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Vindictive virgins: animate images and theories of art in some thirteenth-century miracle stories

ALEXA SAND

It has been persuasively argued that before the fifteenth century the category of art as a theorized entity did not exist; this was a period for which we can write a history of the image, but not a history of art.¹ Careful scrutiny of both intellectual and popular discourse on images, east and west, has resulted in the more cautious view that medieval people, while experiencing what we now call 'art' largely through processual rituals and the paradigm of spiritual vision, were also aware, on a variety of levels, of the art object *qua* art object. At various times and places, they recognized the object as an artificial (i.e. manufactured) representation, capable of being evaluated in aesthetic as well as theological terms.² In this essay, I am concerned with several texts that give evidence of such recognition of 'objecthood' in a category of objects that certainly functioned in a religious and ritual mode, but which at the same time (between about 1150 and 1250) came increasingly to be viewed in aesthetic terms. The friction between these two ways of seeing these objects — specifically, representations of the Virgin and her son — comes into view not in high-minded theological tracts, but in the literature directed toward the instruction of those whom the theologians suspected of being most dependent on and simultaneously given to mistaken understanding of visual representation. Specifically, the laity, women, and other classes of people presumed ignorant and/or illiterate were associated in medieval thinking with the use of material images in devotion.³

The texts I address here are drawn from a vast body of folklore about the miracles of the Virgin that circulated widely in the later medieval period. They are, however, exceptional among that literature in that they concern themselves specifically with visual images, and even more exceptional in that in these tales, the Virgin acts in a surprisingly violent and vindictive fashion. In each instance, the narrative hinges on a visual image, demonstrating a viewer's erroneous response or relationship to it, and the punishment that follows. The protagonist's errors lead to consequences ranging from receiving a stunning blow to the jaw to becoming the victim of cannibalism, leaving no doubt as to the didactic agenda of these narratives. They are cautionary tales, and what they caution against is, in a word, art. This is not to say that they advocate an iconoclastic approach to Christian worship and devotion, but rather that they point at an anxiety about what happens when sacred images are viewed as mere visual objects without proper consideration of their

agency and their essence. That such an anxiety should have arisen in the thirteenth century seems fitting; setting these narratives beside the dramatic shift of style and iconography in the representation of the Virgin in the visual media in this period, the cause for concern becomes visible. The distant, reverential gaze constructed by Romanesque depictions of the Virgin gives way to a far more intimate, eroticized visual relationship cultivated by the Gothic sculptors. Stories in which the Virgin exerts punitive force through or on behalf of her image engage with just this problem: how to correctly see the Virgin in her image, both acknowledging and transcending its materiality.

I begin with an exploration of one of these miracle tales in particular, examining how it presents a scenario in which a misunderstanding about artistic style results in severe retribution on behalf of the Virgin's image. Reading this episode closely for how it describes the image and prescribes the terms by which it should be evaluated, I argue that it speaks to an awareness of a stylistic shift in the representation of the Virgin that took place in the early Gothic period, and that may have puzzled or troubled some observers. A second miracle tale involving the terrible vengeance an image of the Virgin visits upon an offender forms the core of the next part of my discussion. As in the first miracle, aesthetic ways of seeing are contrasted to religious ways of seeing, but instead of revolving around the mistake of judging religious images from an aesthetic standpoint, the second story exposes the erroneous thinking that equates images of the Virgin with pagan idols — a kind of iconographic and materialist fallacy. The third part of the paper deals with several stories that address the materiality and agency of images of the Virgin, and demonstrate the consequences of either respecting or misconstruing the agency of these material bodies. Encoded in all of these accounts, I argue, are valuable clues to the way in which medieval viewers responded to visible alterations in artistic representation taking place over the course of the thirteenth century. As such they inform us about the history of art-historical consciousness before the 'era of art.'

The matron of Veldenz: an aesthetic fallacy

Before I turn to the first miracle of interest here, it is worth reviewing the context in which it was generated. Whether concerned predominantly with the activities of Mary at a particular shrine, or interested more generally in her interventions in the mortal world, collections of miracles of the Virgin, first in Latin,

and then in vernacular languages, began to flourish in the mid-twelfth century, and continued to be produced throughout the remainder of the Middle Ages.⁴ However, between about 1200 and 1300, the repertoire of miracles became more standardized and widely diffused. This phenomenon owed something to the marked increase of emphasis on preaching associated with rise of the Mendicant orders — collections of exemplary stories formed the main ammunition of their rhetorical battery, and Marian miracles numbered significantly among the exempla.⁵ Also, many collections of miracles were composed or compiled in this period, and all of the miracle stories I discuss here are found in one or several of these compendia. The largest and most comprehensive of these collections include (but are by no means limited to) the Latin *Dialogus Miraculorum* of the Cistercian Caesarius of Heisterbach (circa 1220), the Old French *Miracles de Nostre Dame* of the Benedictine Gauthier de Coinci (before 1233), the Spanish *Milagros de Nuestra Señora* by another Benedictine, Gonzalo de Berceo (circa 1250), the Latin *Legenda Aurea* of the Dominican Jacques de Voragine (likewise circa 1250), and the Galician-Portuguese *Cantigas de Santa Maria* by the Castillian king, Alfonso X ‘the Wise’ (circa 1280).⁶ Many of the same miracles recur across these collections, sometimes more or less unchanged, sometimes adapted to local geography or to the particular audience and setting in which the text would have been performed.⁷

The interest in Mary both reflected in and encouraged by the circulation of such miracle narratives was part of a larger trend. The rise of Mariolatry in the west in the later Middle Ages has been well documented: from about 1000 onward, images of the Virgin both visible and imaginative proliferated in the liturgy and in extraliturgical devotion and ritual.⁸ Mary’s intercessory compassion was crucial to her increasing popularity — as Rachel Fulton has pointed out, the ‘new’ Mary imagined by Anselm of Bec in his prayers was, compared to the earlier medieval Mary, less Stoic and more expressive, emotive, and sympathetic to the piteous cries of the sinner.⁹ In the words of Carolyn Bynum, ‘gradually, in popular religion, she becomes so central that her mediation is “automatic” and “ethically irrational”. . . she saves her loyal favorites, even if they fail to meet the standards of contrition and penitence.’¹⁰ The Marian anthem, *Salve Regina*, composed in the eleventh century, addresses her as ‘queen of mercy,’¹¹ a role she enthusiastically enacts in many later miracle stories — for example, when she saves an errant nun from humiliation by taking her place in the convent or when she forces the devil to rescind his rights over the soul of a misled deacon.¹²

While the majority of the Marian miracles demonstrate her loving kindness, occasionally, the Virgin of the thirteenth-century miracle literature behaves violently or vindictively. The first miracle that concerns me here is recounted only by Caesarius of Heisterbach but stands as a prime example of this type of narrative, in which an offense given to an image of the Virgin results in severe consequences for the offender:

In the chapel of the fort of Veldenz there is a certain ancient image of the Blessed Virgin, holding her Son in her bosom, not indeed fashioned with any skill, but endowed with much virtue. A certain matron of the castle, which is situated in the diocese of Trèves, was one day standing in the chapel looking at this image and in scorn for the way it was sculptured, said, ‘Why does this old rubbish stand here?’ But the Blessed Mary who is the Mother of mercy, not, as I think making any accusation to her son concerning this foolish woman, but predicting a future punishment for her fault said to another matron: ‘Because that lady,’ mentioning her name, ‘has called me old rubbish, she will be an unhappy woman all her life.’ A few days afterwards she was despoiled of all her property and lands by her own son and even to this day begs her bread miserably, paying the penalty for her folly. You see how the Blessed Virgin loves and honours those who love her, and punishes and brings low those who despise her.¹³

Behind this tale lies an implicit theory of images. The harshness of the punishment, superficially so out of proportion with the crime, indicates Caesarius’ concern with the correct perception of visual representations of the Virgin. Otherwise it is hard to understand why a lifetime of beggary constitutes an appropriate penalty for the woman’s few inconsiderate words that apply, not to the Virgin herself, but to a mere representation, which Caesarius admits ‘is not indeed fashioned with any skill.’

This statement about the crude nature of the image is the crux of the tale: Caesarius draws attention to the visual qualities of the image in a number of ways. It is ancient, he notes, a characteristic that imparts authority of itself, and that can be visually ascertained from such cues as wear and tear and archaic appearance. The description of the iconography, ‘the Virgin holding her son in her bosom,’ is not terribly specific, but in tandem with this assessment of great age, it implies the old-fashioned (by Caesarius’ day) type of the *sedes sapientiae*, or Throne of Wisdom, in which the Christ child is seated on the Virgin’s lap and appears, from the front, framed by her torso. This also accords with his statement that the work is ‘full of virtue’: in the Throne of Wisdom type, the repletion of Mary’s body with the incarnate Christ is visually figured in terms of the position of the infant on its mother’s lap, directly in front of her womb.¹⁴ Certainly, Caesarius does not associate its virtue with physical attractiveness — like the guilty matron, he is quite frank about what he perceives as its inferior quality of artisanship. Given the antiquity he attributes to the statue, what looks like poor quality to Caesarius might in fact be archaic style. Whether Caesarius is writing about an object he has actually seen, or imagining a kind of object that might attract such scorn, he clearly has a particular kind of image in mind, and I propose that this was a sculpted image of the sort that populated parish churches and chapels across western Europe in the early thirteenth century.

Even as the classicism and naturalism of the Gothic style achieved their apogee in the architectural sculpture of cathedrals constructed in the 1220s and 1230s, the sculptural images of the Virgin with which the greatest number of people had familiarity remained portable representations of the Throne of Wisdom that

played such an important role in the ritual life of parishes and pilgrimage centers.¹⁵ Their hieratic, abstract form articulates authority and sacredness by opening distance between representation and the visual qualities of the workaday world. As Caesarius' story suggests, the value of such works lay in their perceived age and the numen imparted by ancient origin — an antiquity reinforced by their formal qualities. For instance, the Virgin of Rocamadour, a work of the twelfth century, was believed to have issued from the hands of Saint Luke, an origin which both explained and was supported by its visual strangeness.¹⁶ Sometimes, Throne of Wisdom type Virgins even appear to have been deliberately made to appear archaic — as is perhaps the case of the Virgin from Evégnée, near Liège (figure 1).¹⁷ The

Figure 1. *Throne of Wisdom*, photo by permission of the Musée d'Art religieux et d'Art mosan, Liège, Belgium. Photo by permission of the Grand Curtius, Liège, Belgium.

rigid, frontal pose, the severe faces drawn from Byzantine convention, and the often rough quality of the carving are what make these Romanesque Madonnas so engaging to the modern eye, but they hardly correspond to late twelfth- or early thirteenth-century ideas of feminine beauty which emphasized smoothness, blondness, and lightness of complexion.¹⁸

Furthermore, by the time of Caesarius' writing, the style associated with such typically Romanesque works as the *Throne of Wisdom* of about 1150–1200, from the Auvergne, now in the Metropolitan Museum in New York (figure 2), stood in sharp contrast to new artistic approaches to depicting the Virgin. Not only the architectural sculptures associated with cathedrals, but also free-standing works created for both church and private viewing employed a much softer approach to modeling, a more classical sense of proportion, and a broader vocabulary of gesture. All of these changes contributed to an increasingly tender and sensual focus on Mary's bodily and emotional relationship with her son. This is visible in such Gothic works as the enthroned Virgin and Child in ivory from England, from around 1220, now in the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg (figure 3).¹⁹ Nominally a representation of the same subject as the Romanesque *Throne of Wisdom*, that is, the enthroned Virgin with her divine son, this work differs on almost every level: style,

Figure 2. *Throne of Wisdom*, photo © the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Figure 3. *Seated Virgin and Child*, photo by permission of the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg.

scale, material, composition, address to the viewer, and intent. Where the earlier figures sit enfolded in sacred immobility, severe and a little aloof, the English pair break the spatial envelope around them with animated gestures and movements of their limbs accentuated by dramatic swathes of drapery. Each figure spirals slightly away from the center axis, and the Virgin's posture is no longer symmetrical and static — she lifts one hand in a gesture that seems to greet the viewer, and beneath the child, who sits off-center, she raises her thigh to bear his weight, resting her foot on the back of a symbolic, but also compositionally useful, lion. The slight smile on her lips, the contrast of texture between her wavy hair and her smooth veil, the fullness of her body beneath the thin, silk-like drapery, all draw attention to her youth and femininity. By the same token, the chubby cheeks and limbs of her child make him far more a human baby than the grave, stiff, little men who perch on the knees of the Romanesque Virgins.

Even in an 'era before art,' and moreover an era before art history, people could perceive and evaluate such differences. Caesarius' story tells us so, both in his own assessment of the image as being both 'old' and 'without skill' and in the matron's evaluation of the work as 'rubbish.' The difference between Caesarius and his character, however, is that the matron fails to understand that the work's displeasing visual qualities do not hinder, and may even express and augment its 'virtue' as a

numinous entity. What Caesarius proposes in this narrative is that evaluating a sacred image in aesthetic terms is at best a dangerous business. To dishonor the image of the Virgin is in effect to show disrespect to the Virgin herself, to 'despise her' and to be brought low as a result. Caesarius, whose work is addressed as instruction to a novice monk, expresses a theory of the image deeply rooted in Christian practice and theory. The image communicates the honor given it to the subject it depicts, functioning as a kind of sacred conduit.

Then too, Caesarius wrote as a Cistercian novice master, heir to his order's ambivalent relationship with visible images. While Bernard of Clairvaux's famous *Apologia* condemned the uses of art in monastic settings and set out a moral case against excessive art, as Conrad Rudolph has observed, Bernard did not reject out of hand the usefulness of art for lay audiences.²⁰ In fact, he hardly addressed it, as it was not germane to his topic, and in any case the Gregorian dictum that religious art could serve as an instructional tool for the laity was well entrenched by the twelfth century.²¹ Meanwhile, Cistercian mysticism was intensively imagistic and invested in language that conjured visual and even visionary states of mind. Cistercian writers, following Bernard, developed a new idiom for praising the Virgin, one that by its very nature celebrated her in terms of much more clearly physical and often even erotic beauty. While cleaving closely to scriptural sources, Bernard's second homily in praise of Mary stresses her supernal beauty and casts her in a role familiar to an audience versed in the emerging romance tradition — that of the beautiful but humble girl who has caught the eye of a mighty lord; 'This queenly maiden... radiant with this perfect beauty of spirit and body, renowned in the city of the Most High for her loveliness and beauty, so ravished the eyes of all the heavenly citizens that the heart of the King himself desired her beauty.'²²

This attention to Mary's physical beauty, to her femininity and desirability, was not the purview of the Cistercians alone, though they were particular advocates of it. In the same period, secular and Benedictine lyricists alike began to address Mary in terms very similar to those they might equally apply to secular *amies*.²³ Gautier de Coinci, for instance, names her 'Fresh and brilliant rose... neat and pure and clean' in one of the *chansons* from his first cycle of songs to Mary, composed about 1218.²⁴ This appropriation of a literary mode was at least in part calculated to supplant secular with sacred concerns, as many scholars have recognized.²⁵ G.R. Owst wrote that by the fourteenth century, 'the preacher might... hope to outvie the minstrel, with his description of a lady more lovely and gentle than the loveliest dame in Camelot.'²⁶ But advocates of piety had more ammunition than words alone — unlike the *trouvère*, whose performance was above all oral and ephemeral, the performance of piety was enmeshed not only in written texts but in visual representations as well, 'image acts' as well as 'speech acts.'²⁷

In the story of the matron of Veldenz, Caesarius gives the terms of viewing demanded by visual representations of the

Virgin as anti-aesthetic, against this mode of fascination with Mary's beauty. To look for physical beauty is erroneous, and to condemn a work for being poorly made is to miss the visual signs of its power and authenticity. The woman's negative aesthetic judgment is erroneous not because she lacks taste, but because it quite literally offends God. In this way, Caesarius expresses a profoundly conservative and monastic outlook, in which sensory impressions that give pleasure are suspect. Fundamentally, this is a story about a clash of visualities — a conflict between two ways of seeing, one of which is aesthetic and the other, religious. In effect, Caesarius implicitly contrasts the Virgin of Veldenz to her prettier and more sensually pleasing sisters. The matron's negative aesthetic assessment of the former points to the existence of the latter as points of comparison. But, Caesarius demonstrates, she sees things all wrong, or rather, like the Pharisees, she sees, but she is blind to the truth. Whether this means that the new style of sculptural representation is itself flawed, in Caesarius' view, cannot be determined. He is simply making the point that an aesthetic evaluation of the object is not only misguided, but downright sacrilegious. It is the Virgin herself, and not the particular appearance of her image, to which the properly pious mind should direct itself in the presence of her visual representation.

The iconoclastic gambler: beauty, misconstrued

The cautionary tale of the matron of Veldenz sends the message that thinking too literally about images of the Virgin as inert objects comparable to other forms of three-dimensional representation is spiritually and materially dangerous. This comes out in a different way in a story that appears in several collections, but is most dramatically related in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria* of Alfonso X of Castille.²⁸ In this account, a gambler, part of a rabble that has invaded the monastery of Chateauroux, berates an old woman who kneels and prays before an image of the Virgin and child, 'beautifully carved in stone.'²⁹ He tells her that to do so is idolatrous, and to prove his point, throws a stone at the statue, breaking off the arm of the child. The stone then springs to life: the Virgin catches the arm before it falls, blood spurts from the wound, and to heighten the pathos, the Virgin's golden robe slips down to reveal her breasts. And lest the audience sigh relief at the appearance of these symbols of the Virgin's life-giving mercy, the tale continues as follows:

Her eyes narrowed so fiercely that all who saw Her were so frightened of Her that they did not dare gaze at Her face. A crowd of demons took ranks against the one who committed the deed, and like obedient huntsmen, they killed him in short order. Two other demon-possessed gamblers had gone there to carry off that dead comrade. However, in their madness they began to gnaw his flesh in great rage.³⁰

This is another appalling outcome for a hermeneutic error: the gambler, like the matron of Veldenz, applies the wrong set of visual referents to the image of the Virgin — in this case, comparing her statue to the statues of pagan gods, and thus to an idol.

Here, it is not a mistaken evaluation of style, but confusion about iconography on which the narrative hangs. The gambler, who with his comrades clearly has no respect for the sacred, cannot tell the difference between a Christian image and a pagan idol. To him, one statue of a beautiful woman is very much the same as any other. The story, which in other versions is specifically set in 1187, dates to a period when the image of the Virgin at its center might have been either in the older, Romanesque manner or in the newer, Gothic style, but this hardly matters. In the illustrated manuscripts of the *Cantigas*, the statue is depicted as a conventionally courtly, elegant figure mounted in a niche on the wall, exactly in keeping with the type of smaller scale sculpture for church use typical of the period. Any viewer of the manuscript would have recognized the subject, and the gambler's comparison of the sacred figure to a pagan idol seems particularly outrageous in this light. A grotesque figure of the iconoclast, he may, in the *Cantigas*, allude to Jewish aniconism, anti-Semitic imagery and narrative being a stock of both the Marian miracle literature and the courtly culture of Alfonso's Castille.³¹ Whether or not he is meant to be glossed as a negative representation of Jewish attitudes toward the image, he is certainly intended to be read as bestial, sacrilegious, and deserving of his gruesome fate.

The friction between the status of the Christian image and that of the pagan idol is further encoded in the narrative in the baring of the Virgin's breasts and the way in which the gambler meets his fate. The story of Artemis and Actaeon, familiar to educated medieval readers from Ovid, seems to be invoked: like the gambler, Actaeon suffers from being eaten by his own companions after glimpsing the naked flesh of the goddess.³² The otherwise incomprehensible detail of the Virgin losing her drapery draws attention to her breasts, ordinarily symbols of mercy, but here associated with its opposite, revenge.³³ The reversal heightens the drama of the narrative and underscores the difference between the ordinarily modestly depicted Virgin and the shameless, erotic nudity of pagan idols. It is almost as if the gambler's suggestion, that the statue is an idol, is briefly manifested just to show that it is not true. In the context of the illustrated manuscripts of the *Cantigas*, the mildness and modesty of the depicted Virgin contrast sharply with the ferocity of the statue as represented in the text.

Whether mistaking archaic style for low value or polychromatic beauty for false seeming, the unfortunate would-be critics in both the tale of the matron of Veldenz and the gambler of Chateauroux suffer for engaging with material representations of the Virgin as if they were simply objects to be evaluated in aesthetic terms. Their errors are understandable, however. The visible beauty of sacred objects was an important factor in their spiritual value — Hans Belting noted that as late as 1410, a trial over the authenticity of competing relics settled the issue on only two criteria; first and foremost, their age, and secondly, their 'beauty and piety.'³⁴ Furthermore, the thirteenth century saw a great deal of theological effort expended on the contemplation and definition of beauty in its relationship to perception.

Aquinas stressed the sensible nature of beauty when he wrote, 'those things are called beautiful which please us when they are seen.'³⁵ This seems straightforward, until we recall that Aquinas and his contemporaries understood seeing as a discursive mode of perception that spanned the physical and the intellectual senses, leading, ultimately, toward a higher form of vision that was the direct experience of God by the soul at the end of time.³⁶ As Umberto Eco observed of Thomistic aesthetics, 'Beauty is actualized in the relation of an object to the mind which knows it and its beauty.'³⁷ In other words, beauty must be recognized by the mind as a relation between a mode of perception and its object. If the mode of perception is faulty, then the true beauty of the object remains invisible.

On a less rarefied intellectual level, the miracle tales demonstrate a similarly dialectic conception of vision and beauty; the human actors are not only seeing, but being seen as well. The matron of Veldenz is observed by the very statue she insults, and later in the story, Caesarius instructs his listener that she can still be seen on the streets of the town — her visibility a marker of her sinfulness. In the story of the gambler, the mistaken gaze that sees the Virgin as an idol is brought sharply up against the deadly counter-gaze of the Virgin, so fierce that it repels the human regard.³⁸ This is a reminder of the statue's agency and its difference from an inert image, which exists only to be gazed at; it is not only visually perceived, but visually perceiving as well. These constructions of gaze/counter-gaze serve to remind the audience for these miracle narratives that looking at material, physical representations of the Virgin is more like looking at a person, and less like looking at a mute object. To forget this is to cross into dangerous territory, where aesthetic judgments interfere with spiritual perception.

The object intercedes: respecting agency

The cautionary and didactic intent of the Marian miracle literature, so evident in the examples of the stories of the matron of Veldenz and the gambler of Chateauroux, means that it constructs an *ad hoc* epistemology of the image. In this folk-theory, material representations of the Virgin both are and are not like other works of art: the positive relationship is in their visible quality of being made (poorly or beautifully), which can be mistaken by a spiritually ignorant viewer for their totality. The negative relation is that unlike other such manufactured objects, these objects perceive: they hear, they see, and they exercise agency. The object oscillates between modes of perception that are physical and material, and modes that are spiritual and imaginative. In this final part of the essay, I look at a few miracle stories that engage with this problem of how representations of the Virgin hover in the gap between the visible and the visionary, and what this reveals about the stories' intent and their position in regard to the visual culture of their period.

The first two miracles related here demonstrate that a correct visual approach to a representation of the Virgin takes into account its agency and its special status as a perceiving and acting image. But this respect alone does not suffice if the supplicant has

already offended the image, and has failed to take into account the possible consequences of the offense. A third story demonstrates that aesthetic and iconographic errors are not the only mistakes that enrage the Virgin and drive her to violence. This tale of a would-be errant nun is found in a number of collections, including the *Dialogus miraculorum*, and it is to Caesarius' version I will refer here.³⁹ A nun, caretaker for her convent's church, was seduced by a clerk, and agreed to meet him when she had closed up the sanctuary after compline. When she tried to leave, however, she found a vision of the crucified Christ at every door. 'Then,' Caesarius tells us, 'greatly trembling, she threw herself before the image of the Blessed Mother of God and besought pardon for her sin, but the image turned away her face from her, and when, in the eagerness of her supplication she approached nearer, the image smote her on the jaw with her hand So violent was the blow that she fell to the ground and lay there till the morning . . . in a deep swoon.'⁴⁰

Why would the Virgin strike the nun, who clearly respects the status of the image as a spiritually numinous presence? And why would the statue turn away from the nun's supplication? This tale deals with the limits of the Virgin's vision, or her willingness to bestow her gaze, and draws together for comparison the spiritual action of visionary experience and the physicality of the material image. The unexpected violence of the Virgin's response fits with the logic of a narrative in which the normative roles of Christ and his mother are inverted. By appearing as a pathetic vision, Christ intercepts the nun's self-destructive impulse, literally standing between her and sin the way the Virgin ordinarily stands between a sinner and Christ, while it is the Virgin who takes the part of the disciplinarian parent, telling the nun to go to her room before she strikes her down. The vision of the Crucifixion recalls to the nun her spiritual duty, and fills her with contrition. But it is not before the vision that she prostrates herself. Rather, she turns to a material image of the Virgin, and perhaps this is where she goes wrong. For just as the nun has turned away in horror from the vision of the Crucified Christ, so the Virgin turns away from the nun and her sin, refusing to see. When the nun does not accept this refusal, and approaches the statue more closely, she is rebuffed even more forcibly: the stunning blow delivered by the furious Virgin underscores both the materiality and the agency of the representation. The blow is the angry gaze of the miracle of the gambler of Chateauroux transformed from visual into tactile menace: the 'violence of the gaze' made manifest.⁴¹

Where and how and at whom the Virgin looks is an issue charged with significance in later medieval devotional art and literature: Sarah Stansbury has remarked that 'The existence of her gaze. . . acknowledges female power, for a poetic or pictorial narrative that suppresses or deflects her gaze also acknowledges, if momentarily, its potency.'⁴² Just as in the tale of the gambler of Chateauroux, the Virgin is possessed of a killing look; in this miracle, the violence suppressed by her averted gaze finds its way to the surface with a physical blow. The nun's mistake is twofold. First, she turns away from the completely immaterial

vision of the Crucifixion, unequal to the visionary experience it offers, and then, she fails to recognize the potentially fatal force of the material Virgin's wrathful gaze, seeking it even when it is denied to her. Where she falls short is in her understanding of the power of that gaze, and for this mistake she suffers, though not so severely as the sinners featured in the other tales of Marian vengeance, for after all, she has not so much wronged the image as underestimated it.

In contrast to the confused and lust-addled nun, the protagonist of another miracle tale related by Caesarius concerning the image of the Virgin at Veldenz demonstrates how a proper approach to both the materiality and the agency of the object can achieve positive results. Caesarius relates that a woman named Jutta, who witnessed the Virgin's comment about the fate of her critic in the first story, later returned to engage in her own way with the statue. Her daughter having been taken by a wolf, Jutta prays earnestly to Virgin to restore the girl to her. When this fails to produce results, she takes the sculpted infant from the lap of its sculpted mother, and holds it hostage until the Virgin returns the child.⁴³ While this might seem risky behavior given what she already knows about the divine vengeance that has been wrought against the woman who insulted the image in words alone, Jutta is in fact rewarded. Unlike the first woman, she approaches the sculpted pair in the correct frame of mind; while she takes the child from the mother, she treats it with utmost reverence, wrapping it in fine cloth as if it were a relic, and storing it respectfully out of harm's way. She sees the sculpted mother as a mother like herself, concerned for the whereabouts and safety of her child, but also as a divine persona, capable of interventions far beyond human power. The appearance and the material nature of the object are her concern insofar as they provide a handle on the sacred, but she is mostly interested engaging with the Virgin's agency, not her representation. Here, Caesarius demonstrates that when the sacred image is viewed in a properly reverential and essentially credulous mode, its spiritual power can be manipulated to the benefit of the viewer. Kidnapping the infant, far from constituting and insult to the object, testifies to the woman's faith in its efficacy.

While Jutta's interaction with the Virgin specifically addresses her maternal role, it does so in a way that posits the Virgin less as a passive, gazed-upon vision of maternity and more as an active, even heroic figure. What is seen in the representation — the seated mother, enthroned, with her son in her lap — is only part of what is imagined by the viewer who approaches the image correctly. She can envision the Virgin in the athletic and martial role required to free the daughter from the wolf. This heroic Virgin is very much present in the larger miracle literature. For example, in one tale she fights in a battle to spare from accusations of cowardice a devout knight who has missed the fray because he is praying, while in another, her image, placed on the ramparts of a castle, tosses invading Moors to their deaths.⁴⁴ In the extremely popular miracle story of Theophilus, recounted in numerous collections, the Virgin even wrestles with the devil — here she is less the *trouvère's* 'Sweet lady . . . fountain and spring

of sweetness' and more Galahad in skirts.⁴⁵ At least one Romanesque sculptor embraced this motif: at Souillac, on the interior of the west wall of the church of Sainte-Marie, the Virgin swoops down out of the clouds to return the contract she has wrested from the devil to the sleeping Theophilus. But as Michael Cothren demonstrated, the real iconographical heyday of this story was precisely the period during which the sculptural representation of the Virgin became increasingly mild and non-confrontational: the first half of the thirteenth century.⁴⁶ Manuscript illuminations, stained-glass windows, and architectural sculptures all attest to an urge to visualize the Virgin's strong agency; in the tympanum to the north transept portal at Notre Dame, Paris (ca. 1250), for example, she is depicted threatening a demon with a raised sword, a forceful figure notwithstanding her elegant pose accentuated by a sweep of drapery. These are the visual cousins of the miracle stories of the Virgin's sometimes violent agency.

The disjunction between the sweet, passive maiden-mother who is the subject of so many later medieval representations of the Virgin, and the active and assertive character who appears in many of the miracle stories points to the rift between the courtly, aestheticized mode of depiction and the theological matter it addresses. The miracle tales in which people see representations of the Virgin incorrectly express contemporary anxiety over images of the Virgin and her child, exactly what they are and how one is to attend to them. As such, they constitute evidence for an awareness of shifts in style and iconography, and a concern about how to assimilate them to traditional notions about sacred representation. As physical as well as literary images of the Virgin grew to resemble more nearly the courtly notion of an ideally beautiful female love-object, the situation grew more uncomfortable. In adopting the idiom of courtly love to the visual media, perhaps, the religious artist had also adopted its tendency to deprive the beloved (usually a woman) of independent subjectivity.⁴⁷ Where the Romanesque Virgin sits foursquare and looks out at the viewer somewhat implacably, the Gothic Virgin has eyes only for her child, allowing the viewer to gaze at leisure, without engaging in an uncomfortable staring match. Sculpted in luxurious, translucent ivory, soft and curvaceous in form, and small in scale she offers herself as a visual delight. The visual pleasure induced by such refinement, however, puts the viewer at risk of making grave errors of visual interpretation. The consequences of such errors, as related in some of the miracle literature, are serious, since the Virgin could not be thought of or treated like an object, given that her primary role, in terms of devotion, was to behave like a subject — a mother who conceives, bears, nurtures, mourns, and above all, intercedes, physically, if necessary.

Stories in which the Virgin behaves violently capture the subjectivity of images of the Virgin and child, in their ability to act, and speak, and above all to see. They remind the listener that looking at sacred images is not equivalent to other kinds of looking; this idea is present, too, in late thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century depictions of images of the Virgin — for example in the Psalter and Hours of Yolande of Soissons, where

the book's owner kneels before a seated statuette of Virgin and child that instead of turning inwards upon itself (as most contemporary examples of actual sculpture do) engages with her, both mother and child making gestures toward her equivalent to those they make, several pages on, toward the Magi.⁴⁸ Likewise, in the 1311 copy of the vernacular religious manual, the *Somme le Roy*, made for the Countess Jeanne d'Eu, a tall, swaying Virgin who closely resembles the standing statues of the Virgin coming into vogue at that moment reaches out and touches Jeanne's wrist, transformed by her prayer into a tangible and animate presence.⁴⁹

New artistic modes always call for explanation and theorization. Thirteenth-century miracle stories about the Virgin, with their particular emphasis on images and their behavior constitute one venue for such work. Because more highbrow religious writing generally hesitated to engage specifically with artistic representation, these tales offer an important source for understanding how medieval people structured their viewing of images, and what bothered and excited them about the increasing naturalism and humanism of Gothic representation. In a sense, the Virgin acts transgressively as a way of reminding us that it is not the lifelike appearance of her statue (or the lack of lifelike appearance) that makes these representations effective. Instead, as these stories remind us, it is her fundamental humanity — that quality that makes her uniquely qualified to intercede on behalf of the human soul, that makes her compassionate, that enabled her to give flesh to the Word, but that also makes her prone to vindictive rage and even to violent reprisal.

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NOTES

1 – Notably, Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

2 – This point is raised (in relation to post-Iconoclastic art theory in Byzantium) by Charles Barber, 'From Image into Art: Art after Byzantine Iconoclasm,' *Gesta*, 34/1 (1995), 5–10.

3 – The Gregorian dictum that 'pictures are the books of the illiterate' became one of the most widely propagated and intentionally misconstrued apologetics for the image in the medieval west, as Celia Chazelle

demonstrated in her article, 'Pictures, Books, and the Illiterate: Pope Gregory I's Letters to Serenus of Marseilles,' *Word & Image*, 6 (1990), 138–53. Lawrence Duggan ('Was Art Really the "Book of the Illiterate"?' *Word & Image*, 5 (1989), 227–51) also explored the disingenuousness with which medieval authors employed this trope. Conrad Rudolph noted that Bernard's view of the role of art in the instruction of illiterates was absolutely orthodox in this respect, and that he viewed this as the purview of the secular clergy (*Things of Greater Importance: Bernard of Clairvaux's Apologia and the Medieval Attitude Toward Art* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), 50–4, 194–5). Jeffrey Hamburger observed that 'Women have historically been regarded as one of the primary, even formative audiences for devotional art, so it comes as a surprise that devotional imagery has never been adequately analyzed in terms of gender,' a shortfall his own work has done much to address ('Introduction: Texts Versus Images: Female Spirituality from an Art Historian's Perspective,' in *The Visual and the Visionary: Art and Female Spirituality in Late Medieval Germany* (New York: Zone Books, 1998), 15).

4 – Miracle collections abounded between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries, and were often tied to a specific shrine, though in the case of Mary, a more geographically decentralized literature of miracles emerged over the last decades of the twelfth century, as discussed by Benedicta Ward in *Miracles and the Medieval Mind: Theory, Record, and Event, 1000–1215*, revised edition (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987), 132–3, *in passing*; in the course of the thirteenth century, these collections became more generalized with a view to use as exempla in sermons. A cogent discussion of this shift and of its causes is found in Marcus Bull, *The Miracles of Our Lady of Rocamadour: Analysis and Translation* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1999), 8–10. 5 – On the relationship between the Mendicant orders and the development of the exemplum collections intended for the use of preachers, see David D'Avray, *The Preaching of the Friars: Sermons Diffused from Paris Before 1300* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 90–131.

6 – Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Caesarii Heisterbacensis monachi ordinis Cisterciensis Dialogus miraculorum* [*Textum ad quatuor codicum manuscriptorum editionisque principis fidem accurate recognovit Josephus Strange*] 2 volumes (Ridgewood, NJ: Gregg Press, 1966; reprint of Cologne, Bonn, Brussels: S.M. Heberle, 1851); English edition, *The Dialogue on Miracles by Caesarius of Heisterbach*, trans. H. von E. Scott and C. C. Swinton Bland, with an introduction by G. G. Coulton (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1929); Gautier de Coinci, *Les Miracles de Notre Dame*, 2 volumes, ed. V. Frederic Koenig (Geneva: Droz, 1955–1966); no English translation exists; Gonzalo de Berceo, *Milagros de Nuestra Señora*, 3rd edition, ed. Vicente Beltrán (Barcelona: Planeta, 1990); English edition, *Miracles of Our Lady*, ed. and trans. Richard Terry Mount and Annette Grant Cash (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1997); Jacobi a Voragine, *Legenda aurea* 2nd edition, ed. Giovanni Paolo Maggioni (Firenze: Tarnavuzze, 1988); English version *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, ed. and trans. William Granger Ryan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Alfonso X, o Sábio, *Cantigas de Santa Maria*, 4 volumes, ed. Walter Mettmann (Madrid: Coimbra, 1959–1972); English edition, *Songs of Holy Mary of Alfonso X: A Translation of the Cantigas de Santa Maria*, ed. and trans. Kathleen Kulp-Hill, with an introduction by Connie Scarborough (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2000).

7 – The study of the miracle literature constitutes a discipline of its own, with an extensive critical apparatus. Albert Poncelet, 'Index miraculorum B.V. Mariae quae saec. VI–XV latine conscripta sunt,' *Analecta Bollandiana*, 21 (1902), 242–360, lists incipits of miracles of the Virgin found in many of the major Latin collections from the twelfth through fifteenth centuries. Tubach's *Index Exemplorum* catalogs known narrative types used in medieval collections of exempla (didactic stories) for preachers and is used as an indexing tool to cross-reference miracles found in multiple collections. A recent project sponsored by the British Academy and hosted by Oxford University focuses on the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*, but, according to its organizers, 'will eventually contain all Latin and vernacular miracle collections associated with the CSM miracle stories, as well as cycles of miracles associated with particular shrines' (*The Oxford Cantigas de Santa Maria*

Database, URL http://csm.mml.ox.ac.uk/index.php?p=collections_list, accessed 10 July 2008). Numerous critical studies on the Marian miracle tradition exist, ranging from monographs on single authors, such as Gautier de Coinci, to textual studies of individual miracles, to thematic investigations of parts of or the entire corpus: for a bibliography, see Anne McCormick, 'Imaging sex: The body and gender in Virgin Mary miracle tales of thirteenth century Spain and France,' doctoral dissertation, University of California, Berkeley (1996), 208–31.

8 – The literature on the rise of Marian devotion is vast, but a critical source is Hilda Graef, *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion*, vol. I (London: Sheed and Ward, 1985), 210–64. Also see Jaroslav Pelikan, *Mary Through the Centuries: Her Place in the History of Culture* (New Haven: Yale, 1988), 125–6, *in passim*. For development of Marian imagery in the visual and literary arts, see Penny Schine Gold, *The Lady and the Virgin: Image, Attitude, and Experience in Twelfth-Century France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985). More recently, Margot Fassler has provided a long view of the emergence of Marian devotion as part of the liturgy, and as a stimulus for visual responses: 'Mary's Nativity, Fulbert of Chartres, and the *Stirps Jesse*: Liturgical Innovation Around 1000 and its Afterlife,' *Speculum* 75 (2000), 389–434. Rachel Fulton's contribution, *From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800–1200* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), provides important reassessment of the development of Marian devotion in terms of Mary's salvific and empathetic rather than exemplary and maternal role.

9 – Fulton, 204–43.

10 – Carolyn Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1982), 137.

11 – On the dating and authorship of this antiphon, see Jose Maria Canal, *Salve Regina Misericordiae. Historia y leyendas en torno a esta antifona* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1963).

12 – Both examples occur in numerous compilations of miracles and exempla. See Frederic Tubach, *Index Exemplorum: A Handbook of Medieval Religious Tales* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1969), index numbers 536 (appears in 18 distinct texts), 3572 (22 texts), respectively.

13 – Caesarius of Heisterbach, *The Dialogue on Miracles*, vol. I, 525–6. This is Poncelet no. 755. The Latin is found in the *Dialogus miraculorum*, vol. I, *distinctio* VII, *capitulum* XLIV, 62–3.

14 – This visual argument is spelled out most explicitly in the south tympanum of the west façade at Chartres, where the body of Christ in the Nativity scene in the lowest register, in the Presentation in the Temple in the middle register, and on the lap of the Virgin in the upper register underscores the Incarnation and the role of Mary's body as a vessel or seat for the Incarnate Word. See Adolf Katzenellenbogen, *The Sculptural Programs of Chartres Cathedral* (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1959), 8–12.

15 – Ilene Forsyth, *The Throne of Wisdom: Wood Sculptures of the Madonna in Romanesque France* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972), 31–60.

16 – Forsyth, 144, 185 (fig. 143).

17 – Forsyth, 131.

18 – For example, when Lancelot, in *Le Chevalier de la Charrette* (ca. 1170), finds an ivory comb with some hairs from the head of Guinevere, they are described as light and filled with light 'si clers et si luisanz' v. 1415). Chrétien de Troyes, *Romans*, ed. Charles Mela (Paris: Librairie Générale Française, 1994), 540. When Le Comte de la Marche (ca. 1250) praises the beauty of his beloved in a lyric that begins 'You are like rubies and other precious stones,' he speaks of the freshness and high color of her complexion. 'Je me merueille/de la color tant fresche et tant vermeille' (v. 13–14, *Tout autresi comme li rubiz*), *Anthologie de la poésie lyrique française des XIII^e et XIII^e siècles*, ed. Jean Dufournet (Paris: Gallimard, 1989), 244.

19 – Respectively: Metropolitan Museum 16.32.194 and Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe 1893.199. The Hamburg Madonna is illustrated in *Images in Ivory: Precious Objects of the Gothic Age*, ed. Peter Barnett (Detroit: Detroit Institute for the Arts, 1997), cat. 1, 116–7.

20 – Conrad Rudolph, *The 'Things of Greater Importance'*, 50–4, 63–9, 110–24. 21 – See note 3, above.

22 – Bernard of Clairvaux, *Homilies in Praise of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, trans. Marie-Bernard Said (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1993), Homily II.2, 16. The translation is based on the authoritative Latin edition by Jean Leclercq and H. Rochais: *Sancti Bernardi Opera, IV* (Rome: Editiones cistercienses, 1966), 13–58.

23 – For the relationship between *chansons courtoise* and *chansons mariales*, see Pierre Bec, *La Lyrique Française au Moyen Age: contribution à une typologie des genres poétiques médiévaux, I: études* (Centre d'études supérieures de civilisation médiévale de l'Université de Poitiers, 6) (Paris: A. et J. Picard, 1977) 143.

24 – 'Rose fresche et clere . . . nete et pure et saine,' Gautier de Coinci, *Les Miracles de Nostre Dame*, ed. V. Frederic Koenig, vol. 1 (Geneva: Droz, 1966), I Chanson V.III.73, 78, 35, my translation.

25 – Most recently, Daniel E. O'Sullivan, 'Marian devotion in medieval French literature: In and beyond the world of lyric,' dissertation, Boston College, 2000.

26 – G.R. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England* (Cambridge, 1933), 18.

27 – The anthropologist J.L. Austin first theorized speech as active (rather than simply reflective or descriptive), and following this model, Liza Bakewell has developed a theory of images as acts (rather than simply representations) which seems a fertile characterization in light of the apparent agency of images in the context of medieval Christianity. See, Liza Bakewell, 'Image acts,' *American Anthropologist*, 100.1 (March, 1998), 22.

28 – This is Poncelet number 168, Tubach number 5152. Alfonso X of Castile and Leon, *Cantigas de Santa Maria*, ed. Jesús Montoya (Madrid: Cátedra, 1988), no. 38. Translation: *Songs of Holy Mary of Alfonso X, The Wise: A Translation of the Cantigas de Santa Maria*, trans. Kathleen Kulp-Hill (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2000), 51.

29 – The *Cantigas* date to the second half of the thirteenth century, but contain many episodes that are attested in earlier literature.

30 – Alfonso X of Castile and Leon, *Songs of Holy Mary*, 51–2.

31 – For anti-Semitism and the representation of Jews in the CSM, see Dwayne Carpenter, 'Social Perception and Literary Portrayal: Jews and Muslims in Medieval Spanish Literature,' in *Convivencia: Jews, Muslims, and Christians in Medieval Spain*, ed. V. B. Mann, et al. (New York: Brazillier/The Jewish Museum, 1992), 61–87. The same author identifies Jewish disparagement of the Virgin as one of the major themes in the CSM narratives that deal with Jewish characters: see, 'The portrayal of the Jew in Alfonso the learned's *Cantigas de Santa Maria*,' in *In Iberia and beyond: Hispanic Jews between cultures*, ed. Bernard D. Cooperman (Newark/London: Associated University Presses, 1998), 15–42, esp. 16. Further bibliography on the anti-Semitic arguments of the CSM is discussed by Eva Frojmovic, 'Messianic Politics in Re-Christianized Spain: Images of the Sanctuary in Hebrew Bible Manuscripts,' in *Imagining the Self, Imagining the Other: Visual Representation and Jewish-Christian Dynamics in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period*, ed. E. Frojmovic (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 120–1, note 66.

32 – Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, books 1–5, ed. William Anderson (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), book 3, lines 155–253, 91–4. On Ovid's currency among educated readers in the later Middle Ages, see Jeremy Dimmick, 'Ovid in the Middle Ages: Authority and Poetry,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Ovid*, ed. Philip Hardie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 264–87.

33 – The Virgin's breasts — and indeed breasts more generally — were a subject of much devotional rumination. See, for example, Margaret R. Miles, 'The Virgin's One Bare Breast: Female Nudity and Religious Meaning in Tuscan Early Renaissance Culture,' in *The Female Body in Western Culture: Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Susan Rubin Suleiman (Cambridge, MA, and London: 1985 and 1986), 193–208; Carolyn Walker Bynum 'Jesus as Mother and Abbot as Mother,' in *Jesus as Mother: Studies in Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: 1982), 110–69).

34 – Belting, 432.

35 – *Summa Theologia* I 5, 4 ad. 1

36 – Even Roger Bacon's *Perspectiva* concludes with a rationale for the optical theory's utility to contemplation of the divine, as Dallas Denery II discusses in *Seeing and Being Seen in the Later Medieval World: Optics, Theology and Religious Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 6. Suzannah Biernoff

writes, 'Sight, as it was defined by Bacon and his contemporaries, offered a means of *communion* that exceeds Belting's model of "communication" or "dialogue." The visual relationship — more than any other sensory interaction — allowed for bodily participation in the divine.' (*Sight and Embodiment in the Middle Ages* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), 134.)

37 – Umberto Eco, *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages*, trans. Hugh Bredin (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986), 71.

38 – The Virgin's gaze as a transgressive example of active female viewing is addressed by Sarah Stanbury, 'The Virgin's Gaze: Spectacle and Transgression in Middle English Lyrics of the Passion,' *PMLA*, 106, no. 5 (1991), 1083–93.

39 – Poncelet number 804; English version, *Dialogue on the Miracles*, 500–1; Latin, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, book VII, *capitulum* 33, 41–2.

40 – Caesarius, *Dialogue on Miracles*, 501; for the Latin, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, 42.

41 – The notion of the gaze as a violent instrument has been most fully theorized and explored in the context of feminist film studies, building on discussions of violence and rhetoric by Levinas, Lacan, and Derrida. The classic essay is Laura Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,' *Screen* 16.3 (1975), 6–18, reprinted in *Feminism and Film Theory*, ed. Constance Penley (New York: Routledge, 1988), 57–68. Mulvey, however, never uses this specific phrase. For a concise summary of arguments pertaining to idea of 'the violence of the gaze,' see C. Nadia Serematkis, 'Intersection: Benjamin, Bloch, Braudel, beyond,' in *The Senses Still: Perception and Memory as Material Culture in Modernity*, ed. C. Nadia Serematkis (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 57.

42 – Sarah Stanbury, 'The Virgin's Gaze,' 1091.

43 – Caesarius, *Dialogus miraculorum*, book VII, *capitulum* XLV, 64–5. A similar tale is found in the *Cantigas*, no. 76, and was also included in Jacobus of Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, vol. 2, trans. W.G. Ryan (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 155.

44 – The miracle of the knight spared humiliation has several variations, cataloged by Poncelet at nos. 727, 1087, 1443; the miracle of the Virgin of

Chincolla is found only in the *CSM*, where it is miracle no.185 (Oxford *CSM* Database, http://csm.mml.ox.ac.uk/index.php?p=poemdata_view&rec=185, accessed 15 July 2008).

45 – The Theophilus miracle is Poncelet no. 74/75. 'Douce Dame . . . de doucheur fontaine et ruissiaus,' Adam de la Halle, 'Glorieuse Vierge Marie' line 19–20. *Anthologie de la poésie lyrique française des XIIe et XIIIe siècles*, ed. Jean Dufournet (Paris: Gallimard, 1989), 292.

46 – Michael Cothren, 'The Iconography of Theophilus Windows in the First Half of the Thirteenth Century,' *Speculum*, 59.2 (1994), 310–1, Appendices A and B.

47 – The restriction of subjectivity by the language of the courtly love is widely discussed in literary criticism. For an excellent and critical overview of the scholarship and bibliography, see E. Jane Burns, 'Courtly Love: Who Needs it? Recent Feminist Work in the Medieval French Tradition,' *Signs*, 27 (2001), 23–57. Naomi Wolf's characterization of later-medieval love poetry as silencing women 'by taking them beautifully apart,' also relates to the scopic delights of both the courtly lyric and the visual representation of the Virgin (*The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty are Used Against Women* (London: Vintage, 1991), 59).

48 – New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, M. 729 fol. 232v. The miniature is widely reproduced, most recently in color on the cover of Roger Wieck, *Painted Prayers: The Book of Hours in Medieval and Renaissance Art* (New York: George Braziller, 1999). A full-page reproduction is also available in *L'art au temps des rois maudits: Philippe le Bel et ses fils, 1285–1328: Paris, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, 17 mars-29 juin 1998* (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1998), cat. no. 202, 299.

49 – Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms. 6329, fol. iv. The miniature is reproduced in *L'art au temps des rois maudits*, cat. no. 205, 304.