Reprints for Teaching, 24), Toronto, 1989 (1939), esp. pp. 27–74.

22. See for example 'Luxury in the Last Judgement of Ste. Foy in Conques' in M.F. Hearn, *Romanesque Sculpture. The Revival of Monumental Stone Sculpture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, Oxford, 1981, p. 141, fig. 136. For the development of the Luxury motif in medieval art, see J. Leclercq-Kadaner, 'De la Terre Mère à la luxure: A propos de "La migration des symboles"', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, XVIII, 1975, pp. 37–43.
23. See, for example, the corbel head of the Porte Miègeville in St Sernin in Toulouse: Hearn, *Romanesque Sculpture*, fig. 100.
24. P. Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, 1978, pp. 3–23.
25. Marginal sculpture has not yet been investigated as a meaningful category, and its deliberate neglect may be considered a missing chapter in the twentieth-century investigation of medieval art. Recently a few pages have been dedicated to marginal sculpture in M. Camille, *Image on the Edge, The Margins of Medieval Art*, London, 1992, pp. 66–85. The insistence that marginal sculptures are deprived of symbolic meaning appears repeatedly in numerous works, such as F. Brisset, 'Etude comparée des modillons des galeries de circulation de l'église Sainte-Radegonde et de la cathédrale Saint Pierre de Poitiers', *Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest*, 4° série, XIV, 1977–78, pp. 483–510; E. Maillard, *Les sculptures de la cathédrale de Poitiers*, Poitiers, 1921, pp. 38–73; W.B. Wadley, *The Reims Masks – A Reconstruction. Stylistic Analysis and Chronology of the Corbel Sculptures on the Upper Stories of Reims* (PhD diss., University of Texas at Austin, TX 1984), Ann Arbor, MI 1990.

    No other meanings for the subjects and images of marginal sculpture are suggested; they are sometimes considered as the 'art of the artists'. This attitude seems to rely on Emile Mâle's approach to Gothic sculpture depicting floral and animal subjects. See E. Mâle, *The Gothic Image: Religious Art in France of the Thirteenth Century*, pp. 58-63.

    Meyer Schapiro, dealing with Romanesque sculpture, discusses related problems in his 'On the Aesthetic Attitude in Romanesque Sculpture (1947)', *Romanesque Art: Selected Papers*, pp. 1–27. Popular imagery was discussed although not systematically in C. Guignebet and J.D. La Joux, *Art profane et religion populaire au Moyen Age*, Paris, 1985.

CHAPTER 1

Romanesque marginal sculpture: Subjects and images

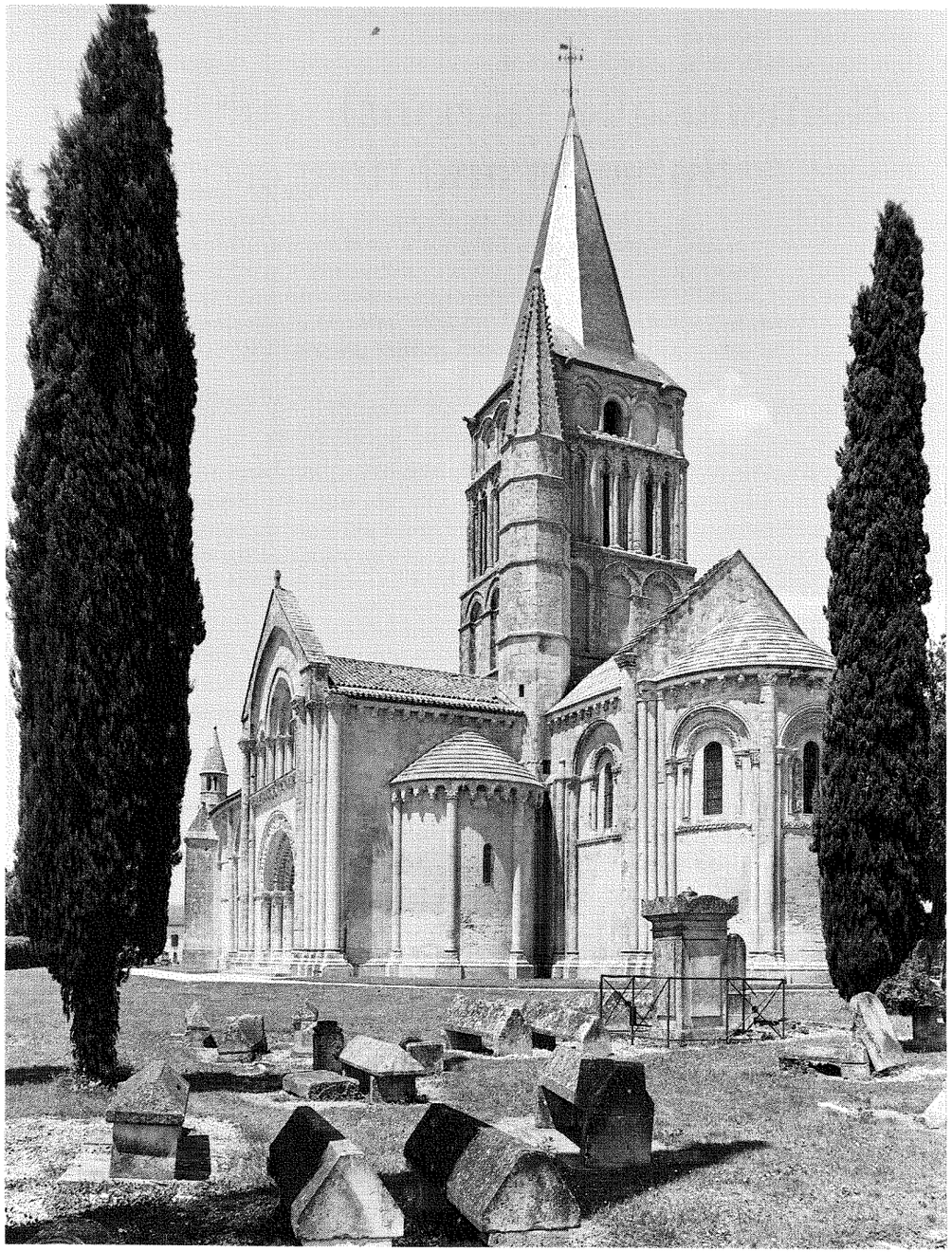
In this chapter I should like to survey the images and subjects of marginal Romanesque sculpture. This 'field work' seems necessary as these sculptures have not been previously surveyed or catalogued, nor have they been previously studied as part of any planned scheme. I should like to suggest several subject group categories, and to point out the specific choice of subjects in certain corbel series. The relationship of the sculptors – the makers of these works – to the series will also be discussed.

The present investigation is based on a study of some 40 churches in Poitou and Saintonge, whose official sculpture programmes are commonly dated to the second and third quarters of the twelfth century, and where the corbels are a predominant, if not a major, sculptural element (pl.1.1–6).[1] The corbel series of St Etienne in Cahors, St Sernin in Toulouse, St Léonard-de-Noblat and the apse of Basle Cathedral were also studied as being representative of other regions.[2]

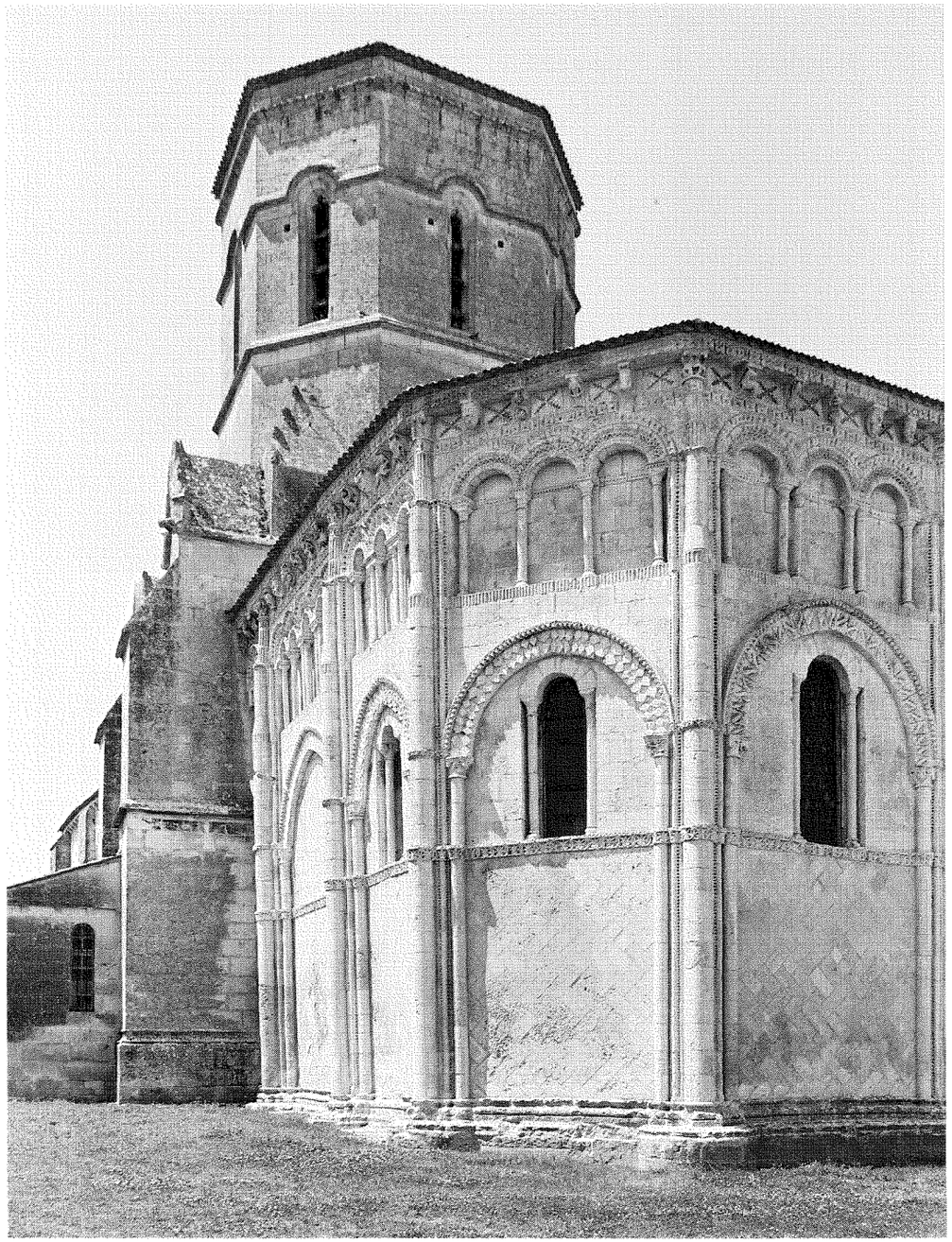
The smaller corbel series consists of about a dozen sculptured units; the largest series comprise up to 60 units. The corbels, 40 to 60 cm high, are usually life-size heads or busts, or less frequently miniature, full-length figurines. Sculpted almost in the round and joining the wall only at the rear, the corbels are located at a fixed distance from one another; the intervals are sometimes occupied by sculptured metopes. While the corbel series serve the same function and have the same meaning in all the churches, their style and their choice and combination of subjects from a given repertory of motifs, as well as the visual formulations of individual subjects, varies from one church to another. These characteristics indicate the existence of concepts shared by all the corbel series workshops.[3]

Components of the repertory

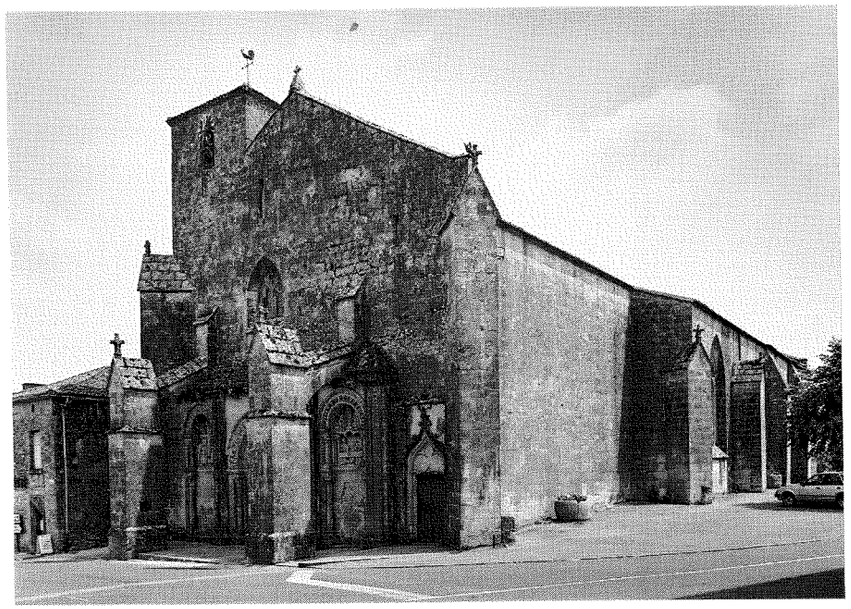
The following subjects represent consistent and major components of the repertory:[4]



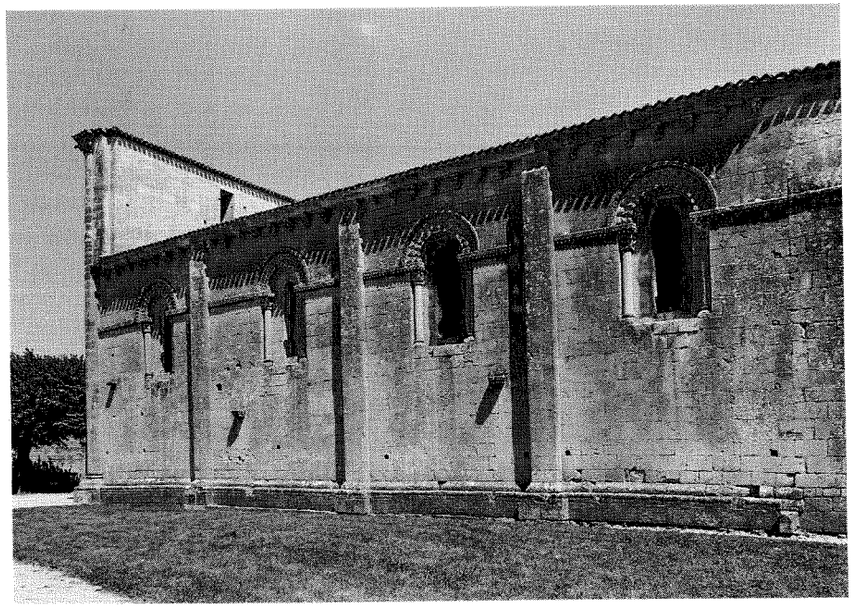
1.1 Aulnay, St Pierre, from southeast.



1.2 Rétaud, St Trojan, from southeast.

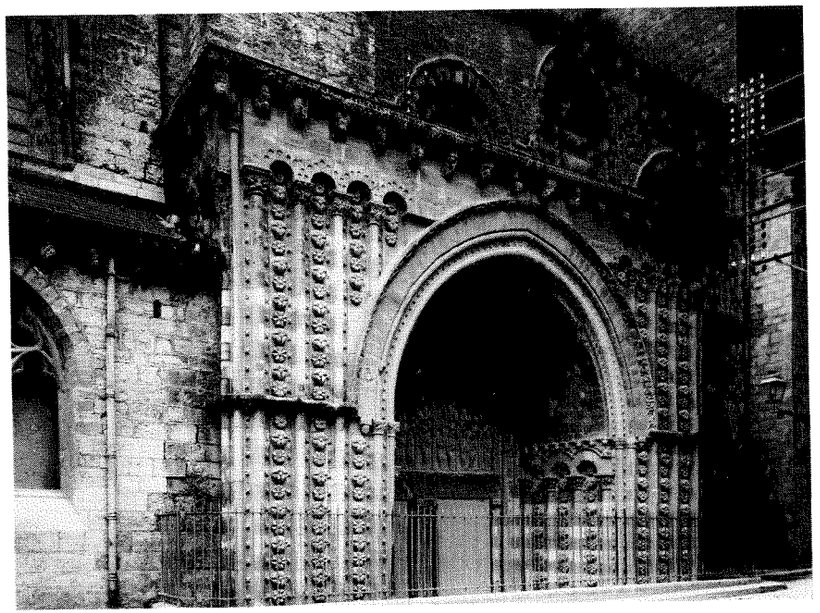


1.3 Foussais, St Hilaire, from southeast.



1.4 Matha, St Hérie, from south.

1.5 Matha-Marestay, St Pierre, from east.



1.6 Cahors, St Etienne, north porch.

Human images

The depiction of human images is a major theme in twelfth-century marginal sculpture. Several stereotypical images are portrayed with specific identifying attributes, while others are of very general character. Craftsmen and figures from the nobility and clergy are not frequently depicted, and when they are they are located next to various images of marginal people and fantastic animals. Marginals, jongleurs (itinerant minstrels, acrobats and so on), prostitutes, drunkards and beggars, as well as images of men and women with specific expressions, constitute the major theme of the series.

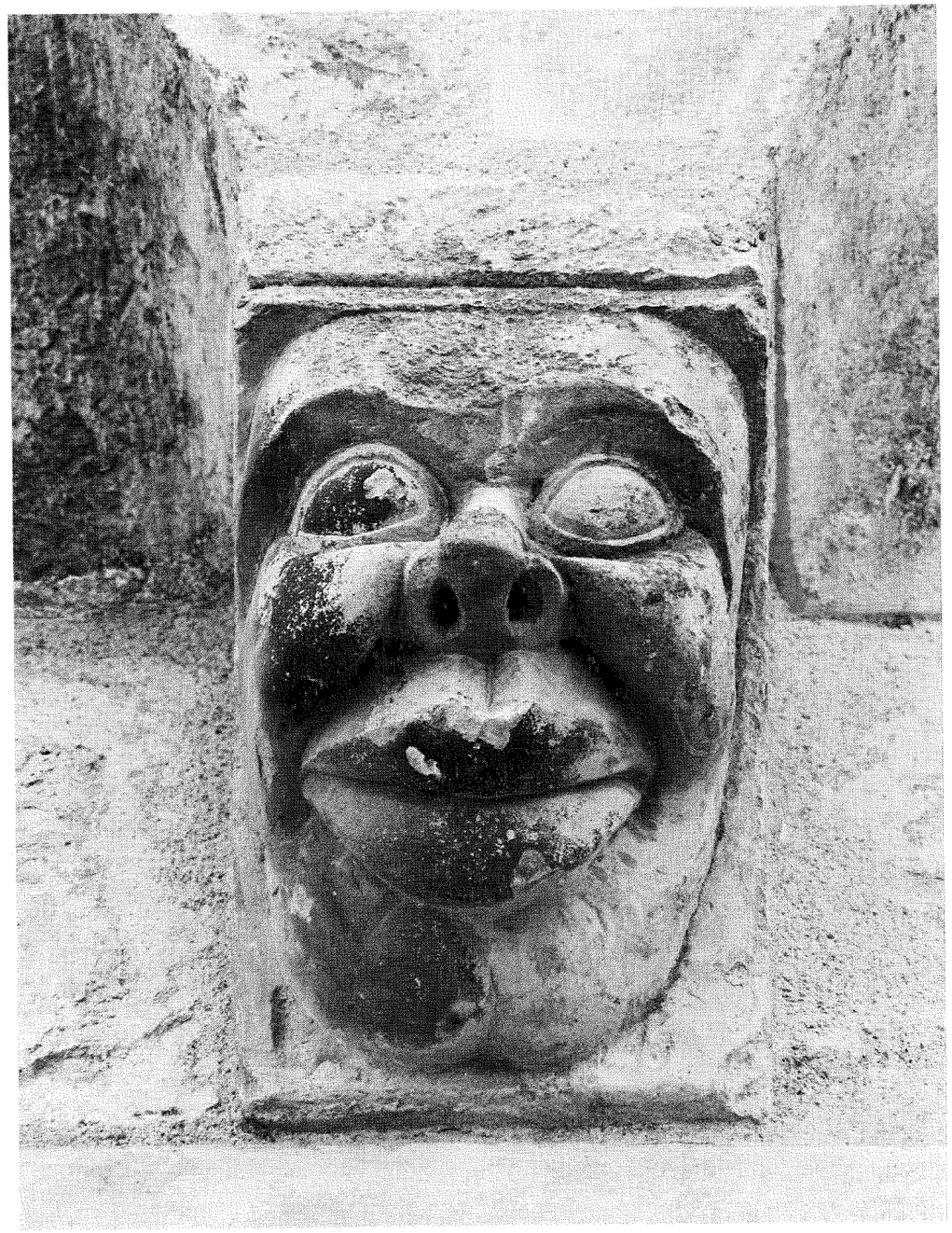
The most provocative expressions seem to depict subversive traits.[5] These are expressed through human heads with distorted, exaggerated facial features (pl. 1.7) and through coarse and bold gestures. A man is depicted holding his mouth open with both hands, for instance, or exhibiting enormous teeth with a corresponding tooth missing in the upper and lower jaws. Grimaces of laughter and mockery are frequent, such as a laughing mouth situated on the cheek of a frontally modelled face,[6] as on the corbels of St Nicolas in Civray and St Etienne in Cahors (pl. 1.8).

A common motif of the corbel series is the head of a man sticking out his tongue (pl. 1.9–10, 22). In the official art, the gesture appears in depictions of the Vices conquered and trampled under the feet of the victorious Virtues. It also appears in the depiction of an evil person who is no longer living. However, the protruding tongues of the corbel faces take a different form. Often they seem to be humorous, or a mark of protest, in contrast to the drooping tongues of the Vices and evil persons. They appear to be reminiscent of the traditional forms of the *Gorgon Medusa*'s head. The meaning behind the sticking-out-the-tongue gesture is hard to define. An associated gesture, that of baring the teeth while holding the mouth open with both hands (pl. 1.11–12), also remains enigmatic.

An additional extreme and coarse gesture is that of a man folding his legs over his back to show his buttocks (pl. 1.12). This gesture developed into even more realistic representations in later periods of marginal sculpture. Showing one's behind perhaps parallels spoken metaphors of protest, or even literary descriptions.

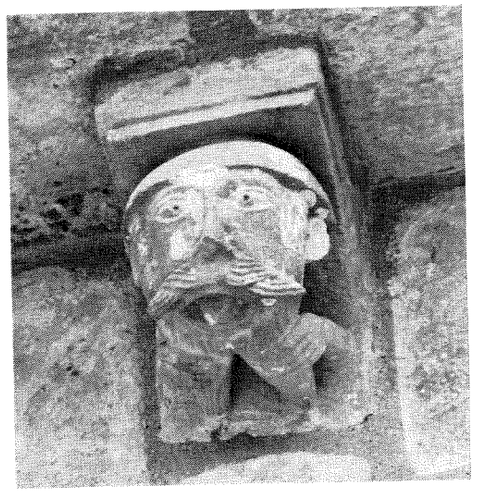
According to Mikhail Bakhtin humorous elements are a major popular component of protest.[7] Indeed, several scholars, such as Philip Ménard and Alicy Colby,[8] have shown that in the courtly romances various subjects were considered comic. In addition to pairs of lovers, who were traditionally the butt of scorn, there were the coquette and the quarrelsome or deceived woman, giants and midgets, monsters and other fantastic phenomena, as well as numerous manifestations of ugliness, horror and old age. Ugliness is rendered by exaggerations of bodily and facial features in specific colours, such as a huge mouth with enormous yellow teeth, large misshapen ears or eyes, strange black hairstyles, black nostrils and red eyes.[9]

In the corbel series there are a number of fantastic monsters, giants, ugly creatures, and so on. Unlike the courtly romance, where they appear in narrative contexts, here



1.7 Civray, St Nicolas, corbel from west façade: male head with exaggerated features.

1.8 Cahors, St Etienne, corbel from north wall: mocking head.



1.9 Matha-Marestay, St Pierre, corbel from apse: male head with tongue stuck out.

1.10 Brioude, St Julien, corbel from apse: male head with tongue stuck out.

1.11 Aulnay, St Pierre, corbel from apse: male head pulling a face and sticking out tongue.

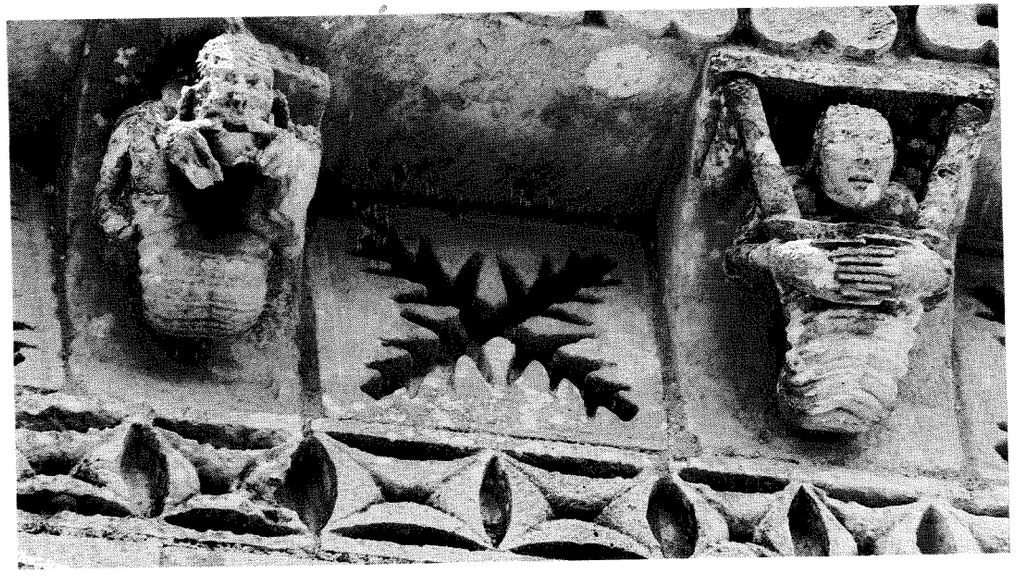
the monsters remain hermetic. Yet the portrait of the loathsome damsel from Chrétien de Troyes, with narrow eyes and a goat's beard, is reminiscent of the depiction of a female with a short beard and narrow eyes in a bust of the corbel series on the western façade of the church of St Hilaire in Melle. Similarly, the portraits of giants from Chrétien de Troyes bring to mind the images of giants on the corbel of Basle Cathedral, and on the church of Rétaud in Saintonge (pl. 1.13).[10] These humorous depictions introduce new dimensions which are not known in the official art. Their meanings are hard to interpret. They might have been subversive in their very depictions of satire and laughter, while at the same time they may also have functioned as moralizing images.

In addition to humour, pain, fear and despair are also expressed in the corbel series through representations of female and male heads bent far forwards or backwards, screaming through wide open mouths. The heads are often depicted together with hands engaged in dramatic activity, such as tearing the hair or supporting the face or cheeks (pl. 1.14–15, 17–18). The hair of the women, whether old or young, is long and dishevelled. These extreme forms appear to me to be a formal breakthrough in the art of the Middle Ages.

The female and male heads expressing extreme emotional states seem to draw directly on Roman and Gallo-Roman models.[11] For example, the classical 'pathos formula' used to depict barbarian men and women defeated in battle in Roman imperial art (particularly of the Antonines) seems to have been known. Thus a woman's head corbel from Toulouse may be compared to the head of a barbarian woman holding her son on the column of Marcus Aurelius (pl. 1.15–16), or the woman's head corbel from Cahors may be compared to the gestures of the figures in a fragment of a Meleager sarcophagus (pl. 1.17–19).[12] The ancient models are further traceable in the vehement foreshortened hand gestures and in bodily postures, such as the drunkard sitting with his back to the observer at St Hilaire in Foussais (pl. 1.20), which might have been inspired by Gallo-Roman sepulchral stones, where depictions of craftsmen sitting on their stools are common (pl. 1.21).

The wide range of corbels depicting classical hairstyles, or bald male heads, with short beards, draw freely on heads portrayed in Gallo-Roman sculpture in Aquitaine, Auvergne and the Languedoc. A bald-headed man sticking out his tongue, from a corbel in Chamalières-sur-Loire (pl. 1.22), may be compared for example to the head of a Gallo-Roman artisan on a sepulchral stone in Bordeaux (pl. 1.23).[13] The way the corbels' sculptors related to their classical models seems to differ from their treatment of the same models while working for the official art. In shaping the corbels, conscious efforts were made to achieve high degrees of intensity, expressiveness and vividness. In the corbel series the sculptors were reviving classical characteristics which had been used as symbols since the early days of Christianity.

Human images reflecting various social classes are also incorporated in the series. Several corbels depict dignified pairs of busts or heads that differ from the pairs of lovers, monsters or others. Examples of such pairs are a frontal male bust from



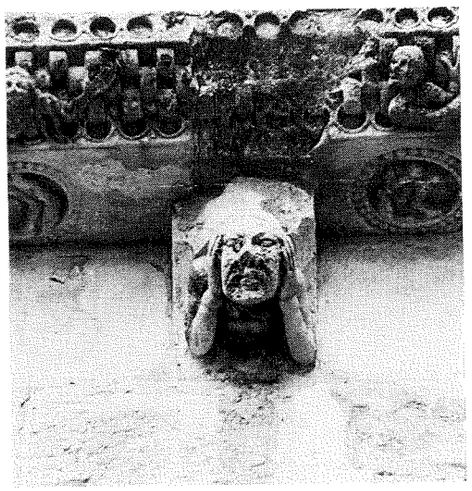
1.12 Rétaud, St Trojan, corbels from apse: two figures with legs pulled up to display their bottoms, one also pulling mouth open in a grimace.

1.13 Rétaud, St Trojan, corbel from apse: giant.

1.14 Moissac, St Pierre, corbel from south wall: head with shocked expression.

1.15 Toulouse, St Sernin, corbel from south façade: despairing woman.

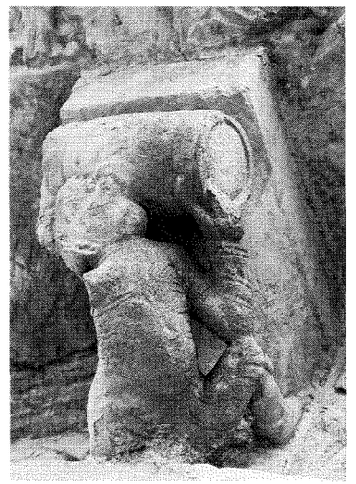
1.16 Column of Marcus Aurelius: barbarian woman with her child.



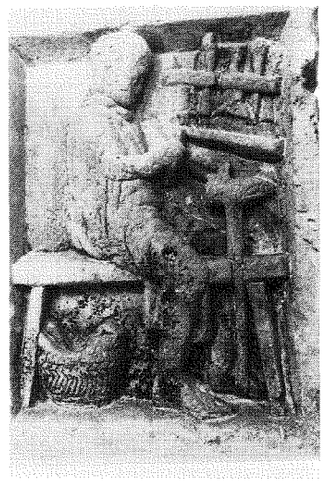
1.17 Cahors, St Etienne, corbel from north wall: woman in despair, with hands to head.

1.18 Cahors, St Etienne, corbel from north wall: woman crying out in despair, hands to head.

1.19 Meleager sarcophagus: mourners.



1.20 Foussais, St Hilaire, corbel from west façade: drunkard.



1.21 Musée de Reims, tombstone of shoemaker.

1.22 Chamalières-sur-Loire, St Gilles, corbel from south wall: bald man.

1.23 Bordeaux, Musée de l'Aquitaine, tombstone of artisan.

Montils with a cross above its head alongside a turbaned woman to its right (pl. 1.24), and a pair of young warriors from St Pierre in Chauvigny with their heads turned away from the corbel's centre. In official religious art, the apostles and other saints are depicted in pairs though they are rendered mostly in full-length, as in Ste Madeleine in Vézelay. It would appear that the corbel formulas for pairs are related to classical and early Christian sepulchral art, in which effigies of the deceased were commonly depicted in pairs (husband and wife, brothers, and so on) on sarcophagi and tombstones. This procedure was also common in popular forms of Gallo-Roman art, as shown by a Gallo-Roman funerary portrait of a couple which is now in the Autun museum.[14] In addition, portraits of imperial and upper-class couples and families also recur on Late Antique gems and caskets, often accompanied by an identifying inscription, as for example on the famous bridal casket of Projecta from the sixth century.[15]

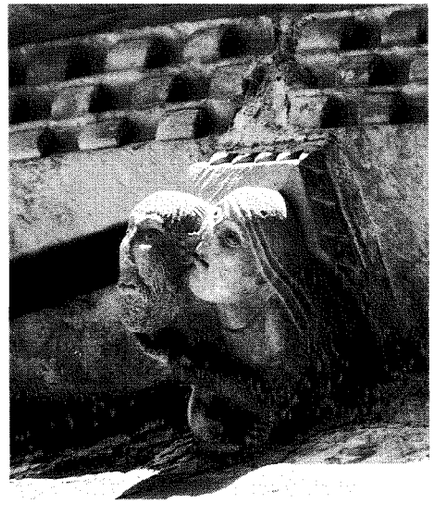
The above-mentioned pair from Montils, for example, invite comparison on the one hand with a possible source such as the Byzantine gold solidi depicting an emperor with a cross above his head (pl. 1.25), while prefiguring on the other hand a later celebrated sculpture of the returning crusader and his wife, now in the Nancy Museum.[16] In this latter piece the man wears a cross on his garment. In Montils the cross is above the man's head, as it is above the Byzantine emperor's head in Byzantine coins, while the turban on the woman's head is the same as that depicted in a pair of women – one playing a musical instrument and the other holding up her child – from the corbels of Matha-Marestay (cf. pl. 1.31). The Montils woman's turban may be contemporary and regional, and the cross above the man's head may be a popular sign of blessing for a pilgrim.

Although it remains an open question whether the Montils pair is the depiction of a specific couple or simply a stereotyped representation of a couple, we may say that a conscious attempt to portray different people with their individual characteristics was initiated here. Another couple, probably a knight and his lady, is from St Sernin in Toulouse (pl. 1.26). Here the woman touches the man's cheek while he is holding his sword to his chest in a ceremonial gesture. The couple appear to be taking part in a ceremony, perhaps some wedding or formal engagement. Additional couples may be seen on the façade of the church of Chadenac. Here the heads of a man and a woman are turned towards each other in a ceremonial gesture (pl. 1. 27).

The three conceptions have a ceremonial bearing in common, in contrast to the depiction of carnal lovers rendered in the corbel series in the posture of lovemaking. The latter are rendered mostly in profile, embracing, kissing or making love (pl. 1.28–30). The noble couples are represented in a formal motionless manner with official attributes, in contrast to the lovemaking couples.

Marginal people are often located next to noble subjects. In several series a detailed study of individual male or female characters, all from the margins of society, may be observed (pl. 1.31). Lovemaking couples and lewd scenes are common in many of the series. The image of the fool appears frequently (pl.

1.24 Montils, St Sulpice, corbel from apse: crusader and his lady.



1.26 Toulouse, St Sernin, corbel from south wall: knight and his lady in a ceremonial posture.

1.25 Solidus of Byzantine emperor Theophilus.

1.27 Chadenac, St Martin, corbel from west façade: heads of a noble couple.

1.28 Aulnay, St Pierre, corbel over portal of south transept: kissing lovers

1.29 Corme-Ecluse, Notre Dame, corbel from west façade: lovers.

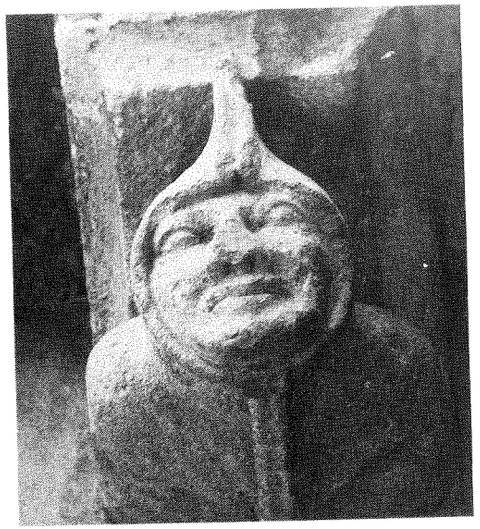
1.30 Marignac, St Supice, corbel from apse: lovers.

1.31 Matha-Marestay, St Pierre, corbels from apse: two beggar women.

1.32–33).[17] The fool wearing the hood is depicted at least six times: in St Quantin de Roncamps he appears twice, once with a tortured face, and once carrying bells over his shoulders and holding his forked beard. In Perignac he sticks out his tongue, in Marignac he averts his suffering face, in Cahors he turns his grief-stricken face upwards, while in Avy-en-Pons he smiles merrily and the lower parts of his hood are stylized.

The images of jongleurs constitute a major theme of the series.[18] Jongleurs (acrobats, dancers, musicians, horn players, monkey and bear trainers) appear in all the series at least once and often more than once. They are shown in various acrobatic positions and professions: bending backwards to form an arc with their bodies (this posture is shown either from the front or from behind); standing on their heads or hands; jumping over a rope; exhibiting a performing bear; exhibiting performing monkeys; dancing (kneeling, spinning around); bending their legs backwards. The musicians are shown seated or standing, playing various stringed instruments as well as horns and tambourines (pl. 1.34–38). These positions recur in all the corbel series that I have studied, regardless of stylistic differences.

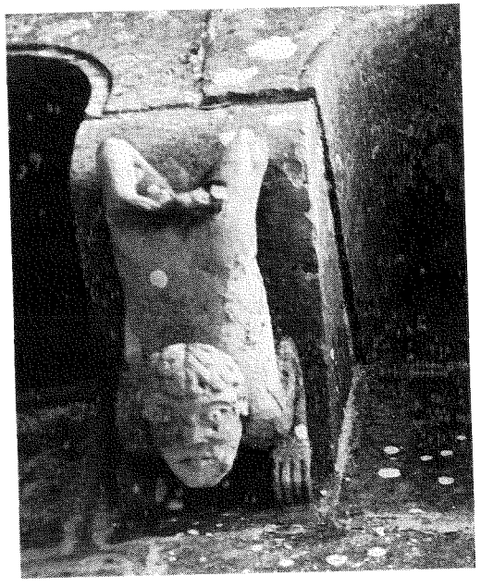
Next to these images are located allegorical subjects, such as the *spinario* (pl. 1.39) and the *triple face* (pl. 1.40): two examples of images derived from Gallo-Roman art. These images do not appear very often, and it would seem that these two motifs, relating to sculptures of possible local deities, are derived from surviving popular pagan traditions.[19] The *spinario* is a theme that originates in the beautiful Hellenistic statue of the child pulling a thorn from his foot. The image of the *spinario* became widespread in imperial Roman art, from mosaics to sculpture, and was also part of the Gallo-Roman vocabulary. In late imperial and Gallo-Roman art the images were frequently simplified, so that the motif was kept but lost its classical forms. From various written sources in the twelfth century we learn that the *spinario* was endowed with a Christian moralistic meaning: while pulling out the thorn the figure reveals its private parts – a situation symbolizing, perhaps, unintentional sin.[20] The role and meaning of the image of the *triple face* in the Middle Ages has not yet been investigated, having been studied either in earlier or in later periods (from the fifteenth century onwards). After the Roman conquest, the image of the triple face was very widespread in Gallo-Roman art of the first century. Several scholars regarded it as a representation of an enigmatic deity expressing the passive persistence of Gallic religious traditions. Examples of Gallo-Roman sculptures of this triple-faced deity are to be found in numerous French museums, including Rheims, Nancy, Epinal, Autun, Clermont-Ferrand, Saintes, Rodez and Toulouse.[21] I believe that when depicted in twelfth-century official art it was interpreted in a Christian context. However, I doubt whether it was depicted in this sense only in marginal sculptures. The meanings of the *spinario* and the *triple face* are enigmatic. Were they included in the margins as symbols of heresy and paganism? Or did the artists include them as emblems of popular culture?



1.32 Cahors, St Etienne, corbel from north wall: fool.

1.33 Toulouse, St Sernin, corbel from west façade: twin fools.

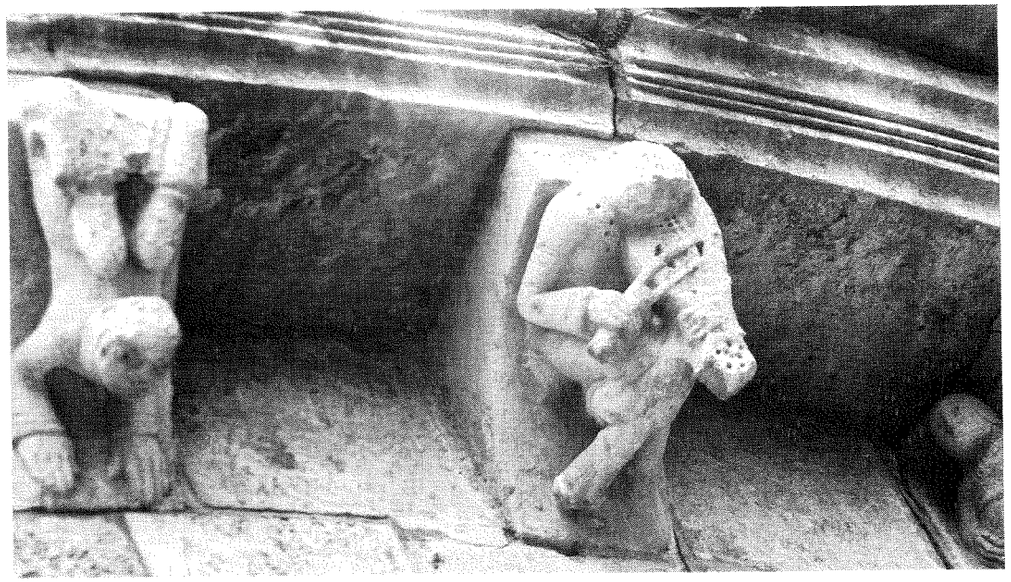
1.34 Matha, St Hérie, corbel from south wall: acrobat.



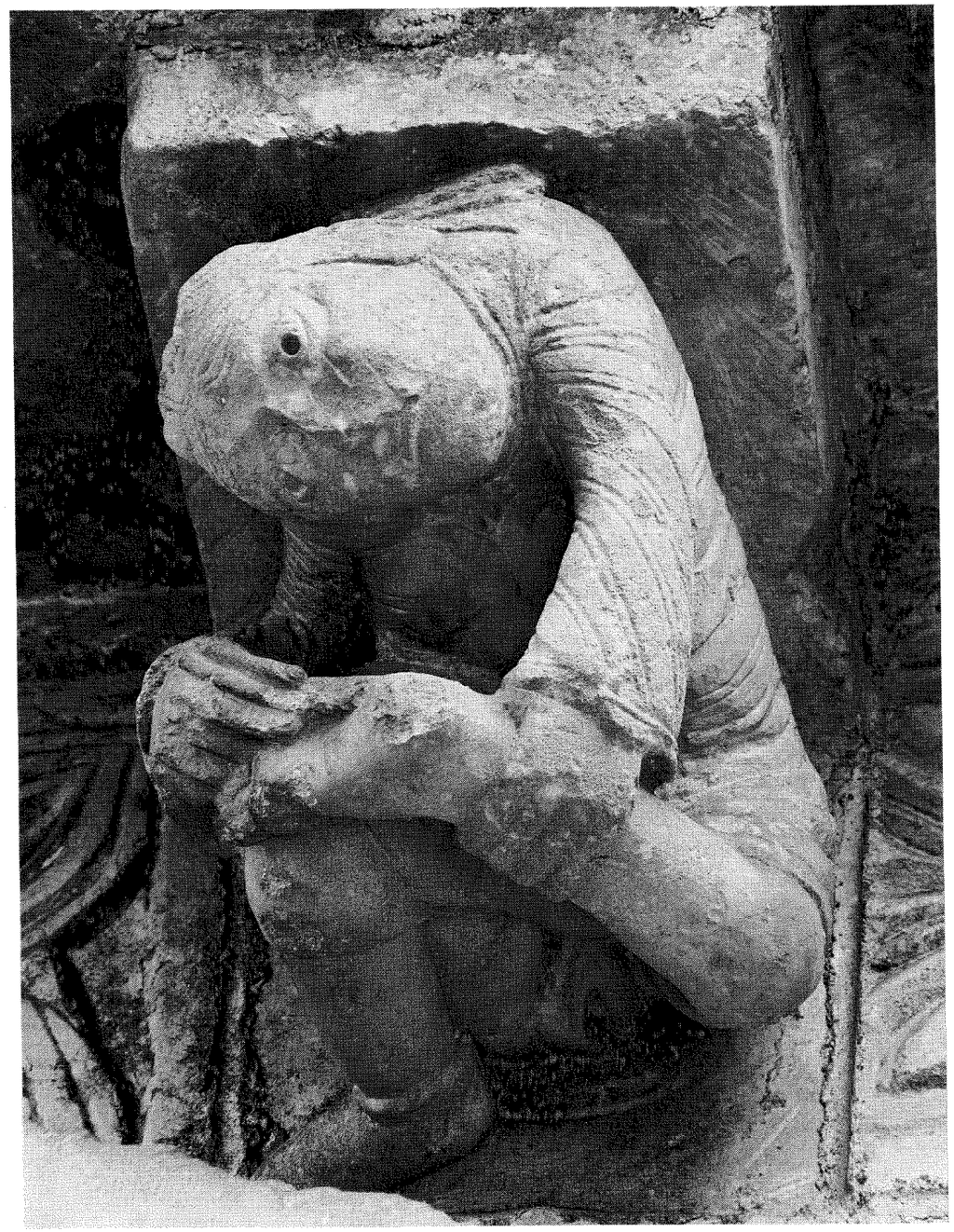
1.35 Aulnay, St Pierre, corbel from northern apse: acrobat.

1.36 Matha, St Hérie, corbel from south wall: jongleur blowing horn.

1.37 Matha-Marestay, St Pierre, corbel from apse: kneeling jongleur with string instrument.



1.38 Surgères, Notre Dame, corbels from apse: jongleurs – acrobat and musician.



1.39 Foussais, St Hilaire, corbel from west façade: spinario.

1.40 Moissac, St Pierre, corbel southern façade: triple face.

1.41 Vouvant, Notre Dame, corbel from south wall: cat washing itself.

1.42 Rétaud, St Trojan, corbels from apse: wolf and fox with prey.

Animal representations

Animals also appear alongside the human images. The repertory of animals includes monstrous, distorted heads grimacing, grinning and sticking out the tongue; busts or heads of bulls, cats, goats and so on; full-length depictions of such animals as goats, deer, pigs and monkeys in pairs or singly; fantastic animals alongside such birds as doves, peacocks, eagles and so on (pl. 1.41–45). An ass (head or bust) holding the Host in its mouth (pl. 1.46) and an ass holding a feed sack are common motifs.

The ass holding the Host in its mouth is a recurrent theme in the corbel series. This may have been an allusion to one or more symbolic meanings of the ass in official church iconography. Or it might symbolize a major popular feast of medieval France, the Feast of the Ass (*festa asinaria*), also called the Feast of Fools, which was celebrated in the octave of the Nativity.[22] Although the flight of Mary and Jesus into Egypt was the event officially celebrated, the ass (for whom a farcical Mass was said) was its central image. The feast, celebrated with local variations, was organized by the lower clergy – the idea being a reversal of status between lower and higher clergy, laity and clergy, and men and women, expressed through their costumes and behaviour. The lower clergy not only appeared in bishops' habits, but also took on their attributes. In addition to the farcical Mass, there were burlesque performances by the clergy and the feast was repeatedly prohibited by the Church high authorities. The rites of this feast were, as Bakhtin has said, a grotesque debasement of religious symbols and rites and their transformation into crass corporeal rituals. [23]

Representations of objects

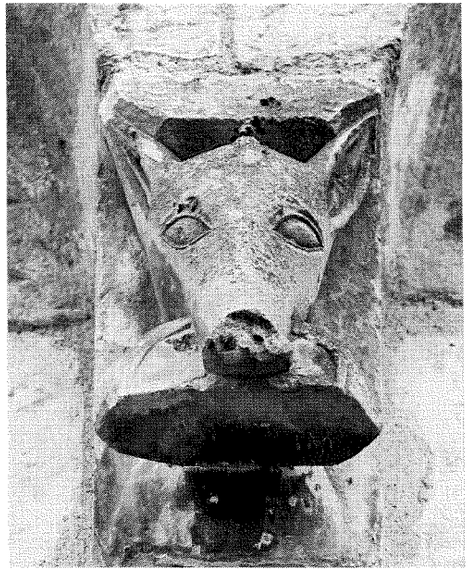
Isolated objects, such as barrels or flasks or parts of the human body, are also frequently found (pl. 1.47–48). The depiction of barrels, hammers, flasks or musical instruments – objects that convey no direct didactic message – is totally alien to the official religious art. However, it may be compared to the votive reliefs of Roman and Gallo-Roman craftsmen who use their tools as emblems. Gallo-Roman examples are legion; among the most celebrated are the representations of the mason's tools now in the museums of Bourges and Arles.[24] Roman workshop signs are also comparable, as well as the emblematic representations by guilds, merchants, societies and craftsmen's workshops of their professional tools or products in the later Middle Ages.

Similarly, the depiction of isolated legs or shod feet remains enigmatic. Perhaps it can be related to the sumptuous reliquary caskets of the official art, on the covers of which are represented in three-dimensional form the legs, hands or fingers contained therein. The corbels may have been a popular version of such reliquaries, a commemoration of votive offerings by people whose feet had been miraculously healed. [25]

1.43 Civray, St Nicolas, west façade, lower series of corbels: bird's head.

1.44 Civray, St Nicolas, west façade, lower series of corbels: head of a cow and a fantastic beaked mask.

1.45 Matha-Marestay, St Pierre, corbel from apse: lion-like beast devouring two human heads.



1.46 Civray, St Nicolas, west façade, lower series of corbels: ass with Host.

1.47 Civray, St Nicolas, west façade, lower series of corbels: wine barrel.

1.48 Matha, St Hérie, corbel from north wall: a leg.

1.49 Civray, St Nicolas, west façade, lower series of corbels: mis-shapen face and woman with dice.

1.50 Civray, St Nicolas, west façade, lower series of corbels: a monster.

1.51 Civray, St Nicolas, west façade, lower series of corbels: a devil.

Thematic relationships

In most series, the above-mentioned subjects lack a fixed or rational location, so it is impossible to establish a readable narrative sequence. In certain series, however, there is a thematic relationship between two neighbouring corbels. In Cahors, for example, a corbel with a mocking, distorted mouth (pl. 1.8) is turned towards a pair of lovers. Similarly, in Civray, the head of a woman with dice near her seems to be turned to look at the distorted male head beside her (pl. 1.49). In Rétaud a centaur bending a bow is located next to a deer with an arrow in its neck. In Saint Hilaire of Foussais, as well as in Vouvant, the self-representations of the sculptors are situated next to jongleurs and musicians.

Several series reveal a preoccupation with a specific artistic problem, such as the rendering of a facial expression, a body posture or a certain human type. In such series, several corbels may be regarded as variations on, or *études*, of the same theme. In Rétaud or Rioux, for example, it is evident that the artists were mainly concerned with rendering monstrous or distorted male faces. In coping with the rendition of the mouth, they offered solutions that range from the expressionless, to sticking out the tongue, to stylized forms. A similar case is the slightly later corbel series of Pont-l'Abbé-d'Arnoult.

In Cahors, images of women predominate: they appear on no fewer than 22 different corbels, depicted in bust form and full-length. The corbels feature old and young women, kneeling, standing or performing some acrobatic feat; some hold their faces in their hands, others scream in despair, still others are shown smirking.

In contrast, some series contain a very wide variety of motifs, each depicted just once or twice, usually in the round. This is the case at Civray, Melle, Foussais, Vouvant and Aulnay.

The three corbel series of Rétaud, Cahors and Foussais exemplify the common and diverse elements in the series. They are dated from the middle of the twelfth century up to its last quarter. None of the series has been studied in its own right, although the architecture and the overall design of these churches have been investigated.[26]

The images of the three corbel series display similar social and artistic concepts, brought out in different images and in markedly different styles. Some motifs – acrobats, monsters and animal heads – recur in all three. But in the specific context of each series, every motif acquires a significance of its own.

The Rétaud series runs around the polygonal apse and round the northern and southern walls of the church, and centres on features of monsters and of men gesturing as if in protest. Most prominent among such gestures are whistling through the fingers, putting out the tongue, laughing, gritting the teeth, and displaying the buttocks by folding the legs over the head. The men themselves are of special types. Some are bald. (In the Middle Ages the bald were often seen as representing the insane; in their demented fury they pulled out their own hair.) Others look as if they

are growing a single horn. We also find some images of mysterious faces and several types of male devil heads (pl. 1.12, 13, 42, 52–54 and App. II). Not a single one of the 38 Rétaud corbels contains an image of a woman.

Cross-shaped sunken metopes separate the figures, which are small in proportion to the size of the corbels; the artists have left an empty frame of considerable size around each figure. Thus, at Rétaud, the images appear as groups of mysterious, frightening, almost violent figures, much like a company of robbers moving through a village or town and leaving behind a trail of havoc.

The Cahors series appears to be the antithesis of that at Rétaud: of its 75 corbels, 25 feature women. The rest show images of devils and marginal male figures, such as a fool (who appears twice) or a male figure folding his legs over his shoulders and displaying an expression of suffering. In contrast to Rétaud the figures at Cahors (the men as well as the women) convey a sense of extreme suffering: of anguish, fear, entreaty, and the like (pl. 1.8, 17, 18, 32, 55–57; 2.2, 10, 11 and App. IV). An example is the figure of a woman crouching, with her head and hands thrown back strenuously (pl. 1.17–18). Not since the Roman images of the second and third century do I know of such a strong and direct depiction of suffering through the dramatic posture of the figures. Indeed, the style of the Cahors images can be compared to Imperial Roman art of the time of the Antonines, and perhaps also to Hellenistic sculpture in its Roman versions – such as the drunken old woman by Myron of Thebes, now in Munich.[27] It seems to me that only from the end of the thirteenth century, when representations of Mary Magdalene at the feet of the Cross became common, can one find again Western art measuring up to such designs.[28]

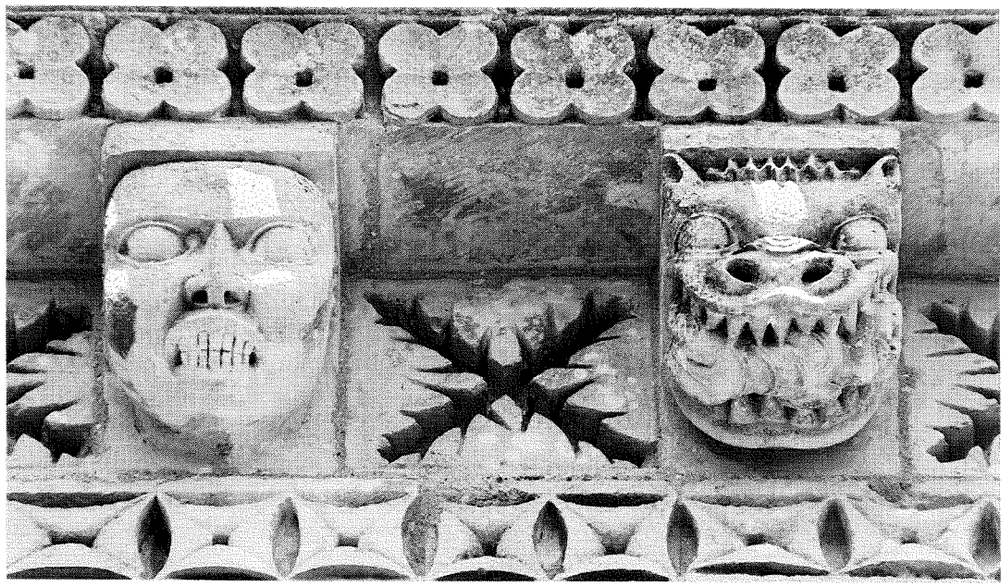
In Cahors, the visual articulation of a cry of pain finds clear expression and recurs in a number of variations. These images differ from Hellenistic depictions of cries, and of pain, which are more stylized or in a sense more 'beautified'. Compared with Rétaud, the Cahors series depicts human images more realistically and can thus be placed in the same artistic group as the series at St Sernin in Toulouse (pl. 1.15, 26, 33) and at Moissac (pl. 1.14, 40; 2.1).[29]

The Foussais series, the smallest of the three (App. III), shows none of the topics dealt with by the other two. Its motifs are more general and may be in part allegorical. Thus, for instance, the drunkard who is seen from the back (pl. 1.20), may stand for 'drunkenness' and the figure of the *spinario* who pulls a thorn from his foot (pl. 1.39) may symbolize sin in general.[30]

Two salient figures in this series are the stone mason or sculptor. The latter wears a long tunic and holds his mallet on his shoulder, standing next to a jongleur who plays the horn (pl. 1.58).[31] A similar group is found in the neighbouring church of Vouvant;[32] there, the sculptor stands between a troubadour, who is singing with his mouth wide open while playing a stringed instrument, and a jongleur playing the horn (pl. 1.59). The artists placing representations of themselves next to those of musicians and jongleurs hint at their identification with those who in their day were the artists par excellence, the 'culture heroes'.[33]

1.52 Rétaud, St Trojan, corbel from eastern apse: bearded male head with staring eyes.

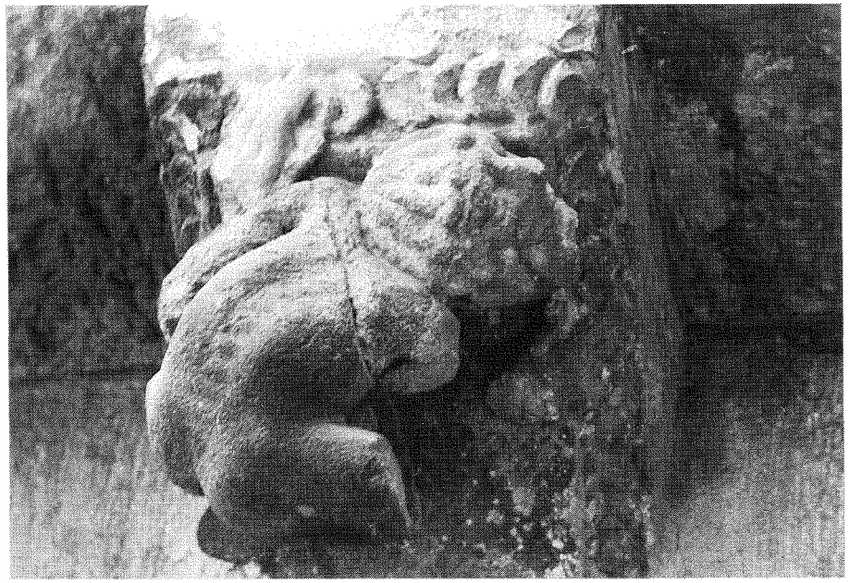
1.53 Rétaud, St Trojan, corbel from eastern apse: pair of grimacing figures in jaws of upside-down monster.



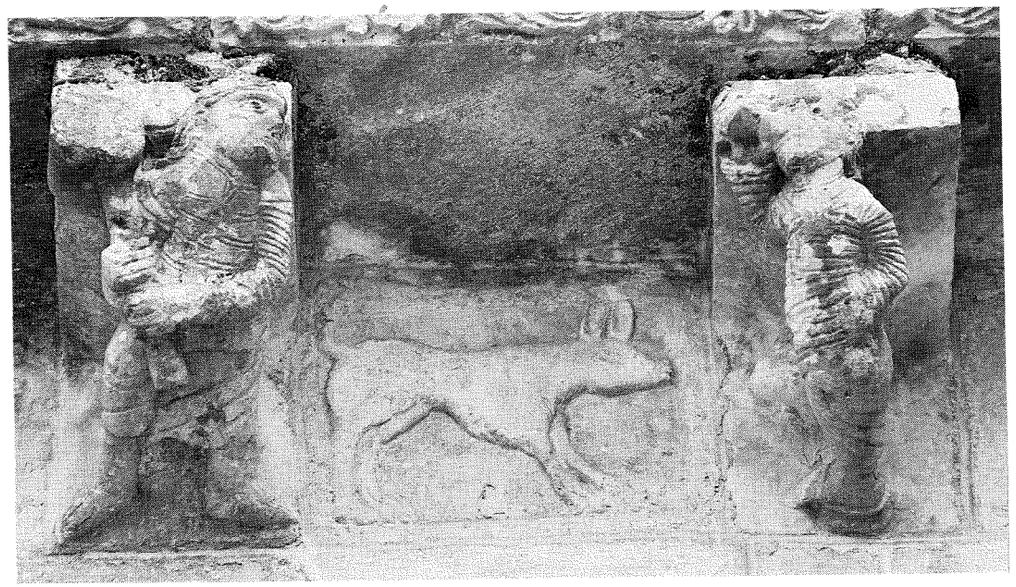
1.54 Rétaud, St Trojan, corbels from eastern apse: bald devil, baring its teeth, and a monster.

1.55 Cahors, St Etienne, corbel from north porch: twisted, screaming devil.

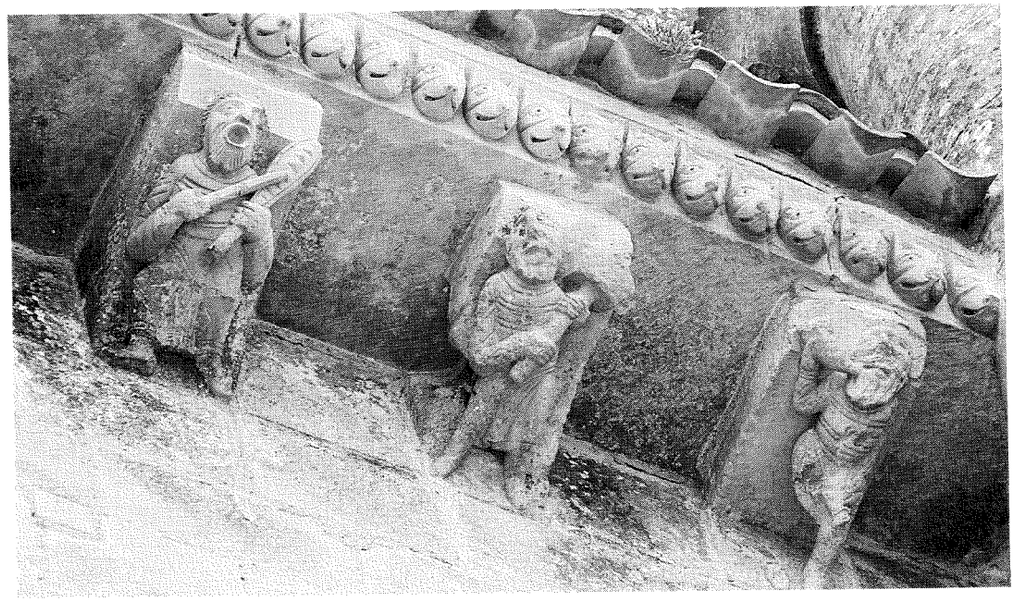
1.56 Cahors, St Etienne, corbel from north porch: woman screaming.



1.57 Cahors, St Etienne, corbel from north wall: back view of naked man, bent down under the weight of the corbel.



1.58 Foussais, St Hilaire, corbels from west façade: mason with mallet, jongleur blowing horn.



1.59 Vouvant, Notre Dame, corbels from apse: sculptor between two jongleurs.

The striking characteristic of the Foussais series is its clear formal link with classical art. This finds expression in sculpted metopes placed between the corbels, as well as in the figures shown on the corbels. The figures are almost free-standing and are realized in complicated postures. On the other hand, unlike the artists who created the other two series, the Foussais master did not concern himself with facial expressions. The images thus remain expressionless, and in this respect resemble the figures of official art.

The marked differences between these three series leads to the view that the corbel series form part of a broad repertory and an artistic routine whose components were known to all. We can discern a universally known language, with its legitimate motifs and perhaps also with other, more explicit links with ancient art than was permissible for those shaping official art. What remains problematic is the manner in which the artist interpreted his material – whether in connection with a specific source of inspiration or whether as a matter of free choice. To what degree was the patron involved in the choice of topics? Or did he give the artist a free hand – so that what we see in these series is a clearly delineated expression of the artist's approach?

It is hard to form a picture of the norms and criteria guiding medieval artists.[34] All we have to go on are particular descriptions of artistic creations. These are found in a variety of sources: (1) the writings of patrons – one of the best known being that of Suger, abbot of St Denis and the famous builder of its church;[35] (2) pilgrims' descriptions of buildings and works of art seen on their journeys, such as in Jerusalem or Rome or at Santiago de Compostela;[36] (3) manuals for craftsmen (only a single one has been preserved, apparently composed by the monk Theophilus);[37] and (4) polemics against art, such as the letter from Bernard of Clairvaux to the Abbot of St Thierry.[38] From these sources, one can draw conclusions about their authors' concepts of the beautiful. They speak of the 'resplendent and the sparkling' as reflecting the divine light, and convey the strong impression made on them by the monumental dimensions of architectural structures on the one hand and by the clever craftsmanship and sophistication of small-scale art on the other.[39] The authors seem at times to be ambivalent about stone sculpture: sometimes it is not mentioned at all, at other times, writers come out against it in vehement terms because of its affinity to paganism and because it was thought to be the abode of demons.[40] No reference at all is made in these writings to nature as a primary source of inspiration.

Artists of the twelth century often signed their names in the margin of their work. These signatures are shorter than those of manuscript illuminators – in most cases monks – who often added words of praise about themselves and sometimes referred to the sufferings they underwent in the course of their work.[41]

Those sculptors who signed their work frequently made use of two fixed formulas, which recur often:[42] in one, the artist declares himself the author of the work, such as Gislebertus of Autun, who in his *Last Judgement* carved at the feet of Christ the words: GISLEBERTUS HOC FECIT;[43] in the alternative formula the piece of work itself seems to be speaking. Such is the case of Godefridus of St Pierre at Chauvigny,

where we find on the central capital of the apse over the main altar, the words: GODEFRIDUS ME FECIT.[44] Such formulas are well known from Greek vases and are also mentioned by classical authors describing works of art.[45] They appear in the twelfth century on the kind of monumental stone sculpture that had not been executed for several centuries. This poses the question as to whether the use of such formulas are a kind of *renovatio*, in the spirit of the twelfth-century Renaissance, for such formulas are encountered on Roman and Gallo-Roman tombstones. There, they refer to the person who commissioned the work rather than to the artist.[46] Whether the twelfth-century formulas always refer to the artist, or whether they too refer to the patron, cannot yet be safely answered. In any case, these signatures tell us nothing about the perception, education or provenance of the artist. Despite the comparatively large number of signatures, therefore, the medieval artist remains almost anonymous.[47]

Thus, in the official art of elitist centres, written signatures were used by the sculptors to put their names in the stone. Even if the sculptor was not literate he could copy his signature.

This was not so in the corbel series where the sculptors 'signed' their work with pictorial self-representations. These two distinct kinds of 'signature' in the official and marginal sculpture indicate two different cultural routes. The pictorial form reflects the visual culture as opposed to the official learned sculpture and acts as a statement rather more than a mere signature. Although general, a sculpted image that depicted professional attributes along with the specific form of a face with the 'artistic gaze' could also have been easily identified. Thus, by placing representations of themselves in the corbel series in the immediate vicinity of jongleurs and musicians, the sculptors declared their affinity with society's marginals and at the same time introduced a pictorial signature instead of a written one.

The linkage of sculptor's representations of themselves with jongleurs was probably inspired by the pictorial tradition of the marginal images of craftsmen and jongleurs which appear above religious compositions in some Carolingian and Ottonian manuscripts and early Romanesque stone reliefs.[48] In the gospels of Ebbo of Reims,[49] hunters and various craftsmen are depicted on the painted gables of the canon tables. The figures are functioning freely; the craftsmen are depicted repairing the gables as if they were a real roof. When a hunter is depicted, the gable serves as his stage. The same tradition is evident in the Echternach Codex where the craftsmen are working with their tools on the painted gables.[50] Meyer Schapiro understood the depiction of jongleurs in the Heavenly Jerusalem above the framed composition of the Doubting Thomas in the cloister of Santo Domingo in Silos as an expression of a new lay culture. It was also the sculptors' way of declaring their autonomy via the depiction of their fellow artists, the jongleurs, who were 'lay, free, uninstitutionalized entertainers'.[51] It seems to me that this representation of the jongleurs continues the Carolingian–Ottonian tradition of depicting craftsmen and other lay figures above religious compositions. This way of depicting lay figures was

continued in eleventh-century French manuscript paintings and ivories,[52] as are for example the figures inhabiting the architectural setting in the illumination of St Aubert's vision in the Cartulaire du Mont-Saint-Michel, executed between 1154 and 1158. The figures include various musicians – horn players and others.[53] A similar marginal form of representation in monumental sculpture is known from the imposts situated above the capitals of Notre Dame de la Daurade in Toulouse,[54] where jongleurs and dice-players appear amid profane scenes. Hence, already in early Romanesque sculpture, jongleurs were a frequent theme in the margins unlike earlier depictions of craftsmen and other images.

Jongleurs are depicted in all of the corbel series I examined. However, in two of them, the older and newer themes of the pictorial tradition of the upper margin were combined, with stone masons and jongleurs depicted side by side. Instead of showing anoymous craftsmen at work, however, the sculptor of St Hilaire in Foussais carved his own image in a long robe, carrying a hammer, and placed it next to a horn-playing jongleur (pl. 1.58).[55] Both carry their instruments in their right hand and in a diagonal position which connects the two. In Vouvant, the sculptor, wearing the same kind of robe and carrying his hammer, is located between a horn player on his left and a jongleur playing a musical instrument and singing enthusiastically with his mouth wide open on his right (pl. 1.59). Again, the similarity in their dress and in the demonstrative way all three hold their instruments is emphasized.[56] A similar representation is also known from a capital of Ste Foy in Conques, where the masons and horn players look down from above the city walls.[57] Thus, the sculptors of the corbel series singled themselves out as individuals, each one of them carrying his hammer as an identifying mark. In other words, the sculptor is no longer an anonymous craftsman at work, as he was on the gables of the Carolingian and Ottonian manuscripts. This assertive form of self-representation is new, although it may hark back to Gallo-Roman sepulchral sculpture, where the craftsman and his tools were depicted on gravestones.[58]

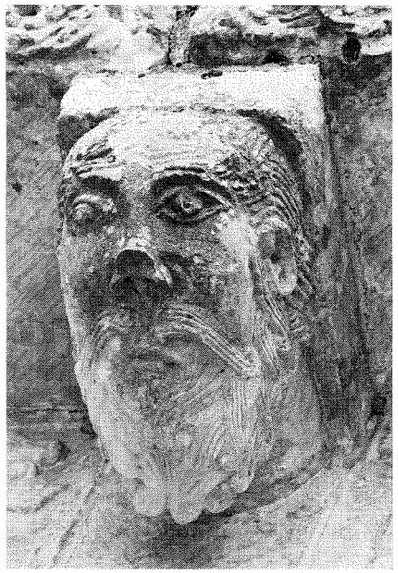
Additional ways of depicting the sculptors or master masons with different tools should be mentioned. On the eastern wall of the northern transept of Notre Dame in Surgères, two seated figures support the burden of the corbel. One is holding a stone block or board, the other the mason's mallet.[59] A similar seated male figure, looking upwards and holding a stone block, is depicted on an apse corbel of Marignac. Figures holding a stone block can be compared to thirteenth-century depictions of the architect sitting at his desk or with a stone block.[60] Such images are situated next to monstrous animal heads. In Echillais, a corbel depicting a man holding a mechanical drill – which may be compared to representations of the same instrument on Greek vases – is located next to a corbel depicting a jongleur.[61] Two corbels – one in St Trojan in Rétaud (pl. 1.60) and one on the transept of the church of Ste Croix de Caille in Avy-en-Pons – contain a full-length male figure dressed in a long girdled robe. In Rétaud the man's hands are folded on the girdle, while in the adjacent corbel a jongleur is depicted. In Avy the figure's hands hang at its sides,

while the corbel flanking it on the left depicts a fool and the corbel on the right depicts an acrobat. Figures dressed in the same manner are depicted as supporters carrying the font in the Pyrenean churches of Saint Savin and Pierrefitte; in the latter, the sculptor's signature is engraved above the heads of the supporters.[62] These depictions of the masons or master masons, either with their tools or with their characteristic long girdled robes, can be compared with depictions of masons and builders in scenes of the building of the Tower of Babel – such as those in the mosaics of the Palatine Chapels of Palermo and Monreale, or the painting of St Savin – and to specific depictions of master masons and architects wearing the same habits in various works of the thirteenth century.[63] However, in the corbel series they are isolated individuals, identified by their professional tools.

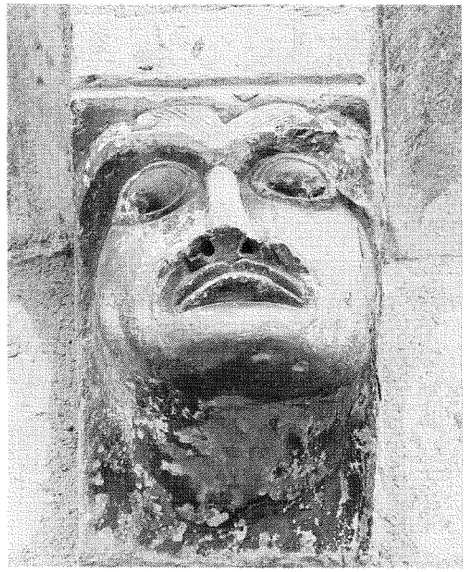
Moreover, it seems to me that in several corbel series there are an entirely different form of stereotyped self-portraits by sculptors or master masons. In St Hilaire in Foussais (pl. 1.61), St Hilaire in Melle, St Nicolas in Civray (pl. 1.62), Notre Dame de Surgerès, St Trojan in Rétaud, in Notre Dame de Rioux, St Hérie in Matha (pl. 1.63), Notre Dame de la Couldre in Parthenay, in St Pierre in Chauvigny and in Chadenac there are corbels depicting male heads, some young and beardless, some with a short beard and a moustache. Some are situated within the series on the left of the façade's central portal (Melle, Foussais, Civray, Surgères); in Parthenay and Rétaud the heads are situated within the right side of the façade series; and in Chauvigny and Rioux they are located on the outer walls of the apses. Some heads are located next to jongleurs or acrobats, others are situated only in their vicinity. Two of the heads, one in Rétaud and the other on the northern nave wall of St Hérie in Matha, are wearing caps such as the master masons or architects wear in thirteenth-century depictions.[64] These heads can be considered the products of the same artistic school. They all have elongated faces, and a penetrating yet aloof look, totally lacking in grimaces or attributes of evil. Moreover, some of them seem to refer back to an antique model, such as the head from Foussais, which may be compared to a Roman philosopher's head. The heads of Foussais and Melle are turned slightly to the left, the pupils of the Foussais head are situated in the right corner of the eyes, as are the pupils of the head at Notre Dame de la Couldre in Parthenay, which is twisted completely to the left. A tightly closed mouth is a prominent feature of the heads of St Hilaire in Foussais, Rétaud and Chauvigny. This impression is conveyed by the use of a downwardly curved line, while the head at St Hilaire in Melle achieves the same effect by means of straight narrow lines.

The two cap-wearing heads of St Hérie in Matha and Rétaud are pupil-less, perhaps because the eyes were once painted. In Chauvigny the sculptor's portrait seems to appear more than once. On a combined pillar on the north side of the transept there is a corbel depicting a male head which supports an impost with a monster head; the pillar's shaft faces another youthful head above which a siren is holding the necks of two swans.[65] These heads were evidently carved by a different master from the famous group of the choir capitals with the inscription GODEFRIDUS

1.60 Rétaud, St Trojan, corbel from apse: man with girdled robe.



1.61 Foussais, St Hilaire, corbel from west façade: sculptor as 'philosopher'.



1.62 Civray, St Nicolas, corbel from west façade: sculptor's head.

1.63 Matha, St Hérie, corbel from north wall: sculptor's head.

ME FECIT. Two very similar male heads with the same characteristics, and obviously carved by the same master, appear in the vast corbel programme on the outer walls of the apses. The heads have short hair, short beards and moustaches, and seem to hark back to a late antique model. Each gazes with a critical, almost bitter look, underlined by vehement, though minimal modelling of the firm mouth. These heads seem to me to be the portrait of the same master mason. The location of such a head in a prominent part of the choir, and its appearance twice among the large corbel series, cannot be regarded as a decorative or naive detail, but shows the sculptor's insistent preoccupation with his own image.

Kurt Gerstenberg argued that a continuous tradition of self-representation by architects and sculptors persisted in Germany from the end of the twelfth century to the sixteenth century.[66] He identified them on various forms of corbels inside churches and outside them on towers, portals, and so on, some as full-length figures holding their working tools, others, in the form of atlantes, supporting the corbels with their heads.[67] Though his identifications are often questionable, there can be no doubt that a tradition of the architect or master mason as a supporter is evident in images like that of Master Adam Kraft carrying the tabernacle in St Lorenz in Nuremberg, which is dated to 1495. Two prominent elements seem to occur consistently in this pictorial tradition: the figures, often with their working tools, are designed as supporters; and they demonstrate a critical, sometimes aggressive, yet spiritual expression.

The heads in the corbel series which I would identify as stereotyped self-portraits of the sculptors, are also part of the series of supporting figures. Yet already they manifest the same characteristics as the later German self-portraits – the aloof gaze, the aggressive, sometimes painful, self-declaration. The self-representations of the sculptors, placed as they are next to figures of jongleurs and the presumed embryonic self-portraits of the master, suggest that they thought of the series as a marginal area appropriate for depictions of themselves.[68] At the same time, the sculptors declared themselves to be a similarly marginal element of society. Enslaved by vanity, their most outspoken revelations concern their own self-portraits: the critically observant gaze, their characteristic robes and tools, and the placing of their self-representations near those of the performing artists, all reveal the sculptors' nascent self-consciousness.

Notes

1. The churches:
   1) Avy-en-Pons; 2) Aulnay – St Pierre; 3) Biron; 4) Basle Cathedral; 5) Cahors – St Etienne; 6) Chadenac – St Martin; 7) Civray – St Nicolas; 8) Colombier; 9) Chauvigny – St Pierre; 10) Corme Royal – St Nazaire; 11) Corme – Ecluse; 12) Echillais; 13) Echerbrune; 14) Foussais – St Hilaire; 15) Matha – St Hérie; 16) Marestay – St Pierre; 17) Marignac; 18) Meursac – St Martin; 19) Montils; 20) Mosnac; 21) Melle – St Hilaire; 22) Melle – St Pierre; 23) Melle – St Savinien; 24) Parthenay – Notre-Dame-de-la-Couldre; 25) Parthenay-le-Vieux; 26) Pérignac – St Pierre; 27) Pont-l'Abbé-d'Arnoult; 28) Poitiers – Notre-Dame-la-Grande; 29) Poitiers – Baptistère St Jean; 30) Rétaud – St Trojan; 31) Rioux – Notre Dame; 32) Surgères – Notre Dame; 33) St Quantin de Roncamps; 34) St Sauvant; 35) St Léonard-de-Noblat; 36) Toulouse – St Sernin; 37) Vouvant. The bibliography on these churches is not exhaustive; it includes only major works.

2. M. Aubert, 'Deux chapiteaux de Notre Dame de la Couldre au Musée du Louvre', *Bulletin monumental*, 1926, pp. 186–87; P.M. Auzas, 'Les églises de Vouvant, Nieul-sur-l'Autise et Foussais', *Congrès archéologique*, 1956, pp. 60–79; J. Chagnolleau, *Aulnay-de-Saintonge*, Grenoble, 1938; J. Chailley, 'Du drame liturgique aux prophètes de Notre-Dame-la-Grande', *Mélanges offerts à R. Crozet à l'occasion de son 70e anniversaire*, Poitiers, 1966, II, pp. 835–41; N. Coatanoan, *Les chapiteaux de Saint Pierre de Chauvigny en Poitou*, Monaco, 1959; R. Crozet, *L'art roman en Berry*, Paris, 1932; *idem*, 'Le décor sculpté de la façade de Civray', *Revue de l'art ancien et moderne*, LXVI, 1934, pp. 97–110; *idem*, 'Le décor sculpté de Notre-Dame-la-Grande (Poitiers)', *La Grand' Goule*, 1935, pp. 75–78; *idem*, *L'art en Poitou, Visages du Poitou*, I, Paris, 1942, pp. 83–157, Paris, 1965, pp. 96–167; *idem*, *L'art roman en Poitou*, Paris, 1948; *idem*, 'Chauvigny', *Congrès archéologique*, 1951, pp. 245–55; *idem*, 'Chauvigny et ses monuments. Etude archéologique', *Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest*, 4e série, III, 1958, pp. 1–93; *idem*, 'L'église d'Aulnay et la route de Saint-Jacques', *Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest*, 4e série, VII, 1963/4, pp. 309–12; *idem*, *L'art en Saintonge*, Paris, 1971; C. Dangibeaud, 'L'école de sculpture romane saintongeaise', *Bulletin archéologique du Comitè des Travaux historiques et scientifiques*, 1910, pp. 22–62; *idem*, *De l'influence des façades romanes charentaises*, Angoulême, 1916; C. Daras, 'L'église Saint-Pierre de Pont-l'Abbé-d'Arnoult', *Congrès archéologique*, 1956, pp. 139–46; *idem*, 'L'église Saint-Nazaire de Corme Royal', *ibid.*, pp. 210–16; *idem*, 'L'église de Marignac', *ibid.*, pp. 236–44; *idem*, L'église abbatiale Saint-Pierre de Marestay', *ibid.*, pp. 290–96; *idem*, 'Les façades des églises romanes ornées d'arcatures en Charente. Leur origine, leur filiation', *Bulletin monumental*, CXIX, 1961, pp. 121–38; M. Durliat, 'La cathédrale Saint-Etienne de Cahors, architecture et sculpture,' *Bulletin monumental*, CXXXVII, 1979, pp. 319–40; F. Eygun, 'Un thème iconographique commun aux églises romanes de Parthenay et aux sceaux de ses seigneurs', *Bulletin archéologique du Comité des Travaux historiques et scientifiques*, 1927, pp. 387–90; *idem*, *L'art roman en Saintonge*, La Pierre-qui-Vire, 1970; P. Héliot, 'Sur les façades des églises romanes d'Aquitaine, à propos d'une étude récente', *Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest*, 1952, pp. 243–71; *idem*, 'Observations sur les façades décorées d'arcatures aveugles dans les églises romanes', *ibid.*, 1958, pp. 367–99, 419–58; Y. Labande-Mailfert, *Poitou roman*, La Pierre-qui-Vire, 1957; R. Lamy, *Notes et documents sur Aulnay et sa région*, Melle, 1941; E. Lefèvre-Pontalis, 'Melle', *Congrès archéologique*, LXXIX/1, 1912, pp. 79–95; *idem*, 'Aulnay', *ibid.*, pp. 95–112; *idem*, 'Deux chapiteaux romans de Parthenay', *Bulletin monumental*, 1922, pp. 426–28; M.M. Mecary, *Sculpture romane en Bas-Limousin*, Périgeux, 1966; E. Maillard, 'Les sculptures de la façade de l'église Saint-Pierre de Parthenay-le-Vieux', *Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest*, 3e série, 1911, pp. 237–48; *idem*, 'Les sculptures romanes de l'église Saint-Hilaire de Foussay en Bas-Poitou', *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, IV, 1930, pp. 158–69; M. Schapiro, 'The Romanesque Sculpture of Moissac', *Art Bulletin*, XIII, 1931, pp. 249–351, 464–531; V. Mortet and P. Deschamps, *Recueil de textes relatifs à l'histoire de l'architecture et à la condition des architectes en France au moyen âge*, I: *XIe et XIIe siècle*, Paris, 1911; C. Naud, *Le dragon dans l'art roman en Poitou-Charentes*, Poitiers, 1972; R. Oursel, *Haut-Poitou roman*, La Pierre-qui-Vire, 1975; F.G. Pariset, 'Les églises de Chadenac et de Pérignac', *Congrès archéologique*, 1956, pp. 245–66; T. Sauvel, 'Les haut-reliefs romans de Surgères', *Révue de Saintonge et d'Aunis*, XLVI, 1936, pp. 1–8; *idem*, 'De l'influence exercée par les ateliers languedociens sur la sculpture romane du Sud-Ouest', *ibid.*, XLVIII, 1938, pp. 180–90; *idem*, 'Le chapiteau dans les manuscrits carolingiens', *Bulletin monumental*, CVI,

1948, pp. 7–48; *idem*, 'Les lions romans de Chadenac et ceux de Saint-Aubin d'Angers', *Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest*, no. hors série, 1949, pp. 47–50; *idem*, 'Les manuscripts limousins. Essai sur les liens qui les unissent à la sculpture monumentale, aux émaux et aux vitraux', *Bulletin monumental*, CVIII, 1950, pp. 117–44; *idem*, 'Les sculptures de l'Abbaye aux Dames', *Revue de Saintonge et d'Aunis*, 1954; J. Thirion, 'Civray', *Congrès archéologique*, 1951, pp. 331–55; Chanoine Thonnellier, 'Pont-l'Abbé-d'Arnoult', *Semailles*, 1954/55; *idem*, 'L'art roman en Saintonge', *Bulletin du Centre international d'Etudes romanes*, 1964, pp. 18–37; *idem*, 'L'architecte Béranger d'après son épitaphe à l'Abbaye des Dames des Saintes', *Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest*, 4e série, X, 1970, pp. 587–95; G. Turpin, 'L'église Notre-Dame-de-la-Couldre à Parthenay et ses sculptures', *Bulletin de la Société historique de Deux-Sèvres*, IV, 1922/25, pp. 79–91; P. Vicaire, 'L'église de Surgères', *Congrès archéologique*, 1956, pp. 272–82; *idem*, 'L'église d'Echillais', *ibid.*, pp. 153–58; F. Semur, *Abbayes, prieurés et commanderies de l'ancienne France, v. IVe s. – v. XVIIIe s., Poitou, Charentes, Vendée*, Bannalec, 1984.

3. Questions regarding procedures in the workshops, for example whether the corbels were made *in situ* as seems evident from the unworked stones on the façade of Pérignac or were produced in the workshop and mounted at a later stage, deserve a separate study. See J. Trouvelot, 'Remarques sur la technique des sculpteurs du Moyen Age', *Bulletin monumental*, XCV, 1936, pp. 103–08; F.G. Pariset, 'Pérignac', *Congrès archéologique*, 1956, pp. 258–66.
4. The corbels on the west façade of the church of St Martin in Meursac are accompanied by inscriptions which are only partly legible now. However, on the 12th corbel, depicting two birds pressed against each other, the inscription reads COLUMBE; on the third corbel, depicting a beast, LEOPARDUS; and above an acrobat there appears the name ARODIL. See R. Favreau, J. Michaud and E.R. Labande, *Corpus des inscriptions de la France médiévale*, III: *Charente-Maritime, Deux-Sèvres*, Poitiers, 1977, p. 96.
5. F. Garnier, *Le langage de l'image au Moyen-Age: Signification et symbolique*, Paris, 1982.
6. These expressions might be termed 'non-legitimated'. For the contrary view, see the studies that concentrate on gestures of the clergy and figures of the heavenly court: J.C. Schmitt, ed., 'Gestures', *History and Anthropology*, I, pt. 1, Nov. 1984, esp. *idem*, 'Introduction and General Bibliography', pp. 1–23, and 'Between Text and Image: The Prayer Gestures of Saint Dominic', pp. 127–62; J.C. Bonn, 'Depicted Gesture, Named Gestures: Postures of the Christ on the Autun Tympanum', pp. 77–95; R.C. Trexler, 'Legitimating Prayer Gestures in the Twelfth Century. The "De Penitentia" of Peter the Chanter', pp. 97–126; J.C. Schmitt, *La raison des gestes dans l'occident médiéval*, Paris, 1990, pp. 93–125. For a discussion on the differences between the legitimated and the non-legitimated gestures and expressions, see C. Casagrande and S. Vecchio, 'Clercs et jongleurs dans la société médiévale (XIIe et XIIIe siècles)', *Annales, E.S.C.*, XXIV, 1979, pp. 913–28.
7. M. Bakhtine, *Rabelais and His World*, Bloomington, IN, 1984, pp. 59–145.
8. P. Ménard, *Le rire et le sourire dans le roman courtois en France au Moyen Age (1150–1250)*, Geneva, 1969, pp. 86–94, 529–53; Alice M. Colby, *The Portrait in Twelfth-Century French Literature*, Geneva, 1965, pp. 173–75.
9. Ménard, *Le rire et le sourire*, pp. 529–53.
10. Colby, *The Portrait*, pp. 17–185.
11. See for example the reliefs on the column of Marcus Aurelius (AD 180–192): N.H. and A. Ramage, *The Cambridge Illustrated History of Roman Art*, Cambridge, 1991, pls. 8.22, 8.24. For the characteristics of Antonine gestures, see R. Brilliant, *Gesture and Rank in Roman Art: The Use of Gestures to Denote Status in Roman Sculpture and Coinage* (Memoirs of the Connecticut Academy of Art and Sciences, XIV), New Haven, CT, 1963, Pt. III, Chap. XII: 'The Antonine Emperors', pp. 136–61.
12. For the Toulouse corbel, see F. Hearn, *Romanesque Sculpture. The Revival of Monumental Stone Sculpture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, Oxford, 1981, fig. 100, pp. 130–42; for the barbarian woman see R. Bianchi-Bandinelli, *Rome, the Centre of Power: Roman Art to AD 200*, London, 1970, fig. 367; for the Meleager sarcophagus see *idem*, *Rome, la fin de l'art antique*, Paris, 1970, fig. 48, but various other barbarian heads can be compared, such as fig. 2.

Antique forms which might have served as models for the official art are one of the main concerns of medieval art historians. However, this question has merely been raised about marginal art. See M. Durand-Lefebvre, *Art gallo-romain et sculpture romane*, Paris, 1937, pp. 60–65; J. Adhémar, *Influences antiques dans l'art du Moyen-Age français*, London, 1939, pp. 186–89; W. Sauerländer, 'Löwen in Lyon', in *Kunsthistorische Forschungen O. Pächt zu seinem 70. Geburstag*, ed. A. Rosenauer and G. Weber, Salzburg, 1972, pp. 214–15; *idem*, 'Architecture and the Figurative Arts – The North', in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. R.L. Benson and G. Constable, Cambridge, MA., 1982, pp. 678–79; R. Crozet, 'Survivances antiques dans le décor roman du Poitou, de l'Angoumois et de la Saintonge', *Bulletin monumental*, CXIV, 1956, pp. 7–33.

13. A. Blanchet, *Etude sur la décoration des édifices de la Gaule romaine*, Paris, 1913; E. Espérandieu, *Recueil général des bas-reliefs et statues de la Gaule romaine*, Paris, 1907–1928; C. Nerzic, *La sculpture en Gaule romaine*, Paris, 1989, pp. 230–31.
14. For the couple from Autun see Nerzic, *Gaule romaine*, p. 210.
15. The depiction of pairs on Roman and early Christian sarcophagi and imperial gems is very well known. See A. Grabar, *Byzantium*, London, 1966, p. 298, pls. 344–45; Bianchi-Bandinelli, *Rome, la fin de l'art antique*, figs. 72, 101, 102, 108, 136, 143; *Age of Spirituality, Late Antique and Early Christian Art, Third to Seventh Century*, ed. K. Weitzmann, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1979, p. 11, fig. 4, pp. 330, 398, 401.
16. In the archaeological museum in Istanbul. This sculpture prefigures the sculpted group of Louis IX and Marguerite of Provence from about 1290. See R. Delort, *Life in the Middle Ages*, London, 1974, p. 115.
17. P. Ménard, 'Les fous dans la société médiévale', *Romania*, XCVIII, 1977, pp. 433–59; D. Gifford, 'Iconographical Notes Towards a Definition of the Medieval Fool', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XXXVII, pp. 336–42.
18. M. di Giovanni, 'Iconografia del giocoliere negli edifici religiosi in Francia e in Italia nel XII secolo', *Il Romanico (Atti del seminario di studi diretto de Piero Sanpaolesi)*, Milan, 1975, pp. 164–80; J. Andersen, 'Akrobater og sheela'er', *Den iconographiske Post*, IV, 1979, pp. 27–28; J. Svanberg, 'Gyklar motiv i romansk konst och entolkning an Portal relieferna de Härjakyrka', *Antikvariskt Arkiv*, XLI, Stockholm, 1970 (French summary, pp. 98–112); *idem*, 'Gycklaren under sit Olof och sit Erik', in *Fra Sankt Olav til Martin Luther*, Olso, 1975, pp. 51–65; M.M. Macary, 'Saint-Julien dans la sculpture romane en Corrèze et en Velay', *Bulletin de la Société scientifique, historique et archéologique de la Corrèze*, XCIII, 1971, pp. 63–74.

The pictorial tradition of images of jongleurs in manuscript paintings is a subject that cannot be treated at present. Nevertheless, the same questions arise regarding their significance. See K. Mayer, 'The Eight Gregorian Modes on the Cluny Capitals', *Art Bulletin*, XXXIV, 1952, p. 87, figs. 5–12; Ph. Lauer, *Enluminures romanes*, Paris, 1927, p. 32.

19. The famous *Spinario* (probably first century BC) was referred to as Priapus by Magister Gregorius in the twelfth century. See Magister Gregorius. *Narracio de Mirabilibus Urbis Romae*, R.B.C. Huygens, ed., Leiden, 1970; Master Gregorius, *The Marvels of Rome*, J. Osborne, trans., Toronto, 1987. In the Middle Ages it became known as Marzo, representing the month of March in cycles of the months. See W.S. Heckscher, 'Dornauszieher', *Reallexikon zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte*, IV, Stuttgart, 1958, pp. 289–99; D. Glass, 'The Archivolt Sculpture at Sessa Aurunca', *Art Bulletin*, LII/2, 1970, pp. 119–31, esp. p. 130 and fig. 22.
20. G. Fossi, 'La représentation de l'Antiquité dans la sculpture romane et une figuration classique:

Le tireur d'épine', in D. Buschinger and A. Crespin, eds, *La représentation de l'antiquité au Moyen Age*, Vienna, 1982, pp. 299–324; A. Ovadiah, 'Mosaic Pavements Discovered in the Last Decades in Israel (1970–1980)', *III Colloquio Internazionale sul Mosaico Antico* (Ravenna, 1980), Girasole, 1984, pp. 313–14; Nerzic, *Gaule romaine*, pp. 69–76.

21. J. Baltrusaitis, 'Grylles gothiques', in *Le Moyen Age fantastique*, Paris, 1955, pp. 32–36, interprets the triple face as Prudence and Time and points out its demonic pagan powers. See also W. Deonna, 'Questions d'archéologie religieuse et symbolique, Diable Triprosope', *Revue d'Histoire des Religions*, 1914, p. 125; R. Pettazzoni, 'The Pagan Origin of the Three-Headed Representation of the Christian Trinity', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, IX, 1946, pp. 135–51. For its appearance in later periods, see E. Panofsky, 'Titian's Allegory of Prudence: A Postscript', in *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, London, 1970, pp. 181–205.
22. E.K. Chambers, *The Medieval Stage*, Oxford, 1903, I, pp. 275–335.
23. Bakhtine, *Rabelais*, p. 59.
24. Nerzic, *Gaule romaine*, pp. 138–39.
25. Various sources refer to votive offerings by pilgrims, those who had been healed and prisoners. See J. Vielliard (ed.), *Le guide du pèlerin de Saint-Jacques de Compostelle: Texte latin du XII^e siècle*, édité et traduit au français d'après les manuscrits du Compostelle et de Ripoll, Macon, 1938, pp. 55, 111; Ordericus Vitalis, *The Ecclesiastical History of England and Normandy*, ed. M. Chibnall, London, 1968, III, pp. 321, 305–57; W. Bruckner, 'Votive, Votivbilder', *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie* IV, Freiburg-im-Br., 1972, cols. 472–74.

    The ex-voto tradition might be traced back as far as the Gallo-Roman period. See C. Vatin, 'Ex-voto de bois gallo-romains à Chamalières', *Revue archéologique*, 1969, pp. 103–14; *idem*, 'Wooden Sculpture from Gallo-Roman Auvergne', *Antiquity*, XLVI, 1972, pp. 39–42. The ex-voto of the twelfth century has not yet been studied.
26. Auzas, 'Les églises de Vouvant, Nieul-sur-l'Autise et Foussais'; Maillard, 'Les sculptures romanes de l'église Saint-Hilaire de Foussay en Bas-Poitou'; Durliat, 'La cathédrale Saint-Etienne de Cahors, architecture et sculpture' (see n. 2 above).
27. See n. 11 above. The old drunken woman has been traditionally assigned to the third century BC. Her earrings, the ring on her left hand and especially her costume seem to connect her with the affluent classes. Therefore, she might have been a devotee of Dionysos, perhaps a famous drinker whose statue could have been placed within a precinct connected with him. Her headcloth was typical of Hellenistic-Roman nurses; women who participated in Dionysiac festivals were known as such. See B.S. Ridgway, *Hellenistic Sculpture I: The Style of ca. 331–200 B.C.*, Madison, WI, 1990, pp. 337–38, pl. 174; H.P. Laubscher, *Fischer und Landleute: Studien zur hellenistischen Genreplastik*, Mainz, 1982, pp. 118–21; E. Simon, 'Review of H.P. Laubscher . . .', *Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen*, 1984, pp. 31–36.
28. N. Kenaan-Kedar, 'Emotion, Beauty and Franciscan Piety: A New Reading of the Magdalene Chapel in the Lower Church of Assisi', *Studi medievali*, 3^e série, XXVI/2, 1985, pp. 699–710.
29. For Toulouse see n. 12 above and T.W. Lyman, 'The Sculpture Programme of the Porte-des-Comtes Master at Saint Sernin in Toulouse', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XXXIV, 1971, pp. 24–25. For Moissac see Schapiro, 'The Romanesque Sculpture of Moissac'.
30. See n. 19 above.
31. The mason of St Hilaire in Foussais was already noted by Crozet, *L'art roman en Poitou*, p. 213. In *L'art roman en Saintonge*, p. 161, Crozet mentions other depictions of craftsmen. See also M. Aubert, 'La construction au Moyen Age', *Bulletin monumental*, CXIX, 1961, pp. 29–30.
32. For Vouvant see P.M. Auzas, 'Les églises de Vouvant', see n.2 above.
33. N. Kenaan-Kedar, 'Les modillons de Saintonge et du Poitou comme manifestation de la culture laïque', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, XXIX/4, 1986, pp. 311–30, esp. pp. 320–30.
34. E. de Bruyne, *Etudes d'ésthetique médiévale*, II, Geneva, 1975, (1946); U. Eco, *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages*, New Haven, CT, and London, 1986, pp. 92–105; R. Assunto, *Die Theorie des Schönen im Mittelalter*, Köln, 1963; M. Schapiro, 'On the Aesthetic Attitude in Romanesque Art (1947)', *Romanesque Art: Selected Papers*, New York, 1977, pp. 1–27.

35. E. Panofsky, *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of St Denis and its Art Treasures*, Princeton, NJ, 1979 (1948).
36. J. Vielliard (ed.), *Le guide du Pèlerin de Saint-Jacques de Compostelle*, Macon, 1928. See also the approach made by M. Camille, *The Gothic Idol: Ideology and Image-Making in Medieval Art* (Cambridge New Art History and Criticism, ed. N. Bryson), Cambridge, 1991 (1989), pp. 77–87.
37. C.R. Dodwell (ed.), *Theophilus. De diuersis artibus*, London, 1961; J. von Schlosser, *Die Kunstliteratur, ein Handbuch zur Quellenkunde der neueren Kunstgeschichte*, Wien, 1924, pp. 23–24.
38. Bernard's *Apologia* trans. in G.G. Coulton, *Life in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge, 1930, IV, pp. 72–76.
39. Panofsky, *Abbot Suger*, pp. 46–47, 61–63; De Bruyne, *Esthetique*, II, pp. 371–72.
40. De Bruyne, *ibid.*, II, pp. 92–107.
41. V.N. Egbert, *The Medieval Artist at Work*, Princeton, NJ, 1953.
42. E. Lefèvre-Pontalis, 'Répertoire des architectes, maçons, sculpteurs, charpentiers et ouvriers français aux XI^e et XII^e s.', *Bulletin monumental*, LXXV, 1911, pp. 432–68.

    The author shows that reference is made to the sculptors in the documentary evidence through the following nouns: LATOMUS, CEMENTARIUS, ARTIFEX and MAGISTER. See esp. pp. 430–31 and 438.

    M. Frankl, 'The Secret of the Medieval Mason', *Art Bulletin*, XXVII, 1945, pp. 46 ff.; R.E. Swartwout, *The Monastic Craftsman*, Cambridge, 1932.
43. Lefèvre-Pontalis, 'Répertoire', p. 452.
44. Kenaan-Kedar, 'Les modillons' . . . , pp. 320–24.
45. H. Stuart Jones, *Select Passages from Ancient Writers, Illustrative of the History of Greek Sculpture*, Chicago, 1966, pp. 64–65, 84–85.
46. Espérandieu, *Recueil général des bas-reliefs et statues de la Gaule romaine.*
47. The accepted traditional view is that the medieval artist was a kind of craftsman who executed sculptural work planned and laid down for him by his patrons, who themselves varied in their attitudes and concepts. This view is also based on the writings of churchmen who throughout the Middle Ages classed sculpture within the *artes mechanicae*, not the *artes liberales*. See De Bruyne, *Esthetique*, II, pp. 385–92; M.D. Chenu, *La théologie au douzième siècle*, Paris, 1957, p. 48. However, new works present different ideas. See, for example, P.C. Claussen, 'Früher Künstlerstolz; Mittelalterliche Signaturen als Quelle der Künstlersoziologie', in *Bauwerk und Bildwerk im Hochmittelalter: Anschauliche Beiträge zur Kultur- und Sozialgeschichte*, Giessen, 1981, pp. 7–34; *idem*, 'Nachrichten von den Antipoden, oder der mittelalterliche Künstler über sich selbst', in *Der Künstler über sich in seinem Werk*, M. Winner, ed., 1992, pp. 19–54.
48. M. Schapiro, 'From Mozarabic to Romanesque in Silos (1939)', *Romanesque Art: Selected Papers*, I, New York, 1977, pp. 28–30.
49. F. Mütherich and J.E. Gaehde, *Carolingian Painting*, London, 1977, pp. 13, 56, pl. 13; J. Swarzenski, 'Die karolingische Malerei und Plastik in Reims', *Jahrbuch der Preuss. Kunstsamml.*, XXIII, 1902, p. 98, pl. 9; C. Nordenfalk, *Die spätantiken Kanonentafeln*, Göteborg, 1938, II, pp. 195–208.
50. A. Goldschmied, *Die deutsche Buchmalerei.* II: *Die ottonische Buchmalerei*, Florence–Munich, 1928, Taf. 47; L. Grodecki, F. Mütherich, J. Taralon and F. Wormald, *Le siècle de l'an mil*, Paris, 1973, fig. 167; R. Kaschnitz, *Das goldene Evangelienbuch von Echternach (Codex Aureus Epternacensis)*, Stuttgart, 1982, pp. 62–63, pls. 60–63. For the parallel evolution of the capitals painted in Carolingian manuscripts to Romanesque capitals, see T. Sauvel, 'Le chapiteau dans les manuscrits carolingiens', *Bulletin monumental*, CVI, 1948, pp. 7–48.

51. Schapiro, 'Silos', p. 46.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 44, figs. 14, 15.
53. Avranches BM, Ms. 210, Folio 4 verso. See also M. Dosdat, *L'enluminure romane au Mont Saint-Michel, X^e-XII^e siècle*, Rennes, 1991, pp. 70–72.
54. M. Lafargue, 'Les sculptures du premier atelier de la Daurade et les chapiteaux du cloître de Moissac', *Bulletin monumental*, XCVII, 1938, pp. 195–216; P. Mesplé, *Toulouse. Musée des Augustins. Les sculptures romanes*, Paris, 1961, nos. 110, 111; D. Milhan, *L'art roman toulousain au Musée des Augustins. Les grandes étapes de la sculpture romane toulousaine (cat.)*, Toulouse, 1971, pp. 11–60, pls, 6, 7.
55. See n. 25 above.
56. I am inclined to think that the same workshop produced the corbels of St Hilaire in Foussais as well as those in Vouvant.
57. Schapiro, 'Silos', p., 46, fig. 20; J. Bousquet, *La sculpture à Conques au XI^e et XII^e siècles*, 3 vols. (PhD diss., Université de Lille, III), 1973, I, p. 362, III, pp. 505–06, compares the masons' depiction to those depicted in the murals of St Julien in Brioude (quotes M. Aubert who regards the capitals as modern, made after older examples).
58. Crozet, 'Survivances antiques', p. 30.
59. Because of the deterioration of the stones in many of the churches, I could not identify with certainty any other images of masons with their tools. This was also the case in Corme-Ecluse and St Quantin de Roncamps.
60. Aubert, 'La construction', 1961, p. 30.
61. R. Wittkower, *Sculpture Processes and Principles*, Harmondsworth, 1979, fig. 3, p. 15.
62. E. Lefèvre-Pontalis, 'Les bénitiers caryatides', *Bulletin monumental*, LXXXII, 1923, pp. 187–88.
63. Aubert, 'La construction', 1961, pp. 24–30. The representations of architects, master masons and other builders in manuscript paintings, and the depictions of building procedures in the representations of the Tower of Babel, were discussed mainly by P. du Colombier, *Les chantiers des cathédrales*, Paris, 1973; J. Harvey, *Medieval Craftsmen*, London, 1975; Wittkower, *Sculpture Processes*, pp. 33–38, fig. 3; Egbert, *The Medieval Artist*. A comparison of self-representations of manuscript painters, who often signed their work, with those of the sculptors of the corbel series is the subject of a separate study.
64. See the examples on the glass windows of Chartres Cathedral; Aubert, 'La construction', p. 34. Such capes are also worn by the troubadours and jongleurs in an illustration in a thirteenth-century manuscript of *vidas*: Paris, Bibl. Nat. Ms. fr. 12.473. For illustrations, see A. Brilliant, *Les troubadours et le sentiment romanesque*, Paris, 1945, figs. 34, 48, 63.
65. Crozet, 'Chauvigny et ses monuments', pp. 39–40; *idem*, *Chauvigny, Saint-Savin*, Paris, n.d., p. 9.
66. K. Gerstenberg, *Die deutschen Baumeisterbildnisse des Mittelalters*, Berlin, 1966, pp. 18, 19, 22. Gerstenberg's material is convincing for he shows the persistence of a specific facial type in self-portraits, which were identified as such by inscriptions from the fourteenth century onward. I am aware that his hypothesis, like my own, is difficult to prove. However, the persistence of such a tradition, whose beginnings I can show in the corbels, and the fact that self-portraits by artists since the Renaissance display the same characteristics, favours this interpretation.
67. *Ibid.*, pp. 78–128.
68. The traditional imagery of religious compositions in the area of the upper margin in early Romanesque stone reliefs, was thus transformed into the autonomous and monumental, though still marginal, corbel programme, which included a wide range of images from the sculptors' immediate cultural environment.

CHAPTER 2

Reading the language and texts of marginal Romanesque sculpture

Traditional iconographical study is based on the investigation of the relationships between images, the deciphering of their context and content, and then reading their meaning. This is usually done with the help of various learned writings which provide parallel or simultaneous systems of representations.

Marginal sculpture is a multilayered system; it expressed one thing to its patrons and another to the artists and their public.[1] Such characteristics have been indigenous to large areas of public art sponsored by official patrons and executed by artists and artisans of popular culture. The pictorial language of the margins, emerging alongside twelfth-century official art, represents specific subjects and projects of realistic, expressive and stark images. This kind of 'marginal language' was not used elsewhere in the church, even when the subject matter was similar to that represented on the more easily visible capitals.[2] The individual images in the series of marginal sculpture function as self-contained autonomous units, each retaining its independent meaning, and each comparable to words in an open ended sentence. These 'words' are all unified under the general design of the series. They might be regarded as being subjected to the architectural form of the series, functioning mostly as supporting elements. There is a casual relationship between one unit and the next, either in terms of action or of time, but communication rests between the observer and individual units, for each corbel is a frontally constructed unit, often depicting emblematic if not enigmatic codes. Consequently, this structure prevents the marginal sculpture from being a decorative system of recurring patterns, with single units forming a complex ornamental system, be it floral, geometrical or figurative.[3] (A single component of such an ornamental system does not function as an individual meaningful unit, even when it frames a central composition.) Marginal art itself does not serve as any kind of framework for other artistic works.[4] It has its own, marginal place in a church, but should be seen as part of the overall architectural plan, which itself was understood as a reflection of the cosmos. [5]

I believe that the onlooker, medieval as well as modern, was and is able to read this language by deciphering its codes and sources, despite their being different from the