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A Living Past: The Historical Environment of the Middle Ages

Giles Constable

This paper looks at some questions that arose in the course of preparing an article on the attitude towards time and the past in the twelfth century.[1] I particularly noticed that the environment created by art, architecture, and ceremony fostered a closeness, and at times an identity, with history. People lived the past in a very real sense, and the past, living in them, was constantly recreated in a way that made it part of everyday life. Scholars tend to rely so heavily on verbal sources that they underestimate the influence of the senses in developing an awareness of history. Sight, smell, hearing, and touch were all enlisted in the task of reconstructing the past. Even speech was a dramatic performance, and the actions that accompanied many rites and ceremonies helped to bring past people and events into the present, giving meaning to history and linking it to the future. The bridges between "was," "is," and "will be" were thus stronger in the Middle Ages than at other times in European history, and they enabled people to move easily between periods and to experience them without losing a sense of their integrity and reality.

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This point distinguishes the attitude studied in this paper from other medieval attitudes towards history. I shall not study here either the sense of continuity, identity, and changelessness, which is sometimes called traditionalism, nor the various techniques by which one thing was taken for another, such as allegory, metaphor, symbolism, exemplarism, and impersonation.[2] The historical bridges were between related but different periods and invited observers to participate in both. I shall be concerned less with the questions of artistic production and patronage—how and for whom works of art were created[3]—than with the effect they had on the people

A version of this paper was originally presented at the Fifth Penn-Paris-Dumbarton Oaks Colloquium held in Morigny, 4-7 November 1986, and will be printed, without illustrations, in its proceedings. The following abbreviations will be used: *CC* for *Corpus Christianorum* (and *CM* for the *Continuatio mediaevalis*), *MGH* for *Monumenta Germaniae historica*, and *PL* for *Patrologia latina*. I am indebted for help in revising this paper, after the initial presentation, to various people who heard or read it, especially Elizabeth Beatson and Madeline Caviness.

[1] "Past and Present in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries: Perceptions of Time and Change," in *L'Europa dei secoli XI e XII. Fra novità e tradizione: Sviluppi di una cultura. Atti della decima Settimana internazionale di studio. Mendola, 25-29 agosto 1986*, Pubblicazioni dell'Università cattolica del Sacro Cuore: Miscellanea del Centro di Studi medioevali, 12 (Milan, 1989), pp. 135-170. See also my article on "The Ceremonies and Symbolism of Entering Religious Life and Taking the Monastic Habit, from the Fourth to the Twelfth Century," in *Segni e riti nella Chiesa altomedievale occidentale*, Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 33 (Spoleto, 1987), II, 771-834.

[2] See Herbert L. Kessler, "On the State of Medieval Art History," *Art Bulletin*, 70 (1988), 166-187, esp. 177: "The work of medieval art was more agent than object. It did not so much attract the beholder's eye to itself as mediate vision toward something beyond." On the concept of *conformatio* (= modern personification) in medieval art, see Karl-August Wirth, "In the Margins of a Twelfth-Century Psalter," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 33 (1970), 22-23.

[3] Among recent works on these questions, see the papers presented at the Rennes conference on *Artistes, artisans et production artistique au moyen âge: Rapports provisoires*, 2 vols. (Rennes, 1983), of which the three volumes of the final publication have been published as *Artistes, artisans et production artistique au moyen âge: Colloque international*, I: *Les Hommes*, II: *Commande et travail*, and III: *Fabrication et consommation de l'oeuvre*, ed. Xavier Barral i Altet (Paris, 1986-90); Francis Salet, "Mécénat royal et princier au moyen âge," *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres: Comptes rendus*, 1985, pp. 620-629; and *Art and Patronage in the English Romanesque*, ed. Sarah Macready and F. H. Thompson, Society of Antiquaries: Occasional Papers, n.s. 8 (London, 1986), which includes papers on patronage at Hereford and St Albans and by Thomas Becket and Henry of Blois.

who saw them, lived and worked in the buildings, and participated in the rites and ceremonies. The nature of the reaction naturally differed with the type of bridge, and the context in which it was presented. A manuscript illumination made a different impression than a building, and a fresco in the nave of a church than a painting in a chapter-house. But they had in common that they created in observers a tendency to enter into the past and experience it in their own lives.

The question of the reaction to works of art has tended to interest aestheticians more than historians, and to be approached from a personal rather than a collective point of view. For Walter Pater, "the salt of all aesthetic study" was not a painting itself but, "What, precisely what, is this to *me*?," and Oscar Wilde in *The Critic as Artist* said that Pater treated a work of art "simply as a starting point for a new creation."[4] More work has been done on the effect of works of art on individuals than on groups in society.[5] Otto Pächt in his *Rise of Pictorial Narrative in Twelfth-Century England* examined "the evolution and specific character of the visual imagination peculiar to the medieval mind" and the "special technique," as he called it, that developed in the Middle Ages "for finding pictorial equivalents for verbal utterances, whether spoken or written."[6] "The records of public response to painting" in fifteenth-century Italy were called "distressingly thin" by Baxandall, who asked, "What sort of painting would the religious public for pictures have found lucid, vividly memorable, and emotionally moving?"[7] Belting in his book on *The Image and its Public in the Middle Ages* showed that the form, function, and content of representations of the Passion were interrelated and appealed to different groups and individuals in different ways. Art is not a language, he said, but it has a language, and he referred to "image-language" (*Bildsprache*) and to works of art as "speaking."[8] More generally, Miles explained in *Image as Insight* that, since vision in the Middle Ages was regarded as a two-way process between the viewer and the object seen, messages received from works of art were no less important than those that were given, especially in the context of public worship and devotion.[9] The very use in these works of terms like speech, language, and message show the difficulty of describing non-verbal responses outside a framework that implies the use of words.

Horace in his *Ars poetica* gave a classic expression to the medieval view that the human mind is more moved by what is seen than by what is heard.[10] St. Augustine in his commentary on John wrote, ". . . a picture is seen in one way, and letters are seen in another way. When you see a picture, the whole thing is to have seen and praised; when you see letters, this is not the whole thing, since you also consider to read."[11] Leo the Great in effect equated vision, touch, and words in his sixty-ninth sermon, telling his listeners to receive the Gospel story of the Passion

[4] Michael Levey, *The Case of Walter Pater* (London, 1978), pp. 183 and 196.

[5] See, for instance, Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (1951; rpt. Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1964), p. 106, who studied the effect of art on "the imagination, the will, and the actions of individuals," citing the examples of John Gualbert, Francis of Assisi, and especially Catherine of Siena, whose stigmatization was described in terms derived from visual rather than written sources; and also Chiara Frugoni, "Le mistiche, le visioni, e l'iconografia: Rapporti ed influssi," in *Atti del Convegno su 'La mistica femminile del Trecento'* (Todi, 1982), pp. 5-45, on the influence on late medieval visions of representations of the life of Christ, especially the Pietà.

[6] Otto Pächt, *The Rise of Pictorial Narrative in Twelfth-Century England* (Oxford, 1962), pp. vi and 55.

[7] Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy* (London, Oxford, New York, 1972), pp. 24 and 43-45, described the experience of a painting as "a marriage between the painting and the beholder's previous visualizing activity on the same matter."

[8] Hans Belting, *Das Bild und sein Publikum im Mittelalter: Form und Funktion früher Bildtafeln der Passion* (Berlin, 1981), *passim* (esp. pp. 20, 30, 105, 126, 129, 223); see also his "Langage et réalité dans la peinture monumentale publique en Italie au Trecento," in *Artistes* (note 3), (provisional) I, 731-750, esp. 734, and (final) III, 491-511, esp. 494.

[9] Margaret Miles, *Image as Insight: Visual Understanding in Western Christianity and Secular Culture* (Boston, 1985), esp. pp. 7-9 and 28.

[10] Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 180-181. This passage was cited in the early thirteenth century in the *Liber sancti Gileberti*, ed. Raymonde Foreville and Gillian Keir, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford, 1987), p. 7.

[11] Augustine, *In Ioannis Evangelium*, 24.2, in *CC*, XXXVI, 245.

"without a shadow of hesitation" and "as manifest as if you encountered them all with bodily sight and touch." Elsewhere he said that the Passion should inhere so firmly in his listeners' hearts that their reading became a kind of seeing and that "the Gospel speech (*sermo*) told [the story] so openly and clearly that to hear what is read is the same for devout and pious hearts as to see what was done." In another sermon he said that the Passion "should not be remembered as something past but honored as something present" both by the daily sacraments and the truth of the Gospel.[12] Similar words were found nine centuries later in the *Vita Christi* of Ludolf of Saxony, who said in the introduction that

> although many of these things are narrated as if they were in the past (*in praeterito*) you should meditate on all of them as if they were done in the present (*in praesentia*), since you will without doubt taste a greater sweetness from this. Read, therefore, what has been done as if it were being done; place before your eyes deeds of the past as if they were present, and you will thus feel them as more tasty and agreeable.[13]

This stress on experience and on bringing the past into the present is found in many writers of late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, when there was a tendency for symbols to merge with what they represented.[14] Images, like texts, were no longer purely narrative and descriptive, and allowed the viewer to encounter the event or person portrayed directly. They synthesized an historical moment and bore witness to an historical truth.[15] This attitude may have influenced the interpretation of Gregory the Great's celebrated dictum that a picture "takes the place of reading" for the unlettered, who can "read by seeing on the walls what they are unable to read in books."[16] Giordano da Rivalto in a sermon given at Florence in 1305 said that pictures were "the book of laymen and also of all people" and that the paintings by saints like Luke and Nicodemus were important evidence and of great authority. Luke painted the Virgin from life, and Nicodemus, who had been present at the crucifixion, showed the form and manner (*il modo e la figura*) of Christ on the cross. "Whoever sees the painting, fully sees almost the entire event (*fatto*)."[17]

[12] Leo the Great, *Tractatus*, 52.1, 69.3, and 70.1, in *CC*, CXXXVIIIA, 307, 421, and 426; see William Loerke, " 'Real Presence' in Early Christian Art," in *Monasticism and the Arts*, ed. Timothy Verdon and John Dally (Syracuse, 1984), pp. 38-41; and *Tractatus*, 64.1 in *CC*, CXXXVIIIA, 389. On the eucharist as a link between the past and present, see Gilles Quispel, "Zeit und Geschichte im antiken Christentum," *Eranos-Jahrbuch*, 20 (1951), pp. 115-140, tr. in *Man and Time: Papers from the Eranos Yearbooks*, Bollingen Series, 30.3 (Princeton, 1957), p. 91.

[13] Ludolf of Saxony, *Vita Jesu Christi*, Proem, I, 7, cited in Charles A. Conway, Jr., *The Vita Christi of Ludolf of Saxony and Late Medieval Devotion Centred on the Incarnation*, Analecta Carthusiana, 34 (Salzburg, 1976), p. 124.

[14] Michel Meslin, "Temps initiatique et progrès spirituel dans la nouvelle religiosité" (on Julian) and M. A. Bardolle, "La vie de Moïse de Grégoire de Nysse ou le temps spirituel vécu à travers l'imaginaire d'un modèle historique" (on Gregory of Nyssa) in *Le temps chrétien de la fin d'Antiquité au moyen âge: IIIe-XIIIe siècles*, Colloques internationaux de Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 604 (Paris, 1984), pp. 53 and 259. John Matthews discussed what he called the theatrical mode of reality in the fourth century in a lecture at Princeton on 14 November 1986.

[15] Michelangelo Cagiano de Azevedo, "Storiografia per immagini," in *La storiografia altomedioevale*, Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 17 (Spoleto, 1970), I, 119; see also Loerke, " 'Real presence' " (note 12), pp. 30-32, who stressed how the viewer of early medieval art passed "through the text to the event itself," and Kessler, "Medieval Art History" (note 2), p. 184: "Art's testimonial power assured pictorial narrative a special place in medieval culture."

[16] Gregory the Great, *Registrum epistolarum*, IX, 208 and XI, 10, ed. Paul Ewald and Ludo M. Hartmann, 2 vols, *MGH*, Epistolae, 1-2 (Berlin, 1887-94), II, 195 and 270 = IX, 209, and XI, 10 in the edition by Dag Norberg in *CC*, CXLA, 768 and 874. These texts were cited or alluded to by countless writers in the Middle Ages, and later, to show the parallel of seeing by the illiterate with reading by the literate and, by implication, the superiority of words over pictures, though this may not have been Gregory's intention. See the recent contributions on this subject by Michael Camille, "Seeing and Reading: Some Visual Implications of Medieval Literacy and Illiteracy," *Art History*, 8 (1985), 26-49; Herbert Kessler, "Pictorial Narrative and Church Mission in Sixth-Century Gaul," *Studies in the History of Art*, 16 (1985), 75-91; and especially the paper of Lawrence Duggan, "Was Art Really the 'Book of the Illiterate'?" to which I owe the citations from Theodulf and Strabo and which I read in typescript and has been published in *Word and Image*, 5 (1989), 227-251.

[17] *Prediche inedite del B. Giordano da Rivalto . . . recitate in Firenze dal 1302 al 1305*, ed. Enrico Narducci, Collezione di opere inedite o rare dei primi tre secoli della lingua (Bologna, 1867), pp. 170-171. Elizabeth Beatson kindly supplied this reference and one to the "Breve dell'arte de' pittori senesi" of 1355, who described themselves as "manifestatori agli uomini grossi che non sanno lectera, de le cose miraculose operate per virtù et in virtù de la santa fede": *Documenti per la storia dell'arte senese*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 3 vols. (Siena, 1854-56), I, 1.

The question of how images were seen was central in the battle over the veneration of icons that disturbed the Greek church in the eighth and ninth centuries. The acts of the Second Council of Nicea in 787 cited the description of the icon of the passion of St Euphemia by Asterius, who stressed the realism of the scenes of suffering and their emotional effect upon him, until he broke down in tears and was unable to speak.[18] The emperors Michael and Theophilus in their letter to Louis the Pious in 824 referred to pictures placed in high places "in order that the picture itself might be taken for scripture *(pro scriptura)*."[19] John of Damascus in his *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*[20] stressed the importance of images for those without "a knowledge of letters nor time for reading," saying that "the honour rendered to the image passes over to the prototype," and he used the philosophical view of sight in his three orations *Against the Calumniators of Images*.[21] The high value attributed to pictures in the Greek church was in part attributable to this view of the superiority of sight to hearing and, consequently, of pictures to written words.[22] Photius in a homily delivered at the unveiling of the image of the Virgin and Child in Hagia Sophia said that

> Just as speech is transmitted by hearing, so a form is imprinted by the faculty of sight upon the tablets of the soul, giving to those whose apprehension is not soiled by wicked doctrines a representation of knowledge concordant with piety. Martyrs have fought for the love of God, and have shown with their blood the dearest of their zeal, and their memory is contained in books. These things are seen enacted in pictures, also, which make the martyrdom of these blessed men more vivid to learn than from the written word. . . . These things are conveyed by speech and by pictures, but it is the spectators rather than the hearers who are drawn to imitation.[23]

Meanwhile, in the West, Theodulf of Orleans wrote in the *Libri Carolini*, after arguing for a middle course between worshipping and destroying images, that "painters can to some degree recall to memory the history of what is past," though he went on to say that writers, rather than painters, could understand "those things which are perceived by the senses only and expressed by words."[24] A generation later Walafrid Strabo cited Constantine, who in his vision had recognized the apostles from their portraits, as an example of someone "who learned the history of the ancients from pictures," and said,

> We sometimes see simple and unlettered people, whom words can scarcely bring to believe in what is past, so moved by a picture of the Lord's Passion or some other marvel that they show by their tears how the outer and visible forms are impressed like letters on their hearts.[25]

The phrase *exteriores figuras cordi suo lituris impressas* shows the parallel of pictures and words and underlines the importance of the concept of *figura*, which was also

[18] Asterius of Amasea, *Hom.* XI on the martyrdom of St Euphemia, *Patrologia graeca*, XL, 336A-337C. See Daniel J. Sahas, *Icon and Logos* (Toronto, 1986), pp. 130-131.

[19] *Concilia aevi Karolini*, ed Albert Werminghoff, *MGH*, Leges, 3: Concilia, 2 (Hanover-Leipzig, 1906-08), p. 475. See Judith Herrin, *Formation of Christendom* (Princeton, 1987), p. 469, n. 79.

[20] John of Damascus, *Expositio fidei*, IV, 16, ed. Bonifatius Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, vol. 2 (Berlin, New York, 1973), pp. 207-208.

[21] John of Damascus, *Contra imaginum calumniatores orationes tres*, I, 17, ed. Bonifatius Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, vol 3 (Berlin, New York, 1975), p. 93.

[22] Ibid., p. 19, n. 40. See Kessler, "Medieval Art History" (note 2), p. 183.

[23] Francis Dvornik, "The Patriarch Photius and Iconoclasm," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 7 (1953), 91.

[24] *Libri Carolini*, III, 23, ed. Hubert Bastgen, *MGH*, Leges, 3: Concilia, 2 suppl. (Hanover-Leipzig, 1924), p. 153. I am indebted to Paul Meyvaert for verifying the text of this passage.

[25] Walafrid Strabo, *De exordiis et incrementis rerum ecclesiasticarum*, 8, in *Capitularia regum Francorum*, ed. Alfred Boretius and Victor Krause, 2 vols., *MGH*, Leges, 2: Capitularia, 1-2 (Hanover, 1883-97), II, 484. The reading *lituris* is either a variant or perhaps a misprint for *litteris*, or, according to Du Cange, for *liniaturis*.

used by Giordano da Rivalto. According to Auerbach, "*figura* is clearly distinguished from most of the allegorical forms known to us from other contexts, by the historical reality of both what signifies and what is signified."[26] A *figura* (which may be a person or an event) is real, not a substitute for something else, and it therefore mediates between the realities of the past and of the present.

The clearest examples of *figurae* of this sort are found in Biblical typology. Abel, Melchizedec, Abraham, and Christ were almost interchangeable figures in making their respective offerings and sacrifices; and each was identified with the priest who celebrated the eucharist, as the prayer following the consecration in the liturgy of the mass shows. Leo presumably had this in mind when he said that the Passion was "not past but present" in the sacraments and the pages of Scripture, and Walafrid when he referred to "the external figures" of the Passion and other marvellous events which moved the hearts of observers. The figures of Cato, Virgil, and Beatrice in the *Divine Comedy* "can 'mean more' than themselves precisely because Dante conceives of them as fully alive and real, and *not* as allegories."[27] It is impossible to judge the precise impression made by such figures and scenes. Some Biblical cycles are divided into historical and typological, which suggests that they were seen as either stories (their "real" meaning) or allegories (their "other" meaning); but others have mixed scenes, without any obvious correspondence between them. Strohm said of the twelfth-century carved stone medallions in the south porch of Malmesbury Abbey that "the effect of so many popular types on an audience accustomed to typology must have been to bind the Old Testament subjects to the New with a series of veiled promises of Christ's victory over Satan."[28]

Scenes of historical events often conveyed a figurative rather than literal reality.[29] Lifelike details were sometimes added, as in the painting described by Paul the Deacon, showing the deeds of the Lombards in the palace at Monza, in which "it is clearly shown how the Lombards at that time cut their hair and what was their clothing and costume."[30] Liutprand of Cremona said that Otto I had a painting of his victory over the Magyars in 933 painted at Merseburg "so that you may see the true thing rather than the likeness of truth."[31] This distinction between *veri similis*—likeness of truth — and *vera res* — the true thing—probably came from the pseudo-Ciceronian *Ad Herennium*, which said that a narrative is made more similar to truth if it is in accord with custom, common opinion, and nature, and that these should be observed whether or not the subject matter is true, "for truth is often unconvincing if these are not preserved."[32] Paul the Deacon and Liutprand were

[26] Erich Auerbach, "Figura," in his *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur romanischen Philologie* (Berne-Munich, 1967), pp. 55-92, esp. 77, as translated in Peter Dronke, *Dante and Medieval Latin Traditions* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 7. See also Horst Günther, *Freiheit, Herrschaft und Geschichte: Semantik der historisch-politischen Welt* (Frankfurt, 1979), pp. 29-33, who stressed the specific chronological connections (*Zeitvorstellung*) associated with *figurae*, which link the past, present and future, and Belting, in *Artistes* (note 3), (provisional) I, 739, and (final) III, 499, who suggested that the two aspects are linked by likeness or *similitudo*, where the resemblance is at the same time literal and allegorical.

[27] Dronke, *Dante* (note 26), p. 7.

[28] Paul Strohm, "The Malmesbury Medallions and Twelfth Century Typology," *Mediaeval Studies*, 33 (1971), 180-187 (quotation on 186). See Piotr Skubiszewski, "Die Bildprogramme der romanischen Kelche und Patenen," in *Metalkunst von der Spätantike bis zum ausgehenden Mittelalter*, ed. Arne Effenberger, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin: Schriften der frühchristlich-byzantinischen Sammlung, 1 (Berlin, 1982), p. 220, and generally on the iconographical programs in Romanesque chalices and patens, "The Iconography of a Romanesque Chalice from Trzemeszno," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 34 (1971), 40-64, and "Bildprogramme," pp. 199-206 and 215.

[29] Cagiano de Azevedo, "Storiografia" (note 15), pp. 128-130.

[30] Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum*, IV, 22, in *MGH, Scriptores rerum langobardicarum et italicarum saec. VI-IX* (Hanover, 1878), p. 124.

[31] Liutprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis*, II, 31, ed. Joseph Becker, *MGH, Scriptores rerum germanicarum in usum scholarum* (Hanover-Leipzig, 1915), p. 52: "adeo ut rem ueram potius quam ueri similem videas."

[32] Ps-Cicero, *Ad Herennium*, I, IX, 16, ed. and tr. Harry Caplan, Loeb Library (Cambridge, Mass., 1954), p. 28: "Veri similis narratio erit si ut mos, ut opinio, ut natura postulat dicemus. . . . Si vera res erit nihilominus haec omnia narrando conservanda sunt, nam saepe veritas, nisi haec servata sint, fidem non potest facere; sin erunt ficta, eo magis erunt conservanda."

describing the visual equivalent of the technique of raconteurs who add fictitious details to their stories in order to make them more vivid and lifelike. Other representations embodied historical truth without attempting to reproduce an actual event, like the mosaics of Justinian and Theodora at Ravenna, and others were frankly propagandistic in character, like the twelfth-century frescoes in the Lateran palace showing the triumph of the reformed popes of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, where the hierarchical presentation made no effort to be factually accurate but embodied the deeper truth of the historical events.[33]

Abstract shapes and forms also conveyed meanings that could not always be put into words. Roundness, for instance, and the associated concepts of smoothness and evenness, conveyed a sense of perfection and completeness that went back to Antiquity and is not entirely lost today, as in the description of a "well-rounded" person.[34] Plato regarded the round or sphere as "the most perfect and the most self-similar of all shapes," which, for Marcus Aurelius, "irradiates a light whereby it sees the reality of all things and the reality that is in itself." Horace's description of a man as "strong [and] self-contained, smooth and rounded" was cited by many medieval writers. Ausonius added "in the manner of the world, too smooth for any blemish from without to settle upon him,"[35] where the words *instar mundi* show the parallel between the microcosm of man and the macrocosm of the world. The medieval depictions of a man with outstretched arms and legs enclosed within a circle illustrated perfection and harmony, like other homocentric diagrams in the twelfth century.[36] A town depicted within a circuit of walls, with order inside and chaos outside, was a sign of security and protection.[37] The toleration of open vistas in Antiquity contrasted with "the strong sense of enclosure" in the Middle Ages, when the theme of the man-made garden reflected "both medieval idealism and medieval 'inwardness' ", looking backward to an ideal of paradisaical perfection (Figure 1).[38]

[33] In addition to the works mentioned in my article on "Papal, Imperial and Monastic Propaganda in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries," in *Prédication et propagande au Moyen Age: Islam, Byzance, Occident. Penn, Paris, Dumbarton Oaks Colloquia, 3: Session des 20-25 octobre 1980* (Paris, 1983), pp. 185-186, see Christopher Walter, "Papal Political Imagery in the Medieval Lateran Palace," *Cahiers archéologiques*, 20 (1970), 155-176, and 21 (1971), 109-136; and Ernst Kitzinger, "The Gregorian Reform and the Visual Arts: A Problem of Method," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th ser., 22 (1972), 99-100; and "The Arts as Aspects of a Renaissance: Rome and Italy," in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Robert Benson and Giles Constable (Cambridge, Mass., 1982), pp. 643-644 and 648 (with further references).

[34] I am indebted to Professor John Callahan of Georgetown University for several references on this subject, which is discussed (with some of the references cited below) by Jean Leclercq, "Aux sources des sermons sur les Cantiques" (1959) and "Saint Bernard écrivain" (1960), in his *Recueil d'études sur saint Bernard et ses écrits*, 3 vols., Storia e letteratura, 92, 104, and 114 (Rome, 1960-69), I, 292, 333, and 351, n. 4, and in his introd. to Bernard of Clairvaux, *On the Song of Songs*, IV, Cistercian Fathers Series, 40 (Kalamazoo, 1980), pp. xxi-xxii. Bernard substituted *perfecte* for *rotunde* in his description of the unity of the Father and Son in his sermon 71 on the Song of Songs: *Serm. super Cantica*, 71.6, in *Opera omnia*, ed. Jean Leclercq a. o., 8 vols. in 9 (Rome, 1957-77), II, 218. Leclercq, in his introd. to the translation of this sermon, attributed this change to Bernard's pastoral sense, since *perfecte* was more abstract and familiar than *rotunde*, with its antique, poetic, and visual associations. On the expression of divine order in the abstract patterns of Cistercian grisaille glass, see Meredith Lillich, "Monastic Stained Glass; Patronage and Style," in *Monasticism and the Arts* (note 12), pp. 218-222.

[35] Plato, *Timaeus*, 33 B (cf. 34 B); Marcus Aurelius, *Meditationes*, XI, 12 (cf. VIII, 42, and XII, 3); Horace, *Sat.*, II, vii, 86; Ausonius, *Ecloga*, III, 1. 5; Augustine, *De quantitate animae*, XVI, 27; Paschasius Radbertus, *Vita s. Adalhardi*, 15 (*PL*, CXX, 1516C); Peter Damiani, *Liber qui dicitur Dominus vobiscum*, 19, and *De institutis ordinis eremitorum*, 27 (*PL*, CXLV, 249C and 360A); Honorius, *Gemma animae*, I, 195 (*PL*, CLXXII, 603 BC); and Sicard of Cremona, *Mitrale*, II, 1 (*PL*, CCXIII, 59B).

[36] Madeline Caviness, "Images of Divine Order and the Third Mode of Seeing," *Gesta*, 22 (1983), 109, wrote that "the human figure itself . . . reflects the order of the universe in its perfect symmetry, calm contour, and evocation of rhomboid, rectilinear, spherical, and elliptical forms." On the macrocosm/microcosm in the twelfth century, see also Marian Kurdzialek, "Der Mensch als Abbild des Kosmos," in *Der Begriff der Repraesentatio im Mittelalter*, ed. Albert Zimmermann, Miscellanea Mediaevalia, 8 (Berlin, New York, 1971), pp. 35-75, esp. 47-57.

[37] Chiara Frugoni, *Una lontana città. Sentimenti e immagini nel medioevo*, Saggi, 651 (Turin, 1983), pp. 10-11 and 124, citing among other sources the poem in honor of the city of Metz by Sigebert of Gembloux, who praised its walls "non facilis solvi, non expugnabilis hosti," in *MGH*, *Scriptores* in fol., IV, 477.

[38] Derek Pearsall and Elizabeth Salter, *Landscapes and Seasons of the Medieval World* (London, 1973), p. 54.

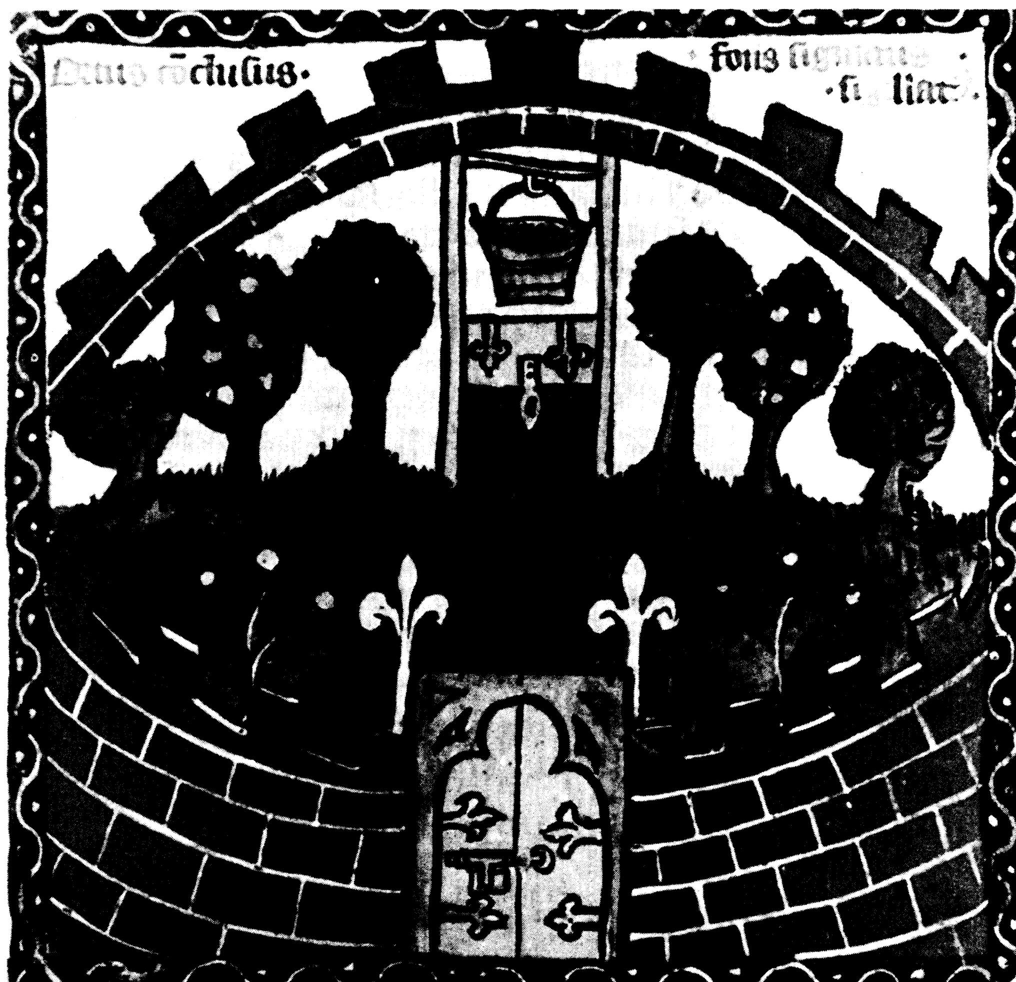

Figure 1. Hortus conclusus *(round walled garden with locked door and sealed well-head), ca. 1350. Darmstadt, Hessischer Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek,* Speculum humanae salvationis, *Ms. 2505, f. 7r (detail).*

With regard to architecture, Cassiodorus wrote in his *Variae* that old buildings should be maintained in their pristine splendor and new ones built "in the likeness of antiquity . . . so that only the newness of the materials differs from the work of the ancients."[39] The design of Charlemagne's church at Aachen reflected the proportions of Solomon's temple as described in the Old Testament. Other churches built during the Carolingian Renaissance and, most impressively, in Italy in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries were modelled on the Christian basilicas of the Constantinian and post-Constantinian age.[40] "All or nearly all the twelfth-century

[39] Cassiodorus, *Variae,* VII, 5, in *MGH, Auctores antiquissimi,* 15 vols. (Berlin, 1877-1919), XII, 204-205, cf. VII, 15 (ibid., p. 211) where he said that ancient buildings should be renewed, "excluding the defects," and new buildings clothed with the glory of antiquity. See Beat Brenk, "Spolia from Constantine to Charlemagne: Aesthetics versus Ideology," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers,* 41 (1987), 109. In the *Institutiones,* I, 15, 15, ed. R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford, 1937), 50, Cassiodorus wrote that in a textual emendation the letters should be formed "so that they may be thought to have been written by the ancients."

[40] See Richard Krautheimer, "The Carolingian Revival of Early Christian Architecture," *Art Bulletin,* 24 (1942), 30, who wrote, "The aim of the Carolingian Renaissance was not so much a revival of Antiquity in general as a revival of Rome, and specifically of one facet of the Roman past: the Golden Age of Christianity in that city." See also, especially on the role of Monte Cassino, Émile Bertaux, *L'art dans l'Italie méridionale de la fin de l'Empire Romain à la conquête de Charles d'Anjou* (Paris, 1903; rpt. 1968), p. 190; Kitzinger, "Gregorian Reform" (note 33), p. 95, and "A Virgin's Face: Antiquarianism in Twelfth-Century Art," *Art Bulletin,* 62 (1980), 19; Richard Krautheimer, *Rome: Profile of a City, 312-1308* (Princeton, 1980), pp. 178-181; and Herbert Bloch, "The New Fascination with Ancient Rome," in *Renaissance and Renewal* (note 33), pp. 615-621, esp. 619. On contrasting architectural developments in the Greek East, where churches in the eleventh and twelfth centuries became more intimate, diverse, and irregular, see Alexander Kazhdan and Ann Wharton Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1985), pp. 144 and 194.

Figure 2. S. Giovanni a Porta Latina, *Rome, 1191. The simple plan conforms to Roman basilicas of the fourth century. Columns, plinths, and some capitals are* spolia.

standard plans in Rome go back to early Christian local prototypes" (Figure 2).[41] This can be seen as a manifestation of the movement of revival and renewal that is collectively referred to as the Renaissance of the Twelfth Century and also, more specifically, as part of a campaign on the part of the papacy to win support for the reform movement.[42] The plans and decoration of some twelfth-century churches outside Rome, as in the Valdinievole and lower valley of the Arno, may also have been designed to show their subordination to Rome and connection with the ancient traditions of the papacy.[43] It would be unwise to push this point too far, however, since the enemies of the papacy also appealed to ancient tradition, and Roman architectural forms and motifs were used in many parts of Europe.[44] These reminis-

[41] Krautheimer, *Rome* (note 40), p. 176 (pp. 161-202 generally). See also Hélène Toubert, "Le renouveau paléochrétien à Rome au début du XIIe siècle," *Cahiers archéologiques*, 20 (1970), 99-154, rpt. in *Un art dirigé. Réforme grégorienne et iconographie* (Paris, 1990), 239-310, and the articles by Bloch and Kitzinger in *Renaissance and Renewal* (notes 33 and 40).

[42] Krautheimer, *Rome* (note 40), p. 179. Kitzinger, "Gregorian Reform" (note 33), p. 97 (also p. 101), in particular argued that the Gregorian reformers consciously went back to the buildings and mosaics of the fourth and fifth centuries, rather than the first and second, in order "to resume a tradition associated with the first golden age of the papacy."

[43] This point was made by Romano Silva in a talk on "Le pieve romaniche della Valdinievole" at the conference on St Allucio at Pescia on 19 April 1985.

[44] See Willibald Sauerländer, "Architecture and the Figurative Arts: The North," in *Renaissance and Renewal* (note 33), p. 677 (with references), and, generally, Piotr Skubiszewski, "*Ecclesia, Christianitas, Regnum*, et *Sacerdotium* dans l'art des Xe-XIe s. Idées et structures des images," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 28 (1985), 133-179, esp. 144 and 179; and, on secular visual propaganda, E. Baldwin Smith, *Architectural Symbolism of Imperial Rome and the Middle Ages*, Princeton Monographs on Art and Archeology, 30 (Princeton, 1956), esp. pp. 89-94, 100-103, and 156-157 on the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and Chiara Frugoni, "L'ideologia del potere imperiale nella 'Cattedra di S. Pietro,' " *Bullettino dell'Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo*, 86 (1976-77), 67-181, esp. 88-96.

cences of antiquity may have impressed modern scholars more than they did people at the time, who were used to seeing a mixture of old and new in buildings.

Many aspects of twelfth-century art and architecture seem to show a desire to recreate (or at least to establish an association with) the ambiance of antiquity, and especially of the primitive church. At Rome, "the classicizing taste of the period found some of its fullest and freest expression" in the furnishings of the new churches; and the decorations in the nave of Sta Maria in Cosmedin, the crypt of San Nicola in Carcere, and the apse of San Clemente, all of which date from about 1120, were based both in details and in overall composition on antique and especially early Christian models.[45] The statues of the *lupa* and of Marcus Aurelius, and even the collection of ancient sculpture at the Lateran Palace, carried a political message, as had the wolf and equestrian statue of Theodoric taken by Charlemagne to Aachen.[46] The later paintings of the *navicella* in old St Peter's, and probably also those in churches north of the Alps, stood at once for Christ's rescue of Peter and His support of the church.[47] The frescoes in the chapter-house of the abbey of the Trinity at Vendôme, which show the feast of Emmaus, the miraculous catch of fishes, the investiture of St Peter, the mission of apostles, and the ascension of Christ, have been associated with the visit of Pope Urban II in 1096 and with his program of ecclesiastical reform and centralization.[48] More generally, the many representations of the apostles in Romanesque sculpture reflected the new stress in the twelfth century on the *vita apostolica* and invited the viewers to participate in apostolic activities (Figure 3).[49]

The desire to draw together old and new may explain the medieval practice of reusing ancient works of art and fragments, known as *spolia*, and of adapting old objects to new uses.[50] Modern taste, which favors stylistic consistency and purity, often finds such mixtures displeasing, aside from the high standard of workmanship.[51] They were appreciated in the Middle Ages, however, probably because they embodied the sense of renewal and continuity that Heckscher called the *principium unitatis*: "What the medieval mind chiefly sought in the remains of the past was—in contradistinction to modern romanticism—the permanent form, the opposite of the ruin."[52] Brenk in an article on "*Spolia* from Constantine to Charlemagne" stressed

[45] Kitzinger, "Arts" (note 33), pp. 639-640, and Toubert, "Renouveau" (note 41), esp. 101-112.

[46] *Karl der Grosse: Lebenswerk und Nachleben*, ed. Wolfgang Braunfels (Dusseldorf, 1965), III (*Karolingische Kunst*), pp. 169, 307, 439, 451, and 572, and Krautheimer, *Rome* (note 40), p. 193.

[47] Belting, in *Artistes* (note 3), (provisional) I, 736, and (final) III, 496.

[48] Hélène Toubert, "Les fresques de la Trinité de Vendôme, un témoignage sur l'art de la réforme grégorienne," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 26 (1983), 297-326; cf. *Un art dirigé* (note 41), 365-402.

[49] Ilene Forsyth, "The *Vita Apostolica* and Romanesque Sculpture: Some Preliminary Observations," *Gesta*, 25 (1986), 75-82, esp. 79-80.

[50] A session at the meeting of the College Art Association in Boston (12-14 February 1987) was devoted to "The Perception of Antiquity in the Middle Ages: Ancient Spoils and Medieval Art," where Dale Kinney pointed out that the term *spolia* now used for such borrowings is of recent origin and groups together types of objects that were particularized in the Middle Ages. Ilene Forsyth in the abstract of her paper on "The Role of Spolia in the Cumulative Work of Art," said that such works of art conveyed "a special sense of cumulative historical tradition." See also William S. Heckscher, "Relics of Pagan Antiquity in Mediaeval Settings," *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 1 (1937), 204-220, rpt. in his *Art and Literature: Studies in Relationship*, ed. Egon Verheyen, Saecula Spiritalia, 17 (Baden-Baden, 1985), pp. 31-51, who is primarily concerned with gems but makes many remarks of wider concern, and the references to works on *spolia* given in *Renaissance and Renewal* (note 33), pp. 617, n. 4, 619, n. 17, and 639, n. 7.

[51] Sauerländer, "Architecture" (note 44), pp. 675-676, was impressed by the fact "that this juxtaposition of classical and barbaric forms was not felt to be disturbing," and attributed the efforts of scholars to explain the "apparently senseless mustering of antique forms" on the façade of St. Gilles to "an inadequate understanding of what one might describe as the fragmentizing, spoliating manner of borrowing from Antiquity which occurred here just as it did in Burgundy." Thomas Lyman in the abstract of his paper on "*Composito* vs. *Venustas*: Constrasting Use of Spolia in Romanesque Architecture" at the College Art Association (note 50) said that scholars customarily attribute the use of *spolia* "to limitations in resources if not simply in taste and judgement."

[52] Heckscher, "Relics" (note 50), p. 205 ("It is in the light of this 'principium unitatis' that we must understand the mediaeval attempts to restore Antiquity which go under the name of renovatio.") and p. 210 (rpt., pp. 32 and 37). Lyman in the paper cited above (note 51) related the use of *spolia* to medieval concepts of order.

Figure 3. The Way to Emmaus, *cloister relief, twelfth century, Silos, S. Domingo. Christ is dressed as a medieval pilgrim, and his scrip is decorated with the shell of Compostella.*

the aesthetic and ideological use of *spolia* to evoke the past and to establish connections with the traditions of the empire and early Christian Rome.[53] Abbot Suger of St Denis in particular wanted what he called "a combination and coherence of old and new work" in his buildings and works of art.[54] He had the famous eagle vase in the Louvre made, as he said, "by transferring it from an amphora into the form of an eagle," which preserved the ancient work while changing its form and use (Figure 4); and he had a fluted cup of sardonyx, possibly of Byzantine origin, made into the chalice which is now in the National Gallery in Washington.[55] It

[53] Brenk, "Spolia" (note 39), pp. 103-109.

[54] Suger of St Denis, *De consecratione ecclesiae sancti Dionysii*, 2, ed. A. Lecoy de la Marche, *Oeuvres complètes de Suger*, Société de l'histoire de France (Paris, 1867), p. 218, tr. Erwin Panofsky, *Abbot Suger, On the Abbey Church of St.-Denis and its Art Treasures* (Princeton, 1946), p. 90. See the article (of which the title was taken from this phrase by Suger) by Madeline Caviness, " 'De convenientia et cohaerentia antiqui et novi operis': Medieval Conservation, Restoration, Pastiche and Forgery," in *Intuition und Kunstwissenschaft: Festschrift für Hanns Swarzenski* (Berlin, 1973), pp. 205-221.

[55] Suger, *De rebus in administratione sua gestis*, 34, ed. Lecoy de la Marche, p. 208, tr. Panofsky (note 54), p. 78. See the articles of Danielle Gaborit-Chopin, "Suger's Liturgical Vessels," and William D. Wixom, "Traditional Forms in Suger's Contributions to the Treasury of Saint-Denis," in *Abbot Suger and Saint-Denis: A Symposium*, ed. Paula Gerson (New York, 1986), pp. 285-289 and 295-297.

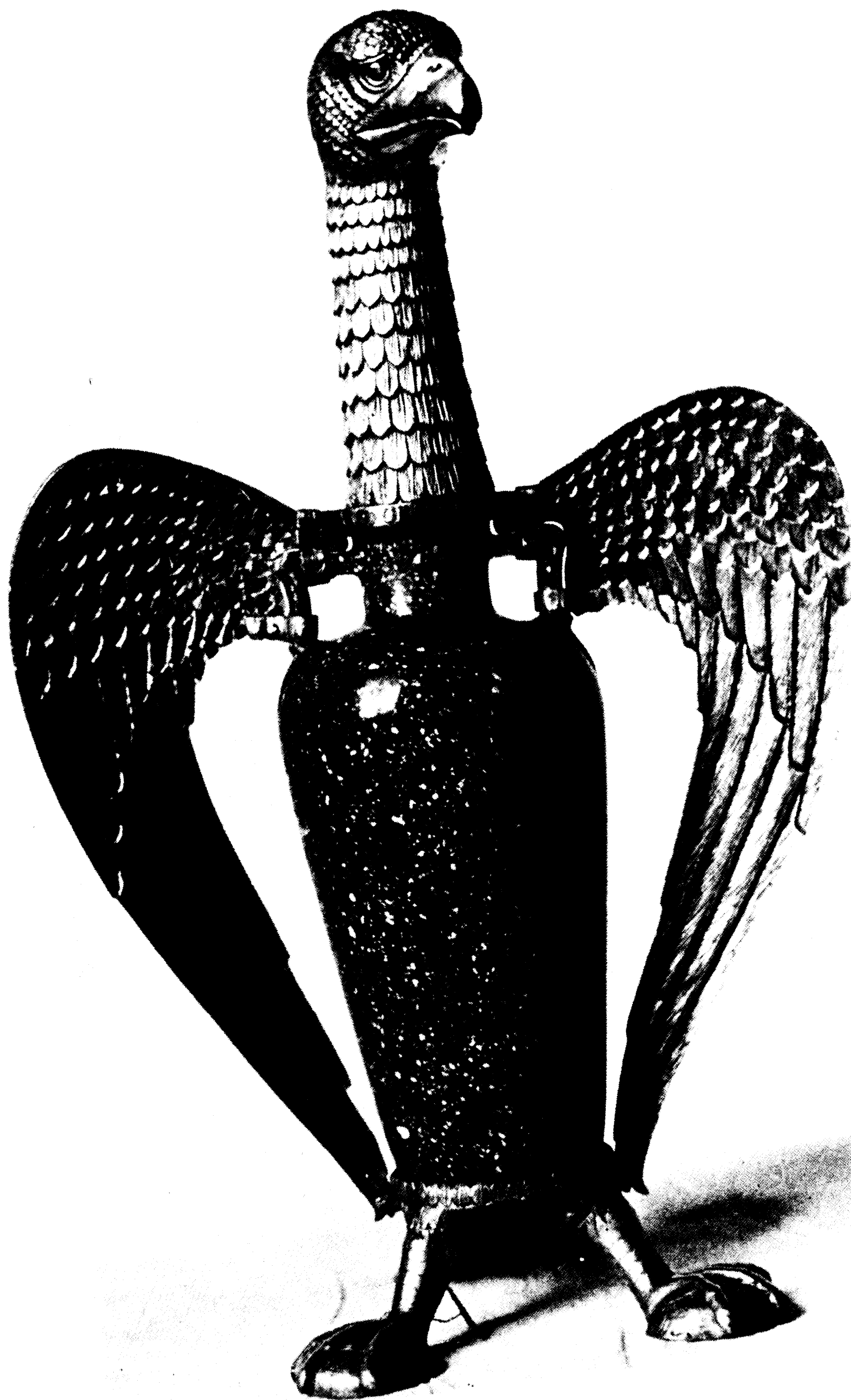

Figure 4. Eagle Vase, *Musée du Louvre, Paris. Antique porphyry vase, the gold and silver mount added by Abbot Suger (1081-1151) of St. Denis.*

has a somewhat Greek form and may have been designed specifically for use in the Greek liturgy at St Denis.[56]

The copies and pastiches made in the eleventh and twelfth centuries combined a concern for "iconographic content, truth, and tradition" with "a degree of personal freedom and artistic license," and were designed not to deceive but to bring past and present together by using old styles for new uses.[57] Some copies may have been forgeries in the modern sense, made in order to deceive, or for some other ulterior motive, like the so-called tomb of St Hilary, which was associated with the controversy over the relics of St Sernin. But even those that included conscious (and to us sometimes deceptive) imitations of earlier styles should not be considered forgeries. One side of the St Guilhem sarcophogus, for example, was made in the twelfth century, apparently to match the others, which date from the fourth; and in the cloister at Ripoll the three fourteenth-century sides reflect the style of the twelfth-century side (Figure 5).[58] There is no obvious motive for this other than the desire, as expressed by Suger, to combine old and new elements in a way that would embody the principles of unity, continuity, and authority. Giordano da Rivalto said that St Luke's portrait of the Virgin at Rome showed Her "exactly as She was."[59] The icons at Sta Maria Nuova and at San Sisto were both believed to be by St Luke. Each had its personality, and they greeted one another when they met in processions. They were often copied, and one of them served as the model for the image of the Virgin seated on the right hand of Christ in the twelfth-century mosaic in the apse of St Maria in Trastevere (Figure 6). The image of Christ there derived from the icon at the Lateran, and those of SS Peter and Paul from early Christian prototypes, so that the entire mosaic served to mediate between past and present.[60]

Perhaps the most puzzling aspect of the interweaving of old and new elements in medieval art and literature was the tendency to combine apparently incompatible and inconsistent elements and to separate form and theme, investing ancient forms with modern meanings and presenting ancient themes in modern form. Panofsky called this the principle of disjunction, which he described as "a basic inability to make what we would call 'historical' distinctions" and as "an irresistible urge to 'compartmentalize' such psychological experiences and cultural activities as were to coalesce or merge in the Renaissance."[61] According to Heckscher's principle of unity, a sense of historical continuity and renewal brought together

[56] This suggestion was made by Philippe Verdier at the conference on linguistic pluralism in Montreal on 3 May 1986. On the Greek liturgy at St-Denis, see Niels K. Rasmussen, "The Liturgy at Saint-Denis: A Preliminary Study," in *Suger and Saint-Denis* (note 55), p. 44.

[57] Hanns Swarzenski, "The Role of Copies in the Formation of the Styles of the Eleventh Century," in *Studies in Western Art: Acts of the Twentieth International Congress of the History of Art*, I: *Romanesque and Gothic Art* (Princeton, 1963), p. 9. Cf. the remarks by Meyer Schapiro in *Art News*, 54, no. 5 (Sept., 1955), 44 and 59-60; and Caviness, " 'De Convenientia' " (note 54). See also Margarete Bieber, *Ancient Copies: Contributions to the History of Greek and Roman Art* (New York, 1977), p. 174.

[58] On this and other examples cited here, see Caviness, " 'De convenientia' " (note 54), pp. 212-218, who remarked (p. 217) on "a conscious archaism" in the style, composition, and motifs of the St-Hilaire tomb.

[59] Giordano da Rivalto, *Prediche inedite* (note 17), p. 171.

[60] Cf. Kitzinger, "A Virgin's Face" (note 40), pp. 6-19, who argued that the representation derived from the Sta Maria Nuova icon and was a sort of visual citation, set off by style rather than quotation marks, and Hans Belting, who said in a lecture at Princeton University on 10 March 1988 that it was modelled on the San Sisto icon and saw it as representing the marriage of Christ and the church and the union of the church and the people of Rome. See also Dale Kinney, "Spolia from the Baths of Caracalla in Sta Maria in Trastevere," *Art Bulletin*, 68 (1986), 379-397, who suggested (p. 394) that the heads of couples on the capitals paralleled the coupling of Christ and Mary in the mosaic and underlined the relation of the old and new images, and Kessler, "Medieval Art History" (note 2), p. 176.

[61] Erwin Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art* (Stockholm, 1960; rpt. 1972), pp. 84 and 106. During the Middle Ages, according to Panofsky (pp. 110-111), "The classical world was not approached historically but pragmatically, as something far-off yet, in a sense, still alive and, therefore, potentially useful and potentially dangerous." On these views, see the article of Cormier cited below (note 64) and the introduction to *Renaissance and Renewal* (note 33), pp. xxiv-xxv.

Figure 5a. and b. Fragments of Relief Sculpture from the Tomb of St. Guilhem *(d. 812), Museum, St. Guilhem-le-Desert.*

a) Fragment of Miracle Scene, *from the front panel, fourth century.*

b) The Three Magi, *from the back panel, ca. 1138.*

Figure 6. S. Maria in Trastevere, *Rome, Apse mosaic, ca. 1130.*

differing forms and contents that Panofsky said remained apart until the Renaissance, when a new sense of history distinguished the past from the present.

These divergences apply not only to temporal and spatial inconsistencies (anachronism and anatopism) but also to timelessness and spacelessness (uchronia and utopia), which look forward as well as backward.[62] It is an odd fact of linguistic usage that although the words utopia and anachronism—being in no place or in the wrong time-framework—are both familiar, the parallel terms uchronia and anatopism—being out of time or in the wrong place—are rarely used, though they are equally useful. Réau in his book on Christian iconography studied these inconsistencies under the headings of places (events depicted in "wrong" settings), people (portraits of later people in scenes of earlier events), and clothing (people dressed in historically "wrong" costumes). Anachronism can also take the form of simultaneity, where events that took place at different times are shown or described together (as in charters, where it has led to many mistaken charges of forgery); and anatopism appears as a lack of perspective, where events and objects seem to be in the wrong place or position in relation to each other. Towards the end of the

[62] See Louis Réau, "L'anachronisme dans l'art médiéval," which was originally published in the *Mélanges Souriau* in 1952 and republished as chap. 4 of vol. I of his *Iconographie de l'art chrétien*, 3 vols. in 6 (Paris, 1955-59), which is cited here. On the terms anachronism (uchronia) and anatopism (utopia), which are of comparatively recent origin, see ibid., pp. 280, n. 1, and 283, n. 1, and Aimé Petit, *L'anachronisme dans les romans antiques du XIIe siècle* (Lille, 1985), pp. 31-37. I am indebted to Professor Raymond Cormier for bringing this work to my attention.

Figure 7. Guido da Rimini?, Last Supper; Christ enthroned between St. Benedict, the Virgin, John the Baptist, and Abbot Guido of Pomposa; Abbot Guido (d. 1046) turning water into wine *(1318). Pomposa Abbey, refectory.*

Middle Ages painters increasingly used perspective and "authentic" detail to create spatial and chronological distance, so that objects and places receded into space and people and event into time. Mantegna, whose tone has been called cool and timeless, especially tried to depict the past "as it really was." Though anachronism never disappeared, it was no longer the prevailing mode and was finally defeated in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by archaeology, which by providing an ever-increasing stream of factual details about the past tended to embalm historical events in a single moment of time.[63] Historical painters of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries still adjusted the settings of the scenes to suit their needs, however, and some modern artists and producers have revived a sense of the values of anachronism and anatopism, which relate the past more directly to the viewer and give it a broader meaning than when it is presented in a strictly historical manner.

The mixtures of old and new and of far and near in the Middle Ages reflected a distinctive way of seeing and ordering the observable world and its past. In old French texts antique characters were sometimes presented as pagans and sometimes not, according to Cormier, who said that anachronisms were part of the medieval sense of relevance and renewal, functioning "as necessary mediators of past and present."[64] Gurevich called anachronism "an inseparable feature of medieval historiography" and said that seeing Old Testament kings and prophets side by side with New Testament figures and men from Antiquity on cathedral portals made people aware of "history in its fullness, its coherence and its unity, its immutability and the continuation of time past in time present."[65] Anachronism and anatopism thus kept events alive and inserted them into the contemporary current of life.

Scriptural scenes especially were given a direct relevance by showing the participants in contemporary settings and clothing, or simply in timeless flowing robes. The paintings of the Last Supper in refectories, of which the earliest known examples date from the twelfth century, often show the analogy between the painted and the observing eaters, and may also have had a eucharistic significance (Figures

[63] In addition to Réau, see Anthony Grafton, "Renaissance Readers and Ancient Texts: Comments on Some Commentaries," *Renaissance Quarterly*, 38 (1985), 629-630, and John Pope-Hennessey, in *Times Literary Supplement*, 21 November 1986, p. 1315.

[64] Raymond J. Cormier, "The Problem of Anachronism: Recent Scholarship in the French Medieval Romances of Antiquity," *Philological Quarterly*, 53 (1974), 145-157 (quotation on 157), who criticized Panofsky for overlooking the nuances in the medieval attitude towards Antiquity. See also Petit, *Anachronisme* (note 62), who analyzed the various types of anachronism in twelfth-century romances of Antiquity and argued that through anachronism they became syntheses of an ideal world, embodying both ancient and medieval elements.

[65] Aron J. Gurevich, *Categories of Medieval Culture*, tr. G. L. Campbell (London, Boston, Melbourne, Henley, 1985), pp. 129-130.

Figure 8. Last Supper, *twelfth century (before 1123), St. Albans Psalter, f. 21r, Hildesheim, St. Godehard.*

7 and 8).[66] In the St Albans psalter the representation of Christ washing the feet of the apostles paralleled the monastic ceremony of the Mandatum, in which the abbot washed the feet of guests,[67] and the scene of the descent from the cross was used as an occasion for the display of grief by the mourners (Figures 9 and 10).

[66] Creighton Gilbert, "Last Suppers and their Refectories," in *The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion*, ed. Charles Trinkaus and Heiko Oberman, Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought, 10 (Leiden, 1974), pp. 371-402, esp. 372, 375, and 385, and Peter Fergusson, "The Twelfth-Century Refectories at Rievaulx and Byland Abbeys," in *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles*, ed. Christopher Norton and David Park (Cambridge, 1986), p. 175.

[67] *The St. Albans Psalter (Albani Psalter)*, ed. Otto Pächt, C. R. Dodwell, and Francis Wormald, Studies of the Warburg Institute, 25 (London, 1960), pp. 88-89, citing Meyer Schapiro, who described the depiction as "a dramatic re-enactment" of the contemporary rite.

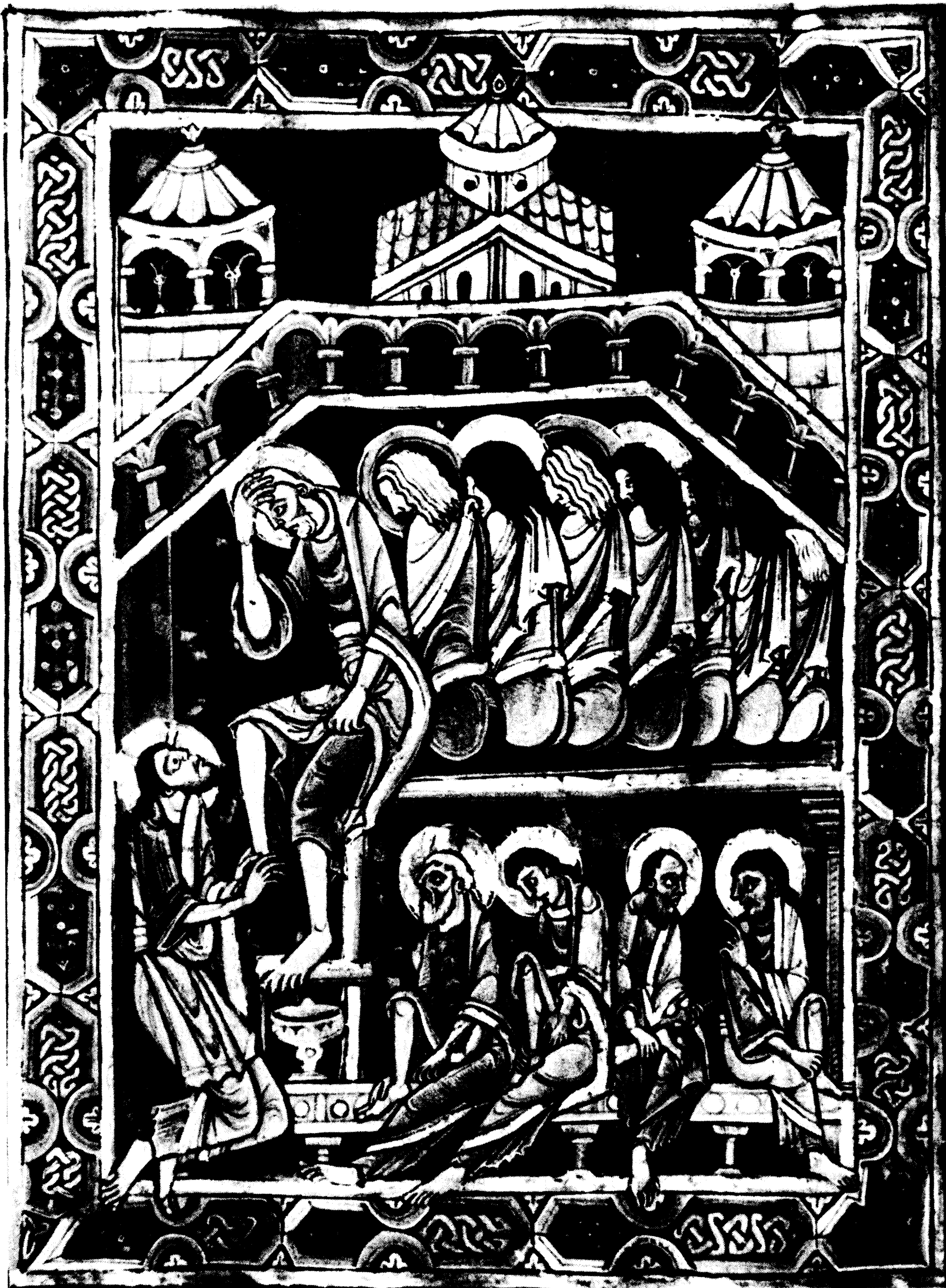

Figure 9. Washing of Feet, *twelfth century (before 1123), St. Albans Psalter, f. 19v, Hildesheim, St. Godehard.*

Pächt called this "the first realization in Western art of the potentialities of this theme as a vehicle of religious sentiment," and he compared it with the *Deposition* by Roger van der Weyden in the Prado (Figure 11), calling it a kind of *tableau vivant* in which "the presence of the beholder for whom the scene is enacted is acutely felt." For Pächt, medieval pictorial narrative was like stagecraft and "a basically theatrical form."[68] It was not owing to ignorance or chance that in representations of the crucifixion the good thief is sometimes shown in contemporary dress. The scenes from the life of John the Baptist in his oratory at Urbino, painted in the early fifteenth century, show a crowd of well-dressed burghers listening to John preach, seeing

[68] Pächt, *Pictorial Narrative* (note 6), pp. 31-32.

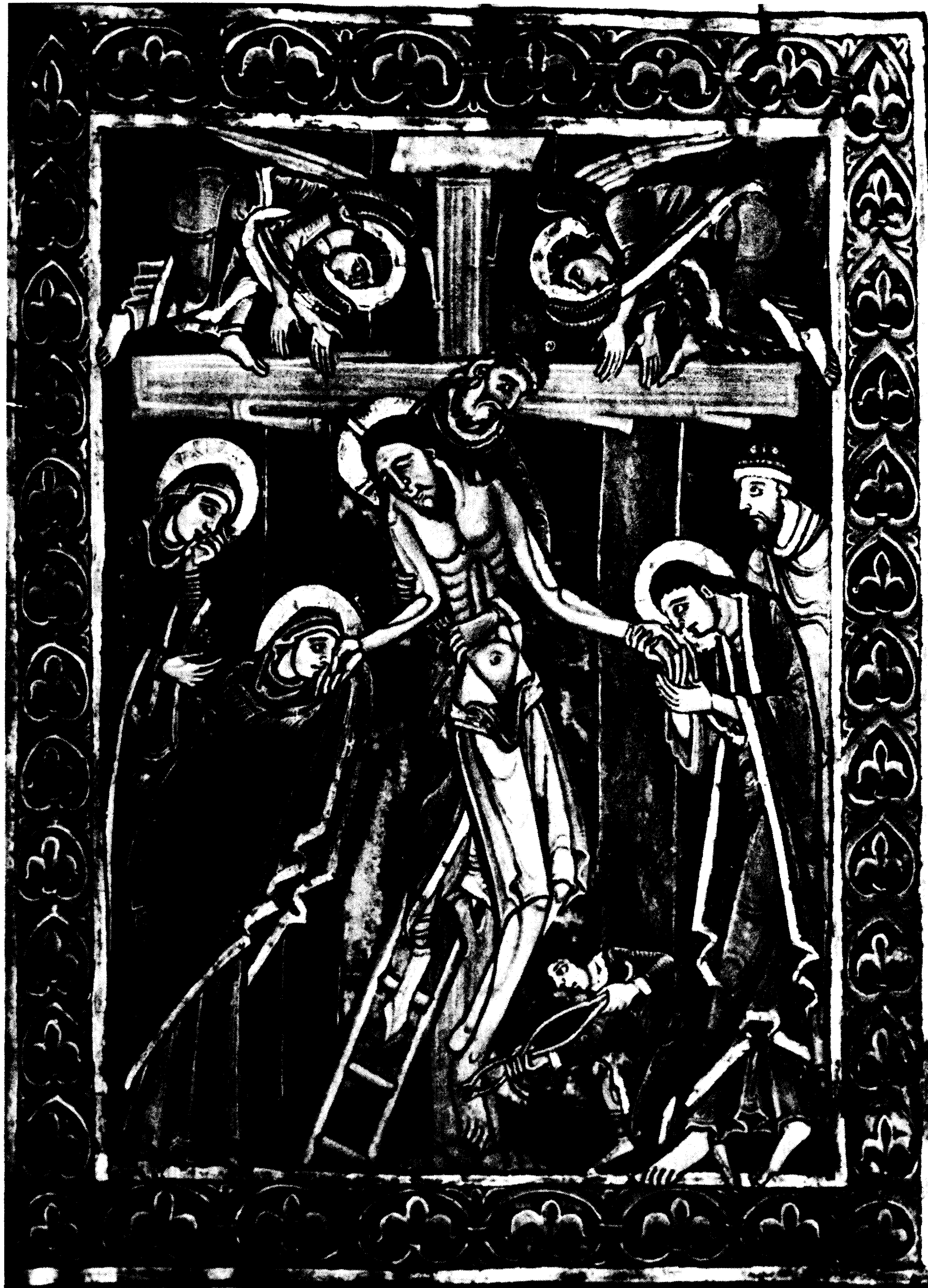

Figure 10. Deposition, *twelfth century (before 1123), St. Albans Psalter, f. 24r, Hildesheim, St. Godehard.*

him baptize Christ, and taking off their clothes to be baptized themselves (Figure 12). The immediacy and applicability of the scenes would have been lost if the onlookers had been depicted as Israelites of the first century.

People in the Middle Ages were thus encouraged and invited to participate in the life of the past, which was also the life of the present, both by their created surroundings and by their religious life and ceremonies. Christian history was confirmed and extended by religious paintings, like those described by Giordano da Rivalto, showing that the Magi were great lords "because they are painted with royal crowns on their heads."[69] For Peter Comestor, "The gospel lived on in the

[69] Giordano da Rivalto, *Prediche inedite* (note 17), p. 171.

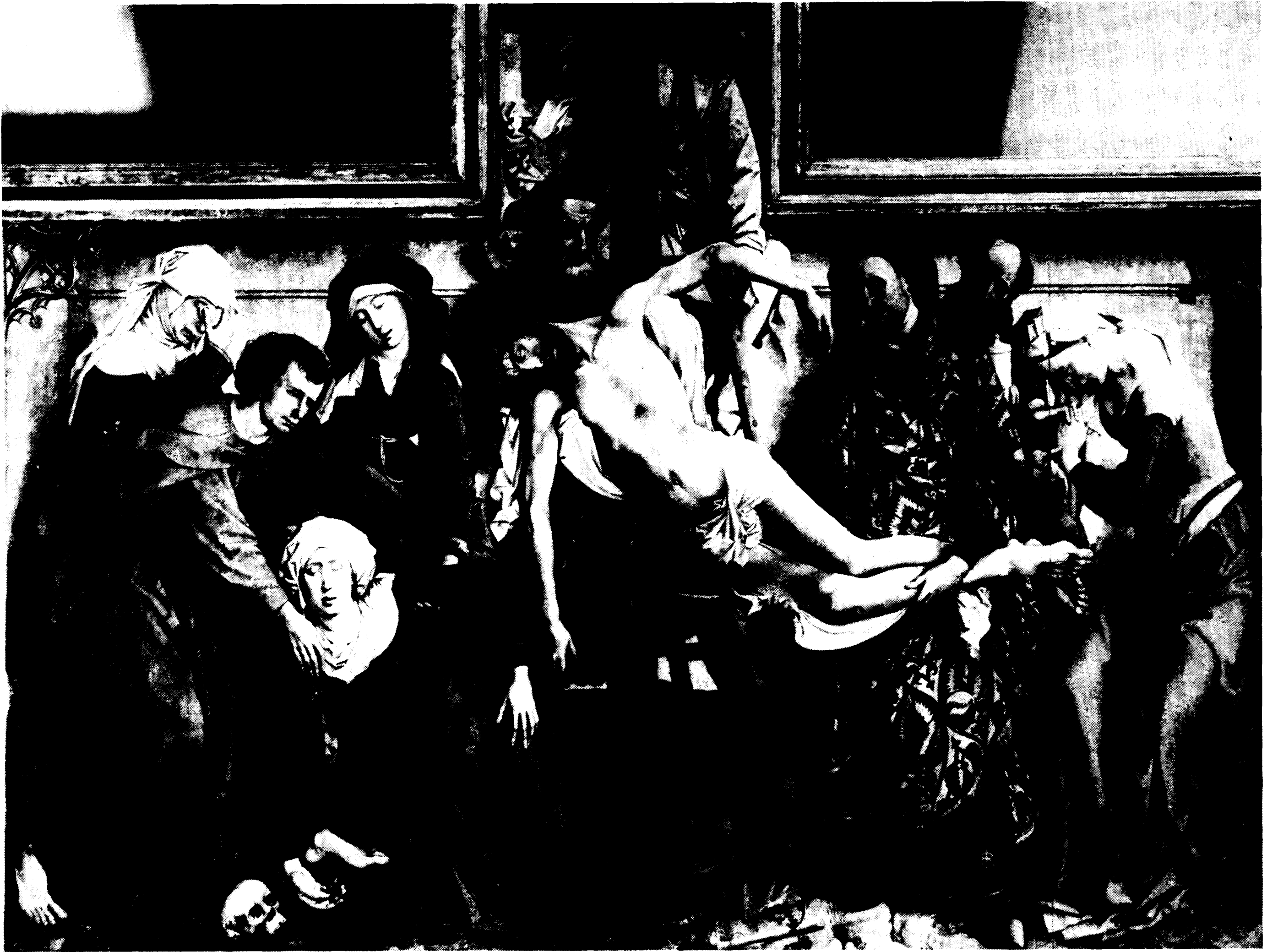

Figure 11. Roger van der Weyden, Deposition, *Prado, Madrid. The dress of the sorrowing participants is partly timeless and partly contemporary. Nicodemus, supporting Christ's legs, wears the rich brocaded mantle of a Flemish fifteenth-century merchant, and Mary Magdalen a jewelled belt.*

sacred drama of divine service. . . . The liturgy in his view re-enacted, recalled and even offered evidence for the gospel story."[70] In paintings and sculptures of the central events of Christian history, the miscellaneous observers, like the later donors, were not anachronistic intruders but actual witnesses and participants. Liturgical drama in particular mediated between the events of Christian history and religious images and works of art. The Passion-ceremonies that developed in the East in the eleventh century, and later spread to the West, created new functions for icons, and the life-sized figures in sculptural deposition-scenes of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries probably represent Good Friday ceremonies in which the faithful participated (Figure 13).[71] These figures are not overtly allegorical or symbolic; and as naturalistic *figurae*, they represent at the same time the historical event of the deposition, its re-enactment in the Good Friday liturgy, and the participants in the ceremony.

For many Christians, the reality of the religious past lay in a direct experience without the intermediary of either art or the liturgy. They were literally in touch

[70] Beryl Smalley, "Peter Comestor on the Gospels and his Sources," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, 66 (1979), 116-127: "His account of the entry into Jerusalem, the Last Supper, the Crucifixion and Resurrection read like a commentary on the liturgy for Holy Week and Easter" (p.116), and "Relics threw another bridge to the past" (p. 121).

[71] Belting, *Bild* (note 8), pp. 160 and 225-234, and Neil Stratford, "Le mausolée de saint Lazare à Autun," in *Le tombeau de saint Lazare et la sculpture romane à Autun après Gislebertus* (Autun, 1985), p. 28 and n. 124, who on p. 16 described the mausoleum itself as "a living theatre" in stone.

Figure 12. Lorenzo and Giacomo of Sanseverino, Baptism of Christ *(1416), S. Giovanni Battista, Urbino. The group of onlookers to the right are dressed as fifteenth-century citizens, in contrast to the Baptist and the kneeling apostles and disciples on the opposite bank.*

with persons and events of Christian history through the saint, to whom honor and gifts were given and from whom favors and protection were expected as if they were present, and whose living reality was confirmed by miracles and by appearances in visions and dreams,[72] and above all through pilgrimages, which brought pious Christians from all over Europe to the *loca sancta* where the saints and martyrs had lived and died. Time was suspended for pilgrims, who by their presence were transformed from observers into witnesses and frequently into participants in the events that had occurred in the places they visited.[73] Paula in the fourth century adored the cross "as if she saw the Lord hanging [on it]"; she kissed the stone that the angel rolled from His tomb; and she licked the place where His body lay "as if thirsting by faith for the desired waters."[74] A few years later Egeria stressed the immediacy of her experiences when travelling in the Holy Land, and the realism of ceremonies like the Good Friday procession at Jerusalem, when "the bishop

[72] See Chiara Frugoni, " 'Domine, in conspectu tuo omne desiderium meum'; visioni e immagini in Chiara da Montefalco," in *S. Chiara da Montefalco e il suo tempo: Atti del quarto convegno . . . organizzato dall'archidiocesi di Spoleto (Spoleto 28-30 dicembre 1981)*, ed. Claudio Leonardi and Enrico Menestò, Quaderni del "Centro per il collegamento degli studi medievali e umanistici dell'Università di Perugia," 13 (Perugia, Florence, 1985), p. 175.

[73] See Loerke, " 'Real Presence' " (note 11), pp. 34-37, who said that the *loca sancta* stressed "the actuality and historicity of the event" and the "actual experience" of the pilgrim.

[74] Jerome, *Ep.* 108.9, ed. Isidore Hilberg, 3 vols., Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum, 54-56 (Vienna-Leipzig, 1910-18), II, 314-316; see also *Ep.* 46.11, ibid. I, 340-341.

Figure 13. Deposition, *thirteenth century (slightly under life-size; cross, ladder, and footrests modern). Pescia, S. Antonio Abate.*

was accompanied in the very way that the Lord was accompanied."[75] Countless pilgrims and, later, crusaders were inspired by the desire of the psalmist to "adore in the place where his feet stood."[76] Replicas of the church of the Holy Sepulchre, and sometimes, as at Bologna, whole complexes based on the holy places in Jerusalem were built for those who were unable to go to the Holy Land.[77]

[75] *Itinerarium Egeriae*, XXXI, 3, in *CC*, CLXXV, 77, tr. John Wilkinson (London, 1971), p. 133; see E. D. Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire AD 312-460* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 115-116. On parallel ceremonies at Rome, see A. Baumstark, *Liturgie comparée* (Chevetogne, n.d.), p. 153.

[76] Peter the Venerable cited this passage in a letter asking the patriarch of Jerusalem to serve in his stead, since he himself as a monk was forbidden physically to see, kiss, and weep at the places of Christ's passion and his own redemption: *Ep.* 83, in *The Letters of Peter the Venerable*, ed. Giles Constable, 2 vols., Harvard Historical Studies, 78 (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), I, 220.

[77] Robert Ousterhout, "The Church of San Stefano: A 'Jerusalem' in Bologna," *Gesta*, 20 (1981), 311-322, who argued that the complex was more than a souvenir and was a real reconstruction used in the Easter liturgy.

Pilgrims, like penitents and holy men, were set off and associated with revered figures of the past by their distinctive clothing and appearance. Ailbert, the founder of Rolduc, was said to have worn a "moderate" habit "neither poor nor rich, but tighter and shorter than the modern usage, hardly touching the top of his feet, such as the clergy used in ancient times, when religion was still flourishing."[78] The author of the treatise *On the truly apostolic life* said that monks, because they shared the privileges of the apostles, should also wear their costume, which derived from the seamless robe of Christ. This poor clothing, reaching to their feet, showed their contempt for the world, whereas the large tonsures, deriving from the crown of thorns, showed that by carrying Christ's cross in this world they would inhabit His kingdom in the next.[79] Here the analysis left the realm of *figurae* and entered that of allegory and symbolism, where one thing stood for something else and where the links with the present were more in evidence than those with the past.

Such figures, dressed in archaic costumes modelled on those of Christ, the apostles, and the early monks, seem anomalous today, as they did to some contemporaries, but they were not out of place in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, when the spirit of rebirth and the desire to renew ancient ideals were in the air. They were living anachronisms, in place but out of time, just as the people who came to the churches built and decorated in the style of the fourth century were living anatopisms, in time but out of place. They were the counterparts of the medieval paintings showing distant events transplanted to familiar settings and surroundings, and more remotely, of the mixture of old and new found in buildings and works of art, and in the representations of biblical and classical figures.[80] People in the Middle Ages were not unaware of chronological or topographical distinctions, or of the differences between their own and other ages and lands; but they were profoundly alive to the continuity of history and constantly reinforced their links with the past, which at the same time pointed to the future. Through works of art, buildings, and religious ceremonies and experiences, they created a framework of historical consciousness that was lost and changed when a different sense of history, and of the relation of the present to the past, emerged in succeeding ages.

[78] *Annales Rodenses* (facsimile ed.), ed. P. C. Boeren and G. W. A. Panhuysen (Assen, 1968), p. 30 (f. 3r).

[79] *De vita vere apostolica*, V, 22, in *Veterum scriptorum et monumentorum . . . amplissima collectio*, ed. Edmond Martène and Ursin Durand, 9 vols. (Paris, 1724-33), IX, 1026AD.

[80] Heckscher, "Relics" (note 50), p. 220 (rpt. 417), suggested an analogy between Wibald's use of "Scito te ipsum" on the church at Corvey and the use of ancient architectural and decorative elements, and also the ancient works of art transformed by medieval settings.