CHAPTER 4

The late Gothic marginal pictorial tradition – a medieval subculture

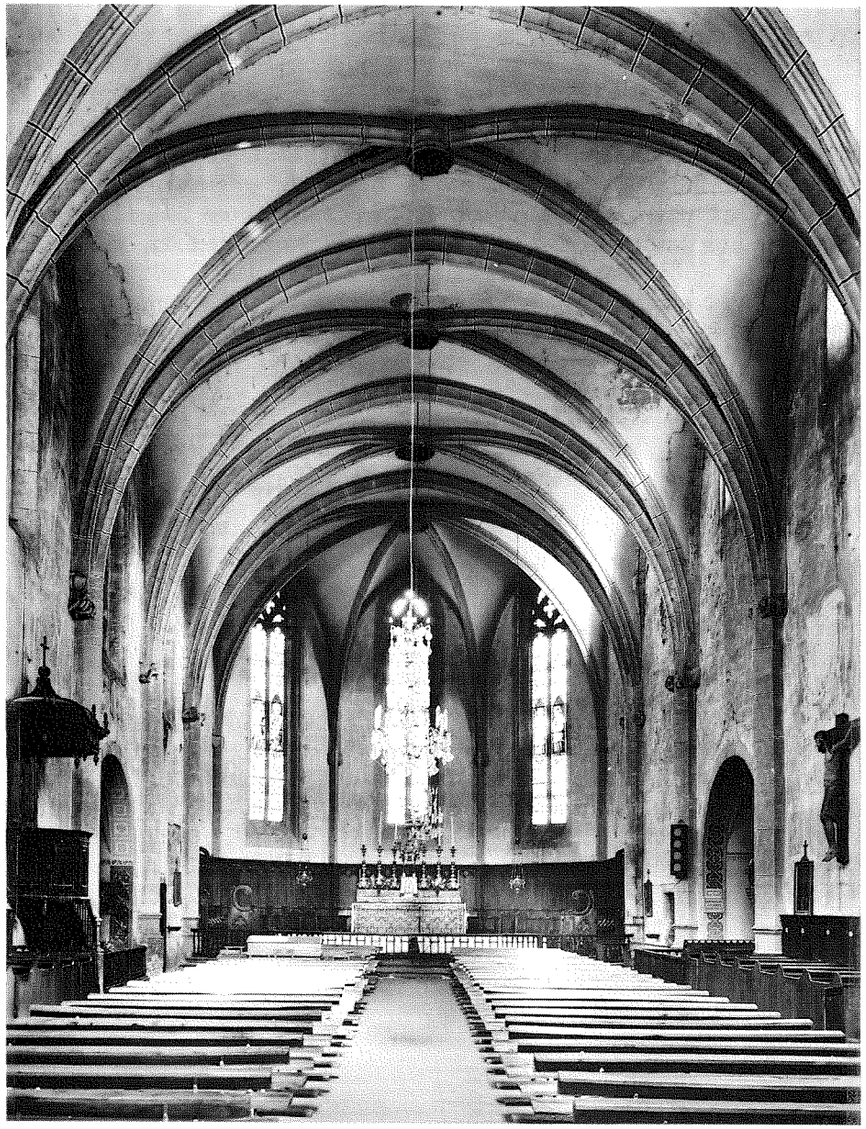
The development of marginal sculpture underwent several stages. In the Romanesque art of the twelfth century the sculptures presented types, expressions and emotions according to generalized schemes. In the thirteenth century, Gothic marginal imagery introduced realistic depictions of various professions, costumes and postures. Mostly hidden in the churches, the images were grotesque in form and imbued with dramatic emotion. Late Gothic marginal sculpture can be observed from the late thirteenth century onwards. In addition to ecclesiastical buildings this marginal imagery in stone and wood was installed on the façades and inner halls of civic edifices, such as town and guilds halls, town houses, hospitals, and so on.[1] The sculpted marginal programmes now included wood carvings in addition to the stone sculpture. In civic buildings and public spaces, it took on a more humorous and narrative form. The thousands of marginal images that were produced until the mid-sixteenth century reflect mutual rapports between the various foci of artistic activity, and a consequent interplay of motifs and stylistic elements between ecclesiastical and public representations. Thus, on churches and civic buildings of the late Gothic period – whether in Poitiers of the mid-thirteenth century, Rodez and Beaune of the fifteenth century, or Bourg-en-Bresse of the sixteenth century – images of the fool, the jester, the drunk, the old and the sick, the vagabond, pilgrim and the adulteress, together with legendary creatures such as the mysterious wildman, the greenman[2] and various animals, recur obsessively. There are also constant depictions of objects, such as working tools and musical instruments, and of the world of nature – flora, fauna and so forth. Hence, marginal sculpture, which was previously confined to hidden places in ecclesiastical buildings, became part of the public scenery of everyman, in the 'Waning of the Middle Ages'.

Marginal images in stone

From the late thirteenth century onwards, stone sculpture that appeared on civic buildings can be seen as a direct continuation of earlier traditions. The thirteenth-century 'House of the Musicians' in Reims, with sculpted figures of musicians playing various instruments on its façade, is a celebrated example.[3] Another famous example can be seen in the fifteenth-century façade of the house of Jacques Coeur at Bourges.[4] Here, the images of two servants, a male and a female, peer out of the windows in expectation of their master's arrival. Having been assigned the servile task of awaiting their betters, the lowly folk are represented on the façade; in contrast, those betters appear in the inner rooms of the palatial building.

The fifteenth-century corbel series of the inner church at Lavoûte-Chilhac in the Auvergne[5] (pl. 4.1 and App. XI) draws on one hand on the marginal pictorial repertory of civic buildings and on the other hand the church sculptural programme seems to follow the traditional imagery of a private chapel, as previously observed in the thirteenth-century church of Semur-en-Auxois.

The corbel series situated on both sides of each of the six combined pillars of the hall church depicts a succession of figurines and bust images of identifiable princely and ecclesiastical patrons (pl. 4.2–6). In addition, the sculptor, with his three hammers in various sizes (pl. 4.2, 5), is depicted along with the wretched (pl. 4.3) and the jongleurs, the recipients of princely charity. The images of the Sire of Lavoûte-Chilhac or the Duc d'Auvergne (pl. 4.6), and of the bishop of Le Puy, Jean de Bourbon, may be identified, together with a praying high cleric and a female donor holding the image of a pillar as a symbol of her donation. In this fifteenth-century marginal programme, the traditional images of the patrons become specific and may be identified. However, the figures of the recipients of charity remain stereotypical. Similar attitudes may also be observed in the contemporaneous marginal sculptural programme of the neighbouring church of Langeac, which has not yet been published. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, wherever local traditions remained alive, this imagery is routine. And so, at the town of Le Puy harsh-looking masks from the early sixteenth century are located on town houses, such as those of the sculptor Jean Goujon or the ones installed on the façade of the fraternity house of the Cornards, the merry carnival groups.[6] Furthermore, the sculpted stone corbels on the supporting columns of the sixteenth-century episcopal palace façade in Troyes elaborates the marginal imagery. The series facing a public court depicts such traditional motifs of marginal sculpture as lovers, drunkards and jongleurs in a humorous carnival style. The merging together of formerly separate motifs, such as the male lover dressed in the fool's costume or his female partner dressed as a peasant girl, might have been meant to convey a moral message. Their merry looks, however, tend to communicate more a sense of joie de vivre.

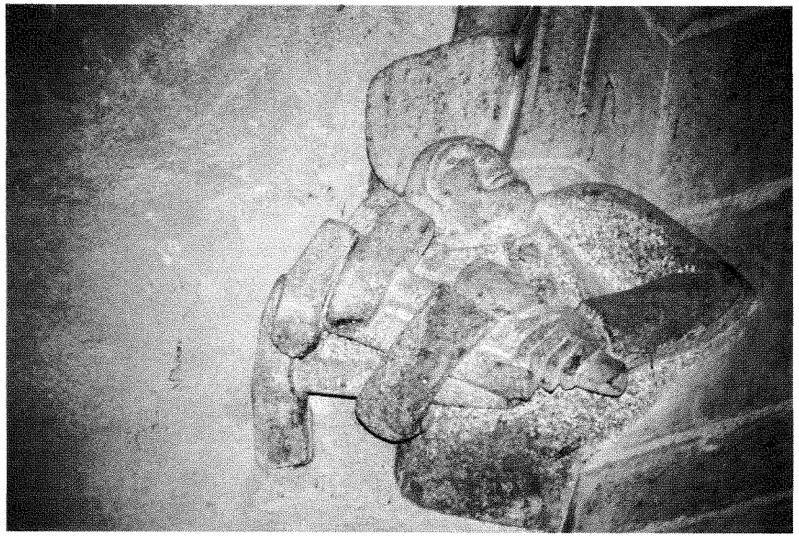


4.1 Lavoûte-Chilhac, Ste Croix, inner church, interior looking east.

4.2 Lavoûte-Chilhac, Ste Croix, inner church, pillar with two corbels: a clergyman and the sculptor (?)

4.3 Lavoûte-Chilhac, Ste Croix, inner church, corbel: one of the wretched.

4.4 Lavoûte-Chilhac, Ste Croix, inner church, corbel: kneeling man.



4.5 Lavoûte-Chilhac, Ste Croix, inner church, corbel: man with three hammers – the sculptor?

4.6 Lavoûte-Chilhac, Ste Croix, inner church, corbel: the Sire of Lavoûte-Chilhac.

Marginal wood carving

Beginning in the late thirteenth century, in various parts of France, wood carvings appear as architectural elements simultaneously with stone sculpture. Carvings appear not only on the wooden corbels of churches but also on those of civic buildings. A representative example is the fifteenth-century Poors' Great Hall of the Hôtel-Dieu at Beaune, where a large series of carved wooden corbels depicting commoners, marginal people and animals support the wooden ceiling beams of the hall.[7] The human and animal images are arranged together in pairs. Carved and painted wooden corbels supporting wooden ceilings can also be found in later periods in additional regions, as, for example, in the heads of young and old people in the sixteenth-century church of St Pierre and St Paul in Villenauxe-la-Grande in Champagne (pl. 4.7–9 and App. XII).

Wood carvings on several town houses in various areas of France present the same pictorial traditions (pl. 4.10–11). The sixteenth-century 'House of Adam' at Angers is widely known, and its motifs – the fool, lovers, animals and drunkards – are identical with those found on corbels, gargoyles and misericords. Similar carvings can be seen on various town houses in Dijon, Joigny, Noyers and Beaune in Burgundy, in Troyes and Reims in Champagne, in Thiers in the Auvergne, and elsewhere, depicting on the one hand the same marginal imagery but on the other Christological themes.

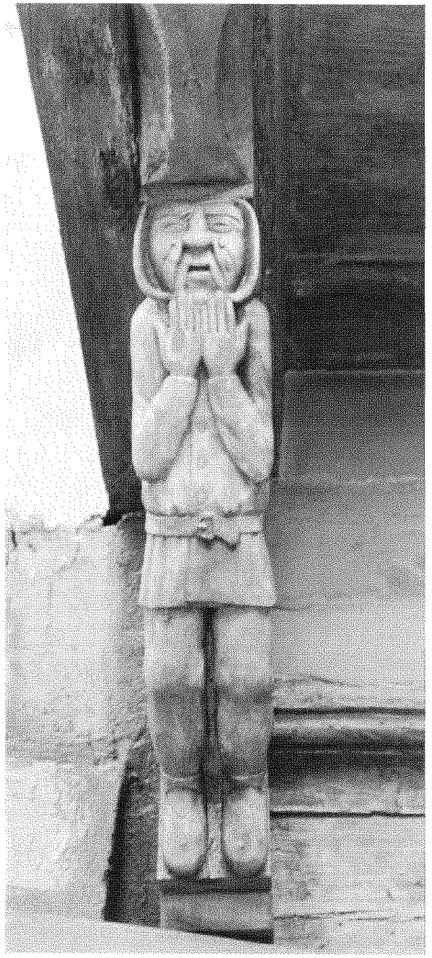
Stall carvings from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries are part of the framework of the marginal series (pl. 4.12–13), though their significance has not yet been adequately elucidated.[8] The carvings, both public and hidden, appear on the backs of the stalls, the arm rests and the misericords (or ledges below the seats), and form part of an overall scheme. The carvings on the backs and the arm rests belong mostly to the realm of official art. They present images of saints, scenes from Scriptures, historical scenes and so on. The carvings below the level of the seats, however, which can scarcely be seen in fact, are similar in character to the marginal stone sculptures of the twelfth to fourteenth centuries, with their representations of people on the margins of society, legendary creatures, scenes from peasant and urban life, and so on. The carvings of the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries both share one outstanding characteristic with marginal stone sculpture – they are located in a place that is almost invisible: in the wooden stalls, they are placed as low as possible; in stone sculpture, they are placed as high as possible. Both have a support function: the wood carvings support the seat of the important personage occupying the stall; the stone sculptures support architectural elements of the building, and have symbolic connotations.

As in official art, the wood carvings of the stalls are arranged in descending hierarchical order – in this case from the backs of the seats down to the misericords. In the stalls structure, however, man himself is integrated into their hierarchical order and, whereas in the marginal stone sculpture, architectural elements rather

4.7 Villenauxe-la-Grande, St Pierre & St Paul, inner church, wooden corbel: young man.

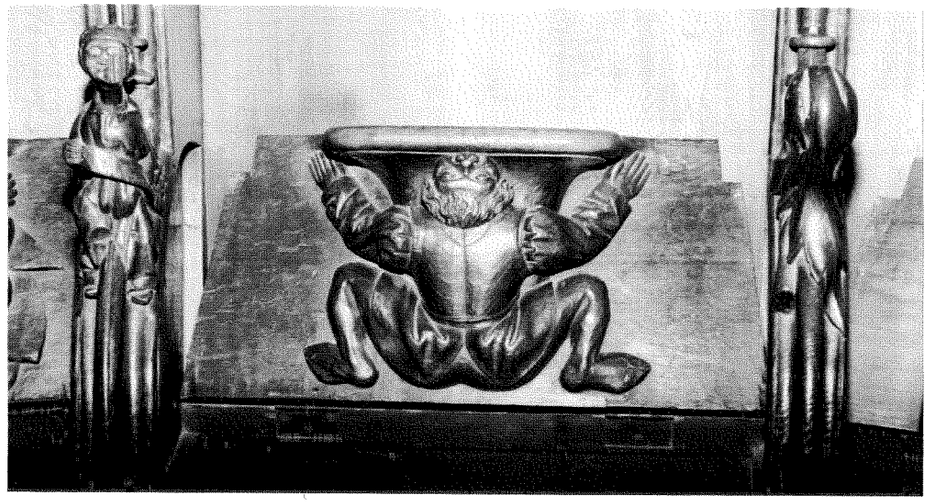
4.8 Villenauxe-la-Grande, St Pierre & St Paul, inner church, wooden corbel: old matron.

4.9 Villenauxe-la-Grande, St Pierre & St Paul, inner church, wooden corbel: young man with stylized hair.



4.10 Brioude, townhouse of 15th century: crying jongleur.

4.11 Brioude, townhouse of 15th century: laughing jongleur.



4.12 Saumur, St Pierre, 16th-century misericord: male with bare buttocks.

4.13 Saumur, St Pierre, 16th-century misericord: two male heads.

than human beings provide the integrating framework.

The misericord carvings present a striking resemblance to the series sculpted on corbels and gargoyles. Both include variations on a central theme and a mixture of motifs. The misericords of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries express the new artistic tendencies which were then prevalent in France, such as the Flemish or Italian styles. But even when the carvings reveal a knowledge of these styles, they still perpetuate the artistic tradition centring on discordant and direct representations, with no attempt at embellishment.

Marginal sculpture also demonstrates some basic similarities with the characteristics of the burlesque and the picaresque novels written about 'vulgar life' in a 'vulgar style'.[9] Like the picaresque novel at various times of its appearance, marginal sculpture highlights vulgar figures and depicts extremes of emotion, such as laughter and fear, expressed through cries and tensely gritted teeth. Its various legendary animals are also reflected in the literature. The images of sculpted dogs on the thirteenth-century corbels of the cathedral of Metz, or on the sixteenth-century stalls of Notre Dame in Bourg-en-Bresse, can be associated with the dogs described by Cervantes in his *Dogs' Colloquy*,[10] which discuss with each other their masters' lives.

Both genres, marginal sculpture as well as the picaresque novel, share the technique of mingling images of marginal folk with fantastic creatures, in order to present a metaphor of human nature.

The persistent appearance of this pictorial tradition, whether compared to spoken language or to intentionally 'vulgar' writings, leads me to suggest it was the expression of an 'anti-culture', protesting against the existing unjust social order.

The world of marginal sculpture – whether high upon corbels above or down on misericords below, on the façades of town houses, in stone or in wood – reflected an autonomous visual subculture expressed in a consistent pictorial tradition that persisted over many centuries. Like the official art and culture, this pictorial subculture also had its own traditional subjects and images which were mostly functional, and remained an architectural sculpture. In its beginnings this art lived on the edge of the official world,[11] but with time it became the visual property of all.

No documents, however, are available concerning the relationship of the patrons or observers with the sculptures, either in the early stages when the sculptures were confined to the churches, or in the later ones when they also became part of public edifices, town houses, and so forth.

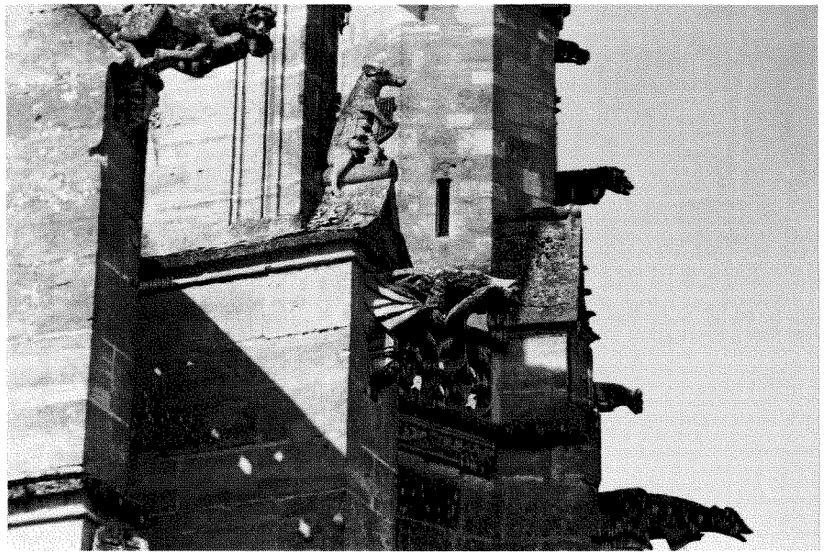
The sixteenth-century gargoyle series of Notre Dame de l'Epine

A study of a series of 24 sculptures of marginal men and women in the late Gothic pilgrimage church of Notre Dame de l'Epine in Champagne and an investigation of its pictorial sources demonstrate the persistence of this pictorial tradition right up to the sixteenth century, without it losing its strength of invention. The church was built

over several periods. According to documentary evidence, the choir and its chapels were erected between 1509 and 1524.[12] Consequently, the series is dated to the first two decades of the sixteenth century (1509–1527),[13] which places it at a critical phase in the long duration of marginal sculpture. These sculptures were mentioned by Victor Hugo and have been referred to as 'curiosities' by several writers and described in monograph studies of the church.[14] They have never before been studied in any detail.

The sculptures are situated in twelve groups on the supporting pillars and flying buttresses of the church's outer choir's chapels (pl. 4.14 and App. XIII). Each group includes a gargoyle and a supporting console, and in each group the figures of a man and a woman appear, together forming a meaningful theme. The following is a description of the sculptures in the series, moving from north to south.[15]

1. A sow is balanced on its hind legs and plays a harp with its front feet. It has three pairs of teats and is suckling a mouse. No console (pl. 4.14).
2. A naked monster devours a naked infant, rendered as a cherub, his little legs flailing in the air. The console shows a male head wearing a cap and with large ears (pl. 4.14 top left).
3. A she-monster with enormous breasts is shown with a huge open mouth bristling with teeth. She is using the claws of two front feet to thrust forward a naked infant. On the console is a caped male head, with a rather horrified expression (pl. 4.15).
4. A witch rides a she-goat. The goat leans back on its four feet, exposing its teats. The heavy-bosomed woman (head missing) leans forwards, her hands stretched backwards, as if flying. On the console is a male head; his mouth is open in a malignant laugh. From his covered head protrude two swathes of hair resembling small horns. This devil's head may be a metaphorical rendering of 'the laugh of the devil'.
5. A male kneels on his left knee. He wears a buttoned upper jacket, a short dress reaching above his knees, and a flat hat high on his head. In his left arm he holds a knife, in his right a bird. His face is framed by a short beard. He seems to represent a pilgrim. His mouth is wide open as if in a scream of despair. The console below him depicts the head of a wrinkled old woman wearing a hat decorated in front with lace.
6. A woman is seated frontally, her legs spread. Her long dress is pulled up over her knees and gathered between them. The dress is in the contemporary fashion and is worn over a pleated shirt. In her two hands the woman holds up a chastity belt as if she has just taken it off. Her head (partly damaged) is that of a female dog baring its teeth in laughter. The head is covered by an untied scarf. The console bears a bearded male head, mouth open in an expression of dismay and anger combined with scorn (pl. 4.16).
7. A screaming woman is seated frontally. Her wide-open overcoat exposes her



4.14 Notre Dame de l'Epine, gargoyles on chapels of choir.

4.15 Notre Dame de l'Epine, gargoyle: she-monster with an infant.

4.16 Notre Dame de l'Epine, gargoyle: woman removing her chastity belt.

4.17 Notre Dame de l'Epine, gargoyle: screaming woman.

4.18 Notre Dame de l'Epine, gargoyle: fool, with girl acrobat on corbel.

legs, explicitly revealing her naked knees. She is leaning forward with her left hand on her left knee, her right hand supporting her cheek. Her mouth and eyes are wide open. The console consists of a male mask from whose mouth acanthus scrolls emerge symmetrically (pl. 4.17).

8. A fool wearing an over-long coat kneels on his bare knees, leaning forward with wide open mouth as if screaming in pain. His hooded head is twisted from right to left, his face expresses fear and confusion. He holds his baton tight to his chest with both hands. The top of the baton is fashioned in the image of a smiling fool with an embroidered hood similar to that of its owner. The corbel depicts a naked acrobat, a contortionist, her folded legs resting on her shoulders. Her face is broad and calm; her hair, parted down the middle, floats on either side of her body (pl. 4.18).
9. A kneeling male is shown dressed in a short habit that exposes his bare legs. His overcoat is torn, the holes in it are showing. His cape is tied under his chin and he wears a decorated hat above it. In his right hand he holds a pitcher, in his left a drinking cup. The drunkard's head is bent backwards, mouth wide open, eyes staring upward in exaltation. The console depicts a jester's head. His hood is decorated with bells on both sides; his eyes are closed but his mouth is open, revealing his teeth (pl. 4.19).
10. A man sits on the floor, his legs folded in front of him. He is wearing long woollen boots but his knees are bare. He holds an animal (probably a lion) by its wide open mouth, while another animal – a very small one – clambers atop his head. His wrinkled face is framed by a disordered beard. On the console is a woman's head, smiling enigmatically with a slightly open mouth.
11. A group of three, probably a family group. The kneeling middle figure is a male (the father?) with a burgher's hat and an expression of pain. On his shoulders he carries a youth – possibly mentally retarded. The youth's face is thin, distorted, the mouth wide open as if in a wild scream. His legs are bare. His head is covered with a hood from which his ears stick out. The console depicts a woman's bust (the mother?) with hair combed burgher-fashion, heavy features and an expression of concern. The group seems to be a pilgrim family, perhaps seeking mercy for their son (pl. 4.20).
12. A huge boar is shown leaning forward. On the console appears a male head, with a shifty gaze and disordered beard.

The creator of the sculptures of Notre Dame de l'Epine chose to represent an equal number of male and female figures, bestowing on them the major characteristics of outcasts. The figures are twisted and distorted, rendered as people in extreme emotional states. Their proximity to three she-monsters and a huge beast-figure emphasizes their nature, and leads the observer to read metaphorical meaning into their images. The she-monsters with the head and body of a beast and the bosom of a woman represent the devouring nature of the depicted women – sows

4.19 Notre Dame de l'Epine, gargoyle: drunkard.

4.20 Notre Dame de l'Epine, gargoyle: man carrying youngster, with woman's head on corbel.

feeding mice. The enormous boar elucidates the nature of the men depicted close to him. They are threatening in their appearance and sudden emergence, just as the wild boar is coming out of the forest.

What are the iconographical sources of the series? In the beginning of the sixteenth century marginal men and women were condemned by the law, banished from towns or quartered in newly formed institutions.[16] At the same time groups of marginals and vagabonds are reported as having taken an active part in local and inter-regional pilgrimages, such as those made to Notre Dame de l'Epine.[17] The master of Notre Dame de l'Epine may have recorded the marginal types of his time in his sculptures. I would also argue that the master continued the earlier pictorial traditions of marginal sculpture and intensified them. I have observed similar combinations and marginal types in numerous Romanesque and Gothic corbel and gargoyle series of the twelfth to fifteenth centuries; those of the Romanesque churches of St Etienne in Cahors, for example, in Basle Cathedral and St Pierre in Aulnay.[18] In Cahors, female figures play a major role and appear on no less than 22 corbels.[19] The types depicted include a female jongleur, screaming women, seducing women, and a lover. They appear in the company of two fools, a man displaying his buttocks by lifting his legs over his shoulders, and a pair of kissing lovers, mocked by a bald-headed man on the adjacent corbel. (The bald-headed man might also be a fool, because the fool was often described as bald.) In the corbel series from Basle Cathedral, a dancing woman and a siren are located together with a bear trainer, a monkey trainer and a healer. In St Pierre in Aulnay a tightrope walker appears with dancers. Gothic marginal sculpture of the thirteenth century shows similar combinations, as can be observed in the corbel series situated in the interiors of the cathedrals of St Maurice in Angers,[20] St Pierre in Poitiers [21] and the church of Semur-en-Auxois.[22] In the fifteenth century the gargoyle series of Rodez Cathedral[23] presented similar combinations.

Types of figure in the pictorial tradition

What are the sources for the individual images of the women in the marginal sculptures of Notre Dame de l'Epine? Let us consider each type in turn.

The prostitute/adulteress

In contrast to official sculpture, where the allegory of Luxury punished is the routine representation of female carnal sins, Romanesque corbel series of the twelfth century present several explicit variations of carnal Lust.

Pairs of lovers (or a prostitute and a customer) are represented usually in profile, kissing, embracing or making love. These images differ distinctly from the ceremonial depictions of lawfully married couples, who are invariably rendered frontally in ways that emphasize their status, dignity and fidelity (see pl. 1.28–30; as

against 1.26, 27). An additional variation on the subject of carnality, in both Romanesque and Gothic marginal sculpture, is of a naked woman, or of a woman lifting up her dress and exhibiting her private parts (pl. 3.35). These images are often located next to corbels depicting men in similar postures (for example, at St Pierre and Ste Radegonde, both in Poitiers).

In these examples, when the prostitute/adulteress is shown in an overt act of carnality, the face and expression are often humorously or grotesquely rendered. Additional versions can be seen in the thirteenth-century (*c.* 1230–1250) corbel series of the inner church of Semur-en-Auxois, which depicts the popular allegory of Luxury with toads on her breasts. On the margins, Luxury evolved into a female figure sitting on the floor with folded legs, her hair dishevelled. Next to her sits a fool sticking out his tongue. On the outer choir wall of Semur a group of three figures incorporates a similar idea. In the middle is the head of a motionless matron; but on either side are two laughing devils, their heads turned towards her, sticking out their tongues.[24]

Images of fallen women, mostly rendered as busts with bizarre coiffures and inviting smiles, recur constantly in Romanesque and Gothic marginal sculpture.[25] The women's hair may be curly or long and dishevelled, their smiles are similar to those of mermaids and sirens in the official art.[26] However, I surmise the hairstyles to be an accurate detail, a rendering of prostitute fashions of the time.

The Romanesque and Gothic marginal sculptures depicting carnal Lust are in the form of corbels that partly protrude from the wall. The adulteress of Notre Dame de l'Epine is an almost life-size free sculpture. She is shown preparing for the act of love, not in the actual moment of realizing it. Her image probably also draws on later sources depicting women with chastity belts and profiled lovers, as in a sixteenth-century woodcut by Peter Flotner.[27] In the case of Notre Dame de l'Epine the woman's head is coarsely metamorphosed into that of a female dog, and it is complemented by the male head on the console below, expressing stern rebuke and scorn. In this rendering, the master of Notre Dame de l'Epine used unadorned pictorial metaphors instead of the direct but humorous Romanesque and Gothic demonstrations of carnality.

The screaming woman

The images of screaming women recur persistently in Romanesque and Gothic marginal sculpture. Often the head is bent forwards or backwards, the hands engaged in tearing the hair. One of the women of Cahors is holding her face in her hands (pl. 1.18). In Surgères and Toulouse (pl. 1.15)[28] a woman's face expresses horror and terror. In Gothic marginal sculpture of the thirteenth century these gestures became more restricted. For example, at Angers, poor women are to be found seated on the floor among a group of sick men; they hold their heads in fear or sit with wide open mouth as if screaming (pl. 3.11). However, in the fifteenth

century the expressions of screaming became extreme again, as in the case of the gargoyles of Rodez Cathedral.

The image of the screaming woman in Notre Dame de l'Epine is, then, traditional, but it is iconographically enigmatic. Is she depicted screaming because of fear of punishment for her sins? Because of fear of her swollen belly? Such images of marginal women are extremely dramatic when compared to contemporary depictions in the official art of mourning women or frightened women in hell.

The female jongleur

The contortionist of Notre Dame de l'Epine appears as an emblem on the corbel below the gargoyle depicting the fool (pl. 4.18). Her image continues the long pictorial tradition of enigmatic female jongleurs.

Since the early Middle Ages women jongleurs have been mentioned as major performers and their images have been depicted in manuscript illuminations and in stone sculptures since the eleventh century.[29] In Romanesque marginal sculpture the jongleur women are shown in numerous acrobatic positions; sometimes they are found next to devils or legendary figures. Women dancers and musicians appear no less frequently than men of the same profession.[30] The same is true of Gothic art. In a corbel from the thirteenth-century cathedral of Metz[31] a woman is training a bear, and in St Maurice Cathedral in Angers[32] a female acrobat is gazing at the observer while balancing on her elbows. In a thirteenth-century representation of the feast of Herod, in the sculpted tympana of the cathedral of Rouen,[33] Salome is rendered as a jongleur performing her art, not as the conventional royal seducer. In the thirteenth-century tympanum of Notre Dame in Semur-en-Auxois a similar type of jongleur appears in the banquet scene of the apostle Thomas in India.[34] These representations of Salome and the dancer point towards the popularity of the jongleur in the royal courts, as well as to the simultaneous perception of them as evil seducers. Furthermore, it indicates the adoption by official art of a motif originating in marginal sculpture. The acrobat on the corbel of Notre Dame de l'Epine is a young girl with a childish face and an emblematic figure. She introduces an additional dimension to the various Ages of Woman depicted in the series.

Witches/old women

The witch on the goat in Notre Dame de l'Epine seems to be a record of the preoccupation with witches and witches' trials at the beginning of the sixteenth century, documented also in Champagne.[35] The location of this gargoyle next to the devouring she-monsters and the corbels of aged women constitutes a profiled combination of the figures described in the witches' Sabbath. However, the linking of women to magic and evil has its own earlier tradition in marginal sculpture. In Romanesque corbels there are several depictions of moustached women with their

eyes closed.[36] On a thirteenth-century capital from the cathedral of Auxerre a naked woman is smiling while holding a goat.[37] I suspect that representations of aged women in Romanesque and Gothic marginal sculpture may have to do with the inflicting of evil on others and not merely with the grotesqueries of old age. An example is a corbel on the porch of St Pierre in Moissac which depicts the head of a toothless old woman laughing maliciously.[38] On a corbel in the cathedral of St Maurice in Angers a laughing old woman is dancing while grasping her left foot in her right hand.[39] Such images lost their comic aspects and became severe in fifteenth-century gargoyles. For example, an old woman from the cathedral of Rodez, breasts bared and hair dishevelled, flies through the air in the company of a jester; and in Notre Dame de la Couture in Le Mans, above the fifteenth-century porch, there appears the sculpted image of a seated old woman with a prophetic look (see Epilogue). In Notre Dame in Semur-en-Auxois a gargoyle situated on the western porch is made in the form of an old bare-footed woman beggar stretching her hands for alms. The console head of the old woman on the corbel beneath the she-monster in Notre Dame de l'Epine (pl. 4.15) fits into this grim tradition. [40]

Fools/drunkards

Representations of fools and the drunkard (always male) serve as an example of image consistency. The fool appears with great frequency in marginal sculpture (pl. 1.32, 33), as well as in painting, manuscript illuminations and elsewhere. However, a characteristic of the marginal fools is their expression of pain and suffering [41] – reminiscent of Rabelais' lists of fools.[42] The fool of Notre Dame de l'Epine is a case in point, with his highly dramatic expression of fear and pain. The face carved on his baton is similarly dramatic (pl. 4.18).

The male drunkard is likewise a routine image of the margins. In Romanesque corbels he appears constantly as a comic figure, sitting and drinking directly from the barrel (pl. 1.20). In many of these depictions only his round head, held in his hands, is shown above the barrel.[43] The drunkard of Notre Dame de l'Epine, shown pouring wine from a pitcher into a cup (pl. 4.19), resembles the same type shown on the wall of the choir of Notre Dame in Semur-en-Auxois (pl. 3.24) but demonstrates personal features; he is old, shabby and embittered. [44]

What is the possible meaning of marginal sculpture? The shifting social attitude towards marginals, from casual tolerance in the twelfth century to municipal involvement and codification in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, to active repression in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, may be paralleled in the changing forms of marginal sculpture. It developed from the representations of the marginals as distorted comic and grotesque little figures in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, to their accurate renderings in the fourteenth century, to their depiction as tragic,

almost life-size, yet repulsive beings in the sculpture of the sixteenth century. I believe that in each period these figures were read differently by various classes of people. The ecclesiastical patrons probably regarded them as personifications of the cardinal vices. Their specific costumes, gestures and situations could be seen as paralleling descriptions and narrations of human vices in various sermons and *exempla*. They are a reminder in sculpted form of the constant effect of evil powers on the world of the faithful. Thus, the figures in Notre Dame de l'Epine can be read as Vices: the prostitute as Luxury, the witch as Idolatry, the fool with the contortionist as Idiocy, and so on.[45] For the people, on the other hand, these images represented elements on the fringes of civilized urban society. Though condemned and banished, they remained a threat to the stable world of the burghers. Thus, like the devilish monsters near them, they were not only frightening but at the same time objects of curiosity, ridicule and a certain fascination.[46]

It seems to me that marginal sculpture served as a frontier where the intentions of the patrons and the artists could meet. In this world of sin the sculptors could truly express their compassion for the inhabitants of the marginal world. Alternatively, they could depict them as objects of ridicule, and thus transgress the strict codes of didactic morals and normative aesthetics. The compassion of the sculptors towards jongleurs and musicians is manifested in Romanesque corbels of Poitou and Saintonge, where the sculptors often placed their own images next to those of jongleurs and musicians.[47]

The sculptors' freedom in creating marginal works can be deduced from documents relating to the repair and restoration of the cathedral of Reims in the years 1501 and 1504.[48] In 1501 it was decided that the southern *pignon* of the cathedral should be decorated with the scene of the Assumption of the Virgin. However, not until 1504 was the work given to three master masons: Thierry Noblet, Henri Broy and Guichart Antoine. There is an extant protocol of 1506 listing the work that still remained to be done; among them the gargoyles and the *Beste* (monsters) are mentioned more than once. While the subject of the official programme was exactly specified, that of the gargoyles and the *Beste* remained undefined.[49] It was Guichart Antoine, one of the three master masons of the Reims gargoyles, who was called on in 1509 to build the choir and chapels in Notre Dame de l'Epine, instead of master Remy Gouveau, who drew the first plan for the choir chapel. Guichart Antoine signed his name on a pillar of the ambulatory in 1524.[50]

The intriguing question of whether Guichart Antoine, his assistant Antoine Bertocourt, or some other master was the creator of the marginal series of Notre Dame de l'Epine must remain open.[51] In any case, the sculptor expressed in these works his awareness of and compassion for the people of the margins, as had many sculptors before him.

Notes

1. For the sixteenth century, see L. Hautecoeur, *Histoire de l'architecture classique en France*, I/1: *La formation de l'idéal classique: La première Renaissance (1495 à 1535–1540)*, Paris, 1963, Chap. I: 'La tradition française', pp. 2–95.
2. R. Bernheimer, *The Wildman in the Middle Ages: A Study in Art, Sentiment, and Demonology*, New York, 1970 (1952).

   The meaning of these works has not as yet been discussed, nor were all the images taken as an expression of a cultural *longue durée*.
3. W. Sauerländer, *Le siècle des cathédrales, 1140–1260* (L'univers des Formes, eds P.M. Duval and H. Landais, Le Monde gothique), Paris, 1989, p. 397 and fig. 365.
4. Hautecoeur, *Histoire de l'architecture classique en France*, t. I/1, fig. 39. In his survey Hautecoeur mentions the sculpted busts of the 'Hôtel de Jacques Coeur' at Bourges (*ibid.*, p. 472). The imagery of 'the other', which forms the main core of my study, was categorized by him as 'La fantaisie', which includes 'véritables caricatures' or 'figures grotesques' (*ibid.*, pp. 91–93, 473.)

   For the growing importance of private houses in France consult B. Chevalier, *Les bonnes villes de France du XIV^e^ siècle* (Collection historique, eds. M. Agulhon and P. Lemerle), Paris, 1982, esp. pp. 184–92. For Jacques Coeur see the thorough study of M. Mollat, *Jacques Coeur ou l'esprit d'entreprise* (Collection historique, eds. P. Lemerle, M. Agulhon and B. Guenée), Paris, 1988.
5. R. Martin, *Le Puy-en-Velay*, Vic-en-Bigorre, 1992, figs, 1–2, 4, 6, 7, 8.
6. J. Martin, *Lavoûte-Chilhac*, Le Puy, 1984; Abbé Dursapt, 'Le monastère de Sainte-Croix à Lavoûte-Chilhac', *Almanach de Brioude*, 1977–1980; Chanoine Emeyre, *Notes historiques sur Lavoûte-Chilhac*, 2 vols., 1912.
7. R. de Narbonne, *Hôtel Dieu Beaune*, Paris, 1989, figs. pp. 20–21, 22, 23.
8. H. and D. Kraus, *The Hidden World of Misericords*, New York, 1975.
9. A. Gomez-Moriana, *La subversion du discours rituel* (Collection l'Univers des Discours), Longueuil, 1985, 2^ème^ étude: 'Pour une semanalyse du roman picaresque', pp. 53–80.
10. Miguel de Cervantes, 'The Dogs' Colloquy', in *The Deceitful Marriage and Other Exemplary Novels*, trans. W. Starkie, New York, 1963, pp. 247–311.
11. M. Camille, *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art*, London, 1992.
12. The building of the church began around 1410. However, the existence of a chapel is documented from 1230. In the fifteenth century the church was visited by Louis XI and Charles VI, who made great donations. At the beginning of the sixteenth century the church was a pilgrimage centre and thus an object of popular devotion. Its major altars beside that of the Virgin were dedicated to St Nicolas, the protector of children, and to Mary Magdalene. See De Granrut, 'Notice historique sur l'église de l'Epine', *Congrès archéologique (Châlons)*, XXII, 1855, pp. 178–89; L. Demaison, 'Documents inédits sur l'église Notre-Dame-de-l'Epine', *Travaux de l'Académie nationale de Reims*, XCV/1, 1893, pp. 105–25; *idem*, 'Eglise Notre-Dame-de-l'Epine, *Congrès archéologique (Reims)*, LXXVIII/1, 1911, pp. 512–19; C.G. Balthasar, 'Notre-Dame-de l'Epine', *Revue de l'Art chrétien*, II, 1858, pp. 7–11; L. Benoist, *Notre-Dame-de-l'Epine* (Petites Monographies des Grands Edifices de la France), Paris, 1962 (1933); J.-M. Berland, *L'Epine en Champagne*, 1972; A. Villes, 'Notre-Dame-de-l'Epine, sa façade occidentale', *Congrès archéologique (Champagne)*, CXXXV, 1977, pp. 779–86.
13. De Granrut, pp. 184–86; Demaison, 'Documents inédits', pp. 120–25; *idem*, 'Eglise Notre-Dame', pp. 517–19, 524–26; Balthasar, p. 8; Benoist, pp. 20–24, 63–67; Berland, pp. 18–20, 63–64, 83–88; Villes, pp. 788–94, 827.
14. Benoist, *Notre-Dame-de-l'Epine*, pp. 41–43; Berland, pp. 84–88, figs. 78–80; Victor M. Hugo, *Le Rhin, Dessins de Victor Hugo*, Paris, 1890, H XII of *Oeuvres complètes*, pp. 15–16.
15. This description reflects my conception of the sculptures as an autonomous series of the choir's

chapels. The sculptures were not mentioned in the basic study of regional sculpture of Champagne. See R. Koechlin and J.J. Marquet de Vasselot, *La sculpture à Troyes et dans la Champagne méridionale au 16ème siècle*, Paris, 1966 (1900).

16. Muchembled, pp. 14–37, 101–07; M. Mollat, 'La montée du pauperisme', *Les pauvres*, ch. 11, pp. 256–302; R. Gascon, 'Economie et pauvreté aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles: Lyon, ville exemplaire et prophétique', in *Etudes sur l'histoire de la pauvreté*, ed M. Mollat, Paris, 1974, II, pp. 747–60; J. Avril, 'Clercs et laïcs devant la richesse d'après les statuts synodaux d'Angers de la fin du Moyen-Age', *ibid.*, II, pp. 571–88; R. Favreau, 'La pauvreté en Poitou et en Anjou à la fin du Moyen-Age', *ibid.*, II, pp. 589–620; B. Geremek, 'La topographie sociale de Paris', *Les marginaux*, Ch. 3, pp. 79–110; P. Burke, 'The Triumph of Lent: The Reform of Popular Culture', *Popular Culture*, Ch. 8, pp. 207–43; N.Z. Davis, 'Poor Relief, Humanism, and Heresy', *Society and Culture*, Ch. 2, pp. 17–64; Brundage, 'Sex, Marriage and the Law from the Black Death to the Reformation, 1348–1517', and 'Sex in the Age of the Reformation: From the Ninety-Five Theses to Tametsi, 1517–1563', *Law, Sex*, Chs. 10, 11, pp. 487–550, 551–75, rep.; L.L. Otis, 'Epilogue to Part One: The Sixteenth Century: The Institution Dismantled', *Prostitution*, pp. 40–45; for medieval literary expressions of isolating the fool, see P. Ménard, 'Les fous dans la société médiévale', *Romania*, XCVIII, 1977, pp. 447–52.
17. De Granrut, pp. 178–86; Demaison, pp. 512–19; Balthasar, pp. 7–9; Benoist, pp. 13–24.
18. See above, chs. 1, 2. For the corbels of St Etienne in Cahors see Kenaan-Kedar, 'Modillons', pp. 314–15, and figs. 4, 16, 19; for those of St Pierre in Aulnay, *ibid.*, pp. 328–29, and fig. 12. For Basle Cathedral, see H. Reinhardt, *Das Basler Münster*, Basel, 1961, figs. 71–73.
19. Kenaan-Kedar, 'Modillons', pp. 314–15, and figs. 4, 16, 19.
20. See Chapter 3, p. 90.
21. 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*, 4e série, XIV, 1977/78, pp. 483–510; Kenaan-Kedar, 'Modillons', p. 312, and n. 4.
22. See Chapter 3, p. 120–2.

    The sculptures of the inner church of Notre Dame de Semur-en-Auxois were mentioned sometimes, but never systematically studied. See Willibald Sauerländer, 'Über einen Reimser Bildhauer in Cluny', in *Gedenkschrift Ernst Gall*, eds. M. Kuhn, Louis Grodecki, Munich, 1965, pp. 255–68; Alfred de Vaulabelle, *Histoire de Semur-en-Auxois*, 1927; reprt. Paris, 1990, pp. 9–20; Anne Prache, 'Notre-Dame de Semur-en-Auxois', *Congrès archéologique de France* (*Auxois-Chatillonnais*), CXLIV, 1986, pp. 291–301.
23. Gargoyles on the northern wall: Archives Benjamin Z. and Nurith Kedar.
24. See n. 22 above.
25. J. Leclercq-Kadaner, 'De la Terre-Mère à la Luxure', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, XVIII, 1975, pp. 37–43; C. Frugoni, 'L'iconographie de la femme au cours de Xe-XIIe siècles', *ibid.*, XX, 1977, pp. 177–88.
26. The siren carved on the 'cul-de-lampe' on the north-east pillar of the choir in St Pierre in Chauvigny, for example. See R. Oursel, *Haut-Poitou roman*, La Pierre-qui-Vire, 1975, fig. 82. See also the one in St Hilaire in Foussais, southern side of the central portal: Kenaan-Kedar, 'Modillons', fig. 31.
27. See in F.C. Endres, *Kulturgeschichte der Frau*, Bern, 1942, figs. 244, 245.
28. For Notre-Dame in Surgères, see the corbel on the eastern side of the north transept: Kenaan-Kedar, 'Modillons', fig. 20; for St Sernin in Toulouse, see the corbel on the Porte Miègeville, *ibid.*, fig. 3.
29. Y. Rokseth, 'Les femmes musiciennes du XIIe au XIVe siècles', *Romania*, LVI, 1935, pp. 464–80. For examples in stone sculpture, see the capitals of the Iglesia de Santiago in Aguero (Huesca) in M. Durliat, *Hispania Romanica*, Wien and München, 1962, figs. 114–15.

30. Kenaan-Kedar, 'Modillons', pp. 324–30.
31. Archives Benjamin Z. and Nurith Kedar.
32. Archives Benjamin Z. and Nurith Kedar.
33. W. Sauerländer, *Gothic Sculpture in France (1140–1270)*, London, 1972, pl. 182.
34. *Ibid.*, pl. 291.
35. J.C. Baroja, *The World of Witches* (The Nature of Human Society Series, eds. J. Pitt-Rivers and E. Gellner), Chicago and London, 1965, pp. 82–98; A.C. Kors and E. Peters, *Witchcraft in Europe 1100–1700: A Documentary History*, Philadelphia, 1989, pp. 332–37.
36. Archives Benjamin Z. and Nurith Kedar.
37. C. Hohl, *La cathédrale d'Auxerre*, Auxerre, n.d., fig. on p. 14.
38. M. Schapiro, *The Sculpture of Moissac*, London, 1985 (1929), figs. 121, 147.
39. Archives Benjamin Z. and Nurith Kedar.
40. A survey of old-woman images in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century France brought forward unique figures which were never photographed nor discussed. This theme deserves a separate study. The photographs are in Archives Benjamin Z. and Nurith Kedar. An old drunkard woman type can be traced back to the Hellenistic sculpture now in Munich Glypthothek. See P. Zanker, *Die trunkene Alte, das Lachen der Verhöhnten*, Frankfurt-am-Main, 1989, pp. 43–48, fig. 29.
41. Kenaan-Kedar, 'Modillons', p. 317. The image of the fool in Romanesque sculpture has not been systematically studied as yet.
42. François Rabelais, *The Histories of Gargantua and Pantagruel*, trans. J.M. Cohen, ed., B. Radice and R. Baldick, Harmondsworth, 1970 (1955), Ch. 38, pp. 392–96.
43. R. Crozet, *L'art roman en Poitou*, Paris, 1948; E. Maillard, 'Les sculptures romanes de l'église Saint-Hilaire de Foussais en Bas-Poitou', *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, IV, 1930, pp. 158–69.
44. Archives Benjamin Z. and Nurith Kedar.
45. Literature on the subject of Virtues and Vices is enormous, and I am quoting here only two basic studies: A. Katzenellenbogen, *Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Mediaeval Art*, New York, 1964; M.W. Bloomfield, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, Michigan, 1967.
46. See Introduction, pp. 1–6, n. 18 above.
47. Kenaan-Kedar, 'Modillons', pp. 320–24.
48. H. Reinhardt, *La cathédrale de Reims*, Paris, 1963, pp. 208–09.
49. Reinhardt, p. 209.
50. De Granrut, pp. 184–86; Demaison, 'Documents inédits', pp. 114–15, 120–22; *idem*, 'Eglise Notre-Dame', pp. 517–19; Berland, pp. 18–20; Benoist, pp. 20–24; Villes, p. 827; Balthasar, p. 8.
51. The marginal figures situated on both sides of the above-mentioned southern pignon of Reims Cathedral show great similarities with the figures of Notre Dame de l'Epine. Archives Benjamin Z. and Nurith Kedar.