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The Metropolitan Museum of Art BULLETIN



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VS DE VERDVN · CONTINENS · ARGEN

The Year 1200

This *Bulletin* is devoted to objects in the collection of the Museum's Medieval Department and The Cloisters, in honor of the exhibition that will open on February 12: *The Year 1200*. The show will present over three hundred works of art made by metalworkers, sculptors, illuminators, scribes, ivory carvers, goldsmiths, and stained-glass-window makers during the two decades on either side of the year 1200, the generation working "between Romanesque and Gothic." This is the first exhibition to bring together so many pieces from this complex period, which has always presented difficulties to art historians. We have usually tried to categorize its innovations as a stage in "late Romanesque" or in "early Gothic," but we actually know very little about how these innovations relate to the art that came before and after, or the influences that shaped them. We hope the exhibition will encourage scholars to unravel some of the mysteries surrounding this period, but it is more than an exercise in art historical documentation. Around the year 1200 were produced some of the most extraordinary works of art in Western history, and our exhibition is dedicated to them, to presenting their craftsmanship, their vitality, and their beauty.

Introducing Nicholas of Verdun

In the exhibition there are outstanding works by two artists we know by name: Benedetto Antelami and Nicholas of Verdun. As strong, individual personalities they stand out from among their countless anonymous contemporaries. But no relationship can be established between them. Though they belong to the same generation, each has a different approach to art. Benedetto Antelami, the leading north Italian architect and sculptor, designed the baptistery at Parma and sculpted its three portals between 1196 and 1214. Nicholas of Verdun, the greatest of Mosan craftsmen, is best known for two major, influential works: the enameled ambo of Klosterneuburg (1181) and the repoussé Shrine of the Virgin at Tournai (1205; Frontispiece). Although the northern Nicholas and the southern Benedetto worked in the quite different stylistic traditions of their countries, they have one thing in common: an awareness of classical art.

Throughout the twelfth century there is evidence of a spasmodic interest in antique art, but nothing to equal Nicholas of Verdun's passionate absorption of it. He did not simply pick up a convenient motif or stylistic trick: he seems to have understood the classical artists' interest in representing man as a living, beautiful being, not a symbol or pattern. He shaped human figures that are vivid, substantial, with drapery that emphasizes form and contour rather than denying them; his faces are personalized – the ones shown in Figure 1, for instance, are like portrait studies of human emotion. We do not know what prompted this "proto-Renaissance," or what kind of antique models he could have studied. The art most likely to have been available to him, so far

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ON THE COVER

*Gideon's fleece and the flowering
of Aaron's rod (back) paired
with the Annunciation. Detail of
a medieval embroidery discussed
on pages 262 to 277*

FRONTISPIECE

*The Presentation of Christ in the
Temple. Detail of the Shrine of
the Virgin, by Nicholas of Verdun,
Mosan, 1205. Cathedral of
Tournai. In the Metropolitan
Museum's exhibition *The Year
1200**



from the orbit of the classical Mediterranean world, would have been the widely circulated Hellenistic statuettes, carved gems, and coins and medals.

In contrast, Benedetto Antelami's sculptural style sprang from local north Italian traditions that can be traced back to late antiquity. In Italy, the former heart of the Roman empire, classical survivals always existed, in decorative details, drapery motifs, the handling of textures, facial types. But intentional copies of antique works were, surprisingly enough, less frequent in Italy during the twelfth century than north of the Alps. Compare the two heads in the lower part of Figure 3, which Antelami sculpted in his severe, patterned Romanesque style, to the head of Luna, the moon, above: in its three-dimensional plasticity and its ornamental frame it harks directly back to Roman funeral portraits. The difference between the treatment of these faces, however, suggests that Antelami did not adopt the classical motif through sympathy with its style, but simply because such an image was part of his basic vocabulary as an Italian artist. The deliberate investigation of antique art, in the sense of recreating its spirit, so clearly manifested by Nicholas of Verdun around 1200, would not turn up in Italy until a century later.

Indeed, the great innovator of the year 1200 was the Mosan goldsmith. His naturalistic treatment of the human face and figure and his highly developed drapery style were imitated throughout northwestern Europe, and came to have important ramifications in the Ile-de-France and along the Meuse, in the Rhineland, in England, and in Scandinavia. It took another generation for the new trends to reach Spain and Italy. Antelami could not have realized that an artistic revolution had taken place somewhere in the north. It is only in retrospect, as can be seen in our exhibition, that we know that around 1200 a new style was born, experimented with, reshaped many times, and finally strengthened enough to survive for centuries.

FLORENS DEUCHLER

Chairman, Department of Medieval Art and The Cloisters

1. *Decorative border from the Shrine of the Three Kings, by Nicholas of Verdun. Begun between 1181 and 1191, finished by his workshop around 1230. Cathedral of Cologne. Photograph: Rheinisches Bildarchiv*

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2. *The prophet Daniel. Detail of the Shrine of the Three Kings, by Nicholas of Verdun. Photograph: Rheinisches Bildarchiv*



3. *Heads of two onlookers and Luna. Detail of a relief of the Deposition, by Benedetto Antelami (1150-about 1233), north Italian. Baptistry of the Cathedral of Parma. Photograph: Foto Marburg*

Documents in Gold

KATHARINE R. BROWN *Research Assistant, Department of Medieval Art*



1. *Solidus of Flavius Valens (364-378), reverse. Weight 4.5 grams; die position $\uparrow\downarrow$; mint mark ANTI (Antioch); legend: RESTITVTOR REIPVBLICAE (Restorer of the State). All coins are reproduced actual size. Gift of Darius Ogden Mills, 04.35.25*

The solidus was a gold coin, which Constantine I introduced as a successor to the aureus. It weighed approximately 4.5 grams.

The die position, or axis, is the relative position of the reverse to the obverse, or “fixed,” die. This may be determined by placing the obverse of the coin right side up in the palm of your hand and turning the coin over from right to left as you would the page of a book. Because die positions varied from one mint to another in the Early Christian-Byzantine period, it is important to note them. The relative arrangement of the pair of dies used to mint United States coins today is the same as it was for this coin.

The mint mark consists of Latin letters designating the name of the city in which the coin was struck. It always appears on the reverse of the coin in the exergue (the segment beneath the base line of the image represented).

In this coin the emperor Valens, in military attire, holds the labarum in his right hand and supports Victory on a globe in his left hand. In the field to the left is a Christogram.



2. *Aureus of Marcus Aurelius (161-180), reverse. Gold, weight 7.3 grams. Bequest of Joseph H. Durkee, 99.35.204*

This coin, minted in Rome, is an example of the traditional Roman Vota Publica type, which was still found as late as the sixth century.

For devotees of Byzantine history, the familiar quotation “Rome was not built in a day” applies also to the long, laborious emergence of “New Rome” (Constantinople) as the Christian capital. An examination of the coinage, one of the principal vehicles by which the rulers proclaimed and disseminated the essential ideas and events of their reigns and hence among the key documents of the period, will show the persistence of the pagan tradition and illuminate the steps taken by the Christian emperors to fashion new imperial images and a new iconography worthy of the second Rome.

Among the possible explanations for the slow shaping of the eastern *Caput Mundi* from its founding by Constantine I in 324 was the desire of the Byzantine emperors to maintain political unity with the more pagan West, an aim that was not completely abandoned until about a century after the Ostrogothic kingdom established itself on Italian soil in 476. A coin whose image and legend exemplify this aspiration for unity is shown in Figure 1.

The equivalent significance given to pagan and Christian symbols on this coin issued by a Christian emperor is testimony to what must have been a trying coexistence of Christianity and paganism that resulted in part from the emperors’ desire for political unity. Thus it was that despite their official persecution of pagans and their advocacy of the new faith, the Christian emperors continued to do homage to the symbols and rituals of paganism, which for centuries had been a deeply rooted religion. It should be remembered, in this regard, that even though paganism received its strongest endorsement from the tradition-bound, wealthy Roman aristocracy and Christianity its greatest support from the Christian

emperors, paganism was not confined to the West nor Christianity to the East but both religions were widespread all over the Mediterranean world. In addition, Romans had long been tolerant of “alien” religious ideas and symbols, and were thus accustomed to different iconographies existing side by side or even being combined.

One of the pagan rituals that the Christian emperors continued to perform was the *Vota Publica* (public vows) (Figures 2-4). Like many social and religious ideas and practices, the periodic offering of public vows for the prosperity of the empire and for the health and good fortune of the ruler had come to Rome from Ptolemaic Egypt, and it was one of the most popular of the pagan festivals throughout the empire. It had been inaugurated in Rome by Augustus (27 B.C.-A.D. 14), who linked it with his acceptance of the imperial rule for a ten-year period only, deeming himself unworthy to accept such power for life as had been proposed by the Senate. Thereafter the vows were celebrated every ten years throughout the Imperial period on the kalends (the first day of the ancient Roman month) of January. We know that in Rome, as early as the second century, when the cult of Isis was at its height, the *Vota Publica* had actually been fused with one of the great festivals of Isis, the *Navigum Isidis* (the launching of the sacred ship). Perhaps this fusion reinforced both cults, but in any case both the worship of Isis in Rome and the *Vota Publica* celebrations throughout the empire were still alive in the early sixth century. At the time of Constantine the Great certain pagan elements were abolished from the ceremony, but the traditional games and chariot races continued to accompany the offering of the vows.

The coin in Figure 3 is a solidus of Constantius II (337-361). The figures of *Roma* and *Constantinopolis* support between them a shield whose legend indicates that the coin was issued in celebration of Constantius's Tricennalia (thirtieth year of rule). The *vota* or vows accomplished during the first thirty years of the emperor's reign and those promised for the forthcoming ten years are recorded. Constantius has broken with the past

3. *Solidus of Constantius II (337-361), reverse. Weight 4.4 grams; die position ↑↓; mint mark RSMP (Rome); legend: GLORIA REI PVBLICAE (Glory of the State), and on the shield: VOT/XXX MVLT/XXXX (Vot[a] XXX/Mult[uplicatis] XXXX). Gift of Darius Ogden Mills, 04.35.18*



4. *Solidus of Gratian (367-383), reverse. Weight 4.5 grams; die position ↑↑; mint mark ANOB (Antioch), followed by Γ (officina mark); legend: VICTORIA AVGVSTORVM, and on the shield: VOT/V/MVL/X. Gift of Darius Ogden Mills, 04.35.20*



In the mint mark, the AN stands for Antioch and the OB for obryzato (of refined gold).

Officinas, or individual workshops, were indicated by Greek letters having numerical equivalents: A = 1, Β = 2, and so forth. Thus the Γ (gamma) on our coin reveals that it came from the third officina in Antioch. In this period officina marks were customarily placed, as here, after the mint mark on the reverse die.

in his scheduling of the vows: this coin commemorating his Tricennalia was issued in 353, considerably before his thirtieth year of rule (according to the Roman calendar), and showing, thereby, that he had abandoned the Augustan tradition of accepting the supreme power of rule only for a ten-year period. Other Christian emperors likewise abbreviated the intervals between celebrations, and the occasions on which the vows were celebrated were greatly in excess of the number of ten-year periods in the reign. This general tendency of the time to increase the frequency of festivals was motivated not only by the desire of the emperor, under whose aegis they were given, for the popularity they gained for him, but also by the treasury's need for the regular income these festivals brought in the form of obligatory offerings.

Another *Vota Publica* type frequently issued by the Christian emperors showed the winged Victory as the recorder of the imperial vows (Figure 4). At first it may strike one as curious that the Christian emperors sanctioned



5. *Sestertius of Vespasian (69-79), reverse. Bronze, weight 26.7 grams. Rogers Fund, 08.170.115*



6. *Solidus of Leo I (457-474), reverse. Weight 4.47 grams; die position ↑↓; mint mark THSOB (Thessalonika); legend: VICTORI AAVGGG. Bequest of Gwynne M. Andrews, 31.33.247, on indefinite loan to the American Numismatic Society*

The three Gs in the legend indicate three ruling colleagues. Their presence enables us to date the coin at the end of 473, after the emperor Leo had appointed his grandson Leo to be his successor and Julius Nepos to be emperor in the West.

The meaning of the star in the field on either side of Victory has not yet been definitely established.



7. *Solidus of Maurice Tiberius (583-602), reverse. Die position ↑↓; mint mark CONOB; legend VICTORI AVGGH. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 17.190.147*

This is one of eight coins and four consular medallions of this emperor mounted together with four coins from earlier reigns, to form the gold girdle from the Cyprus treasure, which was unearthed in 1902.

There is no doubt that CONOB originally stood for money of refined gold of Constantinople, but later the mark came to be used for Carthage, probably for Thessalonika, and possibly for Antioch. On the basis of comparison with similar coins in the Dumbarton Oaks collection, this coin, as well as the others in the Cyprus girdle, is considered to be Constantinopolitan.

The coins in the girdle were recently convincingly attributed by Philip Grierson to the first rather than to the second consulship of Maurice Tiberius—that is to 583 instead of 602. Since his son, who later shared his rule, was not born until 584, the second G of AVGG in the legend probably stands for Maurice Tiberius's wife, Constantina, the Augusta.

The H following the surrounding legend is the officina mark, now and hereafter in this location rather than with the mint mark in the exergue.

the winged Victory as the recorder of their vows, especially since this type is found as late as the sixth century when the Christian faith was already firmly established. The explanation is one of the most interesting stories of the period.

In the Imperial era, Victory had been regarded as a virtue representing the victorious quality of both the Roman emperor and the state. This female deity, Victoria, symbolized the triumphant progress of Rome in the world and was frequently depicted on the coinage (see Figure 5). The Roman people clung so tenaciously to this popular cult that it was regarded by the Christians as one of the major impediments against the dissemination of Christianity. So it was that one of the longest and most desperate struggles between the forces of Christianity and paganism was fought over this cult and consequently over the presence of the great statue of Victory in the senate house in Rome. Even after Gratian succeeded in having the statue removed in 382, his successors found it impossible to eradicate the worship of this goddess. The coins bear witness to the fact that the Christian emperors actually made use of her popularity by adapting her representation to Christian or imperial usage. Considering the reluctance of the people to abandon the worship of Victory, it is understandable that on Gratian's Vota Publica issue (Figure 4) Victory records the vows while the Chi-Rho monogram, or Christogram (the first two letters of the Greek word for Christ), appears almost apologetically in the field.

Gradually, however, Christian symbols became more directly or personally associated with the figure of Victory (for example, a coin of Aelia Flaccilla, wife of Theodosius I [379-395], in the British Museum shows Victory inscribing the cross on a shield), and in 422, under the patronage of Theodosius II (408-450), the old pagan goddess first became truly Christianized. The goddess was portrayed standing to the left and holding a long cross with a legend reading VICTORIA AUG. This design, illustrated by a solidus of Leo I (457-474) in the Museum's collection (Figure 6), maintained its popularity until the end of the fifth century.

The cross that the goddess supports has little beaded borders, which recall the jeweled borders of the great cross that Theodosius II had had erected on the summit of Mount Calvary in 420. Furthermore, since the first issue of the coin type in 422 coincided so closely with Theodosius's erection of the famous monument, many scholars have identified this beaded cross held by Victory with the great jeweled cross on Golgotha.

In a recently discovered contemporary passage, the Christian author St. Prosper associated the initial issue of this coin with the imperial victory over the Persians in 421. Thus on the coin Christianity, symbolized by the cross, was supported by Victory, who was viewed as the protectress of the cross in the presence of the Persian threat. It would seem that in the minds of the Christians Victoria had been transformed: she had come to represent only the abstract concept of the empire and was no longer deified.

This Christianized Victory remained the preferred reverse type until the end of the fifth century, at which time Anastasius (491-518) substituted a scepter with a Chi-Rho monogram for the long cross. Finally, in the succeeding reign, Justin I (518-527) substituted the facing figure of an angel wearing male attire for the female profile figure of Victory (Figure 7). But this angel, for all his Christian attributes—the long cross in his right hand and the *globus cruciger* (globe surmounted by a cross) in his left—was still accompanied by the old legend: VICTORIA AVG. Even though the cross on graduated steps, introduced by Tiberius II (578-582) in 578, had slowly begun to claim its place as the preferred reverse type, this angel was the most common reverse design until the end of the sixth century.

By the seventh century, the cross on graduated steps frequently displaced the angel, and, from the reign of Heraclius (610-641) on, it became the usual reverse representation on all denominations of gold (Figure 8). (It should be noted that although we have been examining the most prevalent reverse types, there had been isolated occurrences of the Chi-Rho monogram alone and the cross alone from as early as about 350). But this image

of the cross was not merely meant to be a general allusion to the Christian faith; it was still another reference to the great jeweled cross erected on Mount Calvary by Theodosius II. The detail of beaded borders had been abandoned, but it had been replaced by the representation of the graduated steps signifying Golgotha. Whereas in the fifth century this cross had been depicted supported by Victory, now only the memory of her lingered on in the surrounding legend: VICTORIA AVG. After two hundred years the symbol of Christianity could at last stand independently without the help of Victory.

It was especially fitting that the coins of Heraclius should display the cross of Golgotha as their salient feature, for shortly after this emperor came to power, the Persians invaded Syria and Palestine and, in 614, stormed the sacred city of Jerusalem, looting the treasures and destroying the Christian sanctuaries. Even the cross of Golgotha was not spared. It was primarily to recover this cross that Heraclius launched his great campaigns, which assumed the proportions of a crusade. After six years of struggle the emperor returned to Constantinople victorious. He had conquered the Persians, regained the Byzantine provinces of Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, and recovered the Holy Cross for the Christians. After his triumphal entry into the capital of the Byzantine empire, he set off for Jerusalem where he restored the Holy Cross to its proper place.

8. *Nomisma (solidus) of Heraclius (610-641), reverse. Weight 4.5 grams; die position ↑↓; mint mark CONOB (probably Constantinople); legend: VICTORIA AVSΥE. Gift of Darius Ogden Mills, 04.2.820*



From the time of Heraclius on, the solidus was usually referred to as the nomisma (νομισμα). The coin shown here gives an excellent example of a mixed inscription: with the Latin *v* and the Greek *υ* for the letter *u*. The *ε* following the legend is the officina mark. The letter *I* in the field may refer to a numerical sequence, although its meaning has not yet been firmly established. As far as we know, it is a very rare occurrence on coins like this one from the early part of Heraclius's reign.



9. *Solidus of Constantius II, obverse. Weight 4.4 grams; die position ↑↑; mint mark on the reverse SMAN (Antioch); legend: FLIVL CONSTAN TIVSPERPAVG (Flavius Julius Constantius Perpetuus Augustus). Gift of C. Ruxton Love, 67.265.20*

In the early fourth century one essential change from the traditional late Roman portrait was made: the laurel wreath (garland of victory) had been replaced by an ornamental headband, or fillet, the diadem, worn by eastern monarchs as an emblem of royalty.



10. *Solidus of Constantius II, obverse of Figure 3. Legend: FLIVL CONST ANTIVSPFAVG (Flavius Julius Constantius Pius Felix Augustus)*

11. *Solidus of Leo I, obverse of Figure 6. Legend: DNLEOPE RPETAVC (Dominus Noster Leo Perpetuus Augustus)*



12. *Detail of Figure 11, enlarged eight times*



While the reverse sides of the coins of Heraclius all bear this same image, the obverses vary and show that in the seventh century, and largely under the auspices of this emperor, several deeply rooted traditions in coinage came to an end.

Throughout the fourth century the emperors had, with few exceptions, fashioned their coins following the traditional late Roman format of the profile portrait to the right (occasionally in military attire) (Figure 9). One exception, however—the frontal military portrait—deserves special mention (Figures 10, 11). It was slow to gain favor after its inception by Constantius II (337-361), but a variation of it—what numismatists call the three-quarter military portrait—was popular from the reign of Theodosius II throughout the fifth and sixth centuries. The coins mounted in a pectoral in the Museum (Figure 13) give an excellent illustration of both the immense popularity of the frontal and three-quarter military portraits and the endurance of the profile portrait. Here the central medallion is flanked by solidi—most of them bearing a three-quarter military portrait. The following emperors are represented: Theodosius I (379-395), Anthemius (emperor in the West 467-472), Basiliscus (emperor in the East 476-477), and Justinian I (527-565). Mounted at the bottom of the piece are two examples of the profile type: they are tremisses (one-third the weight of a solidus) of Justinian I. The third profile portrait, on the solidus in the upper left corner, is as yet unidentified. The central medallion not only demonstrates the persistence but also the influence of this design, for it is a barbarian copy of a Roman medallion—perhaps of the emperor Anthemius.

Constantius's issue of the military portrait was very appropriate since it promulgated the assimilation of the great military tradition of Rome. The Byzantine emperors, like their Roman predecessors, preserved in their concept of the title "Emperor" the meaning of "Imperator," which had designated the commander in chief of the army during the Roman Republic. Almost without exception, the Byzantine rulers had been accomplished military leaders and were, more often than not,

chosen by the will of the soldiers and recognized by the Senate. From the lively accounts of Ammianus Marcellinus, writing in the fourth century, we know that Julian, Valentinian, and Gratian were all acclaimed in the fields by the troops. And even as late as 565, when Justin II succeeded Justinian, he “was invested with the imperial garments . . . [and] a fortunate soldier . . . encircled his neck with a military collar [and] four robust youths exalted him on a shield.”

It has been pointed out that pagan gods had frequently been represented in military attire or with military attributes, probably as an indication of their *virtus* (the qualities of excellence and valor). The fact that Byzantine emperors are represented in military attire signifies the survival by transference of this concept from pagan antiquity to the Christian era. The image also has a triumphal significance: it represents the emperor as the victorious chief of the army—a further survival from pagan antiquity. The Byzantine emperors stressed this triumphal aspect by the image portrayed on their shields (Figure 12), showing the emperor mounted on a horse and trampling an unfortunate barbarian underfoot. Religious significance was assigned to this image by many Christian writers. For example, according to Eusebius’s interpretation of the Greek theory of *mimesis* (imitation) the government of the Christian empire was to be a terrestrial copy of the rule in heaven. These writers believed that the wars against the barbarians were waged with God’s help to achieve this heavenly rule on earth. Or, as Eusebius had said of Constantine I,

Thus the emperor in all his actions honored God, the controller of all things . . . and God requited him by subduing all the barbarous nations under his feet . . . and he proclaimed him as a conqueror to all mankind and made him a terror to his adversaries.

While the tradition of the military portrait had begun to break down during the sixth century (for example, Justinian I had substituted the *globus cruciger* for the spear), it was Heraclius who formally replaced the military dress by civil attire, the chlamys (short

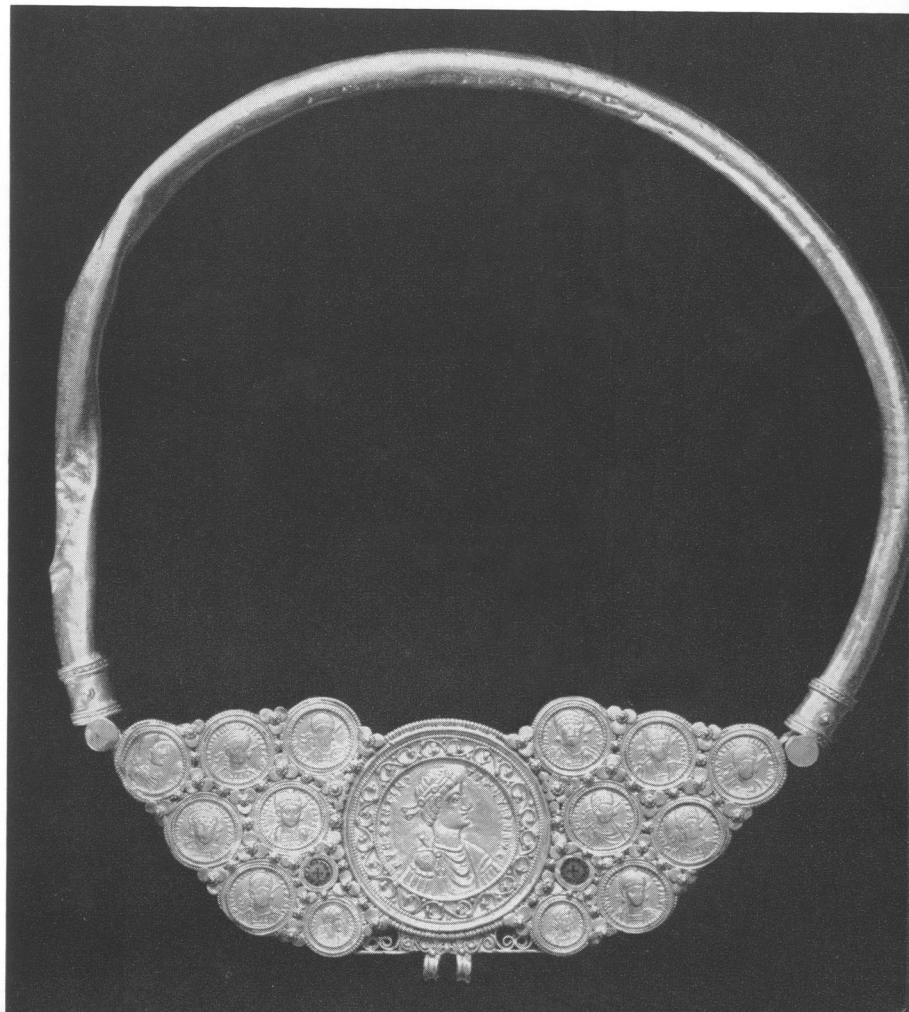
oblong mantle fastened with a fibula at the shoulder), which remained the preferred dress until the eleventh century. On the earliest coins from Heraclius’s reign the bearded emperor is portrayed facing front, wearing a helmet and chlamys and carrying a cross in his right hand (Figure 14). That the emperor holds a cross reflects the association of the Christian religion with the imperial office—signifying the very essence of the Byzantine spirit and motivation.

On coins dating from the end of Heraclius’s reign, showing Heraclius and his sons Heraclius Constantine and Heraclonas (Figure 15), the traditional obverse legends, Roman imperial titles, are conspicuously absent. This was the first step in the change toward placing the imperial image on the reverse of the coins and Christ or the Virgin on the obverse—a change that was to be accomplished by the last quarter of the seventh century (Figure 16).

It was also under the inspiration of Heraclius that the first instance of a reverse legend in

13. Pectoral. Byzantine, VI century. Gold, height $9\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 17.190.1665

Flanking the central medallion and below its center are two small decorative gold and niello disks.





14. *Nomisma of Heraclius, obverse of Figure 8. Legend: [D N HERACLIUS P P AVG] (Dominus Noster Heraclius Perpetuus Augustus)*

This coin can be dated from October 610 to January 613, while Heraclius ruled alone. In conjunction with the association of Christianity with the imperial office specifically illustrated on this coin, it is interesting to note that following the precedent set by Phocas in 602 Byzantine emperors were now crowned in church rather than in the atrium of the palace or in the Hippodrome.

15. *Nomisma of Heraclius, showing Heraclius, Heraclius Constantine, and Heraclonas, obverse. Weight 4.5 grams; die position ↑↓. Gift of Darius Ogden Mills, 04.2.822*

This coin dates from the period between July 4, 638 (when Heraclonas was made Augustus), and February 641, when Heraclius died. The impressive growth of whiskers and beard that distinguish Heraclius (in the center) are characteristic of the emperor in his old age (compare this with Figure 14, representing the emperor at the beginning of his reign). The coins of Heraclius also illustrate changes in his political status: the full-length representation of the emperor and of his colleagues is his innovation – a very dramatic one when the coin is compared to that of Leo I (Figure 6), in which the colleagues had been indicated only by the three Gs of the reverse inscription.



Greek occurred in Byzantine coinage. Greek legends did not entirely replace Latin ones on the obverses of coins until the end of the eighth, and mixed legends on both sides still remained popular in the eleventh century. This initial modification is noteworthy, however, because it is a tangible sign of the Byzantine emperors' shift of focus from West to East, and thus from Latin, the language of the West, to Greek, the predominant tongue of the East.

Compared with coins from earlier in the Imperial period, the solidi of the fourth century reveal only slight modifications. For instance, although Constantius II introduced the facing military portrait, for the most part the emperors continued to favor the profile portrait to the right, only replacing the laurel wreath with the diadem. The most common reverse types were variations on the well-known theme of the Vota Publica. The original meaning of the Vota seems to have been obscured, but the practice of offering them flourished as an essential vehicle of imperial propaganda. Throughout the century, the omnipotence of Victory, the inherent virtue of the Roman state, was slow to wane despite the efforts of the Christians to curtail her power.

No notable change occurred until the reign of Theodosius II early in the fifth century, when Victory was modified – Christianized. By her union with the cross the coexistence of the symbols of Christianity and paganism had been definitely established on the coinage. Theodosius II also revived and popularized the imperial military portrait. The association of military virtues with the imperial personage was a carry-over, slightly altered, of a pagan ideal. It also shows a continuation of the secular Roman military tradition.

These modified images ruled Byzantine coinage until about the middle of the sixth century. Then, as the dream of restoring unity with the western half of the Roman empire faded more and more into the background, the Byzantine emperors focused their attentions with increased zeal on the Christian aspect of their rule: the Christianized Victory was redesigned into an angel under Justin I, and Justinian I created a new image in which the emperor was portrayed holding the cross. The second quarter of the sixth century was the turning point in every phase of Byzantine life and thought: the coinage reflects the firm Christian orientation, which gradually replaced the Roman military tradition. The natural consequence was the rapid decline of pagan elements.

It remained for Heraclius, in the seventh century, to formally substitute civil dress for military attire, to abolish the Roman imperial titles from coins issued toward the end of his reign, and to abandon even the Christianized Victory for the Holy Cross, symbol par excellence of Christianity. But in spite of all these accomplishments the memory of the great Roman heritage lingered on; the legend accompanying the cross still read: VICTORIA AVG.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

I wish to express my thanks to Joan M. Fagerlie of the American Numismatic Society for her help on numerous occasions and to Professor Alfred R. Bellinger for his painstaking assistance on related problems. I wish also to extend my gratitude to Professor András Alföldi for his clarification of several details concerning the Vota Publica.

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Observations on the Museum's Pectoral

Isidore of Seville, in the sixth century, described torques worn in his time by men and women alike as *circuli aurei a collo ad pectus usque pendentes* (gold circlelets hanging from the neck down to the chest). This description could refer to pectorals such as the Museum piece, especially when we recall that our piece is completed by the pendant medallion of Theodosius I (379-395) now in the Freer Gallery of Art. Both the Museum's torque, or neck-ring, itself, and the coins probably were previously used independently and only put together in the sixth century, when the central medallion, undoubtedly of barbarian execution, was received. The torque and coins show considerable wear, but the medallion is in pristine condition.

The military torque often played an important role in imperial coronations. We know that Julian the Apostate and some of his successors were crowned with military torques. And even if from Corippus's account of the coronation of Justin II it is not clear whether this emperor was actually crowned with a torque or simply had one placed around his neck while a diadem encircled his head, it is quite possible that our torque could have served for a crowning before being made into a pectoral.

While the torque may have been worn by an officer of the imperial bodyguard, it seems just as likely that it was a reward to a soldier for excellence in battle. According to Procopius's *History of the Wars*, written in the second quarter of the sixth century, Justinian's great general Belisarius "used to console [the soldiers] by large presents of money for the wounds they had received, and to those who had distinguished themselves he presented bracelets and necklaces to wear as prizes." It is possible, then, that some of the coins mounted on the torque were received by a soldier for wounds suffered in battle, while some others may have been received in connection with a coronation ceremony of one of the emperors represented on them. The early ones could have been inherited and only later mounted on the torque by their owner.



16. *Solidus of Justinian II (685-695), obverse. The reverse of this coin displays the standing figure of Emperor Justinian holding a long cross. Whittemore Collection, Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University.*

The Djumati Enamels:

A Twelfth-Century Litany of Saints

MARGARET ENGLISH FRAZER *Research Assistant, The Cloisters*

The Metropolitan Museum of Art possesses nine beautiful gold and cloisonné enamel medallions, which portray busts of Christ, the Virgin, and St. John the Baptist, forming a composition known as the Deësis. They are accompanied by portraits of Sts. George, John the Evangelist, Luke, Matthew, Paul, and Peter. It is the purpose of this article to propose a reconstruction of their original arrangement and a new date for their manufacture.

For many centuries these enamels were attached to the frame of a silver repoussé icon of the archangel Gabriel in the monastery of Djumati in Georgia (Figure 1), which, in view of its style, may be somewhat later in date than the enamels. Rondels of Sts. Demetrius and Theodore from the same icon are presently in the Musée de Cluny in Paris and the National Museum of Fine Arts in Tiflis, Georgia (Figures 2, 3). If the eleven enamels were incorporated into the icon at Djumati sometime after their manufacture, they probably originally decorated the frame of a similar icon. Medallions of saints were often used to decorate borders of icons in Early Christian as well as in Byzantine art, and they derive from Roman prototypes. They occur in different media, such as a sixth-century textile (Figure 4), a Middle Byzantine painted icon at Mount Sinai, and an eleventh-century silver-gilt icon frame in the Dumbarton Oaks collection (Figure 5).

The rhythmic repetition of rondels not only contributed to the decorative effect of a work, but their subjects enriched the work's meaning. The enamels on the Dumbarton Oaks frame represent a Deësis of Christ, the Virgin, and St. John the Baptist at the top, the archangels Michael and Gabriel on the sides, and Sts. Peter and Paul and the prophet Elijah on the bottom. This Deësis, as well as the one among our enamels, provides the key to their iconography. Traditionally, the Virgin and St. John in the Deësis intercede with Christ for the salvation of men's souls. Their prayer is often strengthened by ranks of angels, prophets, apostles, and saints arranged in hieratic order, forming a "litany of saints." On the tenth-century ivory triptych in the Vatican (Figure 6), Mary and John's prayer is supported by two angels who stand behind



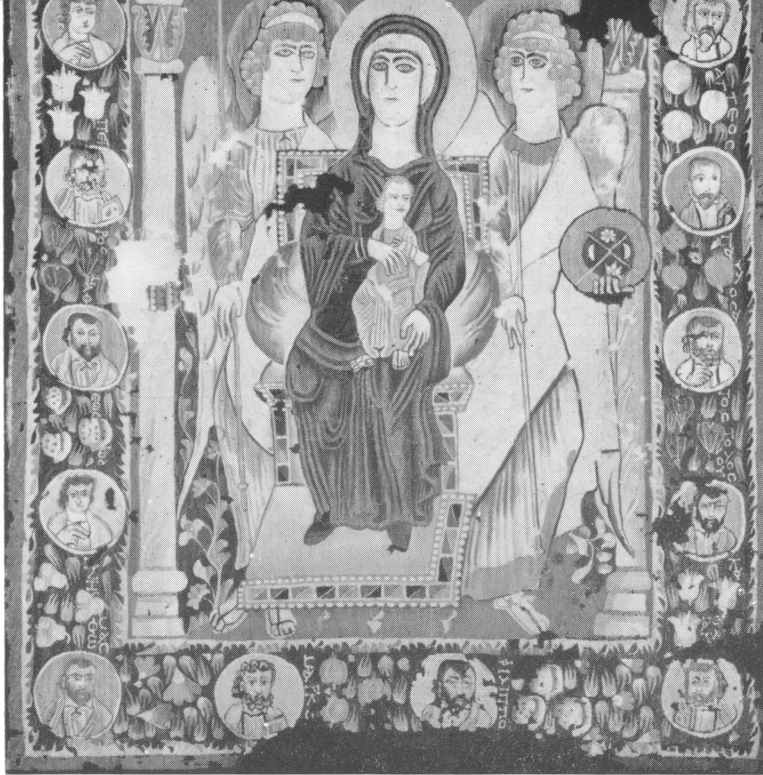
1. Icon of the archangel Gabriel with enamels of Christ, the Virgin, and St. John the Baptist, and Sts. George, John the Evangelist, Luke, Matthew, Paul, and Peter. Byzantine (Georgia and Constantinople?), enamels first half of the xii century, icon somewhat later. Silver-gilt and enamel. Illustration from a wood engraving in N. P. Kondakov, *Geschichte und Denkmäler des Byzantinischen Emails* (1889-1892). Enamels gift of J. P. Morgan, 17.190.670-678



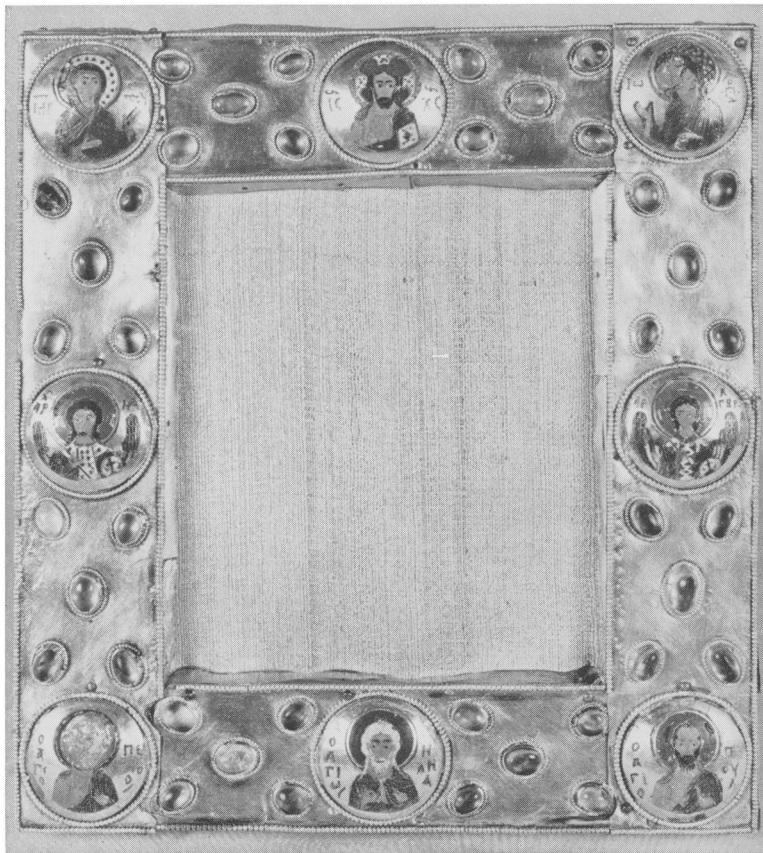
2. St. Demetrius. Byzantine. Enamel, diameter $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Musée de Cluny, Paris

3. St. Theodore. Byzantine. Enamel, diameter $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches. National Museum of Fine Arts, Tiflis, Georgia





4. Lower section of a tapestry icon of the Virgin. Egyptian, 14th century. Wool, $70\frac{3}{8} \times 43\frac{1}{4}$ inches. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Leonard C. Hanna, Jr., Bequest



5. Icon frame with enamels of Christ, the Virgin, St. John the Baptist, the archangels Michael and Gabriel, Sts. Peter and Paul, and the prophet Elijah. Byzantine, mid-11th century. Enamel and silver-gilt, $8\frac{9}{16} \times 7\frac{13}{16}$ inches. Dumbarton Oaks Collection, Washington, D.C.

OPPOSITE

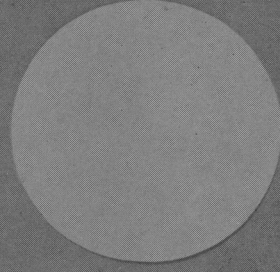
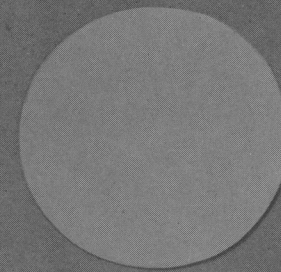
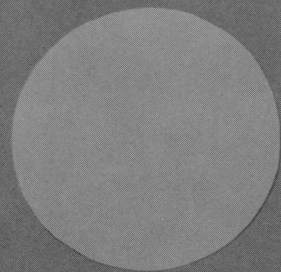
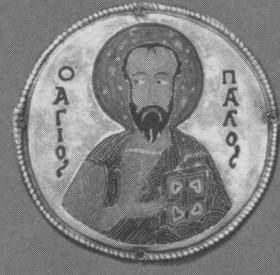
6. Triptych with Christ enthroned, two archangels, the Virgin, St. John the Baptist, apostles, saints, and bishops. Byzantine, 11th century. Ivory, width open approximately $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Museo Cristiano, Vatican. Photograph: Alinari—Art Reference Bureau

Christ's throne, by the apostles ranged in the registers below, and by military saints, martyrs, and church fathers on the wings. The liturgy of the Greek church supplies the basis for the stratification of the saintly orders united in prayer for man's salvation. In the rite of the preparation of the Amnos, or Host, the part stamped with the bust of Christ is separated from the eucharistic bread in honor of the Virgin. Then, each successive piece that is broken from the Amnos is dedicated to the following saints: the archangels Michael and Gabriel and the other angels; St. John the Baptist and the prophets; Sts. Peter and Paul

and the apostles; the church fathers; the holy martyrs, among whom Demetrius, George, and Theodore are specifically mentioned; the monks; hermits; and finally all male and female saints.

The Museum's rondels must have conformed to this highly popular formula as well. The Deësis would have appeared along the top of the frame as it did on the icon at Djumati (Figure 1): Sts. Peter and Paul, John the Evangelist and Matthew, Mark and Luke would have been placed opposite each other on the sides, with Sts. Demetrius, George, and Theodore finding their places along the bot-





tom (Figure 7). St. Mark has been included since it is likely that he completed the group of the four evangelists. In the reconstruction here proposed, the figures arranged on the left side look to the right and those on the right look left, in other words toward Christ to whom they address their supplication.

The enamels have been attributed to a Constantinopolitan artist working at the end of the eleventh century either in the capital or in Georgia. His consummate skill – the delicacy and assurance with which he handled his material and laid out his cloisons – indicates that he had received the best training Byzantium could offer. Certain characteristics of his style, however, such as his conception of the faces and his patterning of the cloisons, conform more to the taste prevailing during the reign of the twelfth-century Comnenian emperor John II (1118–1143) and his wife Irene than to eleventh-century style. It is during the reign of this emperor that I believe our enamels were made.

The tight organization of Christ's features, for example, characterized by thick, evenly curved eyebrows set symmetrically on either side of an exceptionally long, slender nose (Figure 8), is strikingly like that of the faces of John, Irene, and, especially, Mary in the mosaic panel of the south gallery of Hagia Sophia of about 1118 (Figure 12). The abstract downward curve of Christ's mouth is also seen in the mosaic of Irene and John's son Alexius, erected beside that of his parents in about 1122 when he was made co-emperor (Figure 13).

Christ's features on the mid-eleventh-century icon frame from Dumbarton Oaks (Figure 5), on the other hand, are more irregular. The mouth, eyes, and eyebrows are broader and rounder and the outline of the face and hair more uneven. From mid-century, however, and through the end of the eleventh and into the beginning of the twelfth century, patterning of facial features became increasingly conventionalized and simplified, and by the time of our medallions this formal portrayal of faces was well established. This progression can be seen in the faces in a manu-

script of the Homilies of St. John Chrysostom in Paris, dated about 1078 (Figure 10), in the enamel of St. Simon on the lower portion of the Pala d'Oro in Venice, 1105 (Figure 11), and in our enamel of Christ (Figure 8).

The symmetrical arrangement of St. Simon's features (Figure 11) is similar to that of our enamel Christ (Figure 8), but, unlike ours – with its patterning refined by a stark simplification of line and form – the outlines of St. Simon's neck and face are elaborated by spirals and a series of curls. The cloison that describes a crease and the Adam's apple of St. Simon's neck is purely decorative, but that of our Christ, because of its simplicity of line, not only conforms more to actual anatomy than St. Simon's, it also enhances the design of the whole head by echoing the oval shape of his face. The Adam's apple, furthermore, repeats the simple shape of the beard and forms a counterpart to the arc of Christ's mouth.

As important as the style of the facial features in dating these enamels in the twelfth century is the artist's technique of laying his cloisons. Although he prepared the gold surface of his medallions in the traditional fashion (Figure 9), he restricted the use of each specific pattern of cloisons – repeated parallel lines, curves, or herringbone designs – to one compartment of drapery instead of arranging them in the earlier type of overall pattern seen in the enamel of St. Simon (Figure 14). Compare the gamma-shaped folds over Christ's right forearm, the separate herringbone design of the upper arm, and the smooth curves of the himation, or outer garment, over the right shoulder (Figure 8), with the repeated triangular and teardrop patterns of St. Simon's chiton, or tunic, and himation, which unite all the drapery folds into an integrated design. Furthermore, our artist often laid his cloisons in distinctively long, narrow strips, either curved or rectilinear, open at one end. While similar cloison "strips" had occasionally been used in such earlier enamels as the figures of Humility on the crown of Constantine IX Monomachos (Figure 15) and St. Simon from the Pala d'Oro, they received

OPPOSITE

7. *Reconstruction of the Museum's enamels on the frame of an icon.*
Photograph: Taylor & Dull



8. Detail of the Museum's enamel of Christ

9. Christ, reverse of Figure 8. The artist first hammered into shallow relief the areas of the gold to be filled with enamel for the figure and inscription. He then drew in dots the outlines for the face and features, the cross-inscribed halo, the book, and the folds of the drapery. Notice the way he changed the position of the hand while he drew it and the design of the book when he laid the enamels

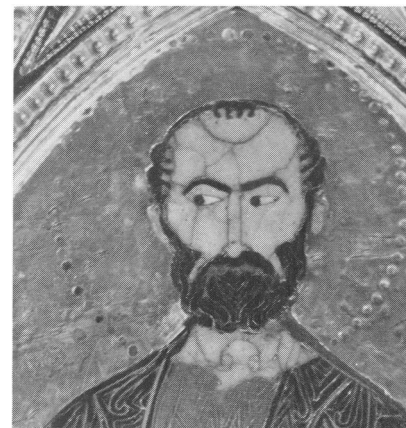


their widest use and development in twelfth-century works, such as the fragmentary feast cycle from the upper portion of the Pala d'Oro (Figure 17). (The Pala d'Oro is divided into two sections within its fourteenth-century frame. St. Simon [Figure 14] is in the lower portion, which contains many enamels and an inscription that gives a date of 1105 for them. The upper part, with seven scenes from the life of Christ and a figure of St. Michael, was added to the earlier Pala in 1209. The scenes from the feast cycle, with one exception, are thought to have been taken from an iconostasis [the screen that divides the chancel from the nave in a Greek church] from the monastery of the Pantocrator in Constantinople during the Latin occupation of the imperial city, when this monastery was the seat of the Venetian podestà. These plaques may be dated in the second quarter of the twelfth century because the three churches in the monastery were built by Empress Irene and Emperor John II.) Similar "strips" appear in an Anastasis from the Kremlin Armory, also dated in the second quarter of the twelfth century; St. Jacob on a composite icon in the

Hermitage in Leningrad (Figure 18), and the reliquary of the Cathedral of Esztergom, Hungary (Figure 21), both possibly works of the second half of the twelfth century.

The Metropolitan Museum's enamels bear important resemblances to this twelfth-century group. The repetitive curved lines over St. John the Evangelist's right arm are similar to those over Christ's right thigh in both the Anastasis from the Pala d'Oro and the one from the Kremlin Armory. The wavelike motif of the folds of his himation over his left forearm is also found over the right thigh and hip of St. Jacob in Leningrad (compare Figure 16 with Figures 17, 18). Finally, the treatment of Mary's drapery over her left forearm in a continuous dentil pattern is encountered in the Esztergom reliquary (compare Figures 19 and 21) and in such figures of the Pala d'Oro feast cycle as Mary in the Ascension.

The style, moreover, was not confined to enamels but appears, although less frequently, in twelfth-century works in other media. Separate triangular sections of drapery, typical of our enamels, were created by the artist of a miniature mosaic of Christ of about 1150



ABOVE

10. *The archangel Michael, detail from a page of the Homilies of St. John Chrysostom. Byzantine, about 1078. Parchment, 16 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 12 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Coislin 79, fol. 2v. Photograph: Hirmer Fotoarchiv, Munich*

11. *Detail of Figure 14*

LEFT

12, 13. *Virgin and Child, Empress Irene, and Emperor John II (1118-1143) (opposite page); and Alexius, son of Irene and John and co-emperor. Byzantine, about 1118 and 1122. Mosaic, original height of each approximately 8 feet. South Gallery, Hagia Sophia, Istanbul. Photographs: Hirmer Fotoarchiv, Munich, and the Byzantine Institute, Inc.*

through the use of repeated parallel lines (Figure 20). In the mosaics of the cupola of the Palatine Chapel in Palermo of about 1143, the folds of the angels' chitons over the legs are articulated only by a series of repeated horizontal lines (Figure 22). This technique closely resembles that of the cloisons over the right upper arm of St. John the Evangelist (Figure 16) and the right leg of Christ on the Pala d'Oro Anastasis (Figure 17), as pointed out above.

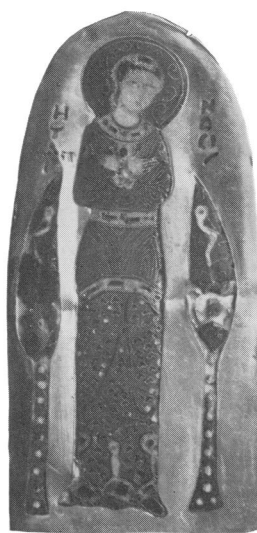
In attempting to establish a new date for the enamel rondels in the Museum, we have compared them with eleventh- and twelfth-century Byzantine works of art. We have seen that the style of our figures' draperies is closer to that of the fragmentary feast cycle of the

Pala d'Oro, probably of the second quarter of the twelfth century, than to the earlier St. Simon on the Pala of about 1105. The patterning of the cloisons and draperies on our enamels, however, is still not as emphatic as those of the feast scenes, the Esztergom reliquary, or St. Jacob. In addition to their affinities to these twelfth-century works, the similarities in the treatment of faces that our enamels bear to the imperial portraits of John II, Irene, and Alexius in Hagia Sophia of about 1118 and 1122 and their noticeable differences from earlier faces, such as those seen on the Dumbarton Oaks icon frame, lead me to conclude that they were probably made at the end of the first quarter or beginning of the second quarter of the twelfth century.

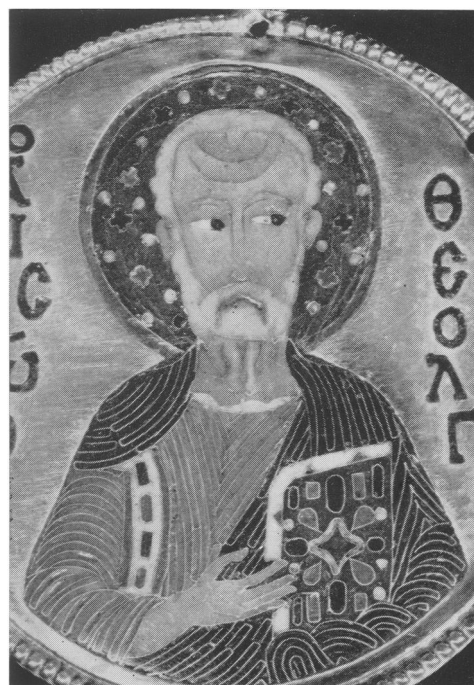


14. *St. Simon from the Pala d'Oro. Byzantine, 1105. Enamel, 11 $\frac{5}{16}$ x 4 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches. St. Mark's, Venice. Photograph: Osvaldo Böhm*

15. *Humility, detail from the crown of the emperor Constantine IX Monomachos (1042-1055) Byzantine, 1042-1050. Enamel, 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 1 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches. National Museum, Budapest. Photograph: Giraudon*



16. *Detail of the Museum's enamel of St. John the Evangelist. A literal translation of the inscription is "St. John the Theologian"*



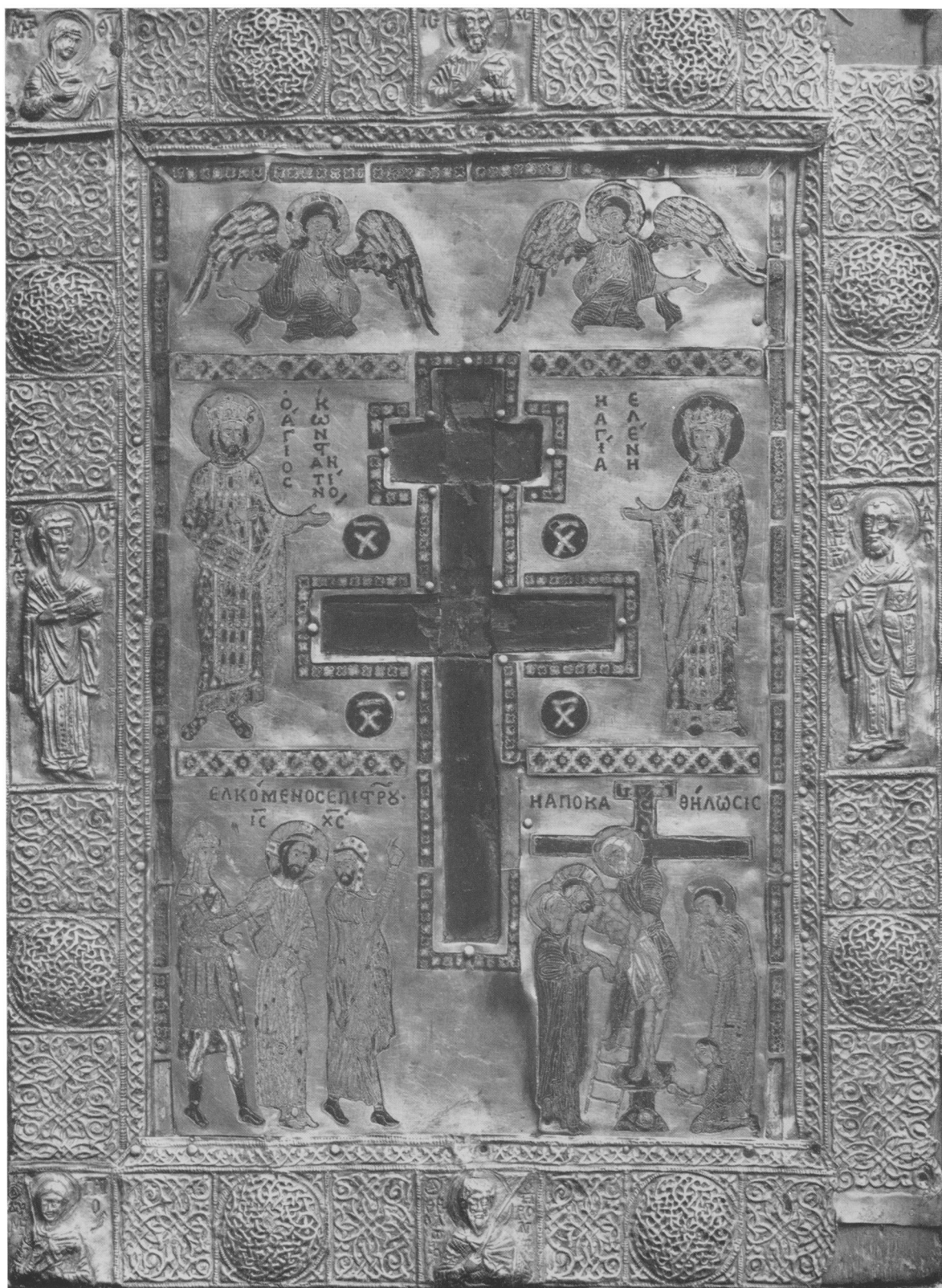
BELOW

17. *Anastasis (Harrowing of Hell)*, detail from the upper portion of the Pala d'Oro. Byzantine, second quarter of the XII century. Enamel, $12\frac{1}{16} \times 11\frac{13}{16}$ inches. St. Mark's, Venice. Photograph: Osvaldo Böhm

RIGHT

18. *St. Jacob (St. James)*, detail from a composite icon. Byzantine, second half of the XII century. Enamel. Hermitage State Museum, Leningrad. Illustration from A. Banck, *Byzantine Art in the Collections of the U.S.S.R.*







19. Detail of the Museum's enamel of the Virgin. Inscription: "The Mother of God"

20. Christ. Byzantine, about 1150. Mosaic, $21\frac{1}{4} \times 16\frac{1}{16}$ inches. National Museum, Florence. Photograph: Hirmer Fotoarchiv, Munich

NOTES AND REFERENCES

The painted icon at Mount Sinai is illustrated in G. and M. Sotiriou, *Icones du Mont Sinai* (Athens, 1956), figure 64; the Anastasis from the Kremlin Armory is plate 185 in A. V. Bank, *Byzantine Art in the Collections of the U.S.S.R.* (Leningrad, 1966); and the portions of the Pala d'Oro not illustrated here, such as the Ascension in the feast cycle, can be seen in H. R. Hahnloser *et al.*, *La Pala d'Oro* (Florence, 1965).

The Museum's enamels have been discussed and illustrated before in *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*. See J. J. Rorimer, "A Twelfth-Century Byzantine Enamel," 33 (1938), pp. 245-246; W. H. Forsyth, "Medieval Enamels in a New Installation," n.s. 4 (1946), p. 232; and no. 15 in V.K. Ostioia's section, "Byzantium," of 26 (1968), p. 203.

The following works include extensive discus-

sions of the Museum's enamels: F. Bock, *Die Byzantinischen Zellschmelze der Sammlungen Alex. von Swenigorodskoi* (Aachen, 1896); O. M. Dalton, "Byzantine Enamels in Mr. Pierpont Morgan's Collection" in *The Burlington Magazine* 21 (1912), pp. 65-73, 127-128; N. P. Kondakov, *Geschichte und Denkmäler des Byzantinischen Emails* (Frankfort on the Main, 1889-1892); K. Wessel, *Die Byzantinische Emailkunst vom 5 bis 13 Jahrhundert* (Recklinghausen, 1967), no. 40.

For additional information about the litany of saints, see E. Kantorowicz, "Ivories and Litanies" in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942), pp. 56-81.

For further reference to the Pala d'Oro, see J. de Luigi-Pomorščac, *Les Emaux byzantins de la Pala d'Oro de l'église de Saint-Marc à Venise* (Zurich, 1966), 2 vols.

OPPOSITE

21. Reliquary of the True Cross, angels, Ss. Constantine and Helena, Road to Calvary, Deposition. Byzantine, second half of the XI century. Enamel, $13\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Cathedral Treasury, Esztergom, Hungary. Photograph: Giraudon



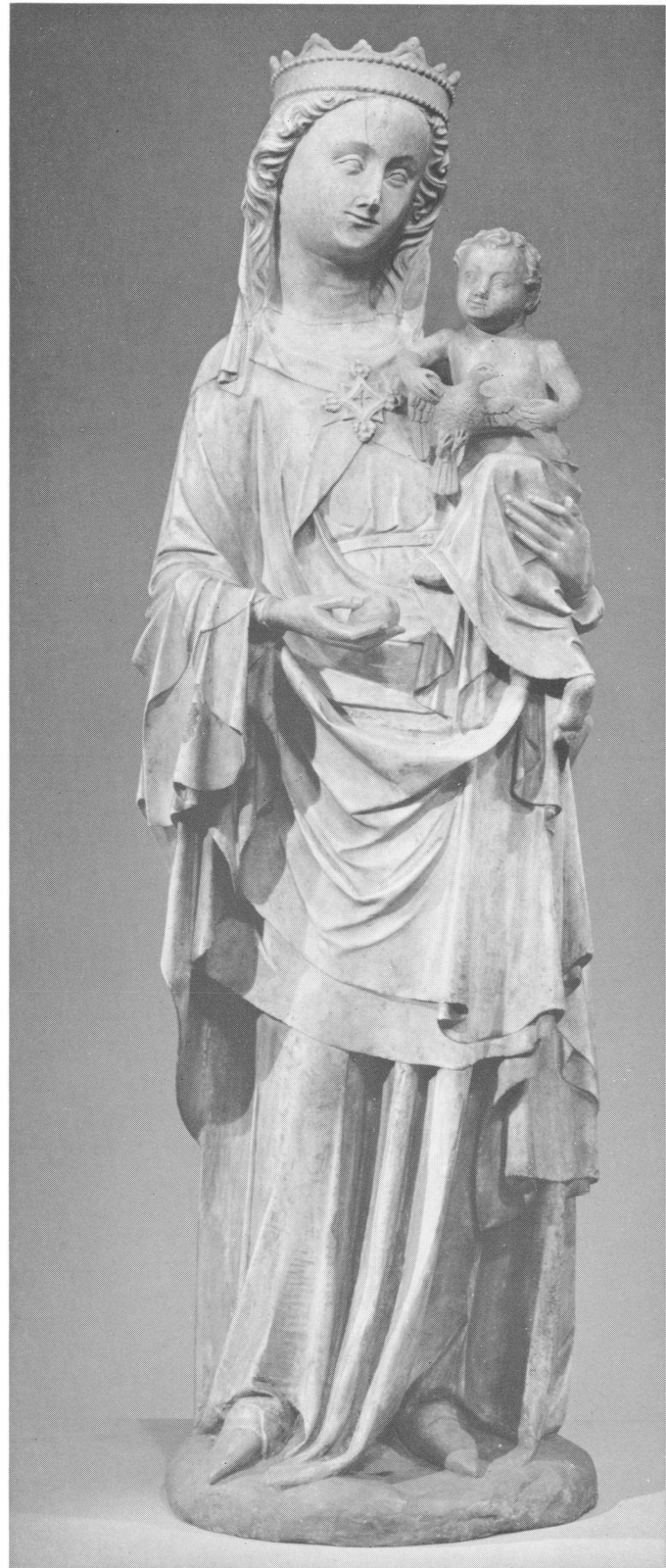
22. Two angels, detail from the cupola of the Palatine Chapel, Palermo, Sicily. Byzantine, about 1143. Mosaic. Photograph: Anderson - Art Reference Bureau

Madonnas of the Rhône-Meuse Valleys

WILLIAM H. FORSYTH
Curator of Medieval Art



1. *Virgin and Child, from Saint-Denis, French (Ile-de-France), 1340. Marble, height 65 inches. Parish church of Magny-en-Vexin. Photograph: Archives Photographiques*
2. *Virgin and Child, from Cernay-lès-Reims. French, about 1350. Alabaster, height 34½ inches. Gift of George Blumenthal, 28.76*
3. *Virgin and Child. French (lower Rhône valley), about 1350. Alabaster, height 35 inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 17.190.717*





The most popular and appealing subject of French fourteenth-century sculpture was the Virgin and Child. Though there are countless variations of these lovely statues, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the great majority of them can be traced ultimately to a few key figures. Like musical themes interwoven in a fugue, the familiar forms of these archetypes constantly appear and reappear, sometimes combining and recombining with each other to create new variations, sometimes developing new variations from elaborations of the same archetype. Like members of any large family, each Virgin differs from the others to a greater or lesser degree. Usually these differences have a regional flavor and can be used to help to group the sculptures by style and province. Differences can be spotted in variations not only of style but of posture, of figure proportions, of drapery arrangements, of faces, and even of costume details.

The royal Virgin in the church of Magny-en-Vexin (Figures 1, 6), originally coming from the great abbey church of Saint-Denis, is one of the most important of these archetypes. It was given to Saint-Denis in 1340 by Jeanne d'Evreux, the widowed queen of Charles IV, who, like many other wealthy widows since her time, made a career of being a great patron of the arts. One part of the family of statues of the Virgin and Child that apparently depend upon the Magny Virgin is scattered along the river valleys of the Meuse and the Rhone, which together form one long, almost uninterrupted waterway between the North Sea and the Mediterranean. Madonnas along this north-south axis sometimes show considerable variation in their styles, which usually show regional characteristics, but the arrangement of their drapery is similar enough to suggest that the Magny Virgin was probably a primary source.

The mantle of the Magny Virgin falls softly across her body, is caught up underneath the Christ child, and then hangs down the side in rippling folds; in the Rhone-Meuse Virgins the sweep of the mantle across the front has been exaggerated, so that a larger pocket of drapery is formed, and the fall beneath the Child tends to be more elaborate. The transition between the drapery pocket and the vertical folds of the fall is made surprisingly abrupt by the greater stiffness of the folds and their sharper profiles, which contrast to the more supple, pliable folds of the Magny Virgin.

Three statues in the Metropolitan Museum that came from the Rhone-Meuse axis well illustrate the subtle relationships between the prototype and works derived from it. A northern example (Figure 4) comes from Diest, near the Meuse valley in eastern Belgium. Made in 1345 for the beguinage of Diest, it was probably carved by a sculptor working in the middle Meuse valley around Liège, who followed the type of the Magny Virgin but worked in his local idiom. The statue belongs to a group from this region that all have the same exaggerated drapery pocket and the same facial features – large, wide-set eyes, prominent noses, and thin lips.

A second sculpture of the Magny type (Figures 2, 7) that can be associated with those of the Rhone-Meuse area came to the Museum in 1924 as a gift from George Blumenthal, President of the Museum and for many years a generous donor. The figure was said to have come from Cernay-lès-Reims, a short distance away from the great cathedral city and only thirty miles from the Meuse. A “said-to-have-come-from” at-

4. *Virgin and Child, from Diest.*
Mosan, 1345. Marble, height
46 inches. Fletcher Fund, 24.215

OPPOSITE

5. *Detail of Figure 2*





6, 7, 8. *The Magny, Cernay, and Morgan statues of the Virgin and Child*

tribution should always be treated with caution; it may represent an honest oral tradition, but it often has no more basis than wishful thinking or, less honestly, the desire to increase the importance of an object by attaching it to a well-known school.

Last year, however, all doubts about the source of this Virgin were happily removed when René Gandilhon, the alert archivist at Châlons-sur-Marne, kindly produced for us a notice in a local archaeological survey of 1900 that described the statue when it was still in the church at Cernay-lès-Reims and published a contemporary photograph of it. A visit to the church revealed that a cast of the statue was installed there, and later another reproduction was found housed in a wall niche of a house at Thillois, only a few miles from Cernay. In World War I the church at Cernay suffered damage when the Germans captured the town during their drive on Reims. It was apparently at this time that the statue disappeared from the church, to turn up some years later on the international art market.

There is evidence to suggest that our statue originally may have decorated the main doorway to the church. The doorway has been rebuilt twice in modern times, once in the nineteenth century and again after World War I, but the 1900 survey reports that



the *montant*, or doorpost (presumably meaning the *trumeau* or central pier, now missing), originally had a corbel with a Gothic canopy over it. Rightly recognizing that a statue must have stood here, the authors surmised that the missing figure was that of a Virgin and Child. Their reasoning was based upon the fact that the Virgin was the patron saint of the chapter of Reims cathedral, and that the chapter in turn was the chief patron and tithe-owner of the church at Cernay, helping to provide for its upkeep and even appointing its priest. What could have been more natural, therefore, than for the good canons of the chapter to have erected a statue of the Virgin at the main entrance to the church? There was once a coat of arms painted below the corbel on which the missing statue had stood, and the writers of the 1900 survey suggested that the arms were those of the chapter. The survey also stated that in 1900 our statue was housed within the church on a console over the sacristy door (which had been built in the nineteenth century), but that it must have come from somewhere else, either against a wall or inside a niche, because of two holes on either side of the base of the neck, through which two attachments must have passed.

It is strange that, having gone so far, these writers did not go one step further and

9, 10, 11. Three statues of the Virgin and Child: from the Comtat-Venaissin, in Lyons, and in the Mortimer collection. All French, about 1350. Marble, height 43 inches; alabaster, height 31 inches; marble, height 29 inches. Musée des Augustins, Toulouse; illustration from p. 22 of Rachou, *Le Musée de Toulouse, Sculpture II*. Musée de Lyon; photograph: Sylvestre. Collection of Stanley Mortimer



associate the Virgin then in the church with the missing statue from the main doorway. Both must have been of the same general size. The existing Virgin is shallow and fairly flat on the back, indicating that she would not have projected very far forward when set on a corbel. The main doorway of the church was, and still is, completely sheltered by a porch, and thus such a delicately carved statue would not have suffered from the weather. It can be assumed that either in the nineteenth century, when the main portal was reconstructed, or possibly at an earlier date, the statue was brought into the church.

By coincidence the Museum also possesses another statue of the Virgin and Child (Figures 3, 8) given in 1917 by J. Pierpont Morgan, which is so similar to that from Cernay that one has the impression that the sculptors could have used the same model. The two statues closely resemble each other not only in size but also in their stance, including their slightly flexed right legs and the tilt of their heads, which are set on long, columnar necks. The drapery of their mantles, moreover, is quite close: as it falls over their right forearms and across the front of their bodies, it forms a similar pattern of folds that cling to the body as if they were wet, and the drapery folds on the backs of the two figures are as similar as on the front (Figures 13, 14). Even their belts have the same square quatrefoil ornaments. The Child in both has the same posture and the same elongated head with parallel vertical curls on the back. Yet in spite of these striking similarities there are intriguing differences – the somewhat more precise contours of the drapery of the Morgan Virgin and especially the more sharply carved features of her face (Figures 5, 12). Indeed, facial differences and resemblances are a very important factor in distinguishing between various regional groups of fourteenth-century sculpture. Therefore one can conclude that these statues are cousins, not sisters: that is to say, that they come from different regions but have the same “grandparent” archetype.

The face of the Morgan Virgin, especially the profile of the eyes and the high, arched eyebrows, has similarities to some faces on sculpture of the Rhone valley, especially around Avignon, such as a Virgin and Child (Figure 9) from the papal territory known as the Comtat-Venaissin, just east of Avignon, the residence of the popes in the fourteenth century. The Morgan Virgin, therefore, could also have come from the lower Rhone valley, perhaps near Avignon.

Both the Morgan and Comtat-Venaissin Virgins wear an ornate brooch holding their mantles together, which is distinctive of other Virgins in this area – one of them now in the Lyons Museum, up the Rhone from Avignon (Figure 10). The drapery of the Lyons Virgin, however, is done in a more supple style, closer to that of the Magny statue. Although it has been called Burgundian because of its rather squat, heavy proportions, the statue in Lyons can probably be considered a product of the Rhone valley, where Burgundian influence was strong.

A statue of the Virgin and Child in the Stanley Mortimer Collection (Figure 11), exhibited at The Cloisters in 1968-1969, combines characteristics of both northern and southern variations of this theme. The exaggerated pocket fold of the mantle and the other deep folds curling around the right leg are like those of the statue from the Comtat-Venaissin. The faces of the two Virgins, however, are quite different, the Mortimer one resembling sculpture made north of Avignon, such as the Virgin in the Lyons

OPPOSITE

12. *Detail of Figure 3. The Virgin's right hand and crown, the bird, and the Child's right foot and forearms have been restored*

museum. The Lyons and Mortimer statues are similar in other respects: the dress of the Christ child in both has a slight slit at the neckline and, more important, both Virgins carry a short flowering stalk – as does the Virgin from Cernay-lès-Reims. In most French fourteenth-century statues of the Virgin and Child, the Virgin, as Queen of Heaven, bears a scepter that usually ends in a fleur-de-lis, the royal flower of France. Sometimes, as in these examples, the scepter takes the form of a rose branch – the rose being a constant symbol of the Virgin as the *rosa mystica* of divine love, the rose of Jericho mentioned in Ecclesiasticus 24:18. Statues bearing such a stalk can be found scattered throughout France: there is a famous one at Coutances, for instance, and a few others from Normandy (and also a Virgin from Maisonnelles now in the Louvre, and a statue at Angers), but most are found in the eastern part of the country, especially in Champagne, Burgundy, and Lorraine. It is significant, however, that almost all the Rhone-Meuse Virgins of the Magny type seem to have carried the stalk. The Magny Virgin herself holds a knobby stalk; a hole in its upper end probably indicates that it originally bore a rose branch as flowering scepter made of metal, like the statue's crown and brooch. A similar knobby stalk can be seen in the hand of the Diest Virgin; the right hand of the Morgan statue is a later restoration – originally it could have looked like the hand of the Cernay figure; the right arm of the Comtat-Venaissin Virgin has been broken off, but it is a safe guess that it, too, once carried a flowering stalk.

The bird that the Child often holds, in these sculptures (except the Mortimer one) and in many others, looks like a household pet, but there may be a deeper implied meaning, since a dove was always a Christian symbol not only of peace and purity but also of the Holy Spirit. In addition, there was the Jewish custom associated with purification rites, which Joseph and Mary followed, of offering two turtledoves when one brought a first-born child to the temple. There is even the apocryphal story that the Christ child created living birds out of clay.

The Cernay and the Morgan sculptures can probably be dated around 1350, or ten years later than the Magny Virgin. The other works mentioned in this article all date from the same general period, and represent only a part of those evolving from the Magny archetype or from sculptures derived from it. There are many other types of Virgins in the Rhone-Meuse valleys, but the ones gathered here give an idea of the complex interrelationships that such Madonnas possess.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

The Cernay Virgin, of alabaster, is 34½ inches high and 5½ inches deep. Modern gilding, probably replacing the old, is on the borders of the garments, the hair, the belt, the bird, and the scepter. The rest of the statue appears never to have been painted. An original, very delicate vine pattern in low relief on the border of the cloak is still visible in one place on the back. Remains of the foliate openwork crown show it had leafy fleurons alternating with smaller terminals. The two holes for attachments at the base of the neck have now been plugged up.

The Morgan Virgin, from the Mannheim Collection (1898), also of alabaster, is 35 inches high and 5½ inches deep. The base, the Virgin's feet, right hand, crown, some sections of her drapery, the Child's left foot, his forearms, and the bird are new. Traces of red and blue paint on the Virgin's garments are not original; her head has been skillfully reset.

The Morgan Virgin resembles several other sculptures of the Rhone area: its facial type is similar to that of a bearded head in the Avignon museum, the head of a Virgin on the doorway of

the church of St. Agricol in Avignon, and the head of a statue of St. John the Baptist in the Lyons museum. (The drapery of this figure – particularly the exaggerated pocket formed by the mantle and the folds curling around the right leg – is very close to that of the Comtat-Venaissin Virgin.) The same type of brooch appears on a Virgin on a calvary cross in the Avignon museum and on a group of Virgins found west of the Rhone in southern Languedoc: at Narbonne (two), at Portal, and at Pépieux.

William H. Forsyth, "A Group of Fourteenth-Century Mosan Sculptures" in *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 1 (New York, Metropolitan Museum, 1968), pp. 41-59 (Diest Virgin).

C. Givélet, H. Jadart, and L. Demaison, *Répertoire archéologique de l'arrondissement de Reims (Canton de Beine)*, fasc. 10 (Reims, 1900), pp.

116-118 (church of Cernay).

Carmen Gómez-Moreno, *Medieval Art from Private Collections: A Special Exhibition at The Cloisters, October 30, 1968, through January 5, 1969* (New York, Metropolitan Museum, 1968), no. 39 (Mortimer Virgin).

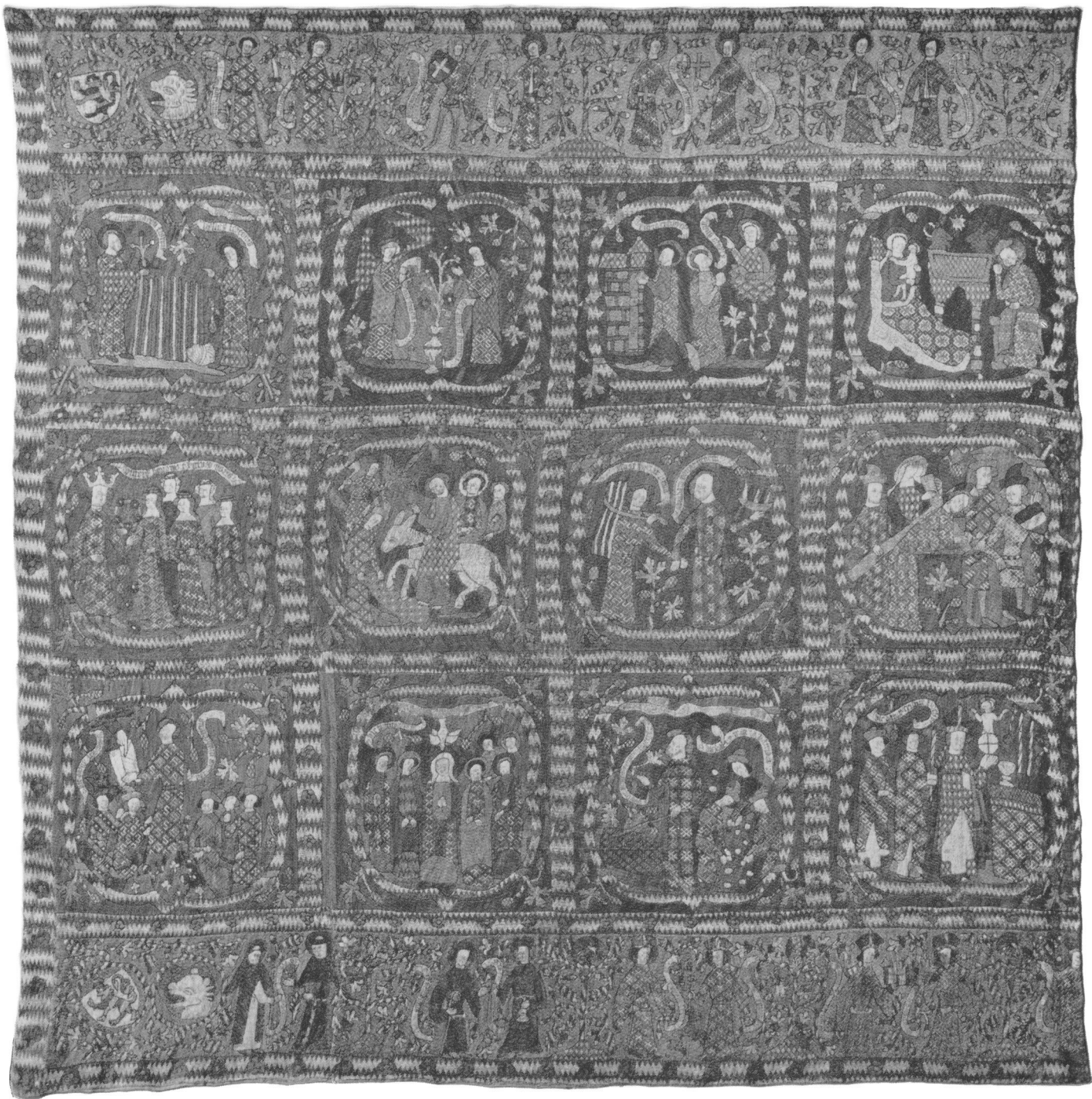
René Jullian, *Catalogue du Musée de Lyon. III, La Sculpture du Moyen-âge et de la Renaissance* (Lyons, 1945), pp. 65-67, 53-55. pls. XII, XIII (Lyons Virgin and St. John the Baptist).

Henri Rachou, *Le Musée de Toulouse. Sculpture II, description des Vierges et Pietàs* (Toulouse, 1908), pp. 21, 22, with illustration (Comtat-Venaissin Virgin).

Claude Schaefer, *La Sculpture en ronde-bosse au XIV^e siècle dans le duché de Bourgogne* (Paris, 1954), pp. 104, 105, 181, no. 94, pls. 31, 32 (Lyons Virgin).



13, 14. Back views of Figures 2 and 3



*"Nuns with their needles wrote histories also,
that of Christ his passion for their altar cloths, . . .
as other Scripture Stories to adorn their houses."*

Needlework by Nuns:

A Medieval Religious Embroidery

BONNIE YOUNG *Senior Lecturer, The Cloisters*

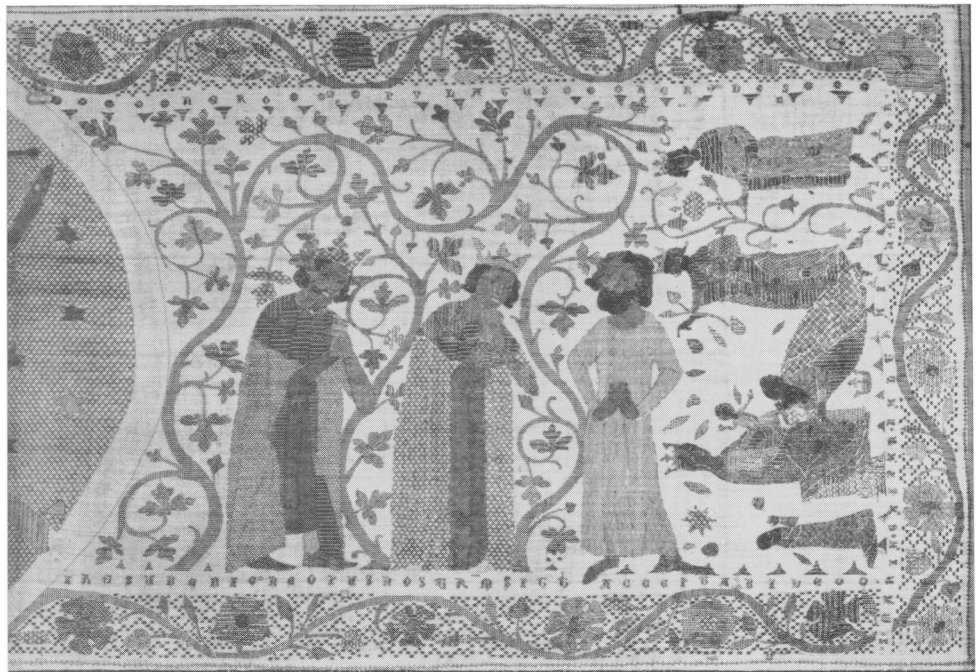
The quotation on the opposite page – words of a seventeenth-century church historian – might easily refer to a rare embroidered hanging (Figure 1) recently given to The Cloisters by Mrs. W. Murray Crane and her daughter, Louise Crane, and believed to be from one of the many medieval religious houses in Lower Saxony. That writer's association of needlework and nunneries may derive from the acceptance of needlework as a proper occupation for ladies of gentle birth, and from the preponderance of well-born women among medieval nuns. Although there were certainly nuns who had a true vocation for the religious life, the convent was a refuge for many girls of the higher classes for whom a suitable husband could not be found. An agricultural laborer or a tradesman could always find work for his superfluous daughters, but for the unmarried daughters of the upper classes only the convent provided an honorable profession. Consequently, the atmosphere in convents was apt to be less "cloistered" during the Middle Ages than what we expect today.

Much embroidery of the Middle Ages was the work of trained craftsmen, sometimes referred to as "needle-painters." In England, for instance, the bulk of the famous embroideries of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was carried out in professional workshops where artisans, both men and women, were expected to serve an apprenticeship of seven years. From Germany, however, there is considerable evidence, including inscriptions, that important embroideries were made in convents. The Metropolitan Museum has a fourteenth-century inscribed embroidery (Figure 2) from Altenberg, on the Lahn River; another embroidery from that same convent, now in the Cleveland Museum, was made during the thirteenth century while Gertrude, the daughter of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, was abbess. Two convents, Wienhausen and Lüne, still possess a number of embroideries made early in their history: at Lüne is a series from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries whose inscriptions indicate they were made by the nuns under the direction of Sophia von Bodendike, prioress and later abbess of the convent.

The fresh, almost childlike charm of the Cloisters embroidery suggests that it might have been made under similar circumstances, with the abbess directing the work of younger nuns. The Virgin in the Nativity scene looks as though she were a doll in a Christmas stocking, suggesting the youthfulness of the needleworkers (see Figure 9), and the elegantly dressed young ladies who acclaim David and present him with a

OPPOSITE

1. *Embroidery. German (Lower Saxony), late XIV century. Linen embroidered with silk, faces and inscriptions painted; 60 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 61 $\frac{1}{16}$ inches. Gift of Mrs. W. Murray Crane and Louise Crane, 69.106*



2. Embroidery. German (Altenberg), early XIV century. Linen embroidered with linen, 156 x 47½ inches. This piece was photographed against light. Inscription: "Sophia, Hadewigis, Lucardis made me. O gentle Jesus, may our work be acceptable to thee." Fletcher Fund, 29.87



LEFT

3. Embroidery. German (Lower Saxony), XIV century. Cotton embroidered with wool, 14½ x 11¾ inches. Bequest of Charles Ikélé, 64.27.21
4. Embroidery. German (Wienhausen), early XIV century. Linen embroidered with wool, 90⅞ x 157⅞ inches. Kloster Wienhausen



chaplet of flowers indicate that the embroiderers still had an interest in the secular costumes and pastimes of girls from noble families (see Figure 10).

The embroideries from Altenberg, like a number of other German religious embroideries, are executed completely in white (see Figure 2). In what appears to be an effort to produce an interesting variation in texture, many different patterns and stitches were used. These patterns in the all-white hangings may have served as the inspiration for the most distinctive feature of the Cloisters embroidery—the depiction of figures and drapery without any attempts to make them three-dimensional or to show shading. Instead, they are treated as a flat combination of geometric shapes, such as crosses, s figures, and swastikas. In contrast to the colorful patchwork-quilt effect created by these patterns, the backgrounds, embroidered in a uniform

looser stitch, are in solid colors. The stitches in the white faces and scrolls were smooth enough to allow the features and inscriptions to be painted on.

It is, above all, these very patterns that unite our embroidery with a group of others from the southern part of Lower Saxony. The group seems more closely related by the geometric patterns, the zigzag designs, the stylized leaf, acorn, and flower motifs, and the animals and birds, such as the pelican in the border, than by story content or overall appearance, a fact that causes speculation as to whether there may have been a medieval equivalent of stitch or pattern books in the nunneries of the region. The Cloisters embroidery, however, differs from many of the Lower Saxon ones in that it is solidly embroidered; in the others the figures are set against the plain background (Figures 3, 6.)

When the embroidery came to this country



5. Cope. German (Hildesheim?), early XIV century. Linen embroidered with silk and gold, 9 feet 4½ inches x 4 feet 9¼ inches. Victoria and Albert Museum, London



6. *Embroidery. German (Lower Saxony), late XIV century. Linen embroidered with silk and linen, 50 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 33 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches. Städtisches Museum, Brunswick*

in 1930, it was attributed to the convent of Wienhausen, and at least one other piece there is close in style and employs the same stitching technique. Most of the embroideries from Wienhausen, however, such as the well-known Tristan hanging (Figure 4), show the same sort of decorative elements and architectural structures but are different in style (for example, the drapery is treated in a more naturalistic way) and are embroidered in wool rather than silk.

According to an 1874 catalogue of the Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen collection where the Cloisters hanging was described, it came from Hildesheim, and it has recently been compared with a cope in the Victoria and Albert Museum purchased from the estate of a bishop of Hildesheim (Figure 5) and an embroidery in the Städtisches Museum in Brunswick, near Hildesheim (Figure 6).

The presence of three little-known saints – Epiphanius, Bernward, and Godehard – in the lower border of the Cloisters hanging (see Figure 27) also points strongly to the region of Hildesheim as a place of origin, as all three are closely associated with that city and infrequently portrayed elsewhere. The body of St. Epiphanius, a fifth-century bishop of Pavia, was brought to Hildesheim in 962 by Bishop Othwin, who had stolen it from Pavia for his relic-poor city while on a trip to Italy; a church was then built in honor of the saint. St. Bernward, bishop of Hildesheim from 993 to 1022 and famous for the bronze doors and other works of art made during his tenure, holds a model of the Church of St. Michael for which he laid the cornerstone in 1001; he consecrated it just before his death in 1022. He was succeeded as bishop by St. Godehard (1022-1038), who was also an important builder of churches. Bernward's empty tomb is still in the crypt of St. Michael's, and medieval reliquaries of all three saints are in the Cathedral of Hildesheim.

Whether the embroidery was originally designed for a church or convent in the city of Hildesheim itself would be impossible to say without documentary proof, but it was almost certainly made in one of the religious

houses within the jurisdiction of that important medieval diocese.

Because embroidery technique seems to have remained much the same during the fourteenth century, the dating of the Cloisters hanging is based on the costumes, which indicate a date at the end of the century. The dresses and coiffures of the ladies who acclaim David (Figure 10), and the helmet, armor, and low-slung sword belt of St. George (Cover, Figure 26), for instance, are similar to ones seen in the Cloisters Nine Heroes tapestries (about 1385); the figure of St. George has also been compared to a sculpture of that saint in an altarpiece of around 1400 in Hildesheim.

Although the execution of the embroidery may seem naïve, the content and arrangement are sophisticated: scenes from the Old and New Testaments are paired, each in a separate compartment enclosed within a zigzag border from which emerge stylized leaf forms. Whoever planned the decorative scheme of the hanging was obviously well versed in the many symbolic interpretations of the Bible current in the Middle Ages. From the earliest days of Christianity, theologians had written commentaries on it and interpreted it in an ordered allegorical system, one of the main features of which was the relation of the Old and the New Testaments. Indications of this theme of relatedness are found in the Gospels in such passages as "For even as Jonah was in the belly of the fish [for] three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (see Figures 22, 23). St. Augustine put it more generally: "The Old Testament is the New veiled, and the New is the Old unveiled."

This type of thinking had irresistible appeal to the medieval mind: the words of the Prophets foretold events in the Gospels, and Old Testament stories became prefigurations for those in the New. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries works like the vast compilation of biblical commentaries, the *Glossa Ordinaria*, Honorius of Autun's *Speculum Ecclesiae* – probably the most popular handbook of sermons in the Middle Ages – and the Moralized Bible expanded the theme until it was

evidently becoming too complicated for ordinary consumption. The early fourteenth-century author of the *Speculum Humanae Salvationis* opened with a partial quote from Daniel: "[Those] who teach many to justice will shine as the stars in perpetual eternity," so I write this book for the instruction of many . . . but I recite only a little of the total history which was available to me . . . for fear I would give boredom to my readers." This work and a similar book, the *Biblia Pauperum*, are essentially picture books with short texts. The *Speculum* has three prefigurations for each New Testament scene and also includes apocryphal material.

After the appearance of these two books the theme reached the height of its popularity in art. While the new hanging relates to the *Speculum* and the *Biblia Pauperum*, it does not follow either literally, as did some other works of art of the late Middle Ages. Some of the marked deviations from those literary works are discussed in the captions accompanying the pictures of details from the embroidery that follow this article.

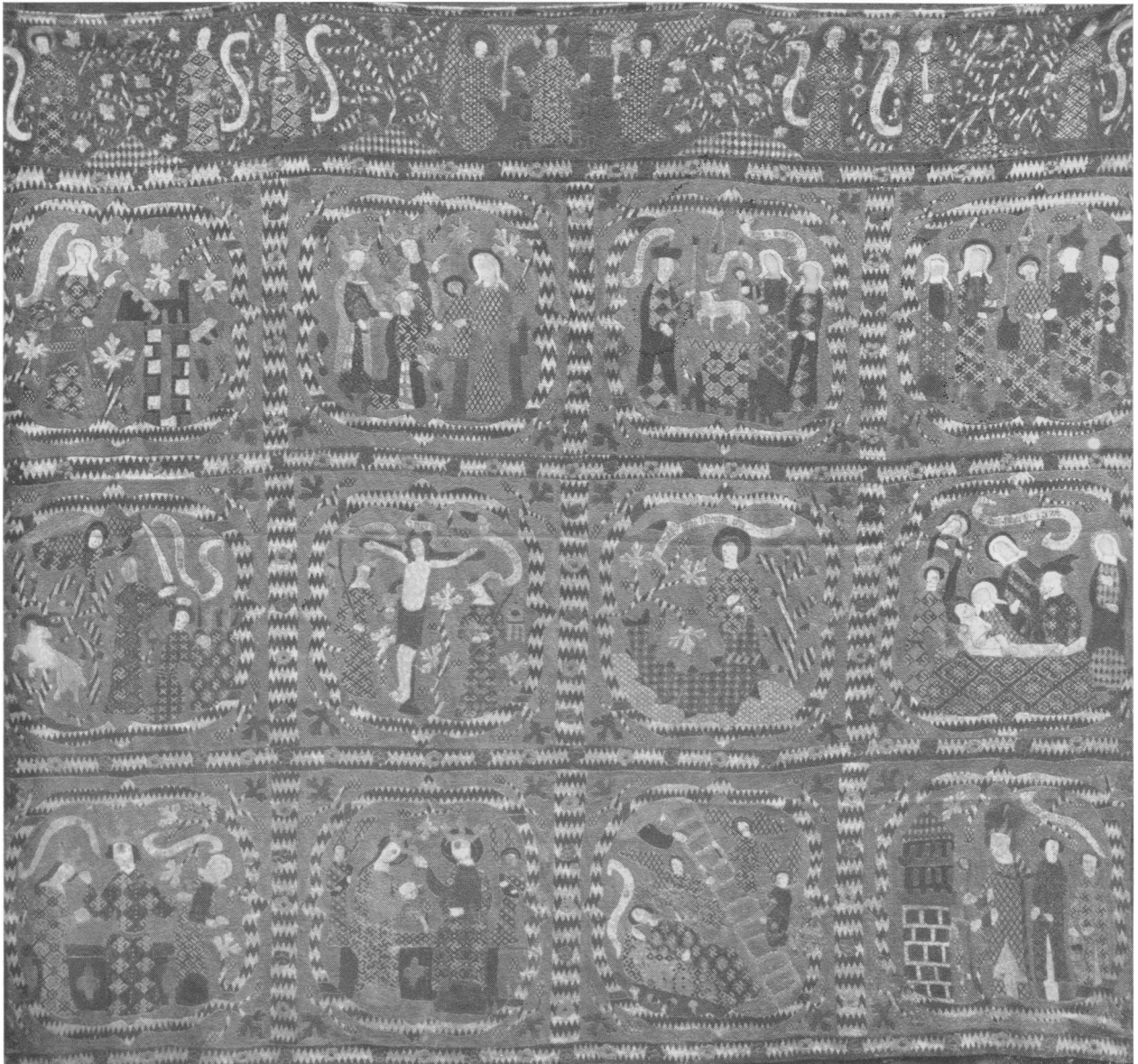
Another section of this embroidery, at one time in the parish church of Brakel in Westphalia, disappeared in 1945 during World War II, but a photograph of it exists (Figure 7). Obviously the continuation of the Cloisters hanging, it contains six paired scenes, including four more from the life of Christ. Neither our outside border nor our coats of arms are repeated. In the middle of the top border, moreover, with saints on either side, Christ is enthroned with the banner of the Resurrection and censuring angels. As was pointed out in the catalogue of an exhibition at Corvey in 1966, the scene of Christ enthroned would logically have been the center of a composition that originally had thirty-six scenes. The existence of a third portion of the embroidery with twelve additional scenes would explain the absence of such important episodes in the life of Christ as the Flight into Egypt, the Baptism, and the Resurrection.

The church consecration scene in the Brakel embroidery (Figure 25) leads one to surmise that the hanging may have been made to

commemorate the dedication of a new church where it was to be used. Although the embroidery was once believed to be part of an altar hanging, its extrapolated original length of about sixteen feet seems too long for this purpose, so it is more likely that it had some other use – possibly as one of a series designed to hang over choir stalls. Considering the per-

ishable nature of textiles, the beautiful condition – there has been little if any restoration and the colors are still remarkably bright – of the Cloisters embroidery shows that it has always been treasured and well cared for. We are indeed fortunate to have today even a part of what must have originally been a most ambitious needlework project.

7. *Embroidery. German (Lower Saxony), late XIV century. See Figures 18-25 for details of eight of these panels. Anna presenting Samuel to Eli and the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (the second pair in the top row), and Ahasuerus crowning Esther and the Coronation of the Virgin (the two left-hand scenes on the bottom) are not separately illustrated. The lower border of this section is missing. Photograph: Landesdenkmalamt Westfalen-Lippe, Münster*



NOTES AND REFERENCES

Since it is difficult to translate accurately the German terms for the stitches in the embroidery, drawings after those in the 1964 catalogue of the Kestner Museum are shown here. The stitches illustrated in drawings A and D were used for the outlines; in B, for the backgrounds, the red and white borders, and some parts of the costumes; in C, for the geometric patterns; and in D, for the faces and scrolls.

While the embroidery was not made all in one piece, each of the three rows appears to be a single, complete unit. The differences in background color (see Cover) were probably intentional rather than caused by fading and the painting of facial features and inscriptions an expedient to simplify the work on the embroidery.

Although the spelling of biblical names follows the King James version, the quotes from the Bible are taken from the Douai version (New York, 1950). The English translations from the *Biblia Pauperum* are from Adolphe Didron's *Christian Iconography* (London, 1886), and those of Durandus of Mende from John Neale and Benjamin Webb's edition of *The Symbolism of Churches and Church Ornaments* (Leeds, 1843). The transcriptions of the scrolls in the embroidery can be found in the Corvey catalogue, *Kunst und Kultur*.

The arms were identified by R. T. Nichol, a member of the Museum staff when the embroidery first came to this country, as those of the ancient Landgrave of Hesse and the House of Lichtfuss, but although the charges seem correct, the colors differ from those indicated in heraldry books.

I wish to express my thanks to Dr. Renate Kroos, who sent me a copy of the text on our embroidery from her forthcoming book *Niedersächsische Bildstickereien (1150-1450)*.

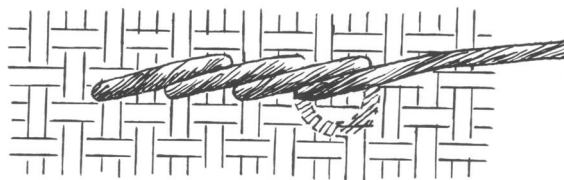
H. Cornell, *Biblia Pauperum* . . . (Stockholm, 1925).

Louis de Farcy, *La Broderie du XI^e siècle jusqu'à nos jours* (Angers, 1890).

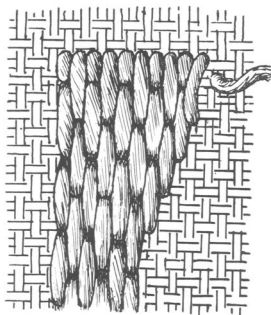
Carmen Gómez-Moreno, *Medieval Art from Private Collections: A Special Exhibition at The Cloisters, October 30, 1968, through January 5, 1969* (New York, Metropolitan Museum, 1968).

Kestner Museum, *Textilien: Webereien und Stickereien des Mittelalters*, picture catalogue no. 7, compiled by Ruth Grönwoldt (Hanover, 1964).

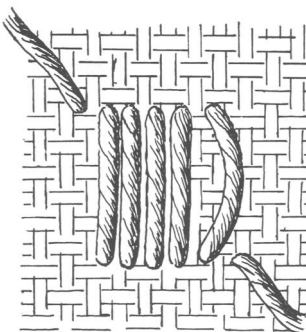
Kunst und Kultur im Weserraum 800-1600 (Corvey, 1966).



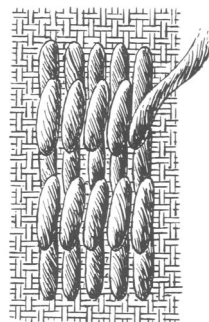
A



B



C



D

Emile Mâle, *The Gothic Image* (New York, 1958).

F. A. Lehner, *Verzeichniss der Textilarbeiten*, Hohenzollernisches Museum (Sigmaringen, 1874).

J. P. Migne, ed., *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 172, *Honorius of Autun* (Paris, 1854).

Eileen Power, *Medieval English Nunneries* (Cambridge, 1922).

Marie Schuette, *Gestickte Bildteppiche und Decken des Mittelalters* (Leipzig, 1927-1930).

Speculum Humanae Salvationis, ed. by J. Lutz and P. Perdrizet from the 1448 trans. by Jean Mielot (Mulhouse, 1909).

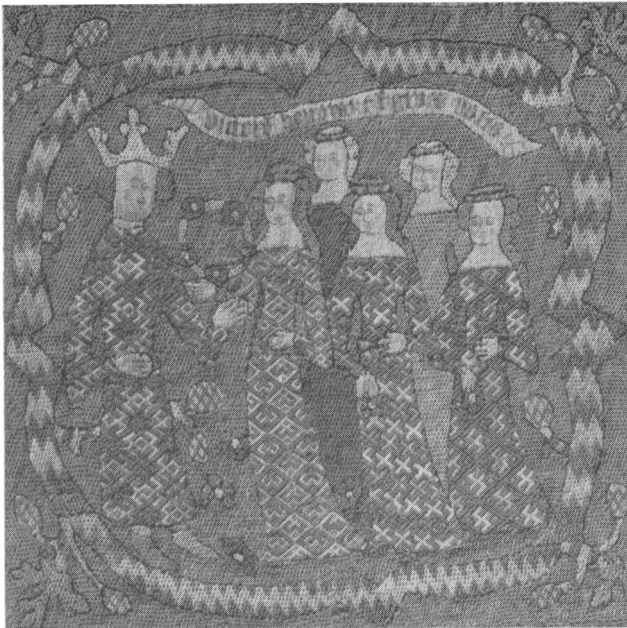


8, 9. Two prefigurations instead of the usual one are contained in the scenes before the Annunciation and the Nativity in the top row of the Cloisters hanging. Scrolls reading *vellus Iedonis* (Gideon's fleece) and *virga Aaron floruit* (the flowering of Aaron's rod) identify two prefigurations for the Annunciation (Cover). In the scenes shown here, the closed gate of Ezekiel and Moses in the burning bush prefigure the Nativity. These images do not coincide exactly with those in either the *Biblia Pauperum* or the *Speculum*, but all of them were used by medieval writers as examples of the virginity of Mary.



Honorius of Autun mentioned all four in his sermon for the Annunciation. He wrote that the sterile rod of Aaron, which gave fruit, is the Virgin Mary who brought Jesus Christ—at once both God and Man—into the world, and that the fleece of Gideon, which miraculously received the dew from heaven, is the Virgin who became fertile, while the air around, which remained dry, symbolizes her virginity. He applied similar logic to the other pair of scenes.

10–13. In the second row of the Museum’s hanging, David, acclaimed after his victory over Goliath, is shown next to the Entry into Jerusalem. As the *Biblia Pauperum* explains, “We read in the first book of Kings . . . the women came rejoicing, and received him into Jerusalem with great glory. David thus typifies Christ, whom the children of the Hebrews received into Jerusalem, shouting with loud voice and uttering blessings on Him who came in the name of the Lord.” In the next scene Isaac carries the wood and Abraham the fire for the Sacrifice of Isaac. The *Speculum* tells us, “The carrying and bearing of the cross by Jesus Christ was prefigured in Isaac, son of Abraham. Isaac carried on his own shoulders the wood by which his father intended to sacrifice him to Our Lord.” The Sacrifice itself prefigures the Crucifixion (Figures 20, 21).



10



11



12



13

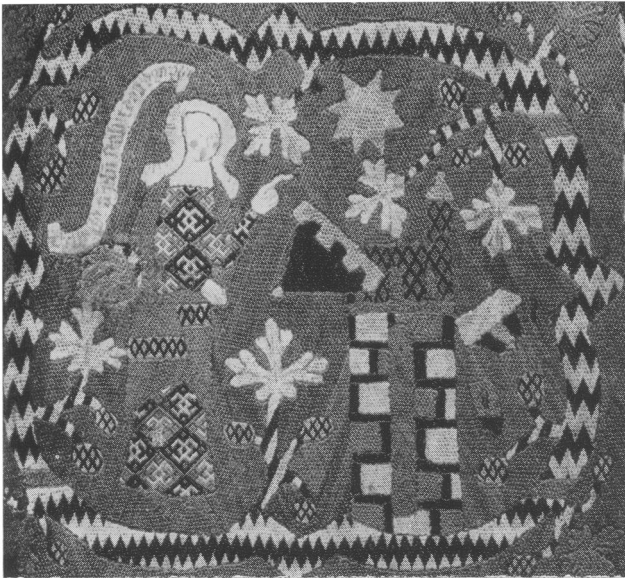
14
16



15
17



14–17. In the bottom row Moses receiving the tablets of the law is paired with the Pentecost. The next scene, from Exodus, shows Moses striking the rock for water and the manna, in the form of eucharistic wafers, descending from heaven. This is the prefiguration of the Mass scene where a bishop, accompanied by two deacons, holds up the consecrated Host in which there is a figure of the Christ child. This rather unusual but by no means unique appearance of the Christ child in the Host probably symbolizes the real presence of the body of Christ, for the scroll reads: “Here is Christ given to the faithful.”



18



19

20



21



18–23. The picture of a female figure who points to a star above a toppling edifice (Figure 18) is a puzzling prefiguration for the Adoration of the Magi (Figure 19). The inscription does little to clarify it, as it has only been partially read: “*stella* [?] . . . *stabit* . . . *templum*” (it suggests that something will stand or remain over the temple), and neither the *Speculum* nor the *Biblia Pauperum* associates such a scene with the Magi.



22



23

The female figure has been called a sibyl, and the scene might relate to the vision of the Virgin and Child that the Tiburtine Sibyl revealed to the emperor Augustus, a theme often associated with the Nativity. Alternatively, it could simply show the downfall of the Roman temples and idols following the birth of Christ, or it could signify the overthrow of Synagogue.

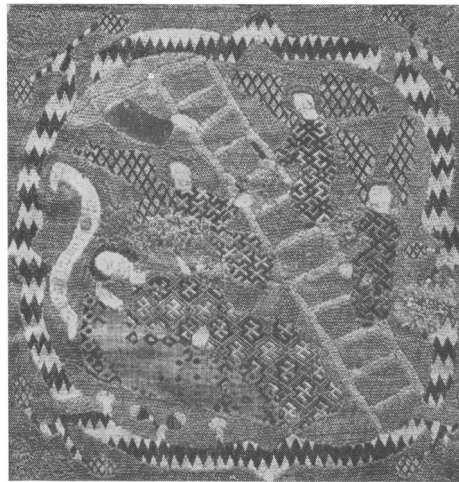
In support of the last suggestion, two other panels present a similar idea. In the Crucifixion scene (Figure 21), Christ is flanked by Church and by blindfolded Synagogue, with scrolls inscribed *Ecclesia sacra* (holy church) and *Judaea caeca* (blind Judea). This symbolic association often appeared in medieval art: it was believed that the moment of Christ's death, when the veil of the temple was rent, marked the end of the rule of Synagogue and the beginning of the rule of Christ's Church. There could also be an allusion to the downfall of Synagogue in the prefiguration for the Coronation of the Virgin, in which Ahasuerus not only crowns Esther but pushes aside his old wife, Vashti, who was equated with Synagogue in medieval writing (see Figure 7).

24, 25. In the biblical story of Jacob's ladder (Genesis 28:10-22), Jacob, while sleeping in the field with a rock for a pillow, saw a ladder on which angels of the Lord descended to him and returned to heaven. When he arose he erected the stone on which he had slept as an altar, consecrating it with oil, and called the place Bethel ("the house of the Lord"). Medieval theologians often paired this story with a bishop consecrating a church. In Durandus of Mende's thirteenth-century treatise on the symbolism of churches, he noted that at the moment of the dedication of the altar during the consecration of a church, "[The] bishop poureth over it oil and chrism, and chanteth 'Jacob set up the stone for a memorial and poured oil upon it.'"

Although the last two scenes in the embroidery may relate to the concluding scenes of the *Biblia Pauperum*, which incorporate, among other texts, that of Jacob's ladder, it seems more likely that it was included, as suggested earlier, because the embroidery was intended for use in a newly dedicated church. And since the word "temple" is used to describe both this church (the inscription reads *Dedicatio Templi*) and the falling building in the unusual scene preceding the Epiphany, it may be possible to relate that enigmatic picture with the dedication idea too. Indeed, such a connection would probably have been quite acceptable to the medieval mind, because of the beginning of the Epistle for the Epiphany (Isaiah 60:1-6): "Arise and be enlightened O Jerusalem, because your light will come, and the glory of the Lord will rise upon thee." Honorius of Autun said that "Jerusalem" in this sentence symbolized "holy church."

Furthermore, the four illuminations in the first column on the page in the Moralized Bible illustrating Isaiah 60 show Isaiah pointing above the city of Jerusalem (verse 1), connected with a bishop in front of a church; and a group of people on camels (verse 6), linked with the Adoration of the Magi.

24



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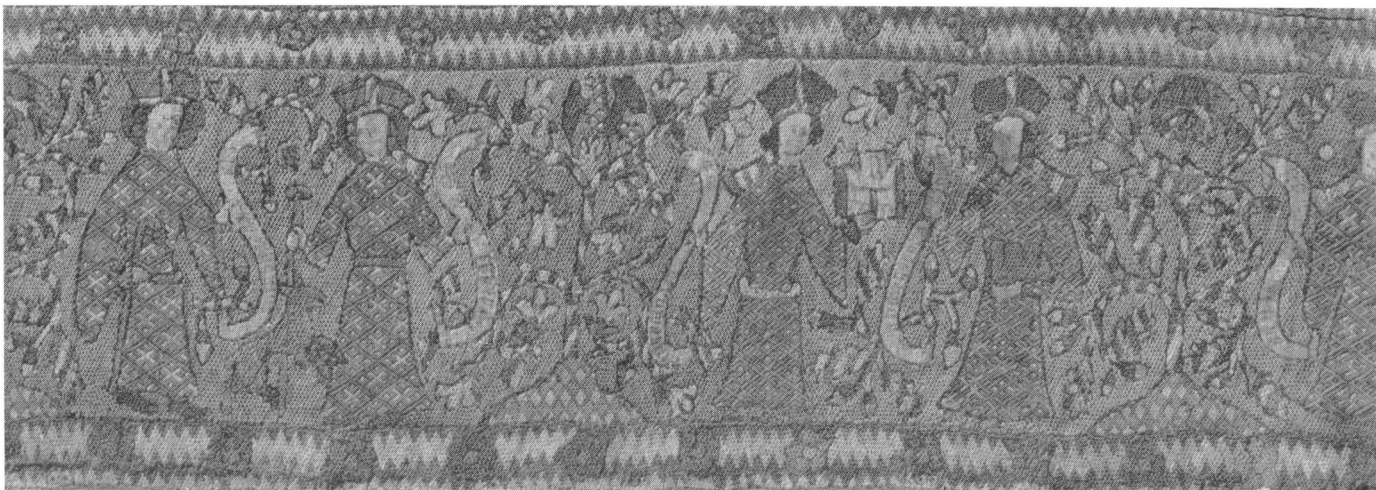


26–27. In the top and bottom borders of the Museum’s portion of the embroidery are coats of arms and figures of saints in pairs, many of them from the group of the fourteen “Helpers in Need,” so popular in Germany (see also Cover, Figure 1). In the top row St. George with his armor and shield stands out. In the bottom row we see Sts. Francis and Dominic in their habits, and Sts. Benedict and Anthony (Figure 1); Sts. Epiphanius and Giles with a red animal, probably the hart that St. Giles saved, according to his legend; St. Bernward holding a church; and St. Godehard. In both borders are stylized trees and pelicans striking the breast for blood to revive their young. The pelicans alternate with a bird that is either a phoenix or an eagle. All three birds were used symbolically – the pelican and phoenix with the Passion and Resurrection of Christ, and the eagle with the Ascension (see also the birds in Figure 6).

26



27



A Beautiful Madonna in the Cloisters Collection

TIMOTHY HUSBAND *Administrative Assistant, The Cloisters*

Around the year 1400, as an offshoot of the so-called International style, a particular stylistic type evolved and eventually dominated the arts of central Europe: it sought, through its soft flowing lines and full color, to achieve an idealized realism, and has become known as the Beautiful style. This style, though manifested in many iconographical types, seems to have found no better vehicle of expression than the figure of the standing Madonna and Child. This particular portrayal of the Virgin became so widespread within the stylistic movement that it virtually became an idiom of its own, known as the *Schöne Madonnen* or Beautiful Madonnas.

An example of a Beautiful Madonna was recently added to the Cloisters collection (Figure 1). The standing Madonna, carved in lindenwood and fully polychromed, assumes the characteristic *hanchement* or s-curve stance and holds the naked Christ child in her arms against her left hip in a near-diagonal position. She wears a heavy gilt crown surmounted by tapered points, the larger of which probably ended in fleurons that have unfortunately been broken off. From under the back of the crown, a long white veil with red fluted border falls in soft folds to rest lightly on her shoulders. Her red robe has a white rosette pattern; it reaches to the floor in smooth folds, one of which breaks over her right foot revealing the end of a gold shoe. A white mantle with a wide gold border, drawn together with a gold quatrelobe, spills over both arms in cascades of pipelike folds, exposing a blue lining. In front, the prominent scoop folds of the mantle descend in a v and end at the floor in a large, bent roll fold. Her hair, carved in concentric arcing lines, is brown and her eyes, lips, brows, and cheeks are carefully painted in (see Figure 17). Although the frontal view dominates, the piece is fully carved and must have been designed to be freestanding.

The emergence of the Beautiful Madonnas, within the Beautiful style, represented an organic stylistic development that appeared at its clearest in the regions of Bohemia, Silesia, West Poland, Bavaria, and Austria; Prague was most likely the principal center though Vienna and Salzburg seem to have been important as well. During the second half of the fourteenth century, Prague in particular enjoyed a revitalization of the arts chiefly as a result of a new surge of courtly and aristocratic patronage, coinciding with the accession of Charles of Bohemia to the throne in 1346 as Charles IV.



1. *Standing Virgin and Child*. South German or Austrian, 1420-1430. Polychromed lindenwood, height 36½ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 65.215.2

2. *Standing Madonna and Child, called the Krumau Madonna. South Bohemian (Český Krumlov), about 1390. Limestone, height 43 $\frac{11}{16}$ inches. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna*

The Museum's statue



The rise of Prague as a major artistic center of Europe was stimulated by a variety of influences. Charles IV's father was French by culture and Charles himself was brought up in Paris, received a multilingual education from renowned scholars, was first married to Blanche of Valois, and sojourned in Avignon during the time of the "Babylonian captivity." It was during the papal stay in Avignon that this city became an artistic center of great importance, attracting major artists from Italy and the North with the lucrative commissions that go hand in hand with the creation of a lavish and grand court. Here, probably for the first time, Charles was exposed to the arts on an international scale. Shortly after Charles's return to Prague the Frenchman Matthew of Arras was invited to the court. The inspiration he had received from the Cathedral of Narbonne was applied to the rebuilding of the Cathedral of Prague. Later Charles brought in Peter Parler, the most celebrated of the talented German family of architects and sculptors, to complete the task. It was under his influence that the Parler lodges became one of the most important artistic guilds in Europe, and because of his fame stonemasons and sculptors of German background were favored in the guilds, not only in Prague but also in a number of other artistic centers throughout eastern Europe.

There developed, then, around the year 1400, not only in Prague, but throughout Europe, a certain internationalism, which accounts in part for the widely spread stylistic affinities in the art of the period. Both the terms "internationalism" and "affinities" are, however, best de-emphasized, for to assume that they imply an artistic uniformity among particular homogeneous states would be misleading at best. By the end of the fourteenth century, the medieval states were breaking up into political, religious, and cultural regions without true boundaries, and the relative stability of the Renaissance was still many decades away. In turbulent times it is not unusual for artists to migrate from city to city or country to country in search of dependable patronage; as they move from

one place to another their monuments and influence necessarily become increasingly diffused.

The diffusion of stylistic types, together with a dearth of documentary evidence, has made determining the origins of individual examples of the Beautiful Madonnas a thorny problem. The style itself, with little question, seems to have originated in Bohemia, centering around the Luxembourg court at Prague. Here, probably as early as the 1360s, prototypes of the Beautiful Madonnas were emerging, chiefly under ecclesiastical incentive. By the last two decades of the fourteenth century, sculptural production fell more exclusively under courtly patronage, and the Beautiful Madonnas, reaching their apex of artistic innovation and expressiveness, became objects of a more intensely personal devotional nature. Most representative of their stylistic perfection in Bohemia is the Krumau Madonna from Český Krumlov in South Bohemia (Figure 2), which can be dated to the last decade of the fourteenth century. This figure, gracefully carved in the typical s-curve stance, her fingers delicately pressing into the flesh of the robust child, who is held fully diagonally in counterbalance to her stance, has a spiritual harmony imparted by the sculptural relationship of mother and child and invokes a sense of serenity and sublime and intensely personal beauty—even sensuousness—which must have been the culmination of all previous efforts and the pivotal point of inspiration for all ensuing ones.

Although evidence seems to indicate that the style of the Beautiful Madonnas reached its peak in Bohemia, one must not assume that this region was either the sole center from which the finest examples of the style emanated, directly or indirectly, or that the Madonnas originating in the Bohemian regions were the result of purely Bohemian artistic conception or manufacture.

Indeed, it is apparent from surviving Beautiful Madonnas that there existed at least two distinct stylistic divisions, which cannot be readily identified with any particular region or school but rather appear intermingled throughout the entire geographic scope of



3. *Standing Madonna and Child. Austrian, about 1395. Limestone, height 33½ inches. Despite such variations as the drapery falling off the left arm instead of the right, this Madonna from the Pfarrkirche St. Maria in Altenmarkt, Austria, belongs to the first stylistic division of Beautiful Madonnas. In addition to the Krumau Madonna, other Madonnas within this group are from the Pfarrkirche of Maria Himmelfahrt in Grossgmain, Austria; in the Stadtkirche of Pilsen; in the Musée du Louvre, Paris; and from the cities of Vimperk, Třeboň, and Chulm sv. Máří. Photograph: Foto Marburg*





the style. The first division (illustrated by the Krumau Madonna, Figure 2, and the Madonna in the parish church of St. Maria in Altenmarkt, Austria, Figure 3) is characterized by a highly refined contrapposto composition based on carefully constructed proportions and a series of delicately intersecting diagonals around a sinuous axis. By employing drapery and physiological features to develop a balance of line and proportion rather than a counterbalance of mass and volume, these Madonnas achieve a gentle beauty, crisp in execution and serene, almost withdrawn, in nature. Generally, the Madonnas of this group have a pronounced *hanchement* on the left side, though occasionally mirror images of the composition are found. The Child, normally of large scale, reposes in a diagonal position on the protruding hip. Often the Child is turned toward the viewer; in other examples only the trunk and head are turned outward. The Madonna, to compensate for the weight of the child, leans slightly back and to her right and gazes at him with maternal tenderness. Although there are a number of variations, the drapery generally falls in brisk vertical folds off her right arm and in a descending cascade of full, bowl-shaped folds (*Schüsselfalte*) down the front of the mantle.

The second division is distinguished by a manneristic contrapposto with a *hanchement* on the right and the Child on the opposite side braced against the free leg (see Figures 4, 5). The Child generally has his left leg crossed against the right and is supported principally by the Madonna's left hand, around which arches a flowing fold of material lending a rich profile to the composition. As if to counterbalance this movement, the drapery on the right sweeps across the front of the Madonna's torso in a generous arching fold forming the so-called false sleeve, as in Figure 5, while the rest of the drapery assumes a tubular pattern of large folds, giving the figures of this group a greater fullness than exists in those of the first group. The billowing drapery and the sweeping exaggerated fold impart a sense of vigor and animation more earthy and naturalistic than that of the first group.

From the start, it is apparent that the Clois-

ters Madonna is more related to the first stylistic division than to the second (compare Figures 1-3 with 4 and 5). The Virgin stands with a marked *hanchement* on the left side and the Child is held in her left arm against the protruding hip in a near-diagonal position (though less pronounced than examples, such as Figure 3, more typical of the group) thus balancing the torso of the Virgin, which leans toward the right. As it is the Madonna's hip and left arm that principally support the Child, her right hand holding the Child's left foot is more a decorative gesture than a functional one. Her face is round and full, as is the Child's, though he seems stiff and doll-like compared to the Madonna.

The identification of any particular example of the Beautiful Madonnas with one of the two principal stylistic divisions is, however, not necessarily a clear indication of the geographic point of origin. As we have already noted, the entire movement was so diffused throughout Europe that stylistic affinities could exist between widely separated regions; thus an example in the Rhineland could be closely related to another example in Silesia or western Poland without indicating a direct connection between the artists. Likewise, works most likely by the same hand can appear in many locations. A strong argument has been made, for instance, that the same master who was responsible for the Krumau Madonna from South Bohemia (Figure 2) was also responsible for the cast-stone seated Virgin from the tympanum of the main doorway of the Benedictine Abbey of Marienburg in the Vintschgau of the southern Tyrol region. To determine whether this artist was South Bohemian or Austrian, if, indeed, either, is a knotty problem, which only lengthy research could hope to unravel.

These obscurities, which are inherent not only to the Beautiful Madonnas but to the entire International style as well, are in part attributable to the fact that the Beautiful style was fundamentally an outgrowth of the Parler workshops, which, as far as the Beautiful style is concerned, centered on Prague, but which existed virtually all over Europe: from Cologne to Prague, from Milan to Cra-

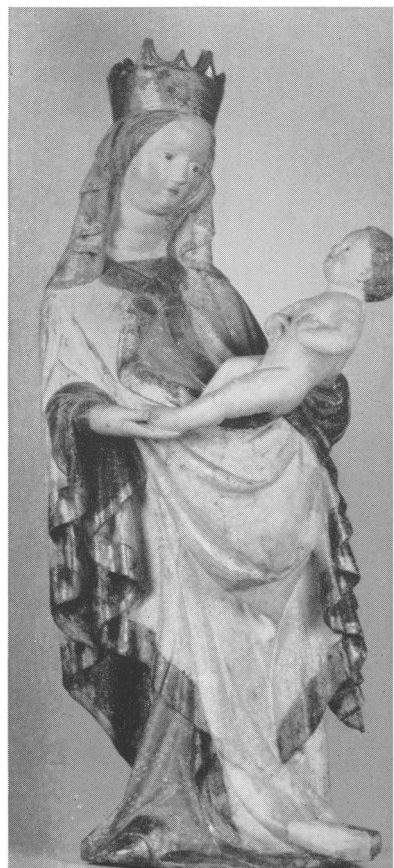
OPPOSITE, LEFT

4. *Standing Madonna and Child. South Bohemian (Cathedral of St. John, Toruń, now lost [?]), 1390-1400. Limestone, height 44 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches. This sculpture and the one in Figure 5 are from the second stylistic division of Beautiful Madonnas. Photograph: Foto Marburg*

OPPOSITE, RIGHT

5. *Standing Madonna and Child. South Bohemian (Church of St. Elizabeth, Breslau), about 1400. Limestone, partially polychromed, height 46 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Other Madonnas in this group are in the municipal museums of Düsseldorf and Danzig, the Thewalt Madonna in the Bonn Landesmuseum, and the Madonnas from Venice and Šternberk. National Museum, Warsaw. Photograph: Foto Marburg*

The Museum's statue



6. *Madonna and Child*. South Bohemian (Stratovítská),
about 1400. Painted panel, 19 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 15 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches. National
Gallery, Prague



7. *Madonna of Vyšší Brod*, by the Master of Vyšší Brod.
South Bohemian (monastery church of the Virgin
Mary, Vyšší Brod), after 1420. Tempera on wood
panel, 38 x 29 $\frac{7}{16}$ inches. National Gallery, Prague

8. *St. Apollonia*, detail of Figure 7



cow. The development and spread of the Beautiful Madonna style was organic; the transmission of the style occurred as much through the export of works of art to distant places as through the creation by itinerant artists, influenced by a particular work, of their own versions in widely removed regions.

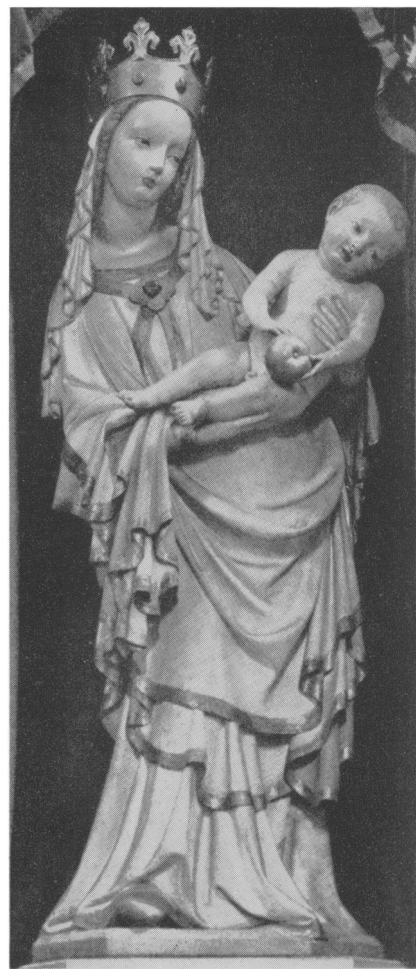
The Cloisters Madonna is not excepted from the obscurities of the period, but certain observations enhance our knowledge of the piece. The principal stylistic source of this sculpture is clearly rooted in South Bohemian panel painting in the Beautiful style. If one compares the Child here with the Child in the so-called Stratovítská Madonna panel of about 1400 (Figure 6), the porcelain and stiff doll-like quality of the two is immediately striking. A closer compositional relationship with the Cloisters Madonna and Child can be seen in the panel of the Madonna from Vyšší Brod, painted about 1420 (Figure 7). The manner in which the Madonna holds the Child varies only slightly from that in the Cloisters statue. The curious thickness of the Madonna's right hand is prominent in both. In each work the Madonna and Child gaze at each other without their eyes meeting and hence not quite achieving the intended sense of close spiritual communication—a relationship not attempted in the earlier panel. Thus it is apparent that the sculptor of the Cloisters Madonna worked in a style closer to that of the South Bohemia panel painters of the second decade of the fifteenth century than to those around the turn of the century. Indeed, the stylistic affinities are as strong here as in any example of sculpture that has survived. Most striking are the similarities in the handling of the drapery of the figure of St. Apollonia seen in the upper left frame panel of the Vyšší Brod Madonna (Figure 8). The Cloisters Madonna has three particular drapery motifs, all of which occur in the drapery of St. Apollonia but which do not seem to have appeared simultaneously in sculptural examples of the style. These motifs are the two deeply cut and bowl-shaped folds in the front of the mantle, the mantle looped over and cascading from both sides of each arm in evenly turned pipe folds, and the mantle falling



9. *The Roudnice Madonna. South Bohemian (Capuchin monastery church of St. Wenceslas, Roudnice), before 1400. Tempera on limewood panel, 35 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 26 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches. National Gallery, Prague*



10, 11. *Standing Madonna and Child. Both South Bohemian, 1420-1430 and about 1420. Wood. National Gallery, Prague*



12. *Standing Madonna and Child. South Bohemian, about 1395. Limestone, height 74½ inches. Church of St. Bartholomew, Pilsen. Illustration from K. Clasen, Die Schöne Madonnen*



13. *St. Catherine. South Bohemian (vicinity of Leubus), about 1400. Limestone and polychrome, height 33⅓ inches. National Museum of Poznań, Poland. Photograph: Foto Marburg*

diagonally from both sides until it reaches the ground between the Virgin's feet and breaks in a stiffly bent roll fold.

The initial conclusion would seem to be that the Cloisters Madonna was executed by a South Bohemian sculptor in close association with the panel painting of the region around 1420 or slightly later. But the case is not quite this simple. The Vyšší Brod Madonna is essentially a later copy of the prototype provided by the Roudnice Madonna thought to be painted in the last decade of the fourteenth century (Figure 9). Of the vast numbers of panels that follow in the style of the Roudnice Madonna, which parallels in panel painting the perfection of the Beautiful Madonna style achieved by the Madonna from Český Krumlov in sculpture

(Figure 2), the Vyšší Brod is one of the last.

The delicate facial features and the gracefully curved stance of the Madonna and the four female saints in the frame of the Vyšší Brod Madonna are clearly rooted in the fourteenth-century tradition of the Beautiful style. The drapery, however, through its hard lines, stiff voluminous forms, and unrhythmical sculptural motifs, is not only characteristic of the decline of the idealism and lyricism implicit in the Beautiful style, but is, as well, indicative of an altogether new and incompatible stylistic format.

This same stylistic conflict exists in the Cloisters Madonna. For all its grace and charm one senses that the piece was the result of an artist trying to recapture the impact of a work that greatly impressed him, but in rendering it he lost the spontaneity of the original work and, bound by a forceful tradition, failed to invoke his own artistic expression or to successfully integrate the current stylistic trends. While it is reasonable to assume that the Cloisters Madonna is datable to 1420 or later, contemporaneous sculpture executed in South Bohemia (see Figures 10, 11) bears little relationship to our piece, making this region an unlikely origin for our sculpture.

Nonetheless, the prototypes in sculpture, as in panel painting, generally originated in South Bohemia and date to the last decade of the fourteenth century.

Two clearly related examples are the Madonna in the church of St. Bartholomew in Pilsen (Figure 12) and the figure of St. Catherine in Poznań (Figure 13). The Pilsen Madonna is one of the earliest examples of the style with the Child in a diagonal position and leaning sharply to the left, the format that the Cloisters Madonna follows. Other coinciding motifs are the two deep-bowl folds in the mantle, the mantle borders—pulled together by a large brooch—forming an x pattern, and the drapery of the robe folding over one foot. The graceful stance of this Madonna, the counterplay of drapery, and the expressiveness of the gentle face are executed with a mastery and sophistication representative of the best traditions of the

14. *Standing Madonna and Child. Austrian, 1420-1430. Limestone. St. Stephan's Cathedral, Vienna. Photograph: Bundesdenkmalamt, Vienna*



15. *Enthroned Madonna and Child on a Crescent Moon. Austrian, 1430-1440. Polychromed lindenwood, height 40 $\frac{3}{16}$ inches. The Thomas Kment Collection on loan to the Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz. Photograph: Steffen-Lichtbild, Graz*

16. *St. Catherine. South German, about 1430. Polychromed lindenwood, height 51 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches. Franz Monheim Collection, Aachen. Photograph: Ann Münchow*



Beautiful style that the sculptor of the Cloisters Madonna was striving to maintain several decades later. The Poznań St. Catherine shares like similarities with the Cloisters Madonna, including the drapery motifs of the bowl folds, the x pattern, and the robe folding over one foot, and in addition has the even cascade of pipe folds descending from the arm. The face, as in the Pilsen Madonna, is similar in shape and structure to that of the Cloisters Madonna, but is more refined in its gentle delicateness and expressiveness.

Ultimately it is impossible to determine the exact source of the Cloisters Madonna with any degree of certainty. A close relationship with South Bohemian panel painting has been observed; likewise, there is an obvious dependency on the Polish-Bohemian sculptural prototypal forms of the last decade of the fourteenth century. Whether the artist of the Cloisters Madonna was more influenced by one stylistic source than the other becomes somewhat of a moot point, but it seems reasonable to assume that the two were so irrevocably intertwined as to make them virtually indistinguishable. Furthermore, the relationship between the Cloisters Madonna and other sculpture of the period assures its



17-19. Details of Figures 1, 16, and 14

production outside the regions of Bohemia and Poland.

Indeed, examples of Beautiful Madonnas providing the closest comparisons to the Cloisters piece are found predominantly in South Germany and Austria. In the Cathedral of St. Stephan in Vienna is a stone sculpture of a Beautiful Madonna (Figure 14), generally thought to be of South German origin, which comes remarkably close to the Cloisters Madonna in the rendering of the Virgin's mantle drawn together by a brooch and folded over her right foot exposing the toe of her shoe, the pipe folds cascading off each arm, the Virgin's right hand holding the Child's foot, and the rigid near-horizontal position of the Child. Another related figure is an enthroned Virgin and Child on a crescent moon in the Landesmuseum Joanneum in Graz (Figure 15). Though this piece is more closely allied to the late Gothic style of the mid-fifteenth

century than to the Beautiful style of around 1400, there are particular motifs that are held over from the earlier style, which closely correspond to the Cloisters Madonna. The handling of the facial features, the neck, the hair, the crown, and the veil are so similar that their relationship must be more than coincidental. The drapery in particular is of a later style that does not coincide with our Madonna, yet there is the striking recurrence of the x pattern, and the curiously prominent bent roll fold over her right foot – an unusual motif occurring in the Cloisters Madonna as well.

A further related sculpture is a figure of St. Catherine from the Franz Monheim Collection in Aachen (Figure 16). Again it is the rendering of the head, veil, and crown rather than the drapery that are so close. The roundness of the face, small chin, and expansive forehead, the fleshiness of the neck, and the



arching lines of the hair bring this figure within the same general area of production as the Cloisters Madonna (compare Figures 17-19).

The Monheim St. Catherine and the Graz Enthroned Virgin and Child can be safely dated within the third and fourth decades of the fifteenth century. The Cloisters Madonna must date from the third decade, sharing with the later examples a similar rendering of facial features but lacking the format of drapery and less formalized stance characteristic of the late Northern Gothic. A date of 1420 to 1430, although late for the mainstream of the Beautiful Madonna style, does not seem unreasonable for the Cloisters Madonna, and there are factors other than the stylistic ones already mentioned to support the assumption. The use of wood as a material was not common to the Beautiful Madonna style during the time of its greatest momentum and only came into use as the style penetrated to the more removed areas and became imitated by provincial artists. The fact that there are no iconographical motifs, such as an apple or the Child holding the Virgin's

drapery, which were common at the height of the style, indicates that the Cloisters Madonna was executed at a time when the symbolic content of the style had lost its full meaning. Although direct travel and trade routes had been firmly established between South Bohemia and South Germany as early as 1380, the greatest influx of South Bohemian influence, carried principally through the exportation of works and traveling sculptor groups or "*Hütten*," did not reach southern Germany until the second decade of the fifteenth century. The fragment of the fresco of the Three Marys in the Augsburg cathedral, datable to this period and clearly of Bohemian stylistic origin, is an indication of this.

Although our knowledge of the Cloisters Madonna is limited and an exact provenance is unlikely to be established, it can be appreciated as an interesting example of the Beautiful Madonna style and the impact this style exerted during the first several decades of the fifteenth century on the sculptural production of South Germany and Austria.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND REFERENCES

I wish to express particular indebtedness to Professor Mojmir Frinta, whose doctoral dissertation covers in exacting detail the entire scope of the Beautiful style. The division of the Beautiful style into two major stylistic groupings was first proposed by Wilhelm Pinder in 1923 and reconsidered by Albert Kotal in 1963. Theodor Müller recognized a connection between the Madonna in the tympanum of the Benedictine Abbey of Marienburg in Vintschgau with the Krumau Madonna. I also wish to thank Dr. Peter Ludwig of Aachen for kindly providing me with photographs of the St. Catherine in the Franz Monheim Collection.

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Medieval Stained Glass from St. Leonhard in Lavanttal at The Cloisters

The Cloisters has recently acquired twenty-four panels of stained glass that came originally from the pilgrimage church of St. Leonhard in Lavanttal in southern Austria. The group comprises one entire window, complete even to its tracery lights, showing scenes of the appearances of Christ after the Crucifixion, and parts of four others, depicting saints and apostles. All of the pieces date from the same period, about 1340, and all were painted by the same workshop. This glass is unique in American museums since it not only represents the largest number of Austrian windows from a single church in any collection but it is also the largest group of Austrian stained glass assembled in any museum in this country.

The church of St. Leonhard was built between 1311 and 1330, and stained glass was placed in the windows of the choir soon after its completion. The south aisle of the nave was added at the end of the century, and the windows there were glazed in a different style. In the seventeenth century, an enormous baroque altarpiece was erected in the

The Harrowing of Hell, from St. Leonhard in Lavanttal. Austrian, about 1340. Stained glass, height 35¾ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 68.2241





apse, completely obscuring the windows behind it. A fire in the nineteenth century severely damaged the western tower, and in order to raise money for the necessary repairs to this part of the church, some of the glass hidden from view by the altar was sold. Much stained glass still remains at St. Leonhard, now reinstalled in the windows of the nave where it can be seen. As far as is known, the panels at The Cloisters are the only ones from the early glazing program that exist outside Austria.

This glass will eventually be permanently installed at The Cloisters. Because of its importance, however, it will be put on display for the first time later this year, accompanied by a descriptive pamphlet. In style, it has a special charm both in its naïve simplicity of design and in the intricacy and detail of its painting. The workshop responsible for the St. Leonhard windows, probably originating in the nearby town of Judenberg, was the most influential of its time in that part of Austria. Glass produced by this workshop is particularly noteworthy for brilliance of color and richness of ornament – qualities inherent in the Cloisters panels, and during the special exhibition it will be possible to observe these qualities at close range.

JANE HAYWARD
Associate Curator of The Cloisters

St. Cunigunda, from St. Leonhard in Lavanttal.
Height 38¾ inches. The Cloisters Collection,
65.96.4

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