catholic Church does not process a Madonna on Christmas Eve, but as a complement to the liturgy of the Mass the Roman pontiff places an image of the infant Jesus within a humble cowshed.

Another form of animation would come, later in the thirteenth century than *Our Lady's Tumbler*, with the vogue of so-called shrine Madonnas. These portrayals sometimes but by no means always contained relics in hollows or canisters. On their exteriors, such openable and operable wooden sculptures presented images of the Mother and Child that could be rigged to reveal different carvings and paintings within. Likenesses of this sort remained a feature of religious life into the sixteenth century. While not alive, they brought home gamely the reality of the incarnation—Mary's inaugural contribution to salvation. They could be manipulated in private as well as public devotion. Would it be too much of a stretch to describe them as performers, on a par with either the jongleur himself or the vivified Virgin who brought him solace?

Miracles of Madonnas

The most beautiful blooms of medieval
ecclesiastic fantasizing are the Marian legends.

Reports of miracles continue to evoke fascination. Nowadays, the secularism well entrenched in some circles in Western countries subjects the possibility of wondrous epiphanies to skepticism and even ridicule. But such derision would have been

cockeyed beyond belief in some earlier periods. Today, one can purchase a novelty mug for coffee or tea, at the bottom of which the Mother of God is supposed to become visible when hot liquid is decanted into it: Our Lady of the Latte. It even has competition, in the form of a "miracle mug": "pour in a hot beverage and see how the Virgin Mary magically appears!" Along the same lines, a "Holy Toast" stamper exists (with a name that puns upon Holy Ghost) that can imprint a Madonna-like image upon a slice of bread, making a Marian equivalent to a wafer employed in the Eucharist (see Fig. 3.13). More seriously, a kit was sold in the late 1990s under the name of "The Virgin Mary Tradition.™" The assortment of objects and instructions includes a statuette of the Blessed Virgin Mary, distinguished as the "Patron Saint of Miracles,™" to assist those seeking intercession. For such novelty items to have been promoted in the nineteenth century or earlier would have been unimaginable.

The Middle Ages had its own methods for commercializing and exploiting the Mother of God. No unpassable gap intervened between perceiving a likeness as lifelike and ascribing lively powers to it. Small wonder that the literature of the period teems with stories in which statues of the Mother of God and the infant Jesus became animate and moved, or at least behaved as if they were alive. This proliferation stands out especially in tales of miracles of the Virgin as accumulated and organized in collections such as Gautier de Coinci's and Caesarius of Heisterbach's.

Such Marian miracle tales, most of them attested in multiple versions, already totaled almost 1800 when they were catalogued in 1902. By chance, Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* premiered in that banner year. The stock of such narratives encompasses many that involve images of one sort or another. Thus, the so-called Soissons manuscript of Gautier's *Miracles of Our Lady* features among many images of the Virgin Mary illustrations of both two-dimensional paintings and three-dimensional statues.

Advancing the trend even further, Caesarius's *Dialogue of Miracles* has been aptly styled "a veritable *summa* of statues that come to life." To take one from among a multitude of moving and memorable instances, the good prior of Heisterbach reports one miracle that centered on the Golden Madonna of Essen (see Fig. 3.14).

Fig. 3.13 Blessed Virgin Mary with halo on a piece of toast. Photograph Shutterstock 544671613.

This late tenth-century sculpture was preserved in the cathedral of that German city but had belonged previously to the nearby royal convent. The carving has a wooden core onto which wafer-thin sheets of gold have been hammered, with nails of the same noble metal. This fabrication is the earliest known and extant group of figures in which the Virgin is represented with her young boy across her lap. According to Caesarius, once during a Mass a carpenter gazed upon the Madonna. Before the watchful woodworker's very eyes, the child raised himself up, snatched Mary's crown from her head, and donned it on his own. Then Jesus returned his mother's headdress to its original position at the appropriate point in the Creed, when Christ was said to be made man.

Outside exempla literature, an episode in June of 1187 is extremely telling. In the days preceding a battle between the forces of Kings Henry II of England and Philip Augustus of France, a soldier of fortune in the service of the British monarch's son Richard lopped or broke off the arm of the infant Jesus from a stone statue of the Virgin and Child at Déols, near Châteauroux. Allegedly the carving of Mary is first bled miraculously, later moved, and even bared her breast.

Fig. 3.14 Golden Madonna of Essen. Wood sculpture with gold plating, ca. 980. Essen, Essen Minster. Photograph by Wikimedia user Arnoldius, 2006, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Essen_muenster_goldene_madonna-4.jpg. CC BY-SA 2.5.

Accounts of miracles tell of representations of the mother or child that apparently come alive, speak, move, and issue fluxes of liquids. The actions and reactions run a gamut that embraces laughing, smiling, nodding, winking, waving, kissing, striking, slapping, catching hold of people, eating food, turning pale and pasty, changing colors, or radiating light. Beyond motions, medieval writers ascribed emotions to the

effigies. The statues were described as having feelings. The effusions reported include shedding tears, oozing blood or oil (such as olive oil, presumably extra virgin), and, last but not least, spurting milk (definitely organic). In English we have the phrase "spitting image." Its etymology has been untangled in many imaginative, speculative, and un- or poorly substantiated ways; implicating phlegm-hawking effigies would be the most bizarre. However the idiom originated, sputum is one bodily fluid that is not routinely emitted from Madonnas in medieval miracle tales. But many other substances flow forth. For example, the famed image of Saydnaya, near Damascus, produced oil. The technical term for miraculous oozing is *exudation*, which according to its basic Latin roots means "sweating forth." Viewers and statues were often reported to have exchanged or come in contact with each other's fluids, including bodily ones. Reports of depictions that perform miracles or behave in ways that involve seepage continue down to the present day, even prompting forensic scientists to conduct blood-type analysis. As such noteworthy events suggest, nothing in the Madonna's tender ministrations to the tumbler as he perspired was out of the ordinary.

Not all the miracles were, to put it mildly and diplomatically, genuine. Effigies allow for the possibility of consolidating art and artifice. For instance, Philipp Melanchthon (see Fig. 3.15), the Protestant reformer, reported: "In one monastery we saw a statue of the blessed Virgin which was manipulated like a puppet so that it seemed to nod yes or no to the petitioners." Although in Western Europe such contrivances were destroyed in the iconoclastic upheaval of the Reformation, later equivalents from Russia were exhibited in anti-religious displays after the Revolution in the former Soviet Union.

Fig. 3.15 Lucas Cranach the Elder, *Portrait of Philip Melanchthon*, 1537. Oil on beech wood, 35.9 × 23.3 cm. Karlsruhe, Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Philipp-Melanchthon-1537.jpg

Two such installations demonstrated the water-powered mechanism by which an icon of the Virgin could be made to weep tears from hidden ducts. Such miracles in which a lachrymose Madonna gives spectators a tearful have been controversial for centuries.

It would be naïve not at least to consider the possibility of such chicanery in the so-called usual or habitual miracle at the Blachernae chapel in Constantinople. Every Friday the silk veil that covered the face of the image rose, as if wafted by a puff of air or by a still more mysterious spontaneity. The fabric remained suspended until the morning of the following day, Saturday. The "usual miracle" was the closest approach that medieval Byzantium could make to the famous scene in Billy Wilder's 1954 film *The Seven Year Itch*, in which a subway passing below a grate produces an updraft that causes Marilyn Monroe's full-skirted white summer dress to balloon and billow suggestively above her knees, giving a glimpse of her panties. Similarly, the extraordinary occurrence at Blachernae could have been orchestrated, almost like clockwork, by emanating hot air through a strategically placed vent from a hypocaust. The weekly wonder was the high-degree part of blowing hot and cold.

The "usual miracle" may have played a role in the evolution of the story of *Our Lady's Tumbler*. It requires no wild fantasy to envisage a Latin Christian visitor to the Byzantine metropolis, whether a pilgrim, crusader, or other wayfarer, awe-struck by the wonder and carrying back word of it. Talk of the Virgin's veil being puffed upward could lead to thinking of Mary, or a Madonna herself, fanning a worshiper with a cloth. The train of thought is rickety, but that is the nature of human recall: trails of association are often hit-or-miss, which is why supposed firsthand witnesses can be notoriously unreliable and why millions of research dollars have been allocated for investigating the fallibility of testimony. Then too, situations, especially in drafty spaces filled with flickering candles, can be pictured effortlessly in which optical illusions could have brought into being deceptive impressions of vitality: they are truly ignis fatuus. In a flurry of experiences in 1796 and 1797, viewers reported seeing Madonnas and other images open or move their eyes, tear up, perspire, change color, twitch with convulsions, and flail their arms. Exactly two centuries pass, and on another continent a 1996 documentary tells of a filmmaker who accidentally caught on tape a millisecond in which a Madonna in Boston's North End appeared to blink (see Fig. 3.16). Although the moviemaker realized nearly immediately that the moment was nothing more than a technical glitch, she could not avoid (and was fascinated to witness) the ensuing storm of interest that developed in the media. Apparently not only girls go crazy, but the Virgin does too: Marian miracles go viral.

Many exempla turn on encounters between on the one hand pious devotees and on the other images of the Virgin that acknowledge the devotion shown them by becoming endowed with life. Such animation was not uncommon. For instance, a snoozing pilgrim reputedly saw a woman, presumably the Madonna, float down from a glass window that would most likely have depicted Mary. The Walloon town of Walcourt had in its basilica a "majesty," sheathed in silver. The carving allegedly saved itself from a conflagration in 1228 by jumping out of the burning church into a tree or into

the arms of a nobleman as he stood outside. Are we to infer that it defenestrates itself? Whatever the place and mode of egress, the statue is still extant, a so-called Black Virgin, not quite charcoal-broiled but allegedly smoke-blackened by this very mishap (see Fig. 3.17).

Fig. 3.16 Beth Harrington and the Madonna del Soccorso in the North End, Boston, MA. Photograph, ca. 1991. Image courtesy of Beth Harrington. All rights reserved.

Fig. 3.17 The Madonna of Walcourt. Wood sculpture with silver gilding, tenth century. Walcourt, Belgium, Sint-Maternusbasiliek. Photograph by Marc Ryckaert, 2013, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Walcourt_Statue_Notre-Dame_R01.jpg. CC BY-SA 3.0.

One exemplum that has motifs comparable to *Our Lady's Tumbler* tells of a simple-minded friar who gave a hearty salutation to the image of the Virgin whenever he loped by it. One day, he uttered such a hail-fellow-well-met hello and as usual received no reply. Unamused, he recriminated with the effigy by saying: "Dear Lady, I always greet you, but you never answer me." The Mother of God responded by blessing him. Another describes a nun who after the other sisters departed would say the "Hail, Mary" nightly to a Marian sculpture in church. The carving made an obeisance to her when in her singsong she mouthed the third phrase, the words "The Lord is with you." A third related that a woman who intoned the same prayer stimulated a likeness of the Mother of God to smile at her. Finally, a thirteenth-century tradition pertained to a Madonna in the cloister of Afflighem. As Bernard prayed his "Hail, Mary" in prostration at her feet, she leaned down in acknowledgment and responded to him "Greetings, Bernard."

The miracle of the Lactation of the Virgin that was ascribed to Bernard of Clairvaux vividly exemplifies the fascination with statues (see Fig. 3.18).

Fig. 3.18 Alonso Cano, *St. Bernard and the Virgin*, 1650. Oil on canvas, 267 × 185 cm. Madrid, Museo del Prado. © Photographic Archive Museo nacional del Prado. All rights reserved.

The legend was not attested until after the saint's death and in fact not before the thirteenth century. According to the hagiographic accounts, the wonder took place when the pious monk did reverence before a representation of Mary. This Madonna was a real carving in the crypt of the church of Saint-Vorles at Châtillon-sur-Seine, where Bernard had experienced in childhood an apparition of the Nativity. The likeness in the miracle of the Lactation was a Black Virgin (see Fig. 3.19).

Fig. 3.19 Madonna and Child. Wood sculpture with paint, eighteenth-century replacement of twelfth-century original. Châtillon-sur-Seine, France, Église Saint-Vorles. Photograph by Wikimedia user GFreihalter, 2015, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ch%C3%A2tillon-sur-Seine_St-Vorles_563.jpg. CC BY-SA 3.0.

While reciting the vesper hymn "Hail, Star of the Sea" before the image, Bernard had a vision in which the Mother of God appeared to him. When asked to "show yourself as a mother," she bared the nipple of one mammary gland and shot from it into his mouth three drops of her milk, sometimes represented as a jet. Thanks to this gesture,

Bernard became the "suckling brother of Christ." Other Cistercians were reported to have merited the rapture of partaking from Mary's milk, sometimes even nursing directly at her breast.

Another report relating to the twelfth century tells of a heretic named Tanchelm, who clapped his hand upon the hand of an effigy of Mary and claimed to be wedded to her, so as to elicit wedding gifts from onlookers. The scoundrel's blasphemy enacted in reality a motif that is common in Marian miracles as well as in folk literature, whereby young men who place rings on the fingers of images that represent the Mother of God are bound by their vows to her. Such tales were also told in the Middle Ages with Venus instead of the Virgin—and we have seen already that writers could succumb to anxiety over the close similarity between representations of the two. William of Malmesbury adduces a very brief version. Directly or indirectly from his telling, William Morris takes the story centuries later for "The Ring Given to Venus" (see Fig. 3.20).

Fig. 3.20 Edward Burne-Jones, *The Ring Given to Venus*, 1865. Etching proof, 128 × 170 cm. Birmingham, UK, Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, Fine Art Prints and Drawings, 1927P1031.1

These tales may speak to an eroticism in which the statues have been marinated. If not, they at least approach as close as can be expected in medieval culture to the situation of Pygmalion, the legendary ancient sculptor who was said to have felt sexually attracted to his own miraculously lifelike sculpture of a woman. The story of the maker who wanted to make out with his own maquette originated with the Roman writer of

poetry Ovid, through whose *Metamorphoses* the carver's love for his own creation was well known to the Middle Ages. Jean de Meun's medieval French *Romance of the Rose* contains a lengthy recounting of the Ovidian legend. According to this poet, the artist knows that his devotion and love can amount to nothing. After all, a deaf and dumb depiction of a delectable woman cannot take pity on him, look sweetly and smile upon him, or grant him a kiss. Yet eventually the goddess Venus becomes implicated, when the image-maker prays to her for grace and vows to repent of the service he has paid to chastity. If she animates the ivory likeness, he will perform penance in her erotic cult by having sex with his beloved.

The episode in the *Romance of the Rose* deals exhaustively and provocatively with many troubling overtones of the wholesale medieval devotion to Madonnas. Even without the help of Pygmalion, we should know that the stirring beauty of the human figure when represented in the round can induce sexual arousal. The adjective *statuesque* connotes not only proportion and stateliness but also feminine comeliness in a curvaceously three-dimensional way. Such lively attractiveness could cause passionate affection for a likeness to go too far and to make men turn torrid and tumescent. That would be swell—or not. Sexualized iconophily can be documented even in conjunction with representations of the Virgin. One miracle, or anti-miracle, has God afflict a man who has had an illicit thought in reaction to the appearance of the holy image of Mary.

Among the many distorted misrememberings of *Our Lady's Tumbler*, one lands in a strange territory between Pygmalion and the *Pietà*. A historian of ballet summed up our miracle bizarrely as "the tale of an old street entertainer who paid ecstatic homage to the Mother of God by the only craft he knew—dancing. Falling exhausted before her image in a church, he was noticed the next morning sleeping in the statue's arms." Monasticism vanishes entirely, as the aperture of the lens narrows to concentrate solely upon the personal intimacy between the performer and the likeness. Could they have joined for part of his routine, and even more forever afterward? The old saw holds "it takes two to tango"—but our story is not about a mating dance and tends more to the *noli me tangere* end of the scale.

Artists and audiences have understood in astonishingly varied and complex fashion the mechanics of what happens with the statue or painting of the Virgin Mary in the climactic scene of *Our Lady's Tumbler* and its multitude of adaptations. Let us take only a single case in point, when any of dozens would serve equally well. One American illustrator selects this narrative and this episode over all the other possibilities to put on the front of a 1927 anthology of *Golden Tales of Anatole France* (see Fig. 3.21). The cover depicts a naked man set to descend a flight of stairs, at the bottom of which stand a demon to the left (sinister indeed) and an angel to the right, with cowled brethren on either side. Inside the book, the crucial scene is illustrated with the familiar quotation "Blessed are the simple-hearted, for they shall see God" underneath (see Fig. 3.22).

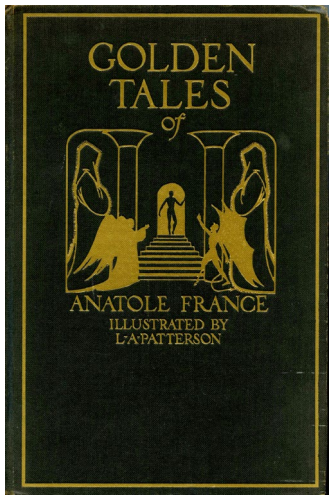

Fig. 3.21 Front cover of Anatole France, *Golden Tales of Anatole France*, illustration by L. A. Patterson (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1927).

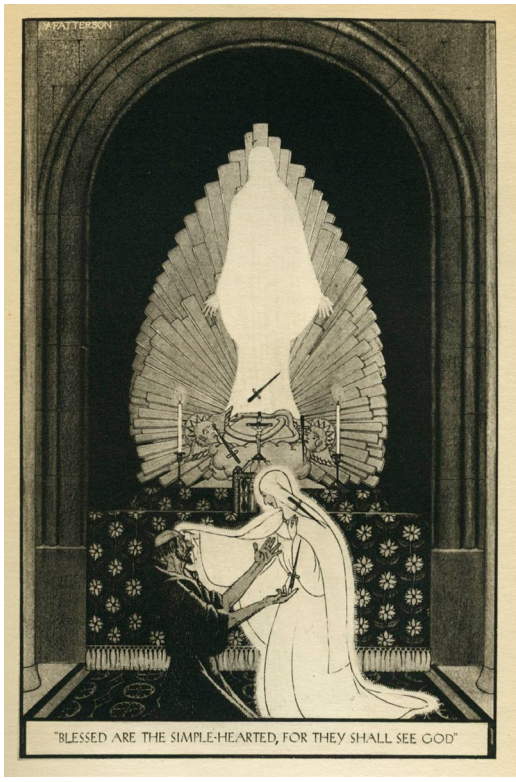

Fig. 3.22 "Blessed are the simple-hearted, for they shall see God." The Virgin descends to wipe the brow of the juggler. Illustration by L. A. Patterson, 1927. Published in Anatole France, *Golden Tales of Anatole France* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1927), facing p. 112.

A tonsured monk juggles daggers before a scalloped niche where the outlines of a veiled Madonna can be seen; meanwhile the Virgin herself has alighted from her plinth with a kerchief in hand to mop the brow of the entertainer. The animated statue of Mary, or the Mother of God herself, is at all times above the juggler or jongleur, who is prostrate and prone or kneeling. When he performs, he does so under her nose.

And what of the infant Jesus? Though the baby goes unmentioned, the medieval narrative is first recorded at a time when any and every statue of Mary would have included him. The Virgin and Child were indivisible, even if an image of them together could be called simply a Madonna. But what happened to the youngster in our story, at the instant when the Mother of God made her gesture of solace? She could have leaned partway down or fully disembarked to soothe the tumbler without letting Jesus out of her grasp. Alternatively, she could have put her babysitter-less moppet down by himself so that she could perform unencumbered either of these motions. Mary was known now and then to put down her little one. In one amusing tale in the medieval French *Life of the Fathers*, the Virgin threatens the young Jesus that she will release him from her arms and set him down. This maternal menace persuades her toddler to bend to her request that he pardon a sinner who has petitioned his mother for mercy.

Later miracles are even more vivid. In the Tuscan town of Prato on July 6, 1484, an eight-year-old boy was eyewitness to one. A figure of the Virgin emerged from a fourteenth-century fresco on a prison wall, set her infant down on the ground, adored him, and went into the maximum-security facility to clean the vaults—chambers that in a castle might be called the dungeon. Afterward she retrieved her son and resumed her place in the artwork (see Figs. 3.23 and 3.24).

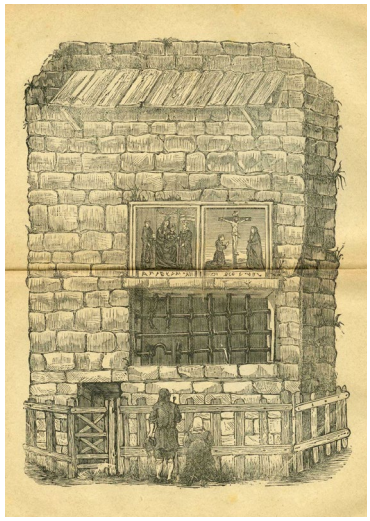

Fig. 3.23 At center of prison wall, fresco from which Mary emerged in miracle at Prato in 1484. Engraving, 1884. Artist unknown. Published in Giovacchino Pelagatti, *La madre di Dio presso le carceri di Prato nel 1484: Ricordo del quarto centenario*, offprint from the journal *Amico del popolo* (Prato: Tipografia Giachetti, 1884), between pp. 12 and 13.

Subsequently, the representation of Mary allegedly swiveled her eyeballs and shed tears of blood. Lorenzo de' Medici enlisted an architect to construct a church where a copy of the image is now domiciled (see Fig. 3.25).

In retellings of the tale about the tumbler, Ruth Sawyer confronted the issue head on. Even so, she made the episode only the more mysterious by modifying the Madonna's act of recognition to be a leisurely embrace, as the sculpted image metamorphoses into the Virgin herself. By ignoring the child to focus on Mary, the twentieth-century storyteller was not blazing a new trail. When dwelling upon the so-called Golden Virgin that stands high in the trumeau of the South Porch at Amiens cathedral (see Figs. 3.26 and 3.27), both the Protestant John Ruskin and the Catholic Marcel Proust omit mention of the infant she holds seated upon her left forearm. Instead, they zero in on her virginity—and by implication upon her maidenly good looks.

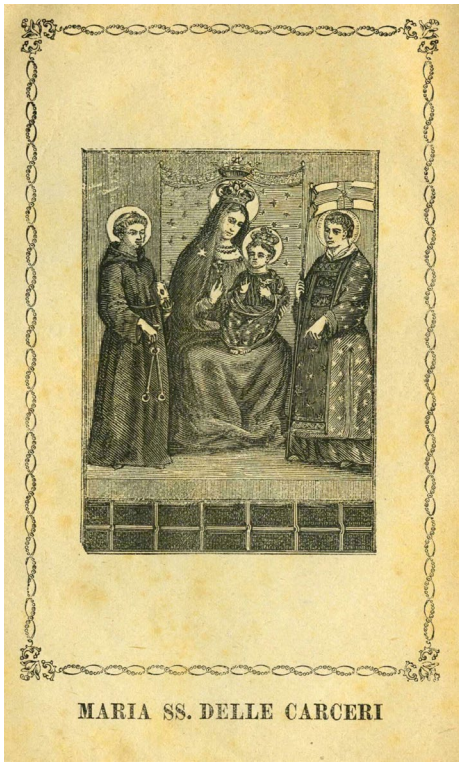

Fig. 3.24 Fresco on prison wall from which Mary emerged at Prato in 1484. Frontispiece of Giovacchino Pelagatti, *La madre di Dio presso le carceri di Prato nel 1484: Ricordo del quarto centenario*, offprint from the journal *Amico del popolo* (Prato: Tipografia Giachetti, 1884).

The question of the Christ child is a live one even as we read the medieval forms of *Our Lady's Tumbler*. It has been speculated that the male writers of *Miracles of the Virgin* never mention the infant in discussing the Mother of God because they imagined her "primarily as a maiden rather than a mother." The tumbler has his thoughts fixed not

at all on Jesus. Instead, all his hopes of the intercession that will lead to redemption rest in Mary. He has her all to himself, almost as if he owns a likeness of her privately for his personal use. Furthermore, he worships her in her special precincts, in the crypt. Only by visiting there ourselves—by being truly cryptic—can we aspire to get literally to the bottom of the story.

Fig. 3.25 Madonna delle Carceri, Prato. Fresco, fourteenth century. Prato, Basilica Santa Maria delle Carceri.

Fig. 3.26 The Golden Virgin of Amiens. Stone sculpture, ca. 1240–1245. Amiens, Basilique Cathédrale Notre-Dame d'Amiens. Photograph, date and photographer unknown.

The question of the Christ child is a live one even as we read the medieval forms of *Our Lady's Tumbler*. It has been speculated that the male writers of *Miracles of the Virgin* never mention the infant in discussing the Mother of God because they imagined her "primarily as a maiden rather than a mother." The tumbler has his thoughts fixed not at all on Jesus. Instead, all his hopes of the intercession that will lead to redemption rest in Mary. He has her all to himself, almost as if he owns a likeness of her privately for his personal use. Furthermore, he worships her in her special precincts, in the crypt. Only by visiting there ourselves—by being truly cryptic—can we aspire to get literally to the bottom of the story.

Fig. 3.27 Postcard of the Golden Virgin of Amiens (early twentieth century).

4. The Crypt

From its inception, then, the medieval is linked to decay, decay to fear, fear to pathos, and pathos to sympathy.

Grottoes and Crypts

The story of the tumbler evokes an entire vertical spectrum, all the way from the depths of the underworld to the heights of heaven. In the medieval French of the tale the protagonist does not descend to the mythical abode of the dead, but he spends much time in a real crypt. There he enacts the rituals of his one-man cult before the Virgin and her image. Once his body has died, his soul has been weighed, and he has been deemed worthy to enter paradise, we are told that the former entertainer will ascend there—but that resolution of the final crisis in the poem arrives only at the very end. For now, let us swing low, down from the high-ceilinged choir of the monastic church (presumably with stained glass) to the windowless basement with its cold damp.

Within the structure of metaphors that underlies our self-representation as human beings, depression is inherently and explicitly a condition of psychological lowness. The prefix that signals despondency, desolation, and dejection is *de-*, the Latin for "down." Not for nothing do we speak of "low spirits," suffering a "decline," sinking into the "depths of despair," being in the "pit of despair," experiences that are "downers," feeling "down" and "downhearted," and going "downhill." When things go badly, they "look down." We could keep working down the list forever. In the opposite direction, we talk about getting "high" and taking "uppers." Things "look up." To improve in social station is to be "upwardly mobile," and someone advancing in a career is "up-and-coming." Whereas infernal distress lies downward, heavenly bliss is upward and (the same holds true again in Latin) supernal. Jesus Christ descends to harrow hell, a place that is genuinely harrowing for its denizens, and leads the deserving to mount upward. Dante visits inferno, from the Latin for below or underground.

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Inside the monastery, the tumbler is left to sink or swim on his own. For the longest time, his fate hangs in the balance—not a promising position for a man who could be described as unbalanced, unsound, and maladjusted. Eventually, he discovers a way out of his doldrums when he ventures into a crypt, where he designs for himself a one-man subculture. The place where he situates his holy of holies makes sense. It is a depression in the ground, but more than a crawl space. Using it to rise, he gets out of a rut by scuttling down into one. Lowly in social status, he is the knave of the church and the crypt is just where he belongs. By the same token, in that subterranean home away from home, he lives down misconduct in his previous life. Making a go-it-alone descent to what could be a first way station on the route to the underworld may seem a peculiar and paradoxical therapy. Yet just as medical treatment is sometimes homeopathic, so it turns out that in the Western tradition an excursion downward can bring peace, understanding, and enlightenment. Being down-to-earth can be uplifting and exalting. This principle may hold especially true when the journey below becomes a round trip, as is usually the case.

The etymology of *sublime* leads to two Latin elements, the preposition *sub*, "under" or "up to," and the noun *limen*, "threshold." The likeliest interpretation is that the compound refers to the upslope leading to a crossover point. Among the sundry derivations that have been posited for the word, one parses it as meaning "toward the upper threshold" or "over the boundary." In classical literature and especially epic poetry, living people often nosedive into the ghostly underworld. In the technical language of literary criticism, such a downturn is designated a katabasis, from the Greek words for "down" and "going." In epic, such an expedition to the land of the dead may begin with entering a grotto. For example, in the sixth book of the Roman poet Virgil's classical Latin *Aeneid*, the eponymous hero Aeneas reaches the underworld by spelunking at Avernus, a volcanic crater near Cumae (modern Cuma) in Italy, west of Naples. An individual who returns from an outing of this sort may trundle back with the special insight that can be garnered from going beneath consciousness. We have solid reason for the prefix of the compound *subconscious*.

The origins of two other Latin words have relevance. The tumbler, prostrate after performing his floor exercise before the Madonna, merits the miracle of being fanned or patted dry with a swatch of a textile. In the metaphorics of literature, a text points literally toward a tissue made by weaving. Beyond being an undertext to the overt and official monastic life that takes place according to a regular cycle in the chapel above the crypt, both the dancer and his routine embody the concept of subtlety. The etymology of the underlying Latin adjective reveals that what is subtle lies beneath the web or warp of threads in a fabric. Such a fine line is textural, a metaphor that in turn relates closely to the words *text* and *textual*. The erstwhile entertainer-turned-monk acts below the main knitting together of monastic life. His performance, even though it begins with his stripping off most of his own clothing, truly constitutes a subtext beneath the canonical one of the liturgical song underway above him.

When the poet of *Our Lady's Tumbler* describes the place where the tumbler secretes himself, he employs a descendant of the noun from the learned language. The Latin

crypta was borrowed in its turn from Greek *krúptē*, "vault" or "crypt." The French equivalent could refer to either a church crypt or an actual grotto. The designation "crypt" survives unmistakably as a word on its own. Beyond that, it has two less readily recognizable derivatives in English. One is *croft*, which was early strengthened by pleonasm in the alternate *undercroft*, and also derives from Latin *crypta*. When referring to medieval architecture, the variant with the redundant prefix denotes a vaulted cellar, underground vault, or subterranean chamber. More narrowly, it means the crypt of a church. Thus it approximates *crypt* closely, and in fact the two terms have been often used synonymously in British English. The other word derived from *crypta* is *grotto*. In this case, the Greco-Latin noun came into English after being Italianized in both meaning and form. In due course, the two syllables would develop resonances that became codified in "grotesque." Originally meaning "grotto-like," this adjective was rejiggered in the sixteenth century with a special new sense, to describe the ancient wall paintings of Pompeii that had recently been recovered from the lava of Mount Vesuvius.

Such later semantics were obviously not yet in play in the thirteenth century, but they held fruitful promise for supporting the connective tissue that later joined Gothic and the grotesque. In *Our Lady's Tumbler*, the space in question could boast features of both a crypt or undercroft and a grotto. However we conceive of the crater, it stands beneath the main altar. In this chamber, the lay brother chances upon a private table for ritual use, surmounted by a statue of Mary. This revelation inspires him to make this area his own personal sanctum sanctorum, and there to mollify the Mother of God with the only service he knows.

In all the iterations, but especially in the oldest extant version of the story, *Our Lady's Tumbler* has an unusual setting. Its key events take place within a specific space in medieval ecclesiastical architecture. In later reception of the tale, the closely coupled mentions of crypt and Madonna function by synecdoche to evoke an entire Gothic great church, most often that of the French capital, with all its architecture and statuary (see Fig. 4.1): with nobody any the wiser, with the interchangeability left unexamined, Notre Dame as Our Lady sometimes changes places with Notre Dame as Parisian cathedral. It may be deceptively undemanding to envisage the choir above and the crypt below, as well as the functions played out in each of them. In the higher area, the choir monks perform the office at the canonical hours (see Fig. 4.2). In the lower, the tumbler sheds his outerwear to enact his routine at the same times. Through his movements, he expresses his devotion to the Virgin, by serving the carving that furnishes an image of her.

If a cathedral is often a big piece of rocky equipment to signify Christianity, a crypt can be a black box hidden within it. It can be mystifying in architecture and function. A common picture of such a space represents it as a windowless, subterranean structure with Gothic vaulting and columns. That said, this sort of place is not necessarily situated fully underground; it need only sit below the main level. Often it extends beneath the choir, and sometimes beneath the transept. Furthermore, nothing presupposes that a crypt must be Gothic. In fact, more of the surviving ones have Romanesque vaulting.

A tour down to this area is likely to involve time travel of a rudimentary kind, from the more recent constructions above to the more ancient ones below. This realm underneath is off the clock: in more than one sense, time is up. Finally, the square feet of floor and cubic ones of volume can vary greatly. Sometimes the total footage of the former can be tantamount to that of a church, except below ground level. In such cases, the crypt could function as an oratory, even for the execution of the offices. In many other instances, the room is smaller and less elaborate.

The specificity of the crypt is a striking feature of the medieval poem. The tale has embedded within it a high tension between a humble lay monk in the lower reaches of a church and the upper echelon of brethren in the choir above. The moment of contrast between the two is powerful enough to make the hair stand on end. A writer would be hard pressed to concoct a more vivid enactment of hierarchy—or of such order overturned. The lay brother, who goes about his business feetfirst, is proven to be the holiest of all within the monastic community (see Fig. 4.3). Up above, the monks engage in formal collective worship, while down below their uncertified counterpart pursues his private devotion. *Our Lady's Tumbler* revolves around an explicit opposition between privileged and popular religious belief. The narrative presents the two at different altitudes, with the favored elite at the top, in the choir, and the public beneath them in the crypt. The elite are the clerical, literate, learned, and high (and mighty); the popular are the lay, illiterate, unlearned, and low; and the social dynamics of the denouement plays out to the advantage of the common folk.

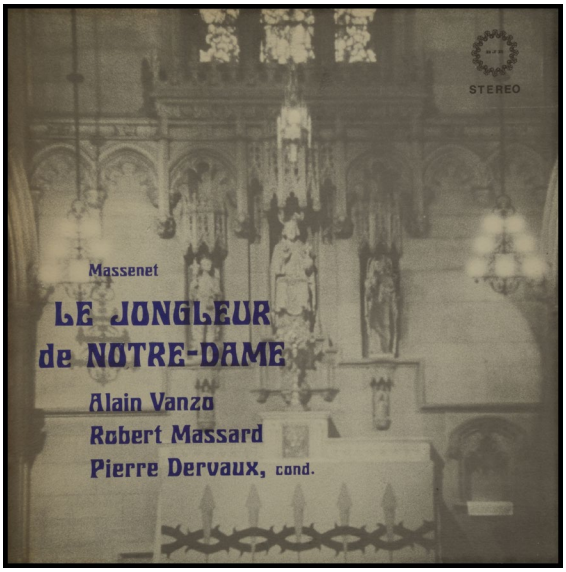

Fig. 4.1 Album cover of Jules Massenet, *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*, dir. Pierre Dervaux (Orchestre philharmonique et chœurs de l'ORTF, 1973).

Fig. 4.2 South aisle of choir, Winchester Cathedral, Winchester, UK. Engraving by W. E. Albutt after drawing by Robert Garland, 1836. Winkles, *Cathedrals,* plate 51.

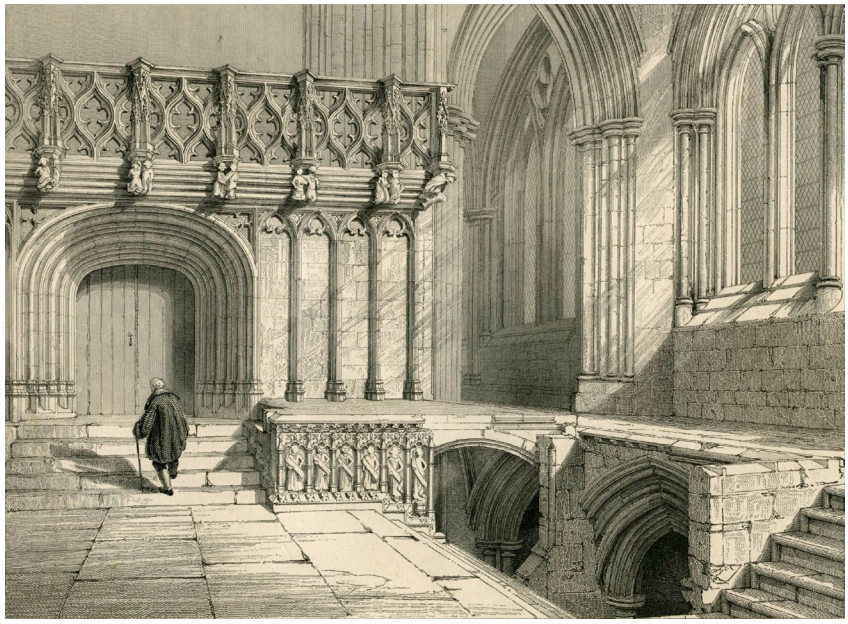

Fig. 4.3 Choir screen and entrance to crypt, Glasgow Cathedral, Glasgow, UK. Engraving by John Henry Le Keux after drawing by Robert William Billings. London: William Blackwood & Sons, 1847.

In the order of society, this result inverts the upstairs-downstairs relationship of superiors and inferiors. The hero does not even recognize his own heroism. Although figuratively an overachiever, he is literally an underperformer, not actually a superhero but a sub-hero. We should bear in mind that in Latin, *superior* and *inferior* refer to differences in relative position: they denote "higher, more above" and "lower, more below," respectively. In the same language, the verbal noun *status* means "standing." The metaphor underlying all these words assumes that a person with an ambition for advancement aims at achieving a higher place: upward mobility. To rise to a high place, or to occupy a lofty position, is a desideratum. In contrast, falling or declining foretokens a downbeat outcome. But in this case the lowliness turns out to be uniquely advantageous. In fact, the location of the jongleur's routine in the nether regions of a church permits the otherwise rare occurrence of a miracle involving an image of Mary that takes place while the liturgy is staged. At the beginning, the entertainer is cornered in the netherworld. He is depressed, with a sinking feeling. Yet at the end, he has been elevated to the ether. His descent levels the playing field: even though he has lower stature, he raises himself up and lifts his spirits not by slipping into self-pity, but by humbling himself. This very Christian message could not fit better with the setting and spirit of the tale.

Henry Adams's *Mont Saint Michel and Chartres* contains, among a host of quotable quotes, the maxim "The spire justifies the church." However true that aphorism may hold in many instances, parish churches and cathedrals alike were often built downward in nearly as impressive, albeit less visible, fashion as they were raised up. Many ecclesiastical constructions from the early Middle Ages rest on massive foundations. The bulk of stones in piers below is as stunning, although in the opposite direction, as the height of the towers above that jut skyward. For that reason Huysmans, in his novel *La Cathédrale* (The Cathedral), posited a bookish analogy, maintaining that Chartres is a work in two volumes. In this analogy, the first book is the exceedingly old Romanesque crypt associated with Notre-Dame-sous-Terre.

Viewed from one vantage point, a crypt is a foundation. It secures a solid basis upon which to erect an edifice that rises above the surface. From another, it discharges a mephitic putrescence, combining the compost and the decomposition of the past. From the mortality (and hence mortal sin?) that rots in it, new life springs up—but not always without peril. In the vicinity of Notre Dame in Paris, only two locations can now be called crypts in even the most tenuous way. Neither served as a functional space in the medieval design of the cathedral, and both are products of the sixties—and that means the 1960s, not the 1160s, 1260s, or 1360s. One of these areas may be considered archaeological and almost adventitious: it was constructed to protect ruins that were exposed in digs undertaken in 1965 (see Figs. 4.4 and 4.5). The other crypt hereabouts is a memorial, a twentieth-century monument to the French victims of Nazi concentration camps (see Fig. 4.6).

Fig. 4.4 Exterior of the Crypte archéologique de l'Île de la Cité, Paris. Photograph by Pierre-Yves Beaudouin, 2011, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Crypte_arch%C3%A9ologique_du_parvis_Notre-Dame_-_ext%C3%A9rieur_01.jpg. CC BY-SA 3.0.

Fig. 4.5 Interior of the Crypte archéologique de l'Île de la Cité, Paris. Photograph by Jean-Pierre Dalbéra, 2012.

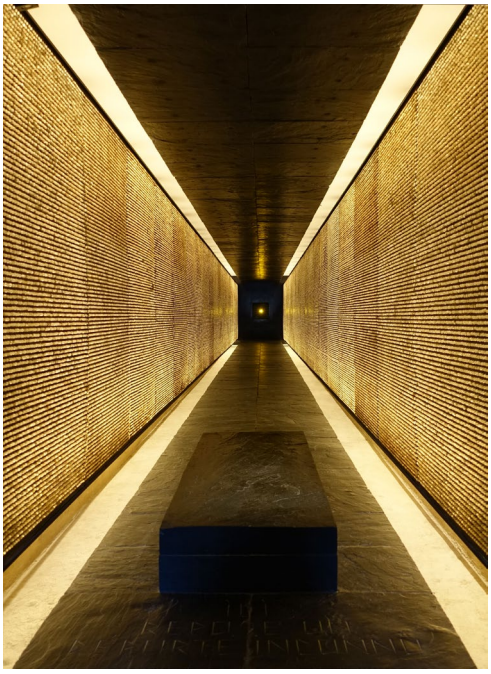

Fig. 4.6 Mémorial des Martyrs de la Déportation, Île de la Cité, Paris. Photograph by Guilhem Vellut, 2016, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:M%C3%A9morial_des_Martyrs_de_la_D%C3%A9portation_@_Ile_de_la_Cit%C3%A9_@_Paris_(26225699524).jpg. CC BY-SA 2.0.

As a rule, original Gothic churches are not renowned for crypts. In fact, houses of worship in this style, as opposed to Romanesque ones that have such understructures, constitute the exception and not the rule. The undersupply (sorry) of crypts can be explained partly by the style's verticality: the architecture was designed to direct the eyes and hearts of visitors toward the sky. In this regard, a medieval German poet believed to have been Albrecht von Scharfenberg transmits intriguing evidence. His romance contains a description of the architecture and iconography in the Church of the Holy Grail. All these features appear to be Gothic. Albrecht pronounces it "wrong" to worship God in subterranean chambers, for a person should "not proclaim Christianity in the crevices of the earth but instead in radiant space."

Gothic places of prayer resting upon the foundations of earlier constructions might employ them as either raised platforms or essential correctives for differences in the slope of terrain. Those earlier crypts had provided access to the tombs of saints that were situated beneath the main altar. Until the late twelfth century, they were heavily associated with funerary rites, particularly with the cult of relics. In the Gothic period, the equivalent tombs tended to be placed not below ground, but rather in apse-shaped chapels off a passageway that circuited the choir. In this arrangement, the crypt became free space. Everything that most mattered was superstructure.

Since the late nineteenth century, the highest elevations of cathedrals—the belfries—have become associated with deformed lapidary gargoyles and flesh-and-blood bell-ringers such as the antisocial climber Quasimodo in Hugo's *Notre Dame de Paris*. Complementarily, the crypts are frequented, or we could say haunted, by monks and clergy. These underground quarters became necessary—at least in the mechanics of fiction from the early Gothic revivals—because of the iniquitous men of the cloth's supposed predilection for darkness and dark deeds. Ecclesiastes 1:9 avers that there is "no new thing under the sun," but the romantics had no doubt that in these dark hellholes, unprecedentedly kinky things transpire. These subterranean zones devolved into chambers of horror that served the same functions in ecclesiastical architecture as places of imprisonment do inside castles. When they did not exist or were missing in reality, the imaginations of the revivalists fabricated them, along with equally fictitious dungeons (and dragons). In due course, they played loosely into the sensationalism and shivers associated with the novel and subsequent musical drama, *The Phantom of the Opera*. They can be even worse, for example as places where inquisitors keep harems of women to pander to their every carnal wish.

In Gothic novels, fantastic crypts are an imperative part of the overall mood; melancholy venues where wayward members of the Church perpetrate crimes upon their ill-fated quarry. Samuel Taylor Coleridge gave his countrymen a dressing-down for the partiality they showed for overripe and melodramatic romances with such scenic settings as "subterraneous dungeons." Other theorists of the later literary Gothic refer to its associations with trapdoors and oubliettes, presumably to accord access to such nether spaces. To go further, the undercrofts furnish sites for uncanny apparitions, such as ghosts and phantoms. In view of the ambivalence that envelops

crypts, it is easy to intuit why a recent researcher would refer, whether consciously punning or not, to the "cryptic subterranean spaces" found in Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*. We could go one step further downward by playing on what we are doing here as "cryptanalysis." The word refers literally to the decipherment of coded messages without the benefit of having the key to the code.

Fortuitously or presciently, *Our Lady's Tumbler* happens to anticipate times, life developments, and places that later became part of romantic medievalism. It contains night, death, cloister, church, and above (or below) all, crypt. At that point, the resemblance between the medieval poem and later Gothic literature ceases, because nothing creepy takes place in *Our Lady's Tumbler*. Rather, the crypt there is the locus of a holy and even hallowing epiphany. The tumbler is authentically cryptic and enigmatic in his namelessness, but his lifesaver is well known. He suffers a life-threatening collapse, but rather than being left to perish from it, he is fanned back into animation by the Virgin Mary. Whatever the photometric level in the crypt when he ends his performance, he becomes correlated at least metaphorically with the forces of light and not of darkness.

As a metaphor, the crypt could be conceived as a spot on the cusp between the subterranean and the terrestrial, the threshold where marginality and liminality enter into full play. Here we verge into deep history in more than one sense of the adjective. In this venue, the Madonna may tap into powers that were formerly ascribed to pre-Christian goddesses who elicited devotion in underground caverns. Then again, marginality, liminality, and autochthonous deities may be modern idées fixes that run athwart the values encoded within the poem itself. In *Our Lady's Tumbler,* no pagan divinities are mentioned even obliquely: the female who matters is Mary, as reified in the Madonna. She elevates a figure, taking him from truly subliminal and below the threshold to sublime and ascending heavenward. Likewise, the downward course trodden by the tumbler looks opposite in its outcome to the descent into irreligion and atheism that Christian critics saw inherent in modernism in latter days (see Fig. 4.7). To fundamentalists, modernist theology was an assault, and the true and unconquerable Christianity that resisted it was symbolized by a Gothic cathedral (see Fig. 4.8).

At the same time, the Virgin is embedded in the world of the here and now, and therefore in the earth. What better way to convey how she is anchored and approachable in our existence in this life than to have chambers of worship for her gouged out from the very ground, in secluded nooks and crannies within the earth? Suggestively, the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem, founded in the fourth century, stands atop a grotto. A tradition reaching back to the mid-second-century *Protevangelium of James* holds that Jesus was born in this hollow. The cave contained a cistern or well from which Mary is purported to have drawn water to decontaminate herself after the Nativity. Near the place of prayer is located the so-called Milk Grotto, where a droplet of the precious fluid once fell while she was nursing Jesus, and rendered the ground chalky white.

The crypt is a place of memory. One kind of recall cries out to be preserved, through plaques and monuments; another ought to be hidden in lightless recesses. A short-lived journal for English antiquarians in the early nineteenth century bore the evocatively digressive title *The Crypt, or, Receptacle for Things Past: An Antiquarian, Literary, and Miscellaneous Journal*. Psychologically, the croft is a sequestered location that expresses the innermost preoccupation of the individual. As such it has been considered a locked space within the subject's ego. It could also be viewed as a site of confinement within an inherently constricted environment. The word "claustrophobia," despite being a late nineteenth-century coinage, is nonetheless based tellingly on *claustrum*; in English, the next of kin to the Latin word is *cloister*. One of the many paradoxes of *Our Lady's Tumbler* is that the hero does not expand his horizons through travel. On the contrary, he broadens his soul by circumscribing his ambit of motion: claustrophilia.

Over the millennia many hermits have chosen to retreat from civilization and to seek out unlivable spots in the wilderness. Although they have not always been afflicted with the fear of open or public spaces diagnosable as agoraphobia, one of their aims has been to avoid the contamination and distraction of human contact. Another has been to undergo the self-imposed discipline of harsh conditions and constraints. Among Christians, anchorites have had themselves immured in small chambers or have subjected themselves to similarly confined settings. Other recluses, like Blessed John Buoni, have found or constructed grottoes. Sometimes the caves have been developed into full-blown monasteries, to accommodate multiple hermits — true troglodytes. The dwellings may be underground, or man-made indentations and dug-out chambers. The individual areas may be webbed by tubular excavations, like catacombs. The existence of such people and places had become well established in literature and art by the end of the Middle Ages, and they continued to be portrayed in later centuries. They belong to the associative backdrop to the jongleur's predilection for the undercroft.

As a lay brother, the performer substitutes the seclusion of the crypt for that of the cavern or cell. The built areas officially at his disposal would have included ateliers for work, storerooms for fetching supplies, lay brothers' stalls in the house of worship for liturgy, dormitory for sleep, refectory for eating, latrines for bodily functions, and infirmary for times of illness. None of these sites would have suited his idiosyncratic brand of devotion. In improvising by venturing into the downside of the church, he achieves transcendence through silence and separation. His performance, by dint of its location and nature, turns into a sort of undertone, a bourdon droning almost inaudibly below the liturgical song that occupies the plateau above him. He sets his worship apart by redefining prayer from static to kinetic. Fittingly, the tumbler wends his way down into a crypt—but why on earth (in multiple senses) should he find a Madonna there?

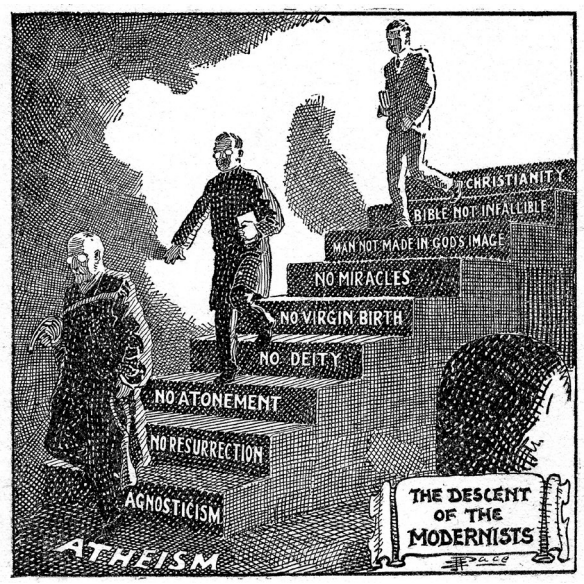

Fig. 4.7 "The Descent of the Modernists." Cartoon by Ernest James Pace, 1924. Published in William Jennings Bryan, *Seven Questions in Dispute* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1924), inside front cover.

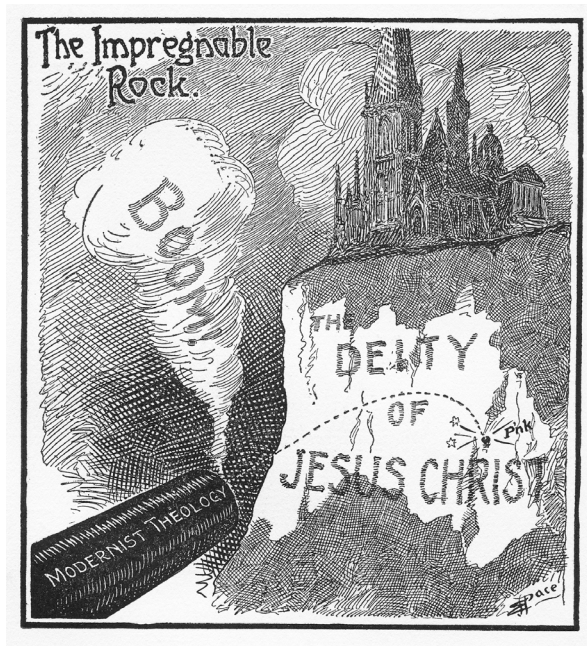

Fig. 4.8 "The Impregnable Rock." Cartoon by Ernest James Pace, 1922. Published in Ernest James Pace, *Christian Cartoons*, 7th ed. (Philadelphia: Sunday School Times Co., 1922), 46.

Madonnas in Crypts

The American Gothicist Andrew Jackson Downing predicted to readers that Trinity Church in New York City (see Fig. 4.9) would "stand as far above all other Gothic structures of the kind in this country, as a Raphael's Madonna before a tolerable sign painting." The landscape designer's basic promise, and premise, rest upon a natural assumption. Likenesses of Mary have been for centuries an intrinsic feature of Catholic places of prayer. As a consequence, drawing an association between the two seems a natural move to make. Where one is found, the other surely follows.

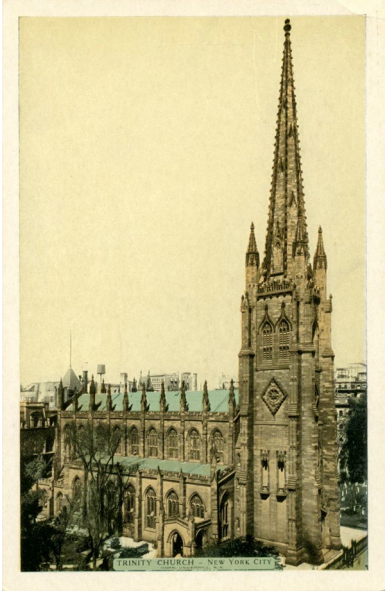

Fig. 4.9 Postcard of Trinity Church, New York
(New York: Irving Underhill, early twentieth century).

The verse-maker of *Our Lady's Tumbler* would have been acquainted not only with literary depictions of statuary that resembles the veiled Mother of God, but also with actual specimens in wood and stone. Yet was he at all realistic in presupposing that a carving of the Virgin would have been located in the undercroft of a church at the abbey of Clairvaux? Bernard and other early white monks were famously negative about the possession and display of representational images and imagery in any of their order's monastic buildings. Even if we minimize the Cistercians' ambivalence about figurative art, we must consider whether crypts accorded with their architectural designs, construction practices, and building needs.

In referring to the void below, the author of *Our Lady's Tumbler* gave no irrefutable sign of trying even lukewarmly to map the reality of Clairvaux. He made no effort to present his story as a slice of life, but instead offered it as an exemplar of a well-lived life. He and his audience would not necessarily have expected a poem to match up

meticulously with the reality of physical conditions. The medieval verbal arts had inherited from antiquity the rhetorical form known technically as *ecphrasis*, a detailed description of a real place, person, or object. Despite the emphasis on detail, such accounts cannot strive for anything on the order of photographic accuracy. How many writers have the time or talent to test the truism (itself no doubt an undervaluation) that "a picture is worth a thousand words"? As a result, the medieval poet may have felt little more compunction about indulging in poetic license than would a writer today. After all, he was composing a literary work, not a lucubration on architectural history. Even if (or because) he never set foot in Clairvaux, he may have felt empowered to ascribe a crypt to the church there, as an architectural asset with which he was familiar from cathedrals elsewhere that were major pilgrimage destinations. In sum, we cannot take the medieval French poem's brief verse description as necessarily bearing any relation to the real topography of the monastery.

At the same time, we must beware of leaping from one extreme of supposition to its opposite. If we would be hasty to assume that the versifier knew and reproduced the layout of buildings and the placement of sculpture at Clairvaux with cartographic exactitude, we would be equally harebrained to presuppose that he was not acquainted with them.

In the famous illuminated book of hours of Étienne Chevalier, the artist Jean Fouquet devoted a full-folio miniature to Saint Bernard. In the upper half of the image, the charismatic Cistercian abbot sermonizes at a podium before his monks in the chapter house at his monastery. Simultaneously, the lower register depicts the great man in what appears to be a level below, seated at work before a desk, with a demon endeavoring to distract him from reading the psalms (see Fig. 4.10). Although the illustrious twelfth-century Peter Abelard referred to jongleurs as engaging in diabolic homiletics, the professional entertainers would not normally have pursued such activity in the subterranean domain of a crypt. If in any loose sense they preached by trying to sway audiences through their words or movements, they did so in spaces that differed radically from the undercrofts of churches.

The physical hierarchy in the miniature bears an eerie resemblance to the stark contrast implied by the setting of *Our Lady's Tumbler*. In the medieval poem, the brethren operate above ground, where they discharge the collective duties of Latin chant and the rest of the liturgy in the light of day, or at least in the choir of a church (see Fig. 4.11). They strive to reenact on earth the heavenly song of angels and the music of the spheres, as celestial bodies enact their ceaseless cosmic dance. Meanwhile, the solitary lay brother could not be further removed from the clear night skies. He is an outlier who operates beneath the choir, the main forum for the enactment of togetherliness by the monks in their rituals. Instead, he slips away into the darkly chthonic world of the crypt below to carry out his mission of nonverbal and unlearned physicality. He assumes a *niveau* appropriate to him in the social stratification of his institution: classes are differentiated vertically, with (naturally) higher above and lower below. Through his performance he fills this quintessential emptiness.

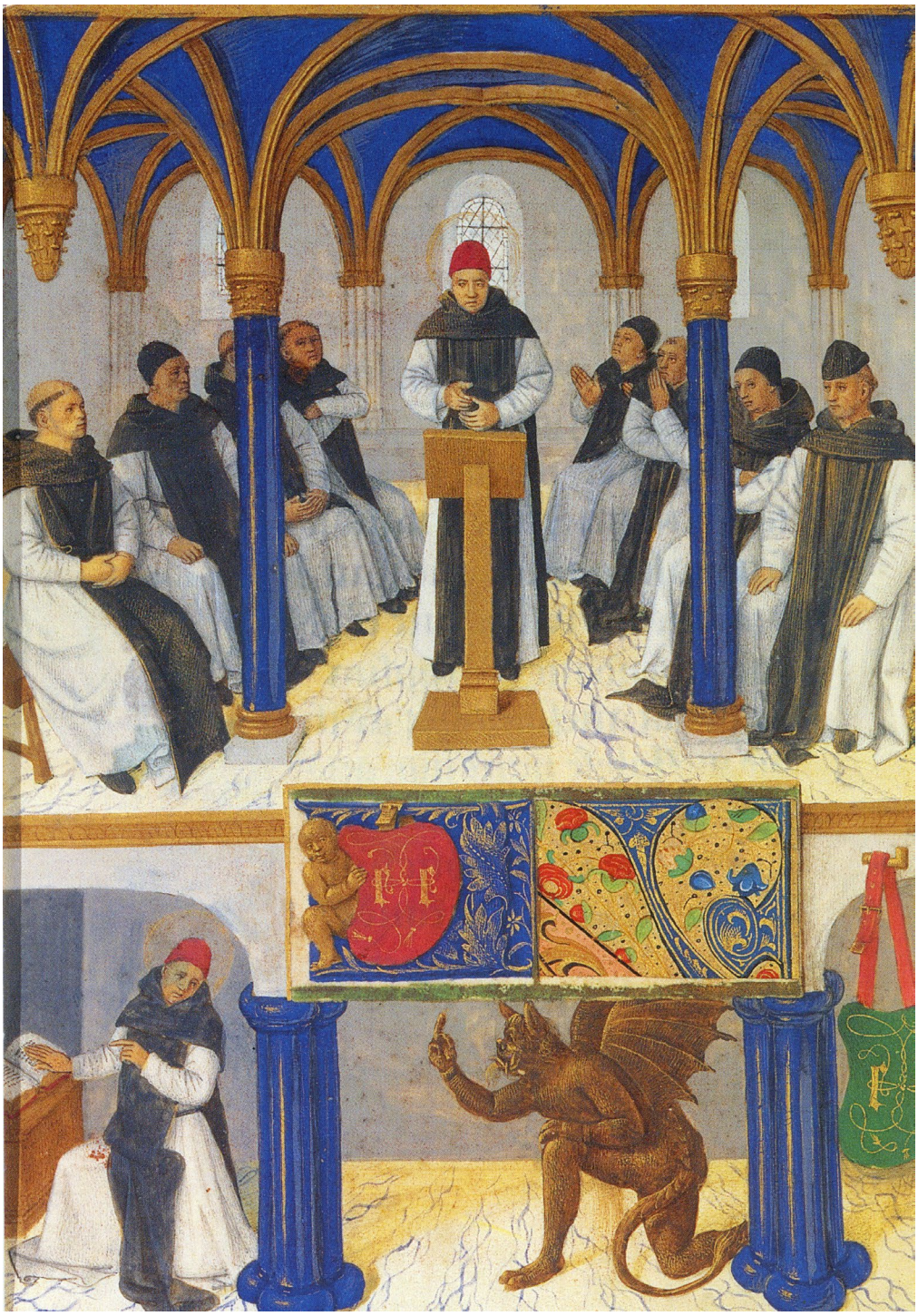

Fig. 4.10 Bernard of Clairvaux preaches and contends with a demon. Illumination by Jean Fouquet, mid-fifteenth century. Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 71, fol. 40r.

The Gothic style is inherently cryptic, in more than one sense, and these architectural spaces are loci of closely guarded secrets and secrecy. The jongleur chose well a destination to visit solitarily, unbeknownst to the choir monks above. By placing himself in the hollow down below, he unencrypts the figurative shadings—he puts himself, very really, in a crypt. By the same token the poet makes himself into a "cryptographer," by writing of the routine that the tumbler performs in the space beneath. The extensive family of words that derives in various modern European languages from the Greek *kruptos* would not have informed the thinking and attitudes of the medieval French poet, any more than he would have had emblazoned in his conceptual lexicon the many associations with Gothic that we bear with us today. Cryptography, encryption, decryption, and all other such concepts would not have entered the poet's train of thought. Nowadays Gothic goes together almost automatically with crypts, as for centuries it has done with caves. In the Middle Ages the overarching category of Gothic did not exist by name, but church architecture, crypts, and grottos or caves were known to interrelate.

Caverns and cathedrals can be set in pointed opposition. In fact, the nickname "Caves to Cathedrals" has been applied to survey courses in art history that take undergraduate students on a forced march into the workings of visual culture from prehistory through the late Middle Ages. Yet the two structures can be likened to each other as well. The same similarity on a smaller scale leads to the designation "cathedral geode" to describe minerals such as amethyst or citrine that when cut open reveal a deep recess and a tall arch tapering to a point like a lancet (see Figs. 4.12 and 4.13).

In modern times, many caves have possessed features that have been called Gothic. In 1879, a report on a cavern in Malaysia pointed out that nature can produce formations analogous to manmade structures. A lava tube near Mount Eccles in Australia is known alternately as Natural Bridge and Gothic Cave, after the distinctively sharp angle of its entrance and roof. Another case (or cave) in point would be the Gothic Chapel in Mammoth Cave, Kentucky (see Fig. 4.14). With a ceiling that resembles the fan tracery in a late perpendicular Gothic church, it earned this designation by the mid-nineteenth century. In Cuba, an area within the Cave of Bellamar became known around the same time as the Gothic Temple (see Fig. 4.15). A fourth example is the antechamber to Lehman Cave in Nevada, known as the Gothic Palace. This specific chamber had acquired its name by the 1920s, since in it "gorgeously banded alabaster columns rise from floor to roof" (see Fig. 4.16).

All three—Gothic, crypts, and caves—share one major characteristic well known to hobbyists and professionals, spelunkers and speleologists: in the absence of artificial illumination, they are dark. Their murkiness serves as a reminder to open yet another inquiry: how does light penetrate the crypt in *Our Lady's Tumbler*—or from where does the poet imagine it emanates?

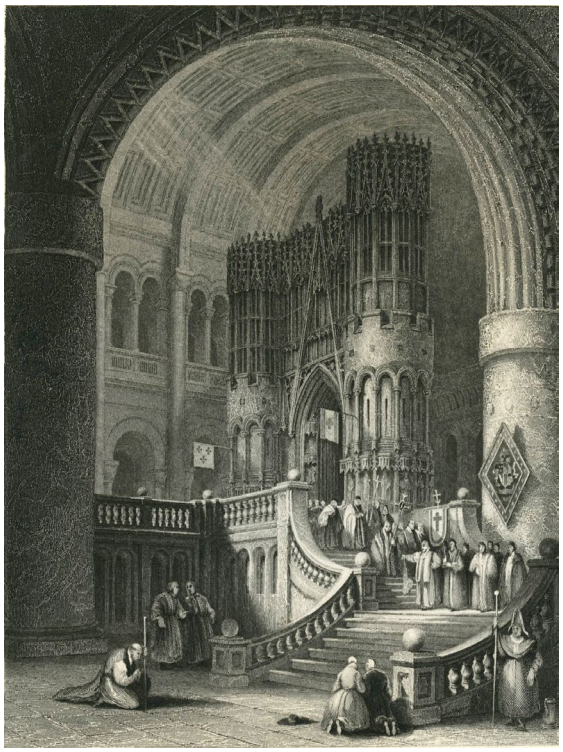

Fig. 4.11 Monks returning from High Mass. Engraving by William Deeble after drawing by David Roberts. London: Simpkin & Marshall, 1850.

Fig. 4.12 Amethyst cathedral geode. Photograph by Joe Mills, 2016. Image courtesy of Joe Mills. All rights reserved.

Fig. 4.13 Amethyst cathedral geode. Photograph by Joe Mills, 2016. Image courtesy of Joe Mills. All rights reserved.

Fig. 4.14 The "Gothic Gallery" in Mammoth Cave, KY. Engraving, artist unknown. *The Graphic,* 1876.

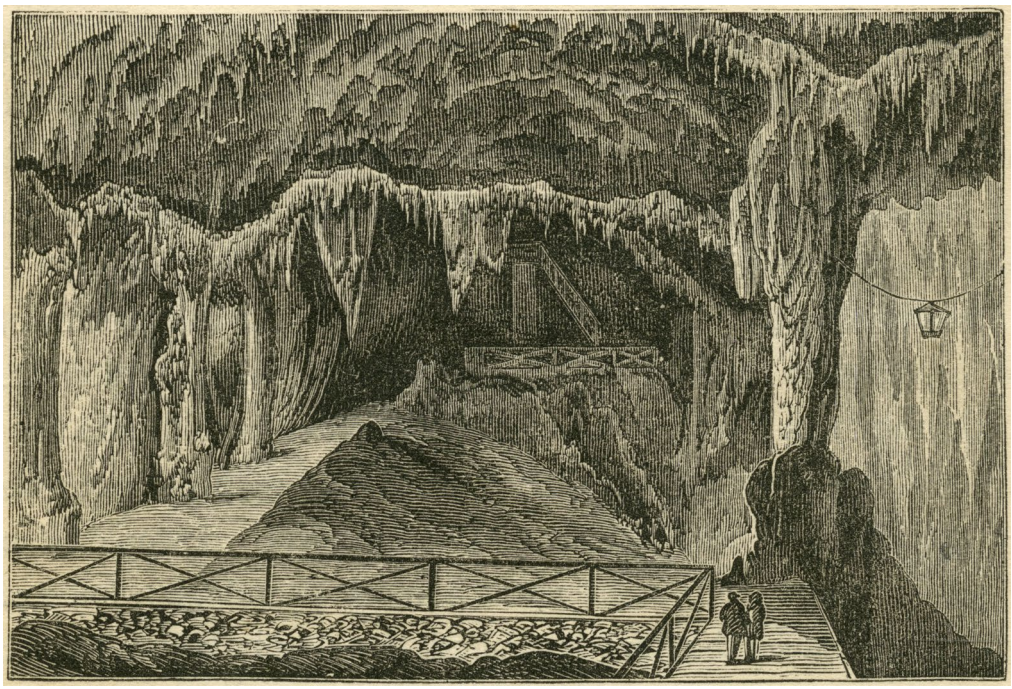

Fig. 4.15 The "Gothic Temple" in Bellamar Caves, Matanzas, Cuba. Wood engraving, artist unknown. 1871.

Fig. 4.16 Postcard of the "Gothic Palace" of Lehman Caves, Great Basin National Park, NV (early twentieth century).

Cistercian Crypts

To reach nuanced conclusions about the verisimilitude of the scene in "Our Lady's Juggler," we need to rise above general concerns about the Gothic associations of crypts and caves and to weigh systematically the responses to at least three questions. First, would the Cistercians have countenanced a likeness of Mary within the confines of one of their abbeys at all? Next, if they had tolerated an effigy, would they have placed it in a crypt? Finally, could the monastery of Clairvaux have possessed a church with such a space where it could have been put?

We would do well to allow for nuance in interpreting the outlook of the white monks on art. It would be unwise to assume a priori that the whole order, and particularly Bernard of Clairvaux, were allergic to all artistic representation without exception. They were not undiscriminatingly iconophobic. True, one of their statutes, compiled between 1115 and 1119, enjoins the brothers from possessing sculptures or paintings. The wording is hard-hittingly simple and Christocentric: with the sole exception of the painted wooden cross, monasteries were to remain entirely devoid of figurative art. But we should bear in mind that *Our Lady's Tumbler* was composed a century after the foundational statutes of Cistercianism were drafted. In the interim, Western Europe had endured an inundation of images, especially in the form of Madonnas. Enthroned Virgins now sat on altars, and upright Mothers of God stood in other interior spaces. During this transition, the society of white monks grew far

more tolerant about representational art, enough to condone the presence of a statue of the Virgin. The devoutly Cistercian Caesarius of Heisterbach refers to a "throne of wisdom" before which on one occasion he read the Mass in a cloister near Groningen. He reports also that once a Madonna boxed a nun on the ear for her sinfulness. More than a single time, he shows awareness of the Virgin of Mercy. In this guise, Mary served the brethren as a fail-safe by extending over them her special protection.

The order stood particularly ready to disregard its prohibitions against representational art, if by doing so it could make allowances for portrayals of Mary. The Mother of God was so venerated by the white monks that they not only dedicated all their foundations to her but also integrated her likeness into the seals with which all their abbeys ratified their most important legal transactions. Eventually the Virgin and Child can be found depicted on tympana and stone reliefs outside Cistercian churches, as well as inside them in positions ranging from monumental altarpieces through carvings in choir stalls.

The foremost example of a figural representation in a Cistercian abbey would be the so-called Virgin of Fontenay, from the early fourteenth century (see Figs. 4.17 and 4.18). To turn to other depictions of which mentions survive, the authorities at the monastery near Atherston in Warwickshire kept a sculpture of Mary in a house of prayer at the gate. The institution was called Merevale, from the Latin for "Marvelous Valley." The large Chapel-by-the-Gate still stands and now serves as the parish church (see Fig. 4.19). The image displayed there drew so many pilgrims that once in 1351 a mob was nearly trampled to death by overcrowding, as the all-too-fervid faithful stampeded into the shrine and crushed each other. In the fifteenth century, the Cistercian abbey at Tintern in Wales promoted pilgrimages to its Galilee chapel. This designation for a specific place of worship referred to Christ's entry from this mountainous region of northern Israel into Jerusalem. A porch of this sort was used as the point where processions entered the western end of a cathedral. In this one a miracle-working statue of Mary was placed, to help raise funds after buildings were destroyed.

Archaeological and historical evidence implies that the churches of the white monks seldom had crypts. When such spaces are found, they turn out usually to have been pre-Cistercian constructions that were absorbed and adapted after the brethren had taken possession of the real estate. To zero in on the specific monastery mentioned in the earliest form of *Our Lady's Tumbler*, years of shoveling at Clairvaux give no reason to suppose that the main place of worship there ever had a crypt. The building for the lay brothers in the abbey as it remains is splendidly Gothic, but it too has no basement. This lack of undercrofts accords with Cistercian architectural practices in general. As far as the geology is concerned, it bears recollecting that white monks favored marshy wastelands. For obvious reasons, complexes erected on terrain that had poor drainage and tended to be muddy would generally not have lent themselves to subterranean spaces. Beyond the impracticalities of deep excavations in soggy soil,

the absence of crypts makes sense in view of the functions houses of prayer did and did not serve in this order. In Cluniac churches, such areas functioned above all (or below all) to accommodate relics. They worked in conjunction with large ambulatories that had radiating chapels. Such passageways and ancillary spaces facilitated channeling the pilgrims who were drawn by objects of reverence. In contrast, the Cistercians eschewed such artifacts and the distractions of cults devoted to them. In fact, the hierarchy strictly regulated access by laity and even lay monks to the choirs and other areas at the east end of their churches. As a result, their floorplans less often called for crypts designed to carry the sort of foot traffic and ceremonies that the level of the nave and transept required.

Lay brothers would not have been permitted to amble freely within the main monastic house of God, especially not in such a restricted and radioactive zone as a chamber beneath the altar and choir, where relics were frequently placed. Still, the converts may have been allowed entrance to other chapels within the portion of the close earmarked for lay brethren. Thus, it could be that the author of *Our Lady's Tumbler* was not so poorly informed after all. Though the Cistercian church proper of Clairvaux had no crypt, the poet may have had in mind one unrelated to the main abbey church.

Fig. 4.17 Postcard of the fourteenth-century Virgin of Fontenay, Montbard, France (Editeur Arvet, early twentieth century).

Fig. 4.18 Postcard of the fourteenth-century Virgin of Fontenay, Montbard, France (early twentieth century).

Fig. 4.19 Gate to Merevale Abbey, near Atherston, UK. Photograph by Nathen Amin, 2015.

As luck would have it, a candidate exists for a place of prayer outside the abbey church that did have an undercroft. The chapel of the Counts of Flanders was built in the early 1190s. A poet in Picardy, whether Cistercian or not, could well have heard tell of it, even if he had never laid eyes on it (see Figs. 4.20 and 4.21). A sizable structure nearly thirty meters in length, it comprised an aisle-less nave, a substantial transept more than eighteen meters from one end to the other, and a pentagonal choir. It stood nearby the great abbatial church, not a furlong to the east of the chevet. In fact, the chapel and church (labeled 21 and 5 in Fig. 4.21) were connected by the north part of the small cloister, where the copyists had their desks (22 in Fig. 4.21).

The chapel held special status as the burial place for a bloodline. Ceremonies were performed there, and a foundation charter exists. Philip of Alsace, Count of Flanders, was inhumed in it after he died in 1191 near Acre. We have no certain evidence, but the path of least resistance is to imagine recumbent statues, at least of Philip and his next of kin. In 1269 the remains of all the brothers of Clairvaux contemporary with Bernard were transferred to sepulchral chambers in the crypt, an attractive vaulted area located beneath the altar and apse of the small edifice above. Owing to the presence of the tombs (both comital and otherwise), the house of worship was apparently a stopping place—the family Mecca or anti-Mecca, as it were—to which the Counts of Flanders repaired before departing on Crusade. On their return, it was probably the site where they deposited the best of their booty from their conquests.

The chapel named after these noblemen suffered demolition some time between 1718 and 1740, but accounts of visits paid there at the end of the seventeenth and the turn of the eighteenth centuries left information about it that would otherwise be

irretrievable. Before the entrance, an inscription with two elegiac couplets in Latin extolled the building for its connection with Saint Bernard and forbade souvenir-taking from the bodily remains. Another couplet, also in the learned language, stated the matter more laconically and menacingly: "The first generation of Bernard which inhabited this valley lies here. If you take bones upon entering here, you die." The message was plain: absconding with any relics would be a grave error.

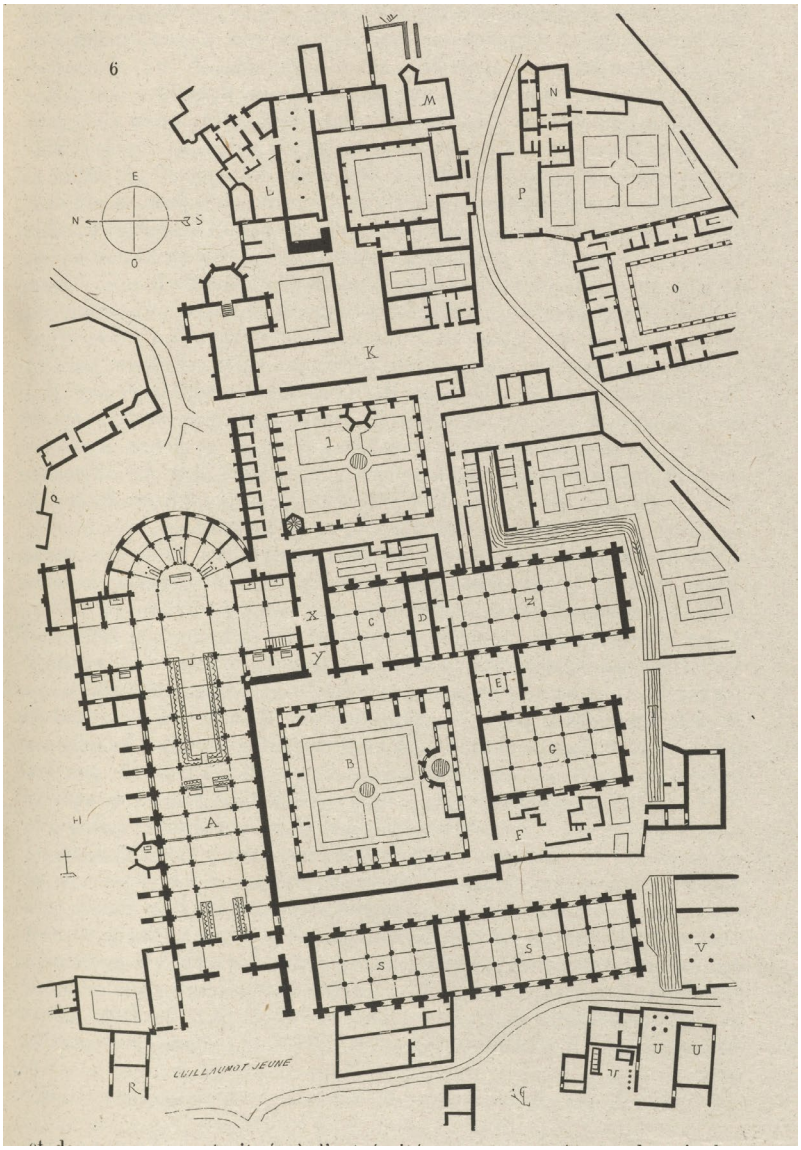

Fig. 4.20 Plan of Clairvaux Abbey. Drawing by Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, ca. 1854. Published in Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture française du XIe au XVIe siècle*, 10 vols. (Paris: B. Bance et al., 1854–1868), 1: 267.

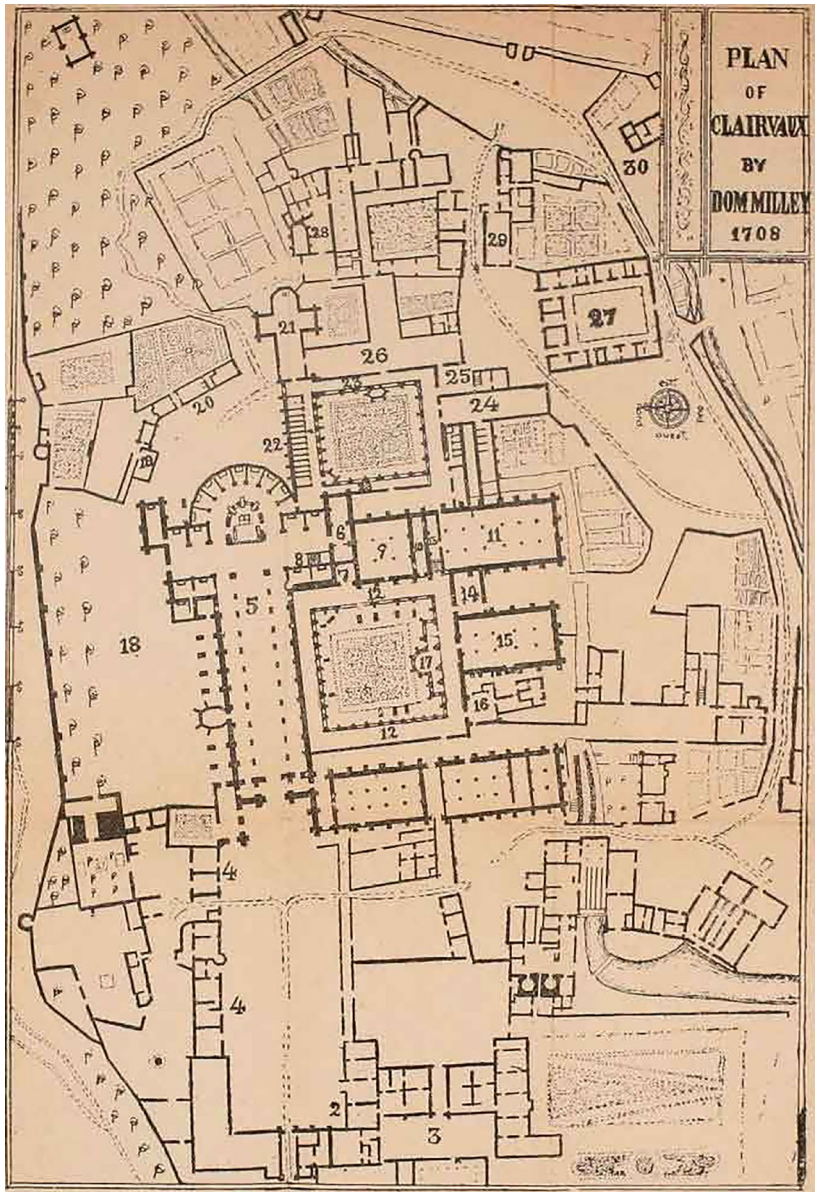

Fig. 4.21 Plan of Clairvaux Abbey. Drawing by Nicolas Milley, 1708. Published in *Mellifont Abbey, Co. Louth: Its Ruins and Associations. A Guide and Popular History* (Dublin: J. Duffy for the Cistercians, Mount St. Joseph Abbey, Roscrea, 1897), 4.

What about the questions linked with the location of the image in *Our Lady's Tumbler*? To be precise, would a Madonna ever have been placed in a crypt in a monastery of white monks? Outside a Cistercian context, nothing in the least makes the idea improbable that the caretakers of a large church that possessed a representation of the Virgin would have kept it indefinitely or warehoused it temporarily in such a space.

One confirmation of such a practice is that across the centuries, dedicating crypts to the Mother of God was a widespread custom. Furthermore, authors of the late Gothic period spoke of "the altar of Saint Mary in the crypt" and "the altar of Our Dear Lady in the crypt." Documents suggest that such an effigy was cached in the undercroft at Châtillon-sur-Loire, and that at least sometimes the Virgins of Chartres and of Le Puy, both of them Black, resided on altars in the crypt (see Fig. 4.22).

Along the same lines, we know that a place of prayer with a crypt existed at Chartres already around 876, in the days of Charles the Bald. In the cathedral, dedicated in 1037, an altar to honor Mary may have stood in the space directly below the high altar in the upper church. As we have seen, the statue on this altar dedicated to the Virgin came to be known as Notre-Dame-sous-Terre; the corresponding English would be "Our Lady Underground." The area at Chartres also included a cave or grotto. Even today the portion known as the crypt there remains a yawning chasm, interstellar enough to warrant the ceiling decorated with Marian fleurs-de-lis and stars (see Fig. 4.23). Through the centuries the Chartrian chapel of Our Lady Underground has remained an object of devotion, particularly for women approaching childbirth or seeking fecundity.

Fig. 4.22 Postcard of the Black Virgin of the Basilique Notre-Dame du Puy, Le Puy-en-Velay, France (Paris: Cie. des arts photomécaniques, early twentieth century).

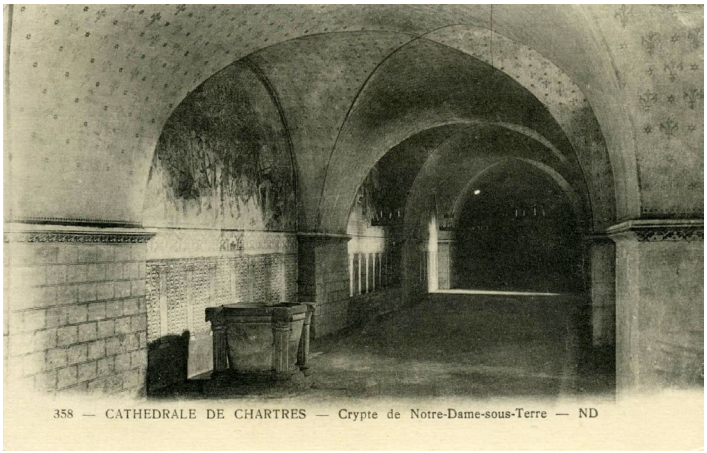

Fig. 4.23 Postcard of the Crypt of Notre-Dame-sous-Terre, Chartres Cathedral, Chartres, France (Paris: Lévy et Neurdein Réunis, ca. 1920s).

Medieval women had questions and needs relating to menarchy, menstruation, pregnancy, morning sickness, birth pangs, and menopause. They suffered sometimes from infections, infertility, unwanted pregnancy, malignant nodules, and diseases. Gynecology, obstetrics, urology, and oncology were laughably (or pitifully) far from where they have advanced today. In any event, few in need of such expertise would

have consulted physicians, who were mainly male. But sufferers were not without access to other practitioners who had practice in dealing with their wellness issues. For instance, they could resort to the older members of their own sex, whose knowledge and experience have been disparaged as old wives' tales. When the care provided by such female attendants failed, Mary took over. As mediator par excellence, she was well qualified to put the mid into midwife. For investigators, the relationship between the Mother of God and the spaces below ground has been an abiding source of far-reaching speculation and theories (see Fig. 4.24). Was the connection of the Virgin with the under-earth chapel suggested by a sense that a notch within the ground resembled a womb, a uterus, or to draw upon another Latin word, a matrix? Did the Marian cult which was grounded, literally, in the subterranean shrine intersect with the early Gothic art in sculpture on the cathedral's façade? Did the learned and folkloric merge, along with men's and women's concerns, in worship of the Madonna?

Another celebrated crypt with a Virgin and Child was the Chapel of Our Lady undercroft in the cathedral of Canterbury (see Figs. 4.25 and 4.26), and yet another was found at Saint Augustine's Abbey in the same locale. The list could be extended by adding Worcester Cathedral and Bury St. Edmunds Abbey. Although the original statue disappeared from the chapel in Canterbury, a splendidly large and finely wrought openwork lead badge survives (see Fig. 4.27), with a riot of pointed arches that give a taste of the architecture, as do other simpler representations of it in more than one specimen as pilgrim's souvenirs.

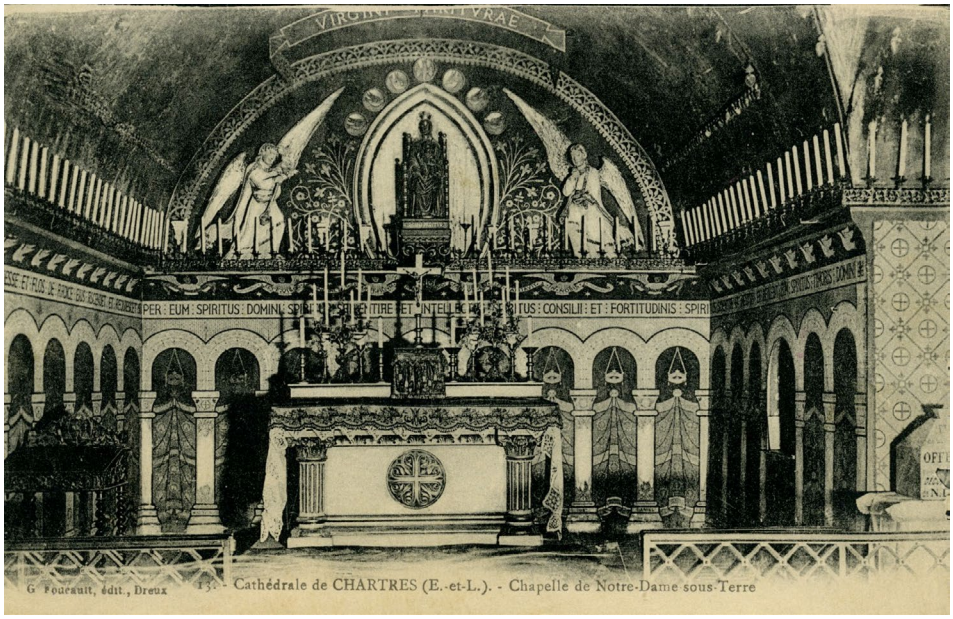

Fig. 4.24 Postcard of the Chapelle de Notre-Dame-sous-Terre, Chartres Cathedral, Chartres, France (Dreux, France: G. Foucault, early twentieth century).

Fig. 4.25 Postcard of the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral, Canterbury, UK (B. C. Clayton, early twentieth century).

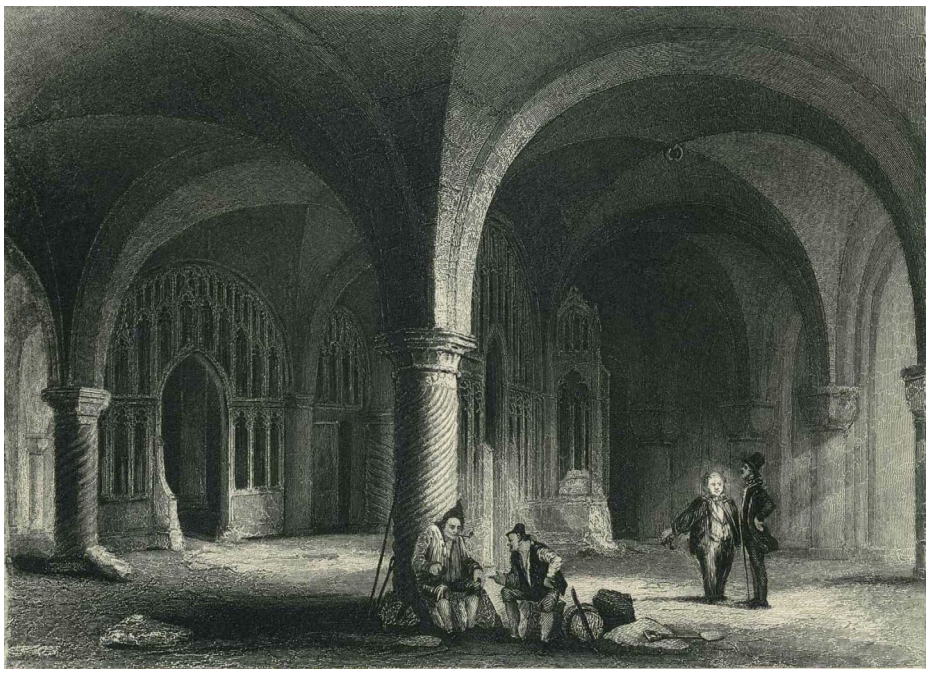

Fig. 4.26 The undercroft of Canterbury Cathedral, Canterbury, UK. Engraving by Benjamin Winkles, after drawing by Hablot Browne, from sketch by Henry Winkles, 1835.

Fig. 4.27 Pilgrim badge from the shrine of Our Lady Undercroft at Canterbury Cathedral, Canterbury, UK. Lead alloy, late fourteenth century. London, Museum of London.

Our best evidence for Madonnas in less famous crofts often emerges from the historical records of tragedies, particularly fires. The miraculous aftermath of a conflagration that took place between 1161 and 1165 is recounted by the Benedictine monk Hugh of Poitiers. Despite the thorough destruction, "the wood statue of the blessed Mary, Mother of God, which was placed on the floor of the crypt, suffered nothing at all from the fire, but was only blackened." One fascination of this excerpt lies in its incidental revelations that a wooden likeness of the Virgin was kept in reserve in the undercroft at the time of the disaster and that it was returned there later only with difficulty. Throngs appeared on the scene to do it reverence after it was discovered to contain many precious relics.

Three decades later, we have word of a blaze at Chartres that gives us a better idea of why effigies of Mary might have been stashed in the undercroft. An anonymous Latin miracle collection from the early thirteenth century, and the French translation of it from 1262, make no specific mention of a Madonna in the crypt, but they describe how during the fire of 1194 the most precious relic chest was transported temporarily down there for safekeeping. We are told elsewhere that the firestorm was whipped up thanks to a plan on the part of the Virgin, so that she might have erected for herself, in her capacity as lady of Chartres, a splendid new, fireproof church. The misfortune was almost the medieval equivalent of a modern arsonist's insurance scam. The account of the burning may be the exception that proves the rule. At this stage in the Middle Ages, statues may have been stored conditionally in the crypt, whence they would have been borne up and out for special occasions, such as processions and holidays. Then again, an altar is mentioned near which the brethren who spy upon the tumbler secrete themselves. Its presence argues that the carving was placed in the croft not on a provisory basis, but permanently or routinely.

The tumbler is described as particularly attached to the crypt as a place of humble devotion, specifically owing to the presence of a Madonna. In this attachment, the fictional character anticipates the real-world John Morton, who presided as cardinal archbishop in Canterbury from 1486 to 1500. He declined a grand burial-place, in favor of being laid to rest in the central chapel of the Virgin in the undercroft, near a sculpture of Mary. In making sense of *Our Lady's Tumbler* we need to ask ourselves what the crypt would have meant symbolically, both by itself and in tandem with a Marian image. The setting of the action in the medieval poem holds the utmost importance. The location coordinates the tumbler's croft with the subterranean chapel at Chartres, with its miracle-working Mother of God. The place is chthonic, tied suggestively to a pre-Christian past of druids, shamans, and others. The site is also concomitantly earthly and earthy, bound to the body and senses. Like caves, grottos may be regarded as womb-shaped and feminine. The same qualities are sometimes detected in Gothic cathedrals, despite the maleness that has been associated with the upward thrust of spires.

At Chartres, the altar of Mary in the crypt stood near a wellhead that was (or at least came to be) associated with pre-Christian, especially druidic, worship. An early print has above the Virgin and Child a Latin label reading "To the Virgin about to Give Birth," and below them a flat-topped plinth bearing the French inscription "The Altar of the Druids" (see Fig. 4.28). Furthermore, the cult statue there was demonstrably a Black Virgin: another seventeenth-century illustration shows the same "throne of wisdom" with this feature (see Fig. 4.29). Consistent with such associations, the croft at Chartres may have developed a loyal following among women on the basis of folklore relating to an ancient well located there. The veneration of Mary in the crypt that was connected with the source of the water may have been related in turn to a chthonic cult from before the advent of Christianity that had been favored especially by female worshipers, seeking divine intervention in matters relating to childbirth and women's health issues. Another idea is that the well in the grotto at Chartres may have offered a Latin Christian answer to the church devoted to the Mother of God that stood in a copse of cypresses outside Constantinople. The Byzantine Emperor Justinian I promoted that house of worship because of the healing spring located there. Whatever the explanation, both the well and the Madonna in the undercroft at Chartres were credited with possessing thaumaturgic powers.

The special reputation of the Chartrian crypt, the related borehole, and the Virgin Mary for helping with matters pertaining to women's fertility, gynecology, and obstetrics may explain why in 1582 King Henry III of France and his wife Queen Louise of Lorraine made a pilgrimage on foot from Paris to Notre-Dame-sous-Terre in Chartres. At the last Mass they attended there, they were present for a novena, prayers repeated for nine days in succession. In homage they offered a silver-gilt statue of Our Lady. Through these demonstrations of piety they sought support from the Mother of God for their desire to produce a male heir to the throne. Speculation has raged about a

supposed druidic well-cult at Chartres, perhaps related to the Virgin's role in assisting women in pregnancy and childbirth. In *Our Lady's Tumbler* not a crumb of evidence suggests that the poet had heard tell of such rumblings: nothing related to gynecology or obstetrics comes into play in the text, where the worshiper is a man, and women apart from the Virgin are not even mentioned. In fact, it would be anomalous if a Cistercian monastery had developed a cult for females centered upon the undercroft of its church. The primary correspondence with the fair sex, and a highly tenuous one it would be, is that the audience of the medieval poem could have associated love poetry with the figure of the professional entertainer.

Fig. 4.28 The Shrine of Mary, resting upon the Altar of the Druids, adjacent to the Well of Strong Saints at Chartres Cathedral. Engraving by Léonard Gaultier, 1609. Published in Sébastian Roüillard, *Parthénie, ou Histoire de la très-auguste et très-dévote église de Chartres* (Paris: Rolin Thierry & Pierre Chevalier, 1609), iii.

Fig. 4.29 "Virgini Pariturae." The so-called Virgin of the Druids. Woodcut by B. Leroux, seventeenth century.

But if the Madonna in the crypt does not pertain to the fair sex, to whom does she belong—the learned choir monks or the illiterate lay brother? Do any of the brethren ever venerate her there, or have they stowed her there solely for safe storage? Does

the setting of the action in the space below represent a knowing attempt by the poet, the Church, or both to assert male control over a cult that might otherwise have been appropriated by women, as happened at Chartres?

Far from all medieval statues of Mary housed relics, but many did. These would have contained recessess in which the sacred remnant was deposited. Each such void was hollowness cubed: a cavity, within the likeness of a woman whose womb was a vessel for the divine, within a cavern. At least now and again, Madonnas appear to have been treated as reliquaries would have sometimes been, by being displayed on altars. On special occasions the images kept in the crypt would have had the distinction of moving, or to be less dramatic, of being moved, hoisted onto litters to be processed into the church above, and occasionally outside it and into the surrounding community.

Not surprisingly, then, Marian miracles abound in effigies that are treated as if alive and that even become animate. Statues are kidnapped, hurled into latrines, and ritually murdered by Jews and Saracens. In retaliation for such abductions, the representations protect those loyal to them who are in danger of suffering harm to life and limb from their foes. The question is whether the sculptures or depictions themselves act directly, or the threats posed to them propel the Virgin to appear and to act on their behalf. The artistic evidence is ambiguous.

A final context in which the liturgy involves an undercroft is worth mentioning. A special ceremony known as the Deposition was instituted at the latest in the tenth century. It took place on Good Friday, between Mass and Vespers. To commemorate the entombment of Christ, it involved the inhumation of a consecrated host in a receptacle that was called—fanfare, if you please—the sepulcher. The covered enclosure that received the wafer was located in the crypt. We need to linger a little longer in the low place. The instant has not yet arrived for us to decrypt ourselves.

Gothic Crypts

> . . . this love of dramatized decay and Gothic architecture
>
> —Kenneth Clark, *Gothic Revival*

The romantic, or specifically Gothic, penumbra of grottoes and crypts continues to color or discolor our conception of these spaces today. Although the two types of hollow are etymologically identical, they require separate consideration. Grottoes entered the picture of medieval revivals extremely early. In the eighteenth century they were introduced as features of the built landscape in gardens, to provide "bright disorder." The last phrase signifies touches of sportiveness. The English estate of Oakley, described in 1733, prided itself upon two picturesque caves. Whereas the one looked artfully Greek, the other seemed naturally, at least to all appearances,

Gothic. The latter artificial hollow, which became ever more "art imitating nature," was associated with "ruins of nature." Situated underground, it was contrived to be a chapel for the prayers of remorseful nuns and hermits. Little matter that England had been emptied of such religious persons since the discontinuance of the monasteries under King Henry VIII between 1536 and 1541.

Like grottoes, crypts also carry both bright and dark connotations. At first blush, a formulation that refers to the cheery side of these underground chambers may appear to be a contradiction in terms, but we find that now and again they were connected with fantasy, play, and childhood. On the gloomy side, Gothic antiquarianism and literature were strongly imbued with death, even to the point of being necrophiliac. The morbidity was wrapped up, as if in a winding cloth, in the Middle Ages. The Society of Antiquaries of London, founded in 1717 and royally chartered in 1751, gave a boost to the study of the medieval period. Alongside cemeteries, tombs, and lych-gates, crypts garnered their share of attention, especially from the so-called graveyard poets. A seemingly macabre fascination with burial took root, with abiding literary consequences.

A fanciful piece called "A Reminiscence of Rome," published in 1857, makes much of the mummified monks preserved in the Eternal City in the Capuchin crypt located near the Piazza Barberini. What may be most impressive about the site today is the sheer ubiquity of human bones, especially skulls (see Fig. 4.30). The writer of the supposed recollection was struck particularly by the skeletal corpses posed in vignettes, like models in a wax museum or mannequins in a shop window (see Fig. 4.31). The pages even ended with a bizarre scene, accompanied by an engraving with the legend "The Dance" (see Fig. 4.32), in which the writer "began humming the Devil's Dream and went skipping about the room, kicking a skull to the right, and a set of ribs to the left, all in hornpipe time." In other words, death fiddles, and we zombies dance.

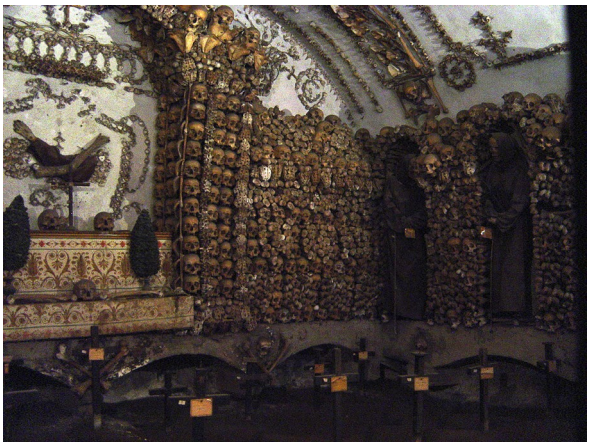

Fig. 4.30 Capuchin Crypt near Piazza Barberini, Rome. Photograph by Wikipedia user Stanthejeep, 2006, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Capuchin_Crypt.jpg. CC BY-SA 2.0.

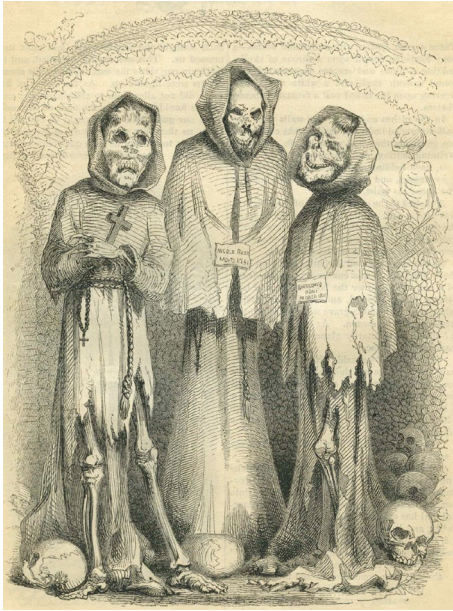

Fig. 4.31 "The Three Brothers." Engraving, 1857. Artist unknown. Published in "A Reminiscence of Rome," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 15 (June–November 1857): 744.

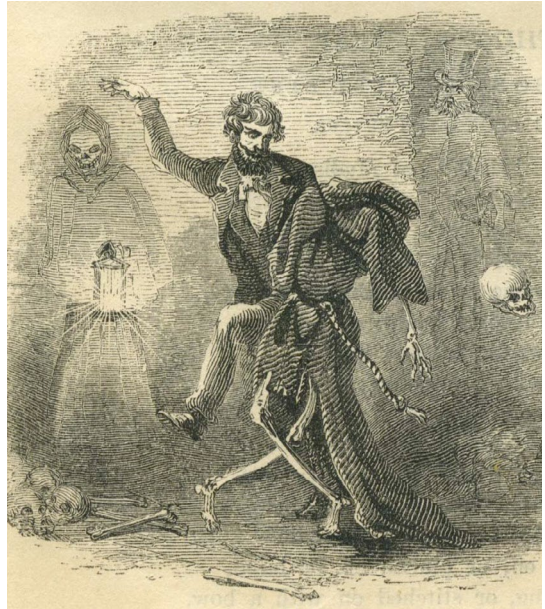

Fig. 4.32 "The Dance." Engraving, 1857. Artist unknown. Published in "A Reminiscence of Rome," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 15 (June–November 1857): 745.

The Gothic bluebook was a kind of early pulp fiction that descended formally from the earlier chapbook. The medium gave rise to narratives such as the anonymous "The Monk of Horror; or The Conclave of Corpses," included in the equally anonymous *Tales from the Crypt, in the Style of The Monk* from 1798. This pap adds up to only a few pages in length. In its chronology, the story has a vaguely sixteenth-century setting. In its geography, the tale takes place in the cloister of Kreuzberg. By the sheerest serendipity, its account complements *Our Lady's Tumbler*. In it, a monk inquisitive about the afterlife of his late predecessors visits the vault of the cemetery by night. In the dim light, he chances upon a trio of paper-skinned cadavers who have a tome entitled the *Book of Obedience* open before them. After a brief dialogue with the three dearly departed brethren, the busybody monk falls into a stupor and awakens groggily at the foot of the altar. The catatonia proves to be remedial: by curing him of idle curiosity, it causes him to die in the odor of sanctity.

Such bluebook items may not have been vanishingly rare in their time, but they were cheaply printed. Such unbound ephemera have barely survived to the present day. At the same time, the Gothic novel of a slightly loftier but still clamorous sort engendered narratives such as *The Monk: A Romance* by Matthew Gregory Lewis. This novel, published in 1796 when its author was just out of his teens, enjoyed so notorious a succès de scandale that Lewis lost his given names and came customarily to be called "Monk," tout court. Such literature held an irresistible sway over the

picturesque strand within Gothic revival architecture. From reading fantasies along these lines, the American Gothicist architect Andrew Jackson Davis was guided to favor "subterraneous chambers" and "passages."

The pleasure in being titillated by gut-wrenching horror, as well as by the old standbys of sex and violence, is sweeping, even almost universal. It helps to explain the gravitational pull that Gothic novels continue to exert on us. The Russian author Leo Tolstoy posited famously in *Anna Karenina*, his novel from 1877, that "Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." If dysfunctionality elicits more interest by virtue of being more varied and complex, then everyone should understand right away why attention should be paid, in the vein of Monk Lewis, to sleazy and skulking churchmen who seduce, rape, batter, and murder. A tale about a chaste and chastened monk may be hard to sell, in comparison.

Even today, the tradition of associating moldering and mildewy crypts with Gothic horrors remains vibrant, if that adjective belongs in this context, in popular and mass culture. Among various titles that document the trend, the most common is *Tales from the Crypt*. Such products now do not typically have medieval settings, but they incorporate cowled figures, castles and dungeons, and of course crypts and crypt-keepers who are redolent of the Middle Ages. According to one oft-cited definition of literary Gothic, a text along the same line should entail exactly what romantic writers and their successors have judged an undercroft from a millennium ago to embody. The accent on enclosure helps to explain why underground prisons and crypts are endemic in literature of this sort.

The crypt in *Our Lady's Tumbler* is hallowed by the devotions of the jongleur. Yet he activates not so much the whole place as the Madonna alone, who dominates silently as its presiding spirit. By way of antithesis, ponder the 1973 inaugural issue of the Marvel Comics *Crypt of Shadows* (see Fig. 4.33). The cover depicts "the macabre devil-dance of the witch-woman." Around the succubus-like leading lady cowled figures have congregated, many looking as much like gargoyles as anything.

Equally alive, but in more placid and scholarly ways, is an awareness of the functions that croft chapels served in the evolution of medieval architecture. Since the early nineteenth century, the undercrofts of churches have been destinations for sightseers with antiquarian architectural interests, quite apart from those tourists who have gone to see unusual tombs, ossuaries or related displays of bones, and other such gruesome oddities. Antique engravings depict the visitors to medieval crypts (see Figs. 4.34 and 4.35).

The National Cathedral in Washington houses an eclectic mix of subterranean chapels in the Norman, Romanesque, and Transitional styles. Henry Adams and Ralph Adams Cram would have been gratified by this outcome, as would also many writers, musicians, artists, and performers who engaged with the original version of *Our Lady's Tumbler*. If the galleries and upper chambers within great churches may be considered stairways to heaven, what by implication does that make their opposites in the caverns

below? Karl Vollmoeller, who directed a silent film version of a closely related miracle story, was well aware of the potential use of the crypt within a cathedral as the setting for hell. In all these guises the space lives on, sometimes as the bone-chilling home of the eternal dead.

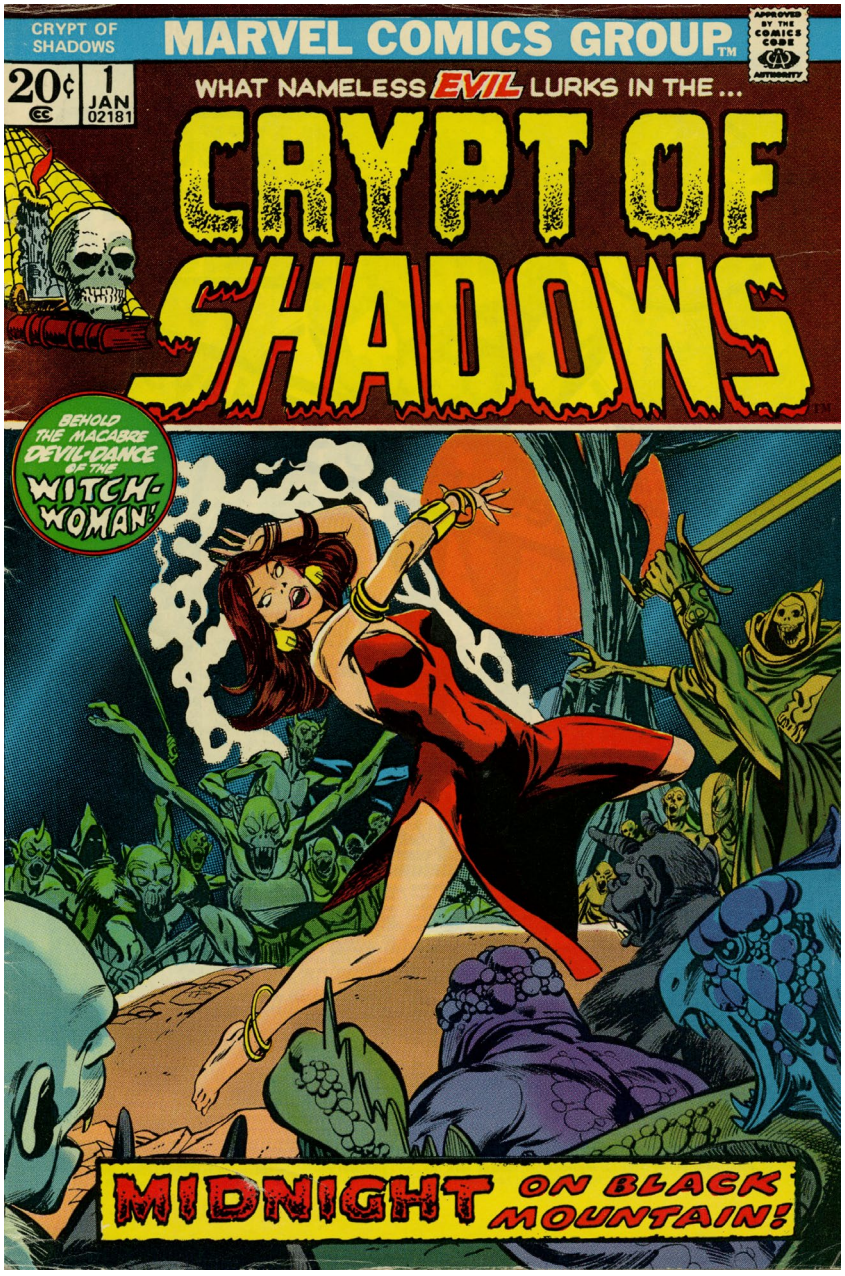

Fig. 4.33 "Behold the macabre devil-dance of the witch-woman!" Marvel Comics Group *Crypt of Shadows* 1 (January 1973), front cover.

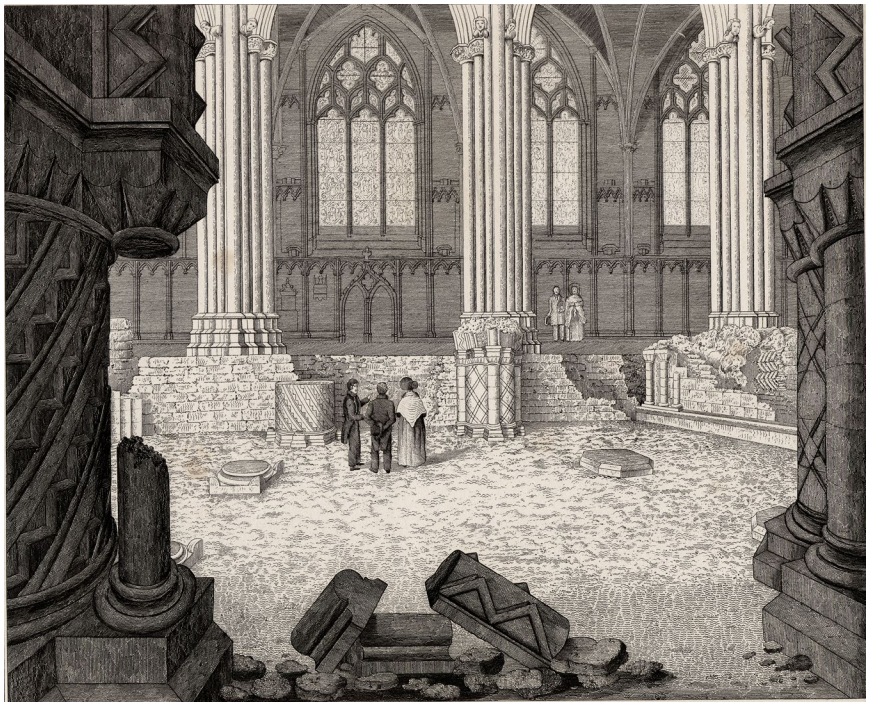

Fig. 4.34 Visitors in the Norman crypt of York Cathedral. Etching by J. Browne & Son after drawing by John Browne, 1839.

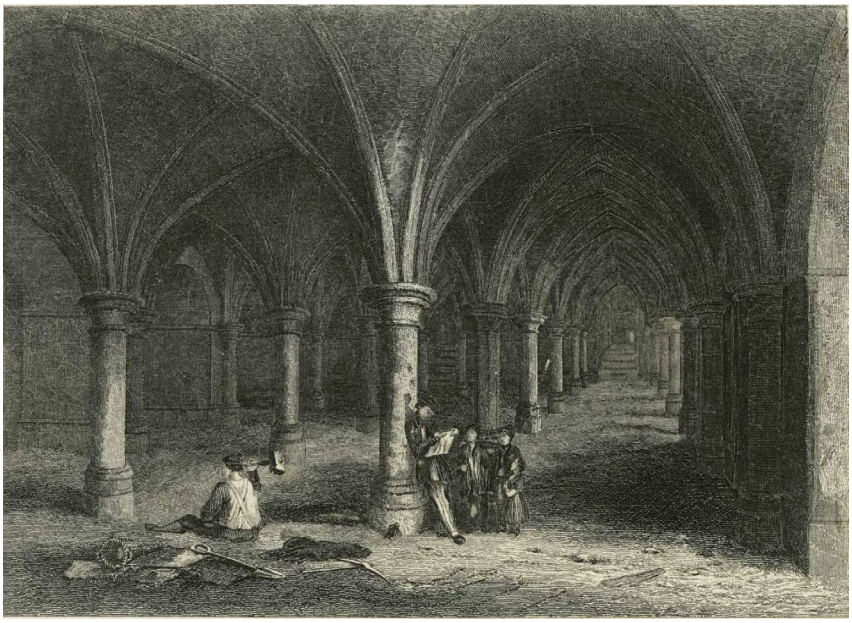

Fig. 4.35 The crypt of Rochester Cathedral, Rochester, UK. Engraving by F. Hilliard after drawing by Hablot Browne, 1835. Winkles, *Cathedrals*.

In the thirteenth-century piece of poetry the undercroft is not a crime scene where the entertainer is shown to die or to be buried. If for much of the poem the performer frequents the the depths, in the end he is elevated into full centrality, when his lifeless body is laid out on the main floor of the church above. Leaving the sidelines once and for all, his corpse is taken up the stairs and across the doorstep. Initially he passes into the choir, thanks to the abbot, and ultimately he is wafted into heaven, courtesy of the Virgin. As a monastery, Clairvaux was renowned for being poised between heaven and earth. Geographically the jongleur plunged himself as deeply earthward as he could go, by descending into the crypt and performing an ad hoc ritual that ended in his prostration there. At the conclusion, his soul goes airborne toward a celestial afterlife: all's well that ends well.

We have milled around long enough, or even too long, in dark, dank, and deadly confines underground. If we flare our nostrils and inhale deeply, we can whiff mold and must in these airless lower extremities of the church. Now it is high time to launch from the spirtual silo and mount into the light and fresh air—time to shine.

5. Enlightening the Virgin

The Incandescent Virgin

> The necessity for light was the motive of the gothic architects. They needed light and always more light, until they sacrificed safety and common-sense in trying to get it.

Crypts may be ideal places for blind devotion, but the time has come to eschew black humor and instead to sound the light motif. The brightness befits the jongleur, who despite his fellow monks' suspicions has no dark side. Since the romantic era, Gothic architecture has had a reputation in some quarters for being dusky and dismal, connotations it acquired in part under the influence of the Gothic novel and its vast progeny in popular culture. At the same time, the association with murkiness acknowledges structural realities that affect and limit the fenestration of buildings in the style. By extension, Gothic in both literature and design can epitomize the Middle Ages in their guise as the much-maligned Dark Ages. Despite repeated attempts, this image of the era has been hard to overturn. These purportedly benighted times, superstitious, brutal, and barbaric, have been cast as being antithetical, first to the enlightened Renaissance and later to the reasonable Enlightenment. Even when viewed as a leaven, the medieval period can look romantically dark.

But the light-deprived Gothic of gloom and doom has its equal and opposite in a bright one. The smokescreen of dinginess which allows dodges and deceptions to pass undetected is counterbalanced by pure and blazing light that leaves nothing in the murk. In fact, the Middle Ages can even be esteemed, though not of course in a technical sense, as an "enlightenment," or at least a time of illumination. It saw solidified within Europe the presence of Christianity, whose exponent proclaimed himself "the light of the world." By the commutative principle, the appearance of Jesus Christ's mother Mary in Mariophanies has often been accompanied by brightness as brilliant as a hot meridional sun. Likewise, epiphanies of her have come with the advent of a celestial

https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0147.05

body, appropriate to the "star of the sea," one of the Virgin's foremost epithets. She has often been clad in light.

The dialectic between dark and light Gothic has evidenced itself at least since Horace Walpole in the eighteenth century. To an extent, the English man of letters, art historian, and antiquarian could be considered the paradigmatic proto-Goth, in the flashy campiness of his buildings, writings, and dress. His renown as an arch-medievalizer rests above all upon two medievalesque fantasies and fakeries, the one literary and the other architectural. In 1764, he published *The Castle of Otranto*, often labeled the first Gothic novel. It inspired such spawn as Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* in 1794 and Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* in 1796. Putting to good use an ambiguity that pervades the European literary tradition, Walpole's novel purports to be not an original story but instead a history. Taking the bluff still further, it claims to have been translated from a genuine medieval manuscript.

To turn from literature to architecture, from 1749 until 1792 Walpole built and bettered the Gothick villa Strawberry Hill (see Fig. 5.1). Really an ersatz "little Gothic castle," the edifice infuses with unexpected meaning the proverbial notion that a home can be a castle. The choice of this revival fashion for its design had the effect of making a new construction at once ancestral, or at least ancestral-seeming. The country house was a Gothicizing game-changer. Long before America sought to endow itself with instant oldness by going Gothic, England was doing the same. A country that had structures aplenty in this manner committed itself to creating new and improved brands.

Fig. 5.1 Strawberry Hill, Horace Walpole's Gothic revival villa in Twickenham, London. Photograph by Wikimedia user Chiswick Chap, 2012, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Strawberry_Hill_House_from_garden_in_2012_after_restoration.jpg. CC BY-SA 3.0.

In this as in no other style, no hard-and-fast line runs between literary text and architectural context. Walpole asserted that his daunting domicile inspired *The Castle of Otranto*. The links between the two creative arts bring with them a complementarity between dark interiors and bright exteriors. Inside his mansion, the writer and designer set out to imprint what he termed "the gloomth of abbeys and cathedrals," for example by equipping his library with only a single window, itself comprising twenty pieces of stained glass that tinted what scant natural light entered the room (see Fig. 5.2). In the preface to his famous novel he describes terror as his principal engine. In both fiction and reality, he shows that the slow-building dread has at its heart darkness. He encircled the house within a cordon of much cheerier gardens, which he described as "riant," the French adjective for "smiling." "Gloomth" and, to fashion a noun from Walpole's Anglicized Gallic epithet, "riance" require each other for the sublime to be achieved. For Walpole, the yin and yang of gloom and glare captured the dualistic essence of human existence. The compound was heady—and long-lasting. By grasping this contrast, he perpetuated the intimate relationship between buildings and built landscape that still pervades the most successful of collegiate Gothic campuses in North America a century and a half later.

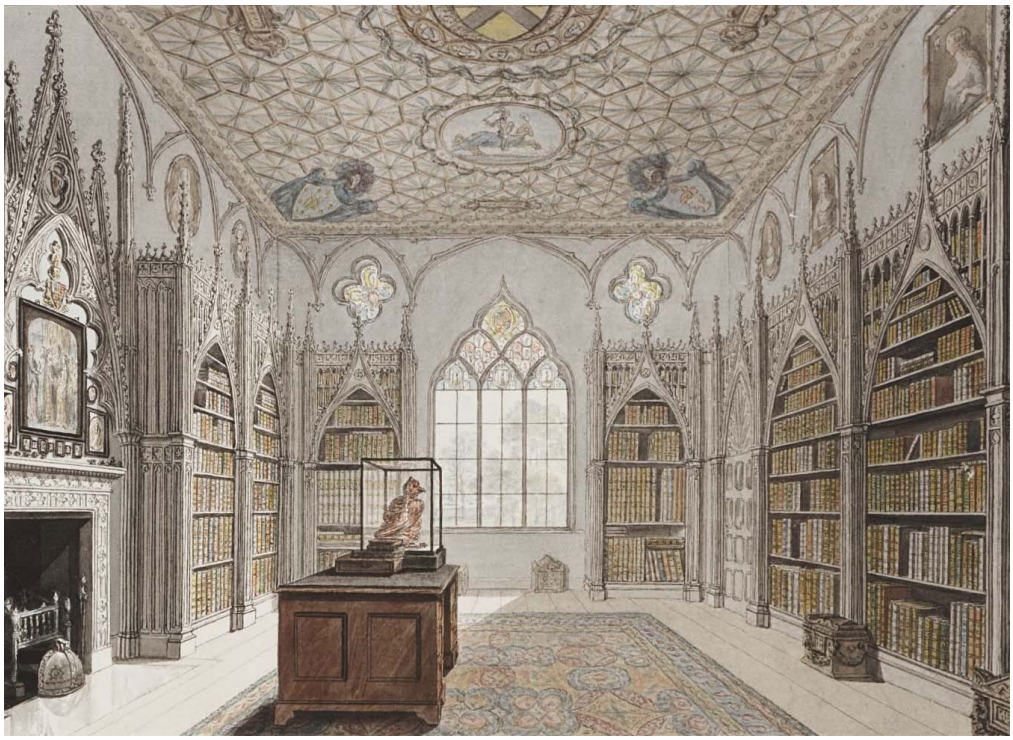

Fig. 5.2 Strawberry Hill Library. Watercolor and ink by John Carter Delt, from Horace Walpole, *A Description of the Villa at Strawberry Hill* (Strawberry Hill, 1784), fol. 74, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Strawberry_Hill_Library.jpg

With an eye toward the later enactments of *Our Lady's Tumbler* on stage with Gothicizing backdrops, as well as toward the staging of adaptations in actual Gothic (original or revival) churches, we may learn from how Walpole himself seized upon both the playful and theatrical dimensions of his Gothic. In a letter from the famous estate to the English classicist Richard Bentley, the bellelettrist ventured the aperçu that "Strawberry Hill is the puppet-show of the times." He played at make-believe, choosing to imagine the house as now a monastery, now a castle.

Walpole bought the property in 1747 from the proprietor of a toy shop. The purchase of his summer villa and its grounds from a "toywoman" prompted him to anticipate Victorians of more than a century later by creating the conceit that the estate was a well-wrought little gadget. He envisaged his residence as a jewel, skillfully attached to an ornate setting. The analogy occurred naturally to him, since he collected enamels and portrait miniatures with a passion. The writer's metaphor for the architecture and landscape of his Gothic villa stuck. His younger coeval and rival, the antiquarian and author William Thomas Beckford, went so far as to coopt the comparison in disparaging him. But the similitude was not always scornful. When the property was sold off in 1842, it was still billed as "the most distinguished gem that has ever adorned the annals of auctions." Yet opinions remained sharply divided. The sale catalogue, extravagant in the puffed-up gravity with which it itemized the contents of Walpole's collections before they were put on the block, was mocked in a parody that promised bidding on "every object that can interest the Bibliomaniac, and all other Maniacs."

In effect, both of these Gothicist novelists and architects, Walpole proudly and Beckford snidely, fancied Strawberry Hill House and its surrounding estate—though they framed the comparison in their own terms, nearly a century before the French borrowing is first recorded in English—a piece of bric-à-brac for the classic bricabracomaniac. For both, the ludic metaphor anticipates neatly the playful framework into which Anatole France set his short stories of late antiquity and the Middle Ages, including of course *The Jongleur of Notre Dame*, when he entitled the cluster of fictions *The Little Box of Mother-of-Pearl*. The medieval tumbler works or worships himself into a serious lather, but his profession and activities appear almost intrinsically frisky and frolicsome—as is the whole genre of writing to which it belongs.

Paradoxically, the correspondence identified (or fabricated?) by Walpole reaches back to the first Gothic revival of a century earlier. In that earlier manifestation, the style when viewed favorably was lauded for its inherent naturalness, establishing the basis for the nineteenth-century apprehension that Gothic particularly, and medieval generally, formed a European subset of primitivism. It may seem self-contradictory to cast the Middle Ages and Gothic as being especially close to both the godly and the natural. After all, in the Judeo-Christian scheme nature is divinely made rather than purely and spontaneously natural in any modern sense. Nonetheless, the medieval period and Gothic have been elected at times to fill the seemingly conflicting roles of serving both God and nature. The tumbler and juggler, uninitiated but naturally pious and devout, fit well within this apparatus.

The lightness and darkness of Gothic are both detectable in a woodcut that illustrates an edition of *The Romance of the Forest* by Ann Radcliffe from 1832 (see Fig. 5.3). In the foreground we discern the heroine, caught between two arches capped by cloverleaves. Between them further quatrefoils are visible, more than a half dozen in a colonnade of lancets that runs perpendicular. In the background is a portal, itself set within a pointed arch, from which a dark figure issues. The woman stands in a ray of light that ends just shy of the shadowy man framed in the rear doorway. The message is perspicuous—pointed, in more than one sense of the word. A few years afterward, the frontispiece of the first illustrated edition of Hugo's *Notre Dame de Paris* in French depicts the cathedral in the Gallic equivalent of full gloomth (see Fig. 5.4).

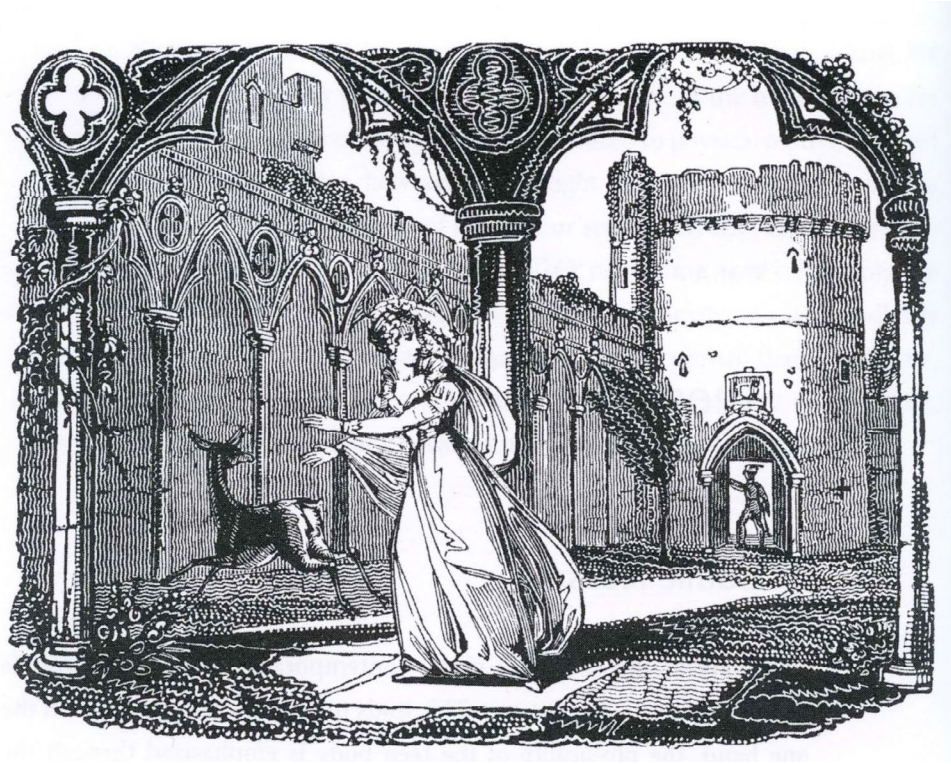

Fig. 5.3 Adeline flees from a figure in the cloister. Woodcut, late eighteenth century. Artist unknown. Published in Ann Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest, Interspersed with Some Pieces of Poetry*, 2 vols. (Woodstock, VT: R. Colton, 1832).

Decades later in America, two of the Adams brothers found their way under their own steam to frames of reference on Gothic dark and light that resembled Walpole's. First came Brooks Adams:

> The gloom of the lofty vaults, dimly lighted by the subdued splendour of the coloured windows, made the interior of the Gothic cathedral the most mysterious and exciting sanctuary for the celebration of the miracle which has ever been conceived by man.

Fig. 5.4 The Cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris at Dusk. Engraving by E. Finden, after drawing by D. Rouargue, ca. 1836. Published in Victor Hugo, *Notre Dame de Paris* (Paris: Eugène Renduel, 1836), frontispiece.

His older sibling Henry was well acquainted with the English author and antiquarian as a personage from the past, though as politician and epistolographer more than as Gothicist. In *Mont Saint Michel and Chartres*, this elder Adams played the firebrand. He took pains to dispel what he judged to be modern prejudices against the Gothic as entailing darkness, dread, and death—presuppositions that evidently had begun to affect the title character of his novel *Esther*, as she succumbed to the sway of the cathedral and theology of the Reverend Stephen Hazard. Instead of detecting gloom, Henry Adams renewed a perspective voiced in the style's early days in the Middle Ages, when it was regarded as being bright. In place of oppressive shadows, he accentuated the light, color, and airiness of the Gothic interior. In his view, these features jibed with the Virgin's own preferences. To him, the apse of Chartres is Mary's boudoir, and it has been prettied up to her liking with the exquisite palette of light and color that filters through the panes. The transcendent qualities of the stained glass in the rose windows were designed for the Mother of God. When Adams betook himself for the first time to Chartres, he confessed to Lizzie Cameron "after thirty-five years of postponed intentions, I worshipped at last before the splendor of the great glass Gods."

Not everyone who studied the architecture was moved to sparkling observations, and still less to wit. To be concrete (or limestone), a person could be a fan of collegiate Gothic, but still recognize its shortcomings in the paucity of outside light that its fenestration could allow to penetrate. Thus Aldous Huxley, in his panegyric on Duke University, commented rightly—which is not to say disapprovingly—on the absolute necessity of artificial lighting in buildings constructed in the style. In 1930 William Harlan Hale launched into a more corrosive, if incendiary is not the right word, diatribe against the architectural manner of his own alma mater. Taking a dim view of collegiate Gothic, he contended that by committing to the fashion, Yale University invalidated half of its Latin motto *Lux et Veritas*, "Light and Truth."

Although not all crypts lack natural lighting, most are at least somewhat dark, and some languish in unremitting obscurity. For the juggler to transact his routine in utter darkness would be nearly unthinkable. If not in complete blackness, the windowless and subterranean crypt must have been candlelit. In the Middle Ages the spectacle of Marian images that shimmered radiantly in the glow of numerous guttering tapers would have been extraordinary in the full sense of the adjective. The brightness of the wicks would have been utterly unlike the lightless domestic situation of most churchgoers. So too the exceptional beauty of ceremonies can be readily imagined. Picture parishioners within churches, holding flickering flames. Imagine them outside, with trains of devotees cupping these lights in their hands. Setting tapers alight for such processions would have been the main outlet for medieval pyromaniacs. Artificial illumination was far less common than nowadays, and the offerings of votive candles and wax that the clergy encouraged became more valuable for being uncommon and costly.

Dressing Madonnas: What Are You Wearing?

Small places of worship consecrated to the Blessed Virgin, when they are inside a cathedral or large church in England, are customarily called Lady Chapels. Within such Marian spaces, the powerful effects of candlelight would have been compounded, as it played upon effigies of Mary painted with vivid, even gaudy, coloring and adorned or enhanced with curtains and coronets, as well as with other objects, often crafted using gesso and studded with gold, silver, pearls, and jewels. In the later Middle Ages and beyond, the carvings were sometimes constructed with mechanical articulations so that limbs could be posed and moved. Making the ambience even more memorable, on special occasions the sculptures would have been bedecked with special clothing, including bridal garments, with gorgets, sometimes of silk, brocade, and other precious fabrics; outfitted with tiaras, necklaces, earrings, and bracelets; draped or wreathed in flowers; and capped with wigs of human hair, shaped into ringlets. This sort of outfitting was frequent when representations were to be processed publicly on feast days.

Such dressing of images, like the painting and gilding of them, gave expression to popular piety, and continues to do so in some locales. Traditionally, women alone have been allowed to dress and undress the statues. The practice is attested from the fourteenth century, extending to paintings and not restricted to statuary, and reached its zenith in the baroque period. These likenesses sometimes rested directly on the altar cloth, and were housed in tabernacles, under or surrounded by canopies. In regions that underwent the most wrenching turmoil of the Reformation, these carvings and their appurtenances were among the first targets to be stripped and stamped out during waves of iconoclasm.

The wardrobes of these sculptures could be extensive and expensive-looking. In Tournai, Mary received a new coat annually. After serving the images, these garments were sometimes redeployed to clothe ecclesiastics when they were entombed. The sartorial sumptuousness showered upon the Madonna of Ipswich elicited a detailed description in an inventory. A wealthy but not atypical London church had "two coats for the Virgin Mary, one of white damask ornamented with roses, the other of cloth of gold." In Nuremberg, the Lady Church had two statues of the Mother and Child that shared an armoire of "twenty-six sets of robes, as well as veils, crowns, rosaries, and other ornaments." If you are what you wear, these representations were queenly or even divine.

The clothing of a Madonna could itself experience miracles, as if being touched by the image elevated the object into the equivalent of a contact relic of the Virgin herself. Thus, by the early thirteenth century, we read of a likeness of Mary at the

shrine of Mont-Saint-Michel that survived a fire in its shrine without any damage to its pure white veil. After the Reformation, the checklists of churches in Protestant areas no longer catalogue such accoutrements. The change is evident early in the already mentioned municipality of Nuremberg, which had been the first free city of the Holy Roman Empire to adopt the Lutheran faith. The exterior of the Lady Church remained as quaintly Gothic as ever, but inside was a different story. The raiment for the carving of the Mother of God ceased to be mentioned, as it was dispersed, destroyed, or both. Traditions were left, truly, tattered and battered.

In the story of *Our Lady's Tumbler*, the Madonna improvised a cloth for dabbing or fanning the perspiration from the dehydrated acrobat. It is tempting to conjecture that the item was the sort of veil with which revered images were covered. At the same time, the Virgin was connected with many textiles: the cloak or mantle beneath which she sheltered her devotees, chemise or tunic, nightgown, girdle, head cloth or kerchief, veil, wimple, swaddling cloth, and shroud. In many cases, the same length of fabric could have served sundry purposes. As a result, the pieces of apparel can be impossible to differentiate. Even a professional lingerie manufacturer from the Middle Ages, if brought back to life and transported across time, would have to admit defeat, let alone library researchers on the order of Anatole France's fictitious philologist, Sylvestre Bonnard. Did a precursor of Victoria's Secret exist, perhaps as Virginia's Secret? Dubious.

A paradox of the Marian cult is that believers were brought in touch with her most intimate garments and body parts. Nightgowns and girdles were only part of the panoply. In addition, the faithful were made to contemplate her breasts and womb. All the time, their thoughts were to be fixed upon her chastity and virginity. Somewhat similarly, we are to envision the able-bodied jongleur unclothed for a solo performance before the image of a pretty young woman, but we are not to permit our thinking to devolve into the human and hormonal realm of sexuality. The Virgin is the model of chastity. To accept this fact, we have only to think of her name. Sexual activity, whether denied or indulged, does not figure in the story.

Fabric relics closely associated with the person of the Mother of God were held at Aachen, Cologne, Regensburg, and Trier. The reliquaries that preserved such treasures could signify by their very shape that the churches where they were deposited were vessels for these precious items. In the Aachen cathedral, the golden casket that is known as the Shrine of Mary contains the so-called Four Great Relics. The case is a textile museum in miniature, with the cloak of the Blessed Virgin, the swaddling clothes of the infant Jesus, the loincloth worn by Christ on the cross, and the mat on which the head of John the Baptist was placed after his decapitation (see Fig. 5.5).

Fig. 5.5 Shrine of Mary (*Marienschrein*), Aachen Cathedral, Aachen, Germany. Donated ca. 1220. Photograph by Wikimedia user Sailko, 2016, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Marienschrein,_reliquiario_delle_sacre_reliquie_di_aquisgrana,_1220-29_ca._01.jpg. CC BY-SA 3.0.

The most prized trophy of Mary in all of France, and the most important of Mariana held by the great church of Chartres, was the so-called Holy Chemise. This article was allegedly a tunic, shift, or nightgown that the Virgin wore when she conceived and gave birth to Christ. Whatever its supposed function, this item of clothing had a storied provenance. After having acquired it, the Carolingian Emperor Charles the Bald transported it from Constantinople and donated it to Chartres in 876 or 877. This piece of clothing was believed to radiate a protective force shield that enveloped the cathedral and community of Chartres. In times of need, the garment could be processed and displayed to inoculate the church, town, townspeople, and soldiers against threats of battle or plague. Thanks to its doughty defensive powers, it could protect itself too. When a blaze destroyed the ecclesiastic treasury of the cathedral in 1020, this textile survived intact—rent-free, in a material sense.

The crisis that ensued upon the conflagration of the early eleventh century led ultimately to the construction of the crypt that still exists beneath the present-day cathedral. The chemise was taken to this subterranean shelter for safekeeping when a second fire befell the place of worship, and once again the fabric emerged unharmed. An object of devotion to the present day, the textile was depicted on the leaden badges that medieval pilgrims accumulated. The reverse of one such keepsake represents the vestment on parade, laid out against its *châsse*, a reliquary box that looks like a church. The vignette shows it plainly as a garment with a collar and sleeves (see Fig. 5.6). It was carried in its reliquary in processions, together with a wooden Madonna and Child of the "throne of wisdom" type. The obverse of the pilgrim's token pictures this statue being borne on a sedan chair in a pageant of this sort (see Fig. 5.7).

Relatively recently, what had been preserved as the Holy Chemise was recognized to be a long swatch of collarless and sleeveless fabric—not at all a chemise but rather a veil (see Fig. 5.8). In the same intersection of devotion and commerce as resulted in the medieval lead souvenirs, this headcovering has been represented on a recent tourist medallion (see Fig. 5.9) struck in 2012. How did the item of clothing turn out to be more like a mantilla? Conceivably, what had been known in former times as the chemise was lost or damaged at some point, and the item now recognized to be a veil could have been another bolt of cloth substituted for the original textile. Alternatively, a garment used to clothe a Madonna could have become confused with this article.

Whatever the explanation, the instability of terminology used to designate the chemise is not unusual. Once again, in their positions as clerics or monks, the men who had custody of such artifacts were unlikely to be versed in the fine print of women's intimate wardrobes. To make matters worse, the churchmen would have had to negotiate the distance between the vocabulary available to them from the usual literary language of Latin and that of the local spoken dialects. To make matters worse, the relics were meant to be exotic. They were supposed to have arrived from outlying places and times, presumably with different fashions in feminine attire. Lastly, the textiles were often kept under lock and key in chests or other containers, and their beneficent power was mediated through images associated with them. Relics and representations, especially statues, went hand in hand (or towel in hand). Of what fabric was the Holy Chemise or veil made? Such humble garments were often of linen. But this sacred treasure was imported from the East. Its material counted foremost among the precious foreign goods associated with Constantinople and the realms that lay beyond it on the Silk Road: the veil is silken.

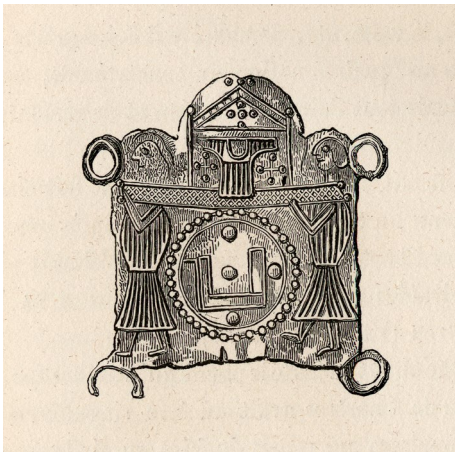

Fig. 5.6 A pilgrim's token (reverse) depicting the Holy Chemise. Illustration, 1863. Artist unknown. Published in Arthur Forgeais, *Collection de plombs historiés trouvés dans la Seine*, 5 vols. (Paris: Chez l'auteur et chez Aubry, 1862–1866), 2: 29.

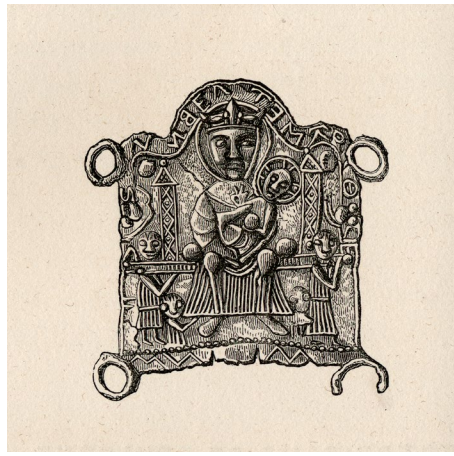

Fig. 5.7 A pilgrim's token (obverse) depicting the procession of a wooden Madonna and Child. Illustration, 1863. Artist unknown. Published in Arthur Forgeais, *Collection de plombs historiés trouvés dans la Seine*, 5 vols. (Paris: Chez l'auteur et chez Aubry, 1862–1866), 2: 28.

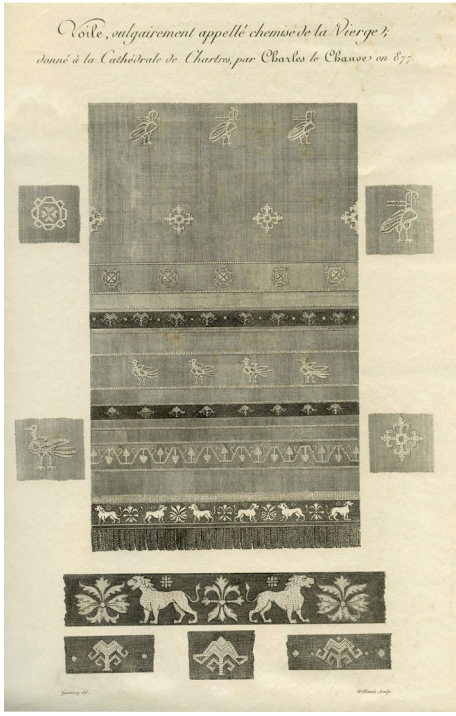

Fig. 5.8 The Holy Chemise of Chartres Cathedral. Engraving by Nicolas-Xavier Willemin, after drawing by Auguste Garnerey. *Monuments français inédits*, 1806, plate 16.

Fig. 5.9 Chartres tourist medallion depicting the Holy Chemise (Paris: Monnaie de Paris, 2012).

Eventually the Madonnas, the textile relics, and the Gothic architecture of Chartres became intertwined to form an indissociable skein of associations. Their relationship is itself a fabric, woven from a thousand threads without a single dropped stitch. By way of confirmation, take a look at a late nineteenth-century holy card from Chartres, showing a structure of Gothic architectural motifs (see Fig. 5.10). At the top, it shows both on the right the Madonna of the Pillar and on the left what was once a Black Madonna called Notre-Dame-sous-Terre. At the bottom, it presents the façade of the cathedral as well as a procession with the holy casket, shaped like a great church and topped by the image of Mary. In the middle, it depicts the Virgin's shift. The shrine with the repository that contained this garment was discrete from the site of Notre-Dame-sous-Terre. To complete the feminization, the prayer card is edged on all four sides to give a semblance of laciness.

Cologne was another site where a textile was a major relic. "Our Lady's Smock," also known as the Holy Robe, was seen as being vested (if the cap fits…) with special powers to safeguard women in childbirth. This object is no more, but we have an idea of what it looked like. A piece of late medieval metalwork depicts the Virgin and Child, together with what is likely to be this very piece of clothing (see Fig. 5.11).

Those who could not benefit from the protection of such precious prizes through site-visits of their own could receive at least indirect reward and reassurance from contact with badges that depicted the objects.

Fig. 5.10 Holy card depicting Notre-Dame-sous-Terre, Notre-Dame du Pilier, Chartres cathedral, and Procession of the Sainte Châsse, with the Holy Chemise in the center (Paris: C. Bertin, late nineteenth century).

Fig. 5.11 Late medieval pilgrim's badge, copper alloy, from the shrine of the Holy Robe, Cologne. Excavated in Norwich. Norwich, UK, Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery. Image courtesy of the Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery. All rights reserved.

Carrying a Torch for Mary

> Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.
>
> —Martin Luther King Jr.

Let's not mind our own beeswax but instead poke our probosces into the Mother of God's business. The feasts associated with her would generally have entailed optimizing candles. The oldest of these days were the Nativity of Mary on September 8, the Annunciation of Christ on March 25, the Purification of Mary on February 2, and

the Assumption of Mary on August 15. These foundational four festivities had been introduced into the Western church by the close of the seventh century; three more were later additives, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: the Presentation in the Temple on November 21, the Visitation on July 2, and the Immaculate Conception of Mary on December 8. The last-mentioned solemnity took full hold officially only once the doctrine was formalized as an article of faith in 1854, although it too had been widely accepted by the end of the fifteenth century.

Among all these celebrations that punctuated the passage of the year and the cycle of the calendar, none was associated more flashily with candles than the Feast of the Purification of Mary. In fact, the occasion has come to be known widely as Candelaria. Exactly forty days after Christmas, this event marks the obedience of Mary in submitting herself to the Temple for churching—ritual cleansing from the pollution of childbirth. Since the Middle Ages, candles have figured prominently before and during the Mass on this date. Hence the festivity is aptly called by its vernacular name, Candlemas. It commemorates a day of light: in medieval Christianity, the Virgin conceives aurally, through the Annunciation, and gets a gleam in her eye only after delivering herself of the Christ child.

On Candlemas, the wax and wicks to be used during the coming year are blessed at the altar. Thanks to the benediction, they are valued for having protective or apotropaic powers: they stand sentry against the forces of darkness. Lighted tapers are apportioned by the priest, and kept alight during much of the service. The underlying spirit is participatory: the whole congregation may take part, truly hands-on, in a formal candlelit procession. More or less the same setup obtained in Cistercian monasteries, where a benison was administered to candles in the abbey church. Afterward they were handed out to all in attendance, including lay brothers, who left the place of worship to process with them around the cloister (see Fig. 5.12).

Even apart from the rituals specific to Candlemas, suppliants to the Virgin in Western Europe, both pilgrims and regular worshipers, would bring candles, wax, and wax effigies as votive offerings. They would carry away their blessed tapers as well as the small containers of hallowed water known as ampoules. The Mother of God herself was associated with illumination in reenactments performed in medieval churches. Most vividly, directions for celebrations to commemorate the Feast of the Purification of Mary call for heavy use of candles. Thus two angels tote a candelabrum in the shape of a grille or grate with twenty-four thick sticks on it, together with other large and heavy lamps. All the participants in the procession carry tapers. From the Middle Ages to this day, candlesticks are commonly mentioned as offerings given either lighted or unused to support the cult of the Virgin. In the Greek Orthodox East, the customary texts for the liturgy and administration of monasteries document an extraordinary interest in the sort of lighting appropriate to a given icon or image.

The miracles of the Virgin by Gautier de Coinci and untold others contain a wealth of legends that revolve around wicks coated with wax, like little eddies of fumes.

Where there is smoke, there is fire—and vice versa. Tapers have lives of their own. They descend from heaven to cast light upon paintings and sculptures, they take their places in candelabra, they dowse and relight themselves unassisted, and their wax exudes an odor of sanctity: they function as a sort of holy deodorant or air freshener. In the miracle of Petrus Iverni at Rocamadour, candles levitate through the powers of a Marian poltergeist. The statue involved in that episode is a Black Madonna. The blackness of such representations has many possible explanations. One hypothesis holds that they were singed: the fuliginous hue followed from the smoke and soot that belched out from the burning of uncounted candlesticks.

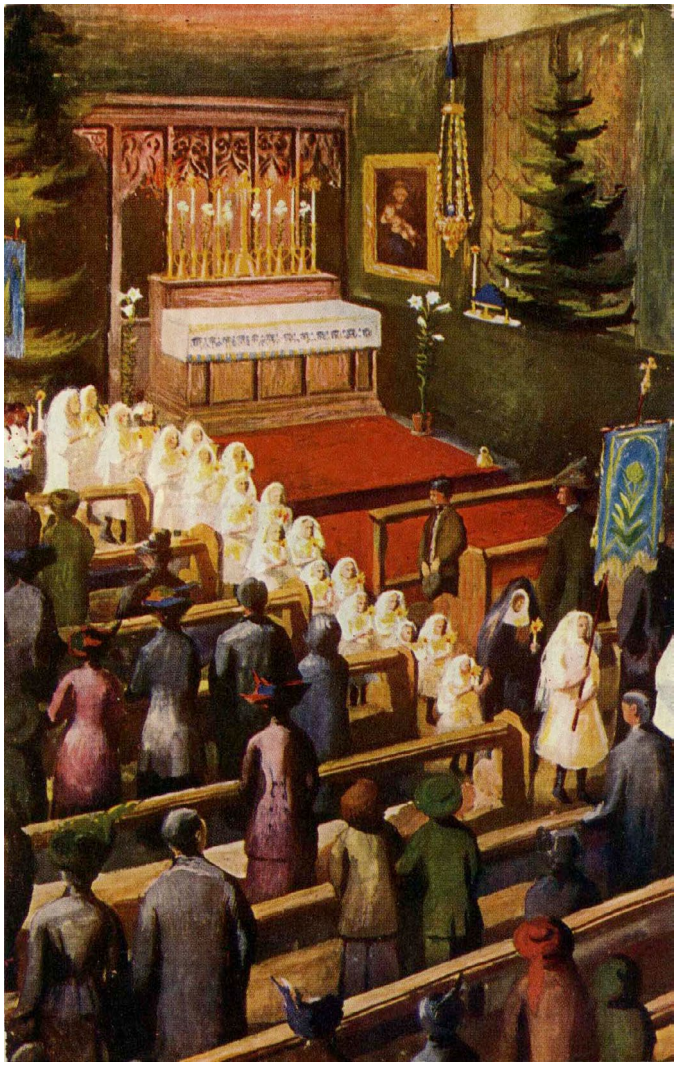

Fig. 5.12 Postcard depicting Guild of the Little Sisters Passing the Altar of St. Mary the Virgin, all carrying lighted candles on Candlemas Eve in Saint John's, Boston, MA (ca. 1910).

As discussed earlier, the Holy Candle of Arras commemorates the salvation of the afflicted city through the agency of two minstrels who are propelled by a vision of Our Lady. The medicine concocted by the two entertainers has drippings from a taper as its active ingredient. The miracle serves as a foundation myth for the guild of jongleurs. Members of the society contribute wax to honor both the anniversary and of course the Mother of God herself. Although tallow was the most common substance for candlemaking in the Middle Ages, chandlers preferred beeswax when manufacturing goods to serve the cult of Mary. The glycerine in animal fat reeked. In contrast to that rancid reality, the substance secreted by bees to form their honeycombs burned odorlessly. On a symbolic plane beyond the olfactory one, the honeybee was associated with virginity and was a type of the Virgin.

Erasmus, in his account of the visit he paid in 1514 to the Holy House of Walsingham, puts considerable emphasis upon its brightness. The general claustrophobic darkness of the site elicits a powerful contrast in the glare from votive candles. The ambient light brightens the jewels, silver, and gold of the Madonna with Christ on her lap in the Chapel of Our Lady. To the faithful, the lambent brilliance was moving. To budding reformers, the light was lurid.

Even though the power of the taper was aggressively reduced under Protestantism, it lived on in Catholic countries. Bernadette Soubirous was a key figure in the apparitions and miracles of the Virgin that established Lourdes as an international pilgrimage site. In one of the epiphanies, she underwent the so-called miracle of the candle, in which she endured no pain from the flame of one as it burned (see Fig. 5.13). The same nail-biting feat has been attributed to undemonstratively heroic men, from Gaius Mucius Scaevola in legends of the early Roman Republic, through G. Gordon Liddy in former President Richard Nixon's inner circle, to various characters in more than a half century of films. Even without the particularity of the taper in the sighting, the cult that grew up around the apparitions and miracles would almost inevitably have involved wax and wicks because of the need for lighting. The main site of veneration for the cult was a grotto at Massabeille that required illumination. Candles were the clear-thinking solution or truly bright idea, even aside from the fact that as votive items to be bought and sold they very quickly became a business interest for individual entrepreneurs and the Church (see Fig. 5.14).

The cave could become a stunning, but also disconcerting sight. The opposite of all heat, no light, the grotto was aglow with candles that brought out all sorts of natural features and perhaps made them appear unnatural (see Fig. 5.15). In an 1896 edition of Émile Zola's *Lourdes* the first color illustration, reprised later with modifications, accentuates tapers. At the back ordinary-sized ones flame; in the foreground tower gigantic ones that even break into the lettering of the city's name (see Figs. 5.16 and 5.17). The saying goes that the game is not worth the candle, but in this municipality the stakes of the gambling merit candlelight galore.

Fig. 5.13 Bernadette Soubirous in the miracle of the candle. Watercolor by Henri Lanos, ca. 1896. Published in Émile Zola, *Lourdes* (Paris: G. Charpentier & E. Fasquelle, 1896), 217.

Fig. 5.14 Candle sellers. Watercolor by Henri Lanos, ca. 1896. Published in Émile Zola, *Lourdes* (Paris: G. Charpentier & E. Fasquelle, 1896), 297.

Fig. 5.15 The grotto of Lourdes, aglow with candles. Watercolor by Henri Lanos, ca. 1896. Published in Émile Zola, *Lourdes* (Paris: G. Charpentier & E. Fasquelle, 1896), 329.

Fig. 5.16 Watercolor by Henri Lanos, ca. 1896. Published in Émile Zola, *Lourdes* (Paris: G. Charpentier & E. Fasquelle, 1896), 1.

Fig. 5.17 Candles of various sizes in Lourdes. Engraved by Charaire, ca. 1896. Published in Émile Zola, *Lourdes* (Paris: G. Charpentier & E. Fasquelle, 1896), 321.

Lighting Effects: Lights, Camera, Action!

Radiant spectacle! I see the heavens open!

—Jean the Jongleur, in Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*

If the "thrones of wisdom" represented an impressive innovation of the twelfth century, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth the corresponding shock to viewers' experience and imagination came from artificial lighting. The age of gas extended over most of the 1800s. In the middle of the hundred-year stretch, gaslight had enabled whole new uses to be made of darkness. The word nightlife was invented. By the early twentieth century electric-powered lighting was extremely well established. Indeed, the first performance of a play under incandescence took place already in 1881 at the Savoy Theatre in London, the first all-electric theater.

Since the Middle Ages (if not before), Mary had been portrayed as at once numinous and luminous. The Mother of God has been mysteriously and incandescently divine, while still imaginably human. Although mighty headwinds might have gusted against the use of man-made illumination in promoting her, the opposite proved to be the case. Henry Adams juxtaposed the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries with constant ambivalence. Yet in writing to his adored Lizzie Cameron, he fused the two syncretically. In a letter he voiced the hope that when visiting the cathedral of Monreale near Palermo,

she would gain enlightenment: "Perhaps you will catch the faint phosphorescence of the Virgin's light and will feel why one wants to pray to her rather than the Dynamo." To take a salient example of how such brightening took place in a nonecclesiastical setting, the gilded statue of Mary that tops the dome of the Main Building at the University of Notre Dame was floodlit well before the end of the nineteenth century, first with gas and later with electricity. What was good for real sculptures of the Mother of God held true too for the images, or rather the impersonations of them, in theatrical and operatic productions of the early twentieth century.

By the time of Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*, the stage was set, truly and literally, for taking the medieval nexus between offertory candles and miracles of Marian effigies to a new modern level. The entertainer Jean, freshly admitted to the monastery of Cluny, is bidden by the prior to make himself a self-cleaning oven and to burn like a taper at the altar of the Virgin. Brother Boniface brings back a candle for the Mother of God from his shopping expedition. The most prominent female presence in Massenet's opera is the figure of Mary that stands above the altar before which the performer does his tricks and dances. The role of the statue is acted by a real woman, who extends her arms to bless Jean as the angels sing, just as the head of the abbey stands ready to anathematize him.

Within the libretto itself, Brother Boniface reports how the likeness first begins to shine with a strange brilliance and then smiles. Its incandescence is reemphasized an instant later, and eventually the altar is described as illuminated by an effulgent light. At this point a nimbus detaches from the hands of the Virgin and sparkles over Jean's head. Already in early performances this climactic moment is emphasized through special effects. The contrast between the Madonna and the jongleur is increased because she is high and he is low, as well as because she brightens with white light a man who has just blacked out.

The original stage-book sets forth the specifics of the pyrotechnic display: "Again is seen the radiance emanating from the Virgin, and now a shaft of light streams down and shines like an aura around the juggler's head." At this juncture, the directions become very specific. The manual emphasizes a contrast between brightness and shadow, like chiaroscuro in drawing and painting. For a short while, the stage is in total darkness, to enable the statue or depiction of the Virgin to be replaced by a person who plays the Virgin. As the searchlights are trained on her, they shine on her head in a halo. The radiance that washes over signifies her animation, and she reaches out toward Jean. At the point of his death, the gleaming aureole indicated by the prompt-book moves from above the Virgin's to above the jongleur's head. At the end of the apparition, the foreground is once again darkened. Mary is hoisted into paradise in an elevator.

In 1901, an impresario bragged, not in reference to Massenet's opera but more generally, "the characters present on the stage are really secondary to the lighting effects." The feats of illumination were achieved courtesy of the switch—and that it was—from gaslight to incommensurably brighter electric light. Theaters were initially electrified in the 1880s after experimentation in the late 1870s. As the technology

developed, operators of such businesses became ever more reliant on electricity, displacing gas and limelight. Lighting became a design element, as electrification moved space by space from the marquee outside, by way of the lobbies, to the stage inside, without overlooking the houselighting.

At first, Massenet's musical drama would have been staged using arc lamps. In newspaper reports, the miraculous altar with the image of Mary was lit up "with a great and mystic brightness" as the nimbus "detach[ed] itself from the hands of the Virgin [and] sparkled above the head" of the jongleur. The accounts describe how "the figure of the Virgin becomes suffused with a soft light," an irradiation accomplished by artificial lighting. Such incandescence permeates the air around the Madonna in the earliest poster for the opera. A beautiful stone lithograph in color, the placard was printed in Paris in 1904 (see Fig. 5.18). It was the work of Georges-Antoine Rochegrosse. In the art nouveau advertisement that he created for Massenet's work, the Madonna is clad in a red dress or blouse patterned with golden fleurs-de-lis. Bearing a crown over her veil or wimple, she stands in a Gothic embrasure. Most strikingly, she is both backlit by an unknown source of illumination and flanked by tapers at least a meter high, three to her left and presumably the same number to her right. The light emanating behind and around her far exceeds what could be achieved by ordinary candlelight. Nothing could hold a candle to her.

We can verify that Rochegrosse's composition was not plucked out of thin air or from his own fancy. Rather, it depicted accurately the actual stage setting for the opera's first Parisian production. We need only compare his piece with another depiction of the same scene at a slightly later moment, when the jongleur has collapsed (see Fig. 5.19). The artist of this engraving portrays Jean before the same niche, with oversized and lucent candles, but in this case with a halo hovering above him. The nimbus is clearly a gimmick or special effect, a ring of bright light that has coasted down from the hands of the now-animate image of Mary to hang perhaps a foot above the dead performer's head. In both works of art, blooms are massed to form a kind of half-moon at the Madonna's feet. The flowery heaps may help to conceal a powerful system of lamps—foot-candles, as it were. The designer of this poster had a history of being preoccupied with florid settings; a case in point is his gorgeous 1894 canvas, *The Knight of Flowers* (see Fig. 5.20).

Not everyone reacted favorably to fireworks on stage. Some found vivid displays of light to be trashy. In pyrotechnics, a grand finale means more when preceded by a squib or two, for contrast—but in the early days of electric lighting, stage managers could not resist the temptation to make full use of the new technology and to transfix audiences with unremitting brightness. The combination of permanent lighting and special arc lamps could be overpowering. The illumination relied, even outlandishly, on incandescence. In 1912 one reviewer, simultaneously over- and underwhelmed, characterized a show in the London Opera House with the restrained comment that "the electrical effects in the final scene of the miracle, when the statue of the Madonna comes to life, might be toned down with advantage."

Fig. 5.18 Poster for Jules Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame: Miracle en 3 actes*. Lithograph by Georges-Antoine Rochegrosse, 1904.

Fig. 5.19 The juggler collapses: a scene from Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*. Illustration by Edouard Zier. *Le Monde Illustré* 2459 (May 14, 1904), 395.

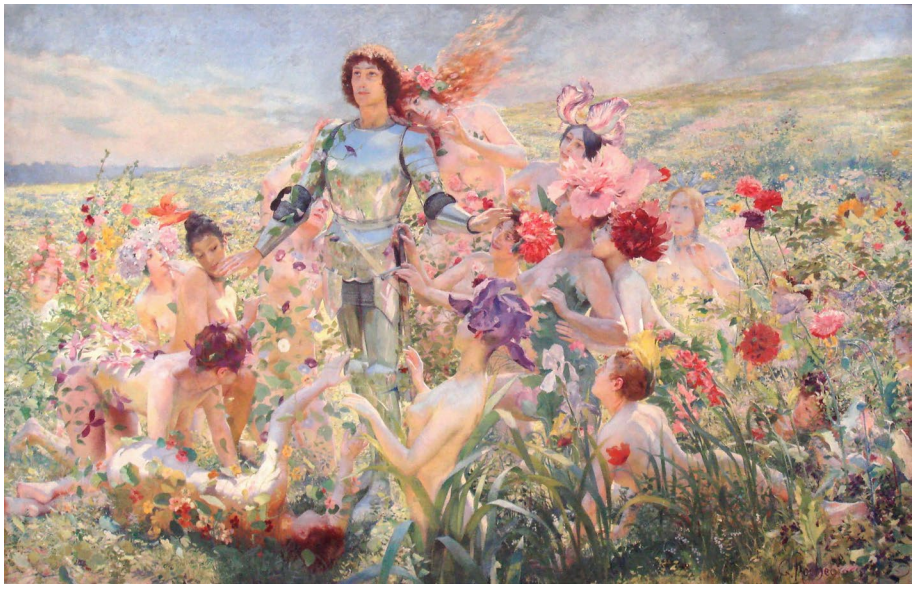

Fig. 5.20 Georges-Antoine Rochegrosse, *Le chevalier aux fleurs*, 1894. Oil on canvas, 235 × 376 cm. Paris, Musée d'Orsay, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Le_Chevalier_aux_Fleurs_2560x1600.png

If lighting was nearly irresistible in set design and stage practice for operas, it had an attraction too even in minimalist theater productions. In 1921, the German writer Franz Johannes Weinrich brought out a theatrical piece entitled *Our Lady's Dancer: A Little Play Based on a Legend, after an Old Text*. When the drama reaches the climax in which the image of Mary gains consciousness, the title character fights back sobs. At this moment, the playwright includes in a lengthy direction the eye-opening but pupil-narrowing indication: "Much light around the Mother of God and Simplicius." Although electricity was expensive, a beam fixed on an isolated character constituted a cost-effective means of reducing the decoration needed for staging. Furthermore, the application of concentrated light to single out individual actors within darkness accorded well with expressionism itself; for the movement drew stark contrasts between bright and dark: it was all about shadowboxing and light lifting.

The performance history of such plays cannot always be reconstructed fully, but not all the evidence has gone unrecorded or perished through the vicissitudes of time. This premiere took place in Frankfurt under the aegis of the Popular Theater League, a conservative Christian movement founded in the same city. It thrived there under the motto "Cultural Theater instead of Show Business," with a religious slant and a German national spirit based on Christianity. Germany needed all the bright spots that it could find. In 1933, these same emphases brought upon it the disfavor of the Nazis. The league's predisposition toward primitivism and medievalism can be discerned readily in a special display that was mounted in a sacred chamber for a theatrical exhibition in Magdeburg in 1927, in which medievalizing sculptures were displayed between and alongside pointed arches (see Fig. 5.21).

Fig. 5.21 Postcard of a theatrical exhibition by the Popular Theater League in Magdeburg (ca. 1927). The point is hard to miss.

By 1926 in the United States, elaborate lighting was enlisted even in amateur presentations when the episode of the jongleur before the Madonna was staged. In fact, one play is far less interesting for its dialogue than for its directions. At one point, the script calls for "*Cold, dim, blue light at first; beam of rosy amber falls on Jongleur's face, rises, and spreads to light the statue as it comes to life*." Later, punctilious instructions are provided on how to achieve these effects.

After decades of different shows, many writers who took up the story would have had seared into their minds and hearts pictures of the crucial scene with the animated Madonna in which bright lighting was a given. This is true of the front illustration to a recording, pressed again and again for more than a decade after its initial release in 1943, of John Nesbitt's narration, with choir, of "A Christmas Gift: The Story of the Juggler of Our Lady." In this case a single spotlight is trained upon the juggler. Caught in this chink of light, he kneels on one knee upon his mat, with his juggling balls around him, before the Madonna in a Gothic church. The image is pure theater (see Fig. 5.22). Katherine Evans's children's book *The Little Juggler*, published in 1960, captured the culminating miracle of the tale in both word and image (see Fig. 5.23). A collection of Christmas stories, put out in 1961, contains a reprint of Anatole France's "The Juggler of Notre Dame." To the right of the text on the first side stands an illustration of a lighted taper. An amateurish retelling of *Our Lady's Juggler* from 1974 describes the incandescence that is evident to the two monastic onlookers when the Lady statue stirs into life. Talk about a bolt from the blue! From the artificial illumination that is found in many churches for free or upon deposit of coins, we have become habituated to the idea of stagy bright lighting in ecclesiastical settings.

Fig. 5.22 John Nesbitt, *A Christmas Gift: The Story of the Juggler of Our Lady, Narration with Choir* (Decca Records, no. 357, 23M Personality Series, 1943).

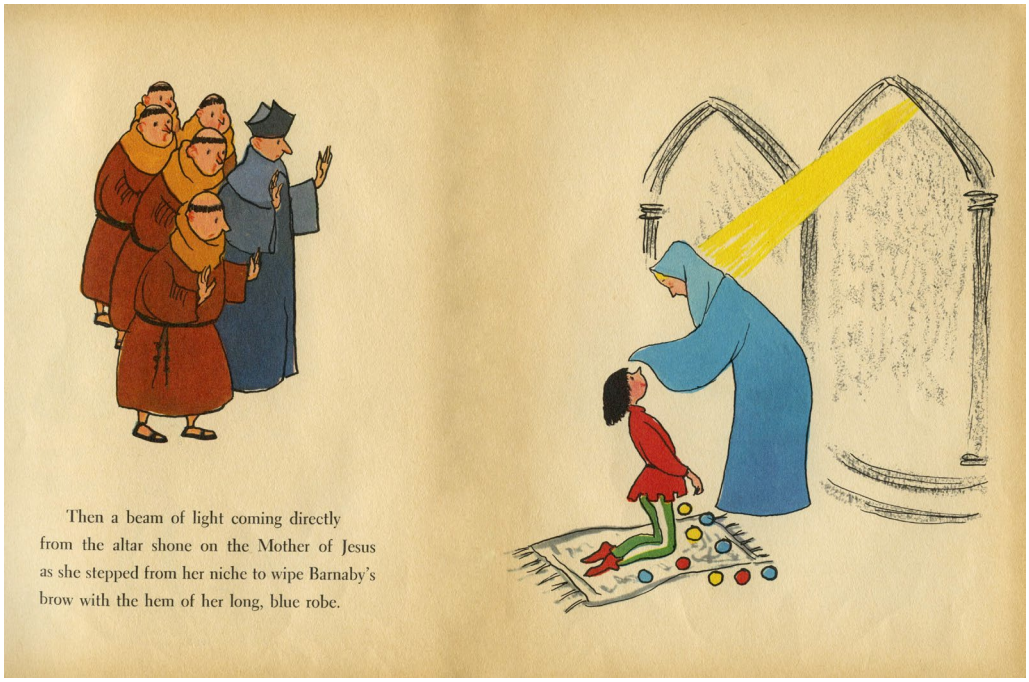

Fig. 5.23 The Virgin descends to the juggler in a ray of light. Illustration by Katherine Evans, 1960. Published in Katherine Evans, *The Little Juggler*, Christian Child's Stories (Milwaukee, WI: Bruce Publishing Company, 1960).

Voyeurism and Performance Art

Seeing the Virgin, seeing her correctly and teaching others to see her, is in many ways the essential aim of Gautier's poetic project.

In productions of Massenet's opera, the lighting would have reinforced the role of the Virgin. The Mother of God contributes mainly through her passivity and silence. Among various aspects of the legend that could reach back to pantomime and physical performance, one of the most significant is the embedded framework of gaze and spectatorship. If we think of the jongleur's disrobing, it would even be within bounds to speak of low-level voyeurism. The same holds true to a lesser extent for the removal of clothing by Mary herself, when she doffs at least partially her veil or mantle to soothe him. English lacks a verb along the lines of "oversee," modeled upon *overhear*, to denote inadvertent sight. Then again, perhaps inadvertence is not in play, at least for the person who sees. If the seeing is deliberate, we could venture even further to moot that we are in the presence of a special passion. It would be the fetishistic love of watching that is known in the technical jabberwocky of academics by the word scopophilia. If anyone engages in contemplative gazing, it is the Madonna and not the jongleur.

In classical Greece and Rome, the myth of the deity Diana and the mortal Actaeon, as recounted in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, may be the most relevant. The goddess of the hunt is bathing naked in a spring with her nymphs when the human hunter happens upon the scene as he pursues his blood sport. For the imprudence and impudence of gazing upon the divinity in the nude, the man is transformed into a deer. As an animal, he experiences a role reversal. The victimizer becomes the victim; the tracker, the tracked: he is first spoored and then slain by his own mastiffs.

Medieval literature has a well-trodden motif in which trysting lovers are caught off guard by viewers who watch unbeknownst to them. They are unwittingly ogled, to use a verb that is built upon the Latin and Romance root for the organ of sight, the eye. If the romance of Tristan offers an archetypal expression of so-called courtly love, an additional archetype inhabits scenes in which King Mark spies from a tree upon his wife Isolde and his nephew Tristan (see Fig. 5.24). The same motif is inverted comically in a fabliau: in the story of the pear tree a hapless old husband is duped into disbelieving his own eyesight as he observes his young wife cuckold him with her lover in a pear tree. He turns a blind eye, a human placeholder for the first of the three wise monkeys: see no evil. What the eye thinks it does not see, the heart does not grieve. Such voyeuristic moments in fiction speak to tension between what we would call private and public, especially in the domain of love, or at least of sex. A big difference, though, separates the narrative of the fruit tree from *Our Lady's Tumbler* and its modern remakes: the love spied upon in the tales about the jongleur is not openly erotic sexuality but personal affection, displayed in veneration of the Virgin. The entertainer thinks that the sole witness of his routine is the Madonna to whom he directs it. In his own performances, is the juggler a spectator, an actor, or both?

The crucial turning point in both the medieval narrative and *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* results from a perspective that turns most earlier situations—such as the biblical episode of Susannah seen bathing by the elders—on their head. Here, a woman eyes a lightly clad man as he dances, rather than vice versa. The type of spectacle and spectatorship inverts the cavorting of Salomé before Herod, and upends the norm in texts from the Middle Ages and for that matter from most other periods, in which males stare glassy-eyed at the Virgin. In prolonged meditation, such gazing men are described sometimes as perceiving images of Mary that possess the capacity to move. Here the opposite holds true. This is anything but see-and-be-seen. A masculine body, and in the end an abject and attenuated one, is the object of view by a female. In the first instance, the Madonna perceives the unsuspecting and unconscious tumbler. In a culture in which women were not only to be seen and not heard, but even to be seen and not see, the image of the Virgin is a looker in two diametrically opposed senses.

Meanwhile, outside the intimate space shared by the tumbler and the Mother of God stand the brethren who engage in espionage. These monks, not comprehending the lay brother's devotion, react with unbrotherly suspicion to his absence from the regular offices. Like the figures of jealous people in the sociodynamics of courtly

love, they interpose themselves between the lover and his beloved. In the literature of medieval France, such opponents may be husbands who have succumbed to the green-eyed monster, or others in their coterie who envy the lovers for the passion they share. In this vernacular literature, they are flanked by other antagonists, including watchmen and tattletales who circulate catty slander and set tongues wagging. The opposition offered by the brothers in the account of the tumbler is especially vindictive. The woman he loves seems hopelessly beyond his reach even without extra efforts from anyone else to distance them.

Fig. 5.24 King Mark spies upon Isolde and Tristan. Detail from Parisian casket panel, ca. 1340–1350. Ivory, 6 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des arts décoratifs. Photograph by Marie-Lan Nguyen, 2006, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tristan_Iseult_fountain_Louvre_OA10958.jpg

Knowing little of his situation and understanding still less even as they see more of it, the other monks spy upon the tumbler, regard him with ridicule and disapproval, and denounce him to the prior of the monastery. In modern terminology, they could be called killjoys. That noun fits the bill, since in the later of the two medieval versions of the story the title is *On Joy*. The tenor of his worship is joyous love, and they set out to end it. A synonym for the same role is spoilsport. The two words get at the opposite of the jongleur's tradecraft—whether we think of him as athlete of the body, artist of a musical instrument, or in some other capacity—which is a form of joy-inducing sport or pastime.

By keeping watch upon both the performer and the Madonna, the abbot and monk engage in the ocular equivalent of eavesdropping. Eyewitnesses in a forensic sense, they are also peeping Toms who monitor an intimate encounter, quite possibly unbeknownst to at least one of the participants, and who want verification. Beyond them stands the poet who records and describes the scene. Finally, we as recipients of

the poem complete the concentric circles that constitute the dynamics. The miracle has three spectators. Although the Virgin ministers to the tumbler after he has collapsed, we must not forget that the abbot and monk partake of the wonder by spotting it—as the minstrel himself does not. For the two monastic flies on the wall who surveil the crypt, seeing is believing; for the performer, belief does not require sight. The whole episode demonstrates what is truly a leap of faith—but it requires the undercover (or undercroft) agents, like doubting Thomases, to verify and validate the basis for their stupefaction. Without them, none of us would be any the wiser. The jongleur's collapse and the subsequent miracle would be as unknown as the tree in the philosophical thought experiment "If a tree falls in a forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound?" Were it not for the prying brethren, the episode would go unnoticed.

The scene calls to mind the story known in French as *Renieur*, in English as "Denier." In the earliest form of this episode in the *Life of the Fathers,* a sinner whose eyes are closed in prayer fails to distinguish that the statue of the Virgin bows to him. Despite having earlier accepted enticement and caved in to coercion from Jews to deny Christ, he refuses to abjure Mary, for doing so would remove his sole recourse to salvation through her intercession. In contrast to his symbolic blindness, his neighbor discerns the miracle. Ultimately, the Mother of God prevails upon her son. In a droll scene in a later version, she threatens to set the juvenile Jesus down, until he gives in by agreeing to show mercy to the sinful man.

In *Our Lady's Tumbler* the Virgin's gesture serves a dual function. On the one hand it rewards and pacifies the tumbler. On the other, it edifies the brethren as to the very purpose underlying their liturgy. With the utmost subtlety, it probes the profound question of what constitutes prayer. The whole scene of surveillance and being surveyed is reminiscent of mime plays, in which individuals act without apparent awareness of those who regard them. The intricacy is further compounded if the unbeheld viewing itself takes place in the context of a theatrical performance, in which the audience in attendance escapes detection as it watches. In the end, we have an elaborate set of Chinese boxes that gives new purport to the concept of peer review.

Before all the viewers performs the jongleur. Having withdrawn from popular entertainment, he ends up having his most formidable impact when without his knowledge, both human and superhuman viewers contemplate his activities in private. He has no cognizance of the brethren gaping at him, and he can only take it on faith that the Mother of God notices his devotion. When the prior declares that he can make out Mary blessing the entertainer, Jean in Massenet's opera replies simply "I see nothing." As in the medieval poem, the monks and their superior catch the former professional off guard in a spectacle directed not at the public but instead at the Virgin and Child alone. The onlookers first are appalled and then applaud.

Above the fray altogether is the Mother of God herself, who is not identical with her statuesque stand-in. Indeed, in many versions of the tale the Virgin intervenes as a physically separate entity from the Madonna. Mary sees the tumbler more clearly than

do the brethren monitoring him. Beyond her lies yet another set of viewers that we must not forget: when the miracle is enacted as a mime play, one-act-er, opera, or the like, then we as watchers add a further layer to an interlocking effect like that of Russian nested dolls. We metamorphose into the outermost encasement of a *matryoshka*.

The same relationships may be construed within the framework of spectatorship and performance. The cenobites in the choir above execute the liturgy as an imitation of angelic song, and as a token of their collective worship of God before all the denizens of heaven. Be that as it may, so far as we are given to understand, the enactment of the conventional offices would appear to fall on deaf ears among those above. The heavens are the intended viewers of the brethren, but the fulfillment of the conventional liturgy fails to reach its desired audience.

What of the jongleur below? In contrast to his colleagues up in the choir, he alone elicits a favorable response. He has opted to desist from the spectacular shows in which he once engaged in the lay world. Before, the world was truly his stage. Now that he has left both world and the boards, he no longer knows what to do. Behind him is the *theatrum mundi*, the great theater of the world. Before him is an unknown, since until he creates the *theatrum claustri*, the conception of a theater of the cloister does not exist. Within the monastery, this consummate professional of a performer finds himself deadwood, without the requisite skills for the internal theater of the canonical hours. A man whose chief action is entertaining, he is duty-bound to find a new outlet: he is doomed to fruitlessness and depression until he devises a fresh mode for satisfying novel viewers. In his own routines of veneration, we are entitled to ask whether the juggler is primarily a spectator or an actor. He watches the Madonna as he makes his offering, but how perceptive an onlooker can he be? He does not even appreciate that she reciprocates by watching him. Likewise, he is unobservant and insensitive when she moves (or when Mary descends from heaven to intervene, which is one way to grasp what happens).

"Performance art" has been defined in innumerable ways. For the present, it will be understood as an enactment, live or recorded, scripted or unscripted, that is presented to an audience within the context of fine arts. Almost perforce, it necessitates a mixing of media, since it blends theater with art. By this definition, the jongleur when performing before the Virgin qualifies as a performance artist, even if the crypt looks nothing like a fine-arts museum. In those versions of the story where the image becomes animate, the movement of Mary as she is enlivened resembles that of a mime breaking a long-held pose, as if by shattering the dramatic illusion the statue means to show that she has been the Mother of God all along.

6. Cloistering the USA: Everybody Must Get Stones

Nothing is more catholic, in the strict sense of the word, than the style of the thirteenth century; it is of all times, if one can speak thus, as it is of all lands.

—Adolphe-Napoléon Didron

Stony Silence

The word silence is still a sound.

—Georges Bataille

In both the medieval story and the adaptation of it by Anatole France, the leading actor's main performance takes place under a self-imposed gag order. In the first he tumbles, while in the second he juggles. The other human beings around this central character are monks, who divide their waking hours between executing their liturgical duties of song and fulfilling their other monastic obligations of wordless work and mute meditation. Both the Madonna and the Mother of God herself stay mute, upholding a long tradition of apparitions in which Mary does not express herself through speech. Instead, she imparts information and insights only through the eloquent soundlessness of simple gestures.

The poem crackles from the setting side by side of two starkly different registers—the full-throated sound of choral song by the brethren in the house of God and the silent communication of the routine that the entertainer dedicates to the Madonna. Upstairs, at ground level, the contemplatives in the choir of the abbey chapel sing in unison or antiphonally, their song echoing through the resonant chambers that interconnect within the masonry church. Downstairs, the lay brother burns the candle at both ends in the dim of the crypt. Paralleling the Latin chant performed above is the vernacular wordlessness of the space below ground.

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Letting our imagination range freely, we can ask ourselves whether the hush is complete or not. If we perk up our ears intently enough, we can perceive the pitter-patter of bare feet padding on flagstones. We can even go from the acoustic to the haptic and catch the athlete literally red-handed, as his callused palms slap on the stones. Likewise, we can hear him as he inhales and exhales, sniffs and snuffles, croaks and wheezes. Does the vacuum down beneath the choir give him true breathing space, even if the respiration is muffled? Listening still more keenly, we can even make out a gentle whooshing as the Virgin fans her devotee with a swatch of fabric. Sharpening our hearing even further, we can also detect the soft snorting and soughing of bated breath as the monks and abbot hide in the darkness and watch. But is the crypt an echo chamber—a whispering gallery, an enclosure in which vibrations reverberate—or is it a sound room, an anechoic space designed to absorb even the drop of a pin? Either way, the area allows the performer to concentrate his own thoughts in devotion and to funnel them toward Mary. She notices his prayers and hearkens to them, but without uttering a word. In any case, he is oblivious to her and the gestures she makes toward him. His conduct spares us the doubt about his mental health that might otherwise arise: "If you talk to God, you are praying. If God talks to you, you have schizophrenia."

In a sense, the quiet of the dancer's routine might turn out to resemble the loquacious hands of the sign language employed by the brethren at occasions such as meals. At these moments, non-oral communication takes place alongside the sounds of eating—earthenware or metal vessels and utensils clicking, wine or beverages glugging, benches creaking. Or the entertainer's earnest voicelessness might be like that of a medieval religious, poring over a manuscript. Yet silent reading may not have been nearly so still and even-tempered as the act is expected to be today. We cannot know to what degree the low decibel level signifies peace and quiet. In any case, the gymnast manages somehow to convey his faith before a likeness without using words of prayer. Images are sometimes interpreted as Scripture. A Gothic cathedral can be called a Bible for the poor, just as a heavily illustrated text on important biblical narratives can.

In *Our Lady's Tumbler* and *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*, speechlessness apparently rules. All the same, such stories have lived on, despite the seeming self-contradiction, by being transmitted through sound. In the Middle Ages, the exemplum would have been expanded when preachers appropriated it as the jumping-off place for sermons. Presumably Anatole France's tale was most often read not aloud but silently. Even so, we would not take an unjustified risk by wagering that thanks to its unintended success as children's literature, it has been recited more often than any of his other fiction. Then Massenet comes along. His opera has spawned variegated descendants in a wealth of media, all interweaving speech and song.

Music has about it at least one paradox. Among its most arresting ingredients is not only sound but also silence. Pauses, rests, and the interstices between notes matter as much as any of the tones themselves. Thematically, a related inconsistency informs the

juggler narrative. Every musical version of it violates noiselessness when declaimed or performed, but all of them do so to champion a universe marked by a contemplative stillness—a world apart from the one inhabited by listeners or spectators. The busier their ever noisier and more bustling lives have become, the more laypeople have succumbed to nostalgia, or at least yearning, for the Middle Ages as a lost time and place of soundless serenity — as days of wine and roses.

Nowhere has tranquility been imagined to reign more than in medieval great churches and cloisters. Silence may be golden, but it can also be stony. In 1878, Robert Louis Stevenson, who had had a strict Calvinist upbringing, traveled in rural France (see Fig. 6.1). Shortly afterward, the Scottish writer published his writings on the experience. Reflecting upon the apse at Noyon, he was spurred to an observation that rings a slight change upon the old image of the cathedral as a Bible for the poor. In his metaphor, such a house of worship imposes a hush upon human beings. By its very nature, an edifice on this scale is a sermon in comparison with which any human discussion would be at least anticlimactic and perhaps even bathetic, ending not with a bang but a whimper.

By chance, the frontispiece to the first edition in which Stevenson's passage on Noyon appeared depicts a procession of nuns parading down the nave, with lofty pointed arches behind them to bring home their humble scale (see Fig. 6.2). In the foreground, four sisters carry a litter. Atop the stretcher ride a Virgin and Child, she crowned and clad in blue. Behind it trails a cortege, four pairs of religious marching in a file, each of them toting a lighted taper. The visual depiction of the scene matches the travel writer's verbal one. In the picture he evokes, the Scottish author is the jongleur-like outsider, a Briton and former Protestant coming to grips with an alien ritual in the foreignness of Catholic France. His otherness was part of what made the place of worship overpower his recollection of all else that he witnessed or experienced in the town.

The shushed power of great churches struck Henry Adams as well, but his response was to draw a contrast between the whirring dynamos of modernity and the majestic Marian cathedrals of the Middle Ages. In his "Prayer to the Dynamo," the American exclaimed, "You come in silence, Primal Force." For all that, he recognized that in life, din was the more common experience when machinery ran. Even a purr is still a noise. For him and his coevals, the medieval period deserved to be perpetuated in quiet spaces reserved for devotion and learning. In both its buildings and its literature, the epoch had a simple solidity of prayerfulness. The quietude of praying, or at least of meditation, helps to explain the architectural aspects of the Gothic revival associated with (to highlight only one name) Ralph Adams Cram, which manifested itself, particularly from the 1890s through the 1930s, in the architecture not just of churches and monasteries but also in the campuses of schools and colleges as well as in public libraries. It was meant often as the architectonics of contemplation—of sound and soundlessness.

The early twentieth century may have spun the globe irreversibly away from the preindustrial centuries. At the same time, the public was afforded more and more opportunities for immersing itself in a past that was imagined to differ radically from what was then modernity. In the very years when Mary Garden forevermore secured a nook for the medieval juggler in American culture, collectors and philanthropists ensured that the United States would have its share of authentic monastic architecture from the Middle Ages, just as the nation had absorbed many types of earlier European architectural style into the fabric of its major institutions. In this appropriation of building design, the country had worked both backward and forward from what had been contemporary when the New World was colonized by the Old. During the first few centuries after Europe came into contact with the Americas, flora, fauna, and much more were commandeered on both sides of the Atlantic for what has been called the Columbian exchange. In the cultural portion of this transfer through colonization and commerce, the medieval fell mostly through the cracks—or perhaps it was consciously eschewed. Now the turn for those long-ago centuries in the limelight had arrived. The Gothic arrival on campuses in the USA had its equivalent in an even more ambitious Gothicization in museums there.

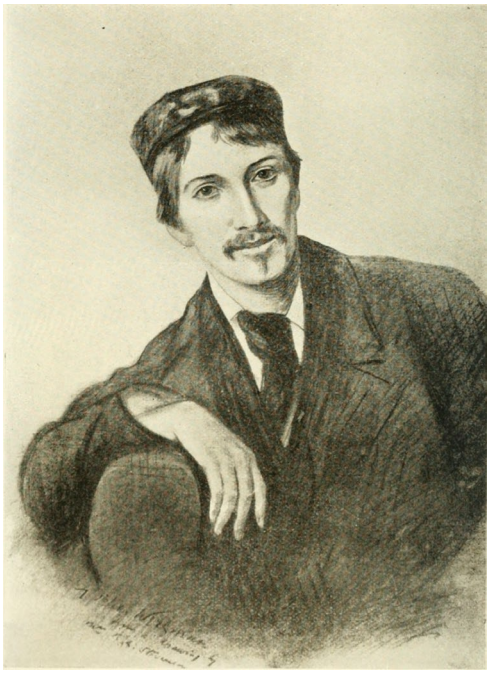

Fig. 6.1 Robert Louis Stevenson, age 26. Engraving by Charles Wirgman after drawing by Fanny Osbourne, 1919. Published in George Edward Brown, *A Book of R. L. S.: Works, Travels, Friends, and Commentators* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1919), frontispiece.

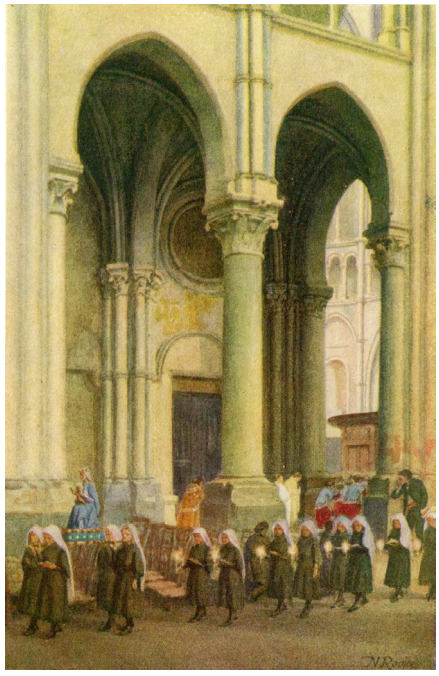

Fig. 6.2 "The Procession in Noyon Cathedral." Illustration by Noel Rooke, 1908. Published in Robert Louis Stevenson, *An Inland Voyage* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1908), frontispiece.

Collecting Clusters of Cloisters

Whether we like it or not, there is no "pure" medieval; there is only medievalism.

In the early phase of the "buying craze" that broke out among well-to-do American upstarts around 1870, the transactional focus rested squarely on the Renaissance and paintings. A little later in the century, the lens shifted to other time periods and artistic forms. Eventually, as chronological vision deepened to comprehend the Middle Ages, private collectors and their counselors, art dealers, and museums widened the aperture to encompass architectural elements. The transoceanic trade zeroed in for a short while on historical replicas in the form of plaster casts; next on reclaiming, first piecemeal and then wholesale, the interiors of stately homes; and finally on scavenging the exteriors of monasteries in their entirety. The United States purchased and imported what it could from Europe, where art and artifacts of the continent were sometimes to be bought at fire-sale prices. Sometimes the young nation grabbed up what it could out of sheer personal acquisitiveness, often out of cultural rivalry, and now and again out of a craving to protect and preserve what seemed imperiled. Americans had ample justification for this conduct from the behavior of past and present Europeans. Ancient Romans had shipped columns and obelisks all across the Mediterranean. Modern French and Germans had stitched together architecture and artwork from medieval churches and monasteries to achieve authenticity in museums of their own national cultures. These same museologists joined with amateur collectors in integrating masterpieces across media, rather than segregating pictures, sculpture, and decorative arts in different spaces.

North America underwent settlement by Western Europeans only after Columbus sailed the ocean blue in August, 1492. The landmass lacks the Middle Ages, if that segment of the past is defined (with the circularity that was the undebated norm until lately) as being more distinctive of Europe than even of immediately neighboring civilizations. By this measure the entire continent so bizarrely named after Amerigo Vespucci is intrinsically para-medieval. Hyphenated Americans come in hundreds of flavors, but no one self-identifies as a medieval one: natives would have found both adjectives redolent of alien and inapplicable cultures. All the Americas have cultures with a multiplicity of their own early, middle, and late phases: the chronometries and chronologies devised for them as for other continents must be overlaid upon each other only very gingerly.

Then again, we may need to infuse more nuance into our thinking than the preceding paragraph allows. The so-called Golden Age of American Giving sprawled from 1900 to 1939. At the time, the art and architecture of the Middle Ages were valuable commodities. One of its most remarkable episodes relates to importing and refurbishing medieval cloisters. Numerous magnates of these four decades could be attacked as unredeemed bandits who had accumulated their fortunes by battening

on the poor. But the basic criticism stands up better to scrutiny than the idea that they achieved no redemption. Ultimately many members of this oligopoly poured their gains, venal and ill-gotten or not, into philanthropy. They may have lined their pockets first, but they then directed their munificence to new goals. Their gifts helped to build the cultural and educational infrastructure of their homeland in museums, libraries, colleges, and hospitals upon which the nation relies heavily even to this day. They gifted wisely, even if sometimes in tainted money, and what they gave has benefited masses of their countrymen and has lasted.

In 1892, the Land of Liberty commemorated the four hundredth anniversary of the so-called discovery of the New World—when Europeans made landfall in the Western Hemisphere. At almost the same instant of the waning nineteenth century, the wealthiest citizens of the nation progressed from merely making grand tours abroad to developing a fervor for importing not just artworks but architectural elements too from before the arrival of Columbus. Although the term "Pre-Columbian" conventionally designates what preceded the Italian navigator in aboriginal American civilizations, it is used here with deliberate provocation to refer to what predated him in Europe itself. From this point of view, pre-Columbian and medieval have more in common than first meets the eye. As has been mentioned already, from an Enlightenment perspective both sets of cultures and civilizations were primitive worlds—and primitivism was not inherently pejorative. In the United States, the acquisition and nativization of components from pre-Columbian Europe raise questions of authenticity. Does a structure constructed during the European Middle Ages remain medieval after undergoing Frankensteinian surgery by being dismembered and re-membered across the Atlantic? Similarly, in the western portion of the Old World, actual medieval Gothic edifices blend into architecture in the revival manner, to say nothing of repeated renovations and postwar reconstructions of the original style. Differentiating between what is medieval and what is medievalist is not always the child's play that it might seem at first glance.

Museums had arisen in the early nineteenth century amid the idea-filled foment of German romanticism. In consonance with their conception as temples of art, these institutions were given expression in neoclassical architecture. Now in the late nineteenth century, Americans experimented with their own New World Sturm und Drang. In one prominent case, they steered clear of Greek and Roman temples, instead latching on to the notion of displaying their artistic treasures inside a loose imitation of the style that characterized medieval Christian Europe. The Boston Museum of Fine Art was signed into being formally in 1870 but not opened until the very deliberate date of July 4, 1876, the hundredth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. It was accommodated in a marvelously (and nationalistically?) red Victorian Gothic pile of brick and terracotta in Copley Square. There it stood until 1909, the centennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth, with collections that relied heavily on plaster casts. By the new century, ideas of what an art museum should be had changed thoroughly. Not a half century later, US tycoons chose to go revival one better by arrogating to

themselves and their country chunks of original Gothic edifices. From across the Atlantic they transported and imported genuine monuments from the Middle Ages.

The United States became trebly cathedralized. It possessed in abundance houses of worship designed in the medieval manner to serve its Christian denominations. It had buildings reminiscent of ecclesiastical ones from hundreds of years earlier to serve its colleges, commerce, and other interests. It owned national parks and forests, with mountain peaks and tree formations that were extolled as natural cathedrals. Nor was the Gothic permeation of the country limited to great churches. Supplementing them came cloisters, in bonafide abbeys, quadrangles of colleges, and mansions and museums. All these constructions and acquisitions were made possible by the boundless wealth of the day. Thanks to the almighty dollar, the nation became the proud and patriotic possessor of its own partly and wholly genuine medieval monasteries. It picked up borrowed finery in architectural elements from the Middle Ages and beyond. In fact, America took so much that it had fair claim to be called the world's ruin-nation.

No thorough list exists, but everyone who visits older museums and historic houses of the United States should keep an eye open for chunks of the European past embedded in the walls or even constituting them. This watchfulness could be styled a spolia alert, since building material or sculpture from earlier structures that is recycled within new ones goes by the Latin word for "spoils." The term most often refers to elements from preceding periods that were repurposed within buildings of late antiquity and the early Middle Ages. The related verb is to spoliate, meaning literally to despoil. By extension, this vocabulary describes the appropriation and incorporation of reusable modules from earlier phases of civilization. In some cases, new architecture and construction could be facilitated by appropriating and incorporating the old. In others, easiness was not a consideration: the objective was not to cut corners but instead to achieve the burnish of legitimacy and prestige.

The Cloisters, a branch of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, embodies twentieth-century American spoliation at its most extreme. By its very nature, the structure housing this institution is anything but a residence for a community of monks living under religious vows. Yet despite being in Manhattan, the site is marked by the seclusion that typifies monasteries. Medieval abbeys were usually located at a distance that would detach them from the energetic and even helter-skelter confusion of lay life. Just so, the complex known fully and formally as The Cloisters Museum predominates by design, high and serene atop the craggy Fort Tryon Park, protected from hurry-scurry development on a four-acre plot of land that overlooks the Hudson River (see Fig. 6.3). It may be the most remarkable memorial, at least through the transfer and reassembly of buildings situated once upon a time in Europe, of medievalism in architecture in America. It is a concrete, or stone, demonstration that the New World was a chip off the old block.

Fig. 6.3 Postcard of The Cloisters, New York (early twentieth century).

Benedictine monasticism and all its offshoots, such as Cistercianism, enjoined an ideal of immovability. The quality in question was known in Latin as *stabilitas loci*, "stability of place." A prospective new member who sought to enter any order promised to remain indissolubly within a stable organization. An irony of The Cloisters, and all its architectural siblings, is that the monasteries themselves have moved. They are no longer in their original places, in situ. The very stones, for all their massiveness, form a monument to translocation. Put into Latin, such mobility is an *instabilitas loci* which contravenes a founding principle of monkishness.

The Cloisters comprehends two sorts of collections. The assortment of art objects, however remarkable for its beauty and however arresting for its medieval focus, is less spectacular than the context in which the things are stationed. The museum's architecture is a collage in sculpted stonework that agglomerates and reconstitutes moving (or not-so-moving) parts from five medieval cloisters, as well as from other southern French monastic sites. To borrow a term from literature, the institution is a cento: a patchwork stitched together like a quilt from pieces of preexisting textiles, except that here the fabric is stonework.

The original collector of many architectural components and some of the sculpture in The Cloisters was George Grey Barnard. The art and other achievements of this American sculptor now lie buried in oblivion, but back in the day his work had many admirers. However improbable and anachronistic the description may seem by our lights, his marble bust of Abraham Lincoln was hailed for "the rightness of the Gothic sincerity." Imagine that: honest Abe as sincere Goth. Then again, the assassinated president had about him a deep spirituality, and the Gothicizing style was felt to be nothing if not soulful. But we should return to Barnard. In amassing architecture to transport to the United States, this enterprising artist and acquirer was driven, among

other things, by pedagogic and proselytizing impulses. Without authentic specimens to display, he felt frustrated in trying to introduce the beauties of medieval stone carving to young people. He craved prototypes, not copies.

For want of its own remote past, the United States was obliged either to construct its Middle Ages wholesale by raising new buildings in Romanesque and Gothic style, or by co-opting elements of the era from Europe. The first step involved getting plastered. Bygone sculpture and architecture that from afar could be seen only in engravings and etchings could be possessed in the round by fabricating low-cost casts. Multitudes of such reproductions could be assembled and put into museums for study and appreciation, with consequent increase of knowledge and improvement of taste. In America, casts had been collected in earnest since the early nineteenth century. They were major, even premier, attractions in the new museums between 1874 and 1905. Although most such replicas were of ancient classics, the monumental art and architecture of the Middle Ages received their share of attention (see Figs. 6.4 and 6.5). At Harvard University, the Germanic Museum with its collection of casts eventually came close to bookending the ethnological Peabody Museum: the one contained the exotic European Middle Ages, the other the exotic from other cultures, both packing a punch with their primitivist appeal.

Fig. 6.4 Plaster casts at the Germanic Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA. Photogravure from Kuno Francke, *Handbook of the Germanic Museum*, 3d ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1908).

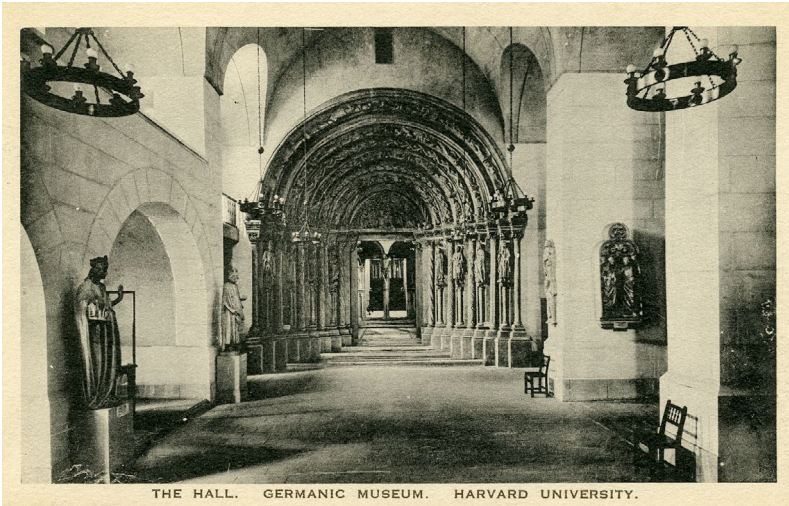

Fig. 6.5 Postcard of the main hall of the Germanic Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Co-Op Society, early twentieth century).

The possession of medieval material objects, even when not the real thing of originals but at least the next best thing of casts, had its utility for teaching purposes in the short run. For the long term, it proved not to be a very popular or effective solution. Along with plaster, much aspersion was cast. In the so-called battle of the casts, the losers were those who supported museums as loci for education through the chronological presentation of European art in reproductions. The winners were those who saw the same establishments as temples where visitors could revere beauty. To the aesthetes, the molded objects stood in the same relation to the authentic ones as player pianos did to the reality of fully live performance: rightly or wrongly, both seemed later to be cut-rate machinery. Beyond lacking the depth and texture of the actual stones, the casts dislodged medieval sculpture from its architectural context. As the statues gained the potential for aesthetic respect, they incurred the risk of losing their historical and cultural setting. The replication binge ended with many galleries taking drastic measures to get un-plastered. The institutions rid themselves of their unwanted necropolises of plaster. The copies are now mostly cast-offs, many dispersed and others forgotten. Some of them, having been produced by emerging from one kind of mold, underwent a decline by becoming caked in mold of another sort. Others ended their lives of frozen immobility by being deaccessioned, discarded, and pulverized: earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, powder to powder.

As casting fell out of favor, the vogue of stocking up on originals for import took hold. Where architectural monuments were concerned, the real thing meant parts of buildings, whole edifices, and even whole complexes of them. These became the coin of the realm. Ceilings, wall paneling, and parquet flooring were bought and shipped, as well of course as movable objects from within structures. Even whole chambers

could be disassembled and freighted by land and sea, to be reassembled in other venues such as the New World. A vogue arose for period rooms. Such spaces served as time capsules or time machines that sought to duplicate the objects and atmosphere of an earlier epoch. Now the scale of such break-up and reuse became grander. Barnard began by collecting capitals and other sculpture, paintings, woodwork and furniture, ceramics, textiles, and other small forms. Then he made into a specialty of his own the purchase and transportation of architectural elements. These included not merely doorways, arches on piers, window frames, and fireplaces, but first single chambers and then even entire cloisters. He did not retain a monopoly for long, as his transferral of architectural salvage from one continent to another provoked the emulation of William Randolph Hearst and others. Doing nothing by halves, these American enthusiasts took this enterprise to epoch-making levels, and across unprecedented distances.

Barnard presented his pursuit as the most literal-minded act of a cathedralomaniac. His activity was the salvage and hoarding of the bulkiest imaginable trumpery. It was "collecting fragments of broken cathedrals." In late antiquity and the Middle Ages, architectural elements were wrested from the remains and rubble of ancient buildings and cannibalized for reuse in newly built structures. In the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, above all in America, the same scrapyard or junkyard process took place in the construction of mansions and museums, except that the material had to be transported across vastnesses of space many magnitudes greater.

In such shipment of whole medieval buildings and chunks of them, Barnard was neither the first nor the last. That said, he deserves credit for having been the best, or at least the biggest-scale. Yet because he lacked the extraordinary wealth required by the ferally Darwinian rules of American philanthropy in his era, he did not manage to project his name across the decades and centuries as others did. His accomplishment was to take the acquisitions imported into the United States during the "buying craze" to a monumental level. With the proceeds from their profiteering, buccaneering businessmen and high-rolling robber barons went on this fling during the so-called American Renaissance. Extending from 1876 to 1917, this chronology coincided with what has also been tagged the Golden Age of Collecting.

The social climbers with stuffed wallets who bought monastic quadrangles from the Middle Ages largely coincided with those who financed the erection of new cloisters in the collegiate Gothic style on campuses. Both undertakings could be viewed profitably (forgive the choice of adverb) within the context of Thorstein Veblen's scalding critique of Gothic. In reaction against what he condemned as the high cost and inefficiency of this revival style, he spurned the campus at the University of Chicago as conspicuous consumption by a tasteless leisure-class elite. Had he known about the transshipment of masonry from hundreds of years ago and thousands of miles away, he would have surely uttered even shriller words about the misspending and misapplication of resources.

During a multiyear residence in France, Barnard established a kind of architectural chop shop where he succeeded in stockpiling medieval objects, including elements from four monasteries. His French sojourn occurred at an opportune time. In 1905 the government established state secularism by separating Church and State. In 1906 it codified a law that permitted the state to inventory and arrogate Catholic property. The policy had unintended consequences, by allowing private citizens and non-French to buy up ecclesiastical buildings. By 1913, the Senate realized tardily the scope of collecting by the American artist and others, and on December 31 of that very year it forbade the export of such antiquities. Overnight, what had been salable rubble became contraband. But the action turned out to be toothless, because it came too late. Breaking news: only a couple of days before the ordinance went into effect, the opportunistic sculptor and speculator laid hold of the loophole before red tape closed it, and foresightedly paid the full freight to ship his holdings—really, his buildings—transatlantic to the United States.

Less than a year later, Barnard opened his catch-as-catch-can display of cloisters to visitors. The timing fell shortly before Christmas, on December 14, 1914 (see Fig. 6.6). The year was a momentous one for American medievalism, since toward the end of it the collection pieced together by John Pierpont Morgan opened for public viewing, also in Manhattan (see Fig. 6.7). From 1914 through 1916, the business leader's vast and magnificent accumulation of art attracted a record-breaking viewership of more than one and a half million people. Meanwhile, the artist's do-it-yourself exhibition, billed as "the first Gothic museum in the United States," became known as "Barnard's Cloisters." The exhibitor was open in his ambition to institute a museum "where the 'spirit of Gothic' could once more cast its spell" (see Fig. 6.8).

The sculptor's re-creation emanated Gallic as much as Gothic. The whole configuration was signposted to be "for the benefit of the widows and orphans of French sculptors." The mention of mothers and children was not entirely fortuitous. The elements of Barnard's Cloisters were arranged in a pseudosacral context to resemble a basilica-plan chapel, with what he called a sanctuary at its heart. Presumably the whole was meant to evoke a monastic church, since the sculptor, collector, and entrepreneur referred to it as his "Abbaye"—the French for "abbey." The architecture had modern features, such as a steel-and-glass roof for lighting, but Barnard made an effort to age the building's appearance artificially. He hosed down the shed while the mortar on the bricks was still moist, to give it a distressed look.

Among a gallimaufry of art objects, a statue of the Virgin and Child held pride of place (see Fig. 6.9). Although the stagy setting can be slammed as unscholarly, it held true to the cultic and miraculous associations that such images had centuries ago in the Middle Ages. Putting together architecture and art as Barnard did risked being anachronistic, but at the same time it dared to integrate what many twentieth-century museums dis-integrated very differently, but equally anachronistically.

Fig. 6.6 Interior of Barnard's Cloisters, New York. Photograph by William M. Van der Weyde, before 1923. Published in William M. Van der Weyde, "Dramas in Stone," *The Mentor* 11 (March 1923): 21.

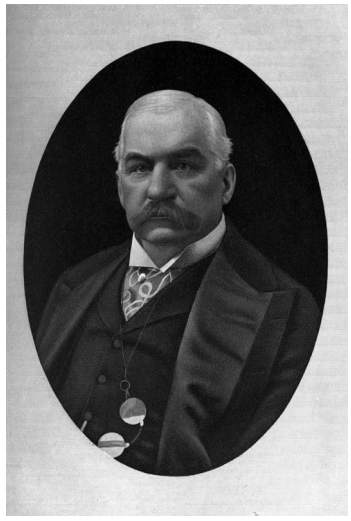

Fig. 6.7 John Pierpont Morgan. Photograph, before 1913. Photographer unknown, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:JohnPierpontMorgan.png

Fig. 6.8 George Grey Barnard. Photograph by William M. Van der Weyde, before 1923. Published in William M. Van der Weyde, "Dramas in Stone," *The Mentor* 11 (March 1923): 19.

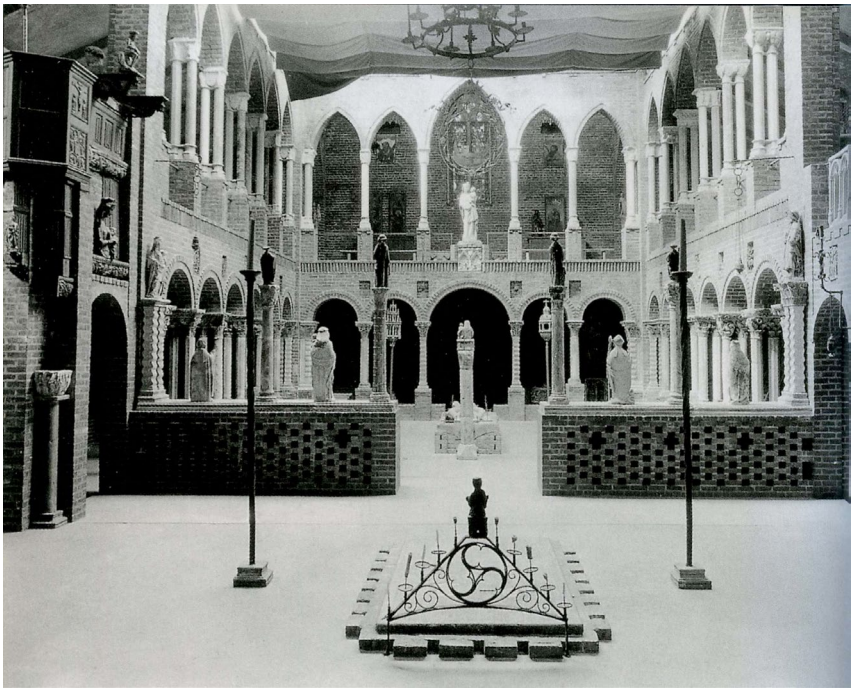

Fig. 6.9 Interior view of Barnard's Cloisters, with Virgin and Child overlooking the central courtyard. Photograph, ca. 1925. Photographer unknown.

The popular response to Barnard's Cloisters was resoundingly positive. It could be rated a blockbuster *avant la lettre*. For example, his one-of-a-kind replication was promoted in an essay entitled "Dramas in Stone." A key photograph to illustrate this article shows the interior lighted by candles. With the flair of a natural-born showman, the artist-collector outfitted the guides to his collection in hooded monastic habits. The stony theater that he staged required human actors to flit in and out of the Gothic shadows. The pseudomonks or -friars led viewers through sham ecclesiastical spaces. These areas were lit by candles to supplement natural light from above, scented and sanitized or at least odorized by incense burning in thuribles, and resonating with the sounds of medieval chant. This was a medievalesque rock concert. With its romanticism, it drew spectators into the fantasy of recreational medievalism that is today available in Renaissance Fayres and Medieval Times.

Alas, the site, however affectingly fresh it was for frequent museum-goers of the day, lacked the permanency that having an endowment or even being debt-free would have provided. Barnard was financially strapped: he had bet his bottom dollar and lost. If success is to be computed by persistence of naming rights, he lost. His dream of having his installation regrouped for a coherent presentation of medieval art and architecture reached lasting fulfillment in 1938—but only after his underfunded venture had suffered the equivalent of a hostile takeover. Less than a month after his death, The Cloisters opened under the aegis of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The feat of reconceiving and reconfiguring Barnard's holdings into a branch of the Met could not have been achieved without the sometimes self-serving generosity and often take-charge approach of Rockefeller. His carefully guided gifts enabled both renovations and acquisitions; for instance, in 1935 The Cloisters acquired the chapter room from Pontaut Abbey. Yet architectural salvage was only part of the picture. The philanthropist also provided money for a Gothic Fund that he designated specifically for the purchase of artworks to be installed within the building of the new facility. For the first time a large and growing sampling of art from the Middle Ages was made available for public viewing, displayed within equally authentic elements of medieval architecture.

Rockefeller had learned much from bankrolling various collegiate Gothic campuses and buildings. The planners had designed their constructions to be subsumed thoughtfully into the surrounding landscapes. In the first half of the twentieth century no form of architecture was aligned more deliberately and creatively with its topographic and horticultural surroundings than Gothic. Drawing on the experience the multimillionaire had gained from his past benefactions, he underwrote the conversion into a public park of land to the north for the reassembly of Barnard's museum. The curation of the environment under Rockefeller's direction could itself be viewed as histrionic. He did not make a mountain out of a molehill, he made a monastery out of one. The objective of the theatricality was to recreate the sort of splendid isolation that so many medieval abbeys seem to bespeak. The frontage of the grounds on the hillside, the river, and the woodlands across the valley belonged to

the installation and exhibition of faux medieval monasticism every bit as much as the architecture and art did.

Within the toned-down setting of the professional museum itself, the Middle Ages were put on before the public. The Cloisters took the presentation of objects to one extreme on the museological spectrum. For much of their collections, many institutions favored a more clinical environment, in which objects were displayed in box-like spaces against white walls: the exhibition hall serves as a de facto graveyard or columbarium. In happy and atypical contrast, medieval art was placed within an architectural and spatial reenactment of the era from which it came, sometimes Romanesque but far more often Gothic. Rather than put into a sterile laboratory, the mediaevalia were set within a pseudomonastery or chapel where seances could be enacted. Instead of looking like specimens in bottles of formaldehyde neatly arrayed within vitrines, the sculptures, stained glass, tapestries, and triptychs stood or hung without such additional barriers. They were heuristics, to facilitate self-guided discovery and learning.

Should devout Catholic or Orthodox visitors cross themselves, kneel, kiss the icons, or show their devotion in other ways? No. But many other participatory activities have taken place in these rooms, some of them anachronistic or otherwise inappropriate, but most of them beneficial in bringing alive the spaces, artworks, and artifacts. The surroundings, atmospheric by design, collocate different media so that the onlooker becomes an actor within a living diorama. The experience is multisensory, with sights, sounds, smells, and touches. At the same time, the ecosystem is contemplative. If what is spiritual may be desacralized, then it reifies medieval spirituality so that sightseers may be transported.

In this faux-natural context, illumination had its role to play. Barnard's dreamland of make-believe monks in costumes was no more, but the impulse toward monastic masquerade was not wholly stifled. Before too many decades passed, The Cloisters would furnish the backdrop for the modern acting out of bona fide medieval dramas. No theatrical form of *Our Lady's Tumbler* would be re-created before the footlights there, but a play performed on site would inspire a great poet to make a simple musical of the tale from the Middle Ages. The telling of that story about W. H. Auden, though, must tarry a little while.

A Gothic Room of Her Own: Vanderbilt and Gardner

Unmentioned in the photo-essay "Dramas in Stone" about Barnard are other such episodes in which American collectors, the rich and famous of their day, took to pieces medieval and Renaissance cloisters from Europe and shipped them block by block to the United States. Before investigating the topic, we should sort out exactly what we mean by the concept "cloister." The English derives from the Latin word for "enclosure." *Claustrum* designates most often an oblong open territory boxed in by covered gangways, usually with a colonnade on the inside and walls on the outside. Its

be-all and end-all is to impound, demarcate, and separate. Claustration sets off those within from those without. Earlier it had accomplished this aim for medieval monks in Europe; more recently it achieved the same goal for modern college students; and finally now it did likewise for the latest museum-goers.

The wealthy titans who repurposed premodern cloisters by disassembling and exporting them lock, stock, and barrel took the late antique and early medieval practice of spoliation to an altogether new level. Centuries earlier, builders could quarry objects and materials from the architecture of antiquity—for example, a column from a classical temple might be expropriated and recycled within a church. The rehashing of architectural elements was not meant as iconoclasm. The objective was not to butcher constructions, but rather to renew and revive the culture that had originally produced them. The taking of spolia was intended not as devastation but instead as celebration, by borrowing building blocks. In the Middle Ages, such integration could also be motivated by a shortage of materials, the need for efficiency, or various other reasons.

In the Gilded Age, the dismantlement, shipping, and reassembly were anything but an economy. Rather, they constituted attempts to reconstruct a prestigious civilization in another place, and to arrogate its authority and aesthetics for a new home. In its own way, they represented an early twentieth-century equivalent of the medieval phenomenon: recall that the stones of the Holy House really or supposedly skimmed, like flying saucers or Identified Flying Objects, from the Holy Land across the Mediterranean to Loreto or Walsingham. This time an assortment of American Croesuses, first female and later male, fulfilled the function that earlier angels had filled.

That story begins with two high-powered and independent ladies who established a novel practice that would endure in the United States for five decades. They collected medieval objects, created defined spaces in their own homes for displaying them, and called these areas "Gothic rooms" or "halls." In one sense, these places developed naturally from Victorian accumulations of objets d'art, and from preceding epidemics of antiquarianism that had manifested themselves centuries earlier in cabinets of curiosities. In another, they marked major steps toward house museums and other signally American institutions that memorialized and immortalized the great wealth, and sometimes the good taste, of individual philanthropists. In a third way, they furnished romantic chambers for time travel, as a reprieve from the frenetic money-making, new technologies, and political pressures of the Gilded Age. They offered a way back to the imagined stability and respectability, both spiritual and social, of the Middle Ages.

One of the two women was Alva Vanderbilt Belmont, whose first marriage was to William K. Vanderbilt. The couple's wealth was legendary, even mythic. Among their most improvident expenditures and conspicuous consumptions, they hosted an extravagant costume ball in 1883. The chronological phantasmagoria of outfits ran the gamut of history, and paid ample tribute to the medieval period. Alva herself was fitted out as a Venetian princess (see Fig. 6.10).

The British royal family had solidified the pedigree for such jamborees. In 1821, George IV added pageantry to his coronation by putting on a pseudomedieval banquet in Westminster Hall. The festivities culminated when the Hereditary Champion rode in on horseback in full armor to fling down his gauntlet. The architectural illustration of the ceremony is a riot of pointed arches, with a touch of Carmen Miranda in the central figure's truly over-the-top headgear (see Fig. 6.11). In 1842, Victoria and Albert set as the theme for their first costumed gala the court of Edward III and Queen Philippa, royal predecessors whom they impersonated in attire based on tomb effigies (see Fig. 6.12). Later the custom, a modification of tableaux vivants, arose of basing fancy dress parties upon paintings.

Beyond the fantasied history of American masked balls in the tradition of British royal masquerades, the Vanderbilts shared a familial gusto for construction on a colossal scale. Their all-American *folie de bâtir*, or "building mania," extended even to Gothic exteriors and interiors. Between 1888 and 1892, William K. Vanderbilt erected a spectacular summerhouse. Called Marble House, it was a gift to mark his wife's thirty-ninth birthday. The couple's New York City mansion, named with similar understatedness the Petit Château, was patterned after the late Gothic Hôtel de Cluny in Paris (see Fig. 6.13). This not-so-little chateau is a wedding cake of gargoyles, chimeras, flying buttresses, ogives, and pointed arches, with layers of late French Gothic and Beaux Arts in alternation, like chocolate and vanilla.

As a special feature, Marble House contained a so-called Gothic Room (see Fig. 6.14). In its principal decorative elements, it was based on the Gothic Hôtel Jacques Cœur in Bourges, France (see Fig. 6.15). The carved wooden wainscot was surmounted by red damask, fenestrated on the inside with four stained-glass window bays, and topped by a polychrome ceiling from which hung brass chandeliers in the revival style. Not too shabby. The centerpiece is the chimneypiece. A riot of pinnacled and crenelated Gothicism, it constitutes the stone equivalent of a folio in an illuminated medieval manuscript, with figures tucked in everywhere. The whole space was designed and decorated to showcase Alva's medieval paintings, sculpture, and other embellishments.

Alva Vanderbilt's name has become unhooked from her Gothic Room, which has migrated still farther from its native Europe to Florida. Even without the dispersal, no one can pretend that she made an individual achievement through systematic connoisseurship and collecting, since she acquired many of her items from the Middle Ages as an ensemble from the holdings of a single Parisian dealer. Yet her idiosyncratic contributions as an aficionado to the Gothicization of America in the Gilded Age should not be downplayed or even less forgotten. Beyond the particulars of the objects she assembled and the architectural space she midwifed for them, she made the Gothic period room chic. In due course, a hotel such as the Park Central in New York City would seek to mimic such an ambience by having a Gothic Room of its own (see Fig. 6.16).

Fig. 6.10 Alva Vanderbilt, costumed as a Venetian princess for her 1883 ball. Cabinet photograph by José Maria Mora, 1883.

Fig. 6.11 The Coronation of King George IV, Westminster Hall, London. Engraving by John Chapman after Robert Blemmell Schnebbelie. Robert Huish, *An Authentic History of the Coronation of His Majesty, King George the Fourth* (London: J. Robins & Co., 1821), frontispiece.

Actual medieval architectural components were first transported en bloc, as it were, to America to form part of what is now the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston. The flamboyant Mrs. Jack Gardner (see Fig. 6.17) began loosening her purse strings and pulling out her checkbook to build Fenway Court as her mansion in 1896, and completed it as a museum in 1903. In the construction of the large courtyard, she sought to simulate a Venetian palazzo, but around it she created an eclectic buffet of Italian, French, and Spanish architectural elements and artworks.

The heiress's collecting found its center of gravity in paintings. To display all her trophies, she fitted together a specially designed setting indoors. Inspired by John Ruskin, she transposed the theory set forth in *The Stones of Venice* into a rocky reality of her own devising. The glass-roofed interior court boasts eight balustrades and balconies from the Ca' d'Oro, or "House of Gold" in the dialect of Venice, which "Mrs. Jack" and her husband had acquired in 1897, together with other architectural elements such as colonnades, window frames, capitals, and roundels—the very balconies that had appeared saliently in Ruskin's masterpiece. Isabella Stewart Gardner went one better

than merely taking a page from the Englishman's book: she took real stones instead of metaphorical ones. A painting from 1894 by the portraitist Anders Zorn depicts her in Venice as she steps through the drapery from just such a railing supported by balusters (see Fig. 6.18).

Fig. 6.12 Edwin Landseer, *Queen Victoria and Prince Albert at the Bal Costumé of 12 May 1842*, ca. 1842–1846. Oil on canvas, 143 × 111.6 cm. London, Kensington Palace.

Fig. 6.13 Petit Château, Vanderbilt House, New York. Photograph by Benjamin J. Falk, ca. 1897. Washington, DC, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

Fig. 6.14 Postcard of the "Gothic Room" of the Vanderbilt's Marble House, Newport, RI (Newport, RI: The Preservation Society of Newport County, date unknown).

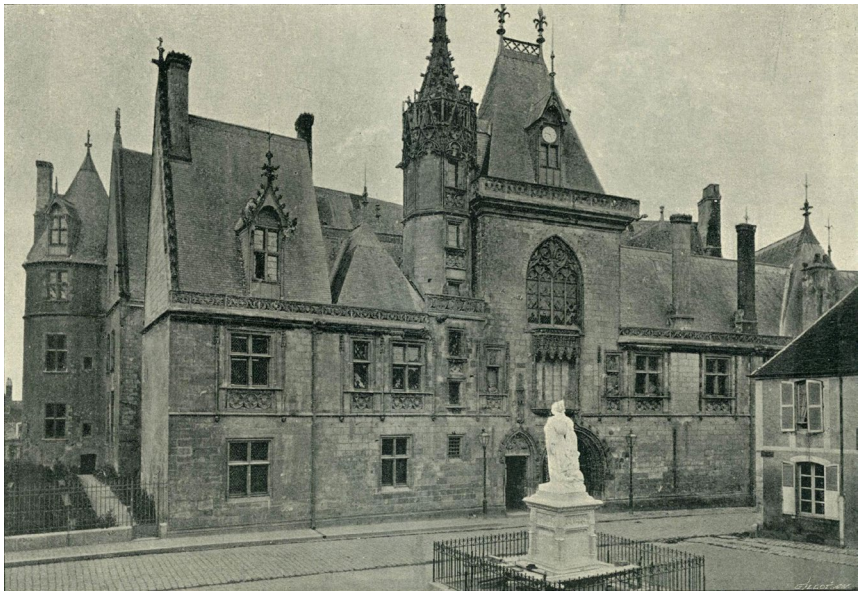

Fig. 6.15 Hôtel Jacques Cœur, Bourges, France. Photograph by M. Campagne, 1895. From L. Boulanger, *Album national: France, Algérie, colonies* Paris, 1895.

Fig. 6.16 Postcard of the "Gothic Room" of the Park Central Hotel, New York (New York: Lumitone Photoprint, 1930s).

Beyond paintings and architectural elements, the relatively few specimens of medieval art in her collection should not be ignored. The famous portrait of Gardner by John Singer Sargent hangs in a corner of the so-called Gothic Room within what is now the Gardner Museum, which in 1903 the painter was permitted to use as a studio. The space is entered by way of an oaken indoor porch, carved in the prevailing style, which lies off the chapel at the end of the Long Gallery. The private place of worship has above the altar a window composed of a twelve-foot stained glass fragment from the cathedral at Soissons. (Fortuitously, we encountered this town in Picardy repeatedly in discussing the context of *Our Lady's Tumbler*.) The room, kept rigorously private during Gardner's lifetime, became home to many of her medieval objects as the building was readied to become a house museum. In both its architecture and interior design, the space contains a profusion of elements in the style from which it takes its name.

In stained glass, Gardner belonged to the first wave of American collecting. She had a sufficiently close relationship with the Harvard medievalist Henry Adams that she followed his recommendation in purchasing the great window from Soissons. Colored glass was as much a defining feature of Gothic as stone, and from the 1870s arbiters of taste imported into the US windows, panes, and shards with the same gusto they showed for the hewn blocks of cloisters and other architectural constructions. Perhaps counterintuitively, the logistical nightmares posed by stone and glass were very similar. Both entailed transportation costs and required installation spaces that lay far beyond the means of any but the deepest-pocketed patrons and largest museums.

Gardner was also connected with the likes of Charles Eliot Norton of Harvard University. In the 1880s she attended this professor's lectures on art history as well as his readings of Dante. In the former she overlapped with William Randolph Hearst,

who for three decades in the century to come would personify the new affluence, from all appearances bottomless, that would impair her own ability to collect. Since Norton was the foremost acolyte of John Ruskin among New World academics, it stands to reason that "Mrs. Jack" should have been influenced deeply by *The Stones of Venice*. In certain respects, the Englishman's monograph provided her with the blueprint for the very structure of the new lodging she built to house her collection. She took actual stones from the City of Water to erect her American recreation of a Venetian palazzo.

Fig. 6.17 John Singer Sargent, *Portrait of Isabella Stewart Gardner*, 1888. Oil on canvas, 190 × 80 cm. Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Isabella_Stewart_Gardner_(John_Singer_Sargent).jpg

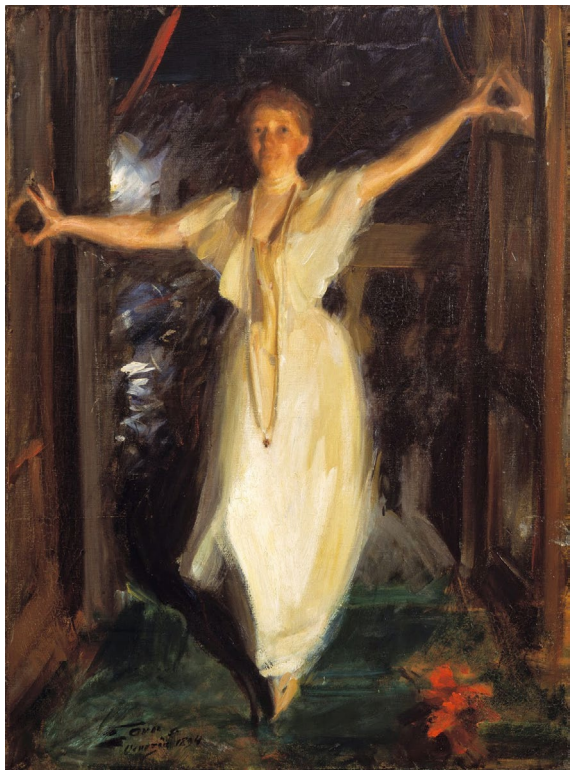

Fig. 6.18 Anders Zorn, *Isabella Stewart Gardner in Venice*, 1894. Oil on canvas, 91 × 66 cm. Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Zorn,_Anders_-_Isabella_Stewart_Gardner_in_Venice_-_1894.jpg

With the thew of her colorful character and the intangibles of her talent, Gardner paved the way, literally as well as metaphorically. She set the stage for a horde of well-fixed successors among her countrymen. Particularly amid the impoverishment and dislocation of the European aftermath to the Great War, wealthy individuals in America elevated collecting beyond such customarily traditional objects as oil paintings and illuminated manuscripts. Now they had the audacity to seek out

large-scale architectural components that hitherto no one had thought to regard as art, or dared to transport. Because stones are famously mute, we risk missing how such lithic refugees contributed, alongside the human ones, to the permeation of American culture by the Middle Ages. The Statue of Liberty, which opened in 1886, welcomed worldwide tired, poor, and huddled masses. Emma Lazarus's sonnet entitled "The New Colossus" that engraved those epithets upon hearts and minds also had the sculpture cry out a silent imperative "Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" Not everyone listened: along with people, plenty of both stories and stones made the tempest-tossed transatlantic trip safely.

Raymond Pitcairn and the "New Church"

John Pitcairn Jr. was the Scottish-American president of the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company, still very much in existence today. In private life, he was a member of the Swedenborgian denomination. To serve the denomination, between 1913 and 1928 he underwrote the costs of constructing a cathedral in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, near Philadelphia (see Fig. 6.19). In time, the medievalesque edifice became known simply as the "New Church."

In the motion of masonry from the Old World to this locale in the New, one demiurge was the son of the industrialist. Like both Gardner and Hearst, Pitcairn *fils* (see Fig. 6.20) engaged closely with scholars of the Middle Ages—with medievalists. A portcullis would soon drop with a clatter to sunder wealthy collectors from learned scholars—but it had not yet fallen. This Raymond had extensive dealings with Ralph Adams Cram, and initially employed him as the architect for the church that he eventually designed on his own. After keeping the fanatic of collegiate Gothic in his employ from 1912 until the spring of 1917, the businessman, collector, and philanthropist himself took personal charge and saw the construction through to completion as ad hoc designer and project manager.

In planning the cathedral, Raymond Pitcairn was influenced by the work of a renowned Harvard faculty member who helped to found the study of medieval art and architecture in the United States. Arthur Kingsley Porter's recruitment to the Department of Fine Arts in 1919 came in tandem with the university's acquisition of twelfth-century capitals. The wealthy constructor and collector turned to the professor for counsel as he transitioned into systematic collecting of decorative elements from ecclesiastic architecture such as stained glass, capitals, lintels, and mosaics. He provided some of these original medieval fragments as models to be studied by the masons. In the end, he accrued such an extensive collection of such items that he was obliged to build a home in which to house them (see Fig. 6.21). The castle-like construction was built from 1928 to 1939 largely in Romanesque style. Called Glencairn, the house (now a museum) incorporated actual medieval stonework.

After the start of the Great War, the acquisition of architectural elements took on radically different undertones from earlier such purchases. If the Middle Ages were thought of as the childhood of the European continent, then the partial handover of its monuments to North America was not necessarily pillaging, but to an extent a humanitarian effort. It could be regarded even as a kind of stone "Save the Children" flotilla, in which the cultural products of an entire epoch were shipped abroad for safekeeping. A symptom of the changed attitudes can be seen in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. Its Chinese Loggia features fragments of stained glass from the Reims cathedral, badly damaged in the hostilities, that were presented to "Mrs. Jack" in 1919 by an American ambulance driver. We should pay attention that in general Gardner took notable pains to avoid any charge of impropriety or exploitation. Her acquisitions were not depredations. This is not to maintain that all the relocations of ruins from France and Spain were motivated by unvitiated altruism. On the contrary, the belated enactment of French and Spanish laws against such transfers of architectural stone elements overseas fits with the tut-tutting views sometimes expressed in both Europe and the United States against this twentieth-century practice as pillaging. Such cultural vandalism is sometimes designated technically as elginism. Whereas the repatriation of the Parthenon Marbles remains a bone of fierce contention between the United Kingdom and Greece, the medieval monasteries of America have not been contested.

Fig. 6.19 Bryn Athyn Cathedral, Bryn Athyn, PA. Photograph by Wikipedia user Coemgenus, 2006, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bryn_Athyn_Cathedral.jpg

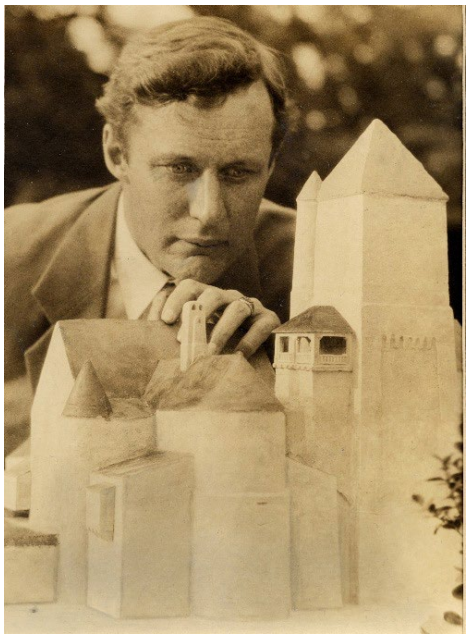

Fig. 6.20 Raymond Pitcairn examines a preliminary model of Glencairn. Photograph, ca. 1930s. Photographer unknown. Image courtesy of Glencairn Museum. All rights reserved.

Fig. 6.21 The Great Room of Glencairn Museum, Bryn Athyn, PA. Photograph by Wikimedia user Bestbudbrian, 2017, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Glencairn_Museum_-_Great_Room.jpg. CC BY-SA 4.0.

The Hearst Castle

The pathfinders in the moving of medieval Europe to the United States have lapsed into being sometimes underrecognized. Among them, the name of William Randolph Hearst must be singled out. He dropped out of Harvard, a century before the practice of not completing the college degree became fashion-forward and even occasionally fabulously lucrative. The slick-haired nabob of sensationalizing newspapers, he evolved into a glad-handing populist politician. More pertinent to the present topic, he was a passionate, even almost pathological collector. In fact, he stockpiled art and architecture, while emptying his war chest of funds, on such an extravagant scale that he might fairly be described as suffering from a hoarding disorder.

Hearst's profligate acquisition of medieval objects, most of which he purchased sight unseen, a pig in a poke, is pilloried in a 1939 novel by Aldous Huxley. Only a few years earlier, the British author had been much more admiring of the Middle Ages newly fabricated in the United States in the collegiate Gothic campus of Duke University. In the end, the objects gathered up suffered from the dispersal that so often ensues upon the deaths of hoarders. A collection is especially doomed to diaspora when its obsessive accumulator fails to set a clear scope and broker a realistic scheme for preservation and oversight within an endowed museum. Hearst put far less effort into a realizable grand plan, or even just a final decluttering, than he did into relentless buy-buy-buy. Like a child who does not clean up after playing with blocks, the moneyed man left strewn across the country heaps of slabs that languished untended for decades. Consequently, his vast holdings of stone and stained glass, alternately neglected and vandalized, underwent spalling and arson. Since then, they have been further split up and sold off. By now, they have traveled many more leagues, scattered across the past century, than ever did the most peripatetic of medieval minstrels. In due course, many a US museum worth its salt built a new hall or redecorated an old one to accommodate medieval stonework that had first been imported into the country by this one uncontrolled collector, whom some might even consider a crank.

Much of what Hearst bought, he brought to the "Enchanted Hill" at San Simeon on the central littoral of California. The ranch is known today simply as "Hearst Castle." Although in the main the sprawling, art-filled house holds to a Spanish Colonial revival style, its architect, the remarkable Julia Morgan (see Fig. 6.22), was well versed in Gothic from having traveled and studied in France. In designing the millionaire's eclectic nirvana, she tucked in features of the medieval style here and there. The massive hilltop mansion features the Gothic Suite which provided the private living quarters of Hearst and his long-time companion, the actress Marion Davies. Within these chambers, the library remains to this day a favorite of tourists. The wing is beloved for both its architecture and its combination of faux and genuine medieval furnishings, such as Gothic painted ceilings, mantels, and chairs. On the shelves sit Hearst's holdings of Walter Scott's novels in various editions. As we have seen time

and again, Gothicizing literature and architecture have often traveled together as bosom buddies.

Although the magnate has had his scholarly defenders, not everyone cares for the juxtapositions that the design produced. Notably, Huxley's novel savaged the construction for its clumsy Gothic extravagance. To compound the eccentricity of the edifice and its grounds, the satire registers item by item a hodgepodge that includes thirteenth-century stained glass in one of the bathrooms, sculpture and ironwork from a Spanish chapel, and even some embalmed Discalced Carmelite nuns. Both the real and the fictionalized San Simeon have nexuses with the Mother of God. In the novel, Hearst's mistress is named Virginia, and the property itself boasts a simulacrum of the grotto of Lourdes and a boudoir shrine to the Virgin. In the actual mansion, paintings of scenes with Mary and Child are overrepresented. Whether the disproportion vaguely reflects Hearst's interest in human figures rather than landscapes, or resulted from his intense relationship with his mother, it may say something about his conception of medieval art.

Fig. 6.22 Julia Morgan. Studio portrait, 1926. Photographer unknown. San Luis Obispo, CA, California Polytechnic State University, Special Collections. Image courtesy of the California Polytechnic State University. All rights reserved.

Along with other architectural merchandise such as ninety ceilings, Hearst endeavored without moderation to acquire abandoned cloisters in whole or part. In 1910 he made his first acquisition of the sort, a series of arches from an abbey at Marciac, France. A decade later he incorporated them into the minstrels' gallery in the refectory of San Simeon. Whether many of the medieval stones he purchased gathered moss is not readily confirmable, but without doubt they rolled, on boats across the ocean and often on rail lines across the continent. Not everything he purchased wended its way to the present-day Hearst Castle, which would not have been big enough to accommodate all of it anyway. Yet the grand acquisitor often nurtured commensurately grandiose schemes to integrate objects and architectural elements, including cloisters, into not just the "Enchanted Hill" but others of his half-dozen home addresses elsewhere.

In 1925, Hearst snapped up for himself in Wales, sight unseen, a genuine castle, Saint Donat's (see Fig. 6.23). He supplemented it with entire rooms and even much of a priory that he freighted to it from elsewhere in Britain and the Continent. Additionally, he filled it with other purchases such as armor. For all that, he put it to use not as a permanent depository so much as a staging post for artworks and architectural elements he ransacked from elsewhere in Europe. Instead, he moved those monuments wholesale to the United States, where he bought, built, and dreamed of building other modern-day keeps.

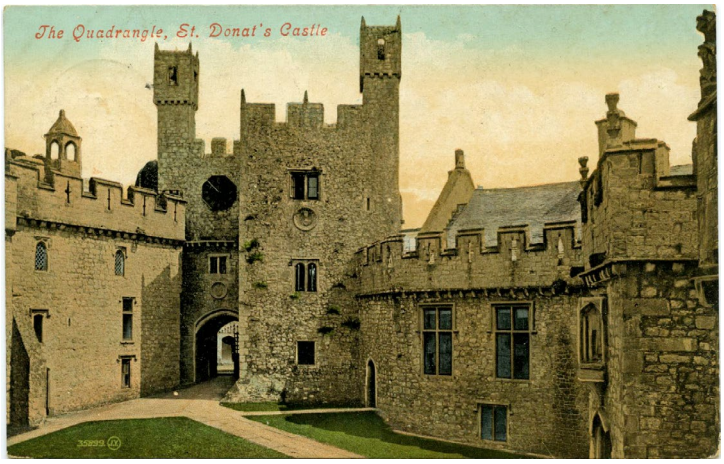

Fig. 6.23 Postcard of Saint Donat's Castle, St. Donats, Wales (Dundee, UK: J. Valentine, early twentieth century).

Meanwhile, in 1925 Hearst secured northern Spanish cloisters. The stones were pulled apart, packed into 10,700 crates, and transported to the United States. For 26 years the boxes stagnated in storage in Brooklyn, a New York borough where it is hard to picture medieval monks. Decades of being penny-wise and pound-foolish (or does the penny-wise part get it wrong?) caught up with him. In 1951 the millionaire died, his rampage

of prodigious profligacy long over, with no rock-solid plan for most of what he had amassed. In 1952, one batch of the blocks was purchased and reassembled in North Miami Beach (see Fig. 6.24). Other abbeys in Hearst's hoard suffered even more. In 1931, the wheeler-dealer acquired in Spain the buildings he called Mountolive. He had select components of a monastery there deconstructed, in a process his agent referred to punningly as "delapidation." The masonry was shipped to San Francisco, where for lack of funding it sat for decades in Golden Gate Park before being reconstituted elsewhere.

In the 1950s Hearst's cloistral collection achieved still broader cross-country dispersion, when five portals purportedly of French Romanesque provenance were given to three museums. The diaspora of the rocks the crackpot plutocrat imported has helped to spread actual architectural remains of the European Middle Ages broadly throughout America. Largely unintentionally and posthumously, the media mogul became an evangelist of Gothic salvage (or pillage?) from one end to the other of the United States. Furthermore, he was not alone. Other individuals and institutions assisted in the diffusion of medieval stones from coast to coast.

Fig. 6.24 Cloisters of the St. Bernard de Clairvaux Church, built in Sacramenia, Spain, and reassembled in North Miami Beach, FL. Photograph by Rolf Müller, 2006, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:St_bernard_de_clairvaux_church_yard_2006.jpg. CC BY-SA 3.0.

The Last Hurrah

The rage for Americanizing authentic medieval cloisters streaked through the 1920s into the 1930s. Thereafter, civic opposition stiffened European lawmakers' resolve to enact less pliable decrees against export. At the same time, the worldwide economic slump crimped the discretionary budgets and slush funds even of millionaires. Combined, these circumstances stanched the flow of such large architectural elements to the United States. Before rough times turned off the spigot, the country received

a spate of unmolten stone. The imports first entered the eastern seaboard and then penetrated the Midwest, in cities such as Cleveland, Detroit, and Chicago.

At the humbler end of the scale would be expanses such as the Gothic period room at the Art Institute of Chicago, where one donor's collection of medieval sculpture, tapestries, and decorative arts was installed (see Fig. 6.25). The design featured an arched vault, to make the space "truly Gothic." Old hands were not universally satisfied with the space's romantic eclecticism. The ceilings featured purpose-made Gothic vaulting. The doorways, windows, mantelpieces, niches, and corbels were at least pretended to be the real thing, jury-rigged to form a pseudomedieval domestic interior where all manner of other largeish objects are displayed. The ensemble was meant to transport visitors into a different world, "the great hall of a large French medieval dwelling or château."

In 1926, the Toledo Museum of Art in Ohio added a Gothic Hall, for the display of decorative arts such as tapestries, stained glass, and sculpture. In 1933, the museum opened an expanded building where the medieval Cloister Gallery was incorporated, with arcades on three sides from three different French sites (see Figs. 6.26 and 6.27). Plus or minus a few years, a legend on a postcard informs the reader that, only three miles away, the municipal Toledo University prided itself upon its "beautiful Gothic architecture and. . . 114 acres of rolling wooded campus" (Fig. 6.28). Old and new Gothic went hand in hand. In 1085, the eponymous Spanish city was the first major city in the Christian Reconquista of Spain from the Muslims. Eight hundred fifty years later, its American namesake acquired a patina of medieval Europe that would have made the reconquerors feel just a little bit at home if they had paid a visit across time and space. Authentic Gothic and the collegiate brand joined forces to make the American Toledo medieval.

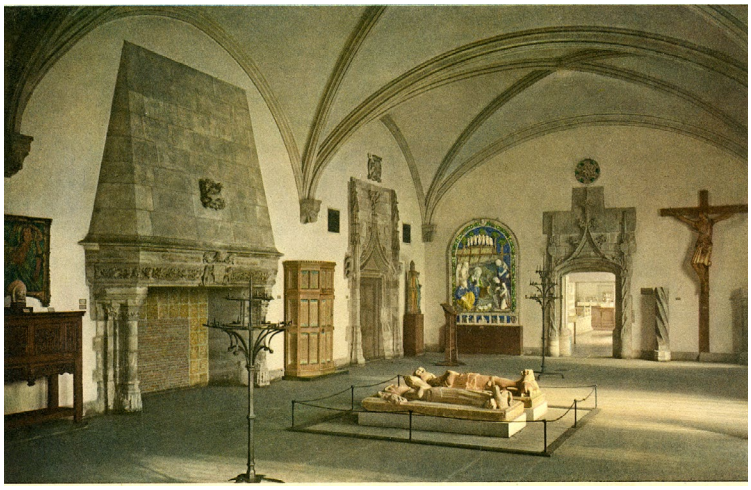

Fig. 6.25 Postcard of the Gothic Room of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL (Vienna: Max Joffé, early twentieth century).

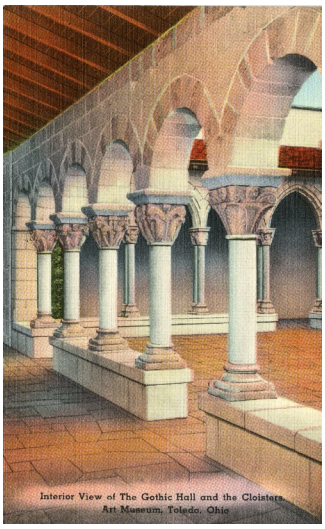

Fig. 6.26 Postcard of the cloisters of the Toledo Art Museum, Toledo, OH (ca. 1930s).

Fig. 6.27 Postcard of the cloisters of the Toledo Art Museum, Toledo, OH (Toledo, OH: Buckeye News Co., ca. 1955).

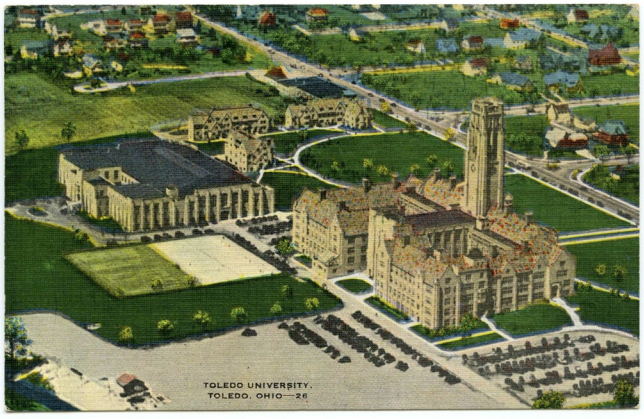

Fig. 6.28 Postcard of Toledo University, Toledo, OH (Toledo, OH: Hirsch News Agency, early twentieth century).

In 1927, the Institute of Arts in Detroit, Michigan opened to the public a Gothic chapel from Herbéviller in Lorraine (see Fig. 6.29) that was acquired from George Grey Barnard. It further echoed his Cloisters in adopting the "concept of a skylit brick shell as a setting for medieval sculpture, building garden courtyards of brick." In 1930, the Dayton Art Institute in Ohio initiated a new museum building. At the behest of a donor, the installation implanted in a central location two courtyards with covered walks, the Gothic Cloister to the north and the Italian or Renaissance one to the south. The Shaw

Gothic Cloister (see Figs. 6.30 and 6.31), as the former is known in full, amalgamates actual medieval elements, such as pointed arches and quatrefoils, with sham-medieval modern ones. The Italian or Renaissance Cloister (see Fig. 6.32), now called the Hale Cloister, melds rounded arches from later Europe with new-built features. Both courts contain pastiches of different spolia, not all of them chronologically or stylistically consistent. The Gothic chapel once featured in an alcove a reproduction of the famous early sixteenth-century Nuremberg Madonna (see Fig. 6.33).

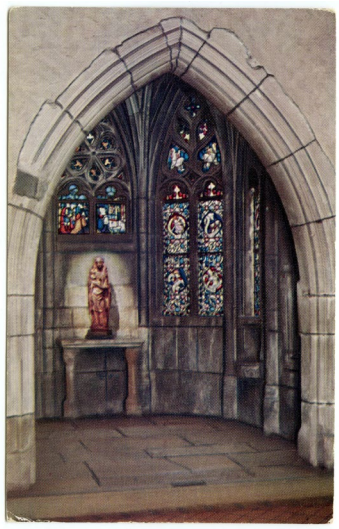

Fig. 6.29 Postcard of a Gothic chapel from Herbeviller, France, installed in the Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, MI (after 1927).

Fig. 6.30 The Shaw Gothic Cloister, Dayton Art Institute of Ohio, Dayton, OH. Photograph, after 1930. Photographer unknown. Image courtesy of the Dayton Art Institute of Ohio. All rights reserved.

Fig. 6.31 The Shaw Gothic Cloister, Dayton Art Institute of Ohio, Dayton, OH. Photograph by Alex Bahnsen, ca. 1930–1946. Image courtesy of the Dayton Art Institute of Ohio. All rights reserved.

Fig. 6.32 The Italian Cloister, Dayton Art Institute of Ohio, Dayton, OH. Photograph, ca. 1940s. Photographer unknown. Image courtesy of the Dayton Art Institute of Ohio. All rights reserved.

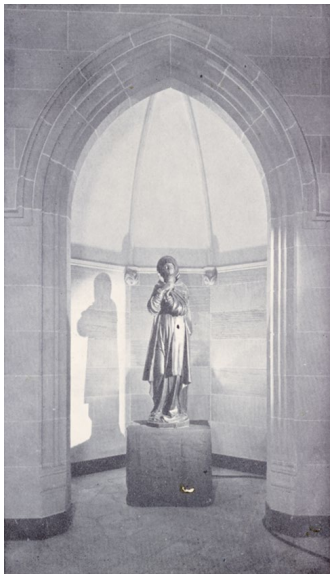

Fig. 6.33 Reproduction of the sixteenth-century Nuremberg Madonna, Gothic Chapel, Dayton Art Institute of Ohio, Dayton, OH. Photograph, date and photographer unknown. Image courtesy of the Dayton Art Institute of Ohio. All rights reserved.

Thanks to the lavish beneficence that has often marked American philanthropy, public galleries in other states in the country's landlocked heartland became proud owners of authentic Romanesque and especially Gothic architectural elements. In 1932, St. Louis Art Museum assembled a Romanesque portal that was installed in a surrounding wall of fake masonry, as well as an arcade that subsumed twelfth-century columns and capitals. In 1941 the Nelson-Atkins Museum in Kansas City became the proud owner of a fourteenth-century French cloister that had belonged earlier to Hearst (see Fig. 6.34).

Elsewhere, the twelfth-century chapter house in limestone from the Benedictine priory of Saint John Le Bas-Nueil near Poitiers in west central France now resides in the Worcester Art Museum in Massachusetts. The highlight of its decoration as it survives now is a fifteenth-century carved relief of the Virgin and Child that sits over the fireplace (see Fig. 6.35). On a smaller scale, in 1928 the Boston Museum of Fine Arts took possession of a portal façade and sculptural elements, dating from about 1150 to 1200, from the church of San Miguel de Uncastillo, Spain (see Fig. 6.36). In 1931 the Philadelphia Museum of Art obtained a cloister from Roussillon Abbey at Saint-Génis-des-Fontaines in the south of France. It was placed in the first Romanesque room, with smaller architectural elements in successive galleries, among them three Gothic Rooms (one French, another Florentine, and a third Venetian) (see Fig. 6.37). Much of this material originated in George Grey Barnard's collection.

Fig. 6.34 Fourteenth-century French cloisters, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO. Photograph, date and photographer unknown. Image courtesy of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. All rights reserved.

Fig. 6.35 Virgin and Child. Limestone sculpture, ca. 1150–1190. Chapter House, Benedictine Priory of Saint John Le Bas-Neuil, now in Worcester, MA, Worcester Art Museum. Photograph by Wikimedia user Daderot, 2010, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chapter_House,_Worcester_Art_Museum_-_IMG_7464.JPG

Fig. 6.36 Postcard of a twelfth- to thirteenth-century Spanish Romanesque portal, in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA (after 1928).

Fig. 6.37 Postcard of a cloister from Rousillon Abbey at Saint-Génis-des-Fontaines, now in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA (after 1931).

A final example—not that an all-inclusive listing is attempted or offered here—has its home today in the Metropolitan Museum of Art: the early Renaissance Vélez-Blanco Patio, from an early sixteenth-century Spanish castle. Like many and probably even most of the medieval cloisters, this early Renaissance veranda has been pressed into service outside normal opening hours as a function space. The secularization of monasteries, which helped to demote them to the degraded condition that caused their owners in Europe to sell them, continues. Now it generates a revenue stream that assists in part in maintaining them, desacralized as they may be. They have become venues for special events, concerts, and meals.

Although this present use takes the trend to an extreme, the cloisters may have bragging rights as one of the best remedies for "museum fatigue." This diagnosis describes the sundry forms of exhaustion—physical, mental, and spiritual—that for at least a century excursions to museums have induced in some visitors. Quadrangles, as places in which to sit and contemplate, may constitute the perfect antidote for overdoses of visual culture. They were designed for overcoming sensory overload and supporting meditation. Whether the argument holds or not, the courtyards that were torn up from their roots in Europe and installed throughout the United States have indubitably seeded an appreciation, or at least an awareness, of Gothic architecture among a broad public. People acknowledge the style as a sublime midpoint in the

transit of art from Paleolithic caves through ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome down to the modern and contemporary world.

What has been presented here barely scratches the surface. Before denigrating such phenomena as the wholesale importation of medieval art and architecture, we would do well to remember how much of Europe itself remade other places. Rome gave rise to a second Rome in Constantinople, and a third one in Moscow. Egypt was raided for its obelisks, Asia Minor for its colonnades. Charlemagne too dreamed of creating a new Rome in Aachen, which helps to explain why he had the marble columns for the Palatine Chapel hauled nearly seven hundred miles from Rome. People in Europe drew from northern Africa and Asia Minor. Hadrian's Villa, located at modern-day Tivoli, monumentalizes in stone stopping points that the Emperor visited on his extensive travels throughout the Roman empire. To look at later times, Loreto and Walsingham gave imagined tastes of Nazareth to Europeans in times and places from which expeditions to the Holy Land itself would have been tremendously touchy. Furthermore, even venues that made no architectural or typological claim to any resemblance to the Levant became destinations for pilgrimage. These places became polestars thanks to the acquisition of allegedly sacred artifacts from abroad. The custom of seeking to replicate sites elsewhere and to derive authority from them by way of talismans such as relics is much older, not just than the theme parks of Walt Disney, but even than the discovery of the New World.

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No craft-printed or hand-copied translation of the medieval French poem, no finely illustrated version of Anatole France's short story, no performance of Massenet's opera, and no tour of a site such as The Cloisters offers a magic carpet ride that permits true time travel. Spectators and sightseers, however intensely fantasist or escapist they may be, are not normally duped by even the most wonderful aesthetic experience into supposing that they have been teleported back into the Middle Ages. Yet they may be budged enough out of the rut of their own time to reap the benefits of reflecting on two distinct types of otherness. One is that of the genuine past, as they can conjure it up in their imaginations. The other is the alterity of artificial bygones, as they can perceive it imported or re-created in their surroundings. Shuttling between the here-and-now and yesteryear should be a common state of motion, emotion, and commotion for the professional historicist and humanist-at-heart. It is all to the good when a larger public can be seduced into making the same commute. It is how we appreciate how far we have come and how we have gotten here.

From the fading nineteenth through the first three decades of the twentieth century, an acute desire to give the United States a medieval makeover manifested itself. US citizens undertook to seize an Americanized vision of those long-ago centuries and to nativize it in their country. The American Middle Ages must be confronted as an element within national culture that was just as important as the modernism

of skyscrapers. The importance of the Gothic revival transcends its being a physical component of skylines and landscapes in many cities and regions, although that presence must not be overlooked or understated.

On a grander scale, the stone spires of cathedrals and pseudocathedrals that jut out of campuses and cityscapes reveal much about the culture and spirit of Americanness as it was thrashed out during a phase of growing national pelf and power, of unreined commercial buildup and imperial adventurism. Underwritten by magnates of the corporate elite like Rockefeller and Duke, Gothic was to a degree—as it had been now and again in the medieval era—a penitential counterweight. It could offset personal or dynastic wealth, sometimes illegally acquired. Backstreet, barons of oil and tobacco broke strikes, tyrannized boardrooms, and profited from monopolies. Publicly, they attended to the bodily health of the citizenry, through the donations they made to the construction of parks and hospitals. On some level they believed that for a country to have a meaningful mission and to make an indissoluble mark required shared cultural and spiritual values. They sought to foster such standards by erecting massive edifices for prayer and education that harked back to what was regarded as an age of faith—the Middle Ages.

We could question and qualify the subtlety and sophistication with which those who drove this medievalizing movement grasped the minutiae of the past that they sought to appropriate. Yet we would do wrong to dismiss the achievements of the mission that they set for themselves. Collegiate Gothic was not the anticipation, in the first half of the twentieth century, of the timelessness and anachronism that would arrive in the second half through Sleeping Beauty castle at Disneyland, or the Cinderella Castles in either the Magic Kingdom at the Walt Disney World Resort or Tokyo Disneyland. A curator at the Louvre in Paris saluted the medievalesque The Cloisters, when it opened, as "the crowning achievement of American museology," not a likely reaction to any of the Disney edifices worldwide.

The Land of Opportunity went through head-spinning flux. The economy developed, technology advanced, and political might expanded as perhaps had never been seen before in the world. Concurrently, the Gilded Age made itself a second Middle Ages, in architecture, literature, and music. Even the sound of "the Gilded Age" arouses the suspicion that Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner intended a sly side glance at that earlier epoch. The era flanking 1900 belonged to the "robber barons"—a phrase that by itself implies medieval Germany and its predatory noblemen.

The inequalities and inequities worked to the advantage of medievalism. As we have seen, the ultrarich of the day siphoned elements of medieval architecture wholesale across the Atlantic. John D. Rockefeller Jr., and William Randolph Hearst brought over hundreds of thousands of building blocks to reunite cloisters and parts of cloisters from the Old World in the New. The old- and new-hewn slabs of rock that were fitted together to produce colleges, museums, mansions, and skyscrapers did not end the story of the Middle Ages in America. On the contrary, they gave new backdrops and

inspirations to many a new performance and recasting of such inheritances as the tale of the juggler.

With Gothicist buildings and genuine Gothic transplants, medievalizers in the United States found a way to piggyback back into earlier centuries. The wealthy and educated of the US deployed their resources to recuperate and celebrate the period. They indigenized it, as they understood it, physically, intellectually, and culturally. Between the 1870s and 1920s, they instituted medieval studies within universities, established a professional association for medievalists, translated medieval texts, and published translations.

With the pseudospolia of collegiate Gothic and the genuine ones of their imports, the influencers who were shaping the United States for the twentieth century tried to make the medieval period American even as they medievalized America. In the metropolis of New York, they even Gothicized the first phase of the afterlife: anyone who was anyone craved burial in Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn, where before passing through the pearly gates they had to cross under the elaborate turrets of an ivory tower (see Fig. 6.38). The medievalization of institutions and structures was so pervasive that even a century later, those of us who pass much of our lives in the United States cannot stage a jailbreak out of the Americanized Middle Ages the Gothicists left behind—and who would wish to do so?

Fig. 6.38 Northern gate of Green-Wood Cemetery, Brooklyn, New York. Photograph by Wikimedia user Beyond My Ken, 2015, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2015_Green-Wood_Cemetery_Gate_from_inside.jpg. CC BY-SA 4.0.

7. The Great War and Its Aftermath

European history is of profound importance to Americans. … Whether we look at Europe genetically as the source of our civilization, or pragmatically as a large part of the world in which we live, we cannot ignore the vital connections between Europe and America, their histories ultimately but one. … European history we shall always in some fashion have with us, but how?

—Charles Homer Haskins

Between the end of the Franco-Prussian War and 1914, most of the European landmass was at peace. Industrialization had given rise to a seemingly stable society with a prospering middle class. Nation-states had imposed themselves as ordering principles upon the peoples, languages, and cultures of the continent, and had forged international economic ties that appeared to hold considerable promise for continuing harmony. But this was not to be. Instead, the long freedom from disturbance turned out to be nothing more than the calm before a storm, the likes of which the globe had never seen. Among many other developments, the First World War broke out and gobbled up millions upon millions of military and civilian lives. At the same time, the rematch between France and Germany crunched up and spat out buildings and culture with a ferocity and thoroughness that beggared the imagination. As the Gilded Age concluded in America, Europe exacted the toll of the First World War on itself and wielded its new weapons of mass destruction against its original medieval past.

In 1917, the Italian philologist Ezio Levi d'Ancona tried to fathom the reasons for the renewed flowering of old legends from the Middle Ages (see Fig. 7.1). To explain the vogue of these tales, he pointed to what he called neoromantic tastes in his age-set. He went on to speculate in detail about what aroused eagerness for such literature:

> Out of the ruins of traditional humanistic culture, in the capitals of Europe, where work is arid, humiliating, and painful, and a person is lost in the crowd as in the most tormenting solitude, there resurfaces the wildflower of legend. The legend becomes

https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0147.07

> again, even today, one of the sharpest spiritual needs, a necessity for life. And in the struggles, the clashes, the turbulences, and the restlessnesses of our tiring existence, perhaps the arrival of a new, legendary poetry is readying itself.

The terse reference here to ruination relates to the conflagration that at this point remained still so uniquely terrible as to be in the singular "the Great War." The hostilities which had nearly ended when this literary scholar penned his lines were thought to be the last forever. Humanity would allow nothing so horrible as "the war to end war" to have an encore. Ha!

The five years of the First World War marked a rupture in European as well as American culture. In France, that half decade truncated and cauterized the belle époque, which had begun in 1890. The era seemed the more shimmeringly and fleetingly beautiful by contrast with the upheaval that convulsed the nation during the bloodshed. What held true for the French applied even more to the peoples of neighboring lands. Later things only got worse—little did Levi foreknow what disarticulation and losses would follow. In 1938, the fascist racial laws against Jews cost him the academic post he had occupied at Naples since 1925. By 1940, he was himself a wind-blown bloom, deracinated from its native earth and transplanted across the sea to teach amid the collegiate Gothic splendor of Wellesley College for women. In 1941, he died in exile. By that point, a second "war to end war" had been underway for years, even if his exilic home had remained aloof in its isolationism.

For the diva Mary Garden, the First World War spelled a halftime in her singing career. She left the stage to minister to wounded combatants in France. After this deviation, she had the strength of psyche to flip quickly back into her previous life. Others lacked her fortune and fortitude. Of relevance to the tale of the tumbler would be the case of Gladys Cromwell. The Manhattanite was not exactly the typical girl next door. Then again, she was not a generic society girl either. Along with her twin sister Dorothea and other siblings, she had become a millionaire as a youth when her father passed away. From an early age, she composed verse that won her recognition as a serious poet. Her unpublished juvenilia include a play entitled *Our Lady's Tumbler*. Set at Clairvaux in the twelfth century, the piece features Brother Lucius as the protagonist. Undated, the one-act drama may well have been written when the author was in her early teens. Although far from a hitherto-unrecognized masterpiece, it does offer one more index of the popularity that the medieval story commanded in the early twentieth century. The poem's poignancy arises not intrinsically, from any of its own qualities, so much as extrinsically, from the fatal destiny that the Cromwell pair soon made theirs.

In 1918, the two volunteered with the American Red Cross in France. There they were posted to the canteen service, which served up food and drink to soldiers near the firing line (see Fig. 7.2). Evidently, they remained so long without relief amid the horrors of round-the-clock shelling and wounded combatants that their nerves were shattered. By the time the sisters were released to sail back to the United States, the damage had

been done: the two were as unmoored as their steamer. Their fellow passengers on the *SS La Lorraine* were deeply worried by symptoms of extreme agitation that the young ladies showed. Early into the voyage home, the twins committed double suicide by leaping from the ship and drowning themselves in the Gironde River (see Fig. 7.3). The deaths of the privileged socialites in their early thirties became a cause célèbre. The tragedy gained notoriety because of its pertinence to "shell shock," which would be classified by clinicians today as post–traumatic stress disorder. The condition had been diagnosed only among men who had served in the hellholes of the trenches, not yet among women who had worked as nurses and in front-line capacities during the armed conflict.

Fig. 7.1 Ezio Levi d'Ancona. Photograph, before 1941. Photographer unknown.

Fig. 7.2 The Cromwell sisters with French soldiers in Châlons, France. Photograph, ca. 1914–1918. Photographer unknown. New York, The Brearley School. Image courtesy of The Brearley School. All rights reserved.

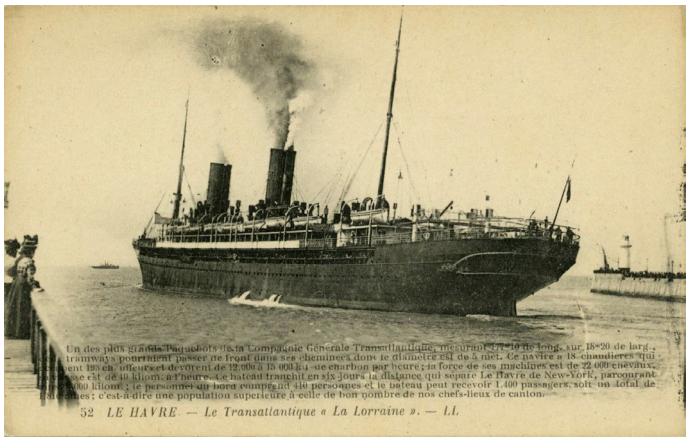


Fig. 7.3 Postcard of the SS *La Lorraine* (Paris: Lévy Fils et Cie, ca. 1914–1918).

To masses of people, the war brought death, disease, displacement, and destruction. In its slipstream, it left sadness, disillusionment, and sometimes sardonic skepticism. Ultimately the years of combat gave rise to the cultural movements we lump together under the name of modernism. The interaction between the modern and the medieval should not be reduced simplistically to opposition and antagonism. Emulation of the Middle Ages was not a minor cultural undercurrent or countercurrent; rather, it was a mainstream that often flowed complementarily within the most recent days—and vice versa. Although to a lesser extent, the medievalesque remained a smear on the palette with which artists worked as they represented their perceptions and perspectives.

The hostilities marked a definitive end to the heyday of the Gothic architectural revival, with the notable exception of collegiate Gothic in the United States. University plans that had been initiated in this manner in the early part of the century were pursued to completion up until the crash of the stock market in 1929 and the onset of the Great Depression. Only in rare cases has the style persisted to the present day. The architecture is anything but cost-efficient, entailing heavy outlays in both materials and labor. If value-engineering has any role, it comes in the fact that Gothic is built to last. Since the time scales of the greatest educational institutions have often been calibrated in centuries, that durability has made sense.

The steadfast commitment to Gothic on the part of certain colleges and universities could be construed as a sort of manifest destiny on a cultural level, but within the geography of individual campuses rather than of the entire North American continent. What is more, the architecture found its academic concomitant in such ambitious enterprises of medieval studies in the United States as what was the Index of Christian Art and has become that of Medieval Art. Professor Charles Rufus Morey of Princeton founded the archive in 1917, as an all-encompassing thematic or iconographic inventory of early Christian and medieval art objects (see Fig. 7.4). Although its basic conception antedated the deathmatch of the Great War by several years, the very undertaking was

an effort of synthesis that ran directly counter to the demolition and dispersion that the fighting produced. The United States lent a hand to document, study, import, and imitate the Middle Ages on its own soil. All the while, it gave lavishly of its treasure to help Europe rebuild its own battered medieval monuments.

Fig. 7.4 Charles Rufus Morey. Photograph, ca. 1920s. Photographer unknown. Image courtesy of the Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University. All rights reserved.

Ruining Europe

> Thus, the ruins of a lofty castle, a monastery or an old country house produce highly diverse stimuli, chiefly as a result of our awareness of temporal and other factors, which are themselves extremely diverse. We are transported into times long past.
>
> —Christian Cay Lorenz Hirschfeld

In a sense, Gothicism began and ended in ruination. It started with a romantic *Ruinenlust*. This German term denotes an attraction to picturesque dilapidation. In many parts of Europe local ruins starred tumbledown medieval structures, such as abbeys. These once-sturdy edifices had become spavined by benign neglect and active demolition in the wake of first Reformation and later revolution (see Fig. 7.5). The decaying monasteries were not universally perceived as signifying melancholy, but they were consistently seen as picturesque in relation to their environs.

The combination of scenic abbeys and sightly landscapes laid the foundations for the Gothic picturesque garden, which employs sham ruins with the objective of engendering the sublimity of delight. In turn, the intimate interplay between them

helps to clarify why on many American campuses collegiate Gothic architecture has been wedded to horticulture and landscaping. In the late eighteenth century, construction of simulated wreckage soon followed, in sham ruins within gardens. Sometimes known in English as follies, these structures were often Gothic and came in conjunction with grottoes. Fakes of this sort contributed importantly to the correlation between architecture and designed scenery that has been a leitmotif of medieval revivals. The renewals concluded, if indeed they have not merely paused, with the reality of ruined European Gothic. In the New World the collegiate flavor of the style effloresced definitively in the 1920s, in full awareness of the gutted, shelled-out, and burnt-out ruins of churches that the war had left behind in the Old World.

Professor Arthur Kingsley Porter of Harvard University was the sole foreigner invited to serve on a commission with the charge of dealing with the ruins of cathedralic catastrophes (see Fig. 7.6). He was knowledgeable and respectful about the marred monuments, the stone-faced victims of collateral damage. Despite having a purist streak about keeping the art and architecture of the Middle Ages truly medieval, he remained appreciative when the era was creatively deployed in modern life. In one expression of his relish for medievalizing, he called the medievalesque nave of Cram's Saint John the Divine in New York (to break the curse of the ninth) "a tenth symphony." Gothic architecture and ceremonious music are nearly inseparable.

Fig. 7.5 Louis Daguerre, *The Ruins of Holyrood Chapel*, 1824. Oil on canvas, 211 × 256.5 cm. Liverpool, UK, Walker Art Gallery, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Ruins_of_Holyrood_Chapel_(Louis_Daguerre),_1824_(Google_Art_Project).jpg

Fig. 7.6 Arthur Kingsley Porter. Photograph, 1920s. Photographer unknown. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Archives. Image courtesy of Harvard University Archives. All rights reserved.

The physical ruination that the First World War dealt Europe coincided with the onset of a spiritual upheaval that affected how the Middle Ages were perceived. Before the hostilities, England and America had resorted to the period for knights in shining armor to rescue ladies in dire straits, for chivalric gallantry to prevail over arrant knavery in jousting, and for valorous warriors to be victorious in righteous crusades. Such fantasies of medieval idealism and an idealized Middle Ages had been important constituents within movements such as the Boy Scouts. In the early stages of the fighting, such romantic images of knighthood became even more visible within the ideological machinery of propaganda for recruiting soldiers and commemorating them when they perished.

When details about the sinking of the *Titanic* became known in 1912, the stainless chivalry that American and English gentlemen had shown toward the fair sex was lauded. Yet such abstractions as glamorized courtliness and glorified manhood quickly lost their meaning amid the standoff of mortar blasts and mustard gas, barbed wire and buzzing bullets, and disease-ridden ditches. The playacting shed its aura and allure, as former white knights became war-wrecked and wounded fodder for the ministrations of the Red Cross.

Young women played the role of intercessors, whose prayers hedged the bets of the sorry souls in the abbatoirs of the trenches. Because the protection that these females provided was less than fail-safe, they also donned nun-like garb as nurses to treat the wounded [see Vol. 3: *The American Middle Ages*: 289, Fig. 6.66]. For many combatants, Mary remained the chief object of devotion, but in wartime she served markedly different functions for embattled and shell-shocked servicemen than she had for misty-eyed operagoers in the affluent years before the hostilities. On this "patriotic edition" of a postcard for the "European War of 1914," the Virgin has metamorphosed into a divine caregiver.

After the conflict, the public stood ready for different fare. The supremely un-idyllic carnage and destruction left people no longer in a propitious state of mind for sniffing the rosy Middle Ages of Alfred, Lord Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*. The romanticism of Sir Walter Scott was likewise shelved. Narrative bias dies hard, but his works would never again enjoy anything approaching the favor that they had received from nineteenth-century revivalists. For those earlier renovators, the medieval period had seemed to hold out hope of everything so badly wanting in the vertigo of modern life. The optimism of the fin de siècle that drew many wistfully to the jongleur wasted away within a decade after the Armistice. The interest dropped especially noticeably in the lands on the European continent that had been affected most directly by the War. In Germany, the mistaken preconceptions and misfired consequences of the Treaty of Versailles soon made the antics of a French entertainer from days of old far less beguiling or convincing than they had looked during the belle époque. Along with the rest of Gallic culture, he receded from the shrunken fatherland in the late 1920s, before disappearing altogether in the 1930s.

Yet even across the Rhine from France, the performer was gone but not entirely dead. Elsewhere he lived on, sometimes even vitally. The juggler's survival can be explained partly by an old constant, namely the pliability that comes of brevity and simplicity in narrative. Another reason is that the jongleur was emphatically not a knight, his skills were anything but martial, and his values had nothing to do with chivalry. Although the Middle Ages were often politicized and nationalized (particularly after the Franco-Prussian War), the hero of the French poem and its modern adaptations came across as apolitical and nonpolemical. For the most part, he was also treated as stateless. After a half decade of guns-blazing combat and many millions of dead soldiers and civilians, the sanguinary slaughter and tragic heroism of the *Song of Roland* hit too close to home. The tales of King Arthur and the Round Table also had qualities overly equivocal for times that at least in some circles may have craved unsullied innocence and purity. Niches remained that an irenic artist like the jongleur or juggler could usefully fill.

Reims: Martyr City and Cathedral

> It was not the stones which the Germans wanted to break down; those stones did not annoy her; it was Our Lady of Reims, with the great memories which she incarnates and represents; our Cathedral, symbol expressing the greatness of France, and reliquary of our national glories.

Apart from the human results of the catastrophe that is called the First World War were architectural ones. Already when Alsace and Lorraine were annexed in the Franco-Prussian War, the cathedrals of Notre Dame of Strasbourg and Saint-Étienne of Metz fell prisoner to the Prussian enemy (see Fig. 7.7). Both were personified, as has happened often with cathedrals, and regarded as nonconsensual female victims of assaults by an alien male occupier. Of the two, the great church of the city on the Rhine suffered worse. During the combat, it endured salvos that blew out windows, burned balustrades and finials, and brought down the stone cross that topped the spire.

In the late nineteenth century, an acute cultural rivalry seethed between France and Prussia. The aggression only intensified thanks to French revanchism, the nationalist will to avenge the coup de grace of the Franco-Prussian War and reclaim the lost territories of Alsace-Lorraine (see Fig. 7.8). One bone of contention between the two countries was which of them deserved credit for creating the most beautiful Gothic cathedrals. The converse was also a matter of competition. During the First World War, the opponents debated which side in the hostilities had mistreated the same buildings more ignominiously and barbarously. Warfare wreaked far greater havoc in the Great War than it had done in the Franco-Prussian one. Furthermore, the combatants' propaganda machines publicized supposed scorched-earth destruction much more powerfully. On that account, war-stricken cathedrals were anthropomorphized in art, news, and literature, with images carefully crafted and disseminated to stir demonstrative reactions in the populace. The towering houses of worship, meant to be inviolate, fell victim to thuggishness. Reims, more than three-fifths destroyed, was designated the "martyr city" (see Fig. 7.9). The great church there too was issued no safe-conduct that enabled it to escape harm. By extension, it likewise became a saint, subjected to torture.

Our Lady of Reims, although sadly not alone among places of prayer in having been bombed and pulverized, suffered more extreme injury than most other major monuments in France hard-hit during the bloodshed. Throughout the war, both the city and the cathedral were assaulted repeatedly by German missiles. The worst turn occurred in September of 1914, during the First Battle of the Marne (see Fig. 7.10). The aggressors transformed the great church into an infirmary, where three thousand cots were to be installed. When camp beds could not be requisitioned, fifteen thousand bales of dried grass were brought instead for use as pallets. Although the French

retook the municipality, their opponents had it mostly surrounded and pelted it with heavy weaponry. Shortly afterward, the reoccupiers began to employ the structure as a field hospital for their wounded foes. On September 18, five shells slammed into it. Worse disaster struck on the following day, when the attackers' artillery batteries pounded the edifice. The projectiles, perhaps incendiary, set afire first the scaffold and then the hay. No more inflammable tinder could have been devised, and no accelerant was required. The north tower bore the brunt of the ensuing conflagration, and many statues and windows were ruined.

Fig. 7.7 French anti-German propaganda, featuring a quotation from Henri Heine and an illustration of Thor destroying a Gothic cathedral. Design by Bloud & Gay, 1915.

Views about the extent of the havoc and the responsibility for the episode diverged sharply. The Central Powers and their opponents waged a pitched battle in a media competition to score propaganda points. Two postcards suggest that publicists in one or both camps doctored images of the destruction, since they show the same view in what might seem to be irreconcilably different ways: the dating of the pictures might explain everything (see Figs. 7.11 and 7.12). Media manipulation was rampant: so what's new? From the German side, the shelling fell well within the domain of legitimate warfare, the resulting fire was accidental, and the overall damage was superficial. From the perspective of the French and their allies, the cathedral was subjected to intentional harm, and those answerable for it were malevolent barbarians—Prussian ruffians

(see Fig. 7.13). Seen in retrospect polemically from the viewpoint of subsequent developments in warfare, the malice aforethought to Gothic art and architecture was a first step toward what would become systematic cultural wrecking, or even attempted erasure, closely related to mass killing.

Fig. 7.8 "Entrée des Français à Strasbourg." Poster by Hansi [Jean-Jacque Waitz], 1918. Banque d'Alsace et de Lorraine, Paris.

Both great churches dedicated to Notre Dame and images of the Virgin Mary had been humanized to such a degree that slashing attacks on them were equated with assaults on human beings. Pondering the cost to the cathedral of Reims, the French historian of medieval art Emile Mâle (see Fig. 7.14) compared the dismantling of its splendor in stone and stained glass to the human bereavement caused when a soldier was killed. The American Goth Ralph Adams Cram, emphatic about the extent of the loss, sought to construe the wreckage as if it could be read through iconography. From it he wrested insight into an unending, dualistic donnybrook between evil and good, anti-Christian and Christian.

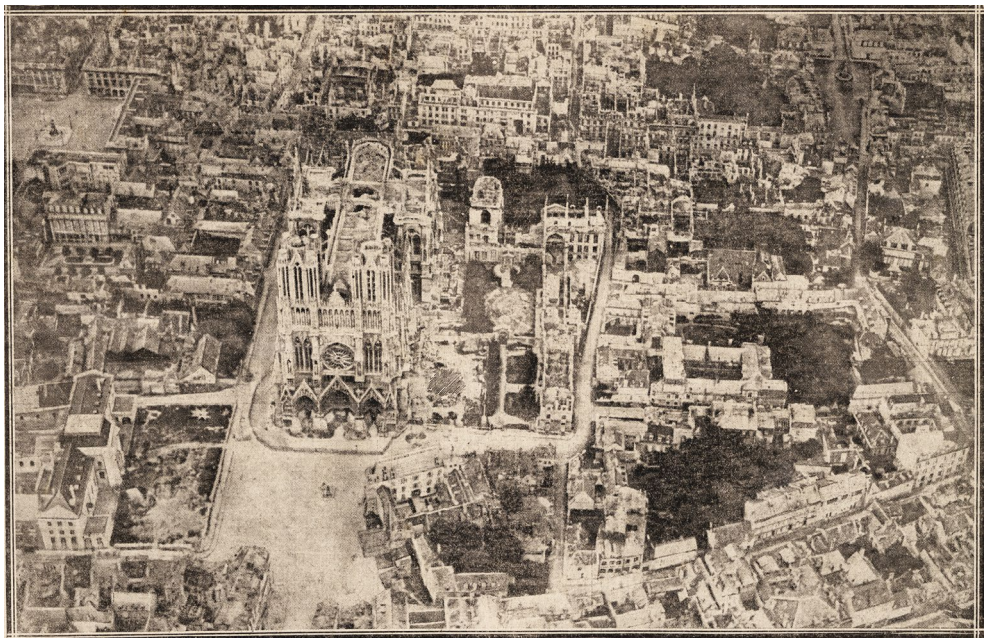


Fig. 7.9 Reims, the "martyred city." Photograph, 1917. Photographer unknown. Published in *Excelsior* 8.2461, August 11, 1917, 1.

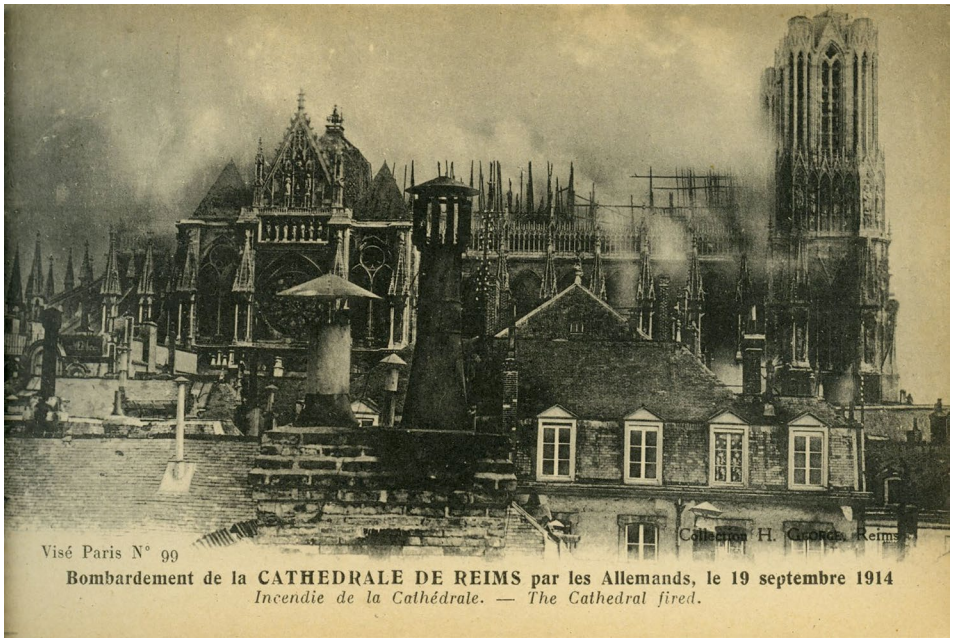


Fig. 7.10 Postcard of the burning of the Reims Cathedral (Reims: H. George, ca. 1914).

Fig. 7.11 Postcard of the "Cathedral among the ruins" in Reims (Reims: G. Graff, after 1914).

Fig. 7.12 Postcard of the "Cathedral of Reims, burned by the Germans" (Reims: H. George, after 1914).

Fig. 7.13 "This is Prussianism!" Poster, ca. 1917–1918. Propaganda for liberty bonds by the Liberty Loan Committee, Philadelphia, USA. Artist unknown.

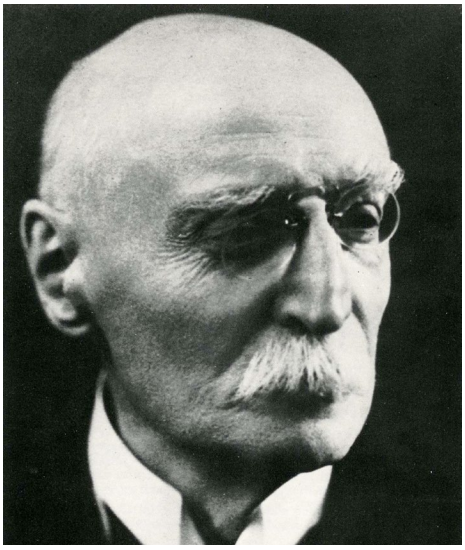


Fig. 7.14 Émile Mâle. Photograph, ca. 1930. Photographer unknown.

For further insight into the propagandistic afterburn that followed the physical fire, we could turn to a famous Gallic intellectual seldom associated with scholarship relating to the Middle Ages. Georges Bataille, then around nineteen years of age, published a pamphlet that mourned the demise of the great church. His attachment was especially warm since he had attended high school in the building's shadow. In the eulogy, he recalled nostalgically the Joan of Arc around whom his countrymen often closed ranks in times of national trials and tribulations. Not irrelevantly, she was canonized in 1920, in the aftermath of the First World War. The pamphleteer has the Maid of Orléans in later times reminiscing fondly about the coronation of King Charles VII of France in Notre-Dame of Reims in 1429 (see Fig. 7.15). The church was the coronation cathedral of the French monarchy. Bataille's subsequent theoretical writings could be viewed as impeaching the simplicity of the beliefs and the organic unity of the structure that he sought naïvely to glorify in his first youthful screed. The iconoclasm of an onslaught against a house of prayer need not take the form of real tools wielded against real stones. It can take place instead conceptually.

More finely drawn was the response of Marcel Proust, whose engagement with Gothic art and architecture was deep and pervasive. In his seven-part *Remembrance of Things Past*, the novelist moved the imagined village of Combray from a location near Chartres to one near Laon, so as to plant it in the path of the German advance during the First World War. The narrator spent an idyllic childhood in the little community, and he lingers lovingly in describing the ecclesiastic architecture. In turn, the annihilation of its church of Saint Hilary is likened by implication to the damaging of Notre-Dame of Reims. But the novel's protagonist takes the character Charlus to task for the error of conflating the cathedral as a symbol with the national spirit that it represents. The ruination of the stones in no way entails that of the people.

In the aftermath of the tragedy and trauma, the public debated what should be done with the dilapidated portions of the chief house of prayer in Reims. During the conflagration, the gargoyles had expectorated lava of liquefied lead from the molten roof. As reminders, they are kept to this day with their grey icicles. Comparing the before and after remains a pitiful and haunting exercise (see Figs. 7.16 and 7.17). In the long run, grim retrospective was not the impulse that prevailed. The drive was to rebuild, rather than to memorialize the ravages of war. More bittersweet than embittered, the American Arthur Kingsley Porter made himself a ruinologist and laid out a lucid case for leaving the detritus as it was. Such preservation of destruction, he said, would avoid the misrepresentation of the past that reconstruction would necessarily entail. With more anti-Teutonic polemic, and with characteristically boundless ambition, Cram promoted an elaborate Plan B for damage control. He favored leaving the ruins as they were, while also constructing an unblemished new cathedral to replace them.

Fig. 7.15 Lionel-Noël Royer, *Joan of Arc at the Coronation of King Charles VII*, late nineteenth century. Fresco mural. Domrémy-la-Pucelle, France, Basilica of Saint Joan of Arc.

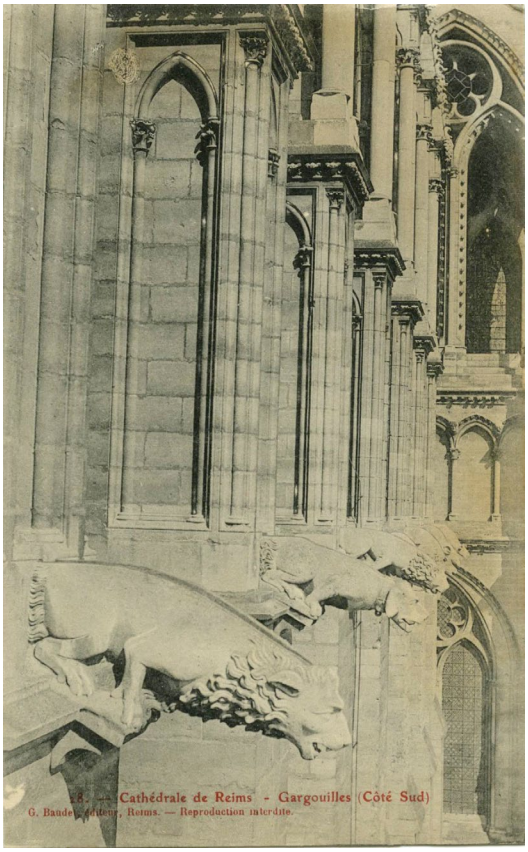


Fig. 7.16 Postcard of gargoyles on the Cathedral of Reims, pre-bombardment (Reims: G. Baude, before 1914).

Fig. 7.17 Gargoyles of Reims Cathedral in their present state. Reims, Palais du Tau. Photograph by Wikimedia user Tangopaso, 2013, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Palais_du_Tau_-_le_plomb_fondu_dans_les_gargouilles.jpg

Porter took medieval architecture exceedingly seriously. Like many before him, he had had a cathedral epiphany. In his case, the revelation had come at Coutances. Distinctively, his experience involved a supernatural light incandescing around him. But in this instance, all the perspicuity of his logic and the forcefulness of his faith were unable to carry the day. The rebuilding began in France after 1918, and was completed two decades later. Notre Dame of Reims was resanctified in July of 1938, with festivities that included the reenactment of a medieval play. The restoration was finished in the nick of time for another world war, this one even more massively and cold-bloodedly reckless of lives and property than the first.

In Britain and even more in the United States, the Great War altered perspectives on the Middle Ages in different ways. Many existences had been nipped in the bud. Above all in England, major social developments were set in motion. For all that, no invasion had taken place and no decimation of medieval monuments had occurred. Although consumer confidence may be tabulated, other sorts of optimism can be a tall order to quantify under any circumstances. The challenge grows when we stand separated by many decades from the communities under examination. Yet looking at the trajectory of the juggler as he continued down his alleyway through cultural time and space, we can notice that after the Armistice the impetus in creative responses to *Our Lady's Tumbler* passes from the European mainland to England and even more to the United States. Along the way, the story itself begins to change.

The transformation may already have begun by the time we see the limping little juggler in a 1917 American children's version. There the accident-prone boy leaning on his crutch belongs to a gimpy tradition, compounding treacle and tristesse, that leads back to the paradigm of Tiny Tim in Charles Dickens's novella of *A Christmas Carol* (see Fig. 7.18). The United States had not lost its Middle Ages. After all, it had never possessed a medieval period as Europe had done. Instead, it manufactured one, or many, for itself. But it had been engaging in such fabrication for decades already. In this mass production, the juggler had his place, as modest as he often was himself. The story survived, since it stood outside the chivalry that the war to end all wars put in the worst of lights. (Merely labeling the Great War as "the war to end all wars" sadly failed to end military conflict for very long.)

Fig. 7.18 Brother Ambrose supports the injured young juggler. Illustration by Violet Moore Higgins, 1917. Published in Violet Moore Higgins, *The Little Juggler, and Other French Tales Retold* (Racine, WI: Whitman Publishing Co., 1917), between pp. 16 and 17.

Rebuilding Europe in America

> A great cathedral, manifest in its purpose to be a monument to faith and hope and reverence, and the spiritual side of life, speaks to the millions as they pass to and fro, and to the generations of the centuries that succeed, and it speaks in a voice that will impress itself upon the simplest and the humblest soul and shed light by the faith and reverence that it manifests. Is there no message to the world that we have to express? Is there nothing on the spiritual side of America to be expressed, after the wonderful exhibition of patriotism, of courage, of service in the great war?
>
> —Elihu Root

In Europe the rude awakening of the First World War, still then beyond all doubt the Great War, wrenched Gothic from the functions it had served during the belle époque. The bright and romantic Middle Ages that had been purveyed in opera of the Golden Age grew suddenly anemic. During the Roaring Twenties, they remained in critical condition, the object of nostalgia and retreat, tinged with Art Deco. But more common than a gleeful Gothic was one dimmed by the shadows of expressionism.

In the United States, Gothic buildings speckled the landscape. Eventually the style endured most and best on college campuses, but experimentally it put in an appearance in early skyscrapers decorated in it. The rise of stone spires in the New World was deemed to be a direct consequence of the hair-raising destruction wrought during the war across the Atlantic (see Fig. 7.19). Ralph Adams Cram was even more explicit as he promulgated a call to rebuild the destroyed monuments of Europe in America. To make it clear that he was no wild-eyed maniac, he conceded that he was not proposing to erect replicas of the Cathedral of Reims or the Cloth Hall of Ypres (see Figs. 7.20 and 7.21) (even if he did exclaim parenthetically "though what a great idea that would be!"). Instead, he suggested what was for him a more temperate approach of re-creating only small-scale constructions.

Before the hostilities, the Americans likeliest to have laid eyes upon the great churches of Europe were mostly immigrants who had left them behind and to a lesser extent well-off natives who had taken them in while on the grand tour. Everything changed in 1917, when the USA entered the armed conflict. After the Expeditionary Forces jumped into the fray alongside the allied armies of the French and British, more than two million US "doughboys" fought in France. These latecomers to the war, most of them Protestants, and the majority of whom had never traveled abroad, gained an exposure to cathedrals and Catholicism, along with much else about the European Continent that was culturally unfamiliar. As we have seen, the sheaves of postcards

that they sent home contained images of Gothic architecture that had been damaged or destroyed by hailstorms of missiles, as well as of Madonnas miraculously spared.

America had not possessed its own Gothic even during the latest phase of that architecture's original expression, but now the country was ready—having already imbibed and transformed Romanesque, and having already developed its own flavors of Ruskinian Gothic—to experiment with the fashion in radically new ways. The United States was ebulliently prosperous both economically and otherwise, and it sought out styles to make its own as it endeavored to legitimate two of its most distinctive institutions: the corporate skyscraper and the private college campus.

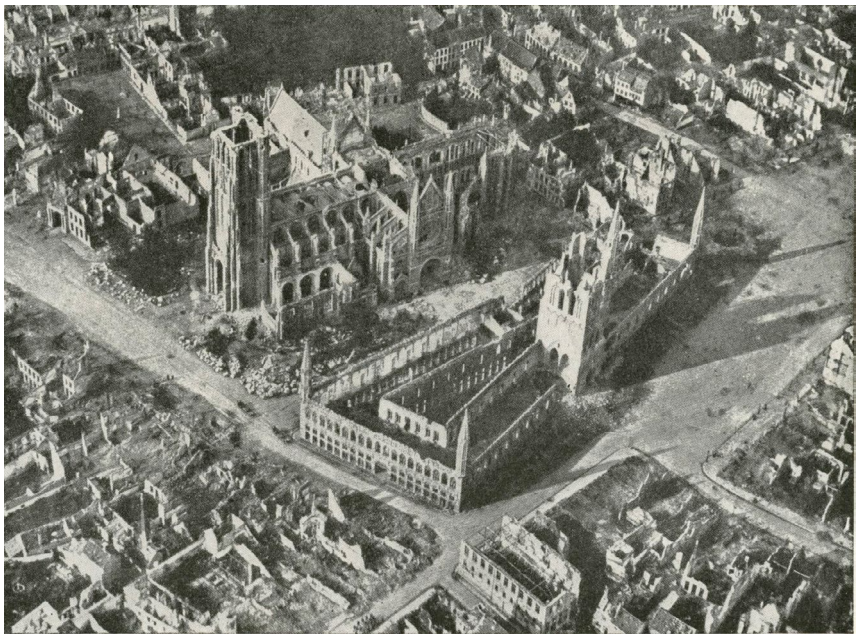


Fig. 7.19 Aerial view of war-ravaged Ypres, Belgium. Photograph, 1917. Photographer unknown. Published in *The National Geographic Magazine* 31.4 (1917): 337.

Gothic skyscrapers like the Woolworth Building and the Tribune Tower formed an alternative to the prevailing modernism. Yet if truth be told, they made up no more than a minor sidelight in the cityscapes of New York, Chicago, and other booming American metropolises. Large edifices of this kind can be found throughout the United States, but even so they constitute essentially an early aside to modernism. Stone gave ground to steel and glass, just as the knights on horseback from medieval romances ceded to the man of steel from modern comic books first created in 1933. Only on campuses and in ecclesiastic architecture did Gothic really hold its own for decades to come. There, the style was more than simply a footnote, for the precise resons that it thrived where such documentation was a ubiquitous feature—among students and scholars in their natural habitat.

An apocryphal witticism, ascribed to more than one modernist architect, held that of all buildings in New Haven he would prefer to live in Harkness Tower. Why? Because then he would not need to look at the structure. The waggish aphorism derived from a bon mot supposedly uttered by the French short-story author Guy de Maupassant to explain why he lunched continually at the bistrot in the Eiffel Tower. Given the traditional dichotomy between the Tower and Notre Dame cathedral as icons for the soul of the city Paris, the transference of the saying from the steel of the Eiffel to the stones of a collegiate Gothic bastion has its ironies—and don't forget the element from the periodic table by chance embedded in that last word.

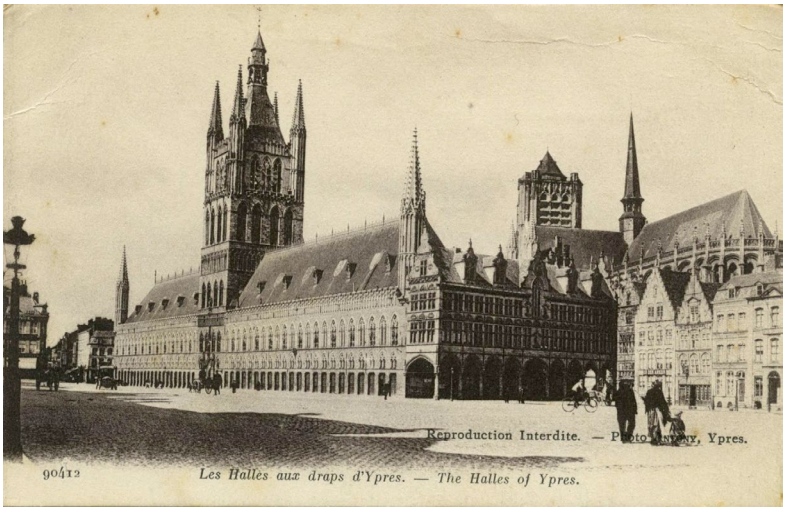


Fig. 7.20 Postcard of the Halles of Ypres before World War I (Ypres: Photo Antony, ca. 1912).

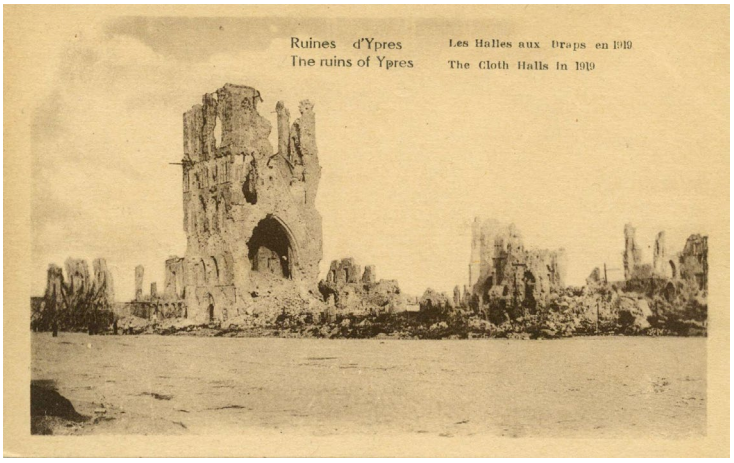


Fig. 7.21 Postcard of the Halles of Ypres after World War I bombardment (1919).

German Expressionism

> The longing of the times is for a new Gothic, the creation of an art that in energy of expression and abstraction equals the old one which evolved before the invention of book printing.
>
> —Paul Fechter in 1914

For the moment, Germany had scant appetite for further war. At the same time, the riled politics and the straitened economy with its harrowing hyperinflation would have complicated any impulse to wrap the jongleur in an embrace of simple nostalgia. In the tumult, the German writer Franz Johannes Weinrich transposed the thirteenth-century tale into a studiously stripped-down play. For decades this poet wrote theater pieces prolifically on religious themes drawn from the New Testament, saints' lives, and the history of the Middle Ages, and for specific Christian holidays—but he was not unequivocal in his faith. After being gravely wounded during military service as a volunteer in World War I, the playwright suffered an existential crisis. First the war and then the conditions engendered by it shook the faith in God that his Catholic upbringing may have given him. Despite the loss of positive religious conviction, he remained ready still to believe in the devil. He composed his drama about the medieval performer at a time when he was struggling to regain belief in God. His *Our Lady's Dancer: A Little Play Based on a Legend, Following an Old Text,* as the lengthy German title reads in English, became a favorite of theatrical groups that emerged out of the youth movement of the time.

A review by a contemporary of his suggests that owing to its religious theme, Weinrich's dramatic work could achieve only modest success. Though this verdict may have been prejudiced and one-sided, a perusal of the text brings home just how different the story has become at the hands of an author under the full sway of the cultural avant-garde known as expressionism. This form of modernism originated in Germany and reached its maximal extent there. It merits examination for its outsized share in the reception history of our story.

The expressionist movement emphasized a subjective perspective and was marked by angst. In the dramatist's theatrical work, the subjectivity manifests itself in the minimalism of the cast. The dramatis personae comprise only four: the abbot; Brother Simplicius, as the jongleur is called after taking the cloth; the monks, collectively, designated once as a choir; and the epiphany of the Mother of God. As Simplicius, the entertainer is here given a *nom parlant* that speaks directly to his simple nature—and helps to place this piece of theater within a larger stylistic evolution.

Expressionism in Germany was rooted deeply in the architecture and art of the waning Middle Ages. According to one hypothesis, the style arose from a coincidence of interest in German Gothic on the part of creative artists on the one hand, and of art historians, historians, aestheticians, and critics on the other: the development owed to

the mutuality of the arts and humanities. In the late medieval period the expressionists identified a primitivism that from their perspective resembled what they saw in exotic and folk art. In Gothic, such modern artists perceived predecessors of both their own isolation from society and their desire for transcendence. Among the medieval antecedents whom they regarded as their predecessors were German sculptors, who had spiritualized stone—they had taken its materiality and dematerialized it to achieve spirituality.

Art historians in Germany correlated the modern movement closely with the medieval manner, as well as with sacral art forms and native traditions going back to the same era. They saw Gothicity as connected to the theatrical stage of the late Middle Ages, particularly the abstraction of morality plays. In theater, the rich potential of settings from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as vehicles for the contemporary moral concerns of the expressionists had been demonstrated by Georg Kaiser in *The Burghers of Calais*. For this play, the German dramatist took as his source an episode from the Hundred Years' War, as recounted by the French author Jean Froissart. But the Middle Ages' impact on Kaiser was not limited to the historical backdrop of a single piece of theater, for the playwright also drew upon the very structures of drama from a half millennium earlier. He was particularly beholden to long-ago literature in *From Morning to Midnight*, which made the passage from the stage into silent film (see Fig. 7.22). The stylized seven-scene "station drama" in this piece rests on an analogy to the devotional practice of the Stations of the Cross, as well as to the principles of medieval mystery plays.

Fig. 7.22 Still from Karlheinz Martin's *Von morgens bis Mitternacht* (1920).

Weinrich's text of *Our Lady's Dancer* was published in hit-and-run succession in two editions. The second printing of the play as a popular edition was itself reprinted several times. The quality of its physical presentation shows all the symptoms of the poverty that gripped Germany as the wages of sin (or the consequences of short-sighted vindictiveness by the victors) for World War I. Its cover is the flimsiest of cardboard, and its paper is likewise drab; the only ornament in the whole brochure is a single, irregular, vaguely cometlike star on the title page. Yet in its minimalist way, the leaflet has copious margins that typographically bring home the spareness of the production, with its limited cast. The jongleur is Simplicius: simple is as simple does.

The humble monk declares in his very first speech an objective that marks him radically apart from his medieval original: "I seek myself, myself, myself!" Similarly twentieth-century rather than medieval is an exchange between a chorus of monks and the jongleur. The brethren enjoin the entertainer: "Pray for us!" He replies: "On the contrary, you pray, good brothers!" His flat refusal seems in context less a display of humility than a reflection of an existentialist's skepticism. The play ends with Simplicius's dying words of self-denial: "I am nothing; you are everything."

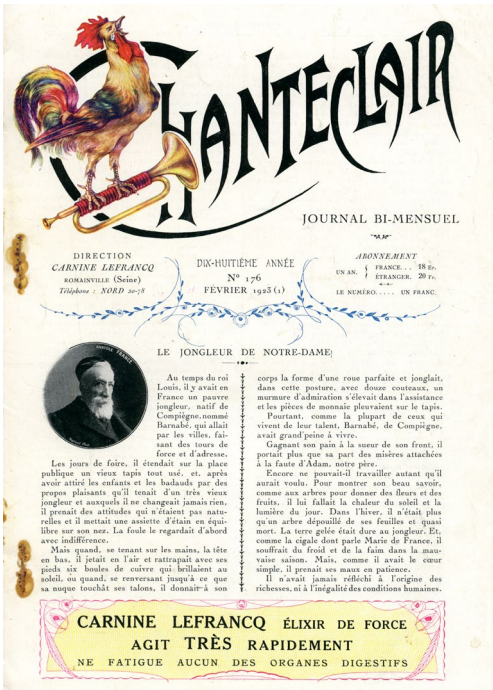
French Piety

After the war, France may have seen a flash of tired triumphalism. The not-too-distant victory over the Germans could, but need not, explain the life-affirming opening of the juggler story in the extended retelling that Maurice Vloberg published in 1921. Yet culling this kind of strained evidence from such adaptations can be an unrewarding exercise. The art historian's version bears the title "Of the Tumbler Who Juggled before the Image of Our Lady." His narrative is saturated with a piety that points toward the success of his later books on Mariocentric religious topics. His refashioning of the tale concludes "Blessed are simple hearts without deceit, for they will see me." Others since Anatole France have understood this beatitude as the central message of the miracle. The same blessing is taken once again, for example, as the conclusion of the events in a dramatic monologue that came out in France in 1943. But that occupied country was an altogether different world from its predecessor of two decades earlier.

Whatever sense of accomplishment hung in the air of the 1920s could not have dispelled the lingering miasma of death and destruction. In the aftermath to the First World War, the Gothic past abided as a dream, but the reverie had been besmirched in ways that were unimaginable before 1914. In 1923, a color-illustrated periodical for young French readers offers at least two vivid juxtapositions in its printing of Anatole France's narrative. The periodical was called by the name *Chanteclair*, the conversational name for the French cockerel or Gallic rooster. The bird became a patriotic emblem during the Third Republic, when it appeared on coinage—and on war memorials for the dead of World War I (see Fig. 7.23). The text of the story begins

on the title page, where the aforementioned Gaulish fowl crows a cockle-doodle-doo while clutching a bugle in its talons.

The flow of Anatole France's prose is interrupted midstream by the reproduction of an 1891 oil painting. The canvas depicts a vaguely Marian nun standing at the foot of a bed in the free-form dispensary improvised in the foyer of the famous theater, the Comédie-Française (see Fig. 7.24). Another nurse and a doctor attend a wounded soldier on the mattress. The nexus of the tale, the war, patriotism, religion, and Marianism could not be clearer. The grim ward of disabled combatants pictured in the children's magazine, although depicting the Franco-Prussian War rather than the Great War, verged all too closely upon the realities of recent bloodlust that left many maimed in their bodies and perhaps even more in their souls.



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LE JONGLEUR DE NOTRE-DAME

Au temps du roi Louis, il y avait en France un pauvre jongleur, natif de Compiègne, nommé Barnabé, qui allait par les villes, faisant des tours de force et d'adresse.

Les jours de foire, il étendait sur la place publique un vieux tapis tout usé, et, après avoir attiré les enfants et les badauds par des propos plaisants qu'il tenait d'un très vieux jongleur et auxquels il ne changeait jamais rien, il prenait des attitudes qui n'étaient pas naturelles et il mettait une assiette d'étain en équilibre sur son nez. La foule le regardait d'abord avec indifférence.

Mais quand, se tenant sur les mains, la tête en bas, il jetait en l'air et rattrapait avec ses pieds six boules de cuivre qui brillaient au soleil, ou quand, se renversant jusqu'à ce que sa nuque touchât ses talons, il donnait à son corps la forme d'une roue parfaite et jonglait, dans cette posture, avec douze couteaux, un murmure d'admiration s'élevait dans l'assistance et les pièces de monnaie pleuvaient sur le tapis.

Pourtant, comme la plupart de ceux qui vivent de leur talent, Barnabé, de Compiègne, avait grand'peine à vivre.

Gagnant son pain à la sueur de son front, il portait plus que sa part des misères attachées à la faute d'Adam, notre père.

Encore ne pouvait-il travailler autant qu'il aurait voulu. Pour montrer son beau savoir, comme aux arbres pour donner des fleurs et des fruits, il lui fallait la chaleur du soleil et la lumière du jour. Dans l'hiver, il n'était plus qu'un arbre dépouillé de ses feuilles et quasi mort. La terre gelée était dure au jongleur. Et, comme la cigale dont parle Marie de France, il souffrait du froid et de la faim dans la mauvaise saison. Mais, comme il avait le cœur simple, il prenait ses maux en patience.

Il n'avait jamais réfléchi à l'origine des richesses, ni à l'inégalité des conditions humaines.

CARNINE LEFRANCQ ÉLIXIR DE FORCE
AGIT TRÈS RAPIDEMENT
NE FATIGUE AUCUN DES ORGANES DIGESTIFS

Fig. 7.23 Front cover of *Chanteclair* 18.176 (February 1923).

Fig. 7.24 "L'ambulance de la Comédie-Française." Original illustration by André Brouillet, 1891. Published in *Chanteclair* 18.176 (February 1923).

Painting the Juggler

The common proclivity to illustrate printings of the tale has meant that knowledge of the performer has been diffused not only among writers but also among artists. In 1919, we have a report of a brush drawing of *Our Lady's Juggler* by Sergius Hruby. Other artists depicted the thirteenth-century story in other connections. Two were illustrators of *Our Lady's Tumbler* as translated by Wicksteed. One was the Englishman Herbert Granville Fell, whose illustrations appeared in 1924 (see Fig. 7.25). The other was Roberta F. C. Waudby, whose figures were published in 1930 (see Fig. 7.26). Her representation of the entertainer purportedly dancing before the Madonna and Child is more than a little off-putting. In her hatched lines, the man is hollow-eyed and gaunt, nothing but skin and bones. His movements seem unballetic, even unhealthy, and spastic, perhaps even grim. He looks like the victim of a shooting, on the verge of crumpling to the ground. Although the efforts of these two book artists fall short of being great pictorial art, they speak to the piety that the narrative has evoked throughout its history.

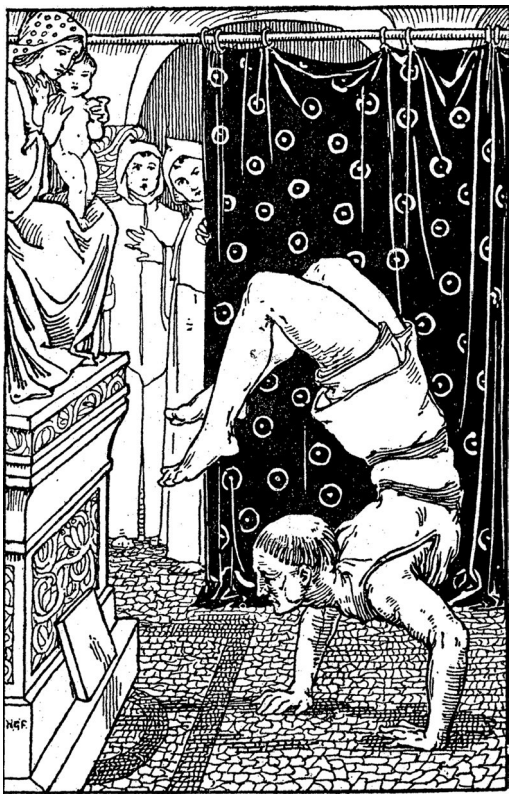

Fig. 7.25 The juggler before the Virgin. Illustration by Herbert Granville Fell, 1924. Published in Philip H. Wicksteed, trans., *Our Lady's Tumbler: A XIIth Century Legend* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1924), between pp. 28 and 29.

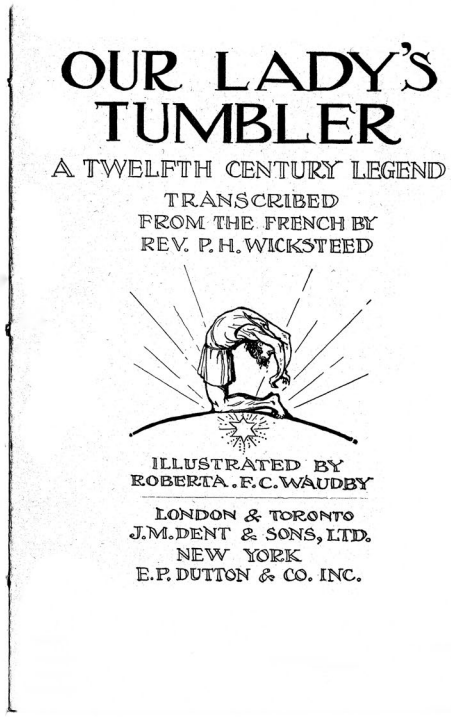

Fig. 7.26 The juggler before the Virgin. Illustration by Roberta F. C. Waudby, 1930. Published in Philip H. Wicksteed, trans., *Our Lady's Tumbler: A Twelfth Century Legend* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons / New York: E. P. Dutton, 1930), frontispiece and title page.

Paintings of the juggler are rarer than books and manuscripts concerned with him, but isolated items of this sort survive. Many date from the decade that followed the Great War. Thus Hugo von Habermann left one. At the turn of the century, this painter played a leading role among modernists in southern Germany. In 1892, he was elected to the highest offices in the Munich Secession. This progressive artistic movement sought to "secede" from traditional state-sponsored art and to adopt independent modernist styles. This pullout inevitably created a rift between those artists in the city who remained in the established cooperative and those who broke away, but Habermann appears to have avoided being alienated from more orthodox colleagues who were not part of the splinter group. In 1904 he was appointed to the Munich Academy. Eventually a doyen among his peers in the capital of Bavaria, he became associated especially with the local reflex of the artistic style known as Jugendstil.

In the 1920s the artist was in his seventies. He plied his brush across many canvases to portray religious themes, such as the Annunciation and All Souls' Day. In the same general ambit, he composed *Our Lady's Tumbler* in 1921 (see Fig. 7.27). His depiction of a juggler captures the make-or-break moment in the story, so that a viewer already familiar with the narrative is led to recall both what has preceded and what is to

follow. The oil painting shows a scene of strikingly incongruous multitasking. A cowled man lying on his back juggles four glistening orbs with his bare soles, while clasping his hands together in prayer. Apart from being in a posture rotated ninety degrees to the vertical, he looks for all the world like a strong-willed monk who is determined to pray while exercising upon an invisible stationary bicycle. The center of the composition is occupied by one of his feet, while his sandals lie prominently in the middle foreground. The performer's face, concealed from us by the brim of his hood, is turned devoutly toward a crowned bust of the Virgin, with a vaguely putto-like child in her right hand and an ornamented staff in her left. The topmost of the balls that the monk has in play intersects with the scepter. This Madonna, atop a column to the side of a niche within the chapel, surveys the scene as the only (sole, in two senses) spectator within the work of art.

Like his fellow nobleman Habermann, Ludwig Ritter von Herterich flourished in fin-de-siècle Munich. The German artist created a watercolor entitled *The Dancer before Our Lady*. The piece depicts an extravagantly and partially dressed, tonsured entertainer. This figure, closer to a fool or jester than a juggler, cavorts with his body facing out to the onlooker, but with his head half turned so as to gaze back away from the spectator at a crowned Madonna who stands with Christ child on her right hip.

Another painter who dealt with the theme was Glyn Warren Philpot (see Fig. 7.28). A convert to Catholicism at the age of 22, he was the subject of some controversy, owing to sexual imagery in his work. Being overtly or at least undeniably gay in that day and age put him in a delicate position, even without considering the conflicts inevitable then between his same-sex preferences and his adopted religion. The English artist left a 1928 painting of *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*, unique at this point in his development for its Pre-Raphaelite style. This painting is brightly colored with prominent stained glass, which helps to situate the event pictured temporally in the Middle Ages, just as the fleur-de-lis pattern of the carpet localizes it geographically in France (see Fig. 7.29). In the composition the red-clad Virgin, crowned in her guise as Queen of Heaven, has slipped down from her pedestal by a short flight of steps to the plane of the performer. With either a towel or her clothing she wipes the sweat from the brow of the athletic juggler as he kneels. Between them on the ground rest the balls he has been juggling.

Another English artist who tried his hand at the story was Frank C. Papé. Active across the first half of the twentieth century as a book illustrator, he received a commission to decorate the works of Anatole France in English translation. His conception of the crucial scene in "Our Lady's Juggler" served as the frontispiece for *Mother of Pearl* (see Fig. 7.30). Elsewhere, the Quebecois artist Rodolphe Duguay produced a composition entitled *Jongleur de Notre-Dame* while in Paris in the first year of a seven-year residence in France from 1920 to 1927. The canvases and drawings of these German, English, and French-Canadian artists in the 1920s did not spell the end of the juggler in art, although since then the tale has had by far its richest afterlife in book illustration.

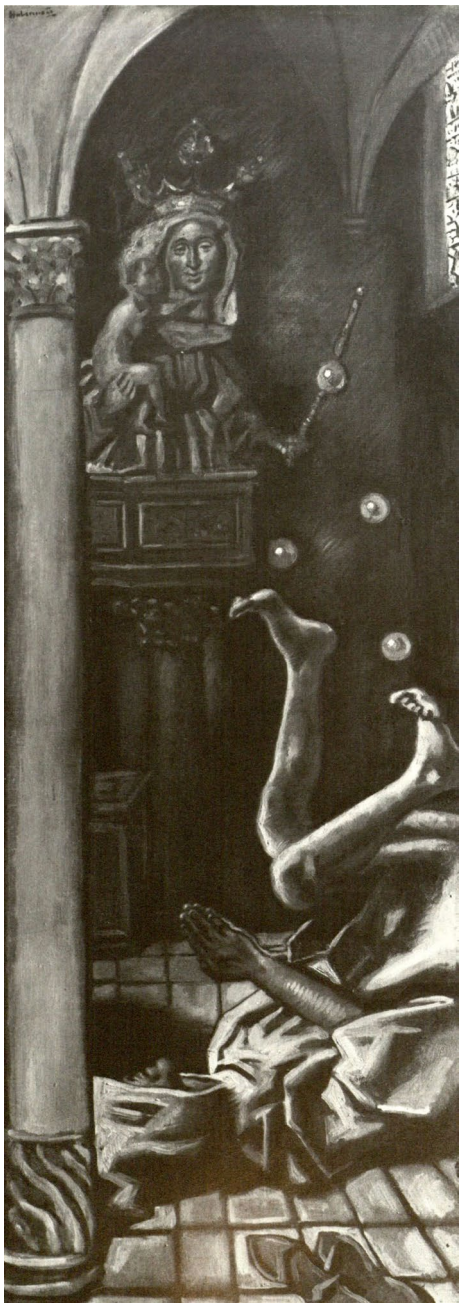

Fig. 7.27 Hugo von Habermann, *Der Spielmann unserer lieben Frau*, 1921. Oil on canvas, 152 × 54 cm. Private collection.

Fig. 7.28 Glyn Warren Philpot, *Self-Portrait*, 1908. Oil on canvas, 91.4 × 71.1 cm. London, National Portrait Gallery, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Glyn_Warren_Philpot_by_Glyn_Warren_Philpot.jpg

Fig. 7.29 Glyn Warren Philpot, *The Juggler*, 1928. Oil on canvas, 51 × 40.5 cm.
Collection of Ömer M. Koç.

Fig. 7.30 The juggler before the Virgin. Illustration by Frank C. Papé, 1929. Published in Anatole France, *Mother of Pearl*, trans. Frederic Chapman, vol. 16 of *The Works of Anatole France in English*, ed. Frederic Chapman (London: John Lane the Bodley Head, 1929), frontispiece.

A few striking Art Deco treatments are found in an Italian anthology of short stories by Anatole France, published in 1933. The identical front pastedown and flyleaf emphasize the ability of books to transport a youthful reader of the twentieth century back to a phantasmagoria of jesters, damsels, and wizards from the Middle Ages (see Fig. 7.31). The full-page illustrations of "Le jongleur de Notre Dame" show instead individualism, with the juggler's isolation at the beginning of the story (see Fig. 7.32) and the facelessness of the monastic brother who welcomes him into the monastery a little later (see Fig. 7.33). The most receptive home for the juggler in art would prove to be children's books, where the maiden voyage of the Virgin and the medieval performer took place in 1917. We will return to this genre and volume later.

Fig. 7.31 Front pastedown and flyleaf, in Anatole France, *Il Cristo dell'Oceano. Il giocoliere della Madonna. Il pane nero,* Favole leggende e racconti di tutto il mondo 16 (Lanciano: Tip. R. Carabba, 1933).

Fig. 7.32 The wandering juggler. Illustration, 1933. Artist unknown. In Anatole France, *Il Cristo dell'Oceano. Il giocoliere della Madonna. Il pane nero,* Favole leggende e racconti di tutto il mondo 16 (Lanciano: Tip. R. Carabba, 1933), 33.

Fig. 7.33 The juggler becomes a monk. Illustration, 1933. Artist unknown. In Anatole France, *Il Cristo dell'Oceano. Il giocoliere della Madonna. Il pane nero,* Favole leggende e racconti di tutto il mondo 16 (Lanciano: Tip. R. Carabba, 1933), 41.

American Gothic

All that I attempted to do was to paint a picture
of a Gothic house and to depict the kind of
people I fancied should live in that house.

—Grant Wood

At the turn of the century, Henry Adams exclaimed with gleeful apocalypticism: "The period from 1900 to 1930 is in full swing, and gee-whacky! How it is going! It will break its damned neck before it gets through." Was he far off the mark, with the lagging global economy, framed by two world wars, that lay ahead? Life was indeed changing, and with it the juggler too. To take only one case in point from literary history, in 1930 an author who soon participated in the founding of the Flemish Nazi party brought into print the Dutch translation of Franz Johannes Weinrich's expressionist play of 1921. The United States had no magic exemption from worldwide transformations, economic or otherwise. In 1930 the Depression applied a throttlehold to the nation. The gross national product plummeted to one half of what it had been a year earlier. Culturally, the Golden Age of Opera expired in that same moment, its demise signaled by the retirement of Mary Garden from the Chicago company at the end of the 1930–1931 season, after her final performance in the role of Jean in Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*.

This is not to say that all symptoms of Gothicizing vanished overnight. Far from it. We took note earlier that particularly in architecture, a late evolution of the style lived on in the United States. By 1930 Henry Adams was long dead and gone, but in Washington, DC, the largest apartment complex in the city, Alban Towers, was a Gothicist construction completed in that very year. In New York, the Woolworth Building, a Gothic skyscraper, remained the tallest inhabited structure in the world. It would not be eclipsed until the following year, when the Empire State Building was completed. Elsewhere on the island of Manhattan, the Gothic Riverside Church was finished thanks to the support of the great Gothodule John D. Rockefeller Jr. Most impressively, many campuses were in the latter stages of major building programs in the collegiate brand of the style. A showcase example was the University of Chicago, located in the American city most closely associated with Mary Garden.

If 1930 had a cultural product that brought home the simultaneously evanescent and continued presence of Gothic, it was a masterwork that would swiftly achieve iconic status in American culture, and that would become one of the country's most famous paintings (see Fig. 7.34). Among Americana, it rates as Americanissimum. In this year, the artist Grant Wood was inspired by a house in the town of Eldon, Iowa. He sketched it on the very day he saw it—and he would never set eyes on it again before dying a little more than a decade later. Subsequently he painted a composition in oil on beaverboard. The work won him the greatest recognition of his career when it took a bronze medal in the Chicago Annual Exposition, and was acquired early by the Art

Institute of Chicago. It has the name *American Gothic*, by no means a neologism of 1930 (see Fig. 7.35).

The most obvious source from which this magnum opus takes its name is the pointed arch, itself bisected by mullions into two further lancets, under the eaves of the modest frame house. The clash between the utter simplicity of the overall architecture and the relative subtlety of the vault is what caught the painter's fancy. Along equivalent lines, Henry Adams's close friend Clarence King gave his fellow Americans a public tongue-lashing:

> Of Gothic architecture we have done little more than to cobble up some unsuccessful plagiarisms in the way of churches, and to nail a few rather thin boards together into sad little suburban villas, having a certain sanctimony of English perpendicular windows.

Wood may have shared King's sense of decorum, which is not to say that the painter was anti-Gothic. In fact, he embedded traces of Gothicism, especially fenestration, in several of his artworks, and went so far as to install a window in the style in a building on the property of the artists' colony that he cofounded. Yet he liked to puncture pompous pretentiousness and preciousness. His eyes were peeled for instances when the lofty aspirations of Gothic in churches or universities suffered disjunctions owing to the shortcomings of the human beings who inhabited them.

In *American Gothic,* the pointed aperture stands behind and between an unsmiling duo, a man on the right holding a three-tined pitchfork and glaring straight ahead, and a woman on the left looking off to the viewer's right. The window almost serves the function of a third head, not so much standing between the two human beings as rounding them off to a geometric trinity of elongated curves and definitive points. Alternatively, the fenestration may be taken to bifurcate into two halves, with one for both members of the couple in the foreground. To consider the lay of the land from another perspective, the individuals are Gothicized by the interplay between vertical lines and glacial curvature in their very faces. The architecture is not humanized. Instead, the people are rendered architectonic, by being angled and arched.

Wood used as his model a home that still stands today (see Fig. 7.36). The original house was built a decade before his birth, and thus it was roughly a half century old when he wielded his brush to paint *American Gothic.* The domicile is in a fashion known as Carpenter Gothic, a North American form of revival building. The construction is spare and trim. Two fingerprints of the style are more decorative than structurally needful: steep gables and pointed-arch windows. These embellishments of household architecture may appear at best out of place, at worst pathetically effete. They breathe the dying breaths of pattern books that had circulated since early in the nineteenth century, and that disseminated notions of the Gothic to builders who were equipped with saws ever more capable of inexpensively turning out minor features of the style. Such ornaments give these structures, even those that are domestic rather than ecclesiastical, an austerity that is churchlike—but hardly redolent of a European cathedral. The weather-beaten whiteness of the wood heightens the aura of New World purity.

Fig. 7.34 Grant Wood, *American Gothic*, 1930. Oil on beaverboard, 78 × 65.3 cm. Chicago, IL, Art Institute of Chicago, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Grant_Wood_-_American_Gothic_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

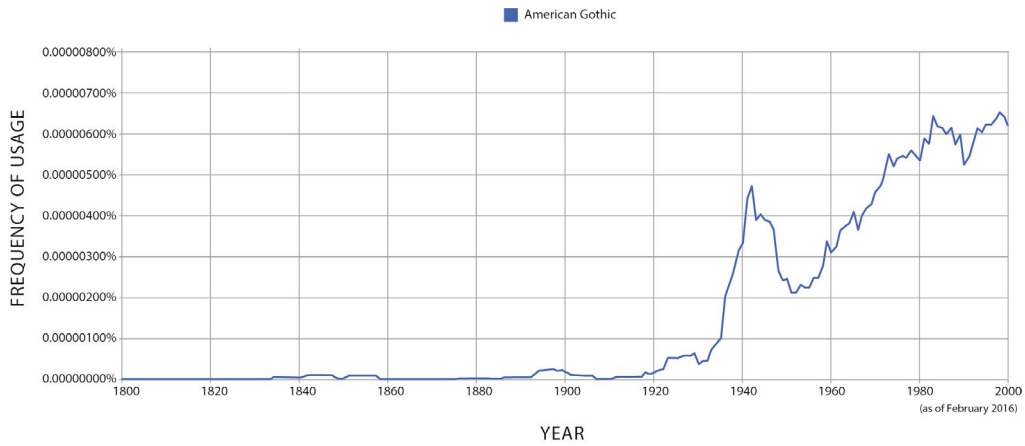

Fig. 7.35 Google Books Ngram data for "American Gothic," an existing term receiving a steep uptick in popularity in 1930. Vector art by Melissa Tandysh, 2016. Image courtesy of Melissa Tandysh. All rights reserved.

The dwelling place in the background puts itself uncannily into the foreground. The structure responds to an old ambivalence about the use of Gothic in country settings in the New World. In 1842 Andrew Jackson Downing published a kit of designs with the qualification *Adapted to North America*. Although this subtitle proclaims the continent for which the architecture was meant, the designer's Americanness cries out for no more confirmation than his first two names: he was the namesake of Andrew Jackson, the seventh President of the United States. The second specimen in Downing's book, "A Cottage in the English or Rural Gothic Style," flaunts at the top a figure that may be fairly regarded as the architectural grandparent of the residence at the back of Wood's later painting (see Fig. 7.37). The architect wrote in July 1850 that houses of this sort, today often called "Downing cottages," were the dernier cri.

In Grant Wood's *American Gothic,* the severity of the building style is complemented by the sour-faced primness of the two people. They are portrayed full-body, from head to toe. Their clothing, truly strait-laced, intensifies a very American propriety, verging on religiosity. They radiate a Puritanism or Victorianism that probably harked back to the painter's childhood at the turn of the century rather than to 1930. The woman's finery brings to mind the nineteenth, not the twentieth century. For better or worse, the twosome depicted have also been thought to bring to mind the Christian fundamentalism of the Bible belt. They emanate an insistence upon the strait and narrow. Not entirely consistent with this interpretation, the man's odd garb appears mildly clerical, even Catholic. Christianity is evident in the loosely trinitarian three tines of the hayfork, its three prongs reflected in the triune seams on the chest of his overalls, while Catholicism may be hinted at in the vague priestliness of his thin white collar and black jacket. The painting's implications have been debated since it was

first put on view, and conflicting interpretations swirl even to this day. Is the pair husband and wife, or father and daughter? The age gap between them is notable. Are they farmers? The red barn and fork may signify. Are both generically American or specifically Iowan? To what degree is the configuration sharp-edged and satirical—and of what?

Fig. 7.36 The *American Gothic* house, Eldon, IA. Photograph by Wikipedia user Jehjoyce, 2007, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2007-06-04-Gothic_House.jpg

A rare characteristic of the composition that has been left unchallenged is its Gothicity. Indeed, the most famous lancet in the United States is the arched window in the dormer of the humble frame house depicted on the beaverboard. The heart of the meanings that this painting holds may be the tension latent in its title, between what makes it stereotypically American and what qualifies it concomitantly as Gothic. The two are as much an odd couple as are the man and woman pictured with the three-tined farm tool. The categories of American and Gothic had had an ocean of both space and time between them, until a whole menu with many flavors of Gothic revival seized hold of popular tastes in the United States. Among the many complexities that suffuse Wood's artwork, the seeming incongruity of a lancet window thrust into a rural American frame house, and farmhouse, is itself conjoined with the apparently unlikely transposition of elements from late medieval European painting upon the two individuals, posed as if for their portraits.

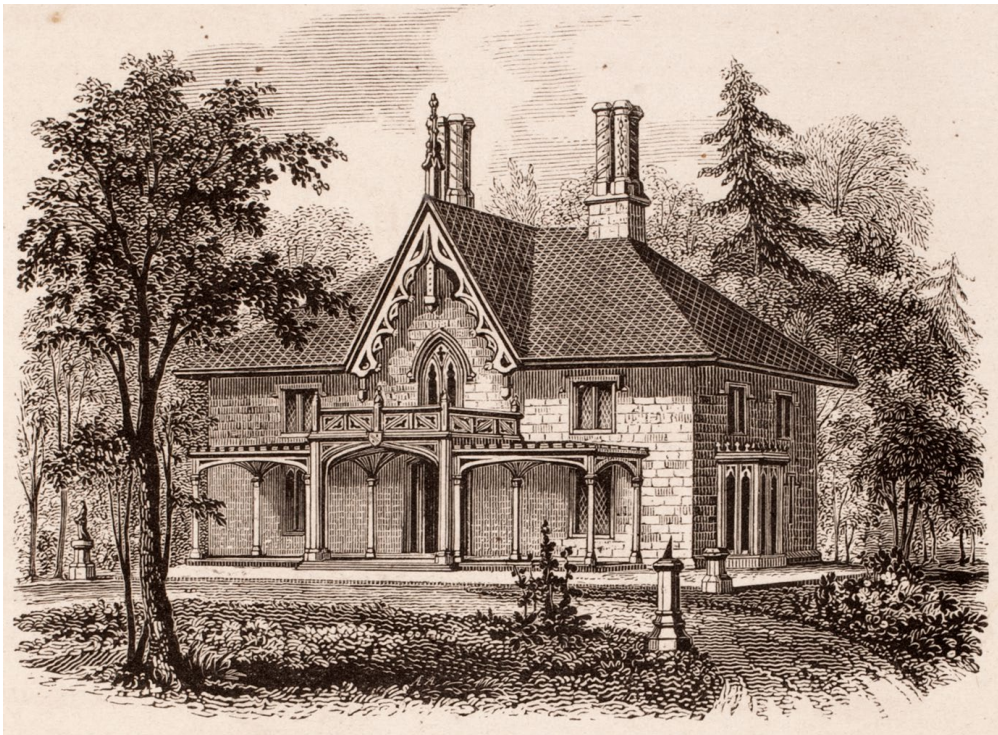

Fig. 7.37 "A Cottage in the English or Rural Gothic Style." Engraving by Andrew Jackson Downing, 1842. Published in Andrew Jackson Downing, *Cottage Residences, or, A Series of Designs for Rural Cottages and Cottage Villas, and Their Gardens and Grounds: Adapted to North America* (New York and London: Wiley and Putnam, 1842), design 2.

Wood himself, despite being largely self-instructed, was no American primitive. As a boy he was exposed through books to a wide range of art, including Renaissance and northern Gothic. In his late twenties and thirties he sojourned repeatedly in France and Germany, where he painted works that bear witness to his interest in ecclesiastic architecture. His early education as an artist exposed him to Arts and Crafts, while his shift in Paris made him conversant with impressionism. His 1928 expedition to Germany was a three-month business trip. While there, Wood encountered expressionism and the reactions to it. In Munich, could he have even seen any canvases by Habermann? More certainly, he also had the chance to engage directly with masterpieces of late Northern Gothic. He studied minutely paintings by Hans Memling—the same Early Netherlandish artist who had engrossed Maeterlinck, the Belgian playwright of the 1901 *Sister Beatrice*. The Flemish primitive painted numerous compositions with the Virgin and Child, such as one depicting them flanked by two angelic instrumentalists, all framed within a lancet and leading into a backdrop replete with other telltale diagnostics of Gothic architecture, such as stepped gables and crockets (see Fig. 7.38). If Wood had wanted a medieval antecedent to *American Gothic,* he could have done no better.

In later years Wood had much to say about his motivation and modus operandi in creating his famous composition. Revealingly or concealingly, he declared: "I simply invented some American Gothic people to stand in front of a house of this type." Despite this protestation, the design of the work actually resulted from selection rather than invention, and it was not nearly so unchallenging as the painter later sought to pretend. Wood ended up choosing his dentist (who knew the drill) as the model for the male, and his own sister Nan for the female. That he was inspired in his mind's eye by medieval Gothic statuary for the two figures we know for certain. To ready his sibling for posing as his subject, he showed her pictures of stone carvings from a Gothic cathedral. Whereas *Our Lady's Tumbler* depicts an image that becomes animate, *American Gothic* immobilizes in paint living beings positioned as statuary.

Especially in her face, Nan Wood as reshaped in *American Gothic* bears more than a passing resemblance to a Madonna in a painting by Memling. The canvas retains iconic status by virtue of its simultaneous Americanism and Gothicism, and iconicity is one of many concepts taken from medieval and Byzantine studies that have become so native that sometimes we forget their origins.

Fig. 7.38 Hans Memling, *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Two Musical Angels*, ca. 1465–1467. Oil on panel, 75.4 × 52.2 cm. Kansas City, MO, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hans_Memling_-_Virgin_and_Child_Enthroned_with_two_Musical_Angels_-_WGA14808.jpg

Notes

Dr. Urbino's most contagious initiative. *Love in the Time of Cholera*, trans. Edith Grossman (New York: Vintage International, 2003), 44.

Notes to Chapter 1

Opera, next to Gothic architecture. Kenneth Clark, *Civilisation: A Personal View* (London: BBC, 1969), 241.

The Jongleur in the Circle of Richard Wagner

Minnesingers. This word anglicizes partially the German *Minnesänger*. A related term is *Meistersänger*, "master singer."

the troubadour had become entrenched. Elizabeth Fay, *Romantic Medievalism: History and the Romantic Literary Ideal* (Houndmills, UK: Palgrave, 2002), 3–8; Clare A. Simmons, *Popular Medievalism in Romantic-Era Britain* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 59–62, 89–91.

Giuseppe Verdi's Il trovatore. The Italian means simply "the troubadour." The opera had an Italian libretto written mainly by Salvadore Cammarano, which was based on the 1836 Castilian play *El trovador* by Antonio García Gutiérrez. The premiere took place in Rome on January 19.

a memorial in Parma. The monument, inaugurated in 1920, was constructed by the Italian sculptor Ettore Ximenes, beginning in 1913. A central altar survives, but not the far larger triumphal arch, flanked by semicircular colonnades, that contained statues representing key figures from all of Verdi's operas. In later mass culture, the troubadour puts in an appearance in the snatches from the musical drama that are incorporated into *A Night at the Opera*, the 1935 American comedy film starring the Marx Brothers.

https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0147.08

This opera. The German title is *Tannhäuser und der Sängerkrieg auf Wartburg*. Wagner's familiarity with Minnesinger melodies from the Middle Ages has been considered by Larry Bomback, "Wagner's Access to Minnesinger Melodies prior to Completing *Tannhäuser*," *Musical Times* 147.1896 (Autumn 2006): 19–31; Michael Scott Richardson, "Evoking an Ancient Sound: Richard Wagner's Musical Medievalism" (Master's thesis, Rice University, 2009).

Germanic Middle Ages. Volker Mertens, "Wagner's Middle Ages," trans. Stewart Spencer, in *Wagner Handbook*, ed. John Deathridge et al. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 236–68, at 237.

provided a complete picture of the Middle Ages. Mertens, "Wagner's Middle Ages," 236.

pilgrimages. Thus, Mark Twain in a travel letter from 1891 ("Mark Twain at Bayreuth," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 6, 1891): ". . . this biennial pilgrimage. For a pilgrimage is what it is"; an anonymous article on Bernard Shaw's "The Perfect Wagnerite" entitled "The Bayreuth Pilgrim," *Literature* (February 17, 1899): 126; Charles Henry Meltzer, "The Coming of Parsifal," *Pearson's* 11.1 (January 1904): 94–104, at 94; Max Simon Nordau, *Degeneration* (New York: D. Appleton, 1895), 213.

a friend read it aloud to her. Her letter (Munich, March 20, 1890) can be found in *Cosima Wagner und Houston Stewart Chamberlain im Briefwechsel, 1888–1908*, ed. Paul Pretzsch (Leipzig, Germany: Philipp Reclam jun., 1934), 144–45, at 145 ("Yesterday Dr. [Konrad] Fiedler [1841–1895, art historian] read aloud to us something that I would like to recommend very much to you: *Old French Tales*, adapted by Wilhelm Hertz. Pick up and read the *Dancer of Our Dear Lady*; I believe that it will speak to you as to us, and that would please me"); for Houston Stewart Chamberlain's reply, which mentions the story only in a brief postscript, see 145–48, at 148 ("The Old French book of Hertz is a dear old friend of mine. Tonight, I will read again the story of *The Dancer of Our Dear Lady*"). Nearly two decades later, in 1908, Chamberlain married Eva von Bülow-Wagner, Cosima's daughter and Wagner's step-daughter.

Our Lady's Dancer. In German, *Der Tänzer unserer lieben Frau*: see Franz Trenner, ed., *Cosima Wagner, Richard Strauss: Ein Briefwechsel*, Veröffentlichungen der Richard-Strauss-Gesellschaft, München, vol. 2 (Tutzing, Germany: H. Schneider, 1978), 39 (her initial proposal, in a letter of March 26, 1890: "Recently I thought of you, when I became acquainted with a very beautiful poem, 'Our Lady's Tumbler,' from Wilhelm Hertz's 'minstrel book' [German *Spielmannsbuch*]. I believe that it would be a beautiful theme for a symphonic poem"), 45 (her follow-up, in a letter of April 15, 1890: "I am eager to know how you like the minstrel book and whether 'Our Lady's Tumbler' gives some inspiration or not. The dance as a basis for the symphony seems to me artistically justified as a conscious theme for it. But only the one who must create it can decide that"), 49 (his reactions, in a letter of May 17, 1890: "Hearty thanks for your

recommendation of the charming 'minstrel book.' 'Our Lady's Tumbler' is certainly a charming thing; I have already taken it up into myself and must now just patiently wait and see if it dances back out of my heart as a symphonic poem"). See Willi Schuh, *Richard Strauss: A Chronicle of the Early Years (1864–1898)*, trans. Mary Whittall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 217n12.

Wilhelm Hertz. Wilhelm Hertz, ed. and trans., *Spielmannsbuch: Novellen in Versen aus dem zwölften und dreizehnten Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, Germany: G. Kröner, 1886), 210–17. In the first half of the twentieth century, the collection was reprinted in 1900, 1905, 1912, and 1931.

The dance as a basis for the symphony seems to me artistically justified. "Der Tanz als Basis der Sinfonie erscheint mir als bewußter Vorwurf derselben künstlerisch berechtigt."

cadre of Jews. Eric Werner, "Jews around Richard and Cosima Wagner," *Musical Quarterly* 71 (1985): 172–99; Milton E. Brener, *Richard Wagner and the Jews* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2006).

interpreters have skirmished. Among the most influential and harshest constructions of Levi would be Peter Gay, "Hermann Levi: A Study in Service and Self-Hatred," in idem, ed., *Freud, Jews, and Other Germans: Masters and Victims in Modernist Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 189–230. For less condemnatory views, see Brener, *Richard Wagner and the Jews*; Laurence Dreyfus, "Hermann Levi's Shame and *Parsifal*'s Guilt: A Critique of Essentialism in Biography and Criticism," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 6 (1994): 125–45; Frithjof Haas, *Hermann Levi: From Brahms to Wagner*, trans. Cynthia Klohr (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2012).

returned to Germany in 1859. Haas, *Hermann Levi*, 22–25.

retire from leading an orchestra. Haas, *Hermann Levi*, 236–38.

came out in 1896. Under the title "Der Gaukler unserer lieben Frau," *Jugend: Münchner illustrierte Wochenschrift für Kunst und Leben* 1.8 (February 22, 1896): 127–29. Levi's authorship is not indicated in the pages where the tale is printed or in the index to the journal, but it is flagged (to cite only one example) by Haas, *Hermann Levi*, 263. The first authorized translation followed five years later, notably as the title story in a volume containing ten of France's short stories: *Der Gaukler unserer Lieben Frau und anderes*, trans. Franziska Reventlow (Munich, Germany: Albert Langen, 1901), 1–13.

The main title of the periodical. The subtitle, translated into English, was *Munich Illustrated Weekly for Art and Life*. See Heinz Spielmann, *Jugend 1896–1940: Zeitschrift einer Epoche. Aspekte einer Wochenschrift "Für Kunst und Leben"* (Dortmund, Germany: Harenberg, 1988).

whom the conductor knew personally. Haas, *Hermann Levi*, 143.

The Mastersingers of Nuremberg. In the original German, the title is *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

mark corrections as she saw fit. Haas, *Hermann Levi*, 189, 191n10, citing Leviana, letter dated November 28, 1895, with a quotation from *Mastersingers*, Act 2.

Dancer of Our Blessed Lady. The German title is *Der Tänzer uns'rer lieben Frau*.

around the turn of the century. Hertz, *Spielmannsbuch*, 420. Hermann Hutter, *Der Tänzer uns'rer lieben Frau: Nach dem gleichnamigen Gedicht von Wilhelm Hertz. Op. 17* (Leipzig, Germany: Luckhardt's Musik-Verlag, 1899). On Hutter, see Jürgen Kraus, ed., *Geborgen ruht die Stadt im Zauber des Erinnerns: Der Kaufbeurer Komponist Herman Hutter 1848-1926 und sein autobiographisches Vermächtnis*, Schriftenreihe von Stadtarchiv und Stadtmuseum Kaufbeuren, vol. 3 (Kempten, Germany: Tobias Dannheimer, 1996).

Lancelot. "Lanzelot," Opus 13 (1898). But note that the comparisons in a contemporary review are to Mendelssohn's *Loreley* and Schumann's *Paradis und Peri*: see Kraus, *Geborgen ruht die Stadt*, 18–19.

Reveille for the Nibelungen. "Nibelungen-Weckruf," Opus 60 (verschollen): see Kraus, *Geborgen ruht die Stadt*, 23.

as it was understood by the nineteenth century. Danielle Buschinger, *Das Mittelalter Richard Wagners*, trans. Renate Ullrich and Danielle Buschinger (Würzburg, Germany: Königshausen & Neumann, 2007).

French songwriters. Steven Huebner, *French Opera at the Fin de Siècle: Wagnerism, Nationalism, and Style* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 25–167 on Massenet (but without inclusion of *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*, because of its date early in the twentieth century).

Tristan and Isolde. 1856–59, premiere 1865.

Parsifal. 1865–82, premiere 1882.

cast an undeniably daunting shadow. On Wagner's influence in France, see Léon Guichard, *La musique et les lettres en France au temps du wagnérisme* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1963); Paul du Quenoy, *Wagner and the French Muse: Music, Society, and Nation in Modern France* (Bethesda, MD: Academica Press, 2011).

polemical articles. Carlo Caballero, review of Huebner, *French Opera at the Fin de Siècle*, *Cambridge Opera Journal* 12 (2000): 81–89, at 87.

satirically anti-Gallic tirade. Richard Wagner, "Eine Kapitulation," trans. W. Ashton Ellis, "A Capitulation," in Richard Wagner, *Prose Works*, vol. 5, *Actors and Singers* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1896), 5–33.

eyewitness account. Steven Huebner, "Massenet and Wagner: Bridling the Influence," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 5.3 (1993): 223–38.

Who can render us that pure love. Claude Debussy, "M. Claude Debussy et *Le martyre de saint Sébastien* (Interview par Henry Malherbe)," in idem, *Monsieur Croche et autres écrits* (Paris: Gallimard, 1926), 302; 2nd ed. (Paris: Gallimard, 1987), 323–25, at 324, repr. in idem, *Debussy on Music: The Critical Writings of the Great French Composer Claude Debussy*, ed. and trans. Richard Langham Smith (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1977), 247–49, at 247: "Qui nous rendra le pur amour des musiciens pieux des anciennes époques? . . . Qui recommencera le pauvre et suave sacrifice du petit jongleur, dont l'histoire attendrissante nous est demeurée?"

defending the cathedrals of his homeland. Marcel Proust, "La mort des cathédrales," *Le Figaro*, August 16, 1904, repr. in idem, *Pastiches et mélanges* (1919). The best edition is in Marcel Proust, *Contre Sainte-Beuve* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), 146–47, with notes at 770–72.

Twilight of the Gods. In the original German, *Die Götterdämmerung*.

Tannhäuser

In The Education of Henry Adams. Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams* (henceforth *EHA*), chap. 23, "Silence (1894–1898)," in idem, *Novels, Mont Saint Michel, The Education*, ed. Ernest Samuels and Jayne N. Samuels (New York: Library of America, 1983), 1049: "This amusement could not be prolonged, for one found oneself the oldest Englishman in England, much too familiar with family jars better forgotten, and old traditions better unknown. No wrinkled Tannhäuser, returning to the Wartburg, needed a wrinkled Venus to show him that he was no longer at home, and that even penitence was a sort of impertinence. . . . From time to time Hay wrote humorous laments, but nothing occurred to break the summer-peace of the stranded Tannhäuser, who slowly began to feel at home in France as in other countries he had thought more homelike." In letters, he mentions hearing in Bayreuth *Das Rheingold* (The Rhinegold), *Die Walküre* (The Valkyrie), and *Die Götterdämmerung* (Twilight of the Gods), the first, second, and fourth, respectively, in Wagner's cycle *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (The Ring of the Nibelungen). For references to these and other Wagnerian operas, see Henry Adams, *The Letters of Henry Adams* (henceforth *LHA*), ed. J. C. Levenson et al., 6 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982–1988), 5: 267–72.

a study on the legend of Tannhäuser. Gaston Paris, "La légende du Tannhäuser," *Revue de Paris* 5.2 (1898): 307–25, repr. in idem, *Légendes du Moyen Âge* (Paris: Hachette, 1903), 111–45. In the meantime between the debut and the Parisian revival, the story was not allowed to languish. In 1866, a lyrical and dramatic poem by the English writer Algernon Charles Swinburne was published on the theme. In translation, its Latin

title of "Laus Veneris" means "Praise of Venus," referring to the Roman goddess of love. Later, the same theme became the object of Aubrey Beardsley's attention. He worked ceaselessly but ineffectually on a novel that was originally to have been entitled *The Story of Venus and Tannhäuser*, but that began to appear in print only in 1896, in expurgated form, under the title *Under the Hill*. Beardsley's version increases the sexual charge of the story.

a nobleman. Specifically, a *landgrave*.

Henry Adams became well acquainted with the Wartburg. Letter to Charles Francis Adams Jr., April 22, 1859, in *LHA*, 1: 34–39, at 36: "The old Wartburg above it is covered with romance and with history until it's as rich as a wedding-cake."

the Sleeping Beauty castle in Disneyland. Martha Bayless, "Disney's Castles and the Work of the Medieval in the Magic Kingdom," in *The Disney Middle Ages: A Fairy Tale and Fantasy Past*, ed. Tison Pugh and Susan Aronstein (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 39–56.

Pierrefonds. On the relationship between the two castles, see Jürgen Strasser, *Wenn Monarchen Mittelalter spielen: Die Schlösser Pierrefonds und Neuschwanstein im Spiegel ihrer Zeit*, Stuttgarter Arbeiten zur Germanistik, vol. 289 (Stuttgart, Germany: Hans-Dieter Heinz, 1994).

Viollet-le-Duc and his successors. For the restorer's own words, see Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, *Description et histoire du Château de Pierrefonds*, 11th ed. (Paris: A. Morel, 1883). For comparative analysis of the French chateau and the German construction, see Strasser, *Wenn Monarchen Mittelalter spielen*.

The Medievalesque Oeuvre of Jules Massenet

The composer has captured. "Le jongleur de Notre Dame," *The Musical Standard* (June 30, 1906): 400–1, at 400.

Massenet achieved a similar status. The most recent general appreciation of his career would be Christophe Ghristi and Mathias Auclair, *La belle époque de Massenet* (Montreuil, France: Gourcuff Gradenigo, 2011).

Academy of Fine Arts. In French, Académie des Beaux-Arts, founded in 1795.

medievalizing revival. For a capsule view of Massenet's medievalism, see Didier Van Moere, "Massenet," in *La fabrique du Moyen Âge au XIXe siècle: Représentations du Moyen Âge dans la culture et la littérature françaises du XIXe siècle*, ed. Simone Bernard-Griffiths et al., Romantisme et modernités, vol. 94 (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2006), 1077–84.

In the Midst of the Middle Ages. Chap. 23, "En plein Moyen Âge."

The Virgin. The *légende sacrée, La Vierge.*

French libretto. The libretto is by Charles Grandmougin.

a libretto in French. The libretto is by Louis Gallet, Édouard Blau, and Adolphe d'Ennery. The opera premiered at the Paris Opera on November 30, 1885.

five-act tragicomedy. First performed and published in 1637.

librettists. Alfred Blau and Louis de Gramont.

Huon de Bordeaux. For a review by an author who was himself caught up in the medievalizing trend of this decade, see Marcel Schwob, "*Esclarmonde*," *Phare de la Loire*, May 18, 1889, repr. in idem, *Chroniques*, ed. John Alden Green, Histoire des idées et critique littéraire, vol. 195 (Geneva: Droz, 1981), 52–55.

one of the writers. The librettist in question was Édouard Blau.

its composer was singled out officially. On its place within the overall presentation of music at the Exposition Universelle, see Annegret Fauser, *Musical Encounters at the 1889 Paris World's Fair*, Eastman Studies in Music, vol. 32 (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2005). On its reception in general, see Annegret Fauser, ed., *Jules Massenet, Esclarmonde: Dossier de presse parisienne (1889)*, Critiques de l'opéra français du XIXème siècle, vol. 12 (Weinsberg, Germany: L. Galland, 2001); she discusses the opening at p. v.

comprising a prologue and three acts. The libretto was based on a play by Paul-Armand Silvestre and Eugène Morand that had been performed first in 1891.

as related in the Italian prose of Giovanni Boccaccio's Decameron. See the tenth, and final, novella of the tenth day.

Massenet's version. *Grisélidis* premiered on November 21, 1901, at the Opéra Comique in Paris.

various images. Especially the watercolor *Love Among the Ruins*, which was first exhibited in 1873 and was recreated as an oil painting in 1894 after the destruction of the earlier work.

a triptych of medievalesque operas. Stefan Schmidl, *Jules Massenet: Sein Leben, sein Werk, seine Zeit*, Serie Musik Atlantis-Schott, vol. 8310 (Mainz, Germany: Schott, 2012), 90–95 presents the three operas explicitly as such.

Amadis. Written by the man of letters, Jules Claretie, who was elected to the French Academy in 1888.

Spanish chivalric romance. It is entitled *Amadís de Gaul.*

as Grisélidis had been. The parallels between the two operas as musical miracle plays were not lost on Massenet's near-contemporaries. For example, see the review in *Nation* 90.2326 (January 27, 1910): 95–96.

even before the musical drama was accepted for performance. Ronald Crichton, "Massenet and After," *Musical Times* 112 (February 1971): 132.

the ruler of the principality had been an enterprising benefactor. Jules Massenet, *Mes souvenirs: À mes petits-enfants*, ed. Gérard Condé (Paris: Plume, 1992), 243; T. J. Walsh, *Monte Carlo Opera 1879–1909* (Dublin, Ireland: Gill and Macmillan, 1975), 148.

a tidy sum. The precise amount was 20,000 francs: see Walsh, *Monte Carlo Opera 1879–1909*, 151.

going back to 1842. In this year, Henri Heugel's father and partner moved into quarters on Rue Vivienne occupied by *Le Ménestrel*, a periodical devoted to music that they had acquired.

The Tall Tale of the Libretto

In his autobiography. See Jules Massenet, *My Recollections*, trans. H. Villiers Barnett (Boston: Small, Maynard, 1919), 231–35 (in the chapter headed "In the Midst of the Middle Ages"). Compare Raymond de Rigné, *Le disciple de Massenet*, 5 vols. (Paris: La renaissance universelle, 1921), 1: 12. For analysis of the flaws in Massenet's account, see Demar Irvine, *Massenet: A Chronicle of His Life and Times* (Portland, OR: Amadeus, 1994), 229–30.

frets over taking nourishment within the community. *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*, lines 108–10, 125–28, ed. Paul Bretel, Traductions des classiques du Moyen Âge, vol. 64 (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2003), 82.

he is described. *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*, lines 234–36, ed. Bretel, 86.

one Maurice Léna. For Léna's recollections, see "Massenet (1842–1912)," *Le Ménestrel* 4422, 83.4 (January 28, 1921): 33–34. For recollections by another contemporary, see Raymond de Rigné, "Souvenirs sur Massenet," *Le Mercure de France* 32.545 (March 1, 1921): 351, 362–63, 369–70.

professor of rhetoric. He taught first at the University of Lyon and later in Paris.

librettos for various composers. Léna also composed texts for such stage works as Émile Jaques-Dalcroze's 1908 *Les jumeaux de Bergame* (The twins of Bergamo), based on an eighteenth-century play; Charles-Marie Widor's 1924 *Nerto*; and Philippe Gaubert's 1927 *Nalïa*.

The Farce of the Vat. In French, *La farce du cuvier*, by Gabriel Dupont.

The Damnation of Blanchefleur. In French, *La damnation de Blanchefleur: Miracle en deux actes*, by Henry Février.

In the Shadow of the Cathedral. In French, *Dans l'ombre de la cathédrale*, by Georges Hüe.

Knight of the Barrel. In French, *Le chevalier au Barizel: légende dramatique en trois parties*, music by Charles Pons ([no place]: Imprimerie E. Desfossés, [no date]). Other versions of a story with the same title are attested in French in the second decade of the twentieth century. The free German adaptation from the same period is entitled *Der Ritter mit dem Fäßchen*. The story was adopted as a modest cartoon strip in the anonymous "Le chevalier au Barizel," *Les trois couleurs* 6.230 (May 1, 1919), 3 (see Fig. n.1).

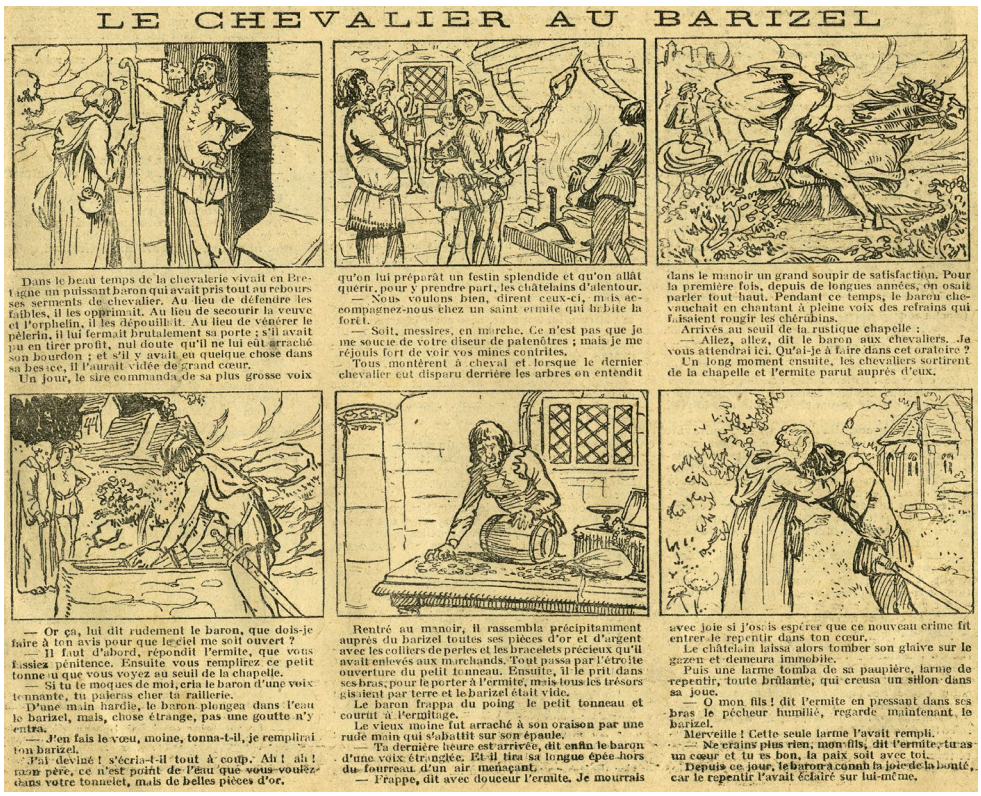

Fig. n.1 Comic strip of "Le Chevalier au Barizel." Published in *Les Trois Couleurs: épisodes, contes et romans de la grande guerre* 6.230 (May 1, 1919), 3.

An obituary. *Le Ménestrel* (April 6, 1928), quoted and translated by Terence Noel Needham in "'Le Jongleur est ma foi': Massenet and Religion as Seen through the Jongleur de Notre Dame" (PhD dissertation, Queen's University Belfast, 2009), 90–91, at n64.

Elsewhere. Henry T. Finck, *Massenet and His Operas* (New York: John Lane, 1910), 91.

portrays the writer. Massenet, *Mes souvenirs*, 240.

During the visit. Léna, "Massenet (1842–1912)," 34.

Massenet pretends. Massenet, *My Recollections*, 234–35.

Three manuscripts. Jean-Christophe Branger, "Massenet et ses livrets: Du choix de sujet à la mise en scène," in *Le livret d'opéra au temps de Massenet: Actes du colloque des 9–10 novembre 2001, Festival Massenet*, ed. Alban Ramaut and Jean-Christophe Branger, Centre interdisciplinaire d'études et de recherches sur l'expression contemporaine: Travaux, vol. 108/Musicologie, cahiers de l'Esplanade, vol. 1 (Saint-Étienne, France: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Étienne, 2002), 251–81, at 269–70.

The Middle Ages of the Opera

Did you ever hear of this juggler. "Fascinating Legend Revived in Massenet's Coming Opera," *New York Times*, August 16, 1908.

delightful vignette in the primitive manner. Léna, "Massenet (1842–1912)," 33–34: "délicieux tableau de primitif."

his thought. Rigné, "Souvenirs sur Massenet," 348.

The Red and the Black. In French, *Le Rouge et le Noir: Chronique du XIXe siècle*.

between the Saône and the Loire rivers. Near Mâcon.

the monastery most emblematic of Cistercianism. Adriaan Hendrik Bredero, *Cluny et Cîteaux au douzième siècle: L'histoire d'une controverse monastique* (Amsterdam: APA-Holland University Press, 1985).

the institution acquired melancholy fame. Janet Marquardt, *From Martyr to Monument: The Abbey of Cluny as Cultural Patrimony* (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2007).

became an object of fascination. Elizabeth Emery, "Le visible et l'invisible: Cluny dans la littérature française du XIXe siècle," in *Cluny après Cluny: Constructions, reconstructions et commémorations, 1720–2010. Actes du colloque de Cluny, 13–15 mai 2010*, ed. Didier Méhu (Rennes, France: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2013), 339–52.

All Souls' Day. On November 2.

National Museum of the Middle Ages. In French, Musée national du Moyen Âge.

American architectural historian. Kenneth John Conant conducted the archaeological investigations at Cluny from 1928 to 1950, under the auspices of the Mediaeval Academy of America.

Even the sounds. Jean-Pierre Bartoli, "Le langage musical du Jongleur de Notre-Dame de Massenet: Historicisme, expression religieuse et système musico-dramatique," in *Opéra et religion sous la IIIe République*, ed. Jean-Christophe Branger and Alban Ramaut, Centre interdisciplinaire d'études et de recherches sur l'expression contemporaine: Travaux, vol. 129/Musicologie, cahiers de l'Esplanade, vol. 4 (Saint-Étienne, France: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Étienne, 2006), 305–33.

the score has the exquisite colors of stained glass. Ghristi and Auclair, *La belle époque de Massenet*, 160 ("La partition a d'exquises couleurs de vitrail").

Léna reported. Massenet, *Mes souvenirs*, 240n3 (with reference to Léna in Le Ménestrel of February 4, 1921).

other French composers. See Schmidl, *Jules Massenet*, 94, on Vincent d'Indy's opera *Fervaal* and Gabriel Pierné's symphonic poem *L'an mil* (*The year 1000*), both written in 1897.

the artist told the poor fellow. Massenet, *Mes souvenirs*, 248; idem, *My Recollections*, 282.

is said to have satisfied the medievalist. Massenet, *My Recollections*, 241.

music of the theater. Jean-Christophe Branger, "Introduction," in idem and Ramaut, *Opéra et religion sous la IIIe République*, 9–36, at 10, with reference to Camile Bellaigue, "La musique d'Église au théâtre," *La Tribune de Saint-Gervais* 11.1 (January 1905): 4–13.

Solesmes. In the département of Sarthe near Sable.

school of singers. Known formally in Latin as the *schola cantorum*.

rhapsody in brew. Katherine Bergeron, *Decadent Enchantments: The Revival of Gregorian Chant at Solesmes* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998).

The first perspective he isolated. G. K. Chesterton, "History Versus the Historians" (1908), in idem, *Lunacy and Letters*, ed. Dorothy Collins (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1958), 128–33, at 130.

The historical music movement. Siegmund Levarie, "Henry Adams, Avant-Gardist in Early Music," *American Music* 15 (1997): 429–45.

melismas. In reference to Gregorian chant, this technical term denotes a group of different notes sung to one syllable (such as the final letter a in the word alleluia). The contrast is coloratura, in which each syllable has its own note in a melody.

characteristically medieval. Arthur Pougin, quoted in Esther Singleton, *A Guide to Modern Opera* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1909), 233.

chalumeau. A woodwind instrument that looks like a recorder but has a mouthpiece like a clarinet.

as the viol was viewed. Harry Danks, "The Viola d'Amore," *Music & Letters* 38.1 (1957): 14–20.

Bertha of the Big Foot. Sometimes called Bertha Broadfoot, she is known in modern French as *Berte aux grands pieds*. For a translation, see Adenet le Roi, *Bertha of the Big Foot (Berte as grans pié): A Thirteenth-Century Epic*, trans. Anna Moore Morton, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, vol. 417 (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2013).

at least by mentioning them. Thus, we hear about the "toper's creed." This would be an oenophile's deformation of the profession of faith known as the Nicene Creed, which begins "We believe in one God, the Father Almighty." We also learn about the *Te Deum* of hippocras, a sweetened and spiced wine. This pseudoliturgy plays upon the early Christian hymn of praise often called the Ambrosian hymn, with the incipit "We praise thee, O God." Another is the *Gloria* of the red-faced, alluding, of course, to the flushed complexion caused by hard drinking. The Latin refers to the so-called angelic hymn that opens with the Latin words "Glory to God in the highest" *(Gloria in excelsis Deo*).

One would search in vain. The foundational repositories of such medieval parodic material remain, for the Latin, Paul Lehmann, *Die Parodie im Mittelalter*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart, Germany: A. Hiersemann, 1963), and for the French, Eero Ilmari Ilvonen, *Parodies de thèmes pieux dans la poésie française du Moyen Âge: Pater–Credo–Ave Maria–Laetabundus* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1914).

their medieval antecedents. The French had no direct equivalent of *Wine, Women, and Song: Medieval Latin Students' Songs* by John Addington Symonds. The 1884 bestseller etched at least its title phrase upon the consciousness of the English-speaking world. All the same, France had its own oft-reprinted 1843 anthology of *Popular Latin Poetry from before the Twelfth Century*. See Édélestand Du Méril, *Poésies populaires latines antérieures au douzième siècle* (Paris: Brockhaus et Avenarius, 1843). The songs that are inevitably absorbed into such collections have had an abiding impact on high culture in the Anglophone world. For confirmation we need look no further than the 1949 book entitled *The Goliard Poets: Medieval Latin Songs and Satires*, by George F. Whicher, a friend of the American poet Robert Frost. In another branch of European literary and musical tradition, the *Carmina Burana* cantata of the German composer Carl Orff (based on the extensive medieval anthology conventionally known by the same name) includes tavern poems that reach a mass audience.

Play of Robin and Marion. In French, *Jeu de Robin et Marion.*

Adam de la Halle. Known also as Adam le Bossu.

at least twice. First, in 1872 it was put on in Paris in its entirety, adapted by Jean-Baptiste Weckerlin and performed at the Comédie française by a company from the Opéra Comique: see Julien Tiersot, *Sur le jeu de Robin et Marion d'Adam de la Halle (XIIIe siècle)* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1897), 5–6. Then, in 1896 it was performed in Arras, this time produced as modernized by Tiersot, a student of Massenet's, and Emile Blémont. In the same year, a philologist published a popularization of the play in modernized form. See Adam le Bossu, *Le Jeu de Robin et Marion*, ed. Ernest Langlois (Paris: A. Fontemoing, 1896). His translations retained their appeal into the twentieth century, with reprintings, for example, in 1923 and 1933.

Instead, he moves on. Pierre Jonin, "Ancienneté d'une chanson de toile? La Chanson d'Erembourg ou la Chanson de Renaud?," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 28.112 (octobre-décembre 1985): 345–59.

Sage Wisdom

Legend of the Sage. In English translation, the herb has also been called Sage-Plant and Sage-Bush. In Mark Schweizer, words and music, *The Clown of God: A Christmas Chancel Drama for Children's Choir* (Hopkinsville, KY: St. James Music Press, 1996), 10–11, Massenet's sage plant is Americanized into the sagebrush familiar from cowboy westerns, which in actuality belongs to a separate genus.

It is sung. "Légende de la sauge," act 2, scene 4.

Legendary Feasts. For the quotation, see *Musical Standard* (June 30, 1906): 401. The book is Amédée de Ponthieu, *Les fêtes légendaires* (Paris: Maillet, 1866).

illustrated French-language weeklies. First was *La semaine de Suzette* 37.13 (October 24, 1946), cover (for illustration). This "Suzie's Weekly," to put its title into English, appeared from 1905 (the year in which Church and State were legally separated in France) through 1960. On it, see Jacques Tramson, "Presse enfantine française," in *Dictionnaire du livre de jeunesse: La littérature d'enfance et de jeunesse en France* (henceforth *DLJ*), ed. Isabelle Nières-Chevrel and Jean Perrot (Paris: Éditions du Cercle de la Librairie, 2013), 764–73, at 769; Marie-Anne Couderc, "Semaine de Suzette, La," in *DLJ*, 883–84. Then came *Bernadette: Illustré catholique des fillettes*, n.s. 8 (January 26, 1947), cover (for illustration) and 124 (for text). The latter publication was thus titled after the Marian visionary of Lourdes by this name. On it, see Catherine d'Humières, "Bernadette," in *DLJ*, 82–83. On such religious publications, see Michel Manson, "Religion et littérature de jeunesse," in *DLJ*, 793–96, at 795.

Applied to this narrative. The original Latin *legendum* was used first as a verbal adjective, and later as a noun meaning "that which is to be read" in the liturgical office.

Such narratives were read aloud. Hippolyte Delehaye, *The Legends of the Saints*, trans. Donald Attwater (New York: Fordham University Press, 1962), 8.

composers, too. Thus, in 1864–1865, Gabriel Fauré set to music as a work for mixed chorus and piano (or organ) a French translation of a Medieval Latin hymn, though under the somewhat misleading title *Cantique de Jean Racine* (Canticle of Jean Racine). The text by the seventeenth-century poet paraphrases a pseudo-Ambrosian hymn with the incipit "Consors paterni luminis." To take another example, in 1910 Claude Debussy composed voice-and-piano music for three "ballades" by the French poet and vagabond François Villon.

contemporary critics. Richard Alexander Streatfeild, *The Opera: A Sketch of the Development of Opera*, 3rd ed. (Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott, 1907), 248: "Rarely has Massenet written anything more delightful than this exquisite song, so fresh in its artful simplicity, so fragrant with the charm of mediaeval monasticism." Another raved: "In the legend related by Boniface to Jean the composer is at his best." See "Massenet's 'Le Jongleur de Notre-Dame,'" *The Athenaeum* 4034 (February 18, 1905): 218.

Juggling Secular and Ecclesiastical

A surprising thing. Jean d'Arvil, on reviews of Massenet's *Jongleur* in the popular press, June, 1904. Quoted in Rigné, *Le disciple de Massenet*, 1: 49.

went so far as to observe. He made the remark in reference to passages in his oratorio-like choral "sacred drama" on Mary Magdalene, *Marie-Magdeleine*, with a text in verse by Louis Gallet.

I don't believe in all this. Léon Vallas, *Vincent d'Indy* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1946), 195: "Oh! Vous pensez bien que toutes ces bondieuseries, moi, je n'y crois pas. . . . Mais le public aime ça, et nous devons toujours être de l'avis du public." For translations, see James Harding, *Massenet* (London: Dent, 1970), 49; Michael White and Elaine Henderson, *Opera and Operetta* (London: HarperCollins, 1997), 208.

the writer assured his readers. Fernand de La Tombelle, "Massenet, musician religieux?," *La Tribune de Saint-Gervais: Bulletin mensuel de la Schola Cantorum* 18 (1912): 285–88, at 288: "You will recognize that he loved religion, honored the Church, adored the Virgin as much as he respected the priest. His faith—and I affirm that he had it—was sensitive, poetic, naïve, but real, and when he had the jongleur dance in the silence of the abbatial church, rest assured that more than once he believed that he was putting himself on stage in offering the Holy Virgin 'an opera,' since it is that that he knew to make!"

could have been slighted either way. For revealing glimpses into the tensions at the time, see Proust, "La mort des cathédrales," 3–4.

goes by the name of verismo. Translated into English, *verismo* would be literally "true-ism."

The Girl from Navarre. In French, *La Navarraise*.

nurtured a genuine predilection. Rigné, "Souvenirs sur Massenet," 355–56: "'Est-il vrai que Massenet affectionait particulièrement *Le Jongleur*?' Demanda Yvonne. 'Massenet préférait toujours sa dernière pièce. Cependant, il eut une réelle predilection pour celle-là. Il a lancé un jour cette boutade: "*Le Jongleur*, amis, ce n'est qu'une carte de visite dans la vie d'un musicien!'""

because he had given the most of himself to it. *Combat*, April 7, 1954: "*Le Jongleur* est mon oeuvre préférée parce que c'est ici que je me suis le plus donné." Also quoted by Needham, "Le Jongleur est ma foi," 1–2.

Thérèse is my heart. Charles Bouvet, *Massenet: Biographie critique, illustré de douze planches hors texte* (Paris: Henri Laurens, 1929), 108. Quoted in the original French (and taken as the title of his dissertation) by Needham, "Le Jongleur est ma foi," 1. The source is a document reproduced in Rigné, *Le disciple de Massenet*, 1: 60.

a wooden image of Mary. Massenet, *My Reflections*, 52.

Raphael's Sistine Madonna. The same painting by the Italian artist had made a strong impression on Clover Adams, but probably not for the same reasons. Raphael was received much differently in the United States than in France. See Martin Rosenberg, *Raphael and France: The Artist as Paradigm and Symbol* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995).

the photograph "remained lighted all night." Irvine, *Massenet*, 183; cited by Needham "Le Jongleur est ma foi," 81.

gaining the support of the Virgin. Massenet, *My Recollections*, 232: "The most sublime of women, the Virgin was bound to sustain me in my work, even as she showed herself charitable to the repentant jongleur."

the marvelous cathedrals arose. Letter to the composer and pianist Paul Lacombe, Venice, May 23, 1873, Carcassonne, Bibliothèque municipale, cited by Branger, "Introduction," 21n33.

blue Madonnas, pink Sacred Hearts. Madeleine Ochsé, *Un art sacré pour notre temps*, Je sais, je crois, vol. 132 (Paris: Fayard, 1959), 14; quoted by Claude Savart, "A la recherche de l'art dit de Saint-Sulpice," *Revue d'histoire de la spiritualité* 52 (1976): 263–82, at 282: "Blue Virgins, pink Sacred Hearts, chocolate-brown Saint Josephs belonged for me

to this enchanted world of Catholic childhood in which the heavens visit the earth without ado."

it will emit a note. William R. Lethaby, *Architecture: An Introduction to the History and Theory of the Art of the Building*, Home University Library of Modern Knowledge, vol. 39 (London: Williams and Norgate, 1912), 201: "The ideals of the time of energy and order produced a manner of building of high intensity, all waste tissue was thrown off, and the stonework was gathered up into energetic functional members. These ribs and bars and shafts are all at bowstring tension. A mason will tap a pillar to make its stress audible; we may think of a cathedral as so 'high strung' that if struck it would give a musical note."

The food is good in the monastery. "La cuisine est bonne au couvent / Moi qui ne dînais pas souvent / Je bois bon vin, je mange viandes grasses. / Jour glorieux!"

glory may be wrapped up in religion. "La Vierge aujourd'hui monte aux cieux, / Et pour elle on répète un cantique de grâces. / *Avec tristesse* / Un cantique en latin!" ("The Virgin today ascends to heaven, and for her her people say over and over a canticle of thanksgiving. [*Sorrowfully.*] A canticle in Latin!")

clerical in social station. The classic study is Herbert Grundmann, "Litteratus-illitteratus," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 40 (1958): 1–65.

verses from the hymn to the Virgin. The passage appears at the opening of the second act. The Latin of the hymn goes back ultimately to an acrostic on the "Ave Maria": see Guido Maria Dreves, ed., *Analecta hymnica medii aevi*, 55 vols. (Leipzig, Germany: Fues's Verlag, R. Reisland, 1886–1922), 15: 115–23, at 115 (no. 94, strophe 1).

a tag from Virgil. *Georgics* 2.496, "agitans discordia fratres."

Massenet's measured mockery. Louis Bethléem et al., *Les opéras, les opéras-comiques et les opérettes* (Paris: Revue des lectures, 1926), 334, discussed by Branger, "Introduction," 16–17.

a brief text. René Brancour, *Massenet* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1922), 56: "Souvenez-vous devant Dieu de MASSENET / *Compositeur de musique*, Né à Saint-Etienne le 12 mai 1842, Mort à Paris le 14 août 1912. / Le Jongleur est ma foi / *Requiescat in pace*."

served in the National Guard. "Autobiographical Notes by the Composer Massenet," *Century Magazine* 45 (November 1892): 122–26, at 124.

romantic opera. In French, the terms are respectively "opéra romanesque," "comédie lyrique," "opéra légendaire," "opéra féerique," and "conte lyrique."

Eve: Mystery Play. In French, *Ève: mystère*, to a libretto by the prolific librettist Louis Gallet.

In the Middle Ages. *L'Echo de Paris*, February 19, 1902, quoted by Needham, "Le Jongleur est ma foi," 105 (my translation).

up to the middle of the sixteenth century. Among scholars, the philologist Gaston Paris had earned himself everlasting association with the *miracle*, thanks to the forty specimens of the genre he coedited in the *Miracles of Our Lady, by Characters*. See Gaston Paris, ed., *Miracles de Nostre Dame par personnages*, 8 vols. (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1876–1893), in collaboration with Ulysse Robert.

the hood does not make the monk. *Twelfth Night; or, What You Will*, 1.5.56, "Cucullus non facit monachum," in *The Riverside Shakespeare* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974), 412.

the mere outward trappings of monkishness. *Thesaurus proverbiorum medii aevi: Lexikon der Sprichwörter des romanisch-germanischen Mittelalters*, 13 vols. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1995–2002), 7: 70–72 (*Kleid* 2.3.2.2 Kleider machen keinen zum Mönch, Geistlichen, Einsiedler oder Heiligen).

a statue served the purpose instead. See Needham, "Le Jongleur est ma foi," 2.

Blessed are the humble. Compare Matthew 5:5–15.

a French reader. Caecilia Pieri, *Il était une fois*, Contes merveilleux, vol. 1 (Paris: Flammarion, 2004), 89 (introduction), 101 (supporting instructional material).

Affected simplicity. The passage as a whole is quoted from Brancour, *Massenet*, 79 (my translation). It incorporates La Rochefoucauld, *Moral Maxims and Reflections* (1665–1678), no. 289, "La simplicité affectée est une imposture delicate."

deliberately for sake of the Virgin. "But to please Mary, I remain simple."

another quality that has been discerned. Brancour, *Massenet*, 78 ("Jean le jongleur, un peu plus naïf tout de même que nature").

A reviewer commented. *Le Figaro*, February 19, 1902: quoted and cited by Needham, "Le Jongleur est ma foi," 98.

Thanks be to God! In the original, "Deo gratias! / Feliciter! / Amen." A review of the Parisian premiere of *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* quotes the composer as having said: "The Benedictines had a practice of concluding their works in this way; it was their cry of thanks to God and expression of their submission to a higher will. I am like them: Go to God!" See *Le Temps*, May 10, 1904.

James Bond novels. For example, in *Casino Royale*, *Never Say Never Again*, and *GoldenEye*.

its first night. The role of Jean was created by Adolphe (Alphonse) Maréchal, a tenor of Belgian nationality (see Fig. n.2). The role was originally meant for Albert Vaguet.

Boniface was performed by Maurice Renaud (see Fig. n.3), the prior by Gabriel-Valentin Soulacroix, both French baritones. The monks were played by Berquier, Juste Nivette, Grimaud, and Cuperninck, and the angels by Marguerite de Buck and Mary Girard. The settings were designed by Lucien Jusseaume. See Walsh, *Monte Carlo Opera 1879–1909*, 152.

Fig. n.2 Adolphe Maréchal as Jean in Massenet's *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*. Photograph, 1904. Photographer unknown. Published in Musica (June 1904).

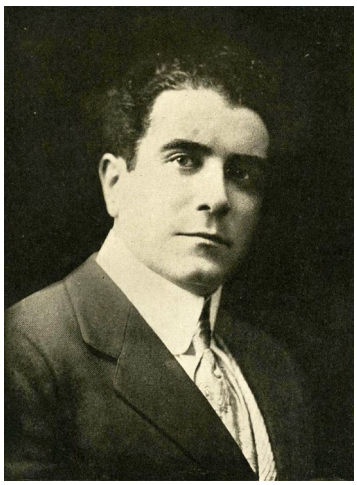

Fig. n.3 Maurice Renaud. Photograph by Herman Mishkin, 1912.

amid the spectators' deafening whoops. Walsh, *Monte Carlo Opera 1879–1909*, 156.

Salle Garnier. Designed by the architect Charles Garnier, the theater named after him was built in a half year to open in 1879. It stands on the former site of entertainment rooms of the casino. Its interior is an impressive square, twenty meters on a side, with a ceiling nineteen meters high.

the campaign to peddle Monaco. A color lithograph from 1897, in the full splendor of art nouveau, constitutes a stunning benchmark of this promotional effort. It was the doing of Alphonse Mucha. A highly versatile artist, he worked across many media but merited greatest acclaim for his advertising posters. Ethnically Czech, he gained stature as the father of Parisian art nouveau.

memorialized for philatelists. On the centenary of the Salle Garnier opera in 1979, the principality issued five commemorative postage stamps to honor operas that had premiered there, together with one to celebrate the building itself and its architect. Two were by Massenet: *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* (1.00 franc) and *Don Quichotte* (1.50 franc). The others were Louis Ganne's *Hans, le joueur de flûte* (1906, 1.20 franc), Maurice Ravel's *L'Enfant et les sortilèges* (1925, 2.10 franc), and Arthur Honegger and Jacques Ibert's *L'Aiglon* (1937, 1.70 franc). The opera house stamp had the highest denomination (3.00 franc). The stamps are designated as Yvert 1175–80, referring to item numbers in the annual *Catalogue de timbres-poste* (Amiens, France: Yvert, commencing in the 1930s).

he himself epitomized the era. Consider the title of José Bruyr, *Massenet: Musicien de la belle époque* (Lyon, France: Éditions et imprimeries du Sud-Est, 1964).

I heard then Le jongleur! Rigné, *Le disciple de Massenet*, 1: 1, 2, and (here) 4.

a few other European cities. Other first nights included Hamburg, Germany, September 24, 1902; Brussels, Belgium, November 25, 1904; and Geneva, Switzerland, November 29, 1904. A description of the first night in Monte Carlo can be read in Irvine, *Massenet*, 240.

we can hear later ones. Malibran Music, CDRG 156 (compact disc).

more than other such famous musical dramas of the period. Irvine, *Massenet*, 254.

the year was an especially good one. In the same year it opened in Brussels and Geneva.

staged on four continents. In 1905, *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* was performed in (to use present-day names) Algiers, The Hague, Milan, and Berlin; in 1906 in Lisbon and London; in 1908 in New York; in 1911 in Buenos Aires, and both Graz and Vienna in Austria; in 1912 in Montreal, Zagreb, and Limberg, Austria; in 1914 in Prague; in 1915 in Rio de Janeiro; in 1919 in Barcelona; and in 1920 in Ljubljana, Slovenia. For the fullest information on places and dates of premieres, see Alfred Loewenberg, *Annals of Opera,*

1597–1940, 3d ed. (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1978), columns 1239–40. At first, the libretto was controlled jealously by the publisher. After the original French, translations appeared in German, Italian, and other languages. See, for example, Jules Massenet and Maurice Léna, *Der Gaukler unserer lieben Frau: Mirakel in drei Akten*, trans. Henriette Marion (Paris: Au Ménestrel, Heugel, 1902), and *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame (Il giullare di Nostra Signora): Miracolo in tre atti*, trans. Biante Montelioï (Paris: Au Ménestrel, Heugel, 1905).

Jean, Bénédictine, and Selling Gothic

Bénédictine. Among bartenders and mixologists, the beverage may be known best today with its name reduced to a mere initial, in the pairing of Bénédictine and brandy called "B & B."

public limited company. In French, *société anonyme*.

facilities designed to fulfill a dual function as tourist attractions. Lynn F. Pearson, *Built to Brew: The History and Heritage of the Brewery* (Swindon, UK: English Heritage, 2014).

enchantment of technology. See Alfred Gell, "The Technology of Enchantment and the Enchantment of Technology," in *Anthropology, Art and Aesthetics*, ed. Jeremy Coote and Anthony Shelton (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 40–63.

The distillery served. On the museum and collection as constituted in the late nineteenth century, see *Distillerie de la liqueur Bénédictine de l'abbaye de Fécamp: Musée, catalogue illustré de nombreux dessins de H. Scott gravés par Bellanger avec préface et notice historique sur l'abbaye de Fécamp* (Fécamp, France: L. Durand, 1888).

Palais Bénédictine. The French name implies simultaneously what in English would require both "Benedictine Palace" (for the monastic order) and "Bénédictine Palace" (for the liqueur brand). Although the original building was destroyed in a fire in 1892, the rebuilding of an expanded replacement was undertaken in the following year and completed in 1900.

his experiments with one of these elixirs. Jean-Pierre Lantaz, *Bénédictine, d'un alambic à cinq continents* (Luneray, France: Bertout, 1991), 251.

endorsements of the cordial's potability. The results were ten lithographs of "Contemporary Celebrities and Bénédictine." The set was printed in color on stiff cards and distributed unbound but in a book-like case, with a string to keep the contents secure. The newsmakers ranged from the aviator Alberto Santos-Dumont through the actor Albert Brasseur to Sem himself.

I am sure that the Benedictines. Sem (Georges Goursat), *Célébrités contemporaines et la Bénédictine* (Paris: Devambez, 1909), 16 x 24 cm: "Je suis certain que les Bénédictins au

temps du 'Jongleur de Notre Dame' buvaient de l'exquise Bénédictine comme nous en avons heureusement encore aujourd'hui."

everything seemed to taste better. We have seen the brew promoted already: an engraving of Raoul Gunsbourg with a few bars of his 1909 opera *Le vieil aigle* (The old eagle) bears at the bottom, above his autograph, the caption "Dream of it and drink some Mariani" (see Fig. 1.73).

cutting-edge photomechanical processes. Willa Z. Silverman, *The New Bibliopolis: French Book Collectors and the Culture of Print, 1880–1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 27.

The painter. The artist was Guillaume Dubufe.

Salettine. This liqueur was peddled by Maximin, one of the children who had claimed to experience the vision at La Salette. He put his name and a picture of himself on the label. See Ruth Harris, *Lourdes: Body and Spirit in the Secular Age* (London: Penguin, 1999), 252; Lisa J. Schwebel, *Apparitions, Healings, and Weeping Madonnas: Christianity and the Paranormal* (New York: Paulist Press, 2004), 122; Victor Witter Turner and Edith L. B. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture*, Lectures on the History of Religions, New Series, vol. 11 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), 223.

If you have never heard of these things. "Fascinating Legend Revived in Massenet's Coming Opera," *New York Times*, August 16, 1908.

The Musician of Women

he grasped the need to maximize their appeal. Finck, *Massenet and His Operas*, 64.

a woman's composer. The French phrases are "compositeur de la femme" and "musicien de la femme." Fairly or not, he has been considered a "musician of femininity." See Ghristi and Auclair, *La belle époque de Massenet*, 160. A contemporary referred to him as "the musician of woman and of love"; see Louis Schneider, *Massenet: L'homme–le musicien* (Paris: L. Carteret, 1908), 2 ("le musicien de la femme et de l'amour"); compare 382–83, where Schneider points to Massenet's allegedly universal appeal to women as the basis for his current and future fame. Compare Finck, *Massenet and His Operas*, 64: "That he has been a great admirer of women it is needless to say to anyone familiar with his operas, for women and love are the themes of most of them. And the women reciprocated."

The sneering latent in such observations. George Cecil, "Impressions of Opera in France," *Musical Quarterly* 7 (1921): 314–30, at 320: "The 'high brows' jeer at him as a feminist composer of sugary ditties intended for the delectation of sentimental men and women incapable of appreciating really well thought-out music."

an effeminate voluptuary. Charles Lecocq (see Fig. n.4), who came in for a goodly share of high-handed criticism himself, curled his lip about Massenet in this regard to his fellow composer Saint-Saëns. Examining *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* and Massenet's reactions to Mary Garden's insistence on singing the part of Jean in this context could lead to interesting results: see Huebner, *French Opera*, 160–66 ("Massenet Emasculated"); for this quotation, 162: "It is well known Massenet is a sensualist and that he always takes care to make declarations of love to the public with his music."

the French musician could not write a successful opera. "Angry at an American Prima Donna: Mary Garden Rouses the Ire of Paris because She Profanes a Sacred Opera by Assuming the Role of a Man in a Work Where Women Are Barred," *Morning Oregonian* (Portland, OR), January 10, 1909, 8.

According to one critic. Carl Van Vechten, *Interpreters*, 2nd ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1920), 85.

an unsparing caricature. "Charvic," *La Silhouette*, March 25, 1894. On caricatures of Massenet, see Clair Rowden, "Mémorialisation, commémoration et commercialisation: Massenet et la caricature," in *Massenet aujourd'hui: Héritage et postérité. Actes du colloque de la XIe biennale Massenet des 25 et 26 octobre 2012*, ed. Jean-Christophe Branger and Vincent Giroud, Centre interdisciplinaire d'études et de recherches sur l'expression contemporaine: Travaux, vol. 166/Collection musique et musicology: Les cahiers de l'Opéra théâtre, vol. 1 (Saint-Étienne, France: Publications de l'université de Saint-Étienne, 2014), 39–63.

he reminded himself. Massenet, *My Recollections*, 232.

Feminist theology. Elizabeth A. Johnson, "The Marian Tradition and the Reality of Women," *Horizons* 12 (1985): 116–35.

The All-Male Cast

What, I exclaimed to myself. Massenet, *Mes souvenirs*, 240 (and see Condé's n. 2, on *La Terre promise*).

a cast made up entirely of men. On this phenomenon generally, see Vincent Giroud, "Couvents et monastères dans le théâtre lyrique français sous la Troisième République," in Branger and Ramaut, *Opéra et religion sous la IIIe République*, 37–64, at 59–64.

the Belgian symbolist poet Émile Verhaeren. With a libretto by Verhaeren and music by a French Jewish composer named Michel-Maurice Lévy. Written in 1899, the piece of theater was staged and published in 1900, first in Brussels and slightly later in Paris. After a delay of a decade and a half, the work was also made into an opera that was performed in the 1914–1915 season.

the English translation. The translation is *The Cloister: A Play in Four Acts*, trans. Osman Edwards (London: Constable, 1915). The review, by Arthur Davison Ficke, is in a piece entitled "Two Belgian Poets," *Poetry* 8 (1916): 96–103, at 102.

the list of characters. It includes the jongleur Jean, singing tenor; Brother Boniface, bass; the prior, bass; the monk-poet, tenor; the monk-painter, baritone; the monk-musician, baritone; the monk-sculptor, bass; and, to move from the soloists, a crowd, merchants, and monks.

the dearth of space for sopranos. Edward Lockspeiser, "Broadcast Music," *Musical Times* 100.1396 (June 1959): 330 ("there is a sameness of tone-color in the voices which soon begins to pall").

As a journalist posed the question. *L'Illustration*, no. 3194, May 14, 1904, 336.

An etching. Done by Charles Baude, after a canvas by Albert Aublet. The original painting, entitled *Autour d'une partition* (Gathering around a score), was shown at the 1888 Salon.

a sumptuous drawing room. The house belonged to Pierre Loti (see Fig. n.5). Coincidentally, this French novelist and naval officer was, at least sporadically, a medievalizer. He once hosted a costumed dinner party that was staged in a notional 1470: see Elizabeth Emery, "Pierre Loti's 'Memories' of the Middle Ages: Feasting on the Gothic in 1888," in *Memory and Commemoration in Medieval Culture*, ed. Elma Brenner et al. (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2013), 279–97.

Sibyl Sanderson. On Sanderson, the best starting point is Jack Winsor Hansen, *The Sibyl Sanderson Story: Requiem for a Diva*, Opera Biography Series, vol. 16 (Pompton Plains, NJ: Amadeus Press, 2005).

its anachronism. On the anachronism, see Claudio Galderisi, "Le jongleur dans l'étui: Horizon chrétien et réécritures romanesques," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 54 (2011): 73–82.

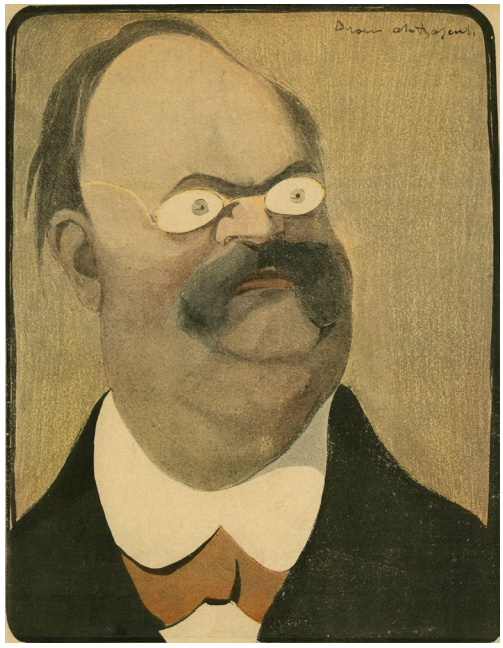

Fig. n.4 Caricature of Charles Lecocq. Illustration by Aroun-al-Rascid [Umberto Brunelleschi], 1902. Published in *L'Assiette au beurre* (September 1902).

Fig. n.5 Pierre Loti. Photograph by George Grantham Bain, late nineteenth century. Washington, DC, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, George Grantham Bain Collection.

Notes to Chapter 2

I don't want realism. Blanche DuBois, in Tennessee Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, scene 9 (New York: Signet, 1951), 117.

Mary Garden Takes America

It is hardly too much to say. *Musical America*, January 25, 1908.

Later the soprano came to be known in America. See Charles Ludwig Wagner, *Seeing Stars* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1940), 203; John Pennino, "Mary Garden and the American Press," *The Opera Quarterly* 6.4 (1989): 61–75, at 61 and 62.

in the right spirit of picturesque feeling and romance. Hermann Klein, "The London Opera House," *Musical Times*, 53.828 (February 1, 1912): 95–96, at 96: "What if the part of the Boy-Juggler was originally written for a tenor? By afterwards giving it to Mary Garden and altering it to suit her, the composer not only exercised a discretion to which he was entitled, but imparted to his opera, as I can personally testify, a measure of variety and interest that helped largely to enhance its popularity. The Chicago singer achieved what was required, because she approached her task in the right spirit of picturesque feeling and romance."

His article. *Morning Oregonian* (Portland, OR) 28.2, January 10, 1909, 8.

her "Eiffel Tower." Along the same lines, music critics of the day referred to the vocal height Sanderson achieved in this opera as the "Eiffel note of the Opéra Comique": see Fauser, *Jules Massenet, Esclarmonde*, vi.

established singer. Marthe Rioton.

constructed his opera obsessively. The playwright had been assured, wrongly, that the opera would star his mistress and not Mary Garden.

redolent of medieval legends and romances. Michael T. R. B. Turnbull, M*ary Garden* (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1997), 58. For broader context, see Paul Gorceix, "Maurice Maeterlinck, la mystique médiévale et le symbole," *La Licorne* 6.1 (1982): 51–64; Carole J. Lambert, *The Empty Cross: Medieval Hopes, Modern Futility in the Theater of Maurice Maeterlinck, Paul Claudel, August Strindberg, and George Kaiser* (New York: Garland, 1990), 20–101; Arnaud Rykner, "Le drame symboliste," in *La fabrique du Moyen Âge au XIXe siècle: Représentations du Moyen Âge dans la culture et la littérature françaises du XIXe siècle*, ed. Simone Bernard-Griffiths et al., Romantisme et modernités, vol. 94 (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2006), 1061–68.

as in a painting by Hans Memling. Gösta Mauritz Bergman, *Lighting in the Theatre* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1977), 315. The early Netherlandish artist, German

by birth, was on many minds. Later, the singer Yvette Guilbert, in the phase of her career when she performed a medieval repertoire, was compared with him. See Bettina Liebowitz Knapp and Myra Chipman, *That Was Yvette: The Biography of Yvette Guilbert, the Great Diseuse* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1964), 263: "She inherits the grace of the 'Primitive' painters, she sings as Van Eyck and Memling painted, with the careful and experienced preoccupation for drawing and construction that every great work and every great artist must possess."

my Mélisande. Vincent Sheean, *The Amazing Oscar Hammerstein: The Life and Exploits of an Impresario* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1956), 203.

Oscar Hammerstein I

In the annals of music in America. Finck, *Massenet and His Operas*, 13.

The delivery that these singers cultivated. They combined the agile leaps of coloratura singing, in which the soprano ornamented the vocal melody elaborately, with nearly glaciated stances of body. See Turnbull, *Mary Garden*, 59.

proliferation of performances. To take Christmas Day of 1909 as an example, Hammerstein's Manhattan Opera presented in New York *Tales of Hoffmann* and *Tosca*, in Philadelphia *Aïda* and *Faust*, in Montreal *Le Caïd* and *Mignon*, and in Pittsburgh *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, and, last but not least, *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*.

the critical acclaim they achieved. Finck, *Massenet and His Operas*, 15.

as a singing actor. Susan Rutherford, *The Prima Donna and Opera (1815–1930)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 231–76.

made her vulnerable to quibbling. See *Evening Tribune*, San Diego, California, July 15, 1922, 14, and *San Diego Weekly Union*, July 20, 1922, 8.

Making a Travesti of Massenet's Tenor

women remained attached to them. Stéphane Michaud, *Muse et madone: Visages de la femme de la Révolution française aux apparitions de Lourdes* (Paris: Seuil, 1985), 23.

costumed as a male. This stratagem, in which a soprano sings the tenor part, goes in English by the name of a "trousers-role" or "breeches-part." In demanding this major adjustment, the impresario reportedly acted on the advice of Maurice Renaud, the French baritone who had played Boniface in Monte Carlo. His approach to performing opera aligned well with Mary Garden's: he was famed as much for his dramatic panache as for his vocal prowess.

the actor in question would be disguised. Mary Garden and Louis Biancolli, *Mary Garden's Story* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1951), 131, 139. This autobiography, not quite ghostwritten but often ghastly in its writing, exceeds Massenet's in its unreliability. Elsewhere, she claimed to be the only woman singer to have secured Massenet's permission to sing as the jongleur: see Turnbull, M*ary Garden*, 86. It is not known whether or not another French baritone, Lucien Fugère, with whom she had studied in Paris and who had scored a great success as Brother Boniface, had any role in the negotiations.

the boyish figure she prided herself on maintaining. Garden and Biancolli, *Mary Garden's Story*, 132; Gillian Opstad, *Debussy's Mélisande: The Lives of Georgette Leblanc, Mary Garden, and Maggie Teyte* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell & Brewer, 2009), 248.

Garden had won great kudos. Opstad, *Debussy's Mélisande*, 122.

putting her histrionic talent to a new test. This sentence paraphrases William S. Niederkorn, "Massenet's 'Jongleur' Has Its U.S. Premiere," *New York Times*, November 28, 1908.

A substantial article appeared. "Fascinating Legend Revived in Massenet's Coming Opera," *New York Times*, August 16, 1908: "When performed in Europe, the role has always been entrusted to a tenor, which makes the American production a novelty, even from the Continental standpoint."

their own mixed feelings. Gary Waller, *The Virgin Mary in Late Medieval and Early Modern English Literature and Popular Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 11 and passim.

Tongue-dragging. Michael P. Carroll, *Madonnas That Maim: Popular Catholicism in Italy since the Fifteenth Century* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 129–37 and 155–61 on masochism, 133–35 on tongue-dragging. The description in this book lacks either photographic or documentary support, and even the Italian term or terms used for the activity are not provided. Yet the practice is attested here and there, most notably in the dialect dictionary of Manlio Cortelazzo and Carla Marcato, *I dialetti italiani: Dizionario etimologico* (Turin, Italy: UTET, 1998), 419 (on the noun *strascìnë* which is attested amply in the Lucano dialect of Basilicata); Andrea Mancusi, *La matréia (la matrigna): Saggio sul dialetto di Avigliano* (Avigliano, Italy: Galasso, 1982), 116 (on the noun *strascíne*).

Freudian explanations. Michael P. Carroll, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary: Psychological Origins* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986).

The supremely famous Sarah Bernhardt. Sheean, *Amazing Oscar Hammerstein*, 208. For the general topic, see Corinne E. Blackmer and Patricia Juliana Smith, eds., *En Travesti: Women, Gender Subversion, Opera* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).

the Sarah Bernhardt of opera. Turnbull, M*ary Garden*, 89.

Napoleon II of France. The play by Edmond Rostand was entitled *L'aiglon*, a nickname of the young emperor. "The Eaglet" had its London premiere in 1901. See Peter G. Davis, "An American Singer," *Yale Review* 85.4 (1997): 1–19, at 14.

in a scrapbook. Opstad, *Debussy's Mélisande*, 78.

Garden also claimed to have traveled with Debussy. Opstad, *Debussy's Mélisande*, 119–20.

it was staged at the Odéon. Elizabeth Silverthorne, *Sarah Bernhardt* (Philadelphia, PA: Chelsea House, 2003), 49–50.

Zanetto's Serenade. In French, *Serénade de Zanetto*. Another French composer, Émile Paladilhe, who had won the prestigious French Rome prize three years before Massenet, failed miserably with an opera that hewed to Coppée's text.

made subsequently into operas. The first was *The Lady of the Camelias* (*La dame aux camélias*), originally an 1848 novel by Alexandre Dumas *fils*, adapted for the stage in 1852 and put to music by Giuseppe Verdi in *La Traviata* in 1853. The second was *La Tosca*, meaning "the Tuscan woman," first an 1867 play by the French playwright Victorien Sardou and later an opera by the Italian composer Giacomo Puccini. See Opstad, *Debussy's Mélisande*, 31.

the French actor had thought twice about playing the role. Sheean, *Amazing Oscar Hammerstein*, 268. On the scandal, see Theodore Ziolkowski, *Scandal on Stage: European Theater as Moral Trial* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 59–73.

The theatrical work was published. Wilde came to hold a place of reverence within Garden's pantheon of artistic influences. According to the American Margaret Caroline Anderson, she and her partner Jane Heap (see Fig. n.6) were struck when meeting the singer to discover that she had a large photograph of the Irish writer on display on her piano. See Margaret C. Anderson, *My Thirty Years' War: An Autobiography* (New York: Covici, Friede, 1930), 137–38. Anderson founded, edited, and published the cultural magazine *The Little Review* (1914–1929). On *The Little Review: Literature, Drama, Music, Art*, see David Miller and Richard Price, *British Poetry Magazines, 1914–2000: A History and Bibliography of "Little Magazines"* (London: British Library, 2006), 29, item A 112.

London Opera House. The house was renamed the Stoll Theatre after being bought by the theater manager Oswald Stoll in 1916.

showcased Le jongleur de Notre Dame. For this season, Hammerstein had produced a libretto, Jules Massenet, *Our Lady's Juggler: Miracle in Three Acts*, libretto by Maurice Léna, trans. Louise Baum (Paris: Au Ménestrel, Heugel, 1911). The principal role was sung by Victoria Fer. The French soprano had been dubbed by Massenet "the goddess

of Nice," after the city in southern France. She also substituted for Mary Garden in this capacity at the Manhattan Opera House. See Klein, "London Opera House," 96.

the gross receipts had been eye-popping. *Musical Times* 53.829 (March 1, 1912): 192: "The season lasted ten weeks, and was the most successful ever given in Chicago. The gross receipts amounted to $463,000, or $63,000 more than last year. Among the operas performed, the following have obtained the most conspicuous success: 'The Juggler of Nôtre [sic] Dame' (Massenet), 'The Jewels of the Madonna,' 'The Secret of Susanne' (Wolf-Ferrari), and 'Natoma,' the new American-Indian opera by Victor Herbert."

starting up. The company was built to no small extent on the set, costumes, copyrights, scores, and artists that the Metropolitan Opera had acquired by buying out Oscar Hammerstein's Manhattan Opera House.

The Jewels of the Madonna. The original Italian was *I gioielli della Madonna*, known also in German as *Der Schmuck der Madonna* (not to be translated as "the Madonna's schmuck"), a tragic opera in three acts by the Italian composer Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari, by the librettists Carlo Zangarini and Enrico Golisciani. The opera premiered in 1911 at the Kurfürstenoper (Electoral Opera House) in Berlin.

the dazzling artist. Massenet, *My Recollections*, 237.

clothing from the Rue de la Paix. See Massenet, *My Recollections*, 237; for the second quotation, 237–38: "My feelings are somewhat bewildered, I confess, at seeing the monk discard his frock after the performance and resume an elegant costume from the Rue de la Paix. However, in the face of the artist's triumph I bow and applaud."

famous for women's jewelry and haute couture. For instance, the American novelist Edith Wharton referred to it in *The Age of Innocence* as allowing for "artistic" choices of merchandise, and she mentioned well-to-do New Yorkers to whom "Fifth Avenue is Heaven with the rue de la Paix thrown in." *The Age of Innocence*, book 1, chap. 10, and book 2, chap. 33, in Edith Wharton, *Novels*, Library of America, vol. 30 (New York: Library of America, 1985), 1082, 1279.

the diva would endorse cosmetic products. The upper left of an advertisement from 1920 displays her in stylish dress as she applies either rouge or face powder; the upper right has large lettering that proclaims "Rigaud, 16 Rue de la Paix, Paris."

a journalist reviewing her performance. "'The Juggler,' with Novelty," *New York Times*, Thursday, January 11, 1912.

At least one other music critic. Henry Edward Krehbiel, *More Chapters of Opera, Being Historical and Critical Observations and Records concerning the Lyric Drama in New York from 1908 to 1918* (New York: H. Holt, 1919), 99.

there is no such thing as bad publicity. The aphorisms provide an English correlative to the French concept of *succès de scandale*, literally "success from scandal" or "scandal success."

We must wonder. Sheean, *Amazing Oscar Hammerstein*, 288.

one of those passive musicians. Quoted in Edward Wagenknecht, *Seven Daughters of the Theater: Jenny Lind, Sarah Bernhardt, Ellen Terry, Julia Marlowe, Isadora Duncan, Mary Garden, Marilyn Monroe* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), 165. See also Garden and Biancolli, *Mary Garden's Story*, 138.

helping to establish and propagate a new music. Quoted in Wagenknecht, *Seven Daughters*, 165: "Today we see the beginning of the great modern school, the music which deals with and carries to the hearts of its audiences great human truths. This modern music aims not wholly at the senses, but also at the mind. It does not aim merely at producing a vehicle for the production of glorious tones. It goes deeper than tone. It strives for a musical interpretation of the impulses and motives of the human mind and heart and soul. It represents not persons, but passions."

the American première of Massenet's Thaïs. On November 25, 1907. It had been performed first in 1894 and revised in 1898, with a libretto by Louis Gallet.

The dress stuck to my flesh. Garden and Biancolli, *Mary Garden's Story*, 113; Turnbull, *Mary Garden*, 57.

James Gibbons Huneker. Arnold T. Schwab, *James Gibbons Huneker: Critic of the Seven Arts* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1963), 257.

she had studied ballet daily. *Musical America*, Special Fall Issue (October 10, 1908): 28: "I take a dancing lesson each day, and think it will be very amusing to become a *ballerine*!" Garden here uses the French word for ballerina.

nearly transparent flesh-colored silk. Turnbull, *Mary Garden*, 57.

New York may insist on a few more clothes. On both the transparent silk and the different mores of New York, see "MARY GARDEN MAKES A THRILLING SALOME; Her Costume for Dance of Seven Veils—It Is Impossible to Describe It Even in Paris. RINGS ON LITTLE FINGERS A Red Wig, Too—Times Correspondent Sees Rehearsal Before She Sails—Comes on the Adriatic," *New York Times*, October 25, 1908.

The resulting tempest in a teapot. June Sawyers, "The Night that 'Salomé' Shocked the Whole Town," *Chicago Tribune*, "Lifestyles," and *The Milwaukee Journal*, October 26, 1944. For the night itself, see *New York Times,* November 30, 1910.

Clothes are only shams. Turnbull, *Mary Garden*, 67.

Salomania. Udo Kultermann, "The 'Dance of the Seven Veils': Salome and Erotic Culture around 1900," *Artibus et Historiae* 27.53 (2006): 187–215.

They bruited abroad. Ronald L. Davis, *Opera in Chicago* (New York: Appleton-Century, Affiliate of Meredith Press, 1966), 98.

Selling the Jongleur

Garden would grow irate. "Miss Garden Muses on Woman's Perils," *New York Times*, January 16, 1910, 16.

her manipulation of the media circus. On her handling of the media, see Pennino, "Mary Garden and the American Press."

never was an active publicity hound. Wagner, *Seeing Stars*, 208–9, 211.

a scent that was marketed under her name. John Dos Passos, *Manhattan Transfer* 2.2, "Longlegged Jack of the Isthmus," in idem, *Novels, 1920–1925*, Library of America, vol. 142 (New York: Library of America, 2003), 608. The perfume was produced by the parfumier Rigaud. An advertisement in the December 1917 issue of *Ladies' Home Journal* spotlights her face and hair, while to the right is a partially draped French flag. Underneath are arrayed more than a dozen different cosmetics in the line.

miracle perfume. In French, a *parfum miracle*.

one exquisite odour. Thankfully, the copywriter resisted referring to the odor of sanctity. That would have stunk.

would open soon in America. The libretto followed was *Le jongleur de Notre Dame (The Juggler of Notre Dame): Miracle Play in Three Acts*, trans. Byrne, published in 1907.

the same issue of the daily. *New York Times*, August 16, 1908, p. SM8 (for *Le jongleur de Notre Dame*) and 7 (for "Isadora Duncan Arrives").

New Woman. Viv Gardner and Susan Rutherford, eds., *The New Woman and Her Sisters: Feminism and the Theatre (1850–1914)* (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992).

where are the snows of yesteryear?. This topos is often designated *ubi sunt*, to convey concisely the question "Where are… today?"

Duncan Grant. A British artist, he was a member of the Bloomsbury Group of artists, writers, and intellectuals.

and me too? Hugh McDiarmid, "A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle," lines 30–32, in idem, *Complete Poems*, 2 vols. (Manchester, UK: Carcanet, 1993–1994), 1: 83–168, at 84.

Yvette Guilbert. Elizabeth Emery and Laura Morowitz, *Consuming the Past: The Medieval Revival in fin-de-siècle France* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2003), 214–15. For a study of Guilbert's life, see Knapp and Chipman, *That Was Yvette*.

Garden knew and studied her. James Huneker, *Bedouins: Mary Garden, Debussy, Chopin or the Circus, Botticelli, Poe, Brahmsody, Anatole France, Mirbeau, Caruso on Wheels, Calico Cats, The Artistic Temperament; Idols and Ambergris; with The Supreme Sin, Grindstones, A Masque of Music, and The Vision Malefic* (New York: Scribner, 1920), 10, 17; Garden and Biancolli, *Mary Garden's Story*, 105, 145, 268.

diseuse. The technical term for a female monologuist.

café-concert singer. During this phase, she was a favorite subject in the art of the French artist Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec.

Society for the Oldest French Texts. In French, Société des Anciens Textes Français.

founded in Paris in 1875. Knapp and Chipman, *That Was Yvette*, introduction (unnumbered page).

cathedral of Reims. Knapp and Chipman, *That Was Yvette*, 258.

sensational concerts. Knapp and Chipman, *That Was Yvette*, 279.

miracle of the Virgin. Knapp and Chipman, *That Was Yvette*, 280.

tours in Europe and America. See Elizabeth Emery, "From Cabaret to Lecture Hall: Medieval Song as Cultural Memory in the Performances of Yvette Guilbert," in *Memory and Medievalism*, ed. Karl Fugelso, Studies in Medievalism, vol. 15 (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007), 3–25; Elizabeth Emery, "'Resuscitating' Medieval Literature in New York and Paris: *La Femme que Nostre-Dame garda d'estre arse* at Yvette Guilbert's School of Theatre, 1919–1924," in *Cultural Performances in Medieval France*, ed. Eglal Doss-Quinby et al. (Rochester, NY: Boydell and Brewer, 2007), 265–78.

the jongleur also had another Mary to thank. We have recordings of this Mary's voice as she sang the role of Jean on March 21, 1911 in New York: Columbia, 30699, 12-inch. Other cylinders and disks conserve the sounds as she crooned in 1903 in London and, to the accompaniment of Debussy's piano playing, in 1904 in Paris. From far past her prime we have a record made in Camden, New Jersey in 1926. On 1912, see Opstad, *Debussy's Mélisande*, 243; on 1903 and 1904, 118n34; on 1926, 259. In 1912, Mary Garden also sang at a dinner in Paris before a bevy of nobility and diplomats, including Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bliss—the eventual donors of the Harvard-owned institute in Washington that I presently direct: see "Entertainments in Paris: Kittens and Doves as Favors at Cotillion Given by Mrs. Moore" (special cable), *New York Times*, June 30, 1912, C5.

Mary Garden Dances the Role

Mary Garden's time in Chicago. Although Chicago movie studios were important in the nascent film industry from 1907 through 1913, Garden's involvement came after the rise of Hollywood. Without reference to her, see Michael Glover Smith and Adam Selzer, *Flickering Empire: How Chicago Invented the U.S. Film Industry* (New York: Wallflower Press, 2015).

gave her pride of place. In the *Saturday Evening Post* magazine of October 27, 1917.

one of the most colossal flops in movie history. Roger Butterfield, "Sam Goldwyn," *Life*, October 27, 1947, 133.

To the majority of the audiences. In the April 5, 1918 issue of *Variety* magazine, quoted and cited by first Anne Morey, "Geraldine Farrar," in *Flickers of Desire: Movie Stars of the 1910s*, ed. Jennifer M. Bean (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2011), 137–54, at 142, and then Mary Simonson, "Screening the Diva," in *The Arts of the Prima Donna in the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. Rachel Cowgill and Hilary Poriss (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 83–100, at 86.

remain legendary. In the standard biography of Mary Garden, the chapter on the year in which she premiered in *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* in New York at the end of November and later in Philadelphia is entitled "The Creation of a Legend: 1907–1908": see Turnbull, *Mary Garden*, 55–65. For comments by those who saw her performances in the role of the jongleur, see pp. 88, 160, 171, 197.

to toy with taking the veil. On her dalliance with conversion, see Garden, *Mary Garden's Story*, 133–34; Opstad, *Debussy's Mélisande*, 198.

Mary Garden Avenue. In French, Rue Mary-Garden.

Place Mary-Garden. In English, Mary Garden Square. See Garden, *Mary Garden's Story*, 135–37. Mary Garden's contribution to the monument in Peille was honored in a small exposition that opened on Armistice Day, 2012.

January 24, 1931. For the date of Garden's retirement, see Turnbull, M*ary Garden*, 173.

In her memoirs. Garden, *Mary Garden's Story*, 247.

More than two decades passed. For her performances, see Davis, *Opera in Chicago*, 275–342.

the journalist described. Fred D. Pasley, *Al Capone: Biography of a Self-Made Man* (New York: Ives Washburn, 1930), 45: "This [a peculiar lurch in his walk, from a childhood injury] and his trick of canting his head as he talked produced on most visitors an impression of infinite slyness, reminiscent of *Le Jongleur de Notre Dame*." The gangster compared with the juggler was Dion O'Banion.

The Role of Dance

a collector and historian of art and literature. Carola Giedion-Welcker, "Meetings with Joyce," in *Portraits of the Artist in Exile: Recollections of James Joyce by Europeans*, ed. Willard Potts (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1979), 256–80. Giedion-Welcker also produced an *In memoriam James Joyce* (Zurich: Fretz & Wasmuth, 1941).

a professor of English literature. His name was Bernhard Fehr.

wild jumps and kicks. Giedion-Welcker, "Meetings with Joyce," at 273–74. "These rhythmical and astonishingly acrobatic exercises" reduced his stiff straw hat to nothing more than a wreath.

part juggling clown. Giedion-Welcker, "Meetings with Joyce," at 273–74: "The grotesque flexibility of his long legs, which seemed to fill the room, and the bizarre grace with which he executed all movements of this strange dance, made him appear part juggling clown and part mystical reincarnation of *Our Lady's Tumbler*, who would like to have continued the performance endlessly, urged on by the constantly changing musical variations of the tireless piano player." Nothing suggests that the Irishman had the comparison with the entertainer on his mind, and the raconteur makes the literary allusion decades after the evening in question.

outright appeal for dancing. Vincent Giroud, "La danse dans les opéras de Massenet: Typologie et fonction," in *Musique et chorégraphie en France de Léo Delibes à Florent Schmitt: Actes de la journée d'étude du 13 juin 2008*, ed. Jean-Christophe Branger (Saint-Étienne, France: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Étienne, 2010), 89–121, at 90.

the composer was sensitive to the role of dance. Giroud, "La danse."

here it refers to a series of movements. Giroud, "La danse," 110. The noun suggests by its etymology "young shepherdess" in French.

classical dance music. Giroud, "La danse," 110–11.

Our Lady's Dancer. In German, "Der Tänzer unserer lieben Frau." Hedwig Müller, *Mary Wigman: Leben und Werk der grossen Tänzerin* (Weinheim, Germany: Quadriga, 1986), 310–20, at 312. The dance is not mentioned in Susan Manning, *Ecstasy and the Demon: The Dances of Mary Wigman* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006). It is touched upon in Maggie Odom, "Mary Wigman: The Early Years 1913–1925," *The Drama Review* 24.4 (December 1980): 81–92, at 83.

pioneer of modern dance. She put into practice the dance theories of the dancer and dance theorist Rudolf von Laban, after whom were named the method for describing human movement known as Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) and Labanotation.

medieval-style outfit. The garb consists of trousers worn under a tunic that incorporates prominently in its pattern a large pectoral cross.

Our Lady's Dancer. In German, once again "Der Tänzer unserer lieben Frau," with music by Stürmer. He was hired by the Hannover theater director Hanns Niedecken-Gebhard: see Karl Toepfer, *Empire of Ecstasy: Nudity and Movement in German Body Culture (1910–1935)* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997), 297–98. The balletic expressions of the story may well have had an impact on silent film as well as on theater, but the evidence is thin.

Terpis himself took the lead role. On March 2, 1923. Later he went on to become ballet director of the Berlin Staatsoper (State Opera), as well as leader of his own dance school in the same city.

Our Lady's Juggler. As set to music by Ottorino Respighi. The Rambert Dance Company, known also variously as the Marie Rambert Dancers, Ballet Club, and Ballet Rambert, was founded by Dame Marie Rambert (1888–1982), and has existed under various names since 1926. Rambert was Polish Jewish by birth, but as an adolescent converted to Christianity. In 1912–1913, she trained with Serge Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, where she assisted Nijinsky. She came to London in 1914, where she opened her own educational institution in 1920.

from 1930 on. "Our Lady's Juggler," performed first on February 25, 1930 (choreographed by Susan Salaman), and in October 1933, on November 25, 1935, and other dates (choreographed by Susan Salaman and Andrée Howard): see Kathrine Sorley Walker, "The Choreography of Andrée Howard," *Dance Chronicle* 13 (1990–1991): 265–358, at 271–72; Sally Gilmour, "Remembering Andrée Howard," *Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research* 2.1 (1984): 48–60, at 55 (for an incidental mention).

a red Madonna dress. The dress dates from 1917, when it was worn by Marie Rambert in *La pomme d'or* (The golden apple). Also in 1930, she played the Madonna in *A Florentine Picture*. See Jane Pritchard, "Archives of the Dance: The Rambert Dance Company Archive," *Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research* 6.1 (1988): 59–69, at 64, repr. idem, "Rambert Dance Company Archive, London, UK," in *Dance History: An Introduction*, ed. Janet Adshead-Lansdale and June Layson, 132–50, at 140. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 1994.

The Lonely Lady. Gilmour, "Remembering Andrée Howard," 55.

educational institutions. Her establishment evolved into what is today the University of Cape Town School of Dance. At the time of its foundation in 1934–1935, it was the UCT Ballet School.

A French Legend of the 14th Century. With music by W. H. Bell, staged in August 1936.

reviewers rendered tribute to the lighting. "The lighting of this ballet was extremely convincing and the halo about 'Our Lady' was probably the most successful effect of the evening." This sentence from an anonymous review appeared under the title "At the Ballet" in a contemporary newspaper. A clipping of it is in a scrapbook that belongs to Pamela Chrimes, a colleague and friend of Dulcie Howes. The book is currently in the private collection of Eduard Greyling.

Sexless, Sexy… and What Sex?

with a man in the title role. "Second Thoughts on Music: 'Juggler' Opera Proves Ingratiating Performance," *Springfield (Massachusetts) Union*, published as *Springfield Republican*, February 26, 1961, 57, asserts that the opera was never performed with a tenor—but this is wrong.

The one-time retrogression failed abysmally. Finck, *Massenet and His Operas*, 101.

an elaborate hennin. Noblewomen wore this conical headdress in the late Middle Ages.

the part should always be performed by a woman. For the "sexless" quotation, see Garden, *Mary Garden's Story*, 166; for her insistence that the jongleur should be played by a woman, ibid., 132.

the challenges of succeeding in the pretense. "Now, this was one of my strangest and most problematic creations. Here was a little boy of fifteen, a sexless child, with a voice that wasn't yet broken, and there was Salomé, with a voice of passion and colour, and I had to take my voice and make it that other thing. I couldn't put into that boy passion of any kind. The voice had to be pure and high, like a choir boy's before it changes, and how it tired me! It wasn't easy, but what a part, the Jongleur! The critics and the public all loved it. They never even thought about the fact that it was a woman doing it."

was the divinity nonsexual. "Aye, there's the rub"—and the etymologies of both *prurience* (Latin *prurire*, "itch") and *tribade* (Greek *tribō*, "rub") remind us that rubbing may be very sexual, as a countermeasure against itching.

the attraction to her. Garden, *Mary Garden's Story*, 133.

wardrobe malfunction. Van Vechten, *Interpreters*, 87: "In the second act she found it difficult to entirely conceal the suggestion of her sex under the monk's robe."

she avers. Garden, *Mary Garden's Story*, 138.

the opera Aphrodite. The musical drama by the composer Camille Erlanger was adapted from the bestselling novel of 1906 about the life of courtesans in Alexandria by the French author Pierre Louÿs (see Figs. n.7 and n.8).

Fig. n.6 Jane Heap and Margaret Anderson. Photograph by Man Ray, 1922. Paris, Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou. © Art Resource, New York. All rights reserved.

Fig. n.7 Mary Garden as Chrysis in Camille Erlanger's *Aphrodite*. Photograph, 1906. Photographer unknown. Published in Henry T. Finck, *Massenet and His Operas* (New York: John Lane, 1910), facing p. 72.

Fig. n.8 Mary Garden as Chrysis in Camille Erlanger's *Aphrodite*. Photograph by Paul Boyer, 1906. Reproduced on postcard (F. C. et Cie, ca. 1906).

The Knight of the Rose. *Der Rosenkavalier*.

same-sex romancing. *Mary Garden's Story*, 220: "Everybody said I would have made a wonderful Octavian. Perhaps. The role didn't appeal to me at all. Making love to women all night long would have bored me to death."

in the simplicities of Jean the Juggler. Huneker, *Bedouins*, 5–6.

Mary Garden: Superwoman. Schwab, *James Gibbons Huneker*, 258. On their correspondence and highly limited personal contacts, see Schwab, 257, 357n121.

one opera buff defended Garden. Edward Moore, *Forty Years of Opera in Chicago* (New York: Horace Liveright, 1930). The quotation is to be found in Davis, *Opera in Chicago*, 186: "No tenor, no matter how talented, could ever be as boyish as Miss Garden. I would rather hear her sing and then cry and mop her eyes and wipe her nose than listen to the finest tenor on earth in the part. When the prior scolds her she twists her body into something that is all knees and elbows, and it is all boy, too."

delightful and adorable Mary Garden. Van Vechten, *Interpreters*, 93.

she is quite irresistible. Huneker, *Bedouins*, 19.

an ineradicable residuum of herself. Finck, *Massenet and His Operas*, 102.

something feminine. "Devries in Title Role in *Le Jongleur*," *New York Times*, February 27, 1910, 11.

to see her at the opera in Paris. In *Louise*, *Cherubin*, *Thaïs*, and *Salomé*.

he had taken the Church to task. Henry Adams, *Historical Essays* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1891), 1–41, at 38 ("Primitive Rights of Women").

Mary Garden could come through in the role. *Theatre Magazine* 11.109 (March 1910), 91.

an almost slavering craving. No one could mistake the thrust, so to speak, of comments such as "I am hungry for Mary Garden," "Mary Garden is squirming at the Grand Opera," and "I dropped in at the Opera last night for half an hour to see Mary Garden squirm Salome." See *LHA*, 5: 414 (to Elizabeth Cameron, October 8, 1902: "to hear Miss Garden in Louise"), 422 (to Anne Palmer Fell, November 22, 1902: "I go there only to hear Mary Garden sing 'Louise.' I no longer count the times, but I go whenever she sings it"), 517 (to Elizabeth Cameron, November 2, 1903: "to hear Mary Garden sing the *premier jour* [in *Louise*]"), 663 (to Elizabeth Cameron, May 28, 1905: "to the Opera Comique to see Mary Garden in Cherubin"); 6:141 (to Elizabeth Cameron, May 14, 1908), 154–55 (to Elizabeth Cameron, June 16, 1908), 339 (to Elizabeth Cameron, May 19, 1910: "squirm Salome"), 342–43 (to Raphael Pumpelly, May 19, 1910: "squirming at the Grand Opera").

I only go when Mary's there. Davis, *Opera in Chicago*, 128.

cultural icon to lesbian opera fans. Bonnie Zimmerman, ed., *Lesbian Histories and Cultures: An Encyclopedia*, Encyclopedia of Lesbian and Gay Histories and Cultures, vol. 1/ Garland Reference Library of the Social Sciences, vol. 1008 (New York: Garland, 2000), 1: 558.

the lesbian opera singer. Terry Castle, *The Literature of Lesbianism: A Historical Anthology from Ariosto to Stonewall* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 867; contrast p. 403, where she is "the bisexual turn-of-the-century opera singer."

one rabidly reported case. *New York Times*, February 18, 1913, 1.

Her 'Queen Cleopatra'. The heading refers to a role that Garden made her own, displaced only decades later by an even bigger star, Elizabeth Taylor.

she had gone devotedly to hear Mary Garden sing. Terry Castle, "In Praise of Brigitte Fassbaender: Reflections on Diva-Worship," in Blackmer and Smith, *En Travesti*, 20–58, at 27.

Jane Heap. She was a writer and an artist, formerly the lover of Djuna Barnes.

definitely not declawed. Holly A. Baggett, ed., *Dear Tiny Heart: The Letters of Jane Heap and Florence Reynolds* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 179n33; compare pp. 66, 180n50, where Mary's movement (clearly Garden) is juxtaposed with a black panther's. Mary Garden is also mentioned on pp. 111; 183n61.

one of the most thrilling human experiences. Anderson, *My Thirty Years' War*, 138, cited by Castle, "In Praise of Brigitte Fassbaender," 27.

an aging gentleman. The man is sometimes identified as the attorney, railroad executive, and politician Chauncey M. Depew. The earliest attestation known to me at this moment is *Zanesville (Ohio) Signal*, August 9, 1943, 6.

lesbian icon. The term is applied to Mary Garden in the index to Blackmer and Smith, *En Travesti*, 377.

a crush she had. *Mary Garden's Story*, 6–7.

her status as a lifelong single. *Mary Garden's Story*, 192: "The *grande passion* never came into my life."

her passion and only real romance. *Mary Garden's Story*, 294: "My passion was opera, and that was the only real 'romance' of my life." Elsewhere she clarified, "I believed in myself, and I never permitted anything or anybody to destroy that belief. … I wanted liberty and I went my own way. … I never really loved anybody. I had a fondness for

men, yes, but very little passion and *no need*; that's it, perhaps, I never had any real need for it."

nobody in God's green earth. *Mary Garden's Story*, 155.

she expresses her rapture. *Mary Garden's Story*, 84.

Painted Veils. James Huneker, *Painted Veils* (New York: Modern Library, 1920).

wealthy lesbian who wears men's clothing. See Castle, "In Praise of Brigitte Fassbaender," 28.

Huneker's biographer decoded Brandes. Schwab, *James Gibbons Huneker*, 267.

occasionally and understandably conflated. See, for example, Alan H. Morriss, "A Twentieth-Century Folk Mass," *Musical Times*, 98.1378 (December 1957): 671–72, at 672. One reference work for literary scholars goes so far as to assert that Hugo was inspired by the medieval story in conceiving his own. See Jean-Charles Seigneuret, ed., *Dictionary of Literary Themes and Motifs*, 2 vols. (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), 1 ("A-J"): 233. In the same passage, the miracle of the medieval story is described as taking the form of "a gracious smile" with which Mary rewards the tumbler. Thanks to equally fallible associative thinking, a newsletter announced W. H. Auden's *The Ballad of Barnaby* as being based on "the medieval French legend of 'The Juggler of Paris.'" See "'Barnaby' Goes to Scotland and Also Will Be Published," *Lytellwyk* 2.1 (November 1969), front page. Along the same lines, a novelist referred to the "Jongleur of Paris": see John Cowper Powys, *A Glastonbury Romance*, vol. 1, chap. 19 ("The Pageant") (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1932), 624.

At least nineteen operas. David Littlejohn, "Hugo Sung and Unsung: Or Why We Put Up with Dumb Opera Plots," in idem, *The Ultimate Art: Essays around and about Opera* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992), 172–82, at 176. The tally of nineteen does not factor in sketches and other projects that did not eventuate in complete operas.

a lost sketch of a musical drama. Irvine, *Massenet*, 37.

a popular hit, in due course California's official state song. In 1913, she became the first to sing "I Love You, California."

the American songwriter Irving Berlin. This happened during her stint as manager of the Chicago Opera Company. See *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* 42.40, March 12, 1922, 2.

23rd Street and Broadway station. At the BMT Broadway train line.

open the floodgates. Opstad, *Debussy's Mélisande*, 249–50.

The Jongleur Goes to Notre Dame

migrated him into the first two media. "Mary Garden in Radio Opera: 'Le Jongleur de Notre Dame' to Be Broadcast from Chicago by WJZ's Network on Thursday Night," *New York Times*, December 18, 1927, XX15. For the fullest treatment, see Luther F. Sies, *Encyclopedia of American Radio, 1920–1960*, 2 vols., 2nd ed. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2008), 1: 498.

from its founding through 1934. *Notre Dame Juggler*, vols. 1–15 (December 1919–May 1934).

like the medieval entertainer's. *The Juggler of Notre Dame* 1 (December 1919): 6: "In emerging from the darkness of back stage, the Juggler begs the audience's suffrage for a curtain speech that will, he hopes, explain and justify his performance."

after the US Senate's historic vote. The vote was taken on June 4, 1919.

The College Woman as Jongleur

illustrated explanation and demonstration. Frederica LeF. Bellamy, *The Jongleur's Story: A History and Demonstration of Religious Drama* (New York: The Woman's Press, 1926).

the other two may be women or girls. Bellamy, *Jongleur's Story*, 4: "The Brother should of course be a man, preferably deep-voiced. Unless young men of real dramatic ability are available, the Jongleur and Player parts should be done by women or girls with good voices of rich timbre."

stilted speech. The first three sentences, preceded by authorial directions on how to bring the character of the jongleur to life, give ample insight into the shortcomings of this piece of theater: "Jongleur (*The* Jongleur *is debonair and winning, but just a little wistful and pleading, for he knows very well what it is to be hungry, proud as he is of his calling*): Good even, all! This, meseemeth, is a goodly company. Are there children here or any of simple hearts, who would listen gladly to the telling of a tale?"

performances that took place in the late 1920s. The shows were put on in May of 1927 and 1928, and June of 1939, on the steps outside Finney Chapel, the largest performance space on campus, designed by the architect Cass Gilbert under the inspiration of Southern French Romanesque. At least one image from 1927 shows a performance outdoors in a park, probably Ladies Grove. Oberlin is a liberal arts college located in Oberlin, Ohio. Fullest information is available at http://www.oberlin.edu/alummag/oampast/oam_winter/iwas.html. Under the title "I Was Our Lady's Juggler–A Memory," this site offers the reminiscences of the juggler, Conna Bell Shaw (Oberlin, '28), as a ninety-one year-old woman. The same recollections were published in *Oberlin Alumni Magazine* (Winter 1998). They are supported both by photographs, mostly

from 1939, and verbatim quotations from the *Oberlin Review* of May 23, 1939 and June 26, 1939. The typescript of the play "Our Lady's Juggler" from 1927 is found in the Oberlin College Archives, Frederick B. Artz papers, box 8. The Archives also possess a silent film of the 1939 performance.

general introduction to the Middle Ages. Frederick Binkerd Artz, *The Mind of the Middle Ages, A.D. 200–1500: An Historical Survey*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980). As the citation indicates, the introduction went through three editions.

townsfolk watch in wonderment. No doubt many other dance performances have been based on the story of *Our Lady's Juggler*. The New York Public Library has a 28 and 1/2-minute black-and-white reel of 16-millimeter film (*MGZHB 12–880. Location PerfArts-Dance) of a dance telecast on Descript 1 reel, 28 1/2 min., 1024 ft., sd. b&w.; 16 mm. Note Telecast on WCBS-TV, New York, May 2, 1965, in the program "Lamp unto my feet," produced by Pamela Ilott, directed by Marvin Silbersher, choreographed by Flower Hujer, and performed by the Flower Hujer Dance Theatre. The cast included the choreographer as the statue and Pablo Candelas as the juggler.

The newspaper report. "Smith Dancing Group in Recital Tomorrow," *Springfield Republican*, February 26, 1929, 6.

a new course in dance and choreography. "Advanced Course in Dance Is Offered," *Springfield Union*, April 2, 1949, 28.

dedication of a chapel. Little Chapel, located at the extremity of an addition to the college library, was eventually desacralized to be used instead as library space.

more than a half dozen states. Wisconsin, Oklahoma (pictured), Nebraska, Utah, California, and Ohio.

Orchesis. From 1932 on, "The Juggler of Notre Dame" was staged annually as a "dance drama" at the University of Oklahoma. On the first such performance, see "Oklahomans at Home and Abroad," *Sooner Magazine* 5.4 (1933): 99–108, at 104. On the fourth, see "Campus Events," *Sooner Magazine* 8.3 (1935): 49. On the twelfth annual performance, see *Sooner Magazine* 17.4 (December 1944): 4–5. On the sixteenth one, see Katherine Wolfe, "News from the Dance Section," *Journal of the American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation* 20.3 (1949): 191–94. On even later iterations, see "The Sooner Salutes," *Sooner Magazine* 25.5 (1953): 9; Bill Crawford, "Maryland, My Maryland," *Sooner Magazine* 26.4 (1953): 13, 29; "O. U. Calendar of Events," *Sooner Magazine* 28.3 (1955), table of contents. The tradition of both Orchesis and the Christmas pageant was brought to the Oklahoma campus by a physical education teacher, Helen Gregory. She had become familiar with both the organization and the pageant during her studies at the University of Wisconsin.

At San Jose State Teachers College, *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* was put on similarly at Christmas time annually from at least 1932 through 1936, as a dance drama, with heavily or entirely female casts. See Charlotte G. MacEwan, "News from the Dance Section," *Journal of Health and Physical Education* (henceforth *JHPE*) 8.3 (1937): 1; Amy R. Howland, "Women's Athletic Section News," *JHPE* 8.3 (1937): 182–83; *Spartan Daily* 24.46, December 4, 1935, 4; *Spartan Daily* 24.50, December 10, 1935, 1, 4.

At Pomona College, the local women's dance organization presented in December of 1932 a recital with "The Juggler of Notre Dame" as the highlight of the program. See the 1932 Pomona College yearbook, *Metate* (Claremont, CA: Associated Students of Pomona College, 1932), 101: "Orchesis, a Greek word meaning 'to dance,' is an organization founded for girls interested in carrying on their dancing outside of class work. Its meetings are held weekly in the evening with one of the members taking charge. Twice a year, try-outs are held with the president and adviser as judges when any girl of advanced ability and keen interest is eligible for membership. As a Christmas feature this year the group presented a recital on December 15, with individual, group, and comic numbers, where 'The Juggler of Notre Dame' was the highlight of the program." From 1936 to 1938, the dance club presented "The Juggler of Notre Dame" for its annual Christmas assembly. See Marcia L. Lloyd, "NDEO Lifetime of Achievement Award—Elizabeth Roths Hayes: A Biographical Sketch of a Dance Educator," *Journal of Dance Education* 3.3 (2003): 103–6, at 104–5.

In 1943, the branch of Orchesis at the State Teacher's College in La Crosse, Wisconsin presented "The Juggler of Notre Dame." See Janet Cumming, "News from the Dance Section," *JHPE* 14.2 (1943): 106–7, at 106.

"The Juggler" or "Our Lady's Juggler" is also described in detail as a production of the Choral-Dance-Theatre at the Ohio State University, from 1939 through 1949, but with no mention of either Massenet or Mary Garden. See Helen Paula Alkire and Louis H. Diercks, "Choral, Dance, Theatre," *Music Educators Journal* 35.5 (April 1949): 26–28. An oral history interview of Helen Alkire, conducted on November 27, 2001, by Jeanette Sexton furnishes helpful context.

In 1949, it was reported that "The Juggle of Notre Dame" had become a traditional element of the Annual Orchesis Demonstration for Freshmen Women at the University of Utah. See Katherine Wolfe, "News from the Dance Section," *Journal of the American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation* 20.4 (1949): 250. In 1953, a dance drama "The Juggler of Notre Dame" capped the annual spring program at the University of Nebraska. See Margaret Dehaan Freed, "Spotlight on the Dance," *Journal of the American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation* 24.5 (May 1953): 44, 47, 51, at 51.

which took its name. The group was founded at the University of Wisconsin about 1925. A prominent member from the beginning was Miss Berta (sometimes spelled Bertha) Ochsner (Mrs. Douglas Gordon Campbell) (1900–1942). In college, she was

president of the parent chapter. Later she would become a well-known dancer and choreographer in the Midwest. She particularly promoted "Juggler of Notre Dame," but also performed such pieces as Debussy's "La cathédrale engloutie" (The sunken cathedral). See *Daily Illini* 50.101, January 7, 1931, 1; *Spartan Daily* 25.45, December 2, 1936, 4.

her students organized a dance club. Nancy Lee Chalfa Ruyter, "H'Doubler, Margaret," in *International Encyclopedia of Dance*, ed. Selma Jean Cohen et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 3: 352–53; Janice Ross, *Moving Lessons: Margaret H'Doubler and the Beginning of Dance in American Education* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2000).

helped to sow throughout the United States such programs for women. On the spread of her teaching from the University of Wisconsin, see J. A. Gray and D. S. Howe, "The Education of Dance Educators at the University of Wisconsin: 1927–1933," in *Dance: The Study of Dance and the Place of Dance in Society. Proceedings of the VIII Commonwealth and International Conference on Sport, Physical Education, Dance, Recreation, and Health. Conference '86 Glasgow, 18–23 July* (London: E. & F. N. Spon, 1986), 204–11, at 210.

a book form of "Our Lady's Juggler." The item in question was printed with a six-tone illustrated frontispiece, four full-page illustrations, and one small illustrated strip on another page.

two Newbery Honor awards. In 1931 and 1949, for the novel *Ood-le-uk the Wanderer* by Alice Lide and Margaret Johansen (Boston: Little, Brown, 1930), about an Alaskan Eskimo who crosses the Bering Strait and returns after adventures among Siberian tribesmen; and for the children's history book *The Story of the Negro by the American poet (and member of the Harlem Renaissance) Arnaud "Arna" Bontemps (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948).* In this period, the aspiring artist was living mostly in the Lower East Side of New York City, and he publicized his portfolio on his own, in hopes of securing work as an illustrator: see his *Drawings for Books, Magazines and Advertisements* (New York: Raymond Lufkin, 1940).

Oberlin College's annual calendars. He illustrated the 1941 and 1942 calendars.

the pageant directed by Artz. http://www.oberlin.edu/archive/holdings/finding/RG30/SG142/biography.html

can be harvested elsewhere. In 1945, we read that the "Juggler of Notre Dame" was a customary Christmas vespers program at Stephens College in Columbia, Missouri, where the dance organization comprised nearly twenty young women (still called "girls" in those days). See Gertrude Lippincott, "News from the Dance Section," *JHPE* 16.4 (1945): 197–200, at 197.

another college, in Cleveland, Mississippi. Delta State Teachers College, today's Delta State University.

a beautiful, miraculous story. The interviewee was Billie Rossie (Tonos). At the time of the performance she was the Grand Stage Manager of the Alpha Psi Omega sorority and the President of Delta Playhouse. The interview, conducted by Brenda Outlaw, took place on September 10, 1999. It is preserved as Delta State University, Charles W. Capps, Jr. Archives and Museum, DSU Oral Histories, no. 266: http://www.deltastate.edu/academics/libraries/university-archives-museum/guides-to-the-collections/oral-histories/delta-state-university-oral-histories/tonos-interview/. Evelyn Hammett (note the correct spelling) was an English professor at Delta State University.

From Opera to Vaudeville

her most famous performances. Frank Cullen, *Vaudeville, Old & New: An Encyclopedia of Variety Performers in America*, 2 vols. (New York: Routledge, 2007), 1: 7.

She would dance country style. "I danced my country dances. I played my fiddle. I juggled the three balls, and sometimes I used to let one go and make the people of the village laugh. It made them happier to think I was such a bad juggler. But I was always the boy, excited and awkward and adoring."

the Mary Garden of vaudeville. In 1911, two papers in Scranton, Pennsylvania refer thus to a Miss Louise Dickinson: *Scranton Truth*, November 25, 1911, 12; *Scranton Republican*, November 25, 1911, 18. Two years later, another paper gives the same billing to Belle Story: *Westfield (NJ) Leader*, March 19, 1913, 2. In 1916, a newspaper in Elmira, New York does likewise in presenting Lucy Tonge: *Telegram*, May 28, 1916. If the performers lacked in talent, the strategy could backfire because of the false expectations it raised: we read of a woman named Olga Cook that "a new single on the Loew time was much picked upon last week because she was billed as 'The Mary Garden of Vaudeville'—and disappointed": *Variety* 34.5 (April 3, 1914): 15.

the Mary Garden of jazz. The phrase was used to describe Frieda Leonard: see *Davenport* (*Iowa*) *Democrat and Leader*, February 17, 1922, 5.

Sophie Tucker. For "Mary Garden of Vaudeville," see *New York Sun*, June 3, 1918, 5; *McClure's Magazine* 50 (July 1918): 55. For "Mary Garden of Ragtime," see *Eugene* (*Oregon*) *Register-Guard*, January 9, 1915, 10; *Vancouver* (*BC*) *Sun*, November 1, 1917; *Pacific Coast Musical Review* 33.7 (San Francisco, November 17, 1917): 6; *Deseret Evening News* (Salt Lake City, UT), January 1, 1918. For the context within her career, see Armond Fields, *Sophie Tucker: First Lady of Show Business* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2003), 40, 41, 51, 54, 56, 68.

comedian. At the time, a woman in this capacity was known as a comedienne.

imitator and appropriator of African-American singing. Such a singer risked then being labeled with the racist slur of "coon shouter."

she proclaimed herself. Eden Elizabeth Kainer, "Vocal Racial Crossover in the Song Performance of Three Iconic American Vocalists: Sophie Tucker, Elsie Janis, and Ella Fitzgerald" (PhD thesis, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 2008), 82. On Tucker's byname as "World-Renowned Coon Shouter," see Lori Harrison-Kahan, *The White Negress: Literature, Minstrelsy, and the Black-Jewish Imaginary* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2011), 25.

a 1918 playbill. The playhouse, known as B. F. Keith's Theatre, existed from 1894 to 1928, in Boston, Massachusetts. The playbill is for performances in the week of March 25, 1918.

Five Kings of Syncopation. The gentlemen in question were Sam Green, Ed Pressler, Ralph Hertz, Phil Sax, and Pete Quinn.

what she and her backup group looked like. They are pictured on the cover of the sheet music for a hit song in 1918 entitled "Ev'rybody Shimmies Now."

Other prima donnas. Massenet, *Mes souvenirs*, 245n1, refers to Geneviève Vix in Buenos Aires in 1915.

an oddity to enliven a repertory. *Opera News* (Metropolitan Opera Guild) 25 (1960): 709, report on the New England Opera Theater: "The company's fifteenth season was climaxed by a production of Massenet's rarely heard jongleur de Notre-Dame."

Sister Beatrice. In French, *Sœur Béatrice.*

the exquisite Tombeur. Myrrha Lot-Borodine, trans., *Vingt miracles de Notre-Dame, traduits de l'ancien français et précédés d'une introduction*, Poèmes et récits de la vieille France, vol. 14 (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1929), v–vi.

Notes to Chapter 3

If a person wished to paint you. Constantine of Rhodes (ca. 870/880–after 931), Epigram for the Virgin, in *Anthologia Palatina*, book 15, epigram 17, lines 1–6, in *The Greek Anthology*, trans. W. R. Paton, Loeb Classical Library, 5 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1916–1918), 5: 120–23 (for text and translation, which I have modified). To satisfy purists, at the risk of making the elements less approachable to nonspecialists, the poet's name may be rendered as Konstantinos Rhodios.

The Power of Madonnas in the Round

through compassion. Edward Dowden, *A History of French Literature* (New York: D. Appleton, 1897), 7: "If there be no other piety in such a tale as this, there is at least the piety of human pity."

images of the Mother of God. For a quick overview of Madonnas in medieval France, see René Germain, "Les représentations de la Vierge, expression de la foi au Moyen Âge en France," in *Autour du culte marial en Forez: Coutumes, art, histoire. Actes du colloque des 19 et 20 septembre 1997 à l'Université Jean Monnet, Saint-Étienne* (Saint-Étienne, France: Université de Saint-Étienne, 1999), 75–83.

regarded as actually animate. Assaf Pinkus, *Sculpting Simulacra in Medieval Germany, 1250–1380* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2014).

set up to preside over synods. William D. Wixom, *Medieval Sculpture at the Metropolitan, 800 to 1400* ([New York]: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2005), 12.

Canticles of Holy Mary. The conventional title in Galician-Portuguese is *Cantigas de Santa Maria.*

The Mimicking Minstrel. Incipit "Par Deus, muit' é gran dereito," Cantigas de Santa María, no. 293, trans. Kathleen Kulp-Hill, *Songs of Holy Mary of Alfonso X, the Wise: A Translation of the "Cantigas de Santa Maria,"* Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, vol. 173 (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2000), 355.

biblical injunctions. In the first five books of the Bible, called the Torah by Jews and the Pentateuch by Christians, see particularly Exodus 20:4–5 and Deuteronomy 5:8–9.

Worshipers must differentiate. Jean-Marie Sansterre, "Omnes qui coram hac imagine genua flexerint. … La vénération d'images de saints et de la Vierge d'après les textes écrits en Angleterre du milieu du XIe siècle aux premières décennies du XIIIe siècle," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 49.195 (2006): 257–94.

a culmination of aesthetic and formal changes. For the definitive study of this high-water mark, see Ilene H. Forsyth, *The Throne of Wisdom: Wood Sculptures of the Madonna in Romanesque France* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972).

the Latin verb meaning "to stand." The word is *sto, stare*.

if the two would have differed much. Nancy Black, "Images of the Virgin Mary in the Soissons Manuscript (Paris, Bnf, Nouv. Acq. Fr. 24541)," in *Gautier de Coinci: Miracles, Music, and Manuscripts*, ed. Kathy M. Krause and Alison Stones, Medieval Texts and Cultures of Northern Europe, vol. 13 (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2006), 253–77, esp. 256–57, 276–77.

not borne in any kind of parade. The technical term for such transportation of a cult object is the verb *process*, pronounced process (with the stress on the final styllable).

Madonnas in Majesty

He did not remember his mother. Robert Curzon, *Visits to Monasteries in the Levant* (London: John Murray, 1849), 427.

on a throne. The ceremonial chair is the *cathedra.*

all-holy bringer of victory. In Greek, *panagia nikopoia*.

majesties. The English translates the Italian *Madonna in maestà* and Latin *maiestates* respectively.

throne of wisdom. From the Latin *sedes sapientiae*, literally "seat of wisdom."

the Mother of God. The conception of Mary as the parent of God was expressed in Greek by the adjective *theotokos*: the epithet emphasizes by extension that Jesus is God incarnate. The term is rendered in Latin variously by words or phrases meaning "Mother of God," "begetter of God," and "bearer of God" (*Mater Dei*, *Dei genitrix*, *Deipara*). Both the epithets and the pose emphasized the role and regal status of the Virgin as the God-Bearer that had been affirmed for her by the Council of Ephesus in 431.

the Word made flesh. John 1:14.

hewn from single tree trunks. Forsyth, *Throne of Wisdom*, 7. For a brief presentation of the major findings in this study, see Ilene Haering Forsyth, "Magi and Majesty: A Study of Romanesque Sculpture and Liturgical Drama," *The Art Bulletin* 50 (1968): 215–22.

predominated in the twelfth century. Only later would come images with the Triumph of the Virgin, in which a crowned Mary and the adult Christ are seated alongside each other on a throne or thrones; the Coronation of the Virgin, in which Mary is shown

alongside Christ as she is being crowned by an angel or by Christ himself; and the Virgin and Child, in which Mary stands with the babe in one of her arms. A cursory exposition is offered by Penny Schine Gold, *The Lady and the Virgin: Image, Attitude, and Experience in Twelfth-Century France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 43–75. For a brilliant and exhaustive study, see Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art,* trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

tympana. This architectural term (the singular is *tympanum)* designates the triangular or semicircular area surrounding an entranceway.

by itself. As in the so-called Royal Portal on the right side of the west façade at the cathedral of Chartres.

depicting the Adoration of the Magi. As on the right side of the west façade at the abbey of Vézelay.

Madonnine images. Michael P. Carroll, *Veiled Threats: The Logic of Popular Catholicism in Italy* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 17, argues that strict usage requires speaking of Madonnine rather than Marian images, since Madonnas are many but Mary unique.

cease-and-desist order. John Ruskin, "Mornings in Florence," §35, in idem, *The Works of John Ruskin*, ed. E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, 39 vols. (London: George Allen, 1903–1912), 23: 330.

paint and other pigments applied. On the twelfth-century Morgan Madonna from Auvergne, see Marco Leona, "Microanalysis of Organic Pigments and Glazes in Polychrome Works of Art by Surface-Enhanced Resonance Raman Scattering," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 106.35 (2009): 14757–62. On The Cloisters's twelfth-century Montvianex Madonna from Auvergne, see Lucretia G. Kargere, "The Montvianex Madonna: Materials and Techniques in 12th Century Auvergne," *ICOM Committee for Conservation: 13th Triennial Meeting, Rio de Janeiro, 22–27 September 2002. Preprints*, 2 vols. (London: James & James, 2002), 2: 507–12.

a standing Virgin and Child. The statue is held by the Dumbarton Oaks Museum (accession number BZ.1912.2): see Gary Vikan, *Catalogue of the Sculpture in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection from the Ptolemaic to the Renaissance* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1995), 123–26, no. 45.

Morgan Madonna. So called because it was a gift from J. Pierpont Morgan in 1916, and was renowned already before being given to the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The loveliness of the stained glass. Yves Delaporte, *Les trois Notre-Dame de la cathédrale de Chartres: Étude suivie de la liste des images de la Vierge appartenant à la cathédrale et de*

quelques mots sur le pèlerinage de Chartres, 2nd ed. (Chartres, France: Étienne Houvet, 1965); Chantal Bouchon et al., "La Belle-Verrière de Chartres," *Revue de l'art* 46 (1979): 16–24 (for detailed examination of the dating of the different restorations within the window).

one manuscript. Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS 3516, fol. 127r (dated 1268).

Lambeth Apocalypse. Its shelfmark is London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 209; this image is fol. iiv. The whole manuscript is available in facsimile in Nigel Morgan, ed., *The Lambeth Apocalypse, Manuscript 209 in Lambeth Palace Library* (London: Harvey Miller, 1990). The folio side has been reproduced in Michael Camille, *The Gothic Idol: Ideology and Image-Making in Medieval Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 228, fig. 120.

Multiple paintings purportedly by the Evangelist. The Hodegetria in Blachernae, in the northwestern section of Constantinople, is the earliest case in point, while the icon in Santa Maria del Popolo in Rome rates as the most important in the West.

contact with Islam. The locus classicus is Gustave E. von Grunebaum, "Byzantine Iconoclasm and the Influence of the Islamic Environment," *History of Religions* 2.1 (1962): 1–10.

between 754 and 787. In 754, the council of Blachernae, far from unanimously, paved the way for Emperor Constantine V to legislate against images. In the aftermath, icons were removed, hidden, painted over, and burned. Then in 787, Empress Irene, with the backing of the Second Council of Nicaea, countermanded the policies that had favored iconoclasm.

Charlemagne's Books. In Latin, *Libri Carolini*, also known as *Opus Caroli regis contra synodum* (The Work of King Charles against the Synod), most likely the product of Bishop Theodulf of Orléans, a Visigoth from what is now Spain in the service of Charlemagne.

a thinking exercise or brainteaser. Theodulf of Orléans, *Opus Caroli regis contra synodum (Libri Carolini)*, ed. Ann Freeman (Hannover, Germany: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1998), 528 (line 41)–529 (line 8); trans. Władysław Tatarkiewicz, *Medieval Aesthetics*, ed. Cyril Barrett, 3 vols. (The Hague: Mouton, 1970–1974), 2: 100 (with modifications): "Offeruntur cuilibet eorum, qui imagines adorant, verbi gratia duarum feminarum pulcrarum imagines superscriptione carentes, quas ille parvipendens abicit abiectasque duolibet in loco iacere permittit. Dicit illi quis: 'Una illarum sanctae Mariae imago est, abici non debet; altera Veneris, quae omnino abicienda est'; vertit se ad pictorem quaerens ab eo, quia in omnibus simillimae sunt, quae illarum sanctae Mariae imago sit vel quae Veneris? Ille huic dat superscriptionem sanctae Mariae, illi vero superscriptionem Veneris: ista, quia superscriptionem Dei genetricis habet, erigitur,

honoratur, osculatur; illa, quia inscriptionem Veneris, Aeneae cuiusdam profugi genetricis, habet, deicitur, exprobratur, exsecratur. Pari utraeque sunt figura, paribus coloribus, paribusque facte materiis, superscriptione tantum distant." ("To one of those who venerate pictures, the pictures of two beautiful women were shown without any captions, which a person had thrown away, caring little for them. Someone said to him: 'One of these is a picture of the Virgin Mary and should not be thrown away; the other is of Venus, and should at all costs be thrown away.' The man turned to the artist and asked him which one was the picture of Mary, and which one was of Venus, for they were alike in all regards. The painter supplied one picture with the caption *The Virgin Mary*, and the other with the caption *Venus*. The picture with the caption *Mother of God*, was elevated, venerated and kissed, and the other, because it had the caption *Venus*, was maligned, scorned and cursed, although both were equal in shape and color, and were made of identical material, and differed only in caption.")

the Mother of God might be mistaken. Ed. Freeman 540 (lines 15–36); trans. Ann Freeman, "Scripture and Images in the Libri Carolini," in idem, *Theodulf of Orléans: Charlemagne's Spokesman against the Second Council of Nicaea* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Variorum, 2003), 163–88, at 165: "Even if we suppose that an image of the Holy Mother of God ought to be adored, how are we to identify her image, or differentiate it from other images? When we see a beautiful woman depicted with a child in her arms, with no inscription provided, how are we to know whether it is Sarah holding Isaac, or Rebecca with Jacob, or Bathsheba with Solomon, or Elizabeth with John, or indeed any other woman with her child? Or if we consider the fables of gentiles, which are often depicted, how are we to know whether it is Venus with Aeneas, or Alcmene with Hercules, or Andromache with Astyanax? For if one is adored for another, that is delusion, and if one is adored that should never have been adored, that is madness."

This monk and writer of Saint Gall. Ekkehard IV, *St. Galler Klostergeschichten/Ekkehard IV*, chap. 45, trans. Hans F. Haefele, Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters, vol. 10 (Darmstadt, Germany: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1980), 102. For discussion, see Jean-Marie Sansterre, "Le moine ciseleur, la Vierge Marie et son image: Un récit d'Ekkehart IV de Saint-Gall," *Revue bénédictine* 106.1–2 (1996): 185–91.

a reverie by Abbot Robert of Mozat. The text of the *Visio monachi Rotberti* by Deacon Arnaldus is extant in Clermont-Ferrand, Bibliothèque du patrimoine (formerly Bibliothèque communautaire et interuniversitaire, itself formerly Bibliothèque municipale), MS 145, fols. 130–134. The drawing appears on fol. 130v. The manuscript was copied at the end of the tenth or the beginning of the eleventh century, in a manuscript of Gregory of Tours. The juxtaposition of the two texts may have been deliberate. For edition and commentary, see René Rigodon, "Vision de Robert, abbé de Mozat, au sujet de la Basilique de la Mère de Dieu édifiée dans la Ville des Avernes, relation

par la diacre Arnaud," *Bulletin historique et scientifique de l'Auvergne* 70 (1950): 22–55. For analysis, see Dominique Iogna-Prat, "La Vierge en Majesté du manuscript 145 de la Bibliothèque municipale de Clermont-Ferrand," *L'Europe et la Bible*, ed. Mireille Mentré and Bernard Dompnier (Clermont-Ferrand: Bibliothèque municipale et interuniversitaire de Clermont-Ferrand, 1992), 87–108. For Rigodon's edition, a French translation, and further analysis, see Monique Goullet and Dominique Iogna-Prat, "La Vierge en Majesté de Clermont-Ferrand," in *Marie: Le culte de la Vierge dans la société médiévale*, ed. Dominique Iogna-Prat et al. (Paris: Beauchesne, 1996), 383–405. For an English translation, see Sarah Jane Boss, ed., *Mary: The Complete Resource* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 173–76.

crafted in 946. The statue no longer exists, having been destroyed in the French Revolution, but for a long time it stood on a column behind the altar in the central apse.

cathedral of Clermont. Now Clermont-Ferrand, in southeastern central France.

dated to the mid-twelfth century. More precisely, it has been placed during the abbacy of Wazelin II, ca. 1149–1158.

as she suckles the infant Jesus. The pose is known in the Greek East as Virgin *Galaktotrophous*a (meaning literally "milk-nursing"), in the West as *Maria lactans*. Jacques Stiennon, "La Vierge de dom Rupert," in *Saint-Laurent de Liège: Église, abbaye et hôpital. Mille ans d'histoire*, ed. Rita Lejeune (Liège, Belgium: Soledi, 1968), 81–92.

Both figures are haloed. Surrounding the Virgin is a rounded Romanesque arch that bears a Latin inscription from Ezekiel 44:2: "This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall pass through it: because the Lord God of Israel hath entered in by it."

Animated Images

Ekkehard IV. Ekkehard IV, *Casus Sancti Galli* 45, in idem, *St. Galler Klostergeschichten*, 102. On the live quality of cult images, see Ellert Dahl, "Heavenly Images: The Statue of St. Foy of Conques and the Signification of the Medieval 'Cult-Image' in the West," *Acta ad archaeologiam et atrium historiam pertinentia* 8 (1978): 175–91, at 188–89.

the effigy is unique. The most exhaustive study of the image is now Beate Fricke, *Fallen Idols, Risen Saints: Sainte Foy of Conques and the Revival of Monumental Sculpture in Medieval Art*, trans. Andrew Griebeler, Studies in the Visual Cultures of the Middle Ages, vol. 7 (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2015).

Faith. *Sainte Foy* in French, *Sancta Fides* in Latin.

the place from which he has taken his name. In northwestern France.

Conques. In the southwest.

Book of Miracles of Saint Faith. In Latin, *Liber miraculorum sancte fidis*.

rendering supernatural the being represented. Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 299.

It was an image made with such precision. *Liber miraculorum sancte fidis*, 1.13.5, ed. Luca Robertini, Biblioteca di *Medioevo Latino*, vol. 10 (Spoleto, Italy: Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 1994), 112 "[statuam] ita ad humane figure vultum expresse effigiatam, ut plerique rusticis videntes se perspicaci intuitu videatur videre oculique reverberantibus precantium votis aliquando placidius favere"; *The Book of Sainte Foy*, trans. Pamela Sheingorn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 77. For a description of the statue and of Bernard's reactions to it, see Kathleen Ashley and Pamela Sheingorn, *Writing Faith: Text, Sign, and History in the Miracles of Sainte Foy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 5–6, 41. For the broadest context, see Jean Taralon and Dominique Taralon-Carlini, "La Majesté d'or de Sainte Foy de Conques," *Bulletin monumental* 155 (1997): 11–73.

a learned companion who was punished. The reactions of Bernard and his companion were reenacted centuries afterward by another author. In keeping with the earlier-mentioned *Charlemagne's Books*, this later writer took exception to having the Virgin Mary put on a par with an ancient statue of Vesta, goddess of the hearth. "Can Our Lady wish to be represented in a sculpted image as Vesta did?" The quotation is provided in translation by Camille, *Gothic Idol*, 221–22, 383n51, who ascribes it to Peter Abelard, *Commentaria in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos* (Commentary on Romans) 1:32, in his *Opera theologica*, ed. E. M. Buytaert, Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio mediaevalis, vols. 11–15, 190 (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1969–2004), 11: 75. Despite the seeming precision of the citation, the cited passage in Abelard does not mention the Virgin in conjunction with Vesta (or with Venus). The miscitation has been followed by other scholars, notably Diana Webb, "Image and Pilgrimage: The Virgin Mary in the Later Middle Ages," in *Mary for Time and Eternity: Papers on Mary and Ecumenism given at International Congresses of the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Chester (2002) and Bath (2004), a Conference at Woldingham (2003), and Other Meetings in 2005*, ed. William M. McLoughlin and Jill Pinnock (Leominster, UK: Gracewing, 2007), 349–66, at 349, 364n1, and Katherine Allen Smith, "Bodies of Unsurpassed Beauty: 'Living' Images of the Virgin in the High Middle Ages," *Viator* 37 (2006): 167–87, at 175n35.

inflicting multiple wounds upon them. Leopold Kretzenbacher, *Das verletzte Kultbild: Voraussetzungen, Zeitschichten und Aussagewandel eines abendländischen Legendentypus*, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte, Jahrgang 1977, vol. 1 (Munich, Germany: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1977), 72–80.

major financial and forensic transactions. Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 301.

Our Lady of Under the Earth. The French is found alternatively as *Notre-Dame-de-Sous-Terre* (with or without the hyphens).

Mont Saint Michel and Chartres. Adams, *Mont Saint Michel et Chartres* (henceforth *MSMC*), chap. 7, "Roses and Apses," in Henry Adams, *Novels, Mont Saint Michel, The Education*, ed. Ernest Samuels and Jayne N. Samuels (New York: Library of America, 1983), 441.

Nativity and Epiphany plays. See Forsyth, "Magi and Majesty," 215–22; idem, *Throne of Wisdom*, 49–60. One major text of this type was on the Adoration of the Magi, the *Officium stellae* or *The Office of the Star.*

they could serve as proxies. On their use in the Epiphany drama, Erwin Rosenthal, "The Crib of Greccio and Franciscan Realism," *The Art Bulletin* 36.1 (March 1954): 57–60, at 59.

in a grotto. See Tommaso da Celano, *Vita seconda*, 30.84, and Bonaventura da Bagnoregio, *Leggenda maggiore* 10.7, in *Fonti francescane*: *Editio minor* (Assisi, Italy: Editrici Francescane, 1988), 267–70, 605–6 respectively. The grotto was later transformed into a chapel dedicated to Saint Luke, which contains two frescos from the fourteenth century.

the first crèche. Amédée Gastoué, *Noël: Origines et développements de la fête* (Paris: Bloude, 1908), 10–22; Karl Young, *The Drama of the Medieval Church*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933), 2: 24–28; Rosenthal, "Crib of Greccio"; Roberta Fidanzia, "L'immagine del Presepe nelle fonti francescane," *Storia del mondo* 19 (January 5, 2004), http://www.storiadelmondo.com/19/fidanzia.presepe.pdf. In Italian the corresponding term is *presepio.*

a statue of the Virgin Mary in the round. Rosenthal, "Crib of Greccio," 59.

a fresco. Dated 1296–1300.

Giotto. To give his name in full, Giotto di Bondone, in the Upper Church of San Francesco in Assisi. 270 x 230 cm.

places an image of the infant Jesus within a humble cowshed. The Christmas Eve placement of Jesus in the crèche is documented widely in media.

shrine Madonnas. For a fine study, see Elina Gertsman, *Worlds Within: Opening the Medieval Shrine Madonna* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015). They are also known by the French *Vierges ouvrantes*, which translates literally (and a little peculiarly) as "opening Virgins."

Miracles of Madonnas

The most beautiful blooms. Karl Storck, "Kritische Rückschau über Konzert und Oper," *Der Klavier-Lehrer: Musik-pädagogische Zeitschrift für alle Gebiete der Tonkunst* 29.1 (1906): 6–9, at 7.

tales of miracles of the Virgin. Jean-Marie Sansterre, "La Vierge Marie et ses images chez Gautier de Coinci et Césaire de Heisterbach," *Viator* 41 (2010): 147–78. On Madonnas in Caesarius, see Egid Beitz, *Caesarius von Heisterbach und die bildende Kunst* (Augsburg, Germany: Benno Filser, 1926), 37–43.

already totaled almost 1800. The tally exceeds 1780 in Albert Poncelet, "Index miraculorum B.V. Mariae quae saec. VI–XV latine conscripta sunt," *Analecta Bollandiana* 21 (1902): 242–360.

two-dimensional paintings. In medieval French the paintings are designated *tavletes or tavletes paintes*, single-panel paintings or portable carved and painted sculptures.

three-dimensional statues. The statues are usually to be placed on altars. On both the paintings and statues, see Black, "Images of the Virgin Mary," 253–77, especially at 256–57, 276.

statues that come to life. Camille, *Gothic Idol*, 222.

Golden Madonna of Essen. For details on the image, see Frank Fehrenbach, *Die Goldene Madonna im Essener Münster: Der Körper der Königin*, ed. Michael Bockemühl et al., KunstOrt Ruhrgebiet, vol. 4 (Ostfildern, Germany: Edition Tertium, 1996).

earliest known. Dated conjecturally to ca. 980–990.

when Christ was said to be made man. Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum*, 7: 36, ed. Joseph Strange, 2 vols. (Cologne: J. M. Heberle, 1851), 2: 65; trans. H. Von Essen Scott and C. C. Swinton Bland, as *The Dialogue on Miracles*, 2 vols. (London: G. Routledge, 1929), 2: 530.

at Déols, near Châteauroux. Jean Hubert, "Le miracle de Déols et la trêve conclue en 1187 entre les rois de France et d'Angleterre," *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 96.1 (1935): 285–300; André Vauchez, "L'image vivante: Quelques réflexions sur les fonctions des représentations iconographiques dans le domaine religieux en Occident aux derniers siècles du Moyen Âge," in *Pauvres et riches: Société et culture du Moyen Âge aux temps modernes. Mélanges offerts à Bronislaw Geremek*, ed. Maurice Aymard et al. (Warsaw, Poland: Wydawnictno naukowe PWN, 1992), 231–40, at 236, repr. André Vauchez, "Les images saintes: Représentations iconographiques et manifestations du sacré," in idem, *Saints, prophètes et visionnaires: Le pouvoir surnaturel au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Albin

Michel, 1999), 79–91, 240–42, at 85–86; Sansterre, "Omnes qui coram hac imagine genua flexerint," 278–80.

described as having feelings. David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response*(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 303.

effusions reported. See Forsyth, *Throne of Wisdom*, 3n2; Freedberg, *Power of Images*, 283–316; Camille, *Gothic Idol*, 220–41.

spitting image. Laurence R. Horn, "Spitten Image: Etymythology and Fluid Dynamics," *American Speech* 79.1 (2004): 33–58.

blood-type analysis. Raffaele Palmirotta et al., "Origin and Gender Determination of Dried Blood on a Statue of the Virgin Mary," *Journal of Forensic Sciences* 43.2 (1998): 431–34.

such noteworthy events. Somewhat separate are images that do not become enlivened by turning into the Virgin they represent but that nonetheless move themselves. Often, statues that have been buried or hidden return to the place where they were discovered, as a sign that a sanctuary should be erected in the find-spot. See René Laurentin and Patrick Sbalchiero, "Spostamenti," in *Dizionario delle "apparizioni" della vergine Maria*, ed. René Laurentin and Patrick Sbalchiero (Rome: Edizioni ART, 2010), 726.

we saw a statue of the blessed Virgin. Theodore G. Tappert, ed. and trans., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1959), 234. This is cited by Bridget Heal, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 56, where at n. 135 other similar accounts from the first half of the sixteenth century are noted.

Two such installations. Theodore Ziolkowski, *Disenchanted Images: A Literary Iconology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), 22, reported on one that was exhibited in the Museum of the History of Religion and Atheism in Leningrad. No such item is found now in the State Museum of the History of Religion in Saint Petersburg. For a description of such a mechanism on display eighty years ago in an installation at the former Strassnoi Monastery in Moscow, see Adam Jolles, "Stalin's Talking Museums," *Oxford Art Journal* 28.3 (2005): 429–55, at 447.

miracle at the Blachernae chapel. Henri Barré, "Plaidoyer monastique pour le samedi marial," *Revue bénédictine* 77 (1967): 375–99, at 381; Venance Grumel, "Le 'miracle habituel' de Notre-Dame des Blachernes à Constantinople," *Échos d'Orient* 30.162 (1931): 129–46; Bissera V. Pentcheva, *Icon and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), 144–63, 236–42 ("The Blachernai Responds: The Icon of the 'Usual Miracle'").

the famous scene. The still of the skirt-blowing scene has become iconic, in a twentieth-century and later sense of the adjective, but not in a way that a medieval Byzantine would have comprehended.

a flurry of experiences in 1796 and 1797. Massimo Cattaneo, *Gli occhi di Maria sulla rivoluzione: "Miracoli" a Roma e nello Stato della Chiesa (1796–1797)* (Rome: Istituto nazionale di studi romani, 1995).

a Madonna in Boston's North End. *The Blinking Madonna and Other Miracles*, prod. Beth Harrington, Independent Television Service, April 1, 1997. The effigy in question was the Madonna del Soccorso (Our Lady of Help).

a snoozing pilgrim. *Miracles of Simon de Montfort*, in *The Chronicle of William de Rishanger, of the Barons' War, the Miracles of Simon de Montfort*, ed. James Orchard Halliwell, Camden Society Publications, vol. 15 (London: J. B. Nichols and Son, 1840), 107–8. The interpretation of the scene is found in Ronald C. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims: Popular Beliefs in Medieval England* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1977), 34.

Walcourt. In the province of Namur in Belgium.

sheathed in silver. The sculpture was supposedly carved by Saint Maternus.

a nobleman. The aristocrat in question was purportedly Count Thierry II of Walcourt.

as he stood outside. Thierry Réjalot, *Notre-Dame de Walcourt: Manuel du pèlerin & du visiteur au Sanctuaire de Notre-Dame de Walcourt* (Walcourt, Belgium: R. Bughin-Baisir, 1938), 6–67, 22; *Le culte de Notre-Dame de Walcourt* (Namur, Belgium: Georges Dereine, 2000).

Black Virgin. Ean C. M. Begg, *The Cult of the Black Virgin*, rev. and expanded ed. (London: Arkana, 1996), 162; *Le culte de Notre-Dame de Walcourt*, 34–36 (the image), 37–43 (the annual procession); Paul Lievens, *Walcourt en cartes postales anciennes: Texte et collection* (Cerfontaine, Belgium: Musée & Cercle d'histoire de Cerfontaine, 1997), 17–18 (the image), 19 (the image in procession).

responded by blessing him. Frederic C. Tubach, *Index exemplorum: A Handbook of Medieval Religious Tales* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1969), 390 (no. 5155).

The Lord is with you. In Latin, *Dominus tecum*. Tubach, *Index exemplorum*, 39 (no. 433).

A third related. Tubach, *Index exemplorum*, 39 (no. 439).

Afflighem. In the Belgian province of Flemish Brabant.

Greetings, Bernard. In Latin, *Salve, Bernarde*. For some information, see Carl Neumann, *Bernhard von Clairvaux und die Anfänge des zweiten Kreuzzuges* (Heidelberg, Germany: Carl Winter, 1992), 37–38.

the Lactation of the Virgin. From the vast bibliography on the topic, note Jacques Berlioz, "La lactation de Saint-Bernard dans un 'exemplum' et une miniature du *Ci nous dit* (début du XIVe siècle)," *Cîteaux: Commentarii cistercienses* 39.3–4 (1988): 270–84; Léon Dewez and Albert van Iterson, "La lactation de St. Bernard: Légende et iconographie," *Cîteaux in de Nederlanden* 7 (1956): 165–89; Cécile Dupeux, "La lactation de Saint Bernard de Clairvaux: Genèse et évolution d'une image," in *L'Image et la production du sacré: Actes du colloque de Strasbourg, 20–21 janvier 1988, organisé par le Centre d'historique des religions de l'Université de Strasbourg II, Groupe "Théorie et pratique de l'image cultuelle,"* ed. Françoise Dunand et al. (Paris: Méridiens Klincksieck, 1991), 165–93. For more information, see James France, *Medieval Images of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux*, Cistercian Studies Series, vol. 210 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2007), xxi–xxii.

The likeness in the miracle of the Lactation. Although the original was destroyed by fire in the eighteenth century, the replacement survives.

Hail, Star of the Sea. In Latin, *Ave, maris stella*.

show yourself as a mother. In Latin, *Monstra te esse matrem*.

suckling brother of Christ. Or "foster-brother of Christ," *collactaneus Christi* in Latin.

a heretic named Tanchelm. For general background on this character, see Herbert Grundmann, *Ketzergeschichte des Mittelalter*, 2nd ed. (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1967), 15–18; Malcolm Lambert, *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1992), 50–52. The episode discussed here was retold by Forsyth, *Throne of Wisdom*, 45. See also Smith, "Bodies of Unsurpassed Beauty." For the Latin text, see Paul Fredericq, ed., *Corpus documentorum inquisitionis haereticae pravitatis Neerlandicae*, 5 vols. (Ghent, Belgium: J. Vuylsteke, 1889–1906), 1:15–18; trans. Walter L. Wakefield and Austin P. Evans, *Heresies of the High Middle Ages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 99–100.

a motif that is common in Marian miracles. Forsyth, *Throne of Wisdom*, 46–47; Claudio Galderisi, "Le récit du mariage avec la statue: Résurgences et modalités narratives," *Romania: Revue trimestrielle consacrée à l'étude des langues et des littératures romanes* 119.1 (2001): 170–95. For the overview that is most comprehensive chronologically, geographically, and thematically, see the chapter entitled "Image as Theme: Venus and the Ring" in Ziolkowski, *Disenchanted Images*, 18–77.

William of Malmesbury. William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum (The History of the English Kings)*, 2.205, ed. and trans. R. A. B. Mynors, R. M. Thomson, and M. Winterbottom, Oxford Medieval Texts, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998–1999), 381–85.

The Ring Given to Venus. See William Morris, *The Earthly Paradise*, ed. Florence S. Boos, 2 vols. (New York: Routledge, 2002), 2: 569–608.

Metamorphoses. 10.243–97.

Romance of the Rose. In French, *Roman de la Rose.*

many troubling overtones. On the Pygmalion story in the *Romance of the Rose*, see Douglas Galbi's purplemotes.net, https://www.purplemotes.net/2015/05/31/romance-rose-sexual-fulfillment/

One miracle. Gabriela Signori, *Maria zwischen Kathedrale, Kloster und Welt: Hagiographische und historiographische Annäherungen an eine hochmittelalterliche Wunderpredigt* (Sigmaringen, Germany: Jan Thorbecke, 1995), 90–91; Smith, "Bodies of Unsurpassed Beauty," 175–76; Jean-Marie Sansterre, "Sacralité et pouvoir thaumaturgique des statues mariales (Xe siècle–première moitié du XIIIe siècle)," *Revue Mabillon* 22 (2011): 53–77, at 60–61.

A historian of ballet. Carol Lee, *Ballet in Western Culture: A History of Its Origins and Evolution* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1999), 15.

One American illustrator. L. A. Patterson.

she could have put her babysitter-less moppet down. In tale 59 of the Old French *Life of the Fathers*, the Virgin sets the Child at her feet. Unfortunately, this tale is not among those thus far edited in Félix Lecoy, ed., *La Vie des Pères* (Paris: Société des anciens textes français, A. et J. Picard, 1987–1999).

resumed her place in the artwork. For brief orientation, see Frederika H. Jacobs, *Votive Panels and Popular Piety in Early Modern Italy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 96–97. For full details, Anna Benvenuti, ed., *Santa Maria delle Carceri a Prato: Miracoli e devozione in un santuario toscano del Rinascimento* (Florence: Mandragora, 2005); Robert Maniura, "The Images and Miracles of Santa Maria delle Carceri," in *The Miraculous Image: In the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. Erik Thunø and Gerhard Wolf, Analecta Romana Instituti Danici. Supplementum, vol. 35 (Rome: Bibliotheca Hertziana, 2004), 81–95. The boy was named, to accord him full onomastic splendor, Jacopino d'Antonio di Ser Nichola di Ser Tingo Lapovera.

enlisted an architect. The designer was Giuliano da Sangallo; the church, Santa Maria delle Carceri. The development of the cult was well documented from 1484 to 1505.

See Isabella Gagliardi, "I miracoli della Madonna delle Carceri in due codici della Biblioteca Roncioniana di Prato," in Benvenuti, *Santa Maria delle Carceri a Prato*, 97–153.

ignoring the child to focus on Mary. Ruth Sawyer, *The Way of the Storyteller* (New York: Viking, 1942), 231–41, at 241: "It is no longer a figure there who smiles—it is the living Mother of Jesus. She leans far down and gathers that small king of the jugglers into Her arms and cradles him. He who has never known cradling knows a mother's arms at last, the close, everlasting blessing they give." In the first sentence, Sawyer addresses the mystery of the relationship between the Madonna and the Virgin, while in the second she manages at once to accentuate Mary's maternal quality and to leave us guessing about what she does with her own infant.

the Protestant John Ruskin and the Catholic Marcel Proust. Cynthia J. Gamble, "Proust-Ruskin Perspectives on La Vierge Doreé at Amiens Cathedral," *Word & Image* 9 (1993): 270–86, at 273–74. Gamble points out later, p. 286, that Proust never saw the carving in person, but had viewed a plaster cast. In addition, he owned a photograph of it that hung in his bedroom: see Mary Bergstein, "Proust and Photography: The Invention of Balbec through Visual Resources," *Visual Resources: An International Journal of Documentation* 29.4 (2013): 307–32, at 326.

primarily as a maiden. Smith, "Bodies of Unsurpassed Beauty," 179–80.

Notes to Chapter 4

the medieval is linked to decay. Alice Chandler, "Order and Disorder in the Medieval Revival," *Browning Institute Studies* 8 (1980): 1–9, at 7.

Grottoes and Crypts

going "downhill." George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 14–21.

sundry derivations. Alfred Ernout and Antoine Meillet, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine: Histoire des mots*, 4th ed. (Paris: Klincksieck, 1979), 661; Alois Walde and Johann Baptist Hofmann, *Lateinisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, 6th ed. (Heidelberg, Germany: Carl Winter, 2007), 2: 618–19, s.v. *sublīmis*.

katabasis. Also spelled *catabasis*.

Aeneas reaches the underworld. On *Aeneid* 6, see Raymond J. Clark, *Catabasis: Vergil and the Wisdom-Tradition* (Amsterdam: B. R. Grüner, 1979).

the underlying Latin adjective. The relevant Latin words are *sub*, "under," and *tēla*, "web": see Mary Carruthers, *The Experience of Beauty in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 188–89.

Such a fine line is textural. On the underlying metaphor, see Jan M. Ziolkowski, "Text and Textuality, Medieval and Modern," in *Der unfeste Text: Perspektiven auf einen literatur- und kulturwissenschaftlichen Leitbegriff*, ed. Barbara Sabel and André Bucher (Würzburg, Germany: Königshausen & Neumann, 2001), 109–31.

a descendant of the noun. Lines 113, 266, 402, 667. The French word is *crote* or *croute*.

Latin crypta. Also commonly written *crupta*.

derives from Latin. The same holds true for a large number of cognate nouns in other Germanic languages.

the crypt of a church. *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.vv. *undercroft* and *croft sb.* As such, it is like related words in Middle Dutch and Dutch, Middle Low German, and Old High German.

from the more recent constructions above. Think of the multitiered San Clemente in Rome. The high-medieval basilica resides atop a fourth-century one, converted from a nobleman's home, which has beneath it a Mithraeum above a former villa and warehouse.

a downbeat outcome. Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 16.

the location of the jongleur's routine. Sansterre, "La Vierge Marie et ses images," 152–53n33.

The spire justifies the church. Henry Adams, *MSMC*, chap. 16, "Saint Thomas Aquinas," 691.

in his novel La Cathédrale (The Cathedral). J.-K. Huysmans, *La cathédrale* (Paris: P.-V. Stock, 1898), 68, cited by Joëlle Prungnaud, *Gothique et décadence: Recherches sur la continuité d'un mythe et d'un genre au XIX*e *siècle en Grande-Bretagne et en Franc*e, Bibliothèque de littérature générale et comparée, vol. 7 (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1997), 278.

victims of Nazi concentration camps. To be more specific, it commemorates the 200,000 people who were deported for such internment from Vichy France. Inaugurated in 1962, this construction is architecturally discrete and sited behind the church proper, at the tip of the Île de la Cité, the natural island in the Seine on which the cathedral is located.

His romance. In German, the text is known as *Jüngerer Titurel*; in English, as either *Later Titurel* or *Younger Titurel*. Completed before 1272, the poem expanded, to over 6300 lines, fragments of the *Titurel* written by Wolfram von Eschenbach.

but instead in radiant space. The description of the Grail temple comes from Albrecht von Scharfenberg, *Jüngerer Titurel*, stanzas 329–439 (alternate numbering, 311–415), ed. Werner Wolf, 6 vols., Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters, vols. 45, 55, 61, 73, 77, 79 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1955–1995), 1: 83–110. The stanza against crypts is 408 (alternate numbering 386), at 1: 103; Paul Frankl, *The Gothic: Literary Sources and Interpretations through Eight Centuries* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960), 10, 184.

Hugo's Notre Dame de Paris. Translated into English often as *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*.

harems of women. Simmons, *Popular Medievalism*, 141–65.

subterraneous dungeons. Review of Matthew Gregory Lewis, *The Monk, A Romance* (1796), in *Coleridge's Miscellaneous Criticism*, ed. Thomas Raysor (London: Constable, 1936), 370–78, at 370.

associations with trapdoors. Gary Richard Thompson, "Introduction," in *The Gothic Imagination: Essays in Dark Romanticism*, ed. idem (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1974), 1.

cryptic subterranean spaces. David Matthews, *Medievalism: A Critical History* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2015), 51.

above (or below) all, crypt. Prungnaud, *Gothique et décadence*, 56–58.

Milk Grotto. On this site, see Denys Pringle, *The Churches of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem: A Corpus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 1: 137–57. On past pilgrimage to it, see Edmund Waterton, *Pietas Mariana Britannica: A History of English Devotion to the Most Blessed Virgin Mary Mother of God. With a Catalogue of Shrines, Sanctuaries, Offerings, Bequests, and Other Memorials of the Piety of Our Forefathers* (London: St. Joseph's Catholic Library, 1879), 2: 202–5. On present-day frequentation of it, see Susan Starr Sered, "Rachel's Tomb and the Milk Grotto of the Virgin Mary: Two Women's Shrines in Bethlehem," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, 2.2 (1986): 7–22.

The Crypt, or, Receptacle for Things Past. Vols. 1–3 (Ringwood, UK: W. Wheaton), August 3, 1827–December 1, 1828).

locked space within the subject's ego. Christine Berthin, *Gothic Hauntings: Melancholy Crypts and Textual Ghosts* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), who relies on Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok.

full-blown monasteries. For example, the literature on the rock-cut cave monasteries and hermitages of Cappadocia is vast. For a classic study, see Spiro Kostof, *Caves of God: Cappadocia and Its Churches*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

The built areas officially at his disposal. On the spaces accessible to lay brothers, see Megan Cassidy-Welch, *Monastic Spaces and Their Meanings: Thirteenth-Century English Cistercian Monasteries*. Medieval Church Studies (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2001, 1: 171–80; Terryl N. Kinder, *Cistercian Europe: Architecture of Contemplation*, Cistercian Studies Series, vol. 191 (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 2002), 305–32.

Madonnas in Crypts

Trinity Church. Begun in 1839 and dedicated in 1846 by the architect Richard Upjohn.

Raphael's Madonna before a tolerable sign painting. *The Horticulturist and Journal of Rural Art and Rural Taste*, reprinted in A. J. Downing, Rural Essays, ed. George William Curtis (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1853).

were famously negative. Conrad Rudolph, *The "Things of Greater Importance": Bernard of Clairvaux's Apologia and the Medieval Attitude toward Art* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990); Bernd Nicolai, "Die Entdeckung des Bildwerks: Frühe Marienbilder und Altarretabel unter dem Aspekt zisterziensischer Frömmigkeit," *Studien zur Geschichte der europäischen Skulptur im 12.–13. Jahrhundert* (1994): 29–43.

illuminated book of hours. The manuscript dates from just after the middle of the fifteenth century.

Peter Abelard referred to jongleurs. *Theologia Christiana*, 2.129, in Peter Abelard, *Opera theologica*, ed. Buytaert, 12: 193, lines 1982–84: "Totus flagrat et anhelat animus foras ad curiam daemonum et conuentus histrionum, ubi sunt in oblationibus prodigi et cum summo silentio et toto desiderio attenti illi, ut dictum est, diabolicae praedicationi."

ceaseless cosmic dance. James Miller, *Measures of Wisdom: The Cosmic Dance in Classical and Christian Antiquity*, Visio, Studies in the Relations of Art and Literature, vol. 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986).

quintessential emptiness. Peter Brooks, *The Empty Space* (New York: Atheneum, 1968).

formations analogous to manmade structures. Dominick Daniel Daly, "Caves at Sungei Batu in Selangor," *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 3 (July 1879): 116–19, at 117: "The roof and sides of the caves, which were 50 to 70 feet high and some 60 feet wide, were beautifully arched, presenting the appearance of a great Gothic dome, with curved arches and giant buttresses. Verily there was a stillness and sublimity in this work of nature that even surpassed the awe of the holy place raised by human art."

it earned this designation. Robert Davidson, *An Excursion to the Mammoth Cave, and the Barrens of Kentucky: With Some Notices of the Early Settlement of the State* (Lexington, KY: A. T. Skillman and Son, 1840), wrote of "Gothic screenwork" (p. 14) and "a beautiful and regularly-shaped dome, running up to a point, and ribbed, like old Gothic masonry" (p. 57; see also 69). Later, the name Gothic Cave is mentioned in Gleason's *Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion* (1851), 356, and the alternate Gothic Gallery is attested a quarter century later in *The Illustrated London News* (1876).

Lehman Cave. This geological feature is located within what is presently the Great Basin National Park.

gorgeously banded alabaster columns. The quotation is from Horace Bath and Gus Newman, "Nature's Treasure House Lies Buried in White Pine County," *The Twenty-Thirtian Magazine* 7.6 (March 1933): 18–19, 32–33, at 33.

Cistercian Crypts

one of their statutes. Statute 20, in Bernard of Clairvaux, *Statuta capitulorum generalium ordinis Cisterciensis ab anno 1116 ad annum 1786*, ed. Joseph-Marie Canivez, 8 vols., Bibliothèque de la Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique, vol. 9 (Leuven, Belgium: Bureaux de la Revue, 1933–1941), 1: 12–32, at 17; trans. in Rudolph, *"Things of Greater Importance,"* 185–86: "Concerning Sculptures, Paintings, and the Wooden Cross: We forbid sculptures or paintings in either our churches or in any of the rooms of the monastery, because when attention is turned to such things the advantage of good meditation or the discipline of religious gravity is often neglected. However, we do have painted

crosses that are of wood." On the dating, see Conrad Rudolph, "The 'Principal Founders' and the Early Artistic Legislation of Cîteaux," in *Studies in Cistercian Art and Architecture*, ed. Meredith P. Lillich, vol. 3, 6 vols., Cistercian Studies Series, vol. 89 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1987), 1–45.

in a cloister near Groningen. Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum* 7.46, 2: 65–66. On Caesarius and images, see Beitz, *Caesarius von Heisterbach*, 38–43; Nicolai, "Die Entdeckung des Bildwerks."

boxed a nun on the ear. Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum* 7.33, 2: 41–42.

Virgin of Mercy. Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum* 7.59, 12.37, 2: 79–80, 346–347. The Virgin of Mercy is often designated by scholars with the German *Schutzmantelmadonna*.

Marvelous Valley. In Latin, *Mira Vallis*.

Chapel-by-the-Gate. On its seal, see *The Victoria History of the County of Warwick*, vol. 2, ed. William Page (London: Archibald Constable, 1908), 75–78 (no. 9 Abbey of Merevale), at 78: "The thirteenth-century seal is pointed oval; the Virgin, with crown, seated on a throne, under a trefoiled canopy, pinnacled and crocketed, supported on slender shafts; the Child on the left knee. In base, an ornamental corbel. In the field, on the left, a dexter hand and arm issuing, grasping a pastoral staff; on the right a crescent between two stars. Legend:—. . ABBATIS ET CONVE . . . IREVALL . . ."

a mob was nearly trampled to death. Roy Midmer, English Mediaeval Monasteries (1066–1540): A Summary (London: Heinemann, 1979), 218.

to help raise funds after buildings were destroyed. Janet Burton and Julie Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2011), 135.

pre-Cistercian constructions. Kinder, *Cistercian Europe*, 165.

years of shoveling at Clairvaux. Terry N. Kinder, "Les églises médiévales de Clairvaux: Probabilités et fiction," in *Histoire de l'abbaye de Clairvaux: Actes du colloque de Bar-sur-Aube I Clairvaux, 22 et 23 juin 1990*, ed. Benoît Chauvin (Bar-sur-Aube, France: Association Renaissance de l'abbaye de Clairvaux, 1991), 204–29. See Bretel, *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*, 116–17.

it too has no basement. Jean-Michel Musso and Michel Miguet, "Le bâtiment des convers de l'abbaye de Clairvaux: Histoire, archéologie, restauration," *Les cahiers de la Ligue urbaine et rurale* 109 (1990): 24–32, especially at 30–31.

chevet. This term, from the French for "headpiece," designates the choir and apse, with the chapels that radiate from them.

Philip of Alsace, Count of Flanders. *De oorkonden der graven van Vlaanderen (1191–aanvang 1206)*, ed. Walter Prevenier, 3 vols., Recueil des actes des princes belges/Académie royale de Belgique, Commission royale d'histoire = Verzameling van de akten der belgische vorsten/Koninklijke Akademie van België, Koninklijke Commissie voor Geschiedenis, vols. 5–6 (Brussels: Paleis der Academiën, 1964–1971), 2: 509–12, no. 243. On the chapel, see Anselme Dimier, "La chapelle des comtes de Flandre à Clairvaux," *Annales du Comité Flamand de France* 45 (1954): 151–56; Thomas Coomans, "Cistercian Nuns and Princely Memorials: Dynastic Burial Churches in the Cistercian Abbeys of the Medieval Low Countries," in *Sépulture, mort, et représentation du pouvoir au Moyen Âge: Actes des 11es Journées Lotharingiennes, 26-29 septembre 2000, Centre Universitaire de Luxembourg*, ed. Michel Margue, Publications de la Section historique de l'Institut Grand-Ducal de Luxembourg, vol. 118/Publications du CLUDEM, vol. 18 (Luxembourg: Section Historique de l'Institut Grand-Ducal de Luxembourg, 2006), 683–734, at 691.

Philip and his next of kin. His wife, Mathilda of Portugal, was also buried there. See Nicholas L. Paul, *To Follow in Their Footsteps: The Crusades and Family Memory in the High Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), 118.

before departing on Crusade. Philip's nephew Baldwin went there before leaving for the East in 1202, his grandson Guy of Dampierre in 1270. See Paul, *To Follow in Their Footsteps*, 148–49.

the best of their booty. Paul, *To Follow in Their Footsteps*, 115, 118.

accounts of visits paid there. The earlier visit was by Joseph Meglinger, a monk of Wittenberg, in 1667, as recorded in his *Iter Cisterciense*. The later one was by Edmond Martène and Ursin Durand, *Voyage littéraire de deux religieux bénédictins de la congrégation de Saint-Maur* (Paris, 1709), in Alexandre Assier, *L'abbaye de Clairvaux en 1547 et en 1709: Pièces curieuses publiées avec des notes*, Bibliothèque de l'Amateur Champenois, vol. 3 (Paris: Dumoulin, 1866), 37–38, repr. 2 vols. (Paris: Florentin Delaulne, 1717–1724), 1: 100.

two elegiac couplets in Latin. "Hic jacet in cavea Bernardi prima propago, / Cujus mens superas possidet alta domos. / Hic locus est sanctus, venerans insignia tanta / Supplex intrato, cerne, nec ossa rape." ("In this hollow here lies the first generation of Bernard, the lofty mind of which occupies homes on high. This place is hallowed; as a suppliant enter, with reverence for such eminent bones—and take them not.")

If you take bones upon entering here. "Quæ vallem hanc coluit Bernardi prima propago, / Hic jacet. Huc intrans, si rapis ossa, peris." For the epitaph and tomb that John of Joinville placed at Clairvaux for his great-grandfather Geoffrey, see Paul, *To Follow in Their Footsteps*, 148.

dedicating crypts to the Mother of God. See the entry "Lady Chapel," in *The Grove Encyclopedia of Medieval Art and Architecture*, ed. Colum Hourihane, 6 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press), 4: 7–8. The abbey of Saint Denis has in its crypt a chapel of the Virgin, called the Chapel of Dagobert (see Fig. n.9). The Sainte Chapelle has a statue of the Madonna and Child at the entrance to the crypt (see Fig. n.10). The chapel of Notre-Dame de Pitié, in the hamlet of Provins near Annecy, has in the crypt of the Sacred Heart such an image, which has been held to be miraculous for more than two centuries (see Fig. n.11). In Cruas the basilica, consecrated in 1095, contains a remarkable crypt. A postcard of it, with a stamp canceled in 1902, shows a ninth-century Virgin (see Fig. n.12).

authors of the late Gothic period. Rolf Wallrath, "Zur Bedeutung der mittelalterlichen Krypta (Chorumgang und Marienkapelle)," in *Beiträge zur Kunst des Mittelalters: Vorträge der ersten deutschen Kunsthistorikertagung auf Schloss Brühl, 1948* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1950), 54–69, at 65.

an altar to honor Mary. Jan van der Meulen et al., *Chartres: Sources and Literary Interpretation: A Critical Bibliography* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1989), 685–91 (nos. 2489–2506).

a cave or grotto. Forsyth, *Throne of Wisdom*, 106–7. A cautious view of the possibilities is taken by Margot Elsbeth Fassler, *The Virgin of Chartres: Making History through Liturgy and the Arts* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 210–11. The basic facts were already laid out in [F. J.] Doublet de Boisthibault, "Notice historique sur la crypte de Notre-Dame de Chartres," *Revue archéologique* 12.1 (April–September 1855): 89–105, at 97–98.

the Chartrian chapel. Along with a healing well known as the *Puits des Saints-Forts.*

worship of the Madonna. Laura Spitzer, "The Cult of the Virgin and Gothic Sculpture: Evaluating Opposition in the Chartres West Façade Capital Frieze," *Gesta* (1994): 132–50.

pilgrim's souvenirs. Brian Spencer, *Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular Badges*, Medieval Finds from Excavations in London, vol. 7 (London: Stationery Office, 1998), 129–30, nos. 136–38 (images), 131–33 (text).

the Benedictine monk Hugh of Poitiers. Hugh of Poitiers, *Historia Vizeliacensis monasterii* (History of the Monastery of Vézelay), in *Monumenta Vizeliacensia: Textes relatifs à l'histoire de l'abbaye de Vézelay*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens, Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio mediaevalis, 42 (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1976).

but was only blackened. The passage was quoted, largely translated, and discussed by Forsyth, "Magi and Majesty, 216–17; idem, *Throne of Wisdom*, 33–34. I follow her translation. For the Latin, see Hugh of Poitiers, *Historia Vizeliacensis monasterii*, lines

2140–48; for an alternative translation, see John Scott and John O. Ward, trans., *The Vézelay Chronicle and Other Documents from MS. Auxerre 227 and Elsewhere* (Binghamton, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1992), 284. On the Black Madonna, see Begg, *Cult of the Black Virgin*, 234. The site of this ruinous conflagration was the church at the abbey of Vézelay. Both the abbey as a whole and the basilica as a separate entity were dedicated to another Mary, namely, Saint Mary Magdalene.

An anonymous Latin miracle collection. Jean le Marchant, *Miracles de Notre-Dame de Chartres*, no. 3, ed. Pierre Kunstmann, [Mémoires] Société archéologique d'Eure-et-Loir, vol. 26 (Ottawa, Canada: Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1973), 1991 repr. in Publications médiévales de l'Université d'Ottawa, vol. 1, 66–78 (with both Old French and Latin texts: the miracle is no. 1 in the Latin text). On Marian miracles in the Latin *Miracula Beatae Mariae Virginis in Carnotensi ecclesia facta* (1210–1225), see Signori, *Maria zwischen Kathedrale, Kloster und Welt*, 174–201.

We are told elsewhere. Marcel Joseph Bulteau, *Monographie de la cathédrale de Chartres*, 3 vols., 2nd ed. (Chartres, France: R. Selleret, 1887–1892), 1: 100; William the Breton, *Philippidos* 4.598–618, in *Œuvres de Rigord et de Guillaume le Breton, historiens de Philippe-Auguste*, ed. Henri François Delaborde, 2 vols., Société de l'histoire de France, vols. 210, 224 (Paris: Renouard/H. Loones, 1882–1885), 2: 122–23.

stored conditionally in the crypt. See Heal, *Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 118, for an instance in which images were kept safe from Protestant image-breakers by being hidden in the crypt.

permanently or routinely. Bretel, *Le jongleur de Notre-Dame*, lines 388 and 428, pp. 66–67.

He declined a grand burial-place. "Dates of the Decease of the Archbishops of Canterbury, from the Martyrology and Obituary of Christ Church, Canterbury," in *The Church Historians of England*, trans. Joseph Stevenson, 5 vols. in 8 (London: Seeleys, 1856), 4.1: 297–312, at 311: "And although he had been very often urged by several persons to build for himself a sepulcher of suitable dimensions, sumptuousness, and magnificence, he chose a burial-place, not in open view, not in a place frequented, but in a private spot, underground, within the crypt, covered only with a marble slab, before our image of the most blessed Virgin Mary, whom he loved in his heart: there his happy corpse now reposes."

what the crypt would have meant symbolically. Wallrath, "Zur Bedeutung der mittelalterlichen Krypta," 54–69.

The same qualities are sometimes detected. Jeff Gundy, "Cathedrals, Churches, Caves: Notes on Architecture, History, and Worship," *The Georgia Review* 54 (2000): 673–99, at 692.

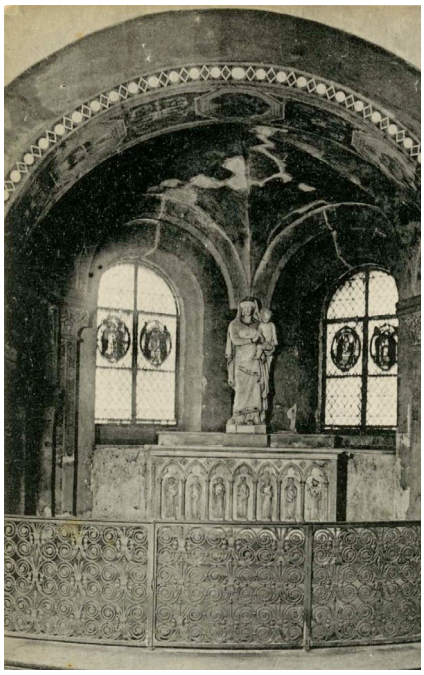

Fig. n.9 Postcard of the shrine to the Virgin in the crypt of the Abbey Church of Saint-Denis, Paris (early twentieth century).

Fig. n.10 Postcard of a statue of the Virgin and Child at the entrance to the crypt of the Sainte-Chapelle, Paris (early twentieth century).

Fig. n.11 Postcard of the crypt of the Chapelle Notre-Dame-de-Pitié (Provins), Annecy-le-Vieux, France (Éditions Jos., early twentieth century).

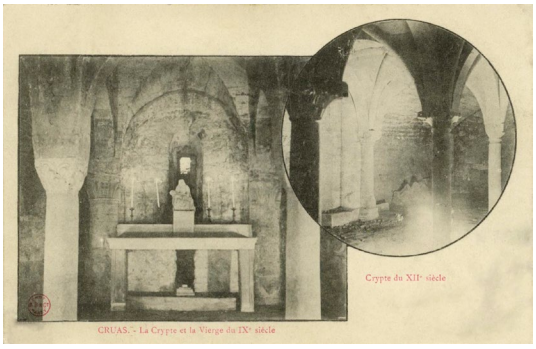

Fig. n.12 Postcard of the crypt of the Abbatiale Sainte-Marie, Cruas, France (Nancy: A. B. & Cie, ca. 1902).

pre-Christian, especially druidic, worship. On the connection of Chartres with the druids, see Fassler, *Virgin of Chartres*, 3–4, 345, 353–56, 358–60, 365–66, 554–55, 567, 589.

To the Virgin about to Give Birth. In Latin, *Virgini pariturae*.

The Altar of the Druids. In French, *L'autel des druides*. To the side is a well, with a banderole indicating *"Le puitz des sainctz fortz"* (The Well of Powerful Saints).

demonstrably a Black Virgin. Begg, Cult of the Black Virgin, 179–80.

an ancient well located there. Spitzer, "Cult of the Virgin." For the archaeological evidence, Spitzer refers to Roger Joly, "Permanence des structures antiques dans la cathédrale de Chartres," *Mémoires de la Société archéologique d'Eure-et-Loir* 6 (1985): 1–18.

their desire to produce a male heir. Pierre de L'Estoile, *Registre-journal du règne de Henri III*, ed. Madeleine Lazard and Gilbert Schrenck, 6 vols., Textes littéraires français, vol. 522 (Geneva: Droz, 1992–), 4: 12 (January 26, 1582).

being displayed. Forsyth, *Throne of Wisdom*, 39.

The artistic evidence is ambiguous. Camille, *Gothic Idol*, 233.

between Mass and Vespers. In one text from Trier, the office is performed after Vespers.

located in the crypt. Young, *Drama of the Medieval Church*, 1: 143.

Gothic Crypts

this love of dramatized decay. Kenneth Clark, *The Gothic Revival: An Essay in the History of Taste*, 3rd ed. (London: Constable & Co., 1962), 31.

Grottoes entered the picture. Geoffrey Grigson, "The Origin of Grottoes," *Country Life* (September 1, 1950): 688–93.

touches of sportiveness. Robert A. Aubin, "Grottoes, Geology, and the Gothic Revival," *Studies in Philology* 31 (1934): 408–16, at 412.

Oakley, described in 1733. Aubin, "Grottoes," 413.

ruins of nature. Aubin, "Grottoes," 414.

for the prayers of remorseful nuns. Aubin, "Grottoes," 413.

connected with fantasy. Arthur Symons, "Cathedrals," in idem, *Studies in Seven Arts* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1906), 156–57: "The crypt is the work of gnomes, or of giants of the under-earth. . . . [I]n the crypt there is only force, and the solemn playfulness of force in its childhood."

A Reminiscence of Rome. *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 15 (June–November 1857): 740–45.

posed in vignettes. Neither *tableau vivant* ("living picture," for a costumed group posed stock-still to represent a historical or artistic scene) nor *nature morte* ("dead nature," for a still-life painting) would be the apt descriptor.

The Monk of Horror. Peter Haining, ed., *Great British Tales of Terror: Gothic Stories of Horror and Romance, 1765–1840* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1972), 133–37, at 133; J. A. Cuddon, *The Penguin Book of Horror Stories* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1984), 59–61. The story is cited by Prungnaud, *Gothique et décadence*, 412.

Kreuzberg. In the German province of Lower Franconia.

Book of Obedience. In Latin, *Liber obedientiae*.

"subterraneous chambers" and "passages." William H. Pierson Jr., *American Buildings and Their Architects*, vol. 2.1: *Technology and the Picturesque: The Corporate and the Early Gothic Styles* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970–1978), 272–73.

Happy families are all alike. Chapter 1, first line.

Tales from the Crypt. The subgenre led to comic books from the 1950s, a feature-length film from 1972, and a television series from 1986 to 1996. Digby Diehl, *Tales from the Crypt: The Official Archives* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996).

judged an undercroft from a millennium ago to embody. Chris Baldick, *The Oxford Book of Gothic Tales* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), xix: "For the Gothic effect to be attained, a tale should combine a fearful sense of enclosure in space, these two dimensions reinforcing one another to produce an impression of sickening descent into disintegration."

Crypt of Shadows. Volume 1.1, illustrating a story entitled "Midnight on Black Mountain."

the succubus-like leading lady. The witch-woman bears more than a passing resemblance to the red-dressed Gina Lollabrigida in the role of Esmeralda in the film version of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*.

stairways to heaven. Toby Huitson, *Stairway to Heaven: The Functions of Medieval Upper Spaces* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2014).

Karl Vollmoeller. Frederik D. Tunnat, *Karl Vollmoeller: Dichter und Kulturmanager. Eine Biographie* (Berlin: Vendramin, 2012), 299.

Notes to Chapter 5

The Incandescent Virgin

The necessity for light. Adams, *MSMC*, 432 (chap. 6, "The Virgin of Chartres").

have been cast as being antithetical. Klaus Arnold, "Das 'finstere' Mittelalter: Zur Genese und Phänomenologie eines Fehlurteils," *Saeculum* 32 (1981): 287–300.

romantically dark. The term Dark Romanticism has been proposed as a replacement for Gothic as a literary-historical term. See Thompson, *Gothic Imagination*, 1–10.

the light of the world. John 8:12.

star of the sea. In Latin, *stella maris*.

Strawberry Hill. The villa is located beside the river Thames, in Twickenham, London.

Walpole asserted. Horatio Walpole, "Preface" to "A Description of the Villa of Mr. Horace Walpole at Strawberry-Hill near Twickenham," in *The Works of Horatio Walpole, Earl of Orford*, 5 vols. (London: Printed for G. G. and J. Robinson, Paternoster-Row, and J. Edwards, Pall-Mall, 1798), 2: 398.

gloomth of abbeys and cathedrals. For a few pages about gloom and gloomth in Gothic literature of the time, see David D. McKinney and Warren Chappell, *The Imprints of Gloomth: The Gothic Novel in England, 1765–1830: The Tracy W. McGregor Room, February-July* (Charlottesville: Alderman Library, University of Virginia, 1988), 7–8, 10.

which he described. To Sir Horace Mann, British Envoy at the Court of Tuscany, from Strawberry Hill, April 27, 1753, in *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, ed. W. S. Lewis, 48 vols. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1937–1983), 20: 372: "I perceive you have no idea what Gothic is; you have lived too long amidst true taste, to understand venerable barbarism. You say, 'you suppose my garden is to be Gothic too.' That can't be; Gothic is merely architecture, and as one has a satisfaction in imprinting the gloomth of abbeys and cathedrals on one's house, so one's garden on the contrary is to be nothing but *riant*, and the gaiety of nature." For context, see Brian Fothergill, *The Strawberry Hill Set: Horace Walpole and His Circle* (London: Faber and Faber, 1983), 45.

the dualistic essence of human existence. He wrote to Lady Ossory, who had lost a child, on July 12, 1778: "Life seems to me as if we were dancing on a sunny plain on the edge of a gloomy forest, where we pass in a moment from glare to gloom and darkness."

the puppet-show of the times. The letter referring to Strawberry Hill as a form of puppetry is to Richard Bentley (1708–1782), English writer and designer, from Strawberry Hill, June 10, 1755, in Lewis, *Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, 35: 227.

choosing to imagine the house. Lewis, *Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, 10: 127 (Horace Walpole to Montagu, June 18, 1764); 20: 111 (to Mann, January 10, 1750); 9: 149 (to Montagu, June 11, 1753). Cited by Michael Snodin, "Going to Strawberry Hill," in *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, ed. idem (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 15–57, at 15.

well-wrought little gadget. Letter to H. S. Conway, from Twickenham, dated June 8, 1747, in Lewis, *Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, 37: 269: "It is a little plaything-house that I got out of Mrs. Chenevix's shop, and is the prettiest bauble you ever saw. It is set in enameled meadows, with filigree hedges."

collected enamels and portrait miniatures. Katherine Coombs, "Horace Walpole and the Collecting of Miniatures," in Snodin, *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, 183–99.

disparaging him. Lewis Melville [Louis Saul Benjamin], *The Life and Letters of William Beckford of Fonthill* (London: W. Heinemann, 1910), 299: "The place was a miserable child's box—a species of gothic mousetrap—a reflection of Walpole's littleness. My having his playthings he could not tolerate, even in idea, so he bequeathed them beyond my reach." The quotation comes from a conversation with Cyrus Redding that Beckford had forty years after Walpole's death.

the most distinguished gem. Stephen Clarke, "The Strawberry Hill Sale of 1842: 'The Most Distinguished Gem That Has Ever Adorned the Annals of Auctions,'" in Snodin, *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, 261–74.

a parody. See Clarke, "Strawberry Hill Sale of 1842," 265.

The Little Box of Mother-of-Pearl. In French, *L'étui de nacre*.

a European subset of primitivism. Arthur O. Lovejoy, "The First Gothic Revival and the Return to Nature," *Modern Language Notes* 47 (1932): 419–46.

The gloom of the lofty vaults. Brooks Adams, *Law of Civilization and Decay* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1895), 64 (chap. 3, "The First Crusade").

regarded as being bright. Suger, Abbot of Saint Denis, *De rebus in administratione sua gestis*, chap. 28, in *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of St.-Denis and Its Art Treasures*, ed. and tr. Erwin Panofsky, 2nd rev. ed. Gerda Panofsky-Soergel (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), 50–51, at lines 11–12: "Bright is the noble edifice which is pervaded by the new light."

the Virgin's own preferences. Adams, *MSMC*, 424, 433 (chap. 6, "The Virgin of Chartres"): "The Queen Mother . . . liked both light and colour."

color that filters through the panes. Adams, *MSMC*, 459 (chap. 7, "Roses and Apses"): "the lighting of her own boudoir," and 491 (chap. 9, "The Legendary Windows").

confessed to Lizzie Cameron. Henry Adams, Letter to Elizabeth Cameron, in *LHA*, 4: 311–13, at 312.

necessity of artificial lighting. Aldous Huxley, "Notes on the Way," *Time and Tide* (July 3, 1937): 889–91, repr. James Sexton, ed., "Notes on the Way, July 3, 1937," *Aldous Huxley Annual* 4 (2004): 26–31, at 28: "The only thing that connects [the interiors] with the outer walls is the fenestration, which is Gothically parsimonious of light. In spite of the sun and the more than Mediterranean sky, Duke has need, even in daytime, of a deal of electricity."

Yale University invalidated half of. "To put deeply splayed Gothic church-windows with heavy mullions and leaded panes into reading rooms which require the maximum of light and air, is the last word in folly."

Dressing Madonnas: What Are You Wearing?

studded with gold. Adam of Eynsham, *The Revelation of the Monk of Eynsham* (chap. 47), ed. Robert Easting, Early English Text Society, vol. 318 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 140.

limbs could be posed and moved. For specifics on such articulation in Spanish Madonnas, see Susan Verdi Webster, "Shameless Beauty and Worldly Splendor: On the Spanish Practice of Adorning the Virgin," in Thunø and Wolf, *Miraculous Image*, 249–71, at 264–66. For a broad anthropological context, see Marlène Albert-Llorca, *Les Vierges miraculeuses: Légendes et rituels* (Paris: Gallimard, 2002). For subsequent studies, see Valeria E. Genovese, *Statue vestite e snodate: Un percorso*, Tesi: Classe di lettere, vol. 6 (Pisa, Italy: Edizioni della Normale, 2011); and especially the review article by Marlène Albert-Llorca, "Les statues habillées dans le catholicisme: Entre histoire de l'art, histoire religieuse et anthropologie," *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 164 (2013): 11–23.

bedecked with special clothing. Richard Trexler, "Habiller et déshabiller les images: Esquisse d'une analyse," in Dunand, *L'image et la production du sacré*, 195–231.

dress and undress the statues. Marlène Albert-Llorca, "La Vierge mise à nu par ses chambrières," *CLIO: Histoire, femmes et sociétés* 2 (1995): 201–28.

reached its zenith in the baroque period. Heinrich Schauerte, "Bekleidung der Marienbilder," in *Marienlexikon*, ed. Remigius Bäumer and Leo Scheffczyk, 6 vols. (St. Ottilien, Germany: EOS, 1988–1994), 1: 414–15.

during waves of iconoclasm. Heal, *Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 99.

redeployed to clothe ecclesiastics. Trexler, "Habiller et déshabiller," 198.

a detailed description. Stanley Smith, *The Madonna of Ipswich* (Ipswich, UK: East Anglian Magazine Limited, 1980), 23: "The robe, square cut on the breast, hanging in ample pleats from a high waist in deep rose. A blue mantle with full long sleeves hangs from the shoulder of the figure. . . . Our Lady's coat with two gorgets of gold to put about her neck."

two coats for the Virgin Mary. Charles Pendrill, *Old Parish Life in London* (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), 16.

Lady Church. In German, *Frauenkirche.*

and other ornaments. Heal, *Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 37. For further information on Nuremberg, see Bridget Heal, "Images of the Virgin Mary and Marian Devotion in Protestant Nuremberg," in *Religion and Superstition in Reformation Europe*, ed. Helen Parish and William G. Naphy (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2002), 25–46.

at the shrine of Mont-Saint-Michel. Hilding Kjellman, ed., *La deuxième collection anglo-normande des miracles de la Sainte Vierge et son original latin avec les miracles correspondants des mss. fr. 375 et 818 de la Bibliothèque nationale* (Paris: E. Champion, 1922), 289, no. 44.

no longer catalogue such accoutrements. Heal, "Images of the Virgin Mary," 45n31.

dispersed, destroyed, or both. In 1816, the church was reacquired by the Catholic Church.

It is tempting to conjecture. Heal, *Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 102, 112.

girdle. On the sash and robe, see Wilfrid Bonser, "The Cult of Relics in the Middle Ages," *Folklore* 73 (1962): 234–56, at 244.

In the Aachen cathedral. Heinrich Schiffers, *Karls des Großen Reliquienschatz und die Anfänge der Aachenfahrt*, Veröffentlichungen des Bischöflichen Diözesanarchivs Aachen, vol. 10 (Aachen, Germany: J. Volk, 1951).

Holy Chemise. *Sancta camisia* in Latin, *sainte chemise* in French. The word *interula* is also used.

that the Virgin wore. E. Jane Burns, "Saracen Silk and the Virgin's 'Chemise': Cultural Crossings in Cloth," *Speculum* 81 (2006): 365–97; idem, *Sea of Silk: A Textile Geography of*

Women's Work in Medieval French Literature (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 156–84.

the garment could be processed and displayed. Hervé Pinoteau, *Notre-Dame de Chartres et de France: Le voile de la Vierge et autres merveilles* (Paris: F. X. de Guibert, 2008).

not at all a chemise but rather a veil. Yves Delaporte, *Le voile de Notre-Dame* (Chartres, France: Durand, 1927, 2nd ed. 1951); André Grabar, "La cathédrale de Chartres: La relique du voile de la Vierge et l'iconographie," *Notre-Dame de Chartres* 28 (September 1976): 14–19; Pinoteau, *Notre-Dame de Chartres et de France*; Jean Villette, "Le voile de la Vierge depuis onze siècles à Chartres," *Notre-Dame de Chartres* 28 (September 1976): 4–13.

tourist medallion. 34 mm in diameter, 2 mm thick, 16 grams in weight, copper-aluminum-nickel alloy. Minted by the Monnaie de Paris (Paris mint), an administrative bureau of the French government.

holy card from Chartres. The board is made of hard paper but framed in a lightly perforated paper called canivet lace. The French *canif*, borrowed from the same Old Norse word as English *knife*, means "penknife." The paper is produced by making holes using such a knife.

what was once a Black Madonna. By whatever name, this sculpture has been colored completely differently in the recent restoration of Chartres cathedral: it is most definitely no longer a Black Madonna.

topped by the image of Mary. Begg, *Cult of the Black Virgin*, 179–80.

discrete from the site of Notre-Dame-sous-Terre. Forsyth, *Throne of Wisdom*, 105–11.

Holy Robe. In Latin, *sancta roba*.

badges. Scilla Landale, "A Pilgrim's Progress to Walsingham," in *Walsingham: Pilgrimage and History. Papers Presented at the Centenary Historical Conference, 23rd–27th March 1998* (Walsingham, UK: R. C. National Shrine, 1999), 56.

Carrying a Torch for Mary

Darkness cannot drive out darkness. Martin Luther King Jr., *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 67.

widely accepted by the end of the fifteenth century. Heal, *Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 25–26.

Candelaria. In French, *la Chandeleur*, Italian *la Candela*, German *Mariä Lichtmess*, Dutch *Maria-Lichtmis*.

handed out to all in attendance. Kinder, *Cistercian Europe*, 131, 175.

both pilgrims and regular worshipers. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims*, 198.

carry tapers. Young, *Drama of the Medieval Church*, 2: 252–53. Compare Heal, *Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 226–27, 268–69.

candlesticks are commonly mentioned. Heal, *Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 111–12; Carroll, *Madonnas That Maim*, 82–83.

customary texts. Known in Greek as *typika.*

appropriate to a given icon. Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "Icons in the Liturgy," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 45 (1991): 45–57, at 45.

an odor of sanctity. Sansterre, "Sacralité et pouvoir thaumaturgique," 59.

Petrus Iverni at Rocamadour. Peter Haas, "Petrus Iverni von Sieglar und das Wunderbuch von Rocamadour," *Troisdorfer Jahreshefte* 36 (2007): 84–89.

a Black Madonna. Of polychrome wood that is partially clad in plates of oxidized silver: see Begg, *Cult of the Black Virgin*, 216; Sophie Cassagnes-Brouquet, *Vierges noires* (Rodez, France: Rouergue, 2000), especially 100–101.

One hypothesis. For discussion, see Stephen Benko, *The Virgin Goddess: Studies in the Pagan and Christian Roots of Mariology*, Studies in the History of Religions, vol. 59 (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1993), 213.

the Holy House of Walsingham. Landale, "Pilgrim's Progress to Walsingham,"18.

miracle of the candle. Harris, *Lourdes*, 8, 20, 63, 201, 204, 205, 293. This miracle occurred in the seventeenth of the apparitions, on April 7.

became a business interest. On the manufacturing and commerce, see Harris, *Lourdes*, 191, with fig. 11 (in color inserts).

made them appear unnatural. Harris, *Lourdes*, 87–92, 262, 263 fig. 58.

Lighting Effects: Lights, Camera, Action!

artificial lighting. For a truly illuminating general and popular account, see Jane Brox, *Brilliant: The Evolution of Artificial Light* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010).

The age of gas. Terence A. L. Rees, *Theatre Lighting in the Age of Gas* (London: Society for Theatre Research, 1978), ix.

nightlife. Brox, *Brilliant*, 75.

Perhaps you will catch. Quoted by Arline Boucher Tehan, *Henry Adams in Love: The Pursuit of Elizabeth Sherman Cameron* (New York: Universe Books, 1983), 176.

first with gas and later with electricity. See http://www.archives.nd.edu/about/news/index.php/2011/let-there-be-light/

The original stage-book. For the translation as well as for highlighting the very existence of the stage-book, credit goes to Needham, "'Le Jongleur est ma foi'," 229 (who quotes the original French): "The painting, until then dimly lit, illuminated with an intense light, the effect produced by an electric light that is stage left, and that gives all its power to illuminate completely the painting of the Virgin." The stage-book is in the Bibliothèque historique de la Ville de Paris: see Needham, 313.

an impresario. David Belasco, in *New York World*, February 17, 1901, cited by A. Nicholas Vardac, *Stage to Screen: Theatrical Method from Garrick to Griffith* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1949), 115; Peter Baxter, "On the History and Ideology of Film Lighting," *Screen* 16.3 (1975): 83–106, at 86.

As the technology developed. Initially came the earliest practical incandescent bulbs from Edison, then a shift from incandescent to tungsten-halogen lamps, next the arc lamp invented in 1896, and still later the carbon-arc klieg light created in 1911.

with a great and mystic brightness. *New York Times*, August 16, 1908, SM8.

suffused with a soft light. *Musical Times*, 47.761 (July 1, 1906): 484.

the earliest poster. The poster, 31.75 in. (80.64 cm) in height and 25.25 in. (64.14 cm) in width, bears the imprint of IMP E. DELANCHY, 51, F9 ST. DENIS, PARIS. It was commissioned to advertise performances at the Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique.

Georges-Antoine Rochegrosse. He was elected first a knight and later an officer of the French legion of honor. Here the distinguished French historical and decorative painter is portrayed as he partakes of the cocaine-laden wine, Mariani (see Fig. n.13). In another indication of the interconnections among literature, opera, and art, he produced the color frontispiece to an edition of Anatole France, *Thaïs: Quinze compositions, dont un frontispiece en couleurs* (Paris: F. Ferroud, 1909), as well as the illustrations to Anatole France, *Le Puits de Sainte Claire* (Paris: Ferroud, 1925).

The artist of this engraving. Édouard François Zier.

a ring of bright light. *Le Monde illustré* (May 14, 1904), 395.

preoccupied with florid settings. Although many of his compositions set in earlier times concentrate upon violence, his paintings inspired by medieval literature and lore elicited from him a range of colors and a type of innocence that owe much to romanticism and later movements such as the Pre-Raphaelites.

The Knight of Flowers. *Le chevalier aux fleurs*. Paris, Musée d'Orsay, RF 898.

One reviewer. Klein, "London Opera House," 96. An advertisement from 1915 (run in *The American Magazine, New Outlook,* and elsewhere) for Mazda lamps made by the General Electric Company shows scientists being strafed by a beam of bright light (see Fig. n.14). Like fugitives from a heavily guarded prison, the spectators look as if they should be on one or the other side of a barbed-wire perimeter.

Fig. n.13 Georges-Antoine Rochegrosse, with bottle and glass of Vin Mariani. Drawing by Joseph Uzanne, 1894. Published in *Figures contemporaines: Tirées de l'Album Mariani*, 14 vols. (Paris: Henri Floury, 1894–1925), 2: 210, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Georges-Antoine_Rochegrosse.jpg

Fig. n.14 Advertisement for Mazda lightbulbs, by General Electric Company, 1915.

Franz Johannes Weinrich. The author came to be better known in his theatrical works for his *Columbus: A Tragedy* (*Columbus: Ein Trauerspiel*, 1923) and *The Maid of God: A Play about Saint Elisabeth* (*Die Magd Gottes: Ein Spiel von der heiligen Elisabeth*, 1928), as well as for his treatment of *Saint Elizabeth of Hungary* (*Die heilige Elisabeth von Thüringen*). For biographical information, see Clemens Siebler, "Weinrich, Franz Johannes," in *Baden-Württembergische Biographien*, ed. Bernd Ottnad (Stuttgart, Germany: W. Kohlhammer, 1994–), 3: 441–44. In 1921, he published a collection of poems that he entitled *With You I'll Dance My Way to the Nearest Star* (*Mit dir ertanze ich den nächsten Stern*) (Munich, Germany: Patmos, 1921). "Dancing with the Stars" would seem to be nothing new.

A Little Play. Franz Johannes Weinrich, *Der Tänzer unserer lieben Frau: Ein klein Legendenspiel nach altem Text* (Augsburg, Germany: Haas & Grabherr, 1921; 2nd ed., Frankfurt, Germany: Bühnenvolksbund, 1925).

Much light. P. 25.

contrasts between bright and dark. Bergman, *Lighting in the Theatre*, 373.

not all the evidence. E.g., June 29, 1923: "Als Ballett wird in der Berliner Staatsoper Franz Johannes Weinrichs Legendenspiel 'Der Tänzer unserer lieben Frau' aufgeführt." The popular edition indicates that the set paintings were designed by Ludwig Sievert, who achieved some prominence as an expressionist before World War II, and that the music was the work of the composer Bruno Stürmer; see http://www.chronikverlag.de/tageschronik/0629.htm

Popular Theater League. In German, *Bühnenvolksbund*.

Cultural Theater instead of Show Business. In German, "Kulturtheater statt Geschäftstheater."

the disfavor of the Nazis. Cecil William Davies, *Theatre for the People: The Story of the Volksbühne* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977), 165–66; idem, *The Volksbühne Movement: A History*, 2nd ed. (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 2000), 287–88.

how to achieve these effects. Bellamy, *Jongleur's Story*, 15, 38–39: "Soft blue light from both sides, until the Abbot enters, when an amber slide is placed over the lower part of the flood on the side opposite the Abbot. As the blue slide is slowly removed, the amber slide is raised, so that the golden beam of sunlight seems to fall first on the dead boy, and finally reaches the face of the statue as she raises her arms in benediction."

illustration of a lighted taper. Van B. Hooper, *Christmas Stories That Never Grow Old* (Milwaukee, WI: Ideals, 1961), unpaginated. The illustration runs the length of the text block.

describes the incandescence. Vincent Arthur Yzermans, *Our Lady's Juggler* (St. Paul, MN: North Central, 1974), 13 (with a spectacular dangling participle): "Emerging from behind the column the altar suddenly became flooded with light so brilliant that the surrounding area was as bright as midday."

Voyeurism and Performance Art

Seeing the Virgin. Kathy M. Krause, "Gazing on Women in the *Miracles de Nostre Dame*," in Krause and Stones, *Gautier de Coinci*, 227.

scopophilia. From Greek *skopos, "watching."*

viewers. On women as the oglers, see Sandra Lindemann Summers, *Ogling Ladies: Scopophilia in Medieval German Literature* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2013).

the story of the pear tree. The most famous telling in English is in *The Merchant's Tale*, one of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales.*

voyeuristic moments in fiction. The classic treatment of such watching, although without reference to *Le Tumbeor Nostre Dame*, is A. C. Spearing, *The Medieval Poet as Voyeur: Looking and Listening in Medieval Love-Narratives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

males stare glassy-eyed. Madeline Harrison Caviness, *Visualizing Women in the Middle Ages: Sight, Spectacle, and Scopic Economy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 1–44.

figures of jealous people. The stock figure of the jealous person is the *gilos,* in medieval Occitan lyric.

watchmen. The Occitan term is *gardador*. See Patrizia Onesta, "Lauzengier-Wāshī-Index, Gardador-Custos: The 'Enemies of Love' in Provençal, Arabo-Andalusian, and Latin Poetry," *Scripta Mediterranea: Bulletin of the Society for Mediterranean Studies* 20 (1999): 119–41.

tattletales. In Occitan, this kind of person is termed a *lauzengier*. For full information, see Marcello Cocco, *"Lauzengier": Semantica e storia di un termine basilare nella lirica dei trovatori* (Cagliari, Italy: Università di Cagliari, Istituto di lingue e letterature straniere, 1980).

spoilsport. Both *killjoy* and *spoilsport* are first attested in the second half of the eighteenth century.

Notes to Chapter 6

Nothing is more catholic. Adolphe-Napoléon Didron, "Modèles d'églises romanes et gothiques," in *Annales archéologiques* 12 (Paris: Victor Didron, 1852): 164–67, at 165: "Rien n'est plus catholique, dans le sens rigoureux du mot, que le style du XIIIe siècle; il est de tous les temps, si l'on peut dire ainsi, comme il est de tous les pays."

Stony Silence

The word silence is still a sound. Georges Bataille, *L'expérience intérieure*, Collection Tel, vol. 23 (Paris: Gallimard, 1954), 25 ("le mot silence est encore un bruit"); trans. Stuart Kendall, *Inner Experience* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2014), 20.

long tradition of apparitions. Michael S. Durham, *Miracles of Mary: Apparitions, Legends, and Miraculous Works of the Blessed Virgin Mary* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1995), 49–63.

If you talk to God. Thomas Szasz, *The Second Sin* (New York: Doubleday, 1973).

imposes a hush. "I could never fathom how any man dares to lift up his voice in a cathedral. What has he to say that will not be an anticlimax? For though I have heard a considerable variety of sermons, I never yet heard one that was so expressive as a cathedral. 'Tis the best preacher itself, and preaches day and night, not only telling you of man's art and aspirations in the past, but convicting your own soul of ardent sympathies." Robert Louis Stevenson, *An Inland Voyage* (London: C. Kegan Paul, 1878), 169–70.

the travel writer's verbal one. Stevenson's description appears in a chapter of *An Inland Voyage* (pp. 166–75) called, unsurprisingly, "Noyon Cathedral": "After a while a long train of young girls, walking two and two, each with a lighted taper in her hand, and all dressed in black with a white veil, came from behind the altar, and began to descend the nave; the four first carrying a Virgin and Child upon a table."

overpower his recollection of all else. "In the little pictorial map of our whole Inland Voyage, which my fancy still preserves, and sometimes unrolls for the amusement of odd moments, Noyon cathedral figures on a most preposterous scale, and must be nearly as large as a department. I can still see the faces of the priests as if they were at my elbow, and hear *Ave Maria, ora pro nobis* ['Hail, Mary, pray for us'], sounding through the church. All Noyon is blotted out for me by these superior memories." Stevenson, *Inland Voyage*, 170–71.

solidity of prayerfulness. Henry Adams, *MSMC*, 369 (chap. 2, "*La Chanson de Roland*"): "The qualities of the architecture reproduce themselves in the song: the same directness,

simplicity, absence of self-consciousness; the same intensity of purpose; even the same material; the prayer is granite."

sound and soundlessness. Cass Gilbert said of the Woolworth Skyscraper that he designed: "To me, a Gothic skyscraper is like a musical harmony like *Stabat Mater*, whose final notes give us the highest pitch of emotion before they are lost in the silence." See Robert A. Jones, "Mr. Woolworth's Tower: The Skyscraper as Popular Icon," *Journal of Popular Culture* 7.2 (1973): 408–24, at 414.

Collecting Clusters of Cloisters

the Columbian exchange. The term was coined by Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1972).

there is no "pure" medieval. Stephanie Trigg, "Walking through Cathedrals: Scholars, Pilgrims, and Medieval Tourists," *New Medieval Literatures* 7 (2005): 9–33, at 33.

the Renaissance and paintings. Manfred J. Holler and Barbara Klose-Ullmann, "Art Goes America," *Journal of Economic Issues* 44 (2010): 89–112.

museums of their own national cultures. The effort was exemplified at the highest level by Wilhelm von Bode, who conceived and founded in 1904 the institution known today as the Bode Museum. See Frank Matthias Kammel, "Kreuzgang, Krypta und Altäre: Wilhelm von Bodes Erwerbungen monumentaler Kunstwerke und seine Präsentationsvorstellungen für das Deutsche Museum," *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* (1996): 155–75.

integrating masterpieces across media. For a study of the corresponding movement that applied these principles in museums in the US as they took shape in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see Kathleen Curran, *The Invention of the American Art Museum: From Craft to Kulturgeschichte, 1870–1930* (Los Angeles, CA: Getty Research Institute, 2016).

German romanticism. Theodore Ziolkowski, *German Romanticism and Its Institutions* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 309–77.

Fort Tryon Park. Near the northern tip of Manhattan Island.

the most remarkable memorial. To spare someone the trouble of only discovering this after hunting it down, Major Nicholas Utzig, "(Re)casting the Past: The Cloisters and Medievalism," *Year's Work in Medievalism* 27 (2012): 1–10, has virtually nothing to observe about The Cloisters themselves.

five medieval cloisters. Saint-Michel-de-Cuxa, Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert, Bonnefont-en-Comminges, Trie-en-Bigorre, and Froville.

other southern French monastic sites. The second of these has received close study in Daniel Kletke, *The Cloister of St.-Guilhem-le-Désert at The Cloisters in New York City* (Berlin: Dr. Köster, 1997). For more recent attention (especially to the reconstruction at the original site in France), see Matthews, *Medievalism*, 73–75. In the technical terminology of architecture, the cloisters are peristyles. Four rows of columns form a box of porticoes that surrounds either a garden or a court. Three of these structures are outside, complemented by gardens that are meant to be true to medieval monastic horticulture. Inside, around three thousand works of art are exhibited. For all that, the name of the museum derives from the form it puts on display.

cento. The original Latin *cento* refers to a patchwork garment.

the rightness of the Gothic sincerity. The quotation is from C. Lewis Hind; see Harold E. Dickson, "George Grey Barnard's Controversial Lincoln," *Art Journal* 27.1 (1967): 8–19, at 14. The bust is now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

young people. He taught in New York's Art Students League, an art school on West 57th Street that was founded in 1875 to accommodate (as it does to this day) learners from the ranks of both amateurs and professionals.

attractions in the new museums. Pamela Born, "The Canon Is Cast: Plaster Casts in American Museum and University Collections," *Art Documentation: Journal of the Art Libraries Society of North America* 21.2 (2002): 8–13, at 8; Alan Wallach, "The American Cast Museum: An Episode in the History of the Institutional Definition of Art," in idem, *Exhibiting Contradiction: Essays on the Art Museum in the United States* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998), 38–50.

received their share of attention. Established in 1901, the Germanic Museum of Harvard University was renamed one half century later the Busch-Reisinger. The collection was given a physical home in a building that was begun in 1914 and completed in 1917.

collection of casts. For an account of the collection, see Lynette Roth, "'Old World Art on the Soil of the New': Plaster Casts and the Germanic Museum at Harvard University," in *Casting: A Way to Embrace the Digital Age in Analogue Fashion? A Symposium on the Gipsformerei of the Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin*, ed. Christina Haak and Miguel Helfrich (Heidelberg: arthistoricum.net, 2016), 106–17.

much aspersion was cast. Kathryn McClintock, "The Earliest Public Collections and the Role of Reproductions (Boston)," in *Medieval Art in America: Patterns of Collecting, 1800–1940*, ed. Elizabeth Bradford Smith (University Park: Palmer Museum of Art, Pennsylvania State University, 1996), 54–60. The topic of plaster casting has been studied within a broad chronological and methodological purview, but with little reference to the Middle Ages, in Rune Frederiksen and Eckart Marchand, eds.,

Plaster Casts: Making, Collecting, and Displaying from Classical Antiquity to the Present, Transformationen der Antike, vol. 18 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010).

battle of the casts. Paul DiMaggio, "Cultural Entrepreneurship in Nineteenth-Century Boston, Part II: The Classification and Framing of American Art," *Media, Culture & Society* 4.4 (1982): 303–22, at 306.

whole chambers could be disassembled. John Harris, *Moving Rooms* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2007).

collecting capitals and other sculpture. See Martin Weinberger, *The George Grey Barnard Collection: Catalogue* (New York: Robinson Galleries, 1941).

fragments of broken cathedrals. H. E. Dickson, "The Origin of 'The Cloisters,'" *Art Quarterly* 28 (1965): 252–74, at 255.

he did not manage to project his name. Dickson, "Origin of 'The Cloisters,'" 252–74; J. L. Schrader, "George Grey Barnard: The Cloisters and The Abbaye," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* n.s. 37 (1979): 2–52; Elizabeth Bradford Smith, "George Grey Barnard: Artist/Collector/Dealer/Curator," in idem, *Medieval Art in America*, 133–42.

Golden Age of Collecting. Holler and Klose-Ullmann, "Art Goes America."

Thorstein Veblen's scalding critique. Thorstein Veblen, *Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York: Macmillan, 1899), 349.

magnificent accumulation of art. R. Aaron Rottner, "J. P. Morgan and the Middle Ages," in Smith, *Medieval Art in America*, 15–126.

the first Gothic museum in the United States. "Barnard, George Grey," in *Biographical Sketches of American Artists*, 4th ed. (Lansing: Michigan State Library, 1916), 32–33, at 33.

Barnard's Cloisters. Alternatively, "Barnard Cloisters." The location was Fort Washington Avenue in Washington Heights. The site stood near the northern end of Manhattan Island in New York, a few miles south from where his quarry of quadrangles was moved when acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art. For the quotation, see Peter Barnet and Nancy Wu, *The Cloisters: Medieval Art and Architecture*, 2nd ed. (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, distributed by Yale University Press, 2012), 9.

spirit of Gothic. He put quotation marks around the key phrase since it translated the title of a German book, Karl Scheffler's *Der Geist der Gothik* (Leipzig, Germany: Insel, 1917).

widows and orphans. Schrader, "George Grey Barnard," 2.

age the building's appearance. See Mary Rebecca Leuchak, "'The Old World for the New': Developing the Design for The Cloisters," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 23 (1988): 257–77, at 257.

a statue of the Virgin and Child. The piece was mounted to stand above an arcade, at the center of a large stained-glass window in a clerestory that comprised an arch flanked by two smaller ones on each side.

Dramas in Stone. William M. Van der Weyde, "Dramas in Stone," *The Mentor* 11 (March 1923): 19–34.

the sounds of medieval chant. William H. Forsyth, "Five Crucial People in the Building of the Cloisters," in *The Cloisters: Studies in Honor of the Fiftieth Anniversary*, ed. Elizabeth C. Parker (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art/International Center of Medieval Art, 1992), 51–59, at 52.

lacked the permanency. In 1925, the Metropolitan Museum of Art acquired most of the ensembles in Barnard's Cloisters. The original brick structure reopened in October of 1937 as a museum, to display a new collection the sculptor had built up in the interim, but he died not a year later. Barnard's own new collection was dispersed, most of it sold to the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1945. See Smith, "George Grey Barnard," 138. The museum in the City of Brotherly Love put its medieval holdings on display first in 1931. At that time, they contained already a sampling of salvage from some of the same sites that supplied elements for the making of The Cloisters. Harris, *Moving Rooms*, 165: "Part of the cloister of Saint-Genis-des-Fontaines housed the fountain from the cloister of Saint-Michel-de-Cuxa, whereas at the Cloisters Museum the fountain in the middle of the Cuxa was from Saint-Genis." Over a couple of decades after Barnard's death, the flotsam and jetsam from his assemblage of art and architecture spread elsewhere throughout the country, but his name receded rapidly from public knowledge. Barnard's diminishment may be construed in part as a deliberate eclipse of him by Rockefeller: see Frederick C. Moffatt, "Re-Membering Adam: George Grey Barnard, the John D. Rockefellers, and the Gender of Patronage," *Winterthur Portfolio* (2000): 53–80.

acquired the chapter room from Pontaut Abbey. For a systematic review of architectural components from the monasteries of white monks, see Terryl N. Kinder, "Historic Cistercian Abbey Fragments," in *The Cistercian Arts: From the 12th to the 21st Century*, ed. Terryl N. Kinder and Roberto Cassanelli, trans. Joyce Myerson (Montreal, Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014), 395–402; for the chapter room from Pontaut Abbbey, p. 395.

land to the north. This tract amounts to sixty-six and a half acres.

the reassembly of Barnard's museum. With the same proactivity and integrity of vision, he also ensured that a plot with additional acreage (no fewer than seven hundred acres) in New Jersey, on the bluffs of the Palisades across the Hudson to the west of The Cloisters, would remain unsullied by development.

illumination. Barnet and Wu, *The Cloisters*, 14: "The atmosphere was intended to be intimate, with minimal ornamentation, limited artificial lighting, and even an occasional burning candle."

A Gothic Room

spoliation. To spoliate means literally to despoil, but in this technical usage the verbal noun signifies taking spoils from earlier phases of civilization. The term *spolia* is often applied to reusable components from classical architecture that were appropriated and incorporated into medieval buildings.

recycled within a church. See Maria Fabricius Hansen, *The Spolia Churches of Rome: Recycling Antiquity in the Middle Ages* (Aarhus, Denmark: Aarhus University Press, 2015).

William K. Vanderbilt. Her first husband inherited an immense fortune made from the New York Central Railroad and steamship lines.

1883. To be precise, on March 26, 1883.

fling down his gauntlet. Robert Huish, *An Authentic History of the Coronation of His Majesty, King George the Fourth* (London: J. Robins, 1821).

impersonated in attire based on tomb effigies. Helene E. Roberts, "Victorian Medievalism: Revival or Masquerade?," *Browning Institute Studies* 8 (1980): 11–44, at 27–32.

basing fancy dress parties upon paintings. Paul F. Miller, "Alva Vanderbilt Belmont, *arbiter elegantiarum*, and Her Gothic Salon at Newport, Rhode Island," *Journal of the History of Collections* 27.3 (2015): 347–62, at 361n3.

spectacular summerhouse. In the local parlance of Newport, Rhode Island, it was referred to as a "cottage."

Marble House. In its overall neoclassical architecture, the so-called cottage was modeled by the architect Richard Morris Hunt upon the most un-medieval Petit Trianon at Versailles.

Petit Château. In English, "Little Chateau." In the designations for both these period houses, the epithet *petit* is, of course, the French for "little."

The whole space was designed. Paul F. Miller, "A Labor in Art's Field: Alva Vanderbilt Belmont's Gothic Room at Newport," in *Gothic Art in the Gilded Age: Medieval and Renaissance Treasures in the Gavet-Vanderbilt-Ringling Collection*, ed. Virginia Brilliant (Sarasota, FL: John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, 2009), 22–35; idem, "Alva Vanderbilt Belmont," 347–62.

Alva Vanderbilt's name has become unhooked from her Gothic Room. In 1926, her medieval objects were moved out of Marble House, and were then sold to John Ringling in 1927. See Virginia Brilliant, "Taking it on Faith: John Ringling and the Gothic Room Collection," in idem, *Gothic Art in the Gilded Age*, 36–50. As part of the circus entrepreneur's holdings, pieces of the Gothic Room remain to this day in Cà d'Zan (in Venetian dialect) or "House of John," the Venetian-style mansion-become-museum he was creating at the time of the purchase in Sarasota, Florida. Today, Ringling's name has palimpsested Alva Vanderbilt's. No site associated with her exists now to bring home the effects the Gothic Room once exercised. Yet in her lifetime, the special space had no small influence, especially after she opened it for the benefit of women's suffrage to public tours in 1909 and 1910. Gothic Room may also be coordinated with the Gothicizing architectural excesses that were undertaken or perpetrated by other members of the Vanderbilt clan. Most remarkable is Biltmore Estate, with a mansion built between 1889 and 1895 that is touted for being the largest privately owned house in the United States. Its idiosyncratic and eclectic style, known as châteauesque, incorporates much Gothic adornment, although not spolia.

an eclectic buffet. Harris, *Moving Rooms*, 203–4. The broad-based manner that resulted has been labeled the American grand style. Customarily, the French phrasing is used: the *grand goût américain*.

a profusion of elements. Items from late medieval Europe within the chamber include a carved and gilded triptych, a wheel-window, and stained-glass windows. Before the fifteenth-century fireplace stand two thirteen-foot Gothic torchères. See Hilliard T. Goldfarb, *The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum: A Companion Guide and History* (Boston: Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 1995), 134–47.

arbiters of taste imported into the US windows. Madeline H. Caviness and Jane Hayward, "Introduction," in *Stained Glass before 1700 in American Collections: Corpus Vitrearum Checklist*, vol. 3: *Midwestern and Western States*, 4 vols., Studies in the History of Art, vol. 28 (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1989), 11–35.

the likes of Charles Eliot Norton. Morris Carter, *Isabella Stewart Gardner and Fenway Court* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1925), 93–95; Kathryn McClintock, "The Classroom and the Courtyard: Medievalism in American Highbrow Culture," in Smith, *Medieval Art in America*, 41–53.

new affluence. Ben H. Procter, *William Randolph Hearst: The Early Years, 1863–1910* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 31.

her American recreation. For building a skeleton of original stones, she selected column bases, columns, capitals, door frames, balconies, balustrades, and arches for importation from Europe. In her new courtyard, she matched the imported items with sculptural elements.

Raymond Pitcairn and the "New Church"

New Church. Its proper name is the "Cathedral of the General Church of the New Jerusalem."

In planning the cathedral. Jane Hayward and Walter Cahn, "Authors' Preface," in *Radiance and Reflection: Medieval Art from the Raymond Pitcairn Collection*, ed. Jane Hayward and Walter Cahn (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1982), 6–7, at 6.

twelfth-century capitals. The dozen column heads came from the Benedictine abbey church of Moutiers-Saint-Jean in Burgundy. Their transatlantic transfer was negotiated between 1918 and 1922. A thirteenth capital was secured separately later. In 1927, the carved stones were installed in the Renaissance Italian-style courtyard at the heart of the Fogg Art Museum. See Kathryn Brush, "The Capitals from Moutiers-Saint-Jean (Harvard University Art Museums) and the Carving of Medieval Art Study in America after World War I," in *Medieval Art and Architecture after the Middle Ages*, ed. Janet T. Marquardt and Alyce A. Jordan (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 298–311. They are no longer on display today.

systematic collecting of decorative elements. Beth Lombardi, "Raymond Pitcairn and the Collecting of Medieval Stained Glass in America," in Smith, *Medieval Art in America*, 185–88.

obliged to build a home. Jane Hayward, "Introduction," in Hayward and Cahn, *Radiance and Reflection*, 33–47.

Glencairn. On Pitcairn's church and home, see Shirin Fozi, "American Medieval: Authenticity and the Indifference of Architecture," *Journal of the History of Collections* 27 (2015): 469–80. Fozi also examines Isabella Stewart Gardner's museum and The Cloisters.

stained glass from the Reims cathedral. Elizabeth Emery, "The Martyred Cathedral: American Attitudes toward Notre-Dame de Reims during the First World War," in Marquardt and Jordan, *Medieval Art and Architecture*, 312–39, 331; especially Shirin Fozi, "'A Mere Patch of Color': Isabella Stewart Gardner and the Shattered Glass of Reims Cathedral," in *Memory and Commemoration in Medieval Culture*, ed. Elma Brenner

et al. (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2013), 321–44, on Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, Accession no. C8eI "Heads in a panel of fragments collected during World War I," 21.5 × 13.5 inches.

Her acquisitions were not depredations. A contemporary newspaper laid out matters explicitly: "Particular stress should be laid upon the circumstance that the materials wrought into this building have in no instance been obtained from any structure that was demolished or dismantled for the purpose or that to this end was deprived of any feature. The spirit in which Fenway Court was conceived and carried out was one of too great reverence for monuments of the past to countenance in any degree their destruction or their spoliation for its own purposes." Sylvester Baxter, "An American Palace of Art: Fenway Court," *Century* 67 (January 1904), 362–82, at 370, quoted by McClintock, "Classroom and the Courtyard," 48.

elginism. The phenomenon is named after the transportation of the Parthenon Marbles from Greece to London effected by Thomas Bruce, Earl of Elgin, between 1801 and 1805. See Smith, "George Grey Barnard," 136–37.

The Hearst Castle

a 1939 novel by Aldous Huxley. *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan* (first American ed., New York: Harper & Row, 1939, repr. 1983). In the 1941 mystery drama film *Citizen Kane,* the director Orson Welles caricatured Hearst's collecting habits less pungently than Huxley had done, but he still clearly portrayed the mercenary millionaire as being tragically (or lamentably) acquisitive.

a few years earlier. Frank Baldanza, "Huxley and Hearst," *Journal of Modern Literature* 7 (1979): 441–55.

Hearst Castle. Welles's movie made the residence more familiar, albeit set in Florida, as the estate called Xanadu, with its cleverly alliterating mimicry of the element *San*. The director took the name from Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem "Kubla Khan," where the title character constructs a "stately pleasure-dome" in the ancient city of Xanadu.

scholarly defenders. Victoria Kastner, "William Randolph Hearst: Maverick Collector," *Journal of the History of Collections* 27.3 (2015): 413–24.

clumsy Gothic extravagance. *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan*, 13: "The thing was Gothic, mediaeval, baronial—doubly baronial, Gothic with a Gothicity raised, so to speak, to a higher power, more mediaeval than any building of the thirteenth century."

registers item by item. *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan*, 24, 29, 30, 46–47. For recent analysis of the reality, see Umberto Eco, *Travels in Hyper Reality: Essays*, trans. William Weaver (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1986), 93.

boudoir shrine to the Virgin. *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan*, 18, 135–36, 141, 154–55, 177.

his conception of medieval art. Mary L. Levkoff, *Hearst, the Collector* (New York: Abrams, 2008), 63.

abandoned cloisters. Levkoff, *Hearst, the Collector*, 63.

the minstrels' gallery. Kastner, "William Randolph Hearst: Maverick Collector."

Saint Donat's. The castle is located near Llantwit Major in the Vale of Glamorgan, on the north side of the Bristol Channel in Wales.

other modern-day keeps. Title passed to him in 1927 for one in Gothic revival style at Sands Point, on the north shore of Long Island. From 1925 on, he bought up the acreage for an estate named Wyntoon which he established near Mount Shasta. With guidance from the architects Bernard Maybeck and Julia Morgan, he aspired to create a romanticized village with supersized cottages in a revival style modeled upon German late Gothic. See Levkoff, *Hearst, the Collector*, 117–22.

northern Spanish cloisters. Originally built between 1133 and 1144 in Sacramenia near Segovia. See "Hearst Importing a Spanish Cloister," *New York Times*, December 14, 1926.

transported to the United States. Despite their purchaser's sporadic ambition to erect the equivalent of Barnard's Cloisters on the West Coast, he never fulfilled his pipe dream of erecting an architectural museum for the University of California.

storage in Brooklyn. Geoffrey T. Hellman, "Onward & Upward with the Arts: Monastery for Sale," *New Yorker* (February 1, 1941): 33–39.

North Miami Beach. In the end, the chiseled pieces were put back together to serve as the Parish Church of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux. See Kinder, "Historic Cistercian Abbey Fragments," 398. Initially, the scheme was to pitch the reconstruction as a touristic destination in the guise of an "Old Spanish Monastery." How the often stern and judgmental holy man of the twelfth century would have reacted to being honored with such extravagance is fascinating to guess.

he called Mountolive. They were from Santa Maria de Óvila, a Cistercian monastery founded in the late twelfth century in the province of Guadalajara near Sigüenza.

delapidation. Though many buildings were demolished without being selected for shipment, the scale of the operation can be gauged from the size of the monastery church, which was taken: it was over 150 feet long and 50 feet tall.

shipped to San Francisco. The transportation required 14,000 wooden crates. From there, it was to be taken for use in a replacement for his mother's home, designed by Bernard Maybeck, which had burned down. See Margaret Burke, "Santa Maria de Ovila," in Lillich, *Studies in Cistercian Art and Architecture*, 1: 78–85. The residence was to be called Wyntoon Castle, after the location near Mount Shasta in California where it was to be located. Hearst never succeeded in executing his plan. He presented the crates in 1941 to the city of San Francisco, which was to reassemble the monastery as a museum.

sat for decades. The crates suffered from at least five fires caused by arson during the extended warehousing. The surviving stones suffered vandalism and pilferage. The sixteenth-century portal that had served as the portal to the church was ultimately rebuilt at the University of San Francisco. See Kinder, "Historic Cistercian Abbey Fragments," 402. Eventually, the remaining components of the chapter house suitable for further use were moved 175 miles north to Vina, California, and reconstructed within the Abbey of New Clairvaux. On May 5, 2012, the monks celebrated the completion of the transvaulted ceiling by singing in Latin the hymn to the blessed Virgin, "Hail, Holy Queen" (*Salve, Regina*) (see Fig. n.15).

given to three museums. Two were gifted to the Los Angeles County Museum, two to the Cloisters, and one to the Detroit Institute of Arts. These portals have been demonstrated to be likely forgeries: Amy L. Vandersall, "Five 'Romanesque' Portals: Questions of Attribution and Ornament," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 18 (1983): 129–39.

Fig. n.15 Chapter house from Ovila, Spain, currently located in the Abbey of Our Lady of New Clairvaux, Vina, CA. Photograph, date and photographer unknown. Image courtesy of the Abbey of Our Lady of New Clairvaux. All rights reserved.

The Last Hurrah

Gothic period room. The Lucy Maud Buckingham Memorial.

one donor's collection. On the original collection, see Christina Nielsen, "'To Step into Another World': Building a Medieval Collection at The Art Institute of Chicago," in *To Inspire and Instruct: A History of Medieval Art in Midwestern Museums*, ed. idem (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), 25–38. On the collection as it was reorganized nearly a quarter century later, see Meyric R. Rogers and Oswald Goetz, *Handbook to the Lucy Maud Buckingham Medieval Collection* (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 1945); Thomas E. A. Dale, "Meyric Rogers, Oswald Goetz, and the Rehabilitation of the Lucy Maud Buckingham Memorial Gothic Room at the Art Institute of Chicago in the 1940s," in Nielsen, *To Inspire and Instruct*, 118–30.

truly Gothic. Nielsen, "'To Step into Another World,'" 31. The quotation that follows this one is equally apropos.

a large French medieval dwelling. Curran, *Invention of the American Art Museum*, 118.

three different French sites. The arcade on the west side of the gallery came from an unknown site closely related to Saint-Michel-de-Cuxa (perhaps Espira d'Agly), another on the north side purportedly but disputedly from the Cistercian abbey of Notre-Dame-de-Pontaut in Gascony (the chapter house of which is in The Cloisters), and the third on the south side from the monastery of Saint-Pons-de-Thomières in Languedoc-Roussillon. In general, see Ricki D. Weinberger, "The Cloister," *Toledo Museum of Art: Museum News* 21.3 (1979): 53–71; Richard H. Putney, *Medieval Art, Medieval People: The Cloister Gallery of the Toledo Museum of Art* (Toledo, OH: Toledo Museum of Art, 2002), 5–8, 23, 62–63. On the arcade, purchased in 1931, that is supposed to have come from Pontaut abbey, see Kinder, "Historic Cistercian Abbey Fragments," 395. Harris, *Moving Rooms*, 165, writes, with specific attention to overlap with The Cloisters: "one colonnade is from Cuxa, another from the Abbey of Saint-Pons near Toulouse, and a third from the cloister of Notre-Dame-de-Pontaut, all three contributing associated salvages to the Cloisters." For broad context, see Mary B. Shepard, "In All 'Its Chaste Beauty': Cloistered Spaces in Midwestern Art Museums," in Nielsen, *To Inspire and Instruct*, 87–98 (with notes on 209–13).

garden courtyards of brick. Smith, "George Grey Barnard," 136. For a systematic study, see Peter Barnet, "'The Greatest Epoch': Medieval Art in Detroit from Valentiner to 'The Big Idea,'" in Nielsen, *To Inspire and Instruct*, 39–53.

a donor. Mrs. Julia Shaw Carnell.

Nuremberg Madonna. This polychrome image represents Mary in her guise as Mater Dolorosa, "Our Lady of Sorrows."

St. Louis Art Museum. See Sherry C. M. Lindquist, "A 'Sympathetic Setting' for Medieval Art in St. Louis," in Nielsen, *To Inspire and Instruct*, 99–116.

now resides in the Worcester Art Museum. After the Philadelphia Museum of Art declined it, the institution in New England purchased it in 1927 from the French dealer and landowner, disassembled it, and conveyed the stones in cases to the city in Massachusetts, where it was put together as part of the museum in 1933. It features ceilings, with ribbed vaulting, that rest upon piers and columns. The arches are both rounded and pointed.

early sixteenth-century. Dated more narrowly 1506–1515. The arcaded galleries, marble capitals, windows, and doorframes fuse inspirations from Gothic and Hispano-Moresque architecture. These elements were sold in 1904 by the castle's owner and secured in Paris in 1913 by George Blumenthal, who put them in his townhouse on Park Avenue in New York City. After Blumenthal died and his townhouse was taken down, the blocks were brought to the Museum and reassembled in 1964.

museum fatigue. For a spectrum of studies, see Benjamin Ives Gilman, "Museum Fatigue," *The Scientific Monthly* 2 (January 1, 1916): 62–74 (the first to describe and analyze the phenomenon); Gareth Davey, "What is Museum Fatigue?" *Visitor Studies Today* 8.3 (2005): 17–21; Stephen Bitgood, "Museum Fatigue: A Critical Review," *Visitor Studies* 12.2 (2009): 93–111.

barely scratches the surface. For a single idea-packed and wide-ranging overview, see Faye Ringel, "Building the Gothic Image in America: Changing Icons, Changing Times," *Gothic Studies* 4.2 (2002): 145–54.

crowning achievement of American museology. Barnet and Wu, *The Cloisters*, 14.

predatory noblemen. The equivalent German designation is *Raubritter*.

Notes to Chapter 7

European history is of profound importance. Charles H. Haskins, "European History and American Scholarship," *The American Historical Review* 28.2 (1923): 215–27, at 215. In the ellipsis Haskins points out interestingly, "The latest statue of Abraham Lincoln looks toward Westminster Abbey and toward the grave of the unknown British soldier who fell in a cause of liberty common to both sides of the Atlantic." This piece is his presidential address before the American Historical Association, delivered in New Haven on December 27, 1922. The statue mentioned is the colossus, completed in 1920 and unveiled in 1922, in the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. The ellipsis reads "We may at times appear more mindful of Europe's material indebtedness to us than of our spiritual indebtedness to Europe; we may in our pharisaic moods express our thanks that we are not even as these sinners of another hemisphere; but such moments cannot set us loose from the world's history."

Out of the ruins. See Ezio Levi d'Ancona, *Il libro dei cinquanta miracoli della vergine* (Bologna, Italy: Romagnoli-Dall'Acqua, 1917), clxv–clxviii (appendix, "Rielaborazioni moderne dei miracoli medievali").

he died in exile. For his biography, see Cesare Segre and Alberto Vàrvaro, *Ezio Levi d'Ancona,* Profili e ricordi, vol. 15 (Naples, Italy: Società nazionale di scienze, lettere e arti, 1986).

a play entitled Our Lady's Tumbler. Princeton University Library, III. Papers of Persons Other Than Ridgely Torrence, Box 95, Folder 7. The typescript is thirteen pages.

the twins committed double suicide. "Brings Story of Cromwell Tragedy," *New York Times*, January 29, 1919, 1.

women who had worked as nurses. Harriet Monroe, "A Gold Star for Gladys Cromwell," *Poetry* 13 (1919): 326–28.

not a minor cultural undercurrent or countercurrent. Stefan Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory: War, Remembrance and Medievalism in Britain and Germany, 1914–1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

Professor Charles Rufus Morey. Craig Hugh Smyth, "Concerning Charles Rufus Morey (1877–1955)," in *The Early Years of Art History in the United States: Notes and Essays on Departments, Teaching, and Scholars*, ed. idem and Peter M. Lukehart (Princeton, NJ: Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, 1993), 111–21, at 115–16. More recently, see Colum Hourihane, "Charles Rufus Morey and the Index of Christian Art," in *The Routledge Companion to Medieval Iconography*, ed. idem (London: Routledge, 2017), 123–29.

Ruining Europe

We are transported into times long past. Christian Cay Laurenz Hirschfeld, *Theorie der Gartenkunst*, 5 vols. (Leipzig, Germany: M. G. Weidmann, 1779–1785), 2: 111; trans. in Georg Germann, *Gothic Revival in Europe and Britain: Sources, Influences and Ideas*, trans. Gerald Onn (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1972), 82. The passage continues: "For a few brief moments we find ourselves living in the centuries of barbarity and feudal warfare, but also of strength and courage; in the centuries of superstition, but also of inward piety; in the centuries of savagery and rapacity, but also of hospitality."

These once-sturdy edifices. See Michael Charlesworth, "The Ruined Abbey: Picturesque and Gothic Values," in *The Politics of the Picturesque: Literature, Landscape and Aesthetics since 1770*, ed. Stephen Copley and Peter Garside (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 62–80.

the Gothic picturesque garden. Daniela Carpi, "The Gothic Picturesque Garden and the Historical Sense," *Pólemos* 7 (2013): 269–83.

sham ruins within gardens. See David Stewart, "Political Ruins: Gothic Sham Ruins and the '45," *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* (1996): 400–11.

a leitmotif of medieval revivals. Günter Hartmann, *Die Ruine im Landschaftsgarten: Ihre Bedeutung für den frühen Historismus und die Landschaftsmalerei der Romantik*, Grüne Reihe: Quellen und Forschungen zur Gartenkunst, vol. 3 (Worms, Germany: Werner'sche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1981), 130–35.

Professor Arthur Kingsley Porter. Linda Seidel, "Arthur Kingsley Porter: Life, Legend, and Legacy," in Smyth and Lukehart, *Early Years of Art History*, 97–110, at 101.

He was knowledgeable and respectful. Among other things, he made heavy use of photographs in his research, regarding the images as a means both to facilitate preservation and to document what was original in monuments and what resulted from later modifications. As a scholar, he wished to spare other members of his profession the obligation to spend weeks in teasing apart what was authentically medieval from what had been imposed through pseudomedieval changes in the nineteenth century or later. See Friedrich Kestel, "The Arthur Kingsley Porter Collection of Photography and the European Preservation of Monuments," *Visual Resources* 9 (1994): 361–81.

keeping the art and architecture of the Middle Ages truly medieval. He belonged to the inaugural cohort of fellows in the Medieval Academy of America, which also included Ralph Adams Cram.

a tenth symphony. Douglas Shand Tucci, *Built in Boston: City and Suburb, 1800–2000* (Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1978), 163, quoted Arthur Kingsley Porter, letter of June 22, 1926, to Cram.

commemorating them when they perished. Allen J. Frantzen, *Bloody Good: Chivalry, Sacrifice, and the Great War*(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); John C. Fraser, *America and the Patterns of Chivalry* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Mark Girouard, *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1981); Debra N. Mancoff, *The Return of King Arthur: The Legend through Victorian Eyes* (New York: H. N. Abrams, 1995), 101–29.

Tennyson's Idylls of the King. The poem had been composed between 1859 and 1885.

the Armistice. November 11, 1918.

Treaty of Versailles. Signed on June 28, 1919.

tales of King Arthur and the Round Table. Girouard, *Return to Camelot*, 198–99.

Reims: Martyr City and Cathedral

reliquary of our national glories. Maurice Landrieux, *The Cathedral of Reims: The Story of a German Crime*, trans. Ernest E. Williams (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1920), 102.

the lost territories of Alsace-Lorraine. Joëlle Prungnaud, *Figures littéraires de la cathédrale: 1880–1918* (Villeneuve d'Ascq, France: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2008), 226–27.

demonstrative reactions in the populace. Prungnaud, *Figures littéraires de la cathédrale*, 231–42.

the "martyr city." In French, *ville martyre* and *cathédrale martyre*. Only after writing this section did I become aware of Elizabeth Emery's characteristically well-researched and insightful "The Martyred Cathedral."

suffered more extreme injury. For revisionary views, see Klaus H. Kiefer, "Die Beschießung der Kathedrale von Reims: Bilddokumente und Legendenbildung—Eine Semiotik der Zerstörung," in *Kriegserlebnis und Legendenbildung: Das Bild des "modernen" Krieges in Literatur, Theater, Photographie und Film*, vol. 1: *Vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg, der Erste Weltkrieg*, ed. Thomas F. Schneider (Osnabrück, Germany: Universitätsverlag Rasch, 1999), 115–52; Jean-Noël Grandhomme, "L'incendie de la cathédrale de Reims pendant la Première Guerre mondiale: réalités, symbole et propaganda," in *Les hommes et le feu de l'Antiquité à nos jours: Du feu mythique et bienfaiteur au feu dévastateur. Actes du colloque de Besançon, Association interuniversitaire de l'Est, 26–27 septembre 2003*, ed. François Vion-Delphin and François Lassus, Annales littéraires de l'Université de Franche-Comté, vol. 823 / Série "Historiques," vol. 29 (Besançon, France: Presses universitaires de Franche-Comté, 2007), 311–17; Yann Harlaut, "L'incendie de la cathédrale de Reims, 19 septembre 1914. Fait imagé… Fait imaginé," in *Mythes et réalités de la*

cathédrale de Reims: De 1825 à 1975, ed. Sylvie Balcon (Paris: Somogy Éditions d'Art, 2001), 70–79. The most recent, thorough, and broad examination of Reims cathedral and its significances owing to the war damage is Thomas W. Gaehtgens, *Reims on Fire: War and Reconciliation between France and Germany*, trans. David B. Dollenmayer (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2018). The book appeared too late for consideration here.

assaulted repeatedly by German missiles. These attacks took place between September 3, 1914, and October 5, 1918.

First Battle of the Marne. September 5–12, 1914.

pelted it with heavy weaponry. From September 14.

Shortly afterward. On September 16.

media competition to score propaganda points. For a lengthy account by a contemporary who attempts to give an equable assessment, see Richard Harding Davis, *With the Allies* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914), 46–58 (chap. 6 "The Bombardment of Rheims"). The title alone suffices to indicate where his allegiance lay.

closely related to mass killing. On the German outlook, see Alan Kramer, *Dynamic of Destruction: Culture and Mass Killing in the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 27–30.

compared the dismantling. Louis Réau, *Histoire du vandalisme: Les monuments détruits de l'art français*, ed. Michel Fleury and Guy-Michel Leproux, 2nd ed. (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1994), 842–50 (844 for the quotation from Mâle): "When France learned that the cathedral of Reims was in flames, every heart was stricken. Those who cried for a son found fresh tears for the saintly church." For this reference as well as other contextual information and the translation in this paragraph I am obliged to Elizabeth Emery, *Romancing the Cathedral: Gothic Architecture in Fin-de-Siècle French Culture* (Albany: State University of New York Press), 168–69, 219.

sought to construe the wreckage. Ralph Adams Cram, *Heart of Europe* (New York: Scribner, 1915), 9, 119.

donnybrook between evil and good. Cram, *Heart of Europe*, 4–5: "between a brute power founded on Bismarckian force and Nietzschean antichristian philosophy, on the one hand, and on the other nations newly conscious of their Christianity, ashamed of their backsliding, and ready to fight for what had made them." Compare pp. 249–50, 317, 319.

published a pamphlet. The original "Notre Dame de Reims" was printed in Saint-Flour (Cantal, France: Imprimerie du *Courrier d'Auvergne*, n.d.), probably in 1918. For the

French, see Denis Hollier, *La prise de la Concorde; suivi de, Les Dimanches de la vie: Essais sur Georges Bataille* (Paris: Gallimard, 1993), 33–43. For an English translation, see Denis Hollier, *Against Architecture: The Writings of Georges Bataille*, trans. Betsy Wing (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), 14–22 (translation on 5–19). For an attempt to fit this youthful panegyric and polemic within a larger view of Bataille's medievalism, see Bruce Holsinger, *The Premodern Condition: Medievalism and the Making of Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 26–56, especially at 29–30.

the coronation of King Charles VII. Before ascending to the throne, the heir apparent had been conventionally known as the Dauphin.

Reims in 1429. "The people exultant with pious joy and hope, the cathedral white and immense as victory, and the whole city open like the ornate portals of Notre-Dame to anyone coming in the name of the Lord." On one level, his rhapsodizing is directed against the Germans, who, Bataille asserts, blasted the cathedral nearly to smithereens before putting it to the torch. On another, it lies within the realm of possibility to sense in the fizz of his phraseology the sexuality of a young man, particularly of one who would later devote much thought and many words to sexology.

in his first youthful screed. Hollier, *La prise de la Concorde*, 32.

Remembrance of Things Past. Literally, *In Search of Lost Time*. In French, *À la recherche du temps perdu* (1913–1927).

Saint Hilary. In French, Saint-Hilaire.

The ruination of the stones. William C. Carter, *Marcel Proust: A Life* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 665; Emery, *Romancing the Cathedral*, 169; Christopher Prendergast, *Mirages and Mad Beliefs: Proust the Skeptic* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), 193–94.

kept to this day. In the Palace du Tau.

Arthur Kingsley Porter. Arthur Kingsley Porter, "Gothic Art, the War and After," *Journal of the American Institute of Architects* (October 1917): 485–87, at 487, repr. idem, "Gothic Art, the War and After: Flying Buttresses of the Cathedral at Reims," in idem, *Beyond Architecture* (Boston: Marshall Jones, 1918), 56–65, at 65: "Gothic churches cannot and must not be restored. What is done cannot be undone. The losses caused by the Revolution, in ignorance, were great. . . . Let the destroyed monuments of France stand as ruins, but noble, poetic, beautiful ruins, not machine-made, modern churches. Let them stand a sempiternal reproach and source of shame to the Germans; but let it never be said that their friends destroyed what their enemies had spared." On Porter himself, see Linda Seidel, "Arthur Kingsley Porter (1883–1933)," in *Medieval Scholarship: Biographical Studies on the Formation of a Discipline*, ed. Helen Damico and

Joseph B. Zavadil, 3 vols., Garland Reference Library of the Humanities, vols. 1350, 2071, 2110 (New York: Garland, 1995–2000), 3: 273–86.

Much the same argument had been framed about Ypres by the Belgian architect Eugène Dhuicque, who headed the national commission to document wartime artistic and architectural losses. He wrote: "On the morning after the armistice the ruins of the hall and of the cathedral of Ypres expressed the unshakable resistance of an entire race with more eloquence and relief than any description could possibly give [. . .]. Certainly no one more than I, who have had the sad privilege of beholding day after day the progressive ruining of these illustrious monuments, regrets their tragic fate. But do they not still belong to history? Are yesterday's events less important than those of years ago? What entitles us to erase their traces." See Jeffery Howe, "A New Key: Modernism and National Identity in Belgian Art," in *A New Key: Modern Belgian Art from the Simon Collection*, ed. idem (Chestnut Hill, MA: McMullen Museum of Art, Boston College, distributed by the University of Chicago Press, 2007), 21–90, at 56.

Cram promoted an elaborate Plan B. Cram, *Heart of Europe*, 118. Porter's ambivalence about reconstruction is evident also in Ralph Adams Cram, *My Life in Architecture* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1936), 136–37.

had a cathedral epiphany. Linda Seidel, "The Scholar and the Studio: A. Kingsley Porter and the Study of Medieval Architecture in the Decade before the War," in *The Architectural Historian in America*, ed. Elisabeth Blair MacDougall (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, and Hanover, NH: Distributed by the University Press of New England, 1990), 145–58, at 147.

resanctified in July of 1938. See Charles Pound, "Rheims Celebrates: Restored Cathedral to Be Ready for the Public Again after Ceremonies in July," *New York Times*, June 26, 1938, 133; Helen Solterer, *Medieval Roles for Modern Times: Theater and the Battle for the French Republic* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010), 1.

Rebuilding Europe in America

A great cathedral. Elihu Root, "Cathedral Building: An Index of National Character," speech delivered on November 20, 1922 (New York: n.p., 1922).

Art Deco. The last term took its name from the 1925 Paris *Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes,* which was dedicated to the modern decorative arts. Nonetheless, the exhibition held there and then was itself just a summa of the first phase in the movement.

Cloth Hall of Ypres. It was in fact rebuilt in situ.

small-scale constructions. Ralph Adams Cram, "War Memorials," *Architectural Record* 45 (February 1919): 116–17, at 117, quoted by Katherine Solomonson, *The Chicago*

Tribune Tower Competition: Skyscraper Design and Cultural Change in the 1920s (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 192. He specified "some chapel or château or bridge that should stand always as an example of what the universal enemy destroyed when he could get the chance, and as an evidence of what our men went abroad to save, and did save—the fine spirit of true civilization that showed itself once in art such as this, and has been preserved, that it may show itself again."

footnote. On this form of annotation, see Anthony Grafton, *The Footnote: A Curious History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).

the Eiffel Tower. Roland Barthes, *The Eiffel Tower and Other Mythologies*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1979), 3; Nate LeBoutillier, *Eiffel Tower* (Mankato, MN: Creative Education, 2007), 10.

German Expressionism

The longing of the times. Paul Fechter, *Der Expressionismus* (Munich, Germany: R. Piper, 1914), 39–40, at 45: "Die Sehnsucht der Zeit ist eine neue Gotik, das Schaffen einer Kunst, die der alten vor der Erfindung der Buchdruckerkunst gewachsenen an Energie des Ausdrucks und der Geistigkeit gleichkommt." For context, see Magdalena Bushart, *Der Geist der Gotik und die expressionistische Kunst: Kunstgeschichte und Kunsttheorie 1911–1925* (Munich, Germany: S. Schreiber, 1990).

Franz Johannes Weinrich. Siebler, "Weinrich, Franz Johannes."

A Little Play Based on a Legend. The playbook was printed in first and second editions in 1921 and 1925. Franz Johannes Weinrich, *Der Tänzer unserer lieben Frau: Ein klein Legendspiel nach altem Text* (Augsburg, Germany: Haas & Grabherr, 1921; 2nd ed. Frankfurt: Bühnenvolksbund, 1925).

became a favorite of theatrical groups. Thereafter, Weinrich's work was staged as a ballet in the Berlin State Opera (Staatsoper) on June 29, 1923: see http://www.chronikverlag.de/tageschronik/0629.htm. The German church organist (and composer) Theodor Pröpper recorded that in 1928 it was performed in Balve, a town in North Rhine–Westphalia. It was also performed again in 1937, when copies where made (Düsseldorf, Germany: Jugendhaus-Feierdienst, 1937).

The initial production of Weinrich's play involved music composed by Bruno Stürmer, recalled today mostly thanks to the taint of his later extensive association with the Nazis, and artwork by Ludwig Sievert, a stage designer. On Stürmer and the Nazis, see Michael H. Kater, *The Twisted Muse: Musicians and Their Music in the Third Reich* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 71–72, 130, 133, 165, 184. On the stage design of Sievert during this period, see Ludwig Wagner, *Der Szeniker Ludwig*

Sievert: Studie zur Entwicklungsgeschichte des Bühnenbildes im letzten Jahrzehnt (Berlin: Bühnenvolksbundverlag, 1926).

A review by a contemporary. "A work with these contents could nowadays become only with difficulty a work of art: it is to be expected from the outset that we are dealing with a work of arts and crafts." Oskar Loerke, *Der Bücherkarren; Besprechungen im Berliner Börsen-Courier, 1920–1928*, Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Akademie für Sprache und Dichtung/Darmstadt, vol. 34 (Heidelberg, Germany: L. Schneider, 1965), 76.

expressionism. On the gradual transference of the term from French to German artists, and on drawbacks to considering it a movement in the full sense of the word, see Donald E. Gordon, "On the Origin of the Word 'Expressionism,'" *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 29 (1966): 368–85.

identified a primitivism. David Pan, *Primitive Renaissance: Rethinking German Expressionism* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001).

the abstraction of morality plays. See William Angus, "Expressionism in the Theatre," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 19.4 (1933): 477–92 (on abstraction in the medieval morality play); Selz, *German Expressionist Painting*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), 12–19.

The Burghers of Calais. *Die Bürger von Calais*. The play appeared in 1914 but was not performed until 1917.

an episode from the Hundred Years' War. Jean Froissart recounts that to end the siege of Calais, King Edward III of England demanded that six of its burghers surrender to him. The half dozen expected to be executed, but instead were spared thanks to the intervention of the English queen. See Jean Froissart, *Chronicles*, trans. Geoffrey Brereton, 2nd ed. (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books, 1978), 105–10.

From Morning to Midnight. *Von Morgens bis Mitternachts*, released in 1916 but first performed in 1917.

station drama. In German, *Stationendrama*.

principles of medieval mystery plays. In the film version of 1921 that was directed by Karlheinz Martin, the contrastive play of light and dark is quite powerful, especially within a very simple décor.

two editions. The first was Augsburg, Germany (Haas & Grabherr, 1921), while the second was Frankfurt: Verlag des Bühnenvolksbundes (Patmos-Verlag, [1923?]). The latter was reprinted in 1923 and 1925. Another edition was printed in Düsseldorf, Germany: Jugendhaus-Feierdienst, 1937.

I seek myself. In German, "Mich such ich, mich, mich!": Weinrich, *Der Tänzer unserer lieben Frau*, 11.

Pray for us!. In the original, "Bitte für uns."

On the contrary, you pray, good brothers! In German, "Bittet lieber Ihr, gute Brüder!"

I am nothing; you are everything. The original has "Ich bin nichts—Du bist alles!"

French Piety

Maurice Vloberg. Maurice Vloberg, *La légende dorée de Notre Dame: Huit contes pieux du Moyen* Âge (Paris, D. A. Longuet, 1921), 177–96: "In those days there was great joy in the city of Our Lord Saint Denis, the glorious martyr and patron of France."

Of the Tumbler Who Juggled. In French, "Du tombeur qui jongla devant l'image de Notre Dame."

his later books. Maurice Vloberg, *La Vierge et l'Enfant dans l'art français*, 2 vols. (Grenoble, France: B. Arthaud, 1933, 2nd ed. 1934, repr. 1954); idem, *La Vierge, notre médiatrice* (Grenoble, France: B. Arthaud, 1938); idem, *La vie de Marie, mère de Dieu* (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1949); idem, *Les Noëls de France* (Grenoble, France: B. Arthaud, 1934, repr. 1938, 1953). Vloberg's lifelong devotion to the Virgin, as a man of letters, scholar, and otherwise, is apparent even to his final decade. In 1960, he published an article on the reanimation of stillborn children in sanctuaries of the Virgin, in 1963, another on Madonnas that can be opened and closed. See idem, "Les réanimations d'enfants mort-nés dans les sanctuaires, dits 'à répit,' de la Vierge," *Sanctuaires et pèlerinages: Bulletin du Centre de documentation* 18 (1960): 17–32; idem, "Vierges ouvrantes: Sanctuaires et pèlerinages," *Sanctuaires et pèlerinages: Bulletin du Centre de documentation* 30 (1963): 25–34. To this day his Marian scholarship, especially in art history, retains a rock-solid standing. The simplest confirmation would be the fact that, more than fifty years after its initial publication, an article of his on iconography was reprinted in translation as the concluding chapter in a standard reference work on Mary: see Maurice Vloberg, "The Iconographic Types of the Virgin in Western Art," in Boss, *Mary*, 537–85.

Blessed are simple hearts without deceit. Compare Matthew 5:8.

a dramatic monologue. Léon Chancerel, *Frère clown; ou, le Jongleur de Notre-Dame* (Brother Clown, or the Jongleur of Notre Dame)*: Monologue par Léon Chancerel d'après le miracle du ménestrel Pierre de Sygelar mis en vers français par le Révérendissime Père Gautier de Coincy de l'Ordre de Saint Benoit, Grand Prieur Clastra de l'Abbaye de St-Médard de Soissons (1177–1236)*, Répertoire du Centre d'études et de représentations (Lyon, France: Editions La Hutte, 1943), 11.

a color-illustrated periodical. *Chanteclair*, no. 176 (1923): 18.

Gallic rooster. This prince among poultry was understood to betoken the ancient Gauls, in their guise as the French people millennia in advance of when France was constituted as a nation.

an 1891 oil painting. Entitled *L'Ambulance de la Comédie Française: Siège de Paris (1870–1871)* (The infirmary of the Comédie Française: Siege of Paris), by the French painter André Brouillet. The painting hangs at the top of the staircase of honor in the Paris Descartes University.

Another nurse and a doctor. The doctor is Didier-Dominique-Alfred Richet, father of Charles Richet, who commissioned the painting.

Painting the Juggler

a report of a brush drawing. *Die Christliche Kunst: Monatsschrift für alle Gebiete der christlichen Kunst und Kunstwissenschaft* 16 (1919): 63. This passage is viewable though Google Books but it has not been verified in the printed periodical.

Herbert Granville Fell. P. H. Wicksteed, trans., O*ur Lady's Tumbler: A XIIth Century Legend Transcribed from the French* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1924), with frontispiece and two other illustrations by Herbert Granville Fell, who specialized in bookbinding and illustrating. His best work is in art nouveau books.

Roberta F. C. Waudby. P. H. Wicksteed, trans., *Our Lady's Tumbler: A Twelfth Century Legend*, illustrated by Roberta F. C. Waudby (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1930). Waudby produced images for many children's and religious books. Among them are such religious books as Muriel Chalmers, *Jesus, Friend of Little Children*, Bible Books for Small People, vol. 11 (New York: Thomas Nelson, 1935); idem, *Hosanna to the King*, Bible Books for Small People, vol. 12 (New York: Thomas Nelson, 1935), and H. W. Fox, *Tales from the Old Testament* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1934).

Hugo von Habermann. Baron of Dillingen an der Donau. For biographical information, see Hans Detlev Henningsen, "Habermann, Hugo," in *Neue Deutsche Biographie* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1966), 7: 396–97. This artist is sometimes designated as Hugo von Habermann the Elder, to differentiate him from his homonymous nephew, who is then called Hugo von Habermann the Younger. He is identified as having been Catholic.

Munich Secession. In German, *Sezession*. The movement was inspired by a similar action taken by artists in Paris in 1890 and followed five years later by the Vienna Secession.

appears to have avoided being alienated. Wolfgang Johannes Bekh, *Die Münchner Maler: Von Jan Pollak bis Franz Marc*, 2nd ed. (Pfaffenhofen, Germany: W. Ludwig, 1978), 210–11.

appointed to the Munich Academy. He taught there from 1905 to 1924.

Jugendstil. The "Youth Style" was so called after the Munich magazine *Die Jugend*, or "Youth." *Jugendstil* and *Sezessionstil* were respectively German and Austrian expressions of art nouveau, an ornamental style of art that was widespread between roughly 1890 and 1910.

his fellow nobleman. For the perspective of shared nobility, see John Trygve Has-Ellison, "Nobles, Modernism, and the Culture of *fin-de-siècle* Munich," *German History* 26.1 (2008): 1–23. Herterich illustrated the covers of *Jugend* 5.3 (January 15, 1900) and 9.19 (April 28, 1904).

The Dancer before Our Lady. *Der Tänzer zu unserer lieben Frau*, 14¾″ × 11¼″ (37.6 × 28.6 cm.), sale date October 28, 2006, from the auction house Winterberg Arno in Heidelberg, Germany. It is incomplete; it was done by brush in India ink over pencil drawing, probably as a preliminary sketch. It has never been published and is now in private hands.

his same-sex preferences and his adopted religion. For a parallel, think of Sebastian Marchmain (who ends up in a monastery) in Evelyn Waugh's novel *Brideshead Revisited*, first published in 1945.

a 1928 painting of Le jongleur de Notre Dame. J. G. Paul Delaney, *Glyn Philpot: His Life and Art* (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1999), 85 (with plate C18). A composition study, graphite on paper, is held at the Courtauld Institute of Art (D.1962.GC.296). The painting has also been reproduced from a private collection in Jacques Le Goff, *Héros & merveilles du Moyen Âge* (Paris: Seuil, 2005), 125.

Mother of Pearl. Anatole France, *Mother of Pearl*, trans. Frederic Chapman, illustration by Frank C. Papé (London: John Lane the Bodley Head, 1929).

Rodolphe Duguay. Rodolphe Duguay, "Naître pour mourir: Journal (extraits)," *Liberté* 39.3, no. 231 (1997): 64–102, at 72 (November 11, 1920, with reference to November 10, 1920).

afterlife in book illustration. Still more exhaustive rifling would be required to determine across all possible languages which translations and adaptations of the tale were illustrated.

short stories by Anatole France. The 1933 book merits comparison with the Italian version of Anatole France, "Il giocoliere della Madonna," *La Lettura* 3 (monthly magazine attached to *Corriere della Sera*) (March, 1, 1932): 234–39; http://www.internetculturale.it/opencms/opencms/it/index.html (search title). The illustrations of this version are

by A. Guazzoni. This artist downplays the performance and instead emphasizes the monks and the Virgin (see Fig. n.16).

American Gothic

All that I attempted to do. Grant Wood, interviewed in *Chicago Leader*, December 26, 1930, quoted by Thomas Hoving, *American Gothic: The Biography of Grant Wood's American Masterpiece* (New York: Chamberlain Bros., 2005), 64. For other perspectives on Wood's painting, see Steven Biel, *American Gothic: A Life of America's Most Famous Painting* (New York, W. W. Norton, 2005); Jane C. Milosch, ed., *Grant Wood's Studio: Birthplace of American Gothic* (Cedar Rapids, IA: Prestel, 2005).

The period from 1900 to 1930 is in full swing. Letter to John Hay, November 7, 1900, in *LHA*, 5: 167–69, at 169.

the Dutch translation. Wies Moens, *De danser van Onze Lieve Vrouw: Een klein mirakelspel* (Antwerp, Belgium: De Sikkel, 1930).

Americanissimum. The Latin superlative signifies "American to the utmost."

Chicago Annual Exposition. Also known as the American Artists Exposition.

by no means a neologism. Elizabeth Emery, "Postcolonial Gothic: The Medievalism of America's 'National' Cathedrals," in *Medievalisms in the Postcolonial World: The Idea of "the Middle Ages" outside Europe*, 237–64," ed. Kathleen Davis and Nadia Altschul (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 243, cites another Wood—William Halsey Wood—who in the 1880s insisted upon the term "American Gothic" in promoting his vision for the design of the cathedral of Saint John the Divine. In 1891, Wood asked and answered a question about "American Gothic": William Halsey Wood, "The Cathedral of St. John the Divine: The Second Competition," *American Architect and Building News* 32.802 (May 9, 1891): 81–84, at 84: "It may again be asked, and in reasonable good faith, 'Is this American Gothic? And can Gothic put on National types?' The answer is plainly 'Yes'; and, that when any recognized type of construction proves unequal to the constantly shifting and growing requirements of advancing civilization it must, and righteously suffer loss and fall into decadence. This study is confidently, yet with all modesty, advanced as a demonstration of this practicability and plasticity of Gothic ideals. …"

what caught the painter's fancy. In 1803, more than a century and a quarter earlier, the architect Richard Else had had a similar reaction. See Germann, *Gothic Revival*, 42: "It would evidently be extremely absurd to employ the same sort of window for a house as in a church."

Of Gothic architecture we have done little more. [Clarence King], "Style and the Monument," *The North American Review* 141 (November 1885): 443–53, at 449.

the artists' colony that he cofounded. The building was called the Green Mansion, the community the Stone City Art Colony. See John Evan Seery, *America Goes to College: Political Theory for the Liberal Arts* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 225n37.

the human beings who inhabited them. In 1937, he produced a lithograph with a self-portrait of himself as the recipient of an honorary degree, flanked to his right by a dean and to the left by a professor (see Fig. n.17). The composition, entitled *The Honorary Degree,* echoes his most famous painting in the centrality of a lancet window, which is mimicked by the angle of the neckline to the fabric that is about to be draped around Wood as the honor is conferred.

a decade before his birth. It was built from 1881 to 1882.

a kit of designs. Andrew Jackson Downing, *Cottage Residences, or, A Series of Designs for Rural Cottages and Cottage Villas, and Their Gardens and Grounds: Adapted to North America* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1842).

The second specimen. Design 2, number 9.

houses of this sort. He described how pseudoclassicism had been displaced by "the Gothic or English cottage, with steep roofs and high gables, just now the ambition of almost every person building in the country. There are, indeed, few things so beautiful as a cottage of this kind, well designed and tastefully placed." See Andrew Jackson Downing's untitled article in *Horticulturist and Journal of Rural Art and Rural Taste* 5.1 (July 1850): 9–11, at 10, repr. "A Few Words on Rural Architecture," in idem, *Rural Essays*, 207.

including Renaissance and northern Gothic. Hoving, *American Gothic*, 71.

he sojourned repeatedly in France and Germany. He made stays in Europe in 1920, 1923, 1926, and 1928.

a three-month business trip. During it, he collaborated with glaziers to produce a stained-glass window for a war memorial in Cedar Rapids.

I simply invented some American Gothic people. Grant Wood, letter to the editor, printed in "The Sunday *Register*'s Open Forum," *Des Moines Register,* December 21, 1930, quoted by Thomas Hoving, *American Gothic,* 38.

he showed her pictures of stone carvings. Seery, *America Goes to College*, 225n37, with reference to Archives of American Art 1216/286.

bears more than a passing resemblance to a Madonna. Hoving, *American Gothic*, 89.

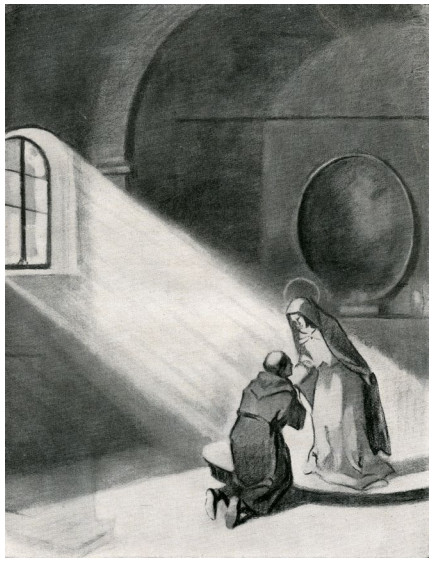

Fig. n.16 The juggler kneels before the Virgin. Illustration by A. Guazzoni, 1932. Published in Anatole France, "Il giocoliere della Madonna," *La Lettura* 3 (March 1, 1932), 239.

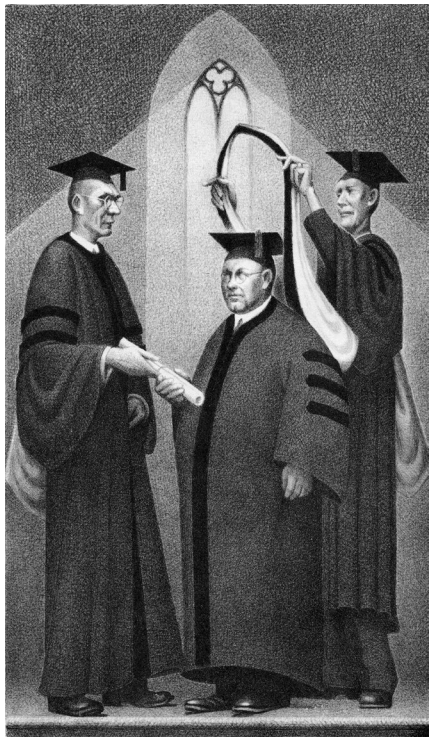

Fig. n.17 Grant Wood, *The Honorary Degree*, 1938. Lithograph on paper, 41.3 × 29.8 cm. Washington, DC, Smithsonian American Art Museum. Gift of Park and Phyllis Rinard in honor of Nan Wood Graham.

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Abbreviations

DLJ *Dictionnaire du livre de jeunesse: La littérature d'enfance et de jeunesse en France*, ed. Isabelle Nières-Chevrel and Jean Perrot. Paris: Éditions du Cercle de la Librairie, 2013.

EdM *Enzyklopädie des Märchens: Handwörterbuch zur historischen und vergleichenden Erzählforschung*. 15 vols. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1977–2015.

EHA *The Education of Henry Adams*, in Henry Adams, *Novels, Mont Saint Michel, The Education*, ed. Ernest Samuels and Jayne N. Samuels, 715-1192. New York: Library of America, 1983.

JHPE *Journal of Health and Physical Education* (formerly, *The American Physical Education Review*, 1896–1929). 1930–1948.

LHA *The Letters of Henry Adams*, ed. J. C. Levenson et al. 6 vols. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982–1988.

MSMC *Mont Saint Michel and Chartres*, in Henry Adams, *Novels, Mont Saint Michel, The Education*, ed. Ernest Samuels and Jayne N. Samuels, 337–714. New York: Library of America, 1983.

PL *Patrologiae cursus completus*, Series latina, ed. J.-P. Migne. Paris, 1844–1880.

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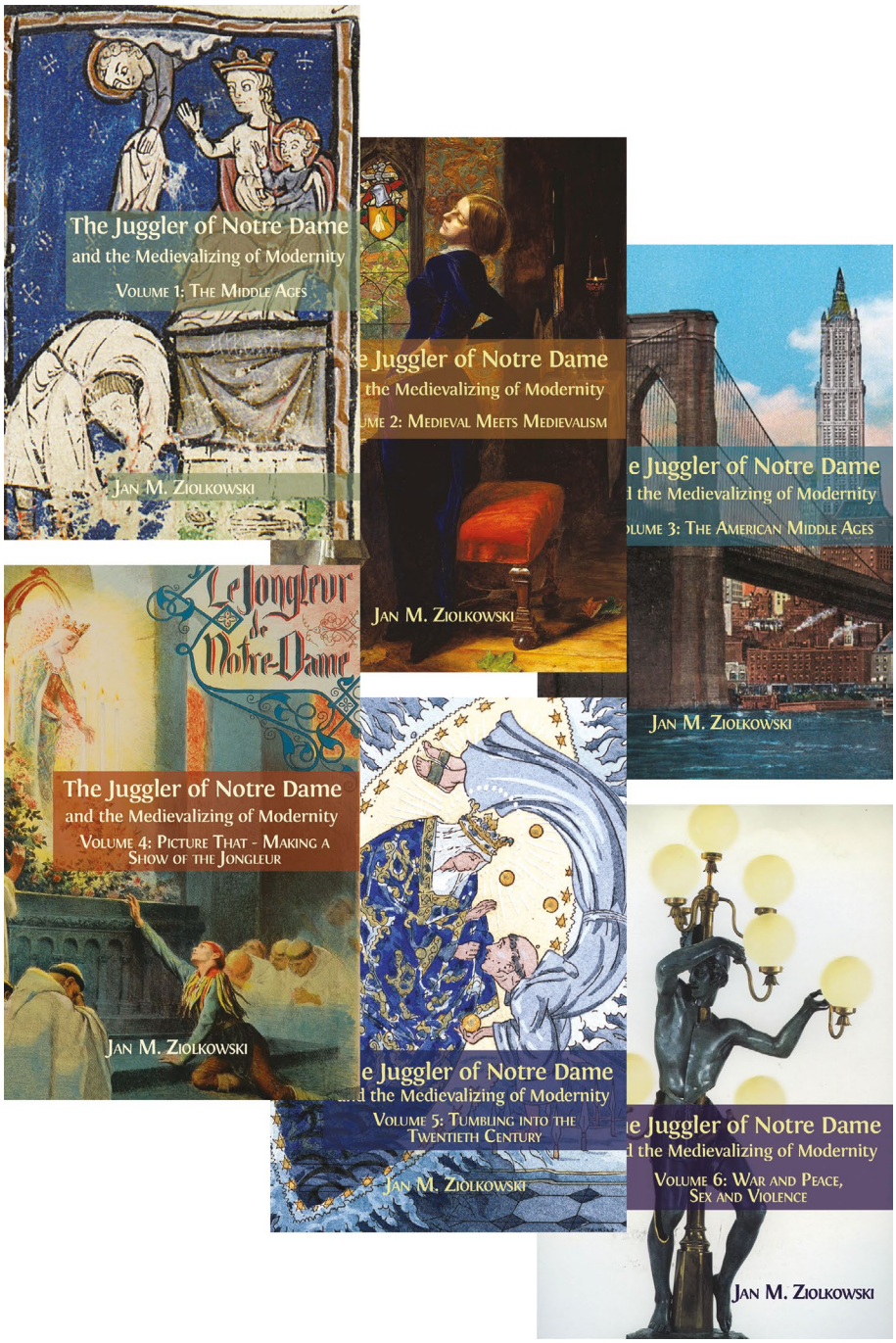

The Juggler of Notre Dame

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JAN M. ZIOLKOWSKI

A lifetime's knowledge has been poured into these pages with passion and dedication, and the reader feels, and shares, the author's enthusiasm along the Juggler's journey from the Middle Ages to the present. This work is a major achievement.

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Funny, erudite, compelling, The Juggler *stretches every boundary of what an academic book is.*

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Jan Ziolkowski tracks the poem from its medieval roots to its rediscovery in late nineteenth-century Paris, before its translation into English in Britain and the United States. The visual influence of the tale on Gothic revivalism and vice versa in America is carefully documented with lavish and inventive illustrations, and Ziolkowski concludes with an examination of the twentieth century explosion of interest in *The Juggler of Notre Dame* and its place in mass culture today.

Volume 4 examines the famous *Le jongleur de Notre Dame* by the French composer Jules Massenet, which took Europe by storm after premiering in 1902 and then crossed the Atlantic to the impresario Oscar Hammerstein and the diva Mary Garden, who gave the opera new legs as a female juggler.

Presented with great clarity and simplicity, Ziolkowski's work is accessible to the general reader, while its many new discoveries will be valuable to academics in such fields and disciplines as medieval studies, medievalism, philology, literary history, art history, folklore, performance studies, and reception studies.

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