THE CRUCIFIXION WINDOW AT POITIERS: ITS ORIGIN, CONTENT AND SYMBOLISM

by

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ABSTRACT

The Crucifixion window installed in the center of the chevet wall of the Cathedral of St. Pierre at Poitiers has attracted the attention of many art historians since the middle of the nineteenth century. It has also been mentioned in art surveys and journal articles, and has been discussed in terms of stylistic evolution and, in the case of Robert Grinnell, in terms of the theory of light symbolism. However, it has not been the subject of a recent and complete monograph. In an effort to fill the gap, this thesis examines the window in terms of its origin, composition, iconography, and symbolism. For the research to be comprehensive, it was necessary to understand how the natural environment, politics, economics, and sociological factors, such as culture and religion, may have influenced not only the development of the window's design and manufacture, but the identity of its patrons and the time frame for its design, execution and installation. Moreover, it was particularly necessary to investigate how one man, Gilbert de la Porrée, Bishop of Poitiers (1142-1154), and his philosophical and theological writings may have influenced the window's design, content and symbolism. Although the female donor represented in the window has been identified as Eleanor of Aquitaine, no incontrovertible conclusion can be drawn concerning the identity of the male donor. It would seem that Henry II may have been instrumental in starting the second phase of the cathedral's reconstruction. However, some components and certain aspects of the composition of the window itself provide circumstantial evidence that tends to show that Louis VII may have participated in the window's patronage.

Finally, a detailed examination of the various layers of symbolism contained in the window serves to demonstrate how an art object, installed in a medieval, public place of primary importance, such as a cathedral church, is a unique expression not only of Christian dogma but, to some extent, a reflection of the contemporary society that produced it. As such, the Crucifixion window can also be seen as an expression of the subconscious desire of a people to memorialize their past, preserve their beliefs and project their ideals for future generations.

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INTRODUCTION

Unique in its conception and realization, the Crucifixion window (fig. 1) occupies a prominent place in the center of the flat chevet of the Cathedral of St. Pierre (fig. 2) located in the provincial town of Poitiers. While amateurs of medieval art flock to the Church of Notre-Dame-la-Grande and to the Baptistery of St. John in Poitiers, and marvel at the polychromatic light shows offered on the façades of both structures during the summer months, the cathedral does not attract the same tourist interest.

However, this cathedral is adorned with a stained glass window, exceptional because of its large size, the quantity and quality of its original glass, its composition, its location (it is the only contemporary window in the center of a high, flat chevet wall), and the complex symbolism of its content and design. It is also unique because no other contemporary representation of the Crucifixion in stained glass includes royal donors; because it is the earliest Crucifixion of this size to be represented in stained glass; and because it is the only one to associate the Crucifixion with the Ascension, Resurrection, martyrdoms of the patron saints of the church, and a donors' panel. Furthermore, no other twelfth-century stained glass window possesses such a wide border that contains such varied and symbolically meaningful elements assembled in such a complex composition.

The Crucifixion window is mentioned not only in books specializing in the study of Medieval stained glass windows, but also in most surveys of Medieval Art. They all refer to it as a work of art in glass, exceptional for its grandeur and beauty. Art historians praise the monumentality of the Crucifixion window, the vibrancy of its colors, the liveliness of its composition, the prominence of its position within the context of the cathedral, and its apparently uncomplicated yet comprehensive and cogent iconography.[1] Despite its undeniable and forceful appeal, it may be surprising to discover that in a town, famous for its Center of Medieval Studies, a modern study of the Crucifixion window, and its origin, form, content, and symbolism is lacking. This thesis is an attempt to remedy the absence of a cohesive and comprehensive work on the Crucifixion window.

Twelfth-century documents that may have clarified the history of the cathedral and of the window are missing because the archives of the diocese of Poitiers were burned in

the sixteenth century. There is a brief mention of the cathedral in Jean Bouchet's Annales d'Aquitaine (c. 1524).[2] However, until the beginning of the twentieth century, only members of the clergy took enough interest in the history of the cathedral and its stained glass windows to write about them. In 1848-1849, Chanoine Auguste Auber wrote the "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers."[3] Yet, Auber devotes only a few pages to the Crucifixion window. Following Louis Steinheil's restoration of the Crucifixion window (c. 1883-1885), Xavier Barbier de Montault, who identified himself as a member of the papal household, wrote "Le Vitrail de la Crucifixion."[4] This first monograph gives a comprehensive description of the Crucifixion window, surveys Steinheil's newly finished restoration work, attempts to date the window, and invents a fanciful reconstruction of the inscription, naming the count of Blason, an obscure country squire, and his wife, as donors. Barbier de Montault's allegations about the identity of the donors sparked a controversy that lasted until 1934, when René Crozet put it to rest in his article, "Le Vitrail de la crucifixion à la cathédrale de Poitiers."[5] In 1944, Robert Grinnell wrote "The Crucifixion Window at Poitiers, A Study in Form and Symbolism," as his doctoral dissertation. This is the most recent monograph written on the window. Following the art historical theories concerned with the relationship between historical facts, ideas and forms proposed by Henri Focillon in Moyen Age roman et gothique, [6] Grinnell stated that he aimed to "demonstrate the relation of the metaphysic of light and theory of divine illumination to the rise of the stained glass window and to Gothic architecture."[7] Grinnell's "Iconography and Philosophy in the Crucifixion Window at Poitiers," published in 1946, is a synthesis of his dissertation.[8]

Although Louis Grodecki wrote several journal articles on twelfth-century stained glass and on the windows at Poitiers, none are specific to the Crucifixion window.[9] Furthermore, his inclusion of the Crucifixion window in Le vitrail roman (1977) is limited to approximately one and a half pages and to one image of the window.[10] In "Structure géométrique du vitrail de la Crucifixion de la cathédrale Saint-Pierre de Poitiers" (1962-1963), Elisa Maillard discusses only the subjacent geometry and proportions used in the design of the window.[11] Yves Blomme's recent article devoted to "La construction de la cathédrale Saint-Pierre de Poitiers" sheds new light on the various phases of its

reconstruction. His discussion of the Crucifixion window is only a succinct summarization of known findings.[12] In articles by other art historians, the Crucifixion window is only mentioned as part of their discussion of particular problems related to stained glass windows, their style, quality, and comparative datings.[13] In "The Architectural and Glazing Context of Poitiers Cathedral" (1995), the latest writing on the cathedral and its stained glass windows, Virginia Chieffo Raguin proposes that "it would be more reasonable to see the stained glass at Poitiers as visual narratives of individual adventures, much like a contemporaneous romance, such as Parsifal ...that convey multivalent meanings of political as well as religious import."[14] In L'Art religieux du XIIe siècle en France, Henri Mâle stated that the window was "the most magnificent example of a Romanesque Crucifixion," and Louis Grodecki was prompted to write that it was "une oeuvre d'une admirable densité de signification théologique." In view of these striking remarks, one is led to wonder why no recent and thorough efforts have been made to understand and explicate the Crucifixion window.[15]

This thesis represents an attempt to rectify this glaring omission. It will explore the major influences that contributed to the conception, manufacture and placement of the Crucifixion window within the context of the Poitiers cathedral. While taking into account the existing research, and synthesizing the findings that are germane and have withstood the test of time, the purpose of this thesis is to analyze the relevant elements of the political, socio-economic, cultural and religious history of Western France, to investigate major historical figures whether secular or religious, and to examine the events which may have had an impact on the design, realization and symbolic content of the window. Because the window is not securely dated, the present research has been akin to detective work. In the hope that it will shed new light on the origin, significance and meaning of the Crucifixion window, this thesis examines the few undisputed facts and the circumstantial evidence, leading to new levels of understanding and interpretation.

Chapter I is dedicated to a thorough description and analysis of the window, including its physical composition and its style. This is necessary to set the stage for further investigation. It will examine the type of materials used in its manufacture, and the

mode of design of the figures to help in establishing a plausible timeframe for the window's design, and a better understanding of the uniqueness of the window.

The iconography of the window, both its origins and meaning, is the topic of Chapter II. While the window's iconography is based on typical representations of the themes of Christ's Crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension, and on donors' portraits, it contains new, ancillary elements that can potentially be attributed to the influence of contemporary people or events. A study of the iconography will further help in the dating of the window, and in finding the first clues towards a possible identification of its donors.

Chapter III will consider the salient events in the political history of France and Aquitaine, and the role played by its various rulers that led to the position occupied by Poitou and its capital, Poitiers, in the twelfth century. It will also investigate the propagandistic elements that these powerful people, whether religious or secular, may have incorporated in the composition of the window in an attempt to fulfill their political agenda. While the rulers made the major decisions that shaped the politics of Poitou, the evolution of Poitevin society was also contingent on the development of its culture and religion.

Chapter IV will address the socio-economic, cultural and religious contexts that inspired and found their expression in the style, iconography and symbolism of the Crucifixion window. Sustained population growth and religious revival and renewal contributed to the building or refurbishing of the major churches throughout France. The location of Poitiers on the pilgrimage road to Santiago de Compostela, Poitiers' relic of the "True Cross," and the participation of Louis VII and his first wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine, in the Second Crusade may have exerted a direct influence on the theme and composition of the Crucifixion window. Elements not usually found in the composition of similar representations were perhaps introduced in an effort to memorialize past events in a society that still relied heavily on images as mnemonic tools.

In an effort to understand who may have exerted the most influence on the Crucifixion window and its design, Chapter V investigates the life, achievements, philosophy and theology of Gilbert de la Porrée, Bishop of Poitiers from 1142 to 1154,

whose eulogies are the only contemporary documents available to possibly shed some light on the histories of the cathedral and of the Crucifixion window. This is of the utmost importance since the responsibility for the decorative programs of a cathedral, especially the choir area, had to be approved by a bishop or an archbishop, and a chapter of canons regular who were in charge of its development and care. Since the exact dating of the Crucifixion window is not known, inquiries are also made into the lives and achievements of Gilbert's successors, especially Jean de Bellesmains, Bishop of Poitiers from 1163 to 1182.

Chapter VI will explore the history of the cathedral in the light of the new elements uncovered in preceding chapters. Furthermore, the reassessment of previous research and the new findings indicate that the rebuilding of the Cathedral may have started earlier than 1162, and progressed in successive phases. Circumstantial evidence may also indicate that perhaps the window was designed for Gilbert de la Porrée's program of renovation and embellishment of the existing eleventh-century structure (c. 1148-1154), or at least prior to the rebuilding of the chevet wall when the first phase of the reconstruction of the cathedral began.

Ultimately, the Crucifixion window has to be considered a didactic and propagandistic image, the locus not only of religious but also of political and cultural messages. Thus, considering the circumstantial evidence gathered earlier concerning the possible dating of the window and the identities of the donors and designer(s), chapter VII will aim to uncover what the several layers of symbolism, contained in the Crucifixion window and its frame, meant to a twelfth-century patron(s), designer(s) and audience caught at the juncture in history between orality and the implementation of literacy.

The conclusion will present an assessment of the facts, an evaluation of the circumstantial evidence uncovered and discussed in the previous chapters, and provide a synthesis of the arguments. Keeping in mind that twelfth-century philosophers and theologians tried to define the fine points of Church dogma, this work will strive to answer such questions as: What was the real significance of this particular window for a twelfth-century audience? Whose ideas may have been used as the basis for developing the form, content and symbolism of the window? How is this relationship between form, content,

composition and symbolism of a twelfth-century stained glass window explained to a twentieth-century audience?

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[1] Auguste Auber (Abbé), "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," Mémoires des la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest, XVI (1848-49): 331-340; Marcel Aubert, Le vitrail en France (1939):7-18; Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail de la crucifixion à Poitiers," Bulletin Monumental, 51 (1885):117-45; Catherine Brisac, A Thousand Years of Stained Glass (1986):13, 16; Louis Grodecki, Le vitrail roman (1977):22, 70-74 and 286; Émile Mâle, L'art religieux du XIIe siècle (1924): 82; Andreas Petzold, Romanesque Art (1995):69; Louis Réau and Gustave Cohen, L'art du Moyen Age (1935):249; Éliane Vergnolle, L'art roman en France (1994):345; George Zarnecki, Romanesque (1989):138. This list is not exhaustive.

[2] Jean Bouchet, Annales d'Aquitaine, 1524.

[3] Auguste Auber (Chanoine), "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest, XVI-XVII, 1848-49. Three different editions of this text were used for this research (see bibliography).

[4] Xavier Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail de la Crucifixion à la cathédrale de Poitiers," Bulletin monumental, 51 (1885):17-45 & 141-168.

[5] René Crozet, "Le vitrail de la Crucifixion à Poitiers," Gazette des Beaux Arts, II (1934):217-231.

[6] Henri Focillon, Moyen Age roman et gothique (1992):7.

[7] Robert Grinnell, unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, "The Crucifixion Window at Poitiers - A Study in Form and Symbolism" (1944), ii.

[8] Robert Grinnell, "Iconography and Philosophy in the Crucifixion Window at Poitiers," Art Bulletin, 28, (1946):171-196.

[9] See bibliography for the list of Grodecki's articles.

[10] Grodecki, Le vitrail roman, 70-74 and figures 56 and 58.

[11] Elisa Maillard, "Structure géométrique du vitrail de la Crucifixion de la cathédrale Saint-Pierre de Poitiers," Actes du quatre-vingt-septième Congrès National de Sociétés Savantes, (1962/63):329-337.

[12] Yves Blomme, "La construction de la cathédrale Saint-Pierre de Poitiers." Bulletin Monumental, 152, 1(1994):7-64.

[13] See list of Grodecki's articles in Bibliography; Jane Hayward mentioned the Crucifixion window in, "The Redemption Windows of the Loire Valley," Études d'art médiéval offertes à Louis Grodecki, (1981):129-149; and Anne Granboulan, in "De la paroisse à la cathédrale: une approche renouvelée du vitrail roman dans l'ouest," Revue de l'art, 103 (1994):42-52.

[14] Virginia Chieffo Raguin, "The Architectural and Glazing Context of Poitiers Cathedral," in Raguin, et al, eds., Artistic Integration in Gothic Building, (1995):167-68.

[15] Grodecki made a similar remark on page 70 of the 1977 edition of Le vitrail roman.

CHAPTER I

THE COMPOSITION AND STYLE OF THE CRUCIFIXION WINDOW

The Crucifixion window suffered from many abuses and endured several restorations during the past eight hundred plus years.[1] Yet, whether because of chance or providential intervention -- the medievals would have favored this last assumption -- the Crucifixion window of the Cathedral of St. Pierre at Poitiers is the only known stained glass window that has preserved most of its twelfth-century glass, and has remained in its originally intended place.[2] When entering the cathedral by the central western door, before going down the steps that lead to the main level, the viewer faces the window directly at the other end of the nave. It occupies the central bay of the chevet on the longitudinal axis of the nave.

The Crucifixion window (fig. 1) is a large rectangle, rounded at the top, measuring eight and a quarter meters in length by a little over three meters in width.[3] An armature made of iron bars cemented to the wall holds the stained glass in place within the bay.[4] "T" bars were used to fasten securely the individual panels of glass to the armature. Contrary to practice in the thirteenth century and later, the panels of the Crucifixion window all have a square or rectangular shape, except for the upper panels that were rounded at the top to fit the shape of the opening. In the forty-six panels of the window, [5] pieces of varied colored glass of different shapes were joined together by lead cames to form a design. Except for the fragile flesh color, the passage of time has not greatly altered the color of the original glass. The blue remains luminous, because silica with a high soda content was utilized in its manufacture. This type of glass was used extensively in France, and exclusively during the twelfth century.[6] Oxides were applied to the glass in the form of grisaille paint which added the finishing details such as facial features, hair, and drapery folds.

Viewed from afar, the Crucifixion window appears simply as a source of colored light. The design becomes clearer and more impressive as one approaches, until finally the pieces of the puzzle fall into place, revealing the unmistakable shape of a great Crucifixion

scene that occupies almost half of the window in its center. The upper part of the window portrays an Ascension scene with Christ in an almond-shaped mandorla flanked by two angels, and the Blessed Virgin and apostles watching from below. Immediately below the Crucifixion, three small panels represent scenes usually associated with the Resurrection. The lower part of the window contains historical scenes, i.e., the martyrdoms of SS Peter and Paul, and the donors' panel. A close examination of its panels will reveal the composition and style of the Crucifixion window.

1. The Panels of the Crucifixion (fig. 3)

At the very core of the design, the cross dominates the whole composition. Towards the top, it bears the inscription: IESUS NAZARENUS REX IUDEORUM. However, this is a modern restitution.[7] The fiery red cross is inscribed within several borders. A garland of greenish/blue leaves outlines the cross. A bright yellow band, pearled on its outside edge, and trimmed with a white fillet, adds a finishing touch to the border. Immediately underneath the horizontal member of the cross, the artist has added a small red band of glass, followed in turn by a white fillet, a border of imbricated geometric forms in the shape of purple, blue, yellow, and green "Ts", and another white fillet. The warm red color of the cross seems to push the body of the crucified Christ towards the viewer. The tone of Christ's skin has been described as almost purple; indeed, it varies according to the outside light. On a clear day, with average sunlight, the color is closest to a normal skin tone, more rosy than purple. A darker sky and less light bring out the purple tones in the glass, while bright sunshine washes out the color almost completely, until only the pattern of the lead cames remains. However, close and lengthy observation reveals that despite the intensity of the light, the skin tone is at no time truly purple.

Christ is almost naked. Only the lower part of his body is draped in a cloth of a deep purple hue with crimson overtones, covering an underlying green cloth. A yellow belt, knotted on Christ's left side, holds both cloths in place. His head is inclined to the left -- His right. It is curiously endowed with dark blue wavy hair, the color of which varies from a lustrous blue to almost black, again depending on the intensity of the outside light. A white nimbus adorned with a pearled edge and a yellow cross crowns His head. The

features of Christ's face reflect immeasurable sadness -- not unspeakable sufferings. His wide-open eyes staring in the distance as though unseeing, His dark eyebrows with drooping ends, His mouth curving downwards in bitterness, convey mental anguish rather than physical pain. Until the end of the twelfth century, four nails were used in portrayals of the Crucifixion. At Poitiers, only two round black holes show where the nails entered the palms of Christ's hands. However, the other two nails driven through the arch of each foot into the suppedaneum are still in place. Christ's greater than life-sized figure (about two meters tall) is slightly arched to the left.[8] Thick lead cames are used to accentuate the contour of His chest muscles, ribcage and abdomen. The artist did not graphically show the gruesome effect of the crucifixion on a human body; he only hinted at the visible signs of a slow death by asphyxiation, and at the distortions that result from the weight of a body hanging on a cross. Thus, Christ is represented with His arms fully extended, showing little sign of sagging. The slight curvature of Christ's body, his hollowed out chest and barely protruding abdomen are the only precursory signs of more gruesome depictions of the Crucifixion in later centuries.

At the ends of the transverse arm of the cross, the personifications of Sun, on Christ's right, and Moon, on His left, are each represented within a yellow semicircular border, beaded on the inside. They appear to be floating on a blue ground between wavy white lines representing clouds. The small male half-figure symbolizing the sun has thick, dark disheveled hair surrounded by a halo of bright red and orange flames. He is completely wrapped in a light purple mantle. His arms are folded and gathered to his chest underneath his cloak, while his veiled hands touch his face, supposedly wiping tears from his eyes.[9] At the other end, the wan, female half-figure of the moon is holding a crescent with her upraised and veiled hands. She is wrapped in a purple mantle that also covers her green-haloed head.

On each side of the foot of the cross, a border divides the Crucifixion scene from the Resurrection. It replicates the border of imbricated "Ts" of alternating colors seen below the horizontal member of the cross, and is contained between two white fillets.[10] Four figures, symmetrically positioned on each side of the Cross, participate in the scene of the Crucifixion. The Roman centurion, Longinus, stands immediately to the right of Christ.[11]

He is wearing the contemporary costume of a twelfth-century freeman, not a Roman soldier's uniform. He is clothed in a knee length, purple undergarment adorned with a brocaded green border at hem and cuffs, covered by a short, light blue tunic with short sleeves also cuffed in green brocade. A yellow belt, with designs embossed on both belt and round buckle, girds his waist. A long white cloak, pushed back over his arms to allow for a greater ease of movement, is draped over his shoulders and knotted at the neck. He is wearing long yellow stockings, and his feet are shod in soft blue boot coverings. His wavy hair and curly beard are reddish-blond. A yellow, conical bonnet completes his costume.[12] Longinus looks at Christ with sad drooping eyes, apparently weighing the importance of his next action. He is preparing to pierce Christ's side with his spear -- that has lost its pointed end -- and holds the weapon in both hands in a forward thrusting motion.[13] He seems to have just taken a step towards the Crucifix with his left foot, and is placing his weight on his left leg, while getting ready to lift his right foot, in order to pivot and keep his balance as he thrusts the spear forward. The right side of his body -- hip and shoulder -- is slightly elevated and closer to the front plane of the design, while his left side is lower and recedes towards the background. What could be perceived as a defect or an unevenness in the size and position of the shoulders, if considered only as a flat plane, is a clumsy yet accurate representation of a three-quarter view of a man seen in perspective within a defined space. What may confuse the viewer, however, is the apparent lack of ground below the feet of Longinus.

Next to Longinus, Mary is dressed in a long purple tunic with a brocaded blue border outlined by a white fillet on its upper side and a yellow one at the hem. The tunic covers a long white robe concealing her arms to her wrists. Her legs are completely hidden from view. Only the front part of her feet, shod in yellow, are visible. Her blue mantle lined in yellow is draped over her shoulders and falls in deep "V" shaped folds across her chest. The yellow ornamental epaulettes hold her cloak in place. She also wears a yellow crescent-shaped ornament around her neck, matching the design of the epaulettes. A white veil, adorned with a tiny black cross at the center of her forehead, covers her head nimbed by a dark green halo. Mary is facing the inside of the Church and looking downwards. Her hands are tightly clasped together, with intertwined fingers. Her head is slightly

inclined towards the crucified Christ. Contrary to Longinus, she stands with her feet firmly planted on the ground. Her wide open eyes, clenched hands, hieratic stillness, and the closure of her pose express her attempted withdrawal from the scene.

On Christ's left, closest to the cross, the other Roman soldier, Stephaton, is dressed in a short green tunic, bordered in purple around the hemline, over a white under garment with long sleeves trimmed with purple cuffs. He is also wearing white hose and soft, yellow boots.[14] A blue mantle, hanging at the back, reveals purple epaulettes, brocaded arm bands and belt. He is lifting up a spear with a sponge dipped in common wine attached at one end, preparing to offer it to Christ. He has turned his head and is looking up at Christ. His posture would be impossible to maintain if viewed as static, and not as potentially mobile. The artist has caught him while he was in the process of taking a step forward. The tip of his left foot is about to touch the ground, while he has just lifted his right heel. Yet Stephaton has already turned and craned his head, which gives it its impossible position vis-à-vis the rest of his body. This was the artist's way of implying a violent movement. However, two facts should be pointed out: Stephaton's head is too small for the rest of his body, and he is shorter than the other three figures of the Crucifixion scene. It seems that the figure of Stephaton was the victim of a clumsy restoration in the past.[15]

Contrary to the implied agitation inherent to the figure of Stephaton, the figure of St. John standing next to him appears remarkably calm and still. St. John is wearing a long yellow robe bordered in green over a long-sleeved white undergarment. A blue mantle bordered in purple is draped over his shoulders and attached at the neck by a round yellow clasp. The stained glass used for his face and hair has darkened with age, turning a brownish color. St. John is holding an open book in his left hand, an attribute commonly used to identify him as the Evangelist, while gathering his right arm to his chest in a gesture of sorrow. His head, nimbed in white, is inclined towards the crucified Christ. His closed stance mirrors the Blessed Virgin's on the right side of the cross.

2. The Three Panels of the Resurrection (fig. 4)

The Nicene Creed tells us that "after three days He rose again from the dead." Thus, the Resurrection is the next event in the life of Christ. It is portrayed below the foot of the cross in three separate rectangular panels. In the right panel, the three holy women are represented as they are walking towards the Holy Sepulchre. They are dressed with long robes and toga-like mantles, and their heads are veiled and nimbed. Each woman carries a pilgrim's staff in one hand and an ointment container in the shape of an ostrich egg in the other. The sad features of their faces reflect their ignorance of the fact that the Resurrection has already taken place. They believe that they are bringing spices and nard to anoint the body of the dead Christ.

The central panel, below the foot of the cross, contains the top lobe of the quatrefoil. Within semi-circles in the spandrels formed by the arch of the lobe and the metal frame of the panel, the small figures of Adam and Eve are coming out of their tomb.[16] They are being brought back to life by the redemptive action of Christ's death on the cross. Inside the upper lobe, the Holy Sepulchre is represented as a two-tiered, domed structure with an open trefoil arch revealing the empty tomb. Two soldiers in twelfth-century military garb, complete with chain mail armor, helmets with nose plate, and elongated shields, have fallen asleep. Christ's shroud is draped on top of the stone slab on which the dead Christ was laid according to Jewish custom. Three lamps within one container are hanging from the center of the treble arcade. The red glass -- the same red as the cross -- representing the stone slab on which Christ was laid out for burial, rests on a purple base decorated with trifoliated reliefs and small dark circles. The background of this scene, within the upper lobe of the quatrefoil, is bright red, while the empty domical sepulchre is blue with sculpted yellow capitals, and white column shafts. The border enclosing the top lobe of the quatrefoil is made of a string of yellow fleurons, outlined by two white fillets, beaded on the inside edge only, and running along both sides.

In the left panel, representing the last scene pertaining to the Resurrection, the angel is sitting very straight on a bench curiously angled to the right. He wears a long purple tunic and white toga-like cloak bordered in green, and he is barefoot. A white nimbus

surrounds the back of his head. He looks as though he has just turned towards the central panel. The heel of his right foot is partly lifted as if he were in the process of moving his leg around to turn towards the right. He is holding a small purple cross within an egg-shaped black monstrance in his left hand. With right arm extended and index finger raised, he is motioning to the holy women to stop, and notice that the Holy Sepulchre is empty. The resurrected Christ does not appear in these scenes. The absence of His body and the emptiness of His tomb reveal that time and death no longer constrain Him.

3. The Ascension Panels (fig. 5)

According to Holy Scripture, Christ's Ascension into Heaven happened forty days after His Resurrection (Acts 1:3). Following the chronology of events, the narrative unfolds in the panel above the transverse arms of the cross. A band of red glass separates the blue background of the Ascension into two parts. Below the red band, on each side of the vertical member of the cross, the Blessed Virgin Mary and ten apostles stand engrossed in the event that is unfolding in the upper part of the window.[17] Wavy blue and white formations, representing clouds, undulate through the red band. They support two angels and the glorified Christ as He is ascending to Heaven. Christ is clothed in rich garments, yet He is barefoot. A white robe, with a yellow orphrey around the neck, covers His whole body. A rich purple cloth with a green orphrey is wrapped around His midriff, and His blue mantle is lined in green. Both the yellow orphrey and the green belt are adorned with a distinctive fishscale design.[18] His hair and beard are brown. He is nimbed with a bright blue halo bearing a white cross with a pearled edge on the right side of its three visible arms. His features are impassive. His eyes are wide open as though staring into the distance. Christ's right hand is raised in a gesture of blessing with only His index and middle fingers extended, while his thumb holds down his fourth finger.[19] A veil covers His left hand in which He is holding a closed book. Christ is shown standing half on a cloud, and half on the threshold of the elliptical mandorla that frames the rest of His body.

The interior background of the mandorla is made up of red octagons, interspersed at regular intervals with small blue squares.[20] The border of the mandorla consists of leaves of different colors arranged in rainbow-like fashion, delineated by two white fillets pearled

only on their inside edge. The restorer Steinheil added two red circles of glass right below the border of the window, next to the upper part of the mandorla.[21] Two angels, the mirror image of one another, are wearing a yellow-green tunic outlined around the neck by a yellow orphrey, and covered by a white cloak bordered in blue at the top, and purple at the hem. Their wings are purple, blue and white, and they have wavy, light brown hair nimbed by a red halo. They are positioned symmetrically on each side of the mandorla and are standing on clouds. The index fingers of both of their hands are pointing, one towards Christ on the Cross, the other, towards Christ in His mandorla. With their legs flexed and arms extended, their bodies are ready to soar into the blue background surrounding them. Their large size reminds the viewer that they are outside the realm of human time.

The Blesssed Virgin and the apostles are engaged in watching Christ ascending into Heaven. They are separated into two groups by the vertical member of the cross. On the left, five apostles, including St. Peter carrying two green keys,[22] stand next to Mary; while five apostles, including St. John, share the right side. The only indication that the figure of a sixth apostle stood at the extreme right next to the border was a piece of garment that Steinheil removed when he restored the Crucifixion window, c. 1883-85. Cl. Delacroix's lithograph, c. 1848 (fig. 6), and G. Durand's photographs taken in Steinheil's workshop prior to the 1883 restoration still show the folds of a tunic or cloak.[23] The transverse arm of the cross provides the ground line on which they all stand. Yet the ground plane is not materially represented since the background is uniformly blue. However, the positions of the bare feet of the apostles -- the Blessed Virgin is the only one wearing sandals-- indicate where the ground should be.[24] All are wearing long garments of varying colors ranging from white to purple, yellow, green, and blue, and the color of their nimbi are either white, yellow, blue or red.

The ten apostles and Mary are crowded into a relatively small space. They are shown in animated poses, with arms outstretched and faces upturned. However, Mary is represented as a supplicant, raising both hands in a mute prayer. St. Peter, green keys in hand-- a modern restoration -- stands next to the Blessed Virgin. In the right panel, instead of watching Christ ascending, St. John holds the pose in which he is often portrayed in images of the Crucifixion. He is holding a closed book in his right hand and is resting his

left hand on his cheek as a way to express his sorrow. He is also the only one not raising his head towards the ascending Christ.

4. Panels of the Martyrdom of SS. Peter and Paul (fig. 7)

After Christ's Ascension, the chronology of events leads the viewer all the way down to the main body of the quatrefoil. In the left lobe, the narrative unfolds under a trefoil arcade, suggesting that the scene is taking place inside. The rich ornamentation of the small architectural constructions on top of the arcade indicates that the scene is taking place in a palace, in this case Nero's. Additionally, an inscription below the scene reads: NERO IMPERAT. The emperor is sitting on a throne. He is portrayed with short hair and a beard similar to those worn by twelfth-century French and English monarchs. An elaborate gold crown rests securely on his head. A long-sleeved green tunic, bordered in dark purple, covers his whole body, while a blue mantle is draped over his left shoulder. He is wearing hose and soft boots of the same blue color as his mantle. He has gathered one end of his cloak in his left hand.

An ugly blue devil with pointed ears shows only his head, while hiding the rest of his body behind the seated Emperor. The devil's mouth is right next to Nero's ear, as though he were whispering to entice him to condemn SS. Peter and Paul to death. In fact, the position of Nero's body, and the implied movement of his limbs and head, indicate that he has just given an order, probably the death sentence in question. His feet are resting on a stool. He has just turned his upper body towards the central square of the quatrefoil in which St. Peter is being nailed upside down on a cross. In his haste, in pivoting to the right, Nero has shifted his balance and his weight. He is putting undue pressure on the right side of his footstool, lifting the left side of the tabouret off the ground. At the same time, he is thrusting his right arm towards the central panel. His hand and index finger are raised in an easily recognizable gesture of command.

Two figures await Nero's orders. A small bearded man, coiffed with a bonnet similar to Longinus', is standing behind the Emperor. His right arm close to his body, he has lifted his right hand and is in the process of timidly raising his index finger, which is represented as barely detached from the others. He is holding up a long sword probably in

his left hand which is not visible. Yet he does not seem eager to move forward and obey the Emperor's command. The small stature of this man and his dark garments render him even more inconspicuous. His reluctance to act is implied in his cowardly response to Nero's orders. He seems to want to interrupt Nero, perhaps to ask him a question, or to make an objection. Yet, he does not dare.

In contrast, Nero's other attendant is more than willing to go forward and make sure that the emperor's judgment is carried out. While he is attentively looking back at Nero, this third character is already moving forward. His left arm is raised, to signify he has heard the Emperor's order and he will immediately obey. His right hand is wrapped around the hilt of the sword that he is about to draw from the scabbard at his side. The bright red background sharply outlines his gesticulating body dressed in a blue bliaud over a white knee-length, long-sleeved tunic, and black boots. At first glance the observer might believe that he is rushing towards the center of the quatrefoil, the area in which St. Peter is being crucified upside down.

Yet, this man, eager to carry out Nero's order, has apparently bypassed the scene only to appear again in the right lobe of the quatrefoil as St. Paul's executioner. Upon close observation, one can see that the man about to decapitate St. Paul is wearing the same type and color of clothing as the figure standing next to Nero. In fact, to a certain extent, his pose in the right lobe mirrors the one in the left. This malevolent-looking executioner is steadying and restraining St. Paul by holding both ends of the scarf covering the eyes of the Saint. He is brandishing a sword, ready to swing it forcefully. His whole body reflects the tension, and the momentum that he is gathering to strike the half kneeling St. Paul. The executioner is shown in the pose of a discus thrower just before he lets go of the discus. The heel of his right foot is lifted off the ground, while his left leg is crossed over his right at thigh level. His right foot is coming to rest securely on the ground represented by a thin line of green glass. The fabric of his garments molds the shape of his leg, showing how taut and straight it truly is. At the same time, he has raised his right arm, in which he is holding a sword, and is ready to strike.

St. Paul is easily recognized because of his bald head and beard. His facial features are otherwise indiscernible underneath a blindfold. He is wearing a yellow tunic bordered

in green, and covered by a blue mantle. His nimbus is blue. While his executioner is shod in soft boot-like stockings, St. Paul is barefoot. His arms are extended and his hands are folded in prayerful mute supplication. He appears to be trying to kneel, but the violence implied in the gesture of the executioner tugging on his blindfold and jerking him backwards prevents St. Paul from kneeling completely. This scene unfolds within a red background under a trefoil arcade crowned by a small brick structure to suggest a building, possibly the prison in which St. Paul was detained.

At the center of the quatrefoil, St. Peter's crucifixion is a small scale mirror image of Christ's Crucifixion seen above. St. Peter is being crucified upside down on a blood red cross bordered in green. Four men in agitated postures are busy nailing him to the cross. Two of them are standing on ladders that form an equilateral triangle with the transverse arm of the cross. St. Peter is wearing a white and purple robe secured around his legs to prevent it from falling over his head. A type of blue sash is wrapped over his right shoulder, under his left arm and around his waist. He appears to be barefoot,and he is nimbed with a white halo. St. Peter's crucifixion is set against a bright blue background. Three borders outline the scene. First, a plain red band surrounds the blue background. Then, a white fillet separates the red band from an elaborate border made of small squares of four alternating colors: purple, blue, yellow and green. Each square contains a four-leaved cruciform, stylized flower. At each corner of the rectangle containing the main body of the quatrefoil, four small naked figures, represented within semicircles, are coming out of their graves. Blue glass from which figures are emerging in various acrobatic positions suggests their tombs. All four appear to be men, although the one in the upper left corner could be a woman. Under SS. Peter and Paul, the inscriptions read respectively: SCS PETRUS and SCS PAULUS.

5. The Donors' Panel (fig. 8)

The bottom lobe of the quatrefoil portrays the donors offering a scaled down model of the Crucifixion window.[25] A triple border composed of two white fillets (the white fillets are pearled only on the side touching the yellow border), running on each side of a yellow border decorated with trifoliated stylized flowers, resembling fleur-de-lis, enclose

this semi-circular lobe. The donors are recognizable as a King and Queen, because of their elaborate gold crowns, identical to Nero's.[26] They are both wearing a plain blue tunic with a white mantle over it. The King is also wearing yellow hose and green boots, and genuflecting on one knee, while the Queen's feet are completely hidden from view and she is kneeling with both knees on the ground. The monarchs' heads are raised and they are looking up at the scenes unfolding above. They are offering a small-scale model of the Crucifixion window. Behind them on each side of the lobe, small figures are shown in the reverent pose of supplicants, with outstretched arms and upraised, open hands as though they were also offering the Crucifixion window to Christ and His apostles.

The only original phrase of the two-line inscription contained in the rectangles on either side of the donors' panel is found on the left side of the first line, and reads: DIT HANC VITREAM. While the letters on the right side of the inscription, BLAS REAS ET S. FILIIS, are original, their association into the phrase that we read today is not.[27] To fill the void left by the broken glass, sixteenth-century restorers borrowed letters from thirteenth, fifteen and sixteenth-century broken windows and combined them haphazardly with the few letters that remained intact.[28] When Steinheil restored the window in 1883-1885, he only kept the original twelfth-century letters, using them together with facsimiles of the original style of lettering to write the following, truncated inscription: LES DEBRIS DE L'INSCRIPTION ANC. -- IENNE ONT ETE RELIGI (eusement) CONSERVES. The loss of the original inscription is very unfortunate because it deprives us of any certain knowledge of the identity of the Donors.

6. The Border of the Crucifixion Window (fig. 9)

The Crucifixion window is set within a wide border of intricate design. A meandering white fillet forms elongated heart-shaped figures, pointed at one end, and round medallions inserted into the design at regular intervals between the elongated hearts. On both the left and right bottom corners of the window, the following pattern develops: one round medallion containing an eight-petal rosette on a red ground contained within a white fillet border beaded on the inside. [29] The rosette has four long yellow petals alternating with four short blue ones. Close observation reveals that the flowers are not

identical. Although the basic shape, position of the petals, and combination of colors remain the same, the inside treatment of the yellow petals varies from plain to striated -- like a palmette design, or with indented edges, akin to a leaf. All the centers are white, some are cruciform and lobed, while others are lobed octagons. The medallion is faced on two sides by the concave end of the elongated heart-shaped figure. A five-leaf design of blue, yellow and green leaves, similar to an architectural finial, seems to sprout from a green five-leaf calyx. In turn, the green stem of the calyx pierces the white fillet to attach itself to the tip of one of the yellow petals growing from the center of the round medallion. The leaves closest to the calyx are blue and curl at the tip in the manner of young fern shoots.[30] Although the outline remains the same, in trying to imitate nature the artist has varied the designs on the inside of the leaves. Some are drawn as open leaves, others as though observed sideways, and at various stages of their development. Each group of five leaves -- two blue, two yellow and one green, mirrors a similar group, represented in reverse within the next elongated heart-shaped figure. At the pointed end of the elongated heart, the white fillets crisscross and intertwine to form what appears to be a loose figure-of-eight knot. A medallion continues the design which repeats itself to frame the whole window.

The semi-circles containing the allegorical representations of sun and moon, the pointed upper end of Christ's mandorla in the Ascension scene and the bottom lobe containing the Donors are the only interruptions in the pattern of the frame. Beyond the white interlaced border, the composition rests on a blue field. Two bands, one white and one red, outline the inside of the border of the Crucifixion window, while only a red one delineates its outside edge. This border is highly ornamental because of the originality of its design. While its composition is stylized, some of the details found in the various elements of plant life contained in the composition are depicted in a realistic manner close to their natural appearances. Yet, the arrangement of these elements within the boundaries established by the meandering white fillet, its elaborate shape, and the hidden symbolism of some of the forms, make the border unique.[31]

7. Stylistic Considerations

Stylistically, the Crucifixion window belongs to the twelfth century. First of all, the shape of the window, divided horizontally and vertically by strong iron bars into rectangular and square panels of varying sizes, places it well within the twelfth-century, Romanesque tradition.[32] The Ascension window of the cathedral of St. Julien in Le Mans, dating c. 1140-1145, is also composed of rectangular panels. These strong iron bars often served to delineate a scene or part of a scene. In the case of the Crucifixion window, they also serve to outline the cross at the center of the composition. The type of figures represented show strong ties to other twelfth-century representations either in mural painting, sculpture, metal enameling or illuminated manuscript. In all media of the period, figures and inanimate objects are strongly outlined reflecting a predilection for graphic design.[33] In addition, the composition is arranged symmetrically according to a central axis -- the cross of Christ in the Crucifixion window. The cross-legged posture of some of the figures implies a potential for movement, while the close fitting garments and drapery folds reveal rather than hide the shape of the body. The finely rendered facial features and general appearances of face and hair are part of the general vocabulary of twelfth-century design.[34]

These elements of style can also be traced to other media, for example, architectural sculptures found on portals, and tympana, or trumeaux such as the sculpted figures of the prophet Jeremiah or St. Paul on the trumeau of the Church of St. Pierre at Moissac (c.1115-1131).[35] Closer to Poitiers, the sculptural programs of the churches of Burgundy and Brionnais, such as the Ascension on the tympanum of the church at Montceaux l'Étoile (fig. 10), show a close stylistic connection to the Crucifixion window. As it was in its finishing stages in 1122, the sculptured façade of the Church of Notre-Dame-La-Grande at Poitiers could also have been a source of inspiration.[36] Elements of style such as the pointed "V" shaped pleats of the drapery in the front of the Blessed Virgin's robe in the Crucifixion window are also found on the figures sculpted on the façade of Notre-Dame-La-Grande. There also exists a strong connection to twelfth-century manuscripts of the Poitou region such as the Vita Radegundis (Poitiers, Médiathèque, MS 250) or the Rituel et recueil de messes (Poitiers, Médiathèque, MS 40). Yet, it is difficult to pinpoint

specific influences since this was a conventional mode to represent drapery folds in Romanesque art.[37]

Metal enameling, an art form closely related to stained glass, can also be connected to the style of the Crucifixion window. Limoges, already known in the twelfth century for its enameled metal work is located relatively close to Poitiers. The body of Christ on the cross is heavily outlined by thick lead cames. This type of sharply outlined body parts is also found in contemporary enameled metal works such as the Stavelot Portable Altar, c. 1160, or the Alton Towers Triptych, c. 1150.[38] The detailed anatomy and the heavy leading of Christ's body -- especially in the chest area and limbs -- show similarities to other contemporary stained glass renditions of Christ such as the bust of Christ in the Last Judgement Window at Le Mans, c. 1120-1145 (fig. 11), or the Christ in Majesty of the Last Judgement from the rose window at the collegiate church of Notre Dame at Mantes-la-Jolie, c. 1170's (fig. 12).[39] Elements of style should only be used as a guideline to identify a possible time frame for a particular image. However, in the case of the Crucifixion window, it will be shown below that art historians have used style to accommodate various dates.

Conclusion

Individually, each scene found in the Crucifixion window was familiar to a twelfth-century audience as was the style of the window and of the figures represented within its borders. However, the overall design representing the Crucifixion together with the Resurrection, Ascension and Martyrdoms of SS. Peter and Paul within an intricate border, is highly innovative and does not occur in any other known stained glass window. While style must be analyzed with care to prevent hasty conclusions, certain elements of design and manufacture such as the shape of the window and its panels that are all based on the square, the contents of the glass, the heavy iron bars of the armature, and thick leading graphically outlining the figures, serve to establish a time frame well within the twelfth century. Within this context, the postures and gestures of the participants in the scenes represented in the Crucifixion window that are naturalistically rendered and reveal their potential for movement and action, the non-existent scenery, and the stylized architectural

settings confirm a twelfth-century dating. An analysis of the iconography of the window will further help in setting a time frame and will perhaps give a clue as to the donors' identity.

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[1] Raguin, "The Architectural," 186-89, gives a concise, yet comprehensive list of all the restorations.

[2] Basing their assessments on the observations of the restorer Steinheil, Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail," 43, and Grinnell, "Iconography," 174, were of the opinion that the window was not in its original place. I will explore this possibility below.

[3] Measurements vary according to the authors: Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," XVI, 211, "longueur: 8 m. 40 cm., ...3 m. 25 cm. de largeur;" Grinnell, "Iconography," 171, "...8.45 x 3.00 meters in size..." Grodecki, Le vitrail roman, 286, "H. 9.50 m., L. 3.50m.; Petzold, Romanesque Art, 69, same as Grodecki's; E. Rayon, Inventaire des vitraux du département de la Vienne (1925):90 ff.. length 8.25 meters, width of 3.02 meters. Rayon's Inventaire, in manuscript form, was formerly held (under number B - 1764) at the Bibliothèque de l'architecture under the aegis of the Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale at Paris, France. This library was dismantled in the early 1980's when the new government of France, under Président Mitterand, came to power. While Raguin, "The Architectural," mentions "Archives de la Commission des Monuments Historiques de la France, Paris" as its present location, recent inquiries made in France (Aug. 1997), revealed that nobody knows the whereabouts of this particular document. However, a typewritten copy of part of Colonel Rayon's inventory that concerns the Crucifixion window (Catalogue nos. II-1 through II-46) was found at the "Centre d'Études Médiévales at Poitiers," attached to an undated "Mémoire" written for Professor René Crozet.

[4] From first hand observation; and Louis Grodecki, "A Stained Glass Atelier in the Thirteenth Century," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, 11 (1948): 101.

[5] Rayon, Inventaire, (1925), I-1 - I-46.

[6] Granboulan, "De la paroisse à la cathédrale," 45-46; Grodecki, Le vitrail roman, 86 and 281.

[7] Crozet, "Le vitrail," 223.

[8] Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail," 36; Grinnell, "Iconography," 171.

[9] Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail," 36; Crozet, "Le vitrail," 229.

[10] Rayon, Inventaire, II-24.

[11] For the history of Longinus, see Louis Bréhier, L'art chrétien (1927):86; and Gertrud Schiller, Iconography of Christian Art. II (1972):13, "...the apocryphal Acta Pilati of the 5th or 6th century."

[12] Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail," 33, "Longin, coiffé d'un bonnet jaune, souple et à plis...;" Grinnell, "Iconography, 172, "...a yellow Phrygian cap...;" Rayon, Inventaire, "Longinus, coiffé d'un bonnet juif rond et doré...;" Crozet, "Le Vitrail," 226, "...coiffé d'un bonnet de forme conique jaune."

[13] Rayon, Inventaire, panel II-30, "les pièces qui dessinaient le contour d'un seau ont disparu."

[14] Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail," 33. "Il [Longinus] a pour pendant celui que le Moyen Age a nommé indifféremment Calpurnius et Stéphaton;" ibid., 33, n. 3.

[15] Rayon, Inventaire, panel II-25, Stephaton's head: "partie probablement restaurée anciennement."

[16] Crozet, "Le vitrail," 227, "Dans les écoinçons..., on reconnaît Adam et Ève."

[17] At the time of the Ascension, the number of Christ's disciples was reduced to eleven. However, only ten are portrayed at Poitiers. A piece of the garment of the eleventh apostle that was originally part of the Crucifixion window was removed by the restorer, Louis Steinheil, c. 1883-1885. It can still be seen

in Cl. Delacroix's lithograph (see Auber, "Histoire," (1848-49):pl. X), on the right side of the Ascension panel (see also Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail," 43).

[18] This is an unusual design, not found in other stained glass windows. However, an ancient marble statue of Minerva (now in the Poitiers Museum) wears an aegis adorned with a similar pattern. One wonders if this statue could have been viewed by the craftsperson who made the window. (For the statue, see Jean Hiernard et Luc Bourgeois, "Quand Poitiers s'appelait Lemonum," Archeologia, 6H (1995):7-11).

[19] Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail," 40, "Le Christ...bénit à la manière grecque"; James Hall, Illustrated Dictionary of Symbols in Eastern and Western Art, (1994), 122, "...In the Greek Church the forefinger is extended, the third half curled, the fourth held down by the thumb, and the fifth half curled. They are meant to form the Greek letters IC XC, the abbreviation of 'Jesus Christ', but are seldom correctly depicted." Close observation of the window reveals that Christ uses a mixed form, closer to the Latin than to the Greek manner of blessing (for a truly Latin blessing, He should have been represented with forefinger. middle finger, and thumb raised -- not bent).

[20] Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail," 41, mentions that "Le fond est rouge, par plaques ovales, qui réunissent de petits carrés bleus;" Crozet, "Le vitrail," 227 only mentions squares and lozenges; yet, in Crozet, "Le vitrail," 223, the picture of the ascending Christ clearly shows octagonal shapes. Observation in situ reveals that the background of the Ascension is made of red octagons and blue squares.

[21] These two red circles do not appear in the 1848 lithograph, or in photos taken prior to Steinheil's restoration.

[22] Crozet, "Le vitrail," 228, "On reconnaît aujourd'hui Saint-Pierre à ses clefs; mais il s'agit d'une addition de Steinheil."

[23] Auber, "Histoire de la Cathédrale," plate X, lithograph by Cl. Delacroix, Poitiers; G. Durand, photographs, scale 1:4. nos. I 5459 to I 5514. Archives des Monuments Historiques. In his Inventaire, Col. Rayon used Durand's photographs taken before and after the restoration, and M. Couvrat's series of photos taken in 1933.

[24] From personal observation and Grinnell, "The Crucifixion Window," 77.

[25] Crozet, "Le vitrail," 222. "...il s'agit d'une restauration exécutée par Steinheil. Avant 1883, ils tenaient une sorte de tiare conique renversée; malheureusement ce n'était qu'un fragment du XVIe siècle."

[26] Musée national du Moyen Age - Thermes de Cluny, (1993): 120-21, fig. 141, Head of a Queen from the façade of the Abbey of Saint-Denis. Monumental sculptures of the Kings and Queens that were part of the sculptural program of the façade at St. Denis (c. 1140), and were removed during the French Revolution, wear the same type of crown as the ones in the Crucifixion window. This conventional design is also found in the murals at Saint-Savin-sur-Gartempe and in contemporary illuminated manuscripts such as the Vita Radegundis (Poitiers, Médiathèque, MS 250).

[27] These are the words that can be read today. According to Delacroix's lithograph (Auber, "Histoire," plate X), the first line read DIT HANC VITREAM (the "m" is cut in half), on the left, and BLAS/REAS/ AD/SII/S, on the right. However, Rayon, Inventaire, II-45, noted that "avant 1883, on lisait: en haut: BLAS/REAS/ET ICV/IS/S/FIL. ICV et IS étaient tête bêche." The difference in the recorded letters may be due to the difficulty in deciphering the writing. For the debate that went on in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries regarding the personality of the donors see below, 43 notes 87 and 88.

[28] Rayon, Inventaire, II-43, states: "avant la restauration, lettres intercalées, du XVIe siècle peut-être: a/ san/ radi, [underlined in the text] le dernier mot inversé;" ibid., II-45, "En bas, lettres du XVème siècle s.SA/RAM/CTE/CE, toutes tête bêche."

[29] Grodecki, "Les vitraux de la cathédrale de Poitiers," 104.

[30] According to Ana María Quiñones, Symboles végétaux - La flore sculptée dans l'art médiéval (1995):65, 67 and 68, the representation of ferns was widespread in twelfth-century churches.

[31] Grinnell, "The Crucifixion Window," 81, "The interlace border...has a distinct character not found elsewhere in the cathedral, either in the sculpture or in glass." In fact, the border has such a distinct character that no exact duplicate can be found in stained glass.

[32] Grodecki, Le vitrail roman, 21-22.

[33] Granboulan, "De la paroisse à la cathédrale," 46-47.

[34] For examples, see André Mussat et al, La Cathédrale du Mans (1981): 62.

[35] Meyer Schapiro, La scultpure de Moissac (1987):4.

[36] Marie-Thérèse Camus, "Un Chef-d'oeuvre de l'art roman," Archeologia, 6H(1995):49; Jean-Pierre Andrault, Poitiers (1996):21.

[37] For connection to other artistic forms, see Larry M. Ayres, "English Painting and the Continent during the Reign of Henry II and Eleanor," William W. Kibler, ed., Eleanor of Aquitaine - Patron and Politician (1976):115-146, especially 117.

[38] Petzold, Romanesque Art, 156, fig. 118, "Stavelot Portable Altar (view of the top), c. 1160. Champlevé enamel and gilt copper. Musées Royaux d'art de d'histoire, Brussels"; John Beckwith, Early Medieval Art (1964):179, fig. 168, "Alton Towers Triptych in champlevé enamel on gilt copper, borders stamped and engraved. Mosan, about 1150."

[39] For the Christ of the Last Judgment at Le Mans, see Grodecki, Le vitrail Roman, 62. For the Chirst at Mantes, see Robert Bailly, La collégiale Notre Dame à Mantes-la-Jolie (1980):25-27; Louis Grodecki, "Le Vitrail et l'architecture au douzième et au treizième siècles" Gazette des beaux arts, (1951): 5-25.

CHAPTER II

ICONOGRAPHY OF THE CRUCIFIXION WINDOW

The Crucifixion window, while unique in design, illustrates theological concepts well disseminated within the popular consciousness of the twelfth century: the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, the Ascension of Christ, the crucifixion of St. Peter and the beheading of St. Paul. However, the images that these concepts helped produce were the results of eight hundred years of dogmatic refinements and iconographic evolution through various cultures and changing political regimes. Theologically and dogmatically, because of their association with the redemption of humanity, these scenes of Christ's Life represent the crucial moments in the foundation of the Christian faith.[1]

In their definition of Christian dogma, one of the first and most important questions that the Church Fathers had to answer, involved the two natures within the one Person of Christ. Is Christ truly man? Is He truly God? Or is He both? If He is both, how can this duality be understood? Furthermore, how can it be portrayed? Can it even be portrayed? In 431, the Council of Ephesus first defined the Hypostatic Union -- the union of the two natures, human and Divine, in the one Person, Christ.[2] However, the concept is very difficult to understand and interpret, and council after council reconsidered the issue. The debate continued into the twelfth century and still goes on today.[3] Not only dogma, but also the many cultures and various political regimes helped define the iconography of the major events of Christ's life. At the time of its conception, the designer(s) of the Crucifixion window included elements of iconography specifically related to past and contemporary events, to the evolving socio-political and religious contexts of the twelfth century, and to contemporary philosophy and theology, especially to the beliefs of one man, Gilbert de la Porrée, Bishop of Poitiers (1142-1154). The following paragraphs contain an analysis of these elements.

1. The Crucifixion Panels

1.1. Iconographic Background

The cross was a well-known symbol throughout the pagan world.[4] However, prior to 313 AD,[5] early Christianity produced few crosses -- even without a corpus -- most occurring within the context of funerary art.[6] For the early Christians, the reluctance to show a Crucified Christ is likely to have stemmed from the odium associated with the type of death that the Romans reserved for the lowest class of criminals. As testified by a second-century graffito found in Rome, Christians were mocked for their beliefs in a Crucified God.[7] As a result, representations of Christ on the cross dating from the first to the fifth century AD have yet to be found.[8] Once the decision had been made to show Christ on the cross, there is evidence that no one was certain if Christ should be portrayed as being alive or dead,[9] and as wearing a colobium or a perizoma.[10]

Beliefs in Christ as the eternal and ever-living God would encourage a symbolic representation of His crucifixion.[11] One of the first examples of this type can be found on the Monza and Bobbio ampullae, on which only a bust of Christ is portrayed. Another alternative would be to represent Christ alive in the position of a crucified figure, but without the cross. This is the way Christ is portrayed on a door panel of the church of S. Sabina at Rome, dating from the fifth century A.D. Later variations would include showing Christ alive on a cross/tree of life, as a symbol of the triumph of life over death. These symbolic representations of the Crucifixion, stressing the divine nature of Christ, place Him outside of the normal unfolding of time. Once Christ is portrayed as dying or dead, emphasizing His human nature, He becomes primarily an historical figure.[12]

Although the representation of a dead Christ on the cross may have occurred before iconoclasm,[13] until the end of the twelfth century most Western European artistic representations of the Crucifixion portray Christ as being alive on the cross.[14] A majestic Christ triumphing over the death of the flesh and removed from historical vagaries and human sensibilities emphasized people's belief in the reality of a better life after death. However, the economic growth that reached its apex in the thirteenth century effected profound societal changes.[15] As a result, a new spirituality was born.[16] In order to atone for one's sins, the clergy preached the need to regard the poor as alteri

Christi, and to be charitable towards them. This meant that theologians put a greater emphasis on the human nature of Christ and on the redemptive qualities of his horrible sufferings on the cross. These influences impelled thirteenth-century Western European artists to graphically depict the Crucifixion.

In addition, the Crusades stimulated economic and cultural exchanges between East and West. Western Europeans traveled to foreign cities such as Constantinople and Jerusalem, and were exposed to other forms of artistic representations, that soon found their way into western art. Following Byzantine practice, Western European artists began to paint a more accurate and realistic picture of the effects of the Crucifixion on the human body.[17] This slow descent towards extreme realism found its culmination in works like that of the German painter, Grünewald, who went out of his way to reveal the true horror of the Crucifixion in his Issenheim Altarpiece (fig. 13).[18]

1.2. Iconography of the Crucifixion Panels

The iconography of the panels depicting a large figure of Christ on the cross between the smaller figures of Mary and Longinus on His right and St. John and Stephaton on His left, attest to the artist's adherence to established artistic conventions. However, the person(s) who designed the Crucifixion panels at Poitiers attempted to strike a balance between the symbolic and the historical, as a way to portray both natures in Christ: the divine and the human.[19] Thus, Christ is shown alive, with His eyes open and with only an expression of profound sadness and resignation on his face. Yet, His body has lost the triumphal bearing of some of the earlier representations, and is beginning to curve to the left showing His ebbing strength. While His arms still hold their almost rigid bearing, His head, inclined to the left, has begun its slow descent towards His right shoulder. However, the crown of thorns has not yet replaced the crossed nimbus that remains as a sure sign of Christ's kingship.[20] This portrayal of Christ's Crucifixion remains a message of hope and redemption, but already hints at the part played in later art by the portrayal of His human nature.

Although the body of Christ's Cross is a vivid red stressing the notion of sacrifice, the border of plant life outlining the cross emphasizes the link and the

contradiction between life and death. This is contrary to some representations encountered in early Crucifixions in which the cross is almost completely hidden,[21] or shown without a corpus. The iconographic element of the living cross is based on early Eastern legends linking the cross to the Tree of Life that grew in Paradise.[22] A mosaic in the apse of the Church of San Clemente in Rome, rebuilt in the early twelfth century, is one of the most beautiful and luxuriant examples of the Cross as the Tree of Life. Closer to Poitiers, contemporary representations of the Crucifixion in stained glass at Chartres, c. 1150 (fig. 14), and Chalons-en-Champagne, c. 1147 (fig. 15), show Christ crucified on a cross the main body of which is green, a widely accepted iconographical convention used to indicate new life.

Similarities in the iconographies do not end at the color of the cross. The crucified Christ is portrayed between the symmetrically arranged figures of the Blessed Virgin and Longinus on the left, and St. John and Stephaton on the right. While the presence of Mary, St. John, Longinus and Stephaton is based on St. John's account of the Crucifixion (Jn. 19:25-33), the positions of the figures can be explained by a long iconographic tradition.[23] In late Carolingian examples, the elimination of unessential elements and the reorganization of the remaining ones into registers increased the legibility of the narratives.[24] In the late tenth and eleventh centuries, the Byzantines streamlined the still cumbersome compositions even further and reduced the representation of the Crucifixion to its essential elements. Several Byzantine ivory plaques of that period portray the crucified Christ with only the Blessed Virgin and St. John on either side of the Cross,[25] sometimes adding the Sun and Moon above its transverse arm.[26]

In the Poitiers Crucifixion window, the figure of Ecclesia often depicted in Crucifixion scenes may have been deemed unnecessary because Mary, as both mother and bride of Christ, was the simile for the divine Church created by Christ. While Mary's role as mother needs no explanation, as Christ's bride, she embodies the celestial Jerusalem. In the twelfth century, St. Hildegard of Bingen evoked this conception of the Blessed Virgin as a heavenly city.[27] Mary is also the link between God and His people on earth, represented by Longinus, the other figure standing at the right of Christ, the Roman soldier who pierced Christ's side.[28] Because he saw and acknowledged the

divinity of Christ (Mk. 15:39), Longinus was given the role of representing the living and militant Church.[29] The female allegorical figure of Ecclesia -- which was meant to represent both the divine Church and its people -- became superfluous and was removed to clarify the composition.

This process of elimination and clarification, and the medieval love of symmetry, also led to the conflation of Stephaton as the sponge bearer with Synagoga.[30] The sponge bearer was always regarded as one of the executioners of Christ, while the blindfolded female figure of Synagoga turning away from the cross was the metaphor for the Jewish people. The fusion of Synagoga with Stephaton is symptomatic of changing trends in Christian beliefs. The Jews were not only the people who were blind to the truth and refused to acknowledge Christ's divinity, they had become the executioners of Christ. However, the difficulty in portraying what the Medievals perceived as collective evil in the form of one man is evident in this representation. Notwithstanding the absence of the neck which may have resulted from a clumsy restoration, the lack of proportion between the body and head of Stephaton is a physical deformity that, according to the Medieval way of thinking, serves to emphasize the inner distortions of a person's soul. An example of a similar representation of an executioner is found at Chartres (fig. 16).[31] In some contemporary stained glass Crucifixions, compositions were streamlined further by removing altogether the figures of Longinus and Stephaton.[32]

The iconographies of these twelfth-century windows do not vary greatly. Yet, at St. Denis and Chartres, the iconographic contexts and placement of the windows are very different from Poitiers.[33] In addition, by representing a dead Christ at St. Denis, and Chartres, the artists stressed Christ's human nature, and the notion of sacrifice. These are not emphasized at Poitiers where the cross of the Redeemer is prominently displayed to remind the viewer that a relic of the True Cross was venerated in the nearby church of Ste. Radegund. In the representations at Chalons and at Reims, the iconographies of the Crucifixion and the portrayals of Christ are closest to Poitiers. However, only in the stained glass window at Poitiers is the Crucifixion combined with the Resurrection and Ascension. Below the Cross, the narrative unfolds in the three small Resurrection panels.

2. Iconography of the Resurrection Panels

The discovery of the empty tomb, as narrated in the New Testament,[34] is the principal event following the Resurrection.[35] It is centered between the representations of the Holy Women in the right panel, and the angel waiting to announce the good news in the left panel. Resurrection scenes frequently accompany the Crucifixion. The Monza and Bobbio ampullae already show an abbreviated version centered around the Holy Sepulchre, depicted as a domed structure supported by columns crowned with sculpted capitals.[36] The more naturalistic and detailed illustration of the Resurrection from the Rabbula Gospels displays a similar construction.[37] Both of these examples could have been representations of the long destroyed Holy Sepulchre built by Constantine, the memory of which not only survived through many models such as the wooden reliquary casket in the Museo Sacro at the Vatican in Rome,[38] but also through the construction of full size churches. The large church of Neuvy-Saint-Sépulcre built on land owned by the dukes of Aquitaine on one of the pilgrimage roads is the example closest to Poitiers.[39] Comparable images of the Holy Sepulchre are also embossed in metal,[40] and carved in ivory, [41] suggesting a continuity and consistency in design at different times and across various media.[42] Taking into account the difficulty in representing the interior and exterior of a building without the use of perspective, the stained glass image at Poitiers seems to be a good rendition of the Holy Sepulchre with its porticos on each side of a domical structure. It is certainly plausible, as Barbier de Montault suggested, that it is a true depiction of the Holy Sepulchre because of the strong ties between the Dukes of Aquitaine, the Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem, and the First and Second Crusades.[43]

While the Crusades left their mark on the Resurrection panels at Poitiers, another influence is also felt. In the right panel, the three Holy Women, leaning on staffs, are walking towards the place where Jesus was laid to rest. The women's staffs are exact renderings of pilgrims' staffs. This iconographic detail is unique to the Crucifixion window. It is a reference to pilgrimages in general, and especially to the pilgrimage road to Santiago de Compostela.

The slab of stone on which Christ was laid, His shroud, [44] the burning oil lamps,[45] that are reminders of the lamps burning next to Christ's tomb in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, the angel waiting to announce the good news,[46] the sleeping soldiers guarding the tomb, and the Holy Women, are all part of the established iconography of the Resurrection.[47] While the iconography of the composition followed an established formula, details, such as costumes, were left to the imagination of the artists and craftspeople, and, like the armor and shields worn by the soldiers guarding the Holy Sepulchre in the Resurrection panel, were often adapted to follow contemporary fashion,[48] a fact that is perhaps helpful in dating the window.[49]

3. Iconography of the Ascension Panels

While the depiction of the Resurrection at Poitiers was faithful to scriptural accounts, the Ascension of Christ into Heaven was not well defined in the Gospels. Artists had to rely on a few lines from the Acts of the Apostles for their compositions.[50] The lack of available details forced the Christian artist to invent a suitable iconography.[51] In an early version, Christ is shown climbing the side of a mountain towards the outstretched Hand of God coming out of a cloud.[52] In another version, only the feet of Christ are seen to intimate that the Apostles and the Virgin, watching from below, were witnessing His disappearance.[53] But the most enduring representation of the Ascension belongs to the Rabbula Gospels (fig. 17), and to the Monza and Bobbio ampullae, [54] where Christ is portrayed in a mandorla, going up to Heaven surrounded by angels, while the Apostles and the Virgin are watching beneath. This type of representation is also found in the Crucifixion window at Poitiers. However, while its iconography is consistent with earlier examples, a small detail gives a deeper meaning to this whole composition. Two large angels, mirroring each other, point with one hand to Christ on the Cross and, with the other, to the mandorla containing the ascending Christ standing on clouds. In a mute explanation, the designer(s) seems to indicate his desire to express the duality of nature in the same person, Christ, who, after His death on the Cross and His resurrection is now ready to ascend to Heaven. Except for the medallion, c. 1175, formerly part of a stained glass window at the Abbey Church of St. Pierre at Chartres, the

only other twelfth-century representation of the Ascension in stained glass is found in the remaining panels of the Ascension window of the Cathedral of St. Julien at Le Mans, tentatively dated c. 1120-1137.[55] However, contemporary illuminated manuscripts, such as the Sacramentary of the Cathedral of St. Étienne at Limoges (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Lat. 9438, fol. 84 v), may have also exerted some influence on the iconography of the Ascension at Poitiers.[56]

Given the difference in medium, a nearby example for the iconographic details at Poitiers can be seen in the Ascension murals of the adjacent Baptistery of St. John (fig. 18). Painted shortly after 1100, this mural portrays Christ in a mandorla holding an open book in his left hand on which the words EGO S[UM] [V]ITA (Jn 14:6) were written as a reminder of the salvific function of baptism.[57] Christ's right hand is raised in a gesture of blessing. Two angels, their hands pointing towards Heaven, are flying below the two oculi on each side of Christ. The Apostles on the walls of the Baptistery of St. John are standing on undulating lines, an iconographic convention frequently used to represent the ground in twelfth-century monumental sculptures, paintings and stained glass, that can also be seen at Le Mans.[58] No such lines exist in the Ascension panels of the Crucifixion window, because the glass under the feet of the Blessed Virgin and of the Apostles, that was painted with wavy lines and small mounds to suggest the ground, was replaced c. 1883-1885. However, lines can be seen in Delacroix's lithograph (fig. 6) made prior to Steinheil's restoration.[59] The sketch accompanying E. Rayon's 1925 inventory confirms the replacement of the glass (fig. 19).[60]

Although it is unusual to find monumental representations of the Ascension on the façades of twelfth century churches, Poitiers possesses one.[61] A short distance from the Cathedral of St. Pierre, the Ascending Christ stands in a mandorla carved on the façade of Notre-Dame-la-Grande at Poitiers (fig. 20). This eleventh-century church, built near the medieval secular administrative center of the city, was being enlarged and given a new façade that was nearing completion c. 1122.[62] The theme of the Ascension seems to have enjoyed a great popularity in twelfth-century Poitiers since it can be seen in three different structures: The Cathedral of St. Pierre, the Baptistery of St. John, and the Church of Notre-Dame-la-Grande. As in the case of the representations of the Crucifixion and the

Resurrection, the iconography of the Ascension remained consistent with contemporary art. A definite relationship in artistic representation extending to various media existed between the ateliers of the regions around Le Mans, Angers, Bourges, Limoges, and Poitiers.[63]

4. Iconography of the Martyrdom of SS. Peter and Paul

Ense Coronatur Paulus, cruce Petrus, eodem
Sub duce, luce, loco, dux Nero, Roma locus[64]

The next set of panels illustrate the words of the short anonymous poem that would later become part of Jacopo da Voragine's Golden Legend. These three panels represent scenes of the martyrdoms of SS. Peter and Paul: Nero's judgment, St. Peter's crucifixion, and St. Paul's beheading. As exemplified in the above verses, the martyrdoms of SS. Peter and Paul are traditionally linked in narratives. According to early Church writers, like Eusebius, St. Irenaeus, and Tertullian,[65] SS. Peter and Paul died on the same day during Nero's widespread campaign of persecutions against the Christians, after the great burning of Rome in 64 AD. [66]

The expansion of the Gregorian reform movement and the increasing influence of the monastic order of Cluny encouraged a renewed obedience to the Church of Rome, and a revival of the veneration of Apostolic saints. It also resulted in the dedication of many churches to SS. Peter and Paul. Since it was mandatory that a saint be represented in a prominent place within the church of which he was patron, the stained glass window on the south side of the chevet wall of the Cathedral of St. Pierre is dedicated to the lives of SS. Peter and Paul. However, their martyrdoms are not portrayed on this window, probably because they were already represented in the Crucifixion window.[67] The importance of these two apostolic saints endured. In the fifteenth century, the Italian artist, Filarete, would depict the three scenes of the martyrdoms of SS. Peter and Paul together once again on the famous bronze doors of the old basilica of St. Peter in Rome.[68]

4.1. Nero Condemning the two Apostles

The narrative of the martyrdom of SS. Peter and Paul develops from left to right. In the left panel, Nero is easily identified by the inscription bearing his name, and by his

imperial attributes. The throne with bolstered cushions is similar to thrones painted in illuminated manuscripts.[69] The architectural structures represented over the trefoil arcades in the two lobes on the left and right of St. Peter's Crucifixion are the conventional representations of buildings in artistic renderings of the twelfth century. Close parallels for these architectural structures are found in the Vita Radegundis manuscript.[70]

4.2. The Martyrdom of St. Peter

In the central square of the quatrefoil, St. Peter is being crucified upside down, following a tradition recorded in early Christian writings.[71] According to one legend, the Church of San Pietro in Montorio on the Janiculum Hill in Rome is supposed to have been built on the spot of St. Peter's crucifixion. Another tradition has him die in Nero's circus, near the spot where St. Peter's Basilica now stands.[72] However, because it did not involve the representation of a major dogma, details of the iconography of St. Peter varied little over the centuries. He is portrayed as being crucified upside down by two or four executioners, either tying his arms and legs with a rope, or nailing his hands and feet to the cross. In some representations of his martyrdom, St. Peter is wearing only a loin-cloth.[73] However, in twelfth-century portrayals of St. Peter's crucifixion found in Western France (fig. 21), he is most often dressed in a long-sleeved tunic, known as a colobium, that is tied around his ankles.[74]

4.3. The Martyrdom of St. Paul

St. Paul's whereabouts towards the end of his life are better documented than St. Peter's. In a few sentences, St. Hillary, Bishop of Poitiers c. 350, related the story of the life and death of St. Paul. According to legend, on the way to his martyrdom, St. Paul met a woman named Plantilla, or Plautilla, from whom he borrowed a veil to cover his eyes. He also promised to return the veil after his death.[75] Thus, in the Crucifixion window, he is portrayed with a scarf covering his eyes and most of his face. His executioner is violently tugging at both ends of the scarf to steady St. Paul's head in order to make a clean cut. The violence implied in the swift movements of St. Paul's executioner, his deformed cranium, and bulbous nose identify him as an evil man. Notwithstanding the medieval custom to equate ugliness and distortion with evil, this is a

well-observed depiction of a man in the process of striking a heavy blow.[76] He shows the same enthusiasm in accomplishing his dirty work as one of St. Stephen's tormentors portrayed in a medallion at Le Mans.[77]

5. Iconography of the Donors' Panel

Usually relegated to the outlying area of the main narrative, the donors are portrayed presenting their offerings. The plainness of their clothing is rather unusual, especially when compared to the elaborate garments worn by other royal donors.[78] They are both shown kneeling, the woman on both knees and the man on only one, as a vassal would when giving homage to his suzerain. They are offering a model of the window -- a modern restitution -- to Christ and His apostles. The tiara that they were offering, prior to Steinheil's restoration, was a replacement installed after Coligny's canon balls hit the Cathedral in 1569.[79] When the donors' panel was first restored, the Church had already launched the Counter-Reformation. In the light of the renewed emphasis placed on papal powers, it is not surprising that a three-tiered tiara was placed right below the head of St. Peter, since it was then customary to represent St. Peter in papal garments with a conical tiara or triple crown (triregnum) on his head.[80] While the original iconography is unknown,[81] the tiara could not have been part of it since it was introduced in the early fourteenth century.[82]

From the early Christian period onwards, the donors were included, offering small scale replicas of the works of art they had commissioned.[83] The custom was widespread. A contemporary example in stained glass is the portrayal of Abbot Suger on one of the chevet windows in the basilica at St. Denis.[84] However, the monarchs are accompanied by small figures, partially hidden in the background. These figures do not represent children, but are meant to portray people of a lesser estate in life. Since a few figures were often used to suggest a group, [85] the four in the Crucifixion window perhaps represent the grateful bourgeois of Poitiers.[86] Unfortunately, because the original two-line inscription was irretrievably lost,[87] and the archives were burned at the same time, the names of the donors will have to be inferred, if at all possible, from other evidence. Their identity was a point of discussion for late nineteenth and early twentieth-

century art historians. The problem has not been solved satisfactorily, but the most outrageous assumptions concerning the identity of the donors can certainly be eliminated.[88] However, certain iconographical elements -- such as the simple attire of the king and queen, the small scale figures behind them, and the fleuron border around the quadrilobe -- may help in the identification of the donors and the establishment of a plausible time frame for the Crucifixion window.

6. Iconography of the Quatrefoil and its Border

The shape of the quatrefoil is found in other Medieval stained glass windows of the Romanesque period. One of the best examples is the twelfth-century Crucifixion panel at Chalons-en-Champagne (fig. 15). The quatrefoliated shape is also found in champlevé enameled metalworks such as the Stavelot Altarpiece.[89] A border, consisting of trilobed fleurons aligned between two white fillets, beaded on the inside, outlines the perimeter of the quatrefoil. Although the fleuron motif was often used in stained glass and other media because of its association with the Trinity and the virgin birth of Christ, it was not used as a border delineating and enclosing a special space.[90]

7. Iconography of the Frame of the Crucifixion Window

While using iconographic elements that can be found in other twelfth-century stained glass windows, the border of the Crucifixion window at Poitiers is unique in its overall composition. No other border of that period shows the same design. Commenting on the borders of the three chevet windows at Poitiers, Grodecki stated that "Aucune d'entre elles n'est la 'copie' d'une bordure connue."[91] Borders containing similar meandering lines and plants with more or less stylized petals and leaves may be found in windows at Angers, Chartres, Le Mans, Reims and St. Denis but their layouts are different, and their designs much simpler.[92] The strange configurations of the white meandering fillets seem to contain an esoteric meaning which will be explored later for its symbolic value.

A double figure eight pattern is also found carved in relief on one side of a contemporary octagonal pillar known as the Calendar of Souvigny (fig. 22), belonging to the Cluniac church of SS. Peter and Paul at Souvigny.[93] The carvings on the pillar,

dating from the first half of the twelfth-century, represent the works of the months on one side, extraordinary people on another, marvelous and exotic animals on a third, and the signs of the zodiac on a fourth. These four historiated sides alternate with four sides decorated with leaves and plant life, including one side on which are carved intertwined patterns made by meandering bands. This type of meandering fillets, first used in Classical architecture, were not uncommon in medieval decorations, but the complex form that it achieved at Souvigny is closest to the one at Poitiers. While the use of the Calendar is uncertain today, it is believed to have served as a grand Paschal candle holder. [94] This hypothesis would account for the sculpted decorations on the pillar, since they unite the Resurrected Christ with His whole creation, a theme that was also sculpted (c.1140) on the tympanum of the central portal of the narthex at Vézelay, a church also within the sphere of influence of Cluny.

Conclusion

The iconography of the Crucifixion window at Poitiers is the result of over eight hundred years of artistic tradition influenced by changes in politics, economic policies, and religious emphasis. Émile Mâle dared say that it is the most magnificent example of a Romanesque Crucifixion.[95] Close ties link the iconography to contemporary book illuminations, enameled metal works, monumental and relief sculptures, and mural paintings that were accessible to the person(s) ultimately responsible for the design of the window. As will be shown below, the Crucifixion window at Poitiers is connected to the history of France, Aquitaine and especially Poitou. It is also the result of the inextricable association of the history of a people and their artistic expression. While the finished product is typically twelfth-century Western European, some iconographical elements refer specifically to events and beliefs particularly important to a twelfth-century Poitevin audience.

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[1] Gerhart B. Ladner, God, Cosmos, and Humankind, (1995):20.

[2] Henricus Dentzinger and Adolfus Schönmetzer, Enchiridion Symbolorum, (1965), 92-93. The Hypostatic Union of the two natures in Christ was first defined at the Third Ecumenical Council of Ephesus (September 431 AD) called by Emperor Theodosius II, in order to combat the Nestorian and

Pelagian heresies; Ladner, God, Cosmos, 13, "The Fourth Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon (451) was being consistent when it defined the one and sole person of Christ as composed of both a divine and a human nature. Here the attempt was made to grasp the great mystery of the incarnation through the material-spiritual symbolism of nature and person."

[3] Cindy Wooden, "Vatican-Armenian Declaration Signed," B.C. Catholic, LXVI, 47 (23-29 Dec 1996):17, "Pope John-Paul II and Catholicos Karekin I of Etchmiadzin, spiritual leader of the world's Armenian Orthodox, signed a declaration ending 1500 years of disagreement over Christ's identity." On this occasion the new definition that both parties found acceptable reads as follows: "Perfect God as to His divinity, perfect man as to His humanity, His divinity is united to His humanity in the Person of the only-begotten Son of God, in a union which is real, perfect, without confusion, without alteration, without division, without any form of separation."

[4] Brehier, L'art chrétien, 32-33; Hall, Illustrated Dictionary of Symbols (1994), for the cross, 2; for the forms of crosses, 1, 6; John Osborne, Early Mediaeval Wall-Paintings in the Lower Church of San Clemente, Rome (1984), 56, and n. 158; Philippe Seringe, Les symboles (1988): 298-307.

[5] William G. Sinnigen and Arthur E.R. Boak, A History of Rome to A.D. 565 (1977):414, "Early in 313, Constantine and Licinius met at Milan and agreed to grant Christians unrestricted freedom and to restore confiscated Church properties;" Peter Brown, The World of Late Antiquity, 11-96.

[6] For a list of the representations of early crosses, see Grinnell, "The Crucifixion Window," 114-115. For the description of the first known representation of a crucifixion, see Bréhier, L'art chrétien, 33; Osborne, Early Mediaeval Wall-Paintings, 56.

[7] Bréhier, L'art chrétien, 33-34. According to Bréhier, "les ennemis des chrétiens ne manquaient pas de leur reprocher cette vénération pour la croix, incompréhensible pour eux. Au témoignage de Tertullien, à Carthage, où les chrétiens étaient appelés 'asinarii';" Peter Brown, The World of Late Antiquity, (1991): 61, fig. 45, "Christianity as seen by a pagan. A crucified donkey with 'Alexander is worshipping his god'. Second-century graffito"; Osborne, Early Mediaeval Wall-Paintings, 56, "The oldest known representation [of the Crucifixion] is a graffito found in 1857 among the ruins of the imperial palace on the Palatine hill. However, this crudely-drawn sketch mocks the religion by showing the crucifixion not of a human figure but of a donkey."

[8] Bréhier, L'art chrétien, 73; Grinnell, "The Crucifixion Window," 115-116; For one of the earliest tentative association of Christ with his cross, see, Michael Gough, The Origins of Christian Art (1973):130. fig. 117; Schiller, Iconography, II, fig. 323; both show an Ivory relief, "Crucifixion with Death of Judas," represented on a "casket" from North Italy, c. 420-30, London, British Museum.

[9] Ladner, God, Cosmos, 20.

[10] Osborne, Early Mediaeval Wall Paintings, 59, "...there seems to have been some uncertainty as to whether Christ should be shown clothed or unclothed. The possibility that both types were in simultaneous use over a considerable period of time finds a strong confirmation in the surviving evidence from Rome." As Osborne, ibid., 58, points out, " A more puzzling example is the Crucifixion miniature in the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus (Paris, gr. 510, fol. 30v.). Although it portrays Christ in a colobium, the paint has flaked off to reveal that he was originally depicted nude."

[11] The religion that Christ preached was one of hope and renewal, of triumph over death, not of the finality of death, see Bréhier, L'art chrétien, 31-35, 39, and 51.

[12] For the two ways -- symbolic and historical -- of depicting Christ's Crucifixion, see Osborne, Early Mediaeval Wall Paintings, 54-61 and n. 163.

[13] Ibid., 58-59, "Thus, the change from alive to dead is likely to have occurred before the ninth century and it was apparently not directly related to the change from colobium to perizoma. The possiblility that this shift in theological emphasis began before iconoclasm is given support by the discussion of the Crucifixion in a seventh-century text, the Hodegos of Anastasius Sinaites;" Ibid, 98, note 183; see also, Schiller, Iconography, 105, 117; Christ is represented dead as early as the ninth (Chludov Psalter), possibly even the eighth century (eighth to ninth-century Icon of Mount Sinai).

[14] In monumental Western European art, Christ is not often represented with His eyes closed until the thirteenth century (see Editorial Staff of the Catholic University of America, The New Catholic Encyclopedia, 4 (1967):487; Schiller, Iconography, 105-117; and Ladner, God, Cosmos, 20).

[15] For socio-economic changes and their impact on religious beliefs and practices, and on artistic expression, see André Vauchez, La spiritualité du Moyen Age occidental, (1994): 70-130.

[16] The new mendicant and preaching orders founded in the thirteenth century -- Franciscans by St. Francis of Assissi (1181/82-1226) and Dominicans by St. Dominic (1170-1221) -- were results more than causes of this new mentality; see also Régine Le Jan, Histoire de France: Origines et premier essor 480-1180 (1996):185-86.

[17] A prime, extant example is found in a mosaic: the emotion-filled Crucifixion in the narthex at Hosios Lukas, Greece, c. 1000 (see, David Talbot Rice, Art of the Byzantine Era, (1977):97, fig. 82).

[18] Colmar, Musée d'Unterlinden, Issenheim Altarpiece, 1512-1516, in Pantxika Béguerie, et al, Le musée d'Unterlinden de Colmar, (1991) 61, "Grünewald (Mathis ou Matthias von Aschaffenburg, dit).

[19] Ladner, God, Cosmos, 20.

[20] Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail de la Crucifixion à la cathédrale de Poitiers," 31; for the replacement of the cross-nimbus by a crown of thorns, see Bréhier, L'art chrétien, (1918) 73-74; and Raymond Oursel, ed., Glossaire de termes techniques, (1989), 308.

[21] For example, the crucifixion scene represented on the Santa Sabina door panel, 5th cent. AD.

[22] Schiller, Iconography, 12, the story of the cross as a living tree is based on the Ethiopian Book of Adam and Eve, the Syrian writings entitled Cave of Treasures, and the Golden Legend of Jacobus da Voragine; ibid., 12, n. 38.

[23] This is confirmed by examples such as the sixth-century Rabbula Gospels (Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana); an eighth-century mural painting in Santa Maria Antiqua at Rome; or various ivory book covers dating from the Carolingian period; for an early, all inclusive representation of the Crucifixion, see John Beckwith, Early Medieval Art (1986):48, fig. 38. "Ivory panel; Crucifixion and the Holy Women at the Sepulchre. Set in the cover of the Book of Pericopes executed for King Henry II before 1014 - Reims, about 870 (cod. Lat. 4452), Staatsbibliothek, Munich."

[24] For an example of the Crucifixion depicted in registers, see Les ivoires - Évolution décorative du Ier siécle a nos jours, (1972):17, "Plaque de l'Évangéliaire d'Adalberon, archevêque de Reims, chancelier de Lothaire, et de Louis V - Musée de Metz."

[25] Richard H. Randall, Jr. Masterpieces of Ivory From the Walters Art Gallery (1985):fig. 183.

[26] Randall, Jr. Masterpieces, fig. 188 (late tenth century), fig. 190 (end of the tenth century), fig. 194 (10th to early 11th century), Colorplate 53. Representations of the sun and moon in Crucifixion scenes were common in Byzantine art dating from the late tenth/early eleventh century.

[27] Marie-Madeleine Davy, Initiation à la symbolique romane (1977):223-224.

[28] Schiller, Iconography 2, 13, "The centurion below the Cross is named Longinus in the apocryphal Acta Pilati of the fifth or sixth-century."

[29] Grinnell, "Iconography," 178.

[30] Female figures personifying Ecclesia and Synagoga are still found in twelfth-century Crucifixion scenes, but they no longer hold the same prominent place. Before it was totally "restored," the stained-glass window of the Crucifixion in the basilica of St. Rémi in Reims portrayed the figures of Ecclesia and Synagoga in a panel under the foot of the Cross (N. H. J. Westlake, A History of Design in Painted Glass, 1 (1881): 59-60, and plates); at the church of Chalons-en-Champagne, the crucified Christ is represented in the central panel of a quadrilobe flanked only by the figures of the Virgin and St. John; Ecclesia and Synagoga are represented respectively in the top and bottom lobes.

[31] In the third panel from the bottom, on the right side of the Passion window at Chartres (c. 1150), a man is scourging Christ prior to His being condemned to death. The exaggerated and almost impossible position of the neck is similar to Stephaton's.

[32] For example, the Crucifixion scene at Chartres located in the Passion and Resurrection window; Jane Hayward, "The Redemption Windows of the Loire Valley," 129-144; and Anne Granboulan, "De la paroisse à la cathédrale," 42-52. Both of these authors discuss Crucifixion windows at Chemillé-sur-Indrois (northeast of Poitiers) and Les Essards (west of Poitiers) where small panels represent Crucifixion scenes with only the Virgin and St. John.

[33] Concerning the Crucifixion at St. Denis, see Erwin Panofsky, ed. and trans., Abbot Suger, (1979):73-74. Of the two twefIth-century Crucifixions at Chartres, one is located in the small rose window in the second vault on the south side of the deambulatory, the other is part of the Passion and Resurrection window mentioned above. At Chalons-en-Champagne, the representation of the Crucifixion is part of what remains of a Redemption window. Its original location is unknown.

[34] Thomas Williams, A Textual Concordance of the Holy Scriptures (1985), 726-28, Mat, 28:1-9, Mk.16:1-9, Lk. 24:1-8, Jn. 20:1-17; Acts 2:22-24, 31, 32; 1 Cor. 15:3-8; 1 Cor. 15:14, 15, 17, 20.

[35] About the different types of iconographic representations of the Resurrection, see André Grabar, Les voies de la création en iconographie chrétienne, (1994):211-217.

[36] André Grabar, Les ampoules de terre sainte (1958), ampullae from Monza: pl. XI, 5, rev.; pl. XIV, 9, obv.; pl. XXII, 12, obv.; pl. XXIV, 13, obv.; pl. XXVI, 14, obv.; pl. XXVIII, 15, obv.; from Bobbio: pl. XXXIV, 3; pl. XXXV, 4; pl. XXXVI, 5; pl. XXXVII, 6; pl. XL, 7; pl. XLV, 15.

[37] Rice, Art of the Byzantine, 37, fig. 26; Ibid., 270.

[38] André Grabar, Christian Iconography. A Study of its Origins (1968), ill. 260.

[39] Robert Ousterhout, "Sepulchre Church," J. Turner, ed., Dictionary of Art, 17 (1996):427-29.

[40] Peter Lasko, Ars Sacra (1972):fig. 131, Resurrection on the lower right panel of a golden altar frontal, c. 1050, from the Palace Chapel at Aachen.

[41] For a representation of the Holy Sepulchre carved in ivory, see Lasko, Ars Sacra, fig. 29.

[42] See Beckwith, Early Medieval, 48, fig. 38; Lasko, Ars Sacra, fig. 146; Mâle, L'Art religieux du XIIe siècle (1924):127, fig. 107, "Chapiteau de Mozat (Puy-de-Dôme, France);" The same type of building is found in other sculptured capitals of the same region of Auvergne, at the basilica of St. Julien at Brioude, at Saint Nectaire and at Issoire (Marie Claire Ricard, L'Abbatiale d'Issoire (1992):24).

[43] Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail," 38.

[44] It can clearly be observed in Cl. Delacroix's lithograph, and by close observation in situ, that the shroud is arranged in a pile on top of a stone slab, and not coming out of an open sarcophagus. During the twelfth century artists experimented with various ways to represent the Resurrection. (see Mâle, L'art religieux du XIIe siècle, 132).

[45] Three lamps are already part of the Resurrection scenes on one of the Bobbio ampullae (see, Grabar, Les ampoules, pls. XXXVII and XXXVIII. However in the Crucifixion window, there are three oil lamps within one container, an element that will be examined in the chapter dedicated to symbolism.

[46] In the left panel, the angel of the Resurrection is shown sitting on a bench while waiting for the Holy Women to arrive (the Angel of the Resurrection is always represented as either waiting for, or welcoming the Holy Women). In the Rabbula Gospels, the angel is also seated on a flat rock shaped like a bench (see, Rice, Art of the Byzantine, 36-37).

[47] No images show more than three Holy Women. SS. Mark and Luke are the only ones to mention three women bringing spices to embalm the body of Jesus. St. Matthew speaks of "two women," while St. John reports the presence of only one, Mary Magdalen.

[48] Examples of the type of military dress worn by the sleeping guards can be found in various media, and in many churches of Western France. For example, on the left console above the door of the Church of Monceaux-l'Étoile in the Brionnais, located between Cluny and Poitiers, an angel, wearing the

same type of armor, is fighting a demon; in the valley of the Loir, north of Tours, the country Church of St. Julien at Poncé-sur-le-Loir is decorated with murals in which two soldiers assisting at Christ's Crucifixion, wear the same type of armor and elongated shield as at Poitiers. Similar armors and shields are found on the capitals of the Church of St. Austremoine at Issoire; see also Bréhier, L'art chrétien, 190-91.

[49] Jean Bernadac, Saint-Gilles de Montoire (1995):22, "On sait aussi que c'est après 1180 que la forme et la longueur des écus vont raccourcir."

[50] St. Mark (16:19) states that "the Lord Jesus...was taken up into Heaven...". St. Luke (24:51) mentions that Christ "was carried up to Heaven." However, neither St. Matthew nor St. John mention this event The New Catholic Encyclopedia, 1 (1967):930-36, presents a concise history of the Ascension of Christ with documentary sources. For a survey of the origins and early representations of the Ascension, see Osborne, Early Mediaeval Wall Paintings, 47.

[51] The first generation of Christians expected Christ to come back within their lifetime. When this event did not occur, a need arose for a thorough explanation of what had happened. St. Luke (Acts 1:9-11) gives a more detailed account of the Ascension, including the length of Jesus's stay on earth after his Resurrection (Acts 1:3). He mentions that while "they who were come together " -- His Apostles -- were watching (Acts 1:6-9), "He was raised up: and a cloud received him out of their sight"(Acts 1:9). This was the textual foundation for the representation of the Ascension in Christian art.

[52] Mâle, L'art religieux du XIIe siècle, 85. "Ivory from Munich, plate 459; also in The New Catholic Encyclopedia, 1, 931; see also George Zarnecki, Romanesque (1989):134, fig. 157, walrus ivory relief (Cologne, c. 1130) portraying Christ in a mandorla, turned to the right and climbing towards the Hand of God (London, Victoria and Albert Museum); another version is found in Osborne, Early Mediaeval Wall Paintings, 46, "In its earliest Roman example, the panel from the Santa Sabina doors, the iconography follows the 'Hellenistic' tradition and depicts Christ stepping into heaven assisted by two angels. Below him in a landscape setting are four apostles who look upwards with expressions of wonder and disbelief;" Ibid, 93, n. 113.

[53] Folio 15r. of the Cotton Tiberius Psalter, c. 1050 (London, British Museum, Cotton MS. Tiberius C. VI), contains an image in which the upper part of Christ's body has already disappeared into the clouds (see, Jean Wirth, "La Représentation de l'image au Moyen Age," Revue de l'art 79 (1988):19; and Lasko, Ars Sacra, fig. 243, "French enameled plaque, c. 1160-70"); Grodecki, Le vitrail roman, 113, fig. 93, similar representation of the Ascension in stained glass. Medallion formerly part of a window, c. 1175, at the Abbey of St. Pierre of Chartres, now at the Chateau de Champs, dépôt des Monuments Historiques.

[54] Rice, Art of the Byzantine, 36, fig. 25; Grabar, Les ampoules, pl. III, amp. I, reverse; pl. XXI, Monza amp. II, detail of obverse. While it is rare to find only the Crucifixion and Ascension on a single panel, such a representation is carved on an early eleventh-century Byzantine ivory diptych showing the Ascension above the Crucifixion (see, Randall, Jr. Masterpieces of Ivory, 125, fig. 195).

[55] For the medallion formerly at Chartres, see above n. 53. Recent research attributes an earlier date to the Ascension panels at Le Mans. André Mussat, et al., La cathédrale du Mans, (1981):62, believe that the Ascension panel could date from the "dédicace 'politique' de 1120," with an outside limit of 1137, date of the second fire.

[56] Dating from c. 1100, its iconography and composition shows some similarity to the Ascension scene at Poitiers (published in Beckwith, Early Medieval, 187, fig. 176, and Zarnecki, Romanesque, 174, and fig. 191).

[57] Véronique Arnault-Nautré, ed., Les peintures murales de Poitou-Charentes (1993): 20; Paul Deschamps et Marc Thibout, La peinture murale en France - Le haut Moyen Age et l' époque romane (1951):93.

[58] Mussat, et al., La cathédrale du Mans, 62.

[59] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers" XVII (1848), pl. X.

[60] Rayon, Inventaire. The sketch of the Crucifixion window accompanying the inventory shows four different areas of glass: the original twelfth century glass; the areas that were restored after the destructions of 1565 and 1569; the area where old glass was reused in the nineteenth century; and the areas where the glass was replaced in the nineteenth century.

[61] Bréhier, L'art chrétien, 244, points out that "La scène de l'Ascension a été adoptée quelquefois à l'époque romane pour orner les tympans des portails...Au portail de Saint-Etienne de Cahors,...au portail royal de Chartres." I would add the remarkable Ascension relief on the tympanum of the Porte Miègeville (Basilica of Saint Sernin at Toulouse), and the Ascension with its Christ in a mandorla on the façade of the Cathedral at Angoulême, south of Poitiers. The Christ in a mandorla on the façade of Notre-Dame-la-Grande has also been identified as the Christ of the Apocalypse (see Marie-Thérèse Camus, "Un chef-d'oeuvre de l'art roman," Archeologia 6H (1995):55).

[62] Camus, "Un chef d'œuvre de l'art roman," 53. A headless Christ holding a book with his left hand and with his right handless arm raised as though ready to bless the people, stands in the middle of a very ornate mandorla in the center and at the apex of the façade. His cross nimbus is still intact, but the Huguenots beheaded the statue of Christ.

[63] Yves Chauvin and Georges Pon, et al., eds. and trans., La vie de Sainte Radegonde (1995):146.

[64] Jacques de Voragine, La légende dorée (1967):427.

[65] William A. Jurgens, The Faith of the Early Fathers, 1 (1970):44, Eusebius's History of the Church, Bk 2, ch. 25; Ibid., 98, St. Irenaeus (c. 140 AD - c. 202 AD), Adversus Haereses, Bk 3, 3:3; Ibid., 122, Tertullian, c. 200 AD De praescriptione haereticorum, 36:1.

[66] John Laux, Church History, (1989):31-32. Tradition has it that Saint Peter was martyred in the Circus of Nero, while Saint Paul was beheaded on the Ostian Way.

[67] Grodecki, Le vitrail Roman, 71; Grodecki, "A Stained Glass Atelier of the Thirteenth Century," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, 11 (1948):109, n. 1.

[68] Filarete's bronze doors, c. 1433-45, were moved from the old basilica of St. Peter before it was demolished, and placed in the new one after its completion in the seventeenth century (see, J. M. Huskinson, "The Crucifxion of St. Peter: A Fifteenth-Century Topographical Problem," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, 32 (1969):135-162).

[69] For similar thrones, see Chauvin and Pon, et al, eds. and trans., La vie de Sainte-Radegonde, folio 22v., and folio 43v.; and Chantal Fraïsse, L'enluminure à Moissac aux onzième et douzième siècles (1992):15-16.

[70] Poitiers, Médiathèque, MS 250, for ex, fol. 22v., fol. 29v., and fol. 38r.; small-scale structures above an arch, often used to suggest an interior setting, are also found on the enameled plaque from the tomb of Geoffrey of Anjou, c. 1151/1160 (Musée de Tessé, Le Mans).

[71] Jurgens, The Faith of the Early Fathers, 1, 44. Eusebius in History of the Church, Bk. 2, ch. 25, mentions that "Paul was beheaded in Rome, itself, and Peter, likewise, was crucified, during the reign of Nero." He goes on to say that Gaius or Caius knows where they are buried and that their tombs are marked by 'trophies'.

[72] For these two traditions, see Huskinson, "The Crucifixion of St. Peter," 135-161.

[73] In the fifteenth-century, the Italian artist Filarete depicted St. Peter wearing only a loin-cloth (see, Huskinson, "The Crucifixion," fig. 13).

[74] For representations of St. Peter's crucifixion (in Western France) similar to Poitiers', see the mural painting on a pillar of the nave of the church at Lavardin, a village close to Vendôme and Montoire-sur-le-Loir, in the Loir Valley; and a stained glass window, c. 1210, in the Cathedral of Bourges.

[75] Jacques de Voragine, La légende dorée, 431.

[76] Jacques Le Goff, "Les Paysans et le monde rural," Agricoltora e mondo rurale in occidente nell'alto medioevo (1966):734.

[77] Grodecki, Le vitrail roman, 284; A. Marquet, La cathédrale du Mans (1992): 28. North side of the nave, facing the Ascension window, the story of St. Stephen is represented with events of the lives of SS. Gervais and Protais. The medallion of St. Stephen's stoning portrays a man ready to throw a rock holding the same pose as St. Paul's tormentor.

[78] For example, the rich garments worn by Empress Theodora (Ravenna, church of San Vitale, right side of choir when facing the main altar, mosaic, bef. 547).

[79] Auber, "Histoire de la Cathédrale," (1850):538, "Cette tiare ...n'appartient au tableau ni par le style de son execution ni par sa forme Elle remplace évidemment le modèle en petit de cette grande verrière." (also in Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail de la Crucifixion à la cathédrale de Poitiers," 144.

[80] For the origins of the triple tiara, see Louis Réau, Iconographie de l'art chrétien (1959):1083; Charles G. Herbermann, et al., eds., The Catholic Encyclopedia, 14 (1912):714-15; and The New Catholic Encyclopedia, 14 (1967):148-50.

[81] Crozet, "Le vitrail de la crucifixion," 222-23.

[82] See above n. 78.

[83] As an early example, see Empress Theodora represented in the church of San Vitale mosaic (mentioned in n. 82 above) among the nobles and prelates as she is bringing an offering. In the murals of the apse at San Angelo in Formis, c. 1075-1080, Abbot Desiderius is portrayed as he is offering a model of the church that he helped to build (Zarnecki, Romanesque, 146, fig. 165).

[84] Brisac, A Thousand Years of Stained Glass, 12, "chevet, axial chapel... Annunciation, showing Abbé Suger at the feet of the Virgin, 1140-1144;" Erwin Panofsky, Abbot Suger, 205.

[85] Grimouard de Saint-Laurent, Manuel de l'art chrétien (1878):115. "Nous rappellerons aussi comme pouvant être très convenablement imité l'usage antique de représenter la généralité des fidèles, le peuple chrétien ou même l'humanité entière par un homme et une femme..."

[86] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers" (1949):538, "Suivis tous deux [Henri II et Éléonore] d'une foule dont le costume était propre aux conditions médiocres de la société, ils ont voulu associer à cet hommage nos ancêtres, les fidèles poitevins, dont la cathédrale est l'église par excellence."

[87] A. Ramé, "Observations sur le vitrail de la crucifixion à la cathédrale de Poitiers," Bulletin monumental, 51(1885):365-378, passim.

[88] Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail," 146-153; and P. Boissonnade, "Le vitrail de la crucifixion à la cathédrale de Poitiers. Sa date probable et la personnalité du donateur," Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest, (1928-1930):803-815, using an hypothetic reconstruction of the inscription based on unlikely assumptions, these two authors argued that the donors were the Count de Blason and his wife. Crozet, "Le vitrail de la crucifixion à la cathédrale de Poitiers," 222; and A. Ramé, "Observations sur le vitrail de la crucifixion à la cathédrale de Poitiers," passim, refuted their arguments.

[89] Petzold, Romanesque Art, 156, fig. 118.

[90] This iconographic element will be explored later (see Michel Pastoureau, "Le roi aux fleurs de lis," L'histoire, 184 (Janvier 1995):66-70; Michel Pastoureau, Traité d'héraldique, (1979):160-165; Brigitte Bedos-Rezak, "Suger and the Symbolism of Royal Power: The Seal of Louis VII," Paula Lieber Gerson, ed., Abbot Suger and Saint-Denis (1986):95-103).

[91] Grodecki, Le Vitrail roman, 76.

[92] Westlake, A History of Design in Painted Glass 1, 29, plate XII.

[93] Souvigny is located to the East of Poitiers, in the Bourbonnais region, on the way to Cluny (see, Pierre Chaudagne, Souvigny - Les tombeaux des Bourbons, (no date):passim; Robert Di Nota, Souvigny - Benedictins et Bourbons, (1994):passim.

[94] Chaudagne, Souvigny, 33.

[95] Mâle, L'art religieux du XIIe siècle, 82.

CHAPTER III

POLITICAL HISTORY OF POITOU AND AQUITAINE

Searching for the historical accuracy and meaning of a work of art might seem foolhardy. Indeed, the first obstacle seems unbreachable. How can a late twentieth-century person understand, let alone explain, what motivated and made possible the conception of a work of art like the Crucifixion window at Poitiers? While it is not possible to recapture completely a twelfth-century frame of mind, by delving into the political, cultural and religious history of the period, it is possible to grasp the essential elements and explain the influences that resulted in the making of a particular image. The following paragraphs provide a background necessary to understand the major political events that influenced twelfth-century artistic production and probably affected the realization of the Crucifixion window.

1. Poitiers: Its Location and Origins

From 56 B.C. to the beginning of the fourth century A.D., the pax romana enabled the town to develop along a north-south axis, and expand beyond the protective enclave of the rivers Clain and Boivre.[1] The decadence of the Empire brought strife to the region. During the fourth century, Poitiers' shrinking population took refuge behind fortified walls, built on the eastern side of the hill with the stones of abandoned Roman buildings.[2] After the fall of Rome, due in part to its strategic location, Poitiers not only survived, but flourished both as an Episcopal town, and as the capital of Poitou.[3] With the palace of its counts as the budding secular center of administration near its western wall, and its religious center growing around the Baptistery of St. John, near the eastern wall, Poitiers's main axis made a ninety-degree turn.[4] In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Poitiers acquired the shape and architectural structures that endured with few changes until the nineteenth century. In the mid-twelfth century, sustained population growth impelled Henry II Plantagenet to have new walls built around the whole area of land contained between the two rivers, thus reclaiming most of the entire area formerly

developed by the Romans.[5] After a hiatus of close to a thousand years Poitiers had regained a level of prosperity close to the one it enjoyed when it was called Lemonum.

2. Brief Survey of the Political Evolution of Poitou and Aquitaine

Although it was a decentralized system of government, feudalism was far from being a democracy. At the end of the tenth century, power was concentrated in the hands of a few men bound by mutual oaths, who shared it at the local level with their own vassals.[6] Each duke and count functioned as "king" in their own estate, dispensing justice, levying taxes, and striking their own coinage.[7] After the accession of Hugues Capet (987-996) to the throne of France, and until the reign of Louis VI (1108-1137), the Frankish kings did not possess the necessary power and resources to interfere in the affairs of Aquitaine.[8] As their capacity to rule effectively dwindled, the Capetian kings, with the Church's help, transformed what used to be an election, followed by a simple secular ceremony, into the anointing of a divinely ordained king during an elaborate religious ritual.[9]

The Church actively supported this transformation because it was concerned that feudalism encouraged the formation of islands of independent rule, which they considered natural breeding grounds for unrest and heresies.[10] At the beginning of the twelfth century, advised by the king's councilor, Suger, both the French Church and the king sought to establish peace.[11] This also meant that every time a vassal of the king died without a male descendent, the Church supported the king's claim to his domains and encouraged the king to establish his own administration. This was the case when Duke William X of Aquitaine died suddenly before reaching Santiago de Compostela in 1137, and the French king, Louis VI assumed control over Aquitaine.

2.1. The Counts of Poitou/Dukes of Aquitaine

Throughout their history the Counts of Poitou/dukes of Aquitaine pursued a policy of strong alliance with Spain and with the order of Cluny, which had been founded on land given by Duke William the Pious (c. 915).[12] Some components of the Crucifixion window at Poitiers reflect this loyal association. As discussed below, this policy was a means to counterbalance the other political forces at play in Western France. Heralded by

the Cluniacs as one who valiantly fought for the glory of St. James, William VIII (1058-1086) became famous throughout Christendom for fighting the Moors in Spain and leading Christian forces to victory at Barbastro (1063).[13] By the end of the eleventh century, under William VIII's wise rule, Aquitaine's strength far surpassed the power of the French state.[14] After a disastrous venture in the Holy Land during the First Crusade, hoping to bring back rich spoils, his son, William IX (1086-1126), participated victoriously in the bloody battle of Cutunda, part of the Spanish "Reconquista." [15] It is important for this investigation to know that William IX was in Jerusalem, and saw the Holy Sepulchre as it had been restored (c.1042-1048) by the Byzantine Emperor Constantine IX Monomachus.[16] William IX, known as the Troubadour, is best remembered for his love of music,[17] and extravagant lifestyle. Nevertheless, he also ordered the reinforcement of Poitiers' fortifications and the building of two new towers.[18]

At the beginning of 1137, Duke William X (1126-1137) of Aquitaine set out on his annual pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, but he never came back. He died unexpectedly on Holy Thursday. Due to his own and to his ancestors' generosity to the shrine of St. James, and to the Cluniacs, to whose order the archbishop of Santiago de Compostela, Diego Gelmirez (c. 1068 - c. 1139) belonged,[19] and because of his close ties with the Spanish monarchs,[20] William X received the privilege to be buried at the foot of the main altar of St. James, in the Cathedral of Santiago.[21] From a political point of view, William X's unexpected death disturbed the balance of power.

2.2. Political Situation in Aquitaine and France in 1137

For centuries, the political situation in Europe followed the evolution of the great feudal families. At the beginning of the twelfth century, three major noble houses shared power in western and southwestern France: the families of the Counts of Anjou, of the dukes of Aquitaine, and of the kings of France. Furthermore these families had ties with all the major noble houses of Europe. These ties, together with the personalities of the respective rulers, often led to changes in the balance of power.

Successful in maintaining cordial relationships with the kings of England and France, Count Fulk V (1109-1129) acquired a well-deserved reputation as a shrewd

diplomat. He increased the prestige and strength of Anjou, and renewed the attempts of his Anjou forebears to encroach on Aquitanian territory. The marriage of his son and heir, Geoffrey V Plantagenet (1129-1159), to Matilda, who was the daughter of Henry I Beauclerc, duke of Normandy and king of England, and who was also the widow of the German emperor, Henry V, brought the counts of Anjou into direct competition for the throne of England. By this alliance, Anjou acquired a position of power that it had never held before.

At the same time, after a long line of weak kings, Louis VI of France (1108-1137), and his councilors -- the shrewd Suger among them -- understood the importance of associating the still fledgling Capetian dynasty with the glorious past represented by the Merovingian and Carolingian dynasties (especially the Carolingians who had modeled their empire on that of Rome) if they wanted to play an important part in the teleological unfolding of history.[22] Already, Philip I had arranged for his son to be crowned as king Louis VI in the Cathedral at Reims, because the last Carolingian to reign over the Frankish kingdom was Louis V.[23]

After more than one hundred years of laissez-faire politics practiced by his forebears, Louis VI (1108-1137) was in the process of reasserting royal authority throughout his kingdom, especially south of the Loire Valley.[24] Since he considered himself the heir to the Carolingian royal ideology, it was his birthright to maintain public order throughout his kingdom, whether in his private domain or on the estates of his vassals.[25] Using the Carolingian renovatio as a model, Louis VI, and his son, Louis VII, with the help of the abbot of St. Denis, developed a propagandistic program to renew the French monarchy. As a result, Louis VII considered himself to be Francorum imperator augustus.[26] When studying the historical background of the Crucifixion window, it is important to remember that Louis VII regarded himself, and was perceived by his contemporaries, as being "the protector of all the churches of his kingdom," [27] and that he revered not only St. Denis but also St. James as his patron.[28]

When William X died, at the age of thirty-eight, he was without a direct male heir. However, he had two daughters, Eleanor, the oldest, and Aelis, also known as Petronilla.[29] According to feudal law, his younger brother Raymond, Prince of Antioch,

should have inherited Aquitaine; but he was not interested. The lack of William X's testament, while not extraordinary in an age when the spoken word was more valuable than words written on parchment, brought the king of France, suzerain of Aquitaine, one step closer to personal rule.[30] As William X's suzerain, Louis VI had the duty to protect Aquitaine and Poitou, and to find a suitable husband for the daughter of the deceased duke.[31] The matter was extremely important since Eleanor's future husband was to rule Aquitaine at her side.[32] Seeing the opportunity to gain Aquitaine without a fight, Louis VI, once again with the help of Suger, secured the aid of the Archbishop of Bordeaux, Geoffrey de Loriol,[33] and arranged the marriage between Eleanor and his son, Louis VII.[34] To thank the clergy of Aquitaine, Louis VI enacted a decree of non-interference in Aquitanian Church affairs, especially in episcopal elections to the sees of Bordeaux, Agen, Saintes, Poitiers, Angoulême and Perigueux.[35] This was a major victory for the Aquitanian bishops who had endured many disputes with their dukes in the past.

3. Eleanor of Aquitaine and the Politics of Poitou in the Twelfth Century

3.1. Eleanor and Louis VII of France (1137-1152)

Eleanor was not yet sixteen at the time of her father's death in March 1137. By marrying his son to Eleanor, Louis VI brought the province of Aquitaine, including Auvergne, under the direct control of the Capetian kings. Following Capetian customs, Louis VII had been crowned (25 Oct 1131) while his father was still alive, by Pope Innocent II, who was attending a council at Reims.[36] The alliance of Aquitaine and its rich territory with the small domain already under his direct control ensured that a steady and healthy income flowed into the coffers of the French monarchy. This was the main economic factor that enabled Louis VII to embark upon a policy of generosity towards the Church.[37]

In the first years of their marriage, blinded by his devotion to his wife, the shy Louis followed Eleanor's whims and engaged in conflicts that could -- and should -- have been avoided.[38] Two unfortunate events marred their first years as a couple, and may also have influenced the king's generosity towards the church. The first occurred in the Spring of 1138. News that Poitiers had rebelled and formed a commune reached Louis

VII and Eleanor while they were in Auvergne, touring their new kingdom. Easily angered, Eleanor pressed the king to intervene quickly. While the king was eager to please his new wife and to punish the rebellious Poitevins, Suger wisely advised Louis VII to forego the planned deportation of the Poitevin children, a punishment that was out of proportion to the offense. With the consent of Louis VII, Suger proclaimed that the magnanimous and God-fearing king had decided to pardon the inhabitants of Poitiers.[39] The children stayed, and both the king and the people of Poitiers were greatly relieved that the incident ended without bloodshed.

The need for divine forgiveness usually prompted twelfth-century Christians to be generous towards the Church in an attempt to secure the remission of their sins. Under this set of circumstances, the offering of prayers of thanksgiving accompanied by a gift or a monetary pledge was customary. Did Louis VII make a gift to the Cathedral of St. Pierre at Poitiers -- the official church of Poitou in which he had been crowned duke? In his quest for forgiveness and reconciliation, were the grateful inhabitants of Poitiers associated to his gift ?[40] The lack of written evidence mentioning a donation was not extraordinary at this time and does not indicate the absence of a gift. Even if such a document once existed, it would likely have perished when the archives of the cathedral were destroyed by the Huguenots in the sixteenth century.[41] Additionally, the donor panel of the Crucifixion window contains circumstantial evidence of the possibility of such a gift: the small figures kneeling with upraised arms behind the king and queen in the donors' panel could well represent the inhabitants of Poitiers.[42]

The second incident that greatly troubled Louis VII and helped to further his estrangement from Eleanor took place in the winter of 1142-43. Once more, listening to Eleanor's pleas, Louis VII supported the marriage between Eleanor's younger sister, Aelis/Petronilla, and his seneschal, Raoul de Vermandois, a one-eyed war veteran twice her age, who was already married to Eleanor, the niece of the Count Thibault of Champagne, with whom Louis VI had fought in the past. [43] Because of Louis VII's support for a marriage that was illicit in the eyes of the Church, the Pope placed Louis VII under an interdict. A troubled and angry Louis VII invaded Champagne and besieged Vitry-en-Perthois, a city in the domain of Count Thibault.[44] During the melee that

followed the taking of the town, a fire broke out, engulfing the church, and causing the death of the thirteen hundred inhabitants who had taken refuge in it. While the battle was won, it was achieved at the cost of many innocent lives

As the commanding officer of the army, Louis VII took full responsibility for the fire. Tortured by guilt and remorse, he relinquished his command, entrusting it to his younger brother, Robert.[45] Although the new pope, Celestine II (1143-44), lifted the interdict imposed by his predecessor, Innocent II (1130-1143), the deeply troubled Louis became more austere, and withdrew further into a life of prayer. From then on, the king shunned expensive and brightly colored garments. Even for important ceremonies, like the consecration of the choir of the new abbey church of St. Denis on 11 June 1144, Louis VII wore the plain grey tunic of the penitent.[46] Haunted by these past events and searching for divine forgiveness, Louis VII decided to participate in the Second Crusade (c. 1147-1149). Accompanied by his wife, Eleanor, the king left the government of France in the capable hands of Abbot Suger.[47] As Michel Bur points out,

> La nouvelle était inouïe. Jamais roi n'avait jusqu'alors exprimé l'intention de quitter son royaume pour se rendre au Saint-Sépulchre. Le pape et ses conseillers avisèrent au plus vite et, puisque les circonstances s'y prêtaient, décidèrent de donner à LouisVII une immense escorte en transformant son pélerinage en croisade.[48]

Upon returning from the Second Crusade one of the king's first public actions was to go to Vitry-en-Perthois and plant the cedars that he had brought back from the Holy Land.[49] This was a sure sign that he still grieved and may have wanted to atone for his errors by whatever means that were available to him, including continuing to make donations and pledges to various churches.

Only two daughters were born during their fifteen-year marriage, Marie (b. 1145) and Aelith (b. 1149).[50] In spite of the pope's reassurance, the king viewed their inability to produce a male heir as a sign of God's condemnation of his union with Eleanor. Frustrated and disenchanted, he too easily agreed to the annulment (March 1152) that Eleanor wanted.[51] Realizing Aquitaine's worth, Suger had always been opposed to a divorce between Louis VII and Eleanor.[52] Suger's death on 13 January 1151, removed what Louis perceived as the last impediment to their divorce.[53] Louis VII was not long in recognizing the grave error that he had committed.[54] The loss of Aquitaine meant a loss

in revenues, changes in internal policies, and a decrease in the numbers and amounts of donations that Louis VII had previously bestowed on the churches of France.[55]

Although no written records have survived which show that Louis VII and Eleanor made any donation to the Cathedral of St. Pierre between 1137 and 1152, circumstantial evidence strongly suggests the possibility of such a gift. As Eleanor S. Greenhill, in "Eleanor, Abbot Suger, and Saint-Denis," so aptly suggests, "if wealth patronage is the basis on which the arts flourish, then the Capetians were, after 1137, in a position to foster the arts as never before."[56] Moreover, if we consider that no records exist of royal subsidies to the abbey church of St. Denis, we cannot be surprised that none exist for the Cathedral of St. Pierre.[57] In her essay mentioned above, Greenhill also points out:

> Before the events of the Second Crusade and her inadequacy as the bearer of Capetian kings had cleared her head, Eleanor would surely have done her part to inspire the king with that policy of 'grandeur and illusion' which, according to Marcel Pacaut, marked the early years of Louis' reign.[58] Indeed it was in all likelihood the revenue from Eleanor's territories which provided the king with the means of implementing that policy.[59]

3.2 Eleanor and Henry II Plantagenet (1152-1189)

It was on 18 May 1152, only eight weeks after they had divorced that, unbeknownst to Louis VII, Eleanor married Henry Plantagenet, count of Anjou, the future Henry II of England, thus uniting two of the most powerful families under the suzerainty of the French king.[60] Louis VII waited until August 1154, after Henry had agreed to pay homage to him for all his continental domains, to recognize him formally as the new duke of Aquitaine.[61] If Eleanor's first marriage had been carefully planned without her approbation, her second one resulted from her own choice, ambitions and personal taste. It seems that she was the one who approached Henry with the idea of a match.[62] While he was nineteen and she was thirty, the difference in their ages did not matter in an era when marriages among the powerful were dictated by the exchange, acquisition and possession of territory.[63] For the ambitious Henry, Eleanor embodied Aquitaine. Although she had never actively disliked Louis VII, Eleanor had found him morose and boring. Thus, one of the determining factors in Eleanor's choice may have been that Henry was the total opposite of her former husband, physically, psychologically,

and morally.[64] Additionally, when the ambitious Eleanor first met Henry during the summer of 1151, she already knew that he had the prospect of one day being king of England.[65] However, if she had hoped to control her young husband, she soon realized that she had made a terrible mistake.[66]

Henry Plantagenet was driven by his ambitious schemes, and Eleanor was only a means to an end. While he was as cultivated as his suzerain, Louis VII,[67] Henry's ambition made him restless.[68] Additionally, he had inherited the quick temper and mood swings of some of his Anjou forebears.[69] The discord between the kings of England and France would be life-long, relieved only at times by temporary truces. To the disputes and wars over territories, were added personal resentments and, after 1168, the betrayals of Henry's wife and sons. During the period between 1152, the date of their marriage, and 1168, the royal couple lived together only for short periods of time, and rarely in Poitiers.[70] Throughout his reign, Henry II spent less than two consecutive years (1161-1162) touring his continental possessions, including Aquitaine and Poitou, ordering restorations and new constructions.[71] However, no contemporary records mention any work being done on ecclesiastical buildings in the territory of Poitou. Only the building of the new wall around Poitiers and the embellishment of the ducal palace are well documented.[72]

While ambition and the desire to rule motivated the revolts of Henry's and Eleanor's children, the Aquitanians had more valid reasons to rebel.[73] They could hardly tolerate to be governed by an Angevin, especially by one whose rancor and bad temper contributed to making their lives miserable. As the inhabitants of Limoges could testify, Henry's grudges were long-lived and his revenge was swift.[74] In addition, Henry wanted to impose on Aquitaine the same form of government that already existed in England, where he reinforced royal power to the detriment of the feudal lords.[75] He also attempted to bring the clergy under his tutelage, as he had tried to do in England,[76] where his interference in Church affairs indirectly caused the tragic death of the Archbishop of Canterbury, his former friend, Thomas à Becket, in 1170.[77]

After the first Aquitanian revolt of 1168, Henry II attempted to stop further rebellions by sending Eleanor to Aquitaine to govern in his name with the help of his

faithful companion, Patrice of Salisbury.[78] Such an arrangement gave Henry the necessary freedom to flaunt his liaison with Rosamund Clifford, thus unofficially ending his marriage to Eleanor. From 1168 until 1174, Eleanor lived almost continuously at her court in Poitiers. By 1169, Henry II had given Aquitaine to their son Richard, and, at Henry's request, Eleanor held the government in trust for their young son.[79] Henry had formally relinquished Aquitaine; yet, he intended to continue to control it vicariously.[80] Desiring to be free from his father's tutelage, Richard joined in the revolt of 1173.

From the beginning of their marriage, Eleanor had suspected Henry's infidelities. However, she could not forgive him for his open liaison with Rosamund Clifford, nor for his attempt to annul their marriage in order to marry Rosamund.[81] Henry's questionable conduct with Rosamund, followed by his despicable treatment of Alix, his would-be daughter-in-law -- Louis VII's daughter by Alix of Champagne -- whom he seduced while she had been entrusted to his care, contributed greatly to Eleanor's turning against him.[82] While Eleanor's participation in the revolts cannot be ascertained,[83] she did not divulge to Henry II the plots and rebellions that her sons and the Aquitanian nobility were fomenting against him .[84] In 1174, suspecting her role in the Aquitanian uprising of 1173, and the part that she played in their sons' betrayals, Henry II imprisoned Eleanor, first at Chinon, then in England, where she stayed a prisoner until his death in 1189. The passion that Eleanor may have initially felt for Henry II had been spent; it had turned to a profound hatred that would mark the history of the region for the next fifty years.[85] After the revolt of 1173, as Auber mentions, "ce pays lui devint dès lors étranger; il n'y eut plus ni résidence ni affections."[86] Thus, while Henry's will of 1182 specifies that he gave large sums of money to the Knights Templar and to religious foundations in Anjou, Maine and Normandy, no mention is made of donations in Aquitaine and Poitou.[87]

Conclusion

During the twelfth century, the political situation of Poitou and Aquitaine was contingent to a great extent on the complex personality and strong character of Eleanor of Aquitaine.[88] Because of her successive positions, first as queen of France and then as

queen of England, she was instrumental in changing the course of European history. In spite of her young age when she married Louis VII in 1137, Eleanor was aware of her worth as the heiress to a vast territory extending from south of the Loire Valley to the Pyrénées. Because of her personality and character, and the fact that she embodied Aquitaine, her influence on the king and on the politics of the Capetian kingdom was immediate, if not always positive.[89] The period of Eleanor's marriage to Louis VII (1137-1152) coincided with "an unprecedented flowering of the arts" throughout France.[90] While they were not always documented, Louis VII is known to have made royal bequests to numerous churches within his kingdom, especially during his marriage to Eleanor.[91] Notwithstanding Louis VII's piety, such royal gifts were intended as political statements, part of the propaganda cultivated by the king and his councilors. Thus, it would have been out of character for the king to shun the Cathedral of St. Pierre, especially since it was the official church of Poitou. Furthermore, when considering the early disaster, narrowly averted thanks to Suger, that had threatened to alienate the inhabitants of Poitiers, Louis VII's gift could have been meant to reaffirm publicly his attachment to the welfare of Poitiers and its inhabitants. From the point of view of a twelfth-century Capetian king, what better way to confirm one's deep interest in a particular people than being represented with them in a stained glass window? While the medium for conveying the message has changed since the twelfth century, this paternalistic approach has certainly been used time and time again throughout history.

When Eleanor married Henry II in 1152, the duchy of Aquitaine became part of Angevin territory. The marriage between these two ambitious and domineering individuals resulted in political maneuverings that brought turmoil and rebellions to Western France, a climate not conducive to artistic expression and expansion. No major rebuilding of religious structures took place at Poitiers during the second half of the twelfth century, except at the Cathedral of St. Pierre. Henry is known to have rebuilt secular Poitevin buildings for security and prestige. However, his participation in the embellishment or rebuilding of the Cathedral of St. Pierre remains questionable. Only his desire to impose his chosen candidate, Jean de Bellesmains, as bishop of Poitiers may have led Henry II to make a donation to the Cathedral Chapter in 1162, the year when, according to the

sixteenth-century compiler, Jean Bouchet, Henry "fect comacer" the rebuilding of the Cathedral of St. Pierre "a la requeste de madame Alienor son epouse."[92] However, a date, possibly marking the beginning of one phase of the reconstruction of the cathedral, must not be confused with a terminus post quem for the Crucifixion window. In searching for historical accuracy, politics is a key element in the puzzle, but not the only one. It is necessary to make further inquiries, and investigate the sociological factors that may have influenced the design and manufacture of the Crucifixion window.

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[1] Robert Favreau, "Poitiers, capitale des ducs d'Aquitaine," Archeologia, 6H(1995):24.

[2] Favreau, "Poitiers," 24.

[3] In 51 B.C., Lemonum was the capital of the Pictaves. When Caesar-Augustus created the Roman province of Aquitania, Saintes was made the capital. But Poitiers remained an important administrative center (see, Hiernard & Bourgeois, "Quand Poitiers," 6); During the third-century A.D., Poitiers's population reached a high of twenty to thirty-thousand (see ibid., 13); Economic decline was later followed by invasions and depopulation (see ibid., 19); however, ibid., 19, "Elle [Lemonum] est également au début du Ve siècle la résidence d'un préfet des Sarmates et des Taifales, commandant une unité de Germains fédérés venus d'Europe de l'Est."

[4] Ibid., 15-19.

[5] Ibid., 26.

[6] André Alba, Rome - Débuts du Moyen-Age (1959):266-68; André Alba, Le Moyen Age (1958):20-21; Michel Dillange, Les comtes de Poitou (1995):25; Le Jan, Histoire de la France: Origines et premier essor 480 - 1180 (1996):219-20; ibid., 179.

[7] Alba, Rome, 268.

[8] Alba, Le Moyen Age, 77-78.; le Jan, Histoire de la France, 227.

[9] During the first two-hundred years of their rule, in order to ensure their hold on French domains, the Capetian kings had their own sons elected while they were still alive (see André Alba, Le Moyen Age, 78; Le Jan, Histoire de la France, 215); Reims was chosen for this religious ritual, probably because it was the place where Clovis was baptized. Therefore, it was perceived as the birthplace of the French monarchy and as the foundation of the French state (see Patrick Demouy, La basilique de Saint-Rémi - Reims (1974):2; Louis Demaison, "Saint-Rémi de Reims," Congrès archéologique de Reims, 1 (1911):57-106).

[10] le Jan, Histoire de la France, 205, "...à partir du milieu du XIIe siècle,... le catharisme s'est répandu rapidement dans le Midi languedocien, dans le triangle Albi-Toulouse-Castres. Il y reçoit le soutien des petits chevaliers ruraux..."

[11] Le Jan, Histoire de la France, 229.

[12] Marcelin Defourneaux, Les français en Espagne aux 11e et 12e siècles, (1949):129, 132, 159; Eleanor S. Greenhill, "Eleanor, Abbot Suger, and Saint-Denis," William W. Kibler, ed., Eleanor - Patron and Politician, (1976):99; Barton Sholod, Charlemagne in Spain: The Cultural Legacy of Roncesvalles (1966):89, n. 139.

[13] Dillange, Les comtes, 156, "Cette action contre les infidèles... annonce le départ des croisés pour Jérusalem, trente ans plus tard." (see also, Richard, Histoire des comtes de Poitou 1, 291).

[14] Ibid., 154.

[15] Ibid., 183; Greenhill, "Eleanor," 84; Defourneaux, Les français, 159-60.

[16] For the history of the Holy Sepulchre, see John Wilkinson, "The Church of the Holy Sepulchre," Archaeology, 31, 4 (July/August 1978):6-13; Alan Borg, "Church of the Holy Sepulchre," Jane Turner ed., Dictionary of Art, 17 (1996):497-499; Robert Ousterhout, "Sepulchre Church," Turner, ed., Dictionary of Art 28 (1996):427-429.

[17] For William IX, see Dillange, Les comtes, 173-79, passim. William IX, known as "the Troubadour," was a writer, the author of ballads, and a lover of art and music. For more information on his writings, see Alfred Jeanroy, La chanson de Guillaume IX (1967):passim; Jean-Charles Payen, Le prince d'Aquitaine (1980):passim; and Rebecca A. Baltzer, "Music in the Life and Times of Eleanor," William W. Kibler, ed., Eleanor of Aquitaine (1976):61; ibid., 74 n. 1.

[18] One of them, the "tour Maubergeon," became the lodging for his mistress, the Viscountess Dangerosa of Chatellerault, who was also the maternal grandmother of Eleanor of Aquitaine.

[19] About Diego Gelmirez, see Anselm Gordon Biggs, Diego Gelmirez, First Archbishop of Compostela (1949): passim; and Durliat, La sculpture romane de la route de Saint-Jacques, 310-311.

[20] Defourneaux, Les français, 166; Greenhill, "Eleanor," 84.

[21] Dillange, Les comtes, 194. Greenhill, "Eleanor," 84.

[22] Le Jan, Histoire de la France, 215.

[23] Michel Bur, Suger (1992):33, "...en 1080, cherchant à mieux assumer l'héritage des deux dynasties qui avaient précédé la sienne sur le trône de France, il [Philippe] avait appelé son premier fils Clovis, nom qui se prononçait alors Louis;" ibid., 45, n. 9, " ...le choix de ce nom [Louis VI] peut apparaître comme la première manifestation d'une volonté des Capétiens de se rattacher à la race éliminée en 987..."; see also A. Fliche, Le règne de Philippe Ier (1912): 2 (Procès-verbal du sacre de 1059); ibid., 335 (Pri

[23] vilège d'Urbain II de 1089); see also, M. Prou, Recueil des actes de Philippe Ier (1908):340, n. 120 (Acte en faveur de Saint-Rémi de Reims).

[24] Alba, Moyen Age, 78, Bur, Suger, 159-60.

[25] Le Jan, Histoire de la France, 215, "C'est en s'appuyant sur cette prérogative [prendre en charge la paix publique] que les rois [français] du XIIe siecle vont reprendre pied hors de leur domaine."

[26] Greenhill, "Eleanor," 102-103.

[27] Le Jan, Histoire de la France, 229, "Suger, ...pendant que le roi est à la seconde croisade (1147-1149), présente le roi comme le vicaire du Christ, le protecteur de toutes les églises du royaume."

[28] Greenhill, "Eleanor," 103; Defourneaux, Les français, 114.

[29] For the lineage of the dukes of Aquitaine, see Dillange, Les comtes, passim; Richard, Histoire des comtes de Poitou, passim; Favreau, "Poitiers," 24.

[30] Michael Camille, "Seeing and Reading: Some Visual Implications of Mediaeval Literacy and Illiteracy," Art History, 8/1 (March, 1985):26-49, "In this period [first half of the twelfth century] there was still a general mistrust of texts." For other works on orality and literacy, see Camille, "Seeing and Reading," 44, n. 5; and Raguin, "The Architectural and Glazing Context," 189, n. 2.

[31] Elizabeth A. R. Brown, "Eleanor as Parent, Queen, and Duchess," William W. Kibler, ed. Eleanor of Aquitaine (1976):13; Henri Waquet, ed., Abbot Suger, Vita Ludovici Grossi (1964): 280.

[32] Edmond-René Labande, "Pour une image véridique d'Aliénor d'Aquitaine," Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de L'Ouest, 3, (1952):176; Achille Luchaire Louis VI le Gros, annales de sa vie et de son règne, (1890):263-64, n. 579.

[33] The name of the archbishop of Bordeaux had several spellings: Loriol, Lauroux, Louroux, or Loroux.

[34] Time was of the essence, because William X's vassals, especially the ambitious viscounts of Thouars and Limoges would have liked to become duke.

[35] Bur, Suger, 161, "Le roi [Louis VI] fit savoir aux évêques et abbés de la province de Bordeaux qu'il leur reconnaissait la liberté d'élection sans exiger l'hommage, le serment de fidélité et le droit de dépouille;" On the same subject, see Luchaire, Louis VI le Gros, 265, n. 581; Dillange, Les comtes, 203-04; Odette Pontal, "Les évêques dans le monde Plantagenet," Cahiers de civilisation médiévale, XXIX/1-2 (Janvier-juin 1986):130; Achille Luchaire, Études sur les actes de Louis VII, 1, (1885):97.

[36] For Louis VII's coronation at Reims, see Bur, Suger, 155-56; L. Mirot, ed., Chronicon Mauriniacense, (Chronique de Morigny, 1095-1152), in Collection de textes pour servir à l'étude et à l'enseignement de l'histoire (1909): 57-59; Luchaire, Louis VI le Gros, 220, n. 476; M. Chibnall, ed., The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis (1980):423, 446-48; Régine Pernoud, Aliénor (1965): 19.

[37] Greenhill, "Eleanor," 103, "During the first fifteen years (1137-1152) [donations to the Church] are twice as numerous as those made during the succeeding twenty eight ... The liberality of his early reign corresponds precisely with the years of his marriage to Eleanor and his tenure as duke of Aquitaine."

[38] Dillange, Les comtes, 215; Labande, "Pour une image," 178, "La politique aventureuse ... de Louis VII avant la croisade serait due à une dualité d'influences exercées sur le prince [Louis VII] par Suger, conseiller de son père, et par sa trop précoce épouse;" see also, Elie Berger, "Les aventures de la reine Aliénor, histoire et légende," Academie des Inscriptions, comptes rendus de séances (1906):703.

[39] Bur. Suger, 165-66; For Suger's proclamation, see A. Lecoy de la Marche, Oeuvres complètes de Suger, (1867):1-12 (supplément, fragment inédit de la vie de Louis VII), in Bur, Suger, 171 n. 51; and Dillange, Les comtes, 211-12.

[40] Bur, Suger, 162, Ibid., 170 n. 46, Chibnall, ed., Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis, 591.

[41] This will be explained further when discussing the history of the cathedral.

[42] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale," (1849):538.

[43] Bur, Suger, 166-67; Dillange, Les comtes, 214-15.

[44] Yves Sassier, Louis VII, (1991):113. The city, Vitry-en-Perthois is not to be confused with Vitry-le-François. Both are east of Paris and in close proximity -- 4 kms of each other.

[45] Dillange, Les comtes, 214-15.

[46] Ibid., 216; Michel Dumontier, L'empire des Plantagenêts (1980):84, "Le 11 juin 1144... Louis se présenta en pénitent, vêtu d'une cotte grise;" Labande, "Pour une image," 179; Pernoud, Aliénor, 46.

[47] Bur, Suger, 272; A. Graboïs, "Le privilège de croisade et la régence de Suger," Revue historique de droit français et étranger 3 (1964):458-465; A. Graboïs, "Louis VII pélerin," Revue d'histoire de l'Église de France, 74 (1988):5-22.

[48] Recent events (December 1144) in the Holy Land had prompted the king of Jérusalem, Baldwin III, to request help from Rome. Furthermore, on 2 Dec. 1145, an Armenian embassy had asked for help once more. The French king's request could not have been more à propos (see, Bur, Suger, 272-73).

[49] Dillange, Les comtes, 227.

[50] Labande, "Pour une image," 194.

[51] For the events surrounding the divorce of Louis VII and Eleanor, see Dillange, Les comtes, 228; Labande, "Pour une image," 193; and Pernoud, Aliénor, 104-05).

[52] Labande, "Pour une image," 191-92.

[53] Bur, Suger, 308; Dillange, Les comtes, 225.

[54] It was a personal outrage to the person of the king that the woman whom he had just divorced, had remarried after less than two months. This fact implied that the marriage was planned while she was still married to him. More important, however, was the loss of territory and the sudden shift in the balance of power. (see Dillange, Les comtes, 227-28 & 231; Pernoud, Aliénor, 123-24).

[55] Greenhill, "Eleanor," 103. Marcel Pacaut, Louis VII et son royaume (1964):83.

[56] Greenhill, "Eleanor," 82.

[57] Robert Fawtier, The Capetian Kings of France (1960):107; Greenhill "Eleanor," 81.

[58] Pacaut, Louis VII, 83.

[59] Greenhill, "Eleanor," 103.

[60] According to the feudal code, as vassals of the king of France, Eleanor and Henry should have asked their suzerain for permission to marry. However, for obvious reasons, they preferred to marry without great pomp and place the king in front of the "fait-accompli."

[61] Richard, Histoire des comtes de Poitou, 117.

[62] This allegation is based on contemporary sources; Brown, "Eleanor as Parent, Queen, and Duchess," 15 quotes William of Newburgh, Historia Rerum Anglicarum, 1 of Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I, Richard Howlett, ed., Rolls Series 82 (1884):92; Dillange, Les comtes, 229-30, and Labande, "Pour une image," 197-98, quotes Gervasius of Canterbury, Chronicles of the reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I, W. Stubbs, ed. (1879):149.

[63] Dillange, Les comtes, 229-230; Pernoud, Aliénor, 111. Henry Plantagenet was born on 5 March 1133. He was the eldest son of Geoffrey V Plantagenet and of Matilda, who was the widow of the German Emperor, Henry V, and fifteen years older than Geoffrey.

[64] For a comparison between the two kings, see Richard, Histoire des comtes de Poitou, 110.

[65] During the summer of 1151, Henry accompanied his father to Paris to give homage to Louis VII, his suzerain, for the duchy of Normandy. Henry II became king of England in the fall of 1154 (see, Dillange, Les comtes, 230).

[66] Labande, "Pour une image," 199, "en lui elle avait déjà trouvé un maître;" ibid., 200, "Été comme hiver, passant et repassant la Manche, presque toujours attendant un nouvel enfant, la voici durement soumise aux plus stricts devoirs d'une souveraine féodale;" Brown, "Eleanor as Parent, Queen, and Duchess," 15, "Eleanor may have hoped and expected, by virtue of her age and established position, to be able to dominate Henry, but in making her assessment of the situation she would have been well advised to consider Henry's background and consequent expectations;" see also Gerald of Wales, De principis instructione liber, vol. 8 of Giraldi Cambrensis Opera, G. F. Warner, ed., Rolls Series 21 (1891):301, 309.

[67] Dillange, Les comtes, 230; ibid., 240.

[68] Labande, "Pour une image," 201, "Du matin au soir, sans arrêt, écrit Pierre de Blois, il [Henry II] s'occupe des affaires du royaume. Sauf quand il monte à cheval ou prend ses repas, il ne s'asseoit jamais.... il inspecte tout;" Pernoud, Aliénor, 112; Richard, Histoire des comtes de Poitou, 127, "Il était... d'une ambition insatiable et il ne renonça jamais à l'assouvir."

[69] Brown, "Eleanor as Parent, Queen, and Duchess," 15.

[70] Dillange, Les comtes, 239.

[71] Ibid., 238; Richard, Histoire des comtes de Poitou, 133.

[72] Dillange, Les comtes, 238; Favreau, "Poitiers," 26; Pernoud, Alièner, 172; Richard, Histoire des comtes de Poitou, 133.

[73] Dillange, Les comtes, 239, Rebellious vassals included "les comtes de la Marche et d'Angoulême, les vicomtes de Limoges et de Thouars. Y figurent également des Manceaux et même des Bretons."

[74] For the unfortunate events at Limoges, see Dillange, Les comtes, 232); ibid., 236; Labande, "Pour une image," 199; and Richard, Histoire des comtes de Poitou, 114.

[75] For Henry's system of government, see Bur, Suger, 212; Dillange, Les comtes, 231; J. A. Green, The Government of England under Henry I (1986):passim; and Pernoud, Aliénor, 136-37.

[76] For Henry's policies regarding the Church, especially the Aquitanian clergy, see Pontal, "Les Évêques dans le monde Plantagenet," 133; Richard, Histoire des comtes de Poitou, 131.

[77] Alba, Moyen-age, 80-81.

[78] Jacques Boussard, "L'empire Plantagenet," Ferdinand Lot et Robert Fawtier, eds., Histoire des institutions religieuses, I (1957):57.

[79] Boussard, "L'empire Plantagenet," 51-52.

[80] Richard, Histoire des comtes de Poitou, 156.

[81] Eleanor's dislike of Rosamund is betrayed by the nickname that was given to her at Eleanor's Court in Poitiers, where she was referred to as "Rose immonde" (foul Rose). (see, Dillange, Les comtes, 244; Pernoud, Aliénor, 179-181).

[82] Richard, Histoire des comtes de Poitou, 239 and n. 1, mentions that, before the major Aquitanian revolt of 1173, king Philip-Augustus told Richard that Henry had planned to divorce Eleanor in order to marry Alix, the daughter of Louis VII and Alix of Champagne (Philip-Augustus' sister), and to make their illegitimate son, his heir. However, Henry's efforts stopped shortly after the child had died. Was it true or, was Philip trying to incite Richard to betray Henry in order to achieve his own ends?

[83] Brown, "Eleanor as Parent, Queen, and Duchess," 19; ibid., 29 n. 72.

[84] Boussard, "L'empire Plantagenet," 51.

[85] Dillange, Les comtes, 244, "Pour une femme comme Aliénor, orgueilleuse et fière ... Il n'est pas exagéré de parler de haine de sa part."

[86] A. Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers,"(1850):5-6.

[87] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," (1850):6, "C'est ainsi que dans son testament, dicté en 1182,... on le voit disposer ... de 42 mille marcs d'argent et 50 mille marcs d'or;...et pas un mot du Poitou, ni de Poitiers, ni de la cathédrale;" Grinnell, "The Crucifixion window," 9 and n. 26.

[88] For Eleanor's personality and character, see Kibler, ed., Eleanor of Aquitaine, passim.

[89] Greenhill, "Eleanor," 85-86; Amy Kelly, Eleanor of Aquitaine, (1950):20-22.

[90] Greenhill, "Eleanor," 81, "Following the arrival of the new queen, Eleanor of Aquitaine, in the late summer of 1137, an unprecedented flowering of the arts... took place in the Frankish kingdom."

[91] Greenhill, "Eleanor," passim.

[92] For Jean de Bellesmains' episcopate, see Pontal, "Les évêques dans le monde Plantagenet," 130; Dillange, Les comtes, 225; for Eleanor's request, see Jean Bouchet, Annales D'Aquitaine, 1524 edition. (this is the earliest extant edition at the Médiathèque of Poitiers), fol. LXII.

CHAPTER IV

CULTURAL HISTORY OF POITOU AND ITS CAPITAL, POITIERS

1. Sociological and Environmental Factors

Although politics can have a tremendous impact on artistic expression, sociological factors, such as the influx of new cultural elements through invasions and immigrations, economic changes, religious evolution, and even natural factors, such as environmental and climatic conditions, can also have a profound effect on representational art. The following paragraphs discuss the various elements that contributed to the formation of the culture, and played an important role in the evolution of twelfth-century Poitevin society. The ultimate aim of this chapter is to show how these factors may have influenced the design and production of the Crucifixion window.

1.1. General Overview (First Century B.C.- Twelfth Century)

From the first century B. C. to the twelfth century A. D., political developments, societal changes, resulting from famine, epidemics and migration, and religious evolution, from a mostly pagan to a mostly Christian population, left their marks not only on the Aquitanian landscape, but also on the psyche of the inhabitants of Poitiers, and on their artistic production. In the first century B. C., the Roman conquerors allowed the culturally well-developed and politically well-established Celtic tribe, known as the Pictaves, who inhabited the region to keep their administration and customs in place.[1] Poitiers/Lemonum benefited handsomely from the association.[2] A vast urbanization and building program transformed the topography of the town.[3]

During the following centuries, in spite of changing governments, new laws, recurring warfare, and all the problems endemic to a society in evolution, Poitiers remained a center of culture and education that came to rely more and more heavily on the Church and on its teachers, such as St. Hilary of Poitiers, bishop from 351/52 to 367/68, and his successors.[4] As the only constant in their lives, the Church brought hope to the Poitevins. Starting in Merovingian times, the bishop of Poitiers became known as "le défenseur de la cité," and wielded more power than the count.[5]

In spite of Saracen raids, Norman invasions, and continuing warfare for the possession of Aquitaine, the Poitevins, who were attached to their Celtic and Gallo-Roman roots, managed to keep alive their old customs and way of life for a time.[6] However, the loss of population that followed epidemics and continuing invasions, coupled with the influx of new people, disrupted the old frameworks of society, bringing new customs and a different way of life. Once the problem of Norman invasions was resolved in the tenth century, restless knights, who no longer had external enemies to fight, formed raiding parties and warred amongst themselves, destroying all in their wake.[7] The insecurity produced by the fear of these destructive raids, and the isolation caused by a breakdown in communication, limited the possibility of exchanges between regions. Interested primarily in day-to-day survival, only the most daring ventured beyond the walls of their cities.[8] Continuing fear for their lives enticed the dwindling population to turn to the strongest and richest amongst them who could afford to protect the rest of the people for a price. Exchanges of oaths and promises of protection mark the beginning of the feudal state, one man being the liege of another, at all echelons of society.[9]

At the end of the eleventh century, the First Crusade (c. 1099) provided an outlet for overzealous knights to vent their excess energies, and brought a relative peace. Activities along the old north/south Roman axis slowly revived. Freed from constant fear, the most affluent people had the opportunity to invest more time in intellectual, artistic and architectural pursuits, and to commission works of art. This flowering of the arts led to new constructions and to the architectural renewal of Poitiers. By the middle of the twelfth century, certain factors converged to strengthen the economy and sustain an increase in population. Clement weather and a general warming trend, that reached its apex during the thirteenth century, and favored cultivation and plant growth, will be examined first.

1.2. Population, Climate and Environment

Often neglected, especially in art historical research, natural factors, such as climatic changes and weather conditions, have been known to alter the development of history by affecting the means of survival of whole populations. Starting in the sixth century, a

general warming trend brought about a regrowth of the forest in areas previously cleared and cultivated by the Romans and their descendents, contributing to the isolation of centers of population.[10] For a long time after the invasions had finally ceased, parts of Aquitaine, especially the regions close to the Atlantic coast, were depopulated, in spite of sustained efforts to repopulate the area.[11]

While land under new or renewed cultivation provided more food that favored population growth, as well as an increase in wealth,[12] by the mid-twelfth century, Poitiers was still surrounded by vast areas of uncultivated and partly forested land.[13] Forests were occasionally areas of refuge for the inhabitants in times of war. They also served as abodes for hermits, and as the domains of brigands, and out-of-work mercenaries. For artists, the surrounding forest supplied them with models of plant life, such as the ferns represented in the border of the Crucifixion window. For country folk and town dwellers alike, the remaining wooded areas around Poitiers were magical places, the loci of the merveilleux, where old Celtic beliefs, such as the worship of tree spirits, endured.[14] Even in the twelfth century, Christian clerics still felt the need to condemn these beliefs, and made constant efforts to replace them or to hide them under a veneer of Christian practices.[15] This emphasis on teaching the lay people the rudiments of Christian faith encouraged the restoration and even the rebuilding of churches.

1.3. Urban Renewal

During the second half of the eleventh and the first half of the twelfth centuries, construction sites dotted the city. This new building activity prompted Hildebert de Lavardin, bishop of Le Mans (1097-1125), to praise Poitiers for the beauty of its site, and for its many towers that reflected the wealth of its clergy and inhabitants, and the power of its ruler.[16] All the major churches of Poitiers were either adorned with new sculptures and paintings, or renovated and/or partially rebuilt between c. 1050 and c. 1150. At the southern end of town, the Church of St. Hilaire-le-Grand, which had become a collegiate church (c. 942) with the duke of Aquitaine as its lay abbot, was adorned with mural paintings and dedicated in 1049. William VII (1039-1058) provided for the security of its surroundings by enlarging the existing fortifications.[17] Because of the fear of fire, the

Church of St. Hilaire-le-Grand was vaulted in stone at the beginning of the twelfth century. Also on the southern side of town, between 1050 and 1051, the duchess of Aquitaine, Agnes of Burgundy (mother of William VII), founded the Church of St. Nicolas.[18] Along the same north/south axis, closer to the ducal palace, the Church of St. Porchaire was rebuilt, and, in 1068, it became a priory church dependent on the Benedictine abbey of Bourgueil. To the north of town, houses sprang up around the Church of St. Germain that was built during the Carolingian period. In 1069, duke William VIII (1058-1086) founded the abbey of St. Jean-de-Montierneuf, in close proximity to the Church of St. Germain.[19] Given to St. Hugh, abbot of Cluny, in 1076, the abbey became the main Cluniac foundation in Aquitaine.[20] At the end of the eleventh century, the Church of St. Radegund was rebuilt with an ambulatory to accommodate the numerous pilgrims who stopped at Poitiers.[21] To the southeast of the Church of St. Radegund, the monastic village surrounding the convent of St. Croix grew under the protection of the convent's walls which were attached to the old southeastern walls of Poitiers. However, the close proximity of the convent's walls to the cathedral prevented its expansion to the southeast.[22]

During the first half of the twelfth century, Notre-Dame-la-Grande acquired its intricately sculpted façade, and the walls of the Baptistery of St. John were endowed with the magnificent mural paintings that can still be seen.[23] After 1137, the date that marks the end of separate rule for Aquitaine and Poitou, the Cathedral of St. Pierre was the only major church in Poitiers that had not been rebuilt. By the middle of the twelfth century, new construction spilled over the old Roman walls that now constricted the city. This left the new buildings unprotected. To remedy this state of affairs, in 1161, Henry II built new walls that protected the whole area between the rivers Clain and Boivre. He also renovated the ducal palace. Tradition maintains that he started the reconstruction of the Cathedral of St. Pierre in 1162.[24] Overall, the urban renewal that took place at Poitiers favored church reconstruction.[25] It also served to emphasize the role of the Church in medieval society, and was accompanied by a spiritual renewal in Poitou and Aquitaine.

1.4. Medieval Society and the Church

The close proximity of people in the restricted environment of a walled city in which everyone was subjected to the gaze of the other, enabled the Church to exert a tight control over the life and mores of the inhabitants. Whether people acted out of deep conviction, or were simply programmed to respond, they attended Church services and answered the tolling of bells that regulated their lives bringing a sense of order to the outside chaos and to the fluidity of time. Since medieval people possessed few written records on which to rely and glean a clear sense of history, buildings like the Baptistery of St. John, the origins of which were shrouded in the mists of time, served to give them a sense of their identity and an understanding of their connection to a historical past. Churches were centers of attraction, nuclei around which life grew, and the rallying points of medieval life. They were "houses of prayer" (Matthew 21:13), places of rest on the journey through life, physical places symbolically caught at the juncture between two worlds: the infinite and the finite.[26]

By their sizes and appearances, churches, especially the bigger cathedrals, contrasted strongly with the small abodes that surrounded them. In the twelfth century, no human dwellings could compare favorably with the cathedrals. Stone churches were imposing in size and in the quality of their construction. The intrinsic differences between the houses of men and the house of God were meant to awe the people, and give them a sense of the divine, and of the infinite chasm that existed between Creator and creature. A twelfth-century person did not consider his/her church as a simple building. Clerics told him/her that it was a sacred space and a conduit for God's grace, in which communion with the Divine was possible.[27] As one entered a church, the historical world was left behind.[28] For the simplest among men, the rustici, it was a mysterious dwelling in which sacred rites, that were not often well-understood, took place. On feast days, the cathedral was a place full of light and chants. At any time and for anyone, it was a place of refuge. The God who dwelt in churches was a God of light, the protector against the magical beings and evil spirits who inhabited the darkness and roamed the surrounding forests.

The Church aroused in Medieval Europeans an awareness of belonging to a greater whole. The clerics repeated that all people were participants in God's great plan, that included an inevitable progression towards the final accomplishment of time: the Apocalypse and the Last Judgement, themes often represented on the tympana of churches built in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and often used in homilies to encourage the people to repent. Teachers like Bernard of Chartres embraced the teleological doctrine of history. John of Salisbury reported how Bernard viewed this inevitable yet positive forward movement "We are like midgets seated on the shoulder of giants. We see better and further than the ancients, but it is not because we have better visual acuity, or because we are taller. It is because they carry us and lift us above their great height."[29]

1.5. Religious Revival and Renewal

At the end of the sixth century, pope Gregory the Great (590-604) had already recognized the importance of images as tools to educate the illiterate.[30] Twelfth-century clerics certainly took his words to heart. Even St. Bernard, who condemned the use of excessive ornaments in religious structures, knew how important they were as teaching tools when he wrote, "we know that they [the bishops], as debtors to the wise and foolish, when they cannot rouse the sense of religion in the carnal multitude, by spiritual means, must do so by ornaments that appeal to the senses."[31]

The importance placed on the evangelization of people is apparent in the number of medieval feast days that were observed. To the fifty-two Sundays were added the feast days of numerous saints that varied from one town to the next. While paid holidays did not exist, on feast days the clergy often distributed free food and drink. On major feast days, ceremonies were organized at the cathedral, not in the local churches, and people from the different parishes would gather there.[32] This required that the cathedral be large enough and in a good enough state of repair to accommodate a growing population. As shown above, the clergy's desire to educate the faithful, and the newly converted, was a key element in the widespread campaign of renovations and rebuilding of churches, and of new programs of decoration that took place at Poitiers during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.[33] The churches that were built or renovated were adorned with a wealth of

sculptures that, in many instances, were carved for the express purpose of educating and evangelizing the people, whether long-time residents or newly arrived from foreign lands.[34] Churches were also adorned with mural paintings and stained glass windows that served the same didactic purposes.

As the twelfth century was a period of spiritual revival, the clerics' words and works seem to have borne fruit. However, twelfth-century society was at a spiritual crossroads. The flourishing economy instigated a debate about materialism and spirituality that influenced both secular and religious classes of society.[35] Significant improvements in the economy, coupled with the realization that the end of the world was not at hand, transformed the way people viewed life. While these improvements fostered a new mentality of profit,[36] they also gave more people the extra funds necessary to contribute to the embellishment of religious structures. In his conclusion to The "Things of Greater Importance": Bernard of Clairvaux's Apologia and the Medieval Attitude Towards Art, Conrad Rudolph remarks that "the instruction of the illiterate came to be seen by some ...as a justification of the artworks which were a part of that instruction."[37] Again, Conrad Rudolph remarks that "material prosperity came to be interpreted both as a concomitant of and necessary to spiritual prosperity."[38]

However, material prosperity also gave people more time to think and explore their role in the new sancta res publica christiana.[39] Following in the footsteps of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, some viewed spending on artistic programs, even those aimed at teaching the illiterate, as excessive because it was to the detriment of almsgiving to the poor. Others, including Abbot Suger and the Cluniacs, believed that "art for the honor of God was predicated on the obligation to embellish the house of God in return for His many favors."[40] According to the Planctus and the De commendatione eulogizing Gilbert de la Porrée, bishop of Poitiers from 1142 to 1154, Gilbert certainly concurred with Abbot Suger and the Cluniacs about the importance of the care and decoration of churches.[41]

Yet, more troubling questions haunted the medieval mind. Already in the eleventh century, St. Anselm had asked, "Cur Deus homo?"[42] The salvific function of Christ's Incarnation, and the problems associated with the understanding and the interpretation of such dogmas as the Incarnation and the Trinity, occupied twelfth-century philosophers and

theologians, including Gilbert de la Porrée. Notwithstanding the debate about excess spending on art vs. almsgiving to the poor, the questions raised by the dogmas mentioned above, and the commitment of clerics to evangelize the people under their care, fostered the creation of significant works of art of which the Crucifixion window at Poitiers is but one example. However, were dogmatic and didactic concerns the only reasons why the Crucifixion window was designed at this time? Were other influences at play? And, if so, what were they? The next paragraphs will attempt to uncover the various elements that probably left their marks on the design of the Crucifixion window. Since the cult of relics was a constant reality throughout the Middle Ages, a survey of its history and how it may have affected the Crucifixion window will be undertaken first.

2. The Relic of the True Cross, Pilgrimages and the Crucifixion Window

2.1. The Cult of Relics

The turbulent times that preceded and followed the fall of the Roman Empire stimulated the cult of saints and the veneration of relics. Born out of devotion and reverence for the remains of the saints and holy martyrs, the cult of relics became a panacea against whatever was harmful, distressing, or disastrous.[43] From the second century onwards, it grew so rapidly that it created a controversy within the Church. Some Church Fathers, such as SS. Jerome and Augustine, believed that relics were only an aid in the worship of God, and a conduit through which God's graces could flow. Relics were not to be worshipped as though having specific, independent powers. Others, like St. Cyril of Jerusalem, followed popular piety and acknowledged the possibility that the power of the relics was inherent to the remains of saints and holy martyrs.[44] Quite often during the Middle Ages, the cult of relics bordered on superstition,[45] and was compared to pagan practices.[46] Popular belief maintained that relics were an extension of the life of a saint, and contributed to keeping him/her "alive."[47] Thus, through the intrinsic power of his/her relic, a saint was able to participate in the life of the city.[48] However, a relic had to prove itself by performing miracles to be accepted as a truly worthy remnant of a saint. Conversely, people had to show continually their veneration if they wanted a relic to keep

on performing miracles. This element of exchange or bartering was part of the religious belief of the age.

During troubled periods, or times of weak central government, relics were prized for their ability to substitute for public authority, to protect and secure the community, and to provide a certain level of economic prosperity. At all times, relics were valued for their thaumaturgic powers. Poitiers possessed and relied on a very valuable relic, the body of St. Hilary, who had died in Poitiers in 368 and, according to William Melczer, "was buried between the tombs of his wife and his daughter, in a funerary chapel that, considerably later became Saint-Hilaire-le-Grand."[49] From the time of St. Hilary's death, his mortal remains had become the object of a pilgrimage. However, three hundred years after St. Hilary's death, another valuable relic came into the possession of the Poitevins.

2.2. The Relic of the True Cross

During the sixth century, Merovingian occupation of Western Gaul weighed heavily on Aquitaine and resulted in many rebellions. In these troubled times, the arrival of a Merovingian queen of the Franks, Radegund (c. 520-587), who had left the court with the approval of her husband, king Chlothar, to pursue a life of prayer,[50] brought hope to the inhabitants of Poitiers. After a sojourn in Tours, the queen had chosen Poitiers to found a new convent that she dedicated to the Holy Cross. According to one of her biographers, the nun Baudonivia, when she was at court, Queen Radegund was already fond of collecting relics, a pastime that was shared by Medieval Latin and Byzantine rulers, for whom relics ensured their position and were a sign of high political prestige and power. For Radegund, the possession of first-class relics was not only proof of her spiritual strength,[51] it also brought her solace during the years of her exile after king Chlothar had forcibly brought her to his court as a captive princess.[52] As abbess of the convent of St. Croix, Radegund succeeded in acquiring a piece of the True Cross (569).[53] While pieces of wood were brandea, and not considered as powerful as bodily remains, the fact that these were believed to be pieces from the True Cross of Christ made them invaluable. This acquisition was quite an accomplishment considering that the remains of the True Cross were part of the Byzantine emperors' vast collection of relics of all kinds[54] that was a

source of great national pride among the inhabitants of Constantinople.[55] As a rule, the basileis were not overly interested in divesting themselves of their treasured possessions. However, Radegund's request to Justin II (565-578) and his wife Sophia met with success, thanks in part to the intervention of her nephew, the Frankish king Sigibert.[56]

Envious of the queen's accomplishment, and humiliated because Radegund had acquired such a valuable relic without his help, Mauroveus, bishop of Poitiers, at first refused to allow the relic to enter the city.[57] Mauroveus' inappropriate action, especially coming from a bishop, needs to be understood in light of the importance that the Medieval Europeans ascribed to the possession of relics and to the way they were acquired.[58] On the spiritual level, since he was not associated with its acquisition, Mauroveus may have felt that he would not partake of its supernatural benefits. On the material level, Mauroveus' open hostility shows that he was angry at losing the opportunity to have the queen in his debt.[59] However, except for the temporary fear of the possibility that God's wrath would fall on the community because of Mauroveus' actions, his reluctance to accept the relic had relatively little influence. On 19 November 569, the Poitevins welcomed the relic of the True Cross with great enthusiasm. For this very special occasion, the poet Venantius Fortunatus, who was a personal friend and the first biographer of Queen Radegund, wrote the Vexilla Regis, a hymn exalting the Cross of Christ and its salvific mission.[60] While Poitiers was already known as a place of pilgrimage in its own right because of the relics of St. Hilary, this new acquisition increased its fame.

From that time on, the population of Poitiers developed a great devotion to the cross of Christ, and yearly processions were made to honor it. These celebrations may have coincided with the ancient feast held in remembrance of the triumphal return of the cross to Jerusalem in 630, when Emperor Heraclius took it back from the Persians. During the difficult times of the late ninth and tenth centuries, the possession of relics in general, and a relic of the True Cross in particular, not only brought material wealth to their many supporters, but also offered spiritual solace. To possess a piece of the True Cross was tantamount to receiving a continuous flow of God's grace through the intervention of the Cross of Christ.[61] Because of her good works and the miracles that

she performed during her life time, Radegund was raised to sainthood after her death. Shortly thereafter, the name of the funerary Church of St. Mary was changed to St. Radegund, and her remains, kept in the church, were venerated as holy relics and became the object of a flourishing cult.

2.3. The Cult of St. Radegund

While veneration of the True Cross did not falter, the cult of St. Radegund did not fare as well. In the early eleventh century (c. 1012), Beliardis, abbess of the convent of St. Croix, attempted to revive it.[62] Partly as a result of Beliardis' efforts, an illustrated manuscript, known as the Vita Radegundis (Poitiers, Médiathèque, MS 250), that combined the Vitae written by Radegund's two biographers, Fortunatus and Baudonivia, was produced between 1075 and 1125.[63] Notwithstanding certain stylistic elements which it shares with the Crucifixion window, this illuminated manuscript is interesting because it shows a desire to revive the cult of St. Radegund and her attachment to the True Cross at a time when the king of France, Philip I, and his successors were trying to regain a foothold in western France. On behalf of Louis VI and Louis VII, Suger was reaching back in time, emphasizing connections between the Capetian kings and their Merovingian and Carolingian predecessors.[64] The re-emergence of the cult of the saintly Merovingian queen, close to the time when Eleanor became queen, concurred with Suger's program to aggrandize the lineage of the Capetian kings, [65] by drawing a parallel between the new Capetian queen, Eleanor, who was already known to be a descendant of Charlemagne,[66] and a past Merovingian queen, Radegund, who had conquered the heart of the Poitevins and was famous for her prestige, courage and sanctity. Indeed, this may have helped Louis VII to bring to fruition his plan to spread Capetian influence in the South, where he had already taken "numerous bishoprics and monasteries into his protection."[67]

2.4. The Theme of Christ's Crucifixion and the Crucifixion Window

After St. Radegund's death, the theme of the Cross and Crucifixion seems to have been foremost in the minds of the clergy and lay people of Poitiers. The Hypogée des Dunes, an underground martyrium situated outside the city perimeter to the east, was built

in the seventh century by the priest, Mellebaude, to bury seventy-two Christian martyrs. The Hypogée was also an oratory furnished with an altar to celebrate the Eucharistic liturgy. One of the remaining blocks of stone, that was part of an ensemble, on which a Crucifixion scene was carved, is adorned with the relief of the two thieves.[68] While it is not known how the crucified Christ was portrayed, or where these sculptured blocks were originally located within the martyrium, it is interesting to note that a Crucifixion scene was represented at Poitiers when such depictions were still rare.[69]

After the death of the saintly queen, Radegund, the church that she had dedicated to St. Mary was rededicated to her name. Rebuilt at the end of the eleventh century as a pilgrimage church, its new ambulatory allowed pilgrims to more easily view the burial place of the saint and the relic of the True Cross.[70] At some point during the twelfth century, a stained glass window was installed in the center of the chevet wall of the Cathedral of St. Pierre. While Grinnell speculates on "a possible relation of ideas" between the Crucifixion window and Suger's large gold enameled and jewelled cross at the Basilica of St. Denis,[71] and Barbier de Montault points out that the window could have served as the large Crucifix that was later placed above the altar,[72] no mention has been made to date of the relationship between the Crucifixion window, the cult of St. Radegund and the relic of the True Cross. However, it is no accident that this representation of Christ on the Cross faces the entrance to the Church of St. Radegund, a few hundred meters away. This window perpetuates the great attachment of the Poitevins to the Cross of Christ and its message of triumph and redemption. It also expresses a desire to keep alive and to link the cult of St. Radegund with a visual reminder of the relic of the True Cross in the form of a stained-glass rendition of Christ's Crucifixion. This stained glass window is an interpretation, in glass, of Fortunatus' words that are part of his famous hymn, the Vexilla Regis. In fact, the designer of the window seems to have had Fortunatus' words in mind when he depicted the central panel showing Christ on the cross.

Vexilla Regis prodeunt:
Fulget Crucis mysterium,
Qua vita mortem pertulit
Et morte vitam protulit.[73]

The first stanza of Fortunatus' hymn, quoted above, contains words that are visually expressed in the Crucified Christ. Both words and stained glass are imbued with the duality of life and death. While Christ's hands are pierced, the nails are not represented. Christ's body is slightly curved showing that it has weight; yet it is not the sagging body of a dead man. Christ's eyes are open, and the expression on His face is one of great sadness and resignation; yet He does not seem to suffer and be close to death. The cross to which He is attached only by His feet, that are nailed to a suppedaneum, is red as though it were bathed in His blood. However, no blood comes out of His wounds, as though He were impervious to death. As Fortunatus proclaims in a later stanza of this hymn, it is the "arbor decora et fulgida, ornata regis purpura,"[74] the "noble and resplendent tree, adorned with the purple of kings."[75] While the cross, the instrument of Christ's death, is colored in "purpura," the "pourpre" used only for kings and emperors since antiquity, it is surrounded by a border of living plants as though illustrating the words of Fortunatus, "...and by death, it [the mystery of the cross] brought forth life."[76] The Crucifixion window is not a portable object that people can carry through the streets during a procession. However, the words of Fortunatus, sung on feast days, explain its contents and could even serve as an adequate substitute. These sung words would attract the people, not only to the relic of the True Cross, but, starting in the mid-twelfth century, to its representation in the most prominent stained glass window in the Cathedral of St. Pierre.[77]

In light of the efforts made to revive the cult of St. Radegund that preceded the production of the Crucifixion window, and because this window reflects the continuing attachment not only of the Poitevins and their rulers, but also of the Capetian kings and their predecessors, embodied in the person of St. Radegund, a Merovingian queen of the Franks, to the True Cross of Christ, and by extension to the Church, one might also wonder if the large scale representation of the crucified Christ was intended to be used for its propagandistic value. This concern regarding the use of the window becomes especially significant when considering that Louis VII not only wanted to spread Capetian influence in the south, but also actively pursued a policy of defense of the pope and of the Church.[78] As Robert Fawtier points out, "whenever the pope needed a refuge from his enemies, he could rely on a welcome in the Capetian kingdom."[79] Thus, propaganda may

have played a role in the decision to commission the Crucifixion window, and influence some of its elements. However, the location of Poitiers at the crossroads of two pilgrimage roads, the pilgrimage to Santiago and the First and Second Crusades most likely contributed to the depictions of some of its elements.

3. Poitiers, Pilgrimages, and the First and Second Crusades

While Poitiers was already a pilgrimage town in its own right, thanks in part to the efforts of Queen Radegund, it was also a renowned stop at the intersection of the via turonense, the northernmost of the four French roads leading to Santiago de Compostela, and of the Roman road that led from the Atlantic Ocean to Southern France, and on to the Italian peninsula and Rome, and/or to the Holy Land. A contemporary travel guide to Santiago, known as the Codex Calixtinus, mentions Poitiers several times.[80] By the twelfth century, Santiago had become an important pilgrimage destination, in direct competition with Rome and the Holy Land. From the reign of William V onwards, Santiago de Compostela was a favorite place of pilgrimage for the Dukes of Aquitaine, who endowed its cathedral with rich gifts.[81] As mentioned above, both William VIII and William IX had fought heroically in the Spanish Reconquista under the banner and protection of St. James depicted as Santiago Matamoros. In thanksgiving for his many donations and for the relentless efforts of his ancestors to free Spain, William X was buried below the main altar of the cathedral.[82] Furthermore, strong family ties bound Poitou and Aquitaine with Castille, León and Aragon. Both Spain and Aquitaine were also closely associated with Cluny and its many abbeys and priories.[83] It is no wonder that these lasting associations affected the contemporary art of the pilgrimage roads, including the Crucifixion window at Poitiers.[84]

The following paragraphs will first analyze the possible association of the Crucifixion window with a sculptural element at Souvigny in the Bourbonnais. The influence of the pilgrimage to Santiago on the Resurrection panels of the Crucifixion window will be examined next. The last section will be devoted to the impact that the First and Second Crusades probably had on the depiction of the Holy Sepulchre in the central panel of the Resurrection.

3.1. The Crucifixion window and the Calendar of Souvigny

As mentioned in Chapter I, the border of the Crucifixion window (fig. 7) contains individual elements that are also found in other contemporary windows. However, its overall composition is quite unique. The strange configurations of white meandering fillets form a pattern that resembles knots in the shape of a figure eight. The only extant, almost identical design is found on an octagonal stone pillar that was part of the furnishings of the Church of SS. Peter and Paul, a Cluniac foundation at Souvigny in the Bourbonnais.[85] The original church of Souvigny was part of the domain that Aymard, a vassal of William the Pious, duke of Aquitaine (886-918), donated to Berno, the first abbot of Cluny, in 909. [86] After the death of St. Mayeul (11 May 994), the first abbot of Souvigny, miracles soon brought pilgrims to the area. Rebuilt by St. Odilo, abbot of Cluny (994-1049),[87] Souvigny acquired an international reputation as a place of pilgrimage.[88] Before his death in 1109, St. Hugh, abbot of Cluny, [89] enlarged the church once more in order to accommodate the growing crowds of pilgrims bound for Santiago who chose this alternate road from Vézelay.[90]

Interestingly, the carvings on the Calendar unite the Resurrected Christ, symbolically represented by the burning candle, with His whole creation.[91] Time is illustrated by the typical works of the months, while timelessness is depicted next to it, in the form of figures that look like the "perfect number" 8. This Calendar, the only one of its kind, can be dated earlier than the Crucifixion window, since it was part of St. Hugh's early twelfth-century reconstruction. It is also interesting to note that St. Hugh was closely associated with the duke of Aquitaine, William VIII, who gave the abbey of St. Jean-de-Montierneuf to Cluny.[92] It is difficult to believe that the rare format of this pattern, common to two different elements in two different churches, both built on land within the territory of the dukes of Aquitaine, both consecrated to SS. Peter and Paul, and both located at places of pilgrimage on roads leading to Santiago de Compostela, just happened by accident. The person(s), on whose erudition the design of the Crucifixion window was based, probably admired the Calendar of Souvigny, knew of its symbolic significance, and decided to incorporate this particular pattern into the border of the

window. Like Suger and the Cluniacs, and contrary to what St. Bernard of Clairvaux continually preached, the person(s) who planned and commissioned the window held the use of ornaments and sumptuous church decorations to be appropriate and even desirable. Such a person(s) might have also entertained the idea of including reminders of the attachment of Poitiers and its rulers to Santiago.

3.2. The Resurrection Panels and the Pilgrimage to Santiago

While a component of the border of the Crucifixion window may suggest ties with Cluny and the pilgrimage road, the Resurrection panels (fig. 3) contain specific elements alluding to Poitiers, Santiago and Jerusalem. Just below the cross, in the right panel of the Resurrection, the three holy women are depicted walking towards the open door of Christ's Sepulchre. The heavy sticks that they are carrying have no iconographic precedent in Resurrection scenes. They are very similar to the bourdon or bordón used by pilgrims to help them on their long journeys towards Santiago or the Holy Land. This sight was familiar to the designer of the window, since Poitiers is located at the intersection of two pilgrimage roads. As already stated, the dukes of Aquitaine were fond of pilgrimages. Since Poitiers held a place of honor on the pilgrimage roads, and possibly to memorialize the devotion of the dukes of Aquitaine to St. James and his shrine, the role of the holy women as the first pilgrims, seemed to have been emphasized by portraying each one carrying a bourdon.

3.3. The Resurrection Panels and the Crusades

Not only pilgrimages, and especially the pilgrimage to Santiago, but also the First and Second Crusades seem to have influenced part of the design of the Resurrection panels. According to Robert Ousterhout, the importance and influence of pilgrimages were such that several churches patterned after the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem were built or rebuilt "by returning pilgrims" between 1050 and the latter part of the twelfth century.[93] One of them, the church at Neuvy-Saint-Sépulchre is located relatively close to Poitiers, "on a major pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela."[94] In light of the attachment of the dukes of Aquitaine to pilgrimages, of Eleanor's and Louis' participation in the Second Crusade (1147-1149), and of the difficulty for ordinary people to visit the Holy Land at a

time when travel had become restricted because of the dangers involved, it is plausible that a representation of the Holy Sepulchre in the central panel may have been included "for the benefit of those who were unable to journey to the Holy Land." [95]

Conclusion

In spite of climatic changes that promoted a regrowth of the forest, and increased isolation, and notwithstanding invasions, internecine wars, economic misery and epidemics leading to a depopulation of the town and its surroundings, Poitiers remained a center of culture and education. During the twelfth century, freed from the fear of invasions, with the town enjoying a regrowth of its economy and population, the Poitevins had a chance to reflect on their past accomplishments, and to plan for the future. The twelfth century was a time of renovation and rebuilding of churches, and of a general regrowth in the arts and architecture of Poitiers. Perhaps because it was the most important church in Poitou, and also because it was still a sound structure, the Poitevins waited to renovate and rebuild the cathedral until it was no longer big enough to serve the needs of the growing population.

The twelfth century was also a time of spiritual renewal and religious debate. While certain iconographic elements found in the Crucifixion window, such as the massive and vivid red cross, the pilgrims' staffs, and the Holy Sepulchre, are reminders respectively of the relic of the True Cross, of pilgrimages, and of the crusades, and while these factors continued to influence twelfth-century Poitevin culture, the Crucifixion window was probably conceived first and foremost as a didactic tool for the literate and illiterate alike.

Other influences were undoubtedly at play. It is possible that, inspired by the work being done at St. Denis, and encouraged by her husband, Louis VII, who desired to stop her interference in political affairs, Eleanor turned her attention to artistic realizations. Eleanor's possible involvement with the renovation of the cathedral at Poitiers may be taken into account in view of the political ramifications of her marriage to Louis. Since Louis VII, helped by the shrewd Suger, was continuing the propagandistic agenda started by his grandfather Philip I, certain elements of the window might have been used as an aid

in their efforts to bolster the importance of the Capetian lineage. The Cross of Christ made of stained glass, and the relic of the True Cross, were a way to associate the past Merovingian queen, Radegund, and the Merovingian dynasty, with the present Capetian queen, Eleanor, who included Charlemagne as one of her forebears.

Overall, elements of design and composition of the Crucifixion window seem to have been affected not only by past events and contemporary politics but also by twelfth-century culture and religion. The next chapter will explore the life of the bishops of Poitiers who oversaw its diocese between 1137 and 1182. Special attention will be given to the strong personality, character and accomplishments of Bishop Gilbert de la Porrée, and to his philosophical and theological writings, in order to discover what influence he may have exerted on the design and/or commissioning of the Crucifixion window and on the rebuilding of the Cathedral of St. Pierre.

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[1] Hiernard and Bourgeois, "Quand Poitiers s'appelait Lemonum," 7.

[2] Ibid., 6-13.

[3] For Poitiers during Roman occupation, see Hiernard & Bourgeois, "Quand Poitiers," 7-8; ibid., 15, map.

[4] For St. Hilary, see Hiernard & Bourgeois, "Quand Poitiers," 19; Favreau, "Poitiers," 22.

[5] Favreau, "Poitiers," 23.

[6] For Norman invasions and Saracen raids in Aquitaine, see Dillange, Les comtes, 53-61; and Le Jan, Histoire de la France, 102-105. For the fight for power between the Carolingians, the Robertians, and the Capetians, see Dillange, Les comtes., 30-51; see also Le Jan, Histoire de la France, 150-154.

[7] Dillange, Les comtes, 61.

[8] For attacks on Poitiers, see Auber "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," 16 (1849):18; and Favreau, "Poitiers," 24.

[9] Le Jan, Histoire de la France, 70.

[10] For climatic changes and their effects, see Malcolm Barber, The Two Cities - Medieval Europe 1050-1320 (1995):16; Charles Higounet, Paysages et villages neufs du Moyen Age (1975):40-47; Emmanuel Leroy Ladurie, Histoire du climat depuis l'an mil (1983):12-13.

[11] Dillange, Les comtes, 130; for the evolution of the population and feudal institutions in Poitou, see Roland Sanfaçon, Défrichements, peuplement et institutions seigneuriales en Haut-Poitou du Xe au XIIIe siècle (1967):passim; ibid., 54-56, for new construction and the transformation of Poitiers in the eleventh and twelfth-century; Henri See, "Les hôtes et les progrès des classes rurales en France au Moyen Age," Nouvelle Revue Historique de Droit Français et Etranger 22 (1898):116-131.

[12] For the increase in cultivated lands, see Le Jan, Histoire de la France, 174-75.

[13] Higounet, Paysages, 47-48.

[14] Ibid., 55, "Quant aux croyances aux esprits des forêts..., elles ont traversé le haut Moyen Age en se transformant en légendes de héros et de géants; et les arbres 'fétiches', convertis en oratoires ou voués à un saint par le christianisme, restent les témoins de ce lointain attachement des hommes à la forêt mystérieuse, mais indispensable à leur vie;" Claude Gaignebet and Jean Dominique Lajoux, Art profane et religion populaire au Moyen Age (1985):79, legend of "l'oncle des bois;" ibid., 114-133, legends of the "wild man" and of the "fou de mai."

[15] For paganism in popular Medieval culture, see Gaignebet et Lajoux, Art profane, passim.

[16] Favreau, "Poitiers," 26.

[17] Ibid., 24; Dillange, Les comtes, 147.

[18] Dillange, Les comtes, 147.

[19] Requested by Pope Gregory VII "en expiation de son mariage incestueaux," (Dillange, Les comtes, 159).

[20] Ibid., 159.

[21] Jean-Pierre Andrault, Poitiers (1996):35.

[22] Yves Blomme, "La construction de la cathédrale Saint-Pierre de Poitiers," Bulletin Monumental, 152, 1(1994):8.

[23] Yvonne Labande-Maillefert, "Les peintures murales - Le programme roman," Jean Hiernard ed., Le baptistère St. Jean de Poitiers (1991):36-37; for the date, ibid., 40, "...aux alentours de l'an 1100."

[24] Jean Bouchet, Annales d'Aquitaine (1524), fol. LXII.

[25] Andrault, Poitiers, 11, 18, 22; Dillange, Les comtes, 147; Favreau, "Poitiers," 24-27.

[26] For churches as "houses of god," and places of communion with the divine, see the Old Testament (ex., Wisd., 9; Ez., 43:10-11); In the Apocalypse, St. John gives the dimension of the Celestial Jerusalem which is the symbolic representation of the Church (Apoc., 21:9-27).

[27] Jean Hani, Le symbolisme du temple chrétien (1990): 16; Davy, Initiation, 27.

[28] Lawrence Lee, et al., Stained Glass (1976):14.

[29] In John of Salisbury, Metalogicon, Cl. Webb, ed., III (1929):4.

[30] Davy, Initiation, 113; Grabar, Les voies de la création, 321.

[31] Joan Evans, Art in Mediaeval France (1969):86, n. 3.

[32] Jean Gimpel, The Cathedral Builders (1992):41-42.

[33] A. Auber, "Répertoire archéologique du département de la Vienne," Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest 9 (1860):219-337. From Auber's study of two hundred churches in the département de la Vienne, one can conclude that sixty percent were built or rebuilt during the11th and 12th centuries.

[34] Gaignebet and Lajoux, Art profane, 27.

[35] Barber, The Two Cities, 141-192; see also André Vauchez, La spiritualité du monde occidental - VIIIe au XIIIe siècle, (1994):102-103.

[36] Vauchez, La spiritualité, 68-69.

[37] Conrad Rudolph, The "Things of Greater Importance": Bernard of Clairvaux's Apologia and the Medieval Attitude Towards Art (1990):194.

[38] Rudolph, The "Things of Greater Importance," 194.

[39] Vauchez, La spiritualité, 61.

[40] Rudolph, The "Things of Greater Importance," 194.

[41] For Gilbert and the cathedral at Poitiers, see N.M. Häring, "Epitaphs and Necrologies on Bishop Gilbert II of Poitiers," Archives d'histoire doctrinaire et littéraire du Moyen Age, 36 (1970):57-87; ibid., in the Planctus Laurentii, 60, §14; ibid., 60, §16; ibid., 60, §19; ibid., 76-77, §6 and §7; for Suger, see Panofsky, Abbot Suger, passim; Abbot Suger's De administratione contains constant references to the gift or purchase of expensive gold, jewels, sculptures and bronze works.

[42] "Why did God become man?" see Vauchez, La spiritualité, 77.

[43] For the cult of relics, see Jonathan Sumpton, "The Cult of Relics," and "Saints and their Relics," Pilgrimage: An Image of Mediaeval Religion (1975):22-53; Patrick Geary, "Sacred Commodities: the Circulation of Relics," Arjun Appadurai, ed., The Social Life of Things: Commodities in a Cultural Perspective (1986):169-191.

[44] Sumpton, "The Cult of Relics," 22-31; Geary, "Sacred Commodities," 176.

[45] Barber, The Two Cities, 171.

[46] Sumpton, "The Cult of Relics," 23; ibid., 53, quotes St. Bernard of Clairvaux who complained that the relics were worshipped as "Jupiter or Mars might well have been venerated..."

[47] Geary, "Sacred Commodities," 174, "relics were the saints, continuing to live among men;" ibid., 176, "In the West...their corpses [the saints'] were seen as the pignora, literally, the security deposits left by the saints upon their deaths as guarantees of their continuing interest in the earthly community."

[48] Sumpton, "The Cult of Relics," 4, "Contempt for the relics of the saints were regularly visited with dumbness, bodily distortion, disease, madness, and death;" Geary, "Sacred Commodities," 171, "They [relics] were immediate sources of supernatural power for good and for ill, and close contact with them or possession of them was a means of participating in that power."

[49] William Melczer, The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela (1993):251.

[50] For St. Radegund see, Gregory of Tours, Historia francorum, in B. Krusch ed., Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum, 7 vols (1885-1920), vol. 1: 3.4 ; ibid., 1: 3.7; see also Magdalena Elizabeth Carrasco, "Spirituality in context: The Romanesque Illustrated Life of St. Radegund of Poitiers," Art Bulletin, 72 (1990): 415; Yves Chauvin et Georges Pon, eds. and trans., La vie de Sainte Radegonde (1995), passim; and Isabel Moreira, "Provisatrix optima: St. Radegund of Poitiers' Relic Petitions to the East," Journal of Medieval History, 19, 4, (Dec 93):286, n. 2.

[51] Sumpton, "The Cult of Relics," 30.

[52] Moreira, "Provisatrix optima," 288.

[53] Gregory of Tours, Historia francorum, 9.40 Patrologia Latina 71 (PL 71); Gloria martyrum 5 (PL 71); also in B. Krusch ed., Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum 1 (1885).

[54] Sumpton, "The Cult of Relics," 29, "This extraordinary large and varied collection was lodged partly in the churches of the city, and partly in the various royal palaces."

[55] Ibid., 30.

[56] Moreira, "Provisatrix optima," 290.

[57] J. Fontaine, "Hagiographie et politique de Sulpice Sévère à Venance Fortunat," Revue d'Histoire de l'Église de France, 62 (1976):113-40; Moreira, "Provisatrix optima," 299, "Maroveus's antagonism may be explained by the fact that the arrival of such a prestigious relic in Poitiers threatened to alter significantly the balance of spiritual authority in the city."

[58] Geary, "Sacred Commodities," 169-191.

[59] Ibid., 173, "The goal of gift-giving was not the acquisition of commodities but the establishment of bonds between giver and receiver;" Philip Grierson "Commerce in the Dark Ages: A Critique of the Evidence," Transactions of the Royal Historical Society 6/9, (1959):123-140, especially 137, "The 'profit' consists in placing other people morally in one's debt."

[60] In France, until the pastoral council, Vatican II, brought sweeping changes to Catholic liturgy, the Vexilla Regis was sung at vespers on Passion Sunday (see Morin, ed. and trans., Missel quotidien vespéral, (1963):346-47; see also The New Catholic Encyclopedia, XV, 396).

[61] Moreira, "Provisatrix optima," 300.

[62] Marie-Thérèse Camus, "L'église Sainte-Radegonde de Poitiers," Yves Chauvin and Georges Pon, et al., eds. and trans., La vie de Sainte Radegonde (1995):255-56; Carrasco, "Spirituality," 416.

[63] For the origins of MS 250 (Vita Radegundis), see Chauvin, Pon, et al., eds. and trans., La vie de Sainte Radegonde (1995):passim; ibid., 10-54, for a partial reproduction of MS 250.

[64] Brigitte Bedos Rezak, "Suger and the Symbolism of Royal Power: The Seal of Louis VII," in Paula Lieber Gerson, ed., Abbot Suger and Saint-Denis (1986):95-101; Bur, Suger, 164; Greenhill, "Eleanor," 103; Le Jan, Histoire de la France, 229-30; Pastoureau, "Le Roi aux fleurs de lis," passim.

[65] Bedos Rezak, "Suger and the Symbolism of Royal Power," 98.

[66] It is not clear how Eleanor was related to Charlemagne. According to Dillange, Les comtes, 75, her ancestor was Renoul II whose mother, Hildegard, was a daughter of Louis the Pious; Melriah V. Rosenberg, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Queen of the Troubadours (1937):5, believes that Eleanor was a descendent of Theodaric, a blood relation of Charlemagne and founder of the house of Aquitaine.

[67] Remensnyder, Remembering, 205.

[68] Henri Labbé de la Mauvinière, Poitiers et Angoulême, 7; Michel Rérolle, "L'hypogée des Dunes," Archeologia, 6H (1995):18.

[69] See Chapt II, 24, the iconographic background of the Crucifixion panels.

[70] See above n. 52.

[71] Grinnell, "The Crucifixion Window," 152.

[72] Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail de la Crucifixion," 24.

[73] Venantius Fortunatus, "Vexilla regis prodeunt," Morin, ed. and trans. Missel quotidien, 346.

[74] See above n. 60.

[75] Morin, ed. and trans. Missel quotidien, 346, "Vexilla regis," 346, 4th stanza, "Arbor decóra..."

[76] Ibid., 346, "qua vita mortem pertulit" means "that [the cross] by which life irrevocably leads to death."

[77] Raguin, "The Architectural and Glazing Context of Poitiers Cathedral," 173.

[78] About the Church and the Capetian kings, see Fawtier, The Capetian Kings, 73-74.

[79] Fawtier, The Capetian Kings, 74.

[80] For Book V of the Codex Calixtinus, see Melczer, The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela; for mention of Poitiers, ibid., 85 and 133.

[81] Greenhill, "Eleanor," 84.

[82] Ibid., 84.

[83] For the ties between Aquitaine, Spain and Cluny, see above Chapt. III.

[84] For the influence of Cluny on art, see Joan Evans, Cluniac Art of the Romanesque Period. (1950): passim; for an emphasis on the art of the pilgrimage roads, see Marcel Durliat, La sculpture de la route de Saint-Jacques (1990): passim.

[85] The Calendar of Souvigny is now in the local museum; see also Chaudagne, Souvigny, 32-34.

[86] Chaudagne, Souvigny, 36; Di Nota, Souvigny, 11.

[87] Rebuilt with the help of the architect, Maugin, a Cluniac monk, the new church was consecrated in 1063 by St. Peter Damian, and dedicated to SS. Peter and Paul. Like St. Mayeul, St. Odilo also died at Souvigny. Saint Hugh (b. 1024, d. 1109), started the twelfth-century reconstruction of the church (see Chaudagne, Souvigny, 37 and 41).

[88] Souvigny's fame grew after Hugues Capet was cured from an undisclosed illness, in 996, when he visited the shrine of St. Mayeul (see Di Nota, Souvigny, 23).; for the kings and popes who stayed at Souvigny, see Di Nota, Souvigny, 24-25.

[89] Ibid., 38.

[90] Durliat, La sculpture romane, 33, fig. 1, map showing the various pilgrimage roads.

[91] See Chapter II above, notes 93 and 94.

[92] Chaudagne, Souvigny, 36; Di Nota, Souvigny, 10-11.

[93] Ousterhout, "Sepulchre Church," 428.

[94] Ibid., 428, "...the secondary dedication of the church at Neuvy was to St. James the Great."

[95] Ibid., 428.

CHAPTER V

THE BISHOPS OF POITIERS (1142-1182), THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. PIERRE AND THE CRUCIFIXION WINDOW

Although political personalities played a significant role in the evolution of twelfth-century Poitevin society and its culture, religious figures, particularly the bishops, who were considered to be "les défenseurs de la cité," often enjoyed greater allegiance, especially if they were attuned to the needs of the people they had been elected to serve. The following paragraphs will explore the lives, works and accomplishments of the four men who were the bishops of Poitiers between 1142 and 1182, in order to discover their possible influence on the renovation of the cathedral of Poitiers and on the design and installation of the Crucifixion window. Special attention will be given to the influence, and to the philosophical and theological achievements of Gilbert de la Porrée, bishop of Poitiers (1142-1154), of whom the Benedictine monk and future abbot of Cirencester, Alexander Neckam (1157-1217), wrote,

> Oh Poitiers, glittering with so many titles to glory, add Gilbert the Porretan to the objects of your praises. Indeed, let your praises of Master Gilbert rank foremost in order. Praise him who once governed you, who was your son as well as your father. Praise him whom the head of the earth [the pope] had to summon before him. Born in your midst, a poem's metre can do no justice to a name which the entire world could hardly contain.[1]

1. Gilbert de la Porrée, Bishop of Poitiers (1142-1154)

When Gilbert became bishop of Poitiers, he inherited a see that his two predecessors, William II Adelmus (1135-1141), and the aging Grimoard (1141-1142), had neglected.[2] Gilbert was presented with the challenge of addressing problems of a mostly financial nature that had accumulated during their successive tenures.[3] As he was born in Poitiers, the son of a well-to-do family of long standing, it can be surmised that Gilbert had a vested interest in the welfare of his diocese and of a cathedral that he had known since boyhood.[4] While historians agree on Gilbert de la Porrée's birthplace,[5] the date of his

birth has been the subject of protracted debates, some historians favoring a date between 1070 and 1075, others preferring 1080 to 1085.[6]

Otto of Freising (d. 1159), a contemporary bishop and writer, recorded that Gilbert studied with four teachers. He first attended school in Poitiers, and studied under Hilarius, bishop of Poitiers (c. 1123-1135).[7] This school was renowned since Roman times when Anastasius taught grammar and Rufus, rhetoric.[8] This is most probably where Gilbert acquired a thorough grounding in the subjects of the trivium (grammar, rhetoric and logic). Under Hilarius' guidance, Gilbert also became well-acquainted with the writings of St. Hilary of Poitiers on the Trinity.[9] The length of time that Gilbert spent studying at the Poitiers school is unknown. However, his teacher, Hilarius, was active between 1105 and 1135. It is probable that Gilbert left Poitiers long before 1135, because his presence is acknowledged in Laon in 1114, and it is known that between his studies at Poitiers and Laon, he spent quite some time at the famous school of Chartres where he was a student of Bernard, teacher and chancellor of the school. Under Bernard's guidance, Gilbert completed a well-grounded education in the liberal arts, and gained a thorough understanding of the Greek and Latin Fathers.[10] While the School of Chartres specialized in the study of the quadrivium (arithmetic, music, geometry and astronomy), [11] under Bernard's aegis its curriculum also concentrated on giving a Christian interpretation to the works of Plato and to the newly translated Arab treatises.[12] Gilbert was particularly interested in the study of arithmetic and music, two areas of learning that were popular in the Middle Ages. Arithmetic was extensively used in construction, especially in building churches. The architects drew the plans according to the divine proportions, known also as the golden section or Φ (phi). Music was also an area of study that fascinated Gilbert, especially musical harmony and the music of the cosmos, which is rooted in mathematics.[13] In fact, because of the philosophical implications of musica humana as the uniting power between elements of the soul (incorruptible/spiritual) and the body (corruptible/material), Boethian writings and Bernard of Chartres' teachings on music greatly influenced Gilbert's philosophical concept of the nature of man with its two components: body and soul. In turn, the studies of these works led him to enhance his understanding of theological abstractions such as the Incarnation and the Trinity.[14]

At the beginning of the twelfth century, the school of Laon was considered the best center for the study of theology.[15] The fame of the two brothers, Anselm and Radulphus,[16] was so widespread that it attracted many young men who later became bishops and cardinals.[17] Thirsting for deeper knowledge, Gilbert traveled to Laon, c. 1114. In the Planctus, Dean Laurent singled out four theologians whose works Gilbert knew best and on which he relied the most for his defense during the Consistory at Reims. These were the "strong defenders of the faith: Hilary, Ambrose, Gregory and Augustine."[18] However, Laurent did not name "the innumerable others who will battle endlessly and effectively in the defense of his [Gilbert's] doctrine."[19] After Gilbert's "trial" at Reims, John of Salisbury, one of Gilbert's most famous students in Paris, and the future bishop of Chartres (1176-1180), asserted that he did "not remember any one there who boasted of having read something that Gilbert had not read." [20]

From 1117 until 1123, Gilbert was a canon at the Cathedral of St. Pierre in Poitiers. At the same time, he was appealing to Bernard for a teaching post at the cathedral school of Chartres. In 1124, his appeal to Bernard bore fruit and he was able to secure a post of canon at the cathedral, and moved to Chartres.[21] Because of conflicting contemporary textual evidence, it is not known exactly when Gilbert became chancellor at the school. Records show that he was chancellor in November 1126 and still held this position in 1137.[22] Probably shortly thereafter, Gilbert left for Paris where, in 1139, John of Salisbury attended his classes in theology and dialectics.[23]

It is obvious that Gilbert was a serious student who took his studies to heart, and a strict teacher who did not tolerate a lackadaisical attitude towards learning.[24] In fact, Gilbert showed great severity and punctiliousness, especially when it came to the proper use of syntax, to the point that, at least in one instance, he did not hesitate to flog a student who had made a grammatical error.[25] Since this episode occurred when he was teaching at Chartres when the royal portal was being rebuilt after the fire of 1134, one may wonder if Gilbert had any input into one of the allegorical representations, sculpted on the right side of this portal. Here, Grammar is depicted as a stern-looking woman holding a bundle of wooden sticks with which she is about to whip the hand that an offending youth is holding out palm up. Next to the boy being punished, a sitting fellow student is bending forward,

attempting to make himself as inconspicuous as possible in order to escape Grammar's wrath. Whether or not Gilbert had any influence on its design, this architectural sculpture not only indicates the great importance that grammatica held for twelfth-century scholars, but also, as André Grabar suggests, "témoigne de la fonction intellectuelle et pédagogique attribuée à l'art religieux monumental aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles."[26] In the words of Édouard Jeauneau, L'Age d'or des écoles de Chartres, "dans l'esprit des hommes de ce temps la grammatica est la porte de tout savoir."[27] In spite of his severity, Gilbert's classes in Paris were well-attended. As an example, Everard of Ypres who was Gilbert's fourth auditor in Chartres, was his three-hundredth in Paris.[28] However, Gilbert's stint as a teacher in Paris was short-lived. When Bishop Grimoard died in 1142, Gilbert was elected to replace him, and returned to Poitiers.

Gilbert wrote all his major works while still a teacher. Thanks to the thorough work of disinformation orchestrated by St. Bernard of Clairvaux and especially by his secretary, Geoffrey of Auxerre, history placed Gilbert if not among the heretics, at least among the teachers who are best forgotten.[29] However, as N. M. Häring, a specialist on Gilbert de la Porrée, adds, "with very few exceptions, Gilbert's contemporaries did not share the sentiments expressed by St. Bernard nor did they indulge in the perhaps less known abuse meted out by his secretary."[30] Today, Gilbert is known mainly for his commentaries on Boethius' De Trinitate, and De Duabus Naturis in Christo (or De Incarnatione); but, in the twelfth century, he was also known for his commentaries on the Psalms, St. John's Gospel, and St. Paul's Epistles (c. 1135).[31]

During his lifetime, his commentary on Boethius enjoyed a great popularity in spite of, or perhaps because of, the papal ban. St. Bernard of Clairvaux complained bitterly because no one bothered to enforce this ban, and a number of people "continued copying and reading that book despite the papal ban which was promulgated there [at Reims]."[32] However, Gilbert's writing that had the greatest influence on his time was his treatise entitled De sex principiis, "a text that expounded the last six Aristotelian categories, and enjoyed such overwhelming success in the thirteenth century that it became a permanent textbook at the arts faculties."[33]

When Gilbert became bishop, he turned his attention to the welfare of his diocese, and to the safety and well-being of his canons and of all the clerics under his care.[34] He also used his teaching skill to further the education of the clergy of Poitou who depended on his guidance. From 1142 until 1147, Gilbert devoted a lot of his time to strengthening the finances and administration of his diocese.[35] According to the De commendatione, "he greatly enlarged the residence of the canons, the so-called canonica, surrounded it with an enclosure and thus made it truly beautiful."[36] Not only did he have the well-being of his canons at heart, but his acquisition of "large pieces of land within the walls of the city" and his building of "wonderful residences for his successors" show a man who planned for the future welfare of his diocese.[37] His straightening of diocesan finances did not happen without a fight. As Dean Laurent mentions in the Planctus "amid hatred from the neighbors, plots from without, and attacks by various kinds of persecutors, he freed the Church from malicious charges and complaints, and even increased her possessions."[38] The De commendatione also mentions Gilbert's efforts to free the Church of Poitiers that "he found involved in serious problems and enfeoffed by many of his powerful countrymen through tributes exacted in the name of feudality."[39]

In May 1145, Bernard, with his secretary, Geoffrey of Auxerre, accompanied the papal legate, Alberic of Ostia, when he came to Poitiers to rule on a local dispute.[40] In 1146, on the occasion of a Synod held at Poitiers, Gilbert made several remarks about the Trinity which were interpreted as heretical by two of his archdeacons, Calo and Arnold.[41] This precipitated the greatest trial of Gilbert's life. Calo and Arnold traveled all the way to Viterbo to denounce Gilbert's so-called "heretical teachings" to the pope. On the way, they stopped to seek the advice of Bernard of Clairvaux, whom they had met in Poitiers in 1145. Pope Eugenius III requested that, in order to resolve the problems, Gilbert and his two accusers should come to the Consistory that was to be held at Paris in late April 1147. However, Gilbert's case was not resolved at Paris, and he was asked to come to Reims in March 1148, where a Council was to take place. However, his "problem" was not discussed until after the Council was over.

At the local level, the accusation brought by Calo and Arnold may have been spurred on by the people who felt that they were despoiled by Gilbert in his efforts to

strengthen the finances of the diocese. At the national level, Gilbert had acquired much fame as a teacher. St. Bernard of Clairvaux, who styled himself "defender of the faith," knowing that Gilbert was acquainted with Abelard and his philosophy, may have been suspicious of Gilbert's teachings and may have wanted to test Gilbert's beliefs, as he had tested Abelard's a few years earlier (c. 1141).[42] At the international level, Bernard's attack on Gilbert at the consistory of Reims was only a pretext to resolve a deeper struggle for pre-eminence between the French prelates and the Roman Curia.[43] During the "trial" at Reims, Gilbert's writings were not made available. As a result, the allegations brought against him were not verifiable. In lieu of proof, two clerics, Adam of Petitpont and Hugh of Champfleuri, swore that they had heard Gilbert make some heretical statements.[44]

At Reims, St. Bernard's secretary, Geoffrey of Auxerre, scrambled through the library, borrowing St. Augustine's De trinitate in an effort to bolster St. Bernard's attack against Gilbert, but this effort was to no avail. Gilbert easily sustained St. Bernard's inquisitive onslaughts because he had a deep enough philosophical knowledge and theological understanding of the points in question to offer a strong resistance.[45] Through his misguided efforts to enforce views that stemmed from his fear of heresy, Bernard had managed to turn a local dispute between two archdeacons and their bishop into a situation from which no one could emerge unscathed. The pope could not condemn Gilbert, because after Gilbert had given a thorough explanation of what he believed and what he meant in his writings, and brought forth supporting evidence from the writings of the Greek and Latin Fathers, the only possible objection was to the form, and not to the content of his texts.[46] However, the pope could not exonerate Gilbert completely because such a decision would mean that St. Bernard was wrong and, based on the fact that St. Bernard was powerful, the pope's desision could provoke a schism within the Church. The case was resolved when Gilbert agreed to Bernard's confession of faith, and to remove the offending passages from his writings.[47]

It was obvious to the pope and to the Curia that Gilbert was being used for some ulterior motives. Thus, the pope resolved the case ambiguously in an effort to satisfy both parties. Gilbert, knowing that he was right, ignored both the findings of the consistory and the pope's request that he correct the wording in some of his writings. In fact, Gilbert

did not change a single word.[48] Furthermore, this "trial" never became part of any official record, signifying that it was ostensibly treated as though it had never happened.[49] However, St. Bernard's quest for orthodoxy within the ranks of the French clergy was so strong that he would not let go. He wished to meet Gilbert for a "friendly" discussion of St. Hilary of Poitiers' writings. Remembering how such a discussion with Bernard had resulted in grave problems for Abelard, a few years earlier, Gilbert declined his invitation, advising him, rather caustically, to go back to school "to procure a better education in disciplinis liberalibus and other preliminary requirements before he [Gilbert] would follow St. Bernard's suggestion to discuss, in peace and without animosity, some dicta of St. Hilary."[50] Gilbert returned to Poitiers accompanied by the repentant Calo and Arnold, and subsequently devoted his time to the affairs of his diocese and most especially to the embellishment and renovation of the cathedral.[51] Gilbert was buried, like most of his brother bishops before him, in the Church of St. Hilaire-le-Grand. Gilbert's choice of an ancient sarcophagus (third century A. D.) to be reused for his tomb, shows that, like many of his erudite contemporaries, he wanted to express his attachment to the classical past.

Opinions about Gilbert, his character, his personality, and about the influence that he had on his time vary according to the position taken by the participants and observers of the proceedings at Reims. Geoffrey of Auxerre greatly contributed to Gilbert's reputation as an "obscure"[52] writer of "unfruitful pages." [53] In spite of his obvious dislike for Gilbert, which probably stemmed from his great attachment to St. Bernard, he admitted grudgingly that Gilbert was "the most experienced theologian."[54] John of Salisbury considered him to be a humble man of great philosophical as well as theological learning, who had fallen victim to his search for perfection.[55] John of Salisbury was not the only one to recognize Gilbert's worth. Everard of Ypres mentioned that during Gilbert's "trial" at Reims, Pope Eugenius remarked: "How can we pass judgement on things we do not understand. This man is conversing with God, not men."[56] Gilbert's death affected the whole Christian community, as exemplified by Dean Laurent's eulogy, the Planctus Laurentii decani Pictauensis, that was written with the approval of the cathedral chapter as a letter "to all the sons of Holy Mother Church dwelling far and wide under the name of Christ."[57] While the author of the De commendatione magistri

Gisleberti porree excerpta de manu Rolligeri is unknown, N. M. Häring believes that he "was obviously at home either in Poitiers or in Poitou."[58] Besides the two most important eulogies, Dean Laurent's Planctus, and the anonymous De commendatione, other epitaphs that preserve the memory of Gilbert were written in the necrologies of Chartres, Le Mans, the Benedictine Abbey of St. Martin at Luçon, the abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés in Paris, St. Maurice Cathedral at Angers, the Benedictine convent of St. Trinité and the Church of St. Hilaire-le-grand (the last two at Poitiers).[59] Other praises were lavished upon Gilbert after his death, anonymously (Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS 1117B, f. 394v), or by known and respected clerics, such as the Cistercian, Everard of Ypres, and the Benedictine, Alexander Neckam (1157-1217), abbot of Cirencester who wrote the Laus sapiencie diuine. These texts demonstrate the influence that Gilbert de la Porrée had, not only on his time, but on later generations of Christian writers.[60] These eulogies and epitaphs present different aspects of Gilbert's accomplishments. Gilbert was a strong administrator who did not spare any effort to bring his plans to a successful conclusion, regardless of the cost to himself. He was also indefatigable in his intellectual pursuits. Amongst various epithets given Gilbert, he is subsequently referred to as "summus et acutissimus philosophus,"[61] "celeberrimus ille magister," "alter Boethius,"[62] and "egregius doctor,"[63] prompting N. M. Häring to exclaim that "no twelfth-century scholar has been extolled with such lavish praise."[64]

From reading about Gilbert's life, one gets the clear feeling that Gilbert was a determined man who would have been frustrated at the apparent lack of understanding of his writings by his educated contemporaries. His severe attitude towards his students demonstrates that Gilbert worked painstakingly to find the right word to express his ideas, and to arrange his words according to correct syntax. When forbidden to spread his beliefs through written documents, without first altering them, Gilbert was the kind of man who would have tried to find another way to present them to the world at large. When the written word failed him, or, more accurately, when his contemporaries failed to understand his ideas as expressed in his writings, Gilbert may conceivably have resorted to images in which symbolic interpretation of his beliefs could be made available to all, because symbols were part of the language without words that was known to most

members of society, or could be explained viva voce. At a time when oral means of communication took precedence over what was written, a verbal interpretation of images was better understood without the added intermediary of written words, that were "symbols of the spoken words," understood only by a few erudite people.[65] As bishop of Poitiers, Gilbert could count on a big audience. The Cathedral of St. Pierre was the perfect place to expose his ideas through imagery, either sculpted, painted on walls, or in stained glass windows.

Through his hard work during the first years of his episcopacy, Gilbert had considerably increased the revenues of his diocese and he now had the means to start on a program of embellishment of his church, the Cathedral of St. Pierre.[66] It is hard to believe that Gilbert would not have started rebuilding his own cathedral at Poitiers, if it were proven necessary, since he not only had the material means, but also had travelled through or lived in towns where important construction and rebuilding of churches were occurring. During his peregrinations, Gilbert, who knew Suger, most probably stopped at St. Denis to admire the renovation work that Suger was starting at the basilica, and had ample opportunities to see how the work was progressing. Thus, he probably learned, if he did not actually witness, how Suger was planning to transform the abbey church into a magnificent basilica illuminated by the numerous stained glass windows of its new choir. As mentioned above, during Gilbert's stay in Chartres, the cathedral underwent great changes due in part to a damaging fire that occurred in 1134. In the late 1140's, the cathedral was also embellished by the construction of the Royal Portal adorned with numerous sculpted figures, and the installation of stained glass windows in the three bays immediately above the portal. This led Grinnell to state: "Perhaps as a result of his years as chancellor of the school of Chartres and his acquaintance with Abbot Suger, he [Gilbert] became interested in putting the arts at the service of religion."[67] His forced visit to Reims gave Gilbert the opportunity to admire the basilica of St. Rémi, and perhaps discuss its planned enlargement and renovation.[68] Perhaps, his path from Reims to Poitiers also led him to Chalons-en-Champagne and its magnificent representation of the Crucifixion.[69] The well-educated Gilbert, who, according to his eulogies, was known for his appreciation of art and who collected books and artifacts, assuredly did not fail to approve and perhaps

desired to emulate what was happening in the churches that he visited during his travels. Furthermore, not only because of his background in mathematics, but also because of his knowledge of the Greek and Latin Fathers, Gilbert possessed the qualifications necessary to help plan the renovations of the cathedral and to give theological advice on the designs of its decor, some of which could have been used as teaching aids to evangelize the masses.[70] Gilbert was in a good position to appreciate the words that Honorius Augustodunensis wrote at the beginning of the twelfth century: "Painting has three purposes, first it is the literature of the uneducated, secondly it embellishes the beauty of the sanctuary, and thirdly, it recalls to mind the lives of those who have gone before."[71]

Gilbert's campaign of embellishments and refurbishing is supported by contemporary textual evidence in the form of eulogies written at the time of Gilbert's death. N. M. Häring writes that "the longest and most emotional epitaph on Gilbert II, bishop of Poitiers (1142-1154), is the Planctus Laurentii decani Pictavensis."[72] While the tone of this encomium, based on biblical writings, is profoundly laudatory, part of it makes clear reference to the cathedral, and to Bishop Gilbert's campaign of restoration:

> ...Emebat pallia preciosa, sericas uestes et alia diuersarum spetierum ornamenta quibus templi faciem exornaret. Argentum eius in uasa domini formabatur et in uarias utensilium formas ad ministerium et ornatum altaris eleganti studio figurabatur. Aurum quoque modo lentescebat in lamminas, modo uanescebat in spumam ut uasa ministerii coloraret. Videres etiam in fila mollescere, torqueri in finbrias et in opus textile per manus artificum deseruire. Denique ut etiam digitorum suorum ornatum opus domini faceret gloriosum, anulos suos conflauit in calicem et preciosos in eo lapides inseruit ad uenustatem. Hic episcopi iugis affectus, hec erga ecclesiam miranda affectio ut omnis gloria filie regis eniteret in finbriis aureis in uestitu deaurato, circumamicta uarietate. Desiderat enim, si fieri posset, parietes auro uestire, pauimentum lapidibus sternere preciosis ut in nuptiis sponsi et sponse fiducialiter domino decantaret: Domine, dilexi decorem domus tue et locum habitationes glorie tue.[73]

According to the text mentioned above, Bishop Gilbert "bought precious pallia, silk vestments and various types of other ornaments to adorn abundantly the general appearance of the church." Indeed, if possible Gilbert would have "covered the walls with gold," and "paved the floor with precious stones."[74]

Another text eulogizing Bishop Gilbert, the De commendatione magistri Gisleberti (Oxford, Magdalen College, MS 118, fol. 135v.), also contains direct references to his

efforts to refurbish his cathedral: "Aurum vero suum et argentum et gemmas in ornamentis ecclesie sue crucibus uidelicet calicibus pallis casulis dalmaticis tunicis albis stolis manipulis aurifrisis deuote semper et diligenter studuit expendere."[75]

It is necessary to remember that these accounts are first and foremost panegyrics meant to extol the praises of a dead bishop. As such, they are biased towards Gilbert's accomplishments as a bishop, teacher and benefactor, not as an architect, designer or builder. However, two facts emerge from the above paragraphs: Bishop Gilbert launched a campaign of renovations the extent of which, while not clearly established, was decidedly wide-ranging; and he did not hesitate to spend money in order to embellish his cathedral, and may have ordered the windows of the chevet, including the central window, identified by its main theme, the Crucifixion.

Before embarking on an analysis of the relevance of Gilbert's writings to the design of the Crucifixion window, it is necessary to state that there is no written, incontrovertible proof that serves to designate Gilbert de la Porrée as the man whose philosophy and theology inform the message of the Crucifixion window.[76] At the same time, it must be asserted that there is no written, incontrovertible proof that anyone else conceived and spearheaded the execution of the Crucifixion window. Nevertheless, the location, composition, and detail of the elements found in this window are charged with symbolic meanings which find their roots in the philosophy and theology of the age, and more specifically in Gilbert's philosophical and theological teachings, the very ones that he defended so ardently at Paris and Reims. In the still mostly oral society of the twelfth century, the Crucifixion window "speaks" for itself. The following does not pretend to be an exhaustive analysis of the philosophy and theology of Gilbert de la Porrée. It is only an examination of Gilbert's basic tenets as far as they are relevant to the discussion of the Crucifixion window.

St. Bernard of Clairvaux's secretary, Geoffrey of Auxerre, qualified the writings of Gilbert as "obscure"[77] and "unfruitful pages."[78] Today, Gilbert and his writings have been rehabilitated. N. M. Häring, who has made an in-depth study of Gilbert's work, was prompted to state that Gilbert "wrote intricate, but excellent Latin which requires very attentive and careful reading," adding that "Gilbert is neither vague nor obscure."[79]

Geoffrey simply did not possess the intellectual capacity to comprehend Gilbert's writings, a fact that he candidly admitted when he said: "This discussion is beyond me."[80] However, the complexity of Gilbert's philosophy and theology resides mostly in understanding his terminology correctly and in following the logic of his writings. His punctiliousness with regard to the choice of words and the use of proper syntax was the root cause for his theological "trial." In fact, at the end of the Consistory at Reims, Pope Eugenius only demanded that "no distinction be made between nature and person in God and that the word essentia, predicated of God, should be used not only in the ablative but also in the nominative case."[81]

Gilbert's unceasing attention to details is understandable when considering that the society of the twelfth century was in transition from orality to literacy, and that the mode of expression had to be adjusted from speech to writing. Thus, the studies of grammar (the set of rules that govern the use of words), and syntax (the way words are associated in order to form correct phrases and sentences) were of great significance to the nascent literate culture of the twelfth century. Both ruled the logical development of arguments or "philosophical disputation."[82]

Gilbert's approach to philosophy, and especially theology, was innovative in so far as his method of argumentation was based on the same logical thinking used in mathematics and grammar.[83] Such a system was necessary for Gilbert because "the mind must accept the rules of human language to express itself in terms of categories and logical or mental distinctions."[84] Gilbert was concerned with fundamental philosophical issues that were related to the very nature[85] of being (esse). Gilbert also applied this novel system of argumentation to theology. "Although he knew that God is incomprehensible, he approached God, the object of theology, not only intellectualiter, but also using 'mathematical abstractions,' in order to speak of God not against, but in accordance with, the rules of philosophical disputation."[86] More specifically, he wanted to achieve a better delimitation,[87] and understanding of the Incarnation and of the Trinity, in order to allow the finite human mind, not truly equipped to fully explain and understand an infinite God, to better circumscribe the insurmountable problems that were inherent to the definition of such dogmas.[88]

According to Gilbert, philosophically, a "person" or "natural whole"[89] is the subject of an [intelligent][90] action -- the id quod of which one speaks. Any subject of any other action, i.e. a non-intelligent action, or action that does not require the use of the higher mental processes, is a non-person, but still the "id quod" of which one speaks. The id quod (substantia, id quod est) represents the substance or being itself, the actor, the subject of the predicate, the "thing" (res aliqua) about which something is said. While the essence of a thing is that which defines what the thing is -- the parameters for its esse, the substance of a thing is that which perdures and remains unchanged throughout any and all changes -- the radical expression of the esse of the thing.[91] The id quod of which one speaks is always the subject of the action, whether the subject is created (creature) or uncreated (Creator/God).[92]

The id quo represents the "that-by-which" of the existent/subsistent, the underlying or causal reason by which a thing/entity/person is "what-it-is" (id quod), the basic causal explanation of the substance of the thing about which one speaks.[93] For example, white is white because of whiteness. The id quo is the "cause" by which a thing can be understood, or the "intrinsic form" which informs a given being and explains the thing/entity/being's attributes or qualities.[94] Gilbert applied these definitions and principles of disputation to God, the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity and to the Trinity itself. The controversy stems mainly from the need to use human language, and the syntax and grammar that govern it, in order to discuss these theological concepts.[95] However, as Häring points out, "Gilbert states clearly that the id quo defined as distinct cause of the id quod is only understood de rebus creatis."[96] To which Häring adds "in approaching this object by a 'mathematical method' Gilbert progresses from the forma quae to the forma qua, or from the divine id quod to the id quo of any divine attribute. He never describes the id quo as the cause of, or distinct from, the divine id quod."[97] Gilbert knows that there cannot be a distinction between id quod and id quo in God, "since the multiplicity of forms is the very reason for the distinction between id quod and id quo. "[98]

The Second Person of the Trinity, as God Incarnate, assumed two natures within the one Person of Christ, who is therefore both divine and human.[99] The difficulty starts when Gilbert tries to define how these two natures coexist in the Person, Jesus Christ, "for

He who assumed human nature did not become but was a Person."[100] Commenting on Boethius' statement that "Nestorius persone, Eutices uero nature significationem ignorans,"[101] Gilbert rejects both Eutices' and Nestorius' definitions. Eutices adhered to the belief that the two natures in Christ are intricately joined or blended in the manner of a commixtio or permixtio.[102] Thus joined, the two natures of Christ form a third one, neither truly divine nor truly human, and distinct from the other two, which is contrary to the orthodox teachings of the Church. Nestorius arrived at the totally different conclusion that the two natures in Christ are not joined but only juxtaposed per appositionem.[103] This is no more acceptable than Eutices' commixtio, because "appositio does not create unity in the total form,"[104] and because the two natures are completely separate, they would not necessarily work conjointly in the person.

Gilbert dismissed both explanations and turned instead to compositio, as the manner in which Christ's two natures are united. In the person of Jesus Christ, each nature retains its integrity.[105] While they cannot blend,[106] the two natures of Christ are intricately united and are embodied in the same singularity, and constitute the one Person of Christ, which is composed of both divinitas and humanitas, in a manner similar to the compositio of body and soul in the one entity,[107] known as a human being.[108] In the person of Jesus Christ only a compositio is possible in which both the perfect human nature and the true Divine Nature are joined in an harmonious whole.[109] One important factor to remember with regard to the Incarnation is that the nature of "any thing" (res aliqua) is denominated by its highest principle of operation. For example, an animal can grow, reproduce and feel, i.e., it has sensual cognition. As a rational animal, a human being is determined not only by his ability to grow, reproduce and feel, but also by his/her ability to rationalize, i.e., to intellectualize cognitive receptions. Thus, in a human being, the soul, being superior because it is spiritual, can "govern" the body that is inferior because it is material.[110] In a similar fashion, as the highest principle of operation, the Divine Nature of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity -- divinitas -- Who is pure spirit and divine, is superior to the human nature -- humanitas -- in the one Person of Christ. Therefore the Person, Christ, is properly designated as a Divine Person. While this is clearly a simplification of a very complex dogma, this comparison enables the human

mind to reach a type of conception and/or understanding of how the two natures are related.[111] This relationship is illustrated in various panels of the Crucifixion window, as will be explained below in the chapter on Symbolism.

Although the dogma of the Trinity affirms that while God is one, simplex et solitarius,[112] it also asserts that there are Three Persons in one God. Two questions remain for Gilbert: What constitutes "Trinitarian Persons ?" And what is the relationship between these Three Divine Persons?[113] According to Gilbert's definition, "Persona uero est rationabilis nature indiuidua substantia."[114] In the Trinity or Triune God, there is one Nature, one Essence, and one Substance with three distinct Persons sharing/possessing these same unitary elements. Since God is totally simple (omne simplex esse suum),[115] all perfect, and infinite in every respect, while, at the same time, being Three Distinct Persons with the same Nature, Essence, and Substance, (id quod est unum habet),[116] it is necessary to posit that there must be a logical/mental distinction between "Nature," [117] and "Person,"[118] in God. This conclusion is necessary and must be reached because of our finite mental capabilities in trying to comprehend something that is infinite, and far beyond our capacity to envision, imagine, conjecture or conceive. This type of intellectual distinction is related to our mental process of mathematical abstraction which forces us to draw these types of conclusions because of the "nature" of our human thinking process. Thus, since "The Three Persons are one God by the unitas of Their divinity or essence,"[119] it would be possible to represent them on the material level as three identical beings/entities/objects within one vessel/container/envelope. While this would be a gross approximation, it might help the finite mind to conceptualize an infinite and otherwise unfathomable concept. Again, the Crucifixion window contains at least one example that will be analyzed within the symbolic meaning of the window. As mentioned above, this analysis of Gilbert's writings is not complete. Only what was deemed necessary to illustrate Gilbert's participation to the design of the Crucifixion window, either directly or indirectly, was examined.

2. Gilbert's Successors to the Bishopric of Poitiers

Calo, one of the canons who had denounced Gilbert's teachings to the pope, succeeded him. No records remain of his episcopacy, except that he died on 4 Nov 1158, and that a period of vacancy followed. Almost five months elapsed before Dean Laurent was elected on 26 March 1159. However, he was bishop for only two years, dying on 27/28 March 1161. Laurent, who was on the most friendly terms with Gilbert de la Porrée, would have been content to continue the renovation work of the cathedral started by his predecessor. Both Calo and Laurent were local people from the "pays" of Poitou. As such, they would have been attuned to the region's artistic modes of representations. After Laurent's death, another period of vacancy ensued. This period lasted until Henry II's appointment of Jean de Bellesmains to the bishopric of Poitiers was finally accepted by the clergy of Aquitaine. The Aquitanian clergy accepted Jean only after Pope Alexander III had anointed him, as the new bishop, at Tours, on Pentecost day, 1163.[120]

In order to discover why the bishops and archbishops of Aquitaine and the clergy of Poitou were opposed to the appointment/election of Jean de Bellesmains, it is necessary to go back to the political and cultural history of France in general, and of Poitou and Aquitaine in particular. Firstly, Jean de Bellesmains was not a native Poitevin; he did not belong to the "pays."[121] French mentality, especially in pre-Revolutionary France, was definitely provincial. The importance of the "pays," the original birthplace of a person cannot be emphasized enough. Secondly, not only was Jean de Bellesmains not Poitevin, but he was a subject of the Angevin king, and, as an Anglo-Norman cleric, he belonged to the English hierarchy. Finally, Henry II had imposed on a clergy that, since 1137 (when the king of France, Louis VI, had reluctantly abolished the practice of interfering in the affairs of the Church), had become accustomed to running their own affairs unhampered by outside intervention.[122] Jean was first and foremost an ambitious man. In 1158, through clever networking, he had become treasurer of the cathedral at York. Well-educated and blessed with a keen sense of diplomacy, Jean advised the archbishop of Canterbury, Theobald, to side with King Henry II in the dispute dividing the English Church.[123] His shrewdness enabled him, as André Mussat states, to make "une fortune rapide."[124] Grateful for Jean's support, and knowing that Jean would enforce his policies, Henry II

had decided to impose him on the unruly Poitevin clergy at a time when the winds of revolt were starting to blow across Aquitaine. While the pope's anointment of Jean certainly influenced the Poitevin clergy's decision to accept him, it is also probable that, advised by Eleanor, Henry obtained the good will of the Cathedral Chapter by making a sizable contribution. After all, he did not hesitate to enlarge the city walls, in part to win over the inhabitants of Poitiers. In this manner, as Jean Bouchet suggested, Henry was instrumental in beginning the reconstruction of the cathedral. However, as will be shown in the next chapter, it was the second building campaign that Henry started, not the first.

Once installed in Poitiers, Jean de Bellesmains was certainly capable of directing and seeing such a project through. For a period of almost ten years, between 1163 and 1174, Jean was in residence at Poitiers. Therefore, he certainly had the time to supervise the second building campaign of the cathedral that, according to Yves Blomme, lasted until c. 1175.[125] However, Jean de Bellesmains was not content with the bishopric of Poitiers; he had set his eyes on a higher prize, and was soon involved in other political ventures. In his capacity as a papal legate (1174-1182), Bishop Jean was often away from Poitiers, which may explain why the reconstruction of the cathedral stalled c. 1175.[126] His efforts in the fight against the Albigensian heresy were rewarded by his appointment to the archbishopric of Narbonne. Soon thereafter, he achieved a great honor for a twelfth-century member of the clergy: he became archbishop of Lyon.[127]

It would seem that, while no documents have yet been found mentioning Jean de Bellesmains' involvement in the renovation/rebuilding work at the Cathedral of St. Pierre, the sequence of the dates of the second campaign (c. 1162/63-c. 1175) closely corresponds to the time when he was available to give his time to this particular project. However, Jean de Bellesmains is not remembered as being particularly interested in the decoration of churches. Being a former treasurer, he may have contemplated the vast sums of money that a total rebuilding would require, and encouraged the canons to be thrifty and re-use available materials in order to continue the work of renovation. As will be explored in the next chapter, physical evidence seems to indicate that sculpted bases of columns, corbels and modillions, that probably belonged to the eleventh-century structure, were incorporated in the renovated/rebuilt cathedral.

Conclusion

A review of the life, personality, character, accomplishments, and especially of the philosophy and theology of Gilbert de la Porrée, has provided strong evidence that Gilbert contributed extensively to the embellishment and possible renovation of the eleventh-century cathedral that may have been the starting point of an extensive rebuilding program. The examination of the symbolism will later indicate that, even if it be granted that Gilbert was not personally involved, his philosophical and theological writings were probably the source and inspiration for some of the symbolic representations incorporated into the Crucifixion window. Contemporary history and the personality of one of his successors, Jean de Bellesmains also show that as bishop of Poitiers, Jean may have supervised the second campaign of reconstruction of the cathedral. However, since Jean did not leave any substantial writings, it is impossible to know if he exerted any influence on any particular aspect of the reconstruction or decoration of the new cathedral. An examination of the history of the Cathedral of St. Pierre and of the Crucifixion window will attempt to unravel the mystery that surrounds its renovation/rebuilding and the date, design, production and installation of the Crucifixion window.

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[1] N. M. Häring, "Epitaphs and Necrologies on Bishop Gilbert II of Poitiers," Archives d'histoire doctrinaire et littéraire du Moyen Age, 36 (1970):85.

[2] Häring, "Epitaphs," 72.

[3] Lauge Olaf Nielsen, Theology and Philosophy in the Twelfth Century (1982):29.

[4] For Gilbert's origins, see Nielsen, Theology, 26 n.8, 9 and 10.

[5] For Gilbert's name, see Häring "Epitaphs," 77-78. After he became bishop, Gilbert preferred to be known as Gislebertus Pictauensis episcopus or Pictauorum episcopus. However, while he was a teacher in Chartres, he must have been known as Gilbert de la Porrée since he had a student flogged for addressing him incorrectly as "Magister Gilleberte Porreta" instead of "Magister Porreta Gilleberte." (see Édouard Jeauneau, L'âge d'or des écoles de Chartres (1995):54; R. W. Hunt, "Studies on Priscian in the Twelfth Century, II: The School of Ralph of Beauvais," Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies, 2 (1950): 42).

[6] For Gilbert's birthdate, see Migne, Dictionnaire de patrologie, 2 (1852):1070; A. Clerval, Les écoles de Chartres au Moyen Age (1895): 163; New Catholic Encyclopedia, 6 (1967):478; Maurice de Wulf, History of Mediaeval Philosophy I (1926):166; today, Jeauneau, L'âge d'or des écoles de Chartres, 53, still posit 1075 as the year of Gilbert's birth, while, according to Nielsen, Theology and Philosophy, 26, "He was undoubtedly born immediately after 1085," the most likely date is c. 1080, as shown by A. Hofmeister, "Studien über Otton de Freising," Neues Archiv, Bd. 37 (1912):641.

[7] He succeeded Bishop William I (117-1123), (see Häring, "Epitaphs," 72-73).

[8] Hiernard and Bourgeois, "Quand Poitiers s'appelait Lemonum," 19.

[9] For Bishop Hilarius, Gilbert's first teacher at Poitiers, see Nielsen, Theology, 26. For Gilbert's course of studies while at Poitiers, Häring, Commentaries, 11 and n. 58.

[10] Ghellinck, J. de, Le mouvement théologique du XIIe siècle (1914):177-78; De Commendatione magistri Gisleberti, in N. M. Häring, "Epitaphs," 75-76; ibid., 66, "He [John of Salisbury] notes that Gilbert was particularly familiar with the works of Hilary, Augustine and Jerome....From one of Gilbert's students, Hugh of Honau, we learn that Gilbert often perused Greek authors like Theodoret, Sophronius, and even Athanasius of Alexandria..."

[11] Davy, Initiation, 20, n. 8; Gordon Leff, Mediaeval Thought (1958):116, "It [the School of Chartres] was associated with an interest in grammar and the subjects of the quadrivium, furthered by the translations of Constantinus Africanus,...[who] translated medical works from Arabic.. Galen and Hippocrates. These translations spread first to Salerno,... and then to Chartres;" Nielsen, Theology, 27; Clement C. J. Webb, John of Salisbury (1932):6-7.

[12] Grinnell, "The Crucifixion," 191.

[13] C. Stephen Jaeger, The Envy of Angels, 166.

[14] Jaeger, The Envy of Angels, 164. For Boethius and music, ibid., 165.

[15] Davy, Initiation, 20.

[16] Also known as Raoul.

[17] J. de Ghellinck, Le mouvement théologique du XIIe siècle, 93, "Dans les premières années du XIIe siècle, c'est à Laon que s'est transporté le principal foyer des études sacrées;" see also Abélard, Historia calamitatum, "Epistola I," 2, PL, 178:122-23; for Gilbert in Laon, see Otto of Freising, Gesta Friderici imperatoris, lib. I, 50 in Monumenta Germanie Historica Summa Sententiarum, XX:379; for Anselm, see Marbode of Rennes, Carmina varia, XXIV, PL 171:1722; Guibert of Nogent, Ad commentarium in Genesum proœmium, and De vita sua, III, 4, PL 156:19 and 912D; and Marlot, Metropolis Remensis historia, II (1679):284.

[18] Häring, "Epitaths," Planctus 60:18.

[19] Ibid., Planctus 60:18.

[20] For the authors that Gilbert studied, see n. 10 above; Häring, "Epitaths," 66; Poole, ed., Historia pontificalis 10, 22; ibid., 8, 18; Hugh of Honau, Liber de diversitate nature et persone, in N. M Häring, ed., Archives d'histoire doctrinaire et littéraire du Moyen Age 29 (1962):122; N. M Häring, "The Porretans and the Greek Fathers," Mediaeval Studies, 24 (1962):181-209.

[21] Häring, "Epitaphs," 73 and n. 6.

[22] Häring, "Epitaphs," 73; Hayen, "Le Concile de Reims," 33, "il [Gilbert] enseigna lui-même à Chartres, dont il fut plusieurs fois chancellier (en 1126, 1134, 1136);" Nielsen, Theology, 28. "There is... no doubt that Gilbert was Chancellor on February 26, 1134, in 1136 and also in 1137;" B. Guérard, "Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Père de Chartres," Collection des cartulaires de France, II, 4, 7, 53.

[23] André Mussat, L'architecture gothique dans l'ouest de la France aux douzième et treizième siècles (1963):246; Nikolaus M. Häring, The Commentaries on Boethius by Gilbert de la Porrée (1966):8.

[24] Reginald Lane Poole, Illustrations of the History of Medieval Thought (1960):161.

[25] Hunt, "Studies on Priscian," 42.

[26] Grabar, Les voies de la création en iconographie chrétienne, 380.

[27] Jeauneau, L'âge d'or des écoles de Chartres, 39.

[28] Everard of Ypres, Dialogus, in N. M. Häring, ed., "A Latin Dialogue on the Doctrine of Gilbert of Poitiers," Mediaeval Studies 15 (1953):252. A. Hayen, "Le concile de Reims et l'erreur théologique de Gilbert de la Porrée," Archives d'Histoire doctrinaire et littéraire du Moyen Age (1935-1936):34-35.

[29] Häring, "Epitaphs," 84.

[30] Ibid., 84.

[31] Wulf (de), History of Mediaeval Philosophy, 166.

[32] Häring, "Epitaphs," 65 and n. 43; see also S. Bernardi opera, PL 183:1170D.

[33] Leff, Mediaeval Thought, 121-22; ibid., 122, "Gilbert's metaphysical approach is apparent in his discussion of Aristotle's ten Categories in his De sex principiis (PL 188)...which became one of the standard texts on logic in the thirteenth-century..."; For the direct quote, Nielsen, Theology,40-46; ibid., 45; and Wulf, Mediaeval Philosophy, 167.

[34] Häring, "Epitaphs," 74.

[35] Nielsen, Theology, 29; see also, De commendatione magistri Gisleberti Porree excerpta de manu Rolligeri, in N. M. Häring, "Epitaphs," 80.

[36] Häring, "Epitaphs," 76, § 6 of the De commendatione; and Jean Leclercq, "L'Éloge funèbre de Gilbert de la Porrée," Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age, (1952):183-85.

[37] Häring, "Epitaphs," 76, § 7 of the De commendatione.

[38] Häring, "Epitaphs," 60, §19 of the Planctus Laurentii.

[39] Ibid., De commendatione, 76, §6.

[40] Nielsen, Theology, 30.

[41] Ibid., 31; Geoffrey of Auxerre, Epistola ad Albinum, II, 4, in N. M. Häring, ed., "Geoffrey of Auxerre: Writings against Gilbert of Poitiers," Analecta Cisterciensia, 22/1 (1966):70.

[42] Clerval, Les écoles de Chartres, 169; Poole, Medieval Thought and Learning, 164.

[43] For Gilbert's "trial" at Reims, see Bernard Jacqueline, Papauté et épiscopat (1963):109; Nielsen, Theology, 33-38; Hayen, "Le Concile de Reims," 30, n. 4; Poole, Medieval Thought and Learning, 165.

[44] Migne, Dictionnaire de Patrologie, II, (1852):1071.

[45] Nielsen, Theology, 35; Geoffrey of Auxerrre, Epistola ad Albinum, V, 23, Häring, ed. "Geoffrey of Auxerre," 74.

[46] Hayen, "Le Concile de Reims," 31.

[47] For the text of Bernard's "confession of faith," see Geoffrey of Auxerre, Epistola ad Albinum, VIII, 39 and Libellus contra capitula Gisleberti pictavensis episcopi I, 11 in Häring, ed., "Geoffrey of Auxerre," 3-83; Nielsen, Theology, 36.

[48] Häring, The Commentaries on Boethius, 15.

[49] Häring, The Commentaries on Boethius, 3; Hayen, "Le Concile de Reims," 40-41.

[50] Nielsen, Theology, 33-38; for the quote, see N. M. Häring, "The Case of Gilbert de la Porrée, Bishop of Poitiers (1142-1154)," Mediaeval Studies, XIII (1951):1-41; ibid., 3.

[51] Nielsen, Theology, 33-38.

[52] Geoffrey of Auxerre, Libellus, PL 185, 609B, "glosam oscuriorem textu."

[53] Geoffrey of Auxerre, Libellus, 27, PL 185, 605A, "infelices pagine."

[54] Geoffrey of Auxerre, Vita Prima, III, 5, 15, in N. M. Häring, "Writings Against Gilbert," 30.

[55] Jacqueline, Papauté et épiscopat, 81-83; Schmale, ed., Otto de Freising, Gesta Frederici seu rectius Cronica, I, 62 (1974): 260, "vir litteratissimus;" Poole, ed., Historia Pontificalis, 10:21, John of Salisbury pronounced Gilbert to be "the most well-read and the wisest."

[56] Häring, The Commentaries on Boethius, 11 and n. 53.

[57] Häring, "Epitaphs," 57.

[58] Ibid., 78.

[59] For the various epitaphs, see, Häring, "Epitaphs," 72-84.

[60] Ibid., 85-87.

[61] Häring, The Commentaries on Boethius, 11; Bernard Gui (d. 1131), Chronicon as quoted by Jean Besly, Evesques de Poitiers (1647):100.

[62] Ibid., 11, n. 56.

[63] Ibid., 11, n. 57.

[64] Ibid., 12.

[65] Gilbert Crispin, Disputatio Judei et Christiani (1092-3), B. Blumenkranz, ed., Stromata Patristica et Medievalia, 3 (1956):67 (quoted in Michael Camille, "Seeing and Reading: Some Visual Implications of Medieval Literacy and Illiteracy," Art History, 8/1 (March 1985):32).

[66] Häring, "Epitaphs," in the Planctus Laurentii, 60, §14, §16, §19; ibid., 76-77, §6 and §7.

[67] Grinnell, "Iconography," 174.

[68] Demouy, La basilique Saint-Rémi, 9; Alphonse Gosset, La basilique de Saint-Rémi à Reims, (1900):passim; Louis Demaison, "Saint-Rémi de Reims," Congrès archéologique de Reims, I (1911): 57-106; Jean-François Lemarignier et Françoise Poirier-Coutansais, "Les abbayes bénédictines du diocèse de Reims," Gallia Monastica, I (1974):554.

[69] Louis Rousselot, The Cathedral of Chalons-sur-Marne (1970), "The cathedral built in the twelfth century was consecrated on Oct., 26, 1147 by Pope Eugenius III" (same town as Chalons-en-Champagne).

[70] François Garnier, Le langage de l'image au Moyen Age (1989): passim.

[71] Honorius Augustodunensis (Honorius of Autun), De Gemma Animae, PL 172: 586; and in T. A. Heslop, "Brief in Words but Heavy in the Weight of its Mysteries," Romanesque and Gothic - Essays for George Zarnecki (1987):111.

[72] Planctus Laurentii, Häring, "Epitaphs," 57-87.

[73] Häring, "Epitaphs," 70.

[74] Ibid., 70-71.

[75] Ibid., 74-78.

[76] For Gilbert de la Porrée's philosophy and theology, see N. M. Häring's articles (list in Bibliography); especially Häring's Commentaries, passim; Nielsen, Theology and Philosophy, passim.

[77] Geoffrey of Auxerre, Libellus, PL 185, 609B; J. Mabillon, ed., S. Bernardi Opera II, 6 (Paris, 1690):40.

[78] Geoffrey of Auxerre, Libellus, PL 185, 605A.

[79] Häring, "The Case of Gilbert," 2.

[80] Ibid., 20, "While the latter [Gilbert] laboured hard to penetrate the mystery regarding the relationship between the divine substance and the Trinitarian Persons, Geoffrey abstained... with the candid confession: 'This discussion is beyond me'."

[81] Ibid., 1, and n. 9.

[82] Ibid., 5.

[83] Ibid., 11.

[84] Ibid., 5.

[85] The nature of a res aliqua (thing) has its foundation in the essence of the thing, in other words, it is its principle of operation. For ex., it is in the nature of a dog to bark, but it is not in its nature to think.

[86] Häring, "The Case of Gilbert," 11-12; ibid., 18, "we can now legitimately conclude that his differentiation between God and divinity is basically one of grammar, formally 'one of logic and not of metaphysics';" ibid., 18, n. 71.

[87] The words "delimit" or "circumscribe" are used because it is not possible to explicate certain dogmas that must be taken on faith.

[88] Häring, "The Case of Gilbert," 5-6.

[89] Nielsen, "Theology," 169.

[90] "Intelligent" is placed between quotation marks because this qualitative word only applies to entities able to think rational thoughts, for example, human beings.

[91] The essence of a thing (res aliqua) is the representation/manifestation of the substance of the thing, which in turn is "that which is," the underlying element which makes a thing what it is, i.e. it is the radical principle about which any attribute, property, quality, characteristic, trait, or virtue can be predicated. This general definition is derived from Gilbert's writing as found in Häring, The Commentaries on Boethius, passim.

[92] Häring, "The case of Gilbert," 13, "Gilbert does not differentiate between a res or substance qua Deus sit et quae non sit Deus, as St. Bernard accuses him of saying and which was rightly rejected by Gilbert;" ibid., 13 n. 8.

[93] Boethius, De duabus naturis, PL 64, 1318.

[94] Häring, "The case of Gilbert," 7-8.

[95] Nielsen, "Theology," 104.

[96] Häring, "The case of Gilbert," 13, and 15, "He [Gilbert] would have agreed with St. Bernard's own statement: Non est formatus Deus: forma est (St. Bernard, Sermo super Canticum Canticorum LXXX, 8; PL 182,1170D).

[97] Häring, "The case of Gilbert," 15.

[98] Nielsen, Theology and Philosophy, 158.

[99] Häring, "The case of Gilbert," 26; Häring, The Commentaries, 310 (PL 64, 1388D, CEut 4, 106-115).

[100] Häring, "The case of Gilbert," 26, "In other words, the second Trinitarian Person, not the divine nature, assumed human nature and united it to His divine nature;" Häring, The Commentaries, 310:52 (PL 64, 1388D, CEut 4, 108).

[101] Häring, The Commentaries, 234:43 (PL 64, 1355B, CEut 7 prol.).

[102] Ibid., 294:85-87 (PL 64, CEut 4, 33-42; Nielsen, "Theology," 167, and n. 15 and 16.

[103] Häring, The Commentaries, 290:71-81 (PL 64, 1379D, CEut 4, 12-13); Nielsen, "Theology," 167-68, and note 23.1.

[104] Häring, The Commentaries, 300:65-70 (PL 64, 1384A, CEut 4, 65); Nielsen, "Theology," 168, and note 23.2; ibid., 175.

[105] Ibid., 182.

[106] Häring, The Commentaries, 292:33 to 293:58 (PL 64, 1380C, CEut 4, 24-29).

[107] Every substance is composed of form and matter. The form of a thing -- res aliqua, is that which determines the (essence) expression/manifestation of that thing ("res multiplex nomen est," see, Häring, The Commentaries, 244:62).

[108] Nielsen, "Theology," 168-69.

[109] Häring, The Commentaries on Boethius, 345:14-19 (PL 64, CEut 7, 19).

[110] Ibid., 244:45 (PL 64, 1359C, CEut 1, 9).

[111] Nielsen, "Theology," 168-69, "Gilbert therefore interprets the pseudo-Athanasian simile: Nam sicut anima rationabilis et caro unus est homo, ita Deus et homo unus est Christus in such a way that there is a likeness on the one hand between the relationship existing in man, where the forms of the soul and the body are joined together by composition in the total form of the individual man... and on the other hand the fact that in Christ a union of this kind exists between the forms divinitas and humanitas so that they come together in a natural whole or a complete form or property, for which reason we can equally well describe Christ as man and God" (see also Nielsen, 169, n. 29, 30 and 31; ibid., 189).

[112] Häring, The Commentaries on Boethius, 89:23-24 (PL 64, DTrin I, 2, 54); ibid., 86:11, "Deus simplex."

[113] For an exposé on the Trinity, see Häring, "The case of Gilbert," 18-24; see also, Gilbert of Poitiers, Gisleberti Pictauensis Episcopi expositio in Boecii librum primum de Trinitate, in Häring, The Commentaries, 53-180.

[114] Häring, The Commentaries, 288:30 (PL 64, 1378D, CEut 4, 5) "A person is truly an individual substance with a rational nature;" For the definition of the "Trinitarian Persons," ibid., 147:41-55, (PL 64, 1295A, DTrin I, 5, 38-40).

[115] Häring, The Commentaries, 201:49 (PL 64, 1320C, DHeb 1, 62).

[116] Ibid., 201:49-50 (PL 64, 1320C, DHeb 1, 62).

[117] Ibid., 260:80-104 (PL 64, 1366C, CEut 1, 82-86).

[118] Ibid., 143:48-147-48 (PL 64, 1295A, DTrin I, 5, 18-40).

[119] Häring, "The case of Gilbert," 22.

[120] René Crozet, "Recherches sur la cathédrale et les évêques de Poitiers des origines au commencement du XIIIe siècle," Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest,VI (1962): 371; Grinnell, "The Crucifixion," 228; Grinnell, "Iconography," 177; "Mussat, Architecture, 246, "Le nouvel évêque....fut consacré à Déols le 23 septembre 1162 et oint par le pape Alexandre III à Tours à la Pentecôte de 1163;" For papal interventions in episcopal elections, see Jacqueline, Papauté et épiscopat, 93.

[121] Crozet, "Recherches sur la cathédrale," 368.

[122] Odette Pontal, "Les évêques dans le monde Plantagenet," Cahiers de civilisation médiévale, XXIX, 1-2 (janvier-juin 1986):130, "Henri voulait revenir à la politique d'intrusion dans les élections épiscopales jadis pratiquée par Guillaume X; see also Richard, Histoire des comtes de Poitou, 2; Crozet, "Recherches sur la cathédrale et les évêques de Poitiers," 368.

[123] For Jean de Bellesmains, see Mussat, Architecture gothique de l'ouest, 246.

[124] Ibid., 246.

[125] Yves Blomme, "La construction de la cathédrale Saint-Pierre," "La construction de la cathédrale Saint-Pierre de Poitiers." Bulletin Monumental, 152, 1(1994):30, "Après une interruption qui put être brève, ...le chantier reprit sa pleine activité pour voir le voûtement du chœur s'achever en 1167, et la construction de l'enveloppe des croisillons se poursuivre probablement au-delà de cette date, peut-être jusque vers 1175."

[126] For example, Jean de Bellesmains took part in the Lateran Council of 1177.

[127] P. Boissonade, "Administrateurs laïques et ecclésiastiques anglo-normands en Poitou à l'époque d'Henri II Plantegenêt (1152-1189)," Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de L'Ouest, 3, V (1920-21):156-190; Mussat, L'architecture gothique de l'ouest, 246; The archbishop of Lyon is still known as "le primat des Gaulles."

CHAPTER VI

THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. PIERRE AT POITIERS AND THE CRUCIFIXION WINDOW

1. History of the Cathedral of St. Pierre From Its Origins to 1137

An overview of the political situation, and of environmental and cultural factors, that were prevalent in Aquitaine during the twelfth century and a survey of the life and accomplishments of contemporary political and religious figures have provided the framework in which to examine the histories of the Cathedral of St. Pierre and of the Crucifixion window. At the outset, it is important to remember that while intricately linked, these two histories should not be confused. In order to arrive at a cogent analysis and possible solution to the problems involved in dating the window and in identifying the donors and designer(s), it is necessary to examine the facts, and the circumstantial evidence that surround the origins and several reconstructions of the cathedral. While it is mentioned in most surveys of medieval art, the last complete and detailed monograph of its history was written in 1848/1849 by Auguste Auber. Because its reconstruction lasted over a century and a half, at a time when styles were rapidly evolving and innovations in construction abounded, the style of the Cathedral of St. Pierre resists traditional categorization.

1.1. General Background

Today art historians still divide medieval architecture according to stylistic categories, using a terminology that was first adopted during the Renaissance, and later modified by Romantic proponents of a medieval artistic revival. Since the nineteenth century, the term "Gothic" has lost its pejorative connotations. Moreover, nineteenth-century medievalists divided the Middle Ages into "Gothic" and "Romanesque."[1] However, except in cases when churches were entirely replaced by new construction, there is no clear division between the styles because churches that started as Romanesque were modified and often acquired Gothic, neo-classical, neo-gothic and even modern elements during the successive centuries. While these categorizations are artificial, they are still in

use because they have come to be associated with certain types of architecture and decoration.[2] Therefore, for lack of another, perhaps better nomenclature, the terms "Romanesque" and "Gothic" are used in this thesis. However, the categorization of the Cathedral of St. Pierre as "Gothic" should not detract from the fact that it is the result of the integration of various styles that resulted in a coherent whole, prompting Virginia Chieffo Raguin to proclaim:

> Hitherto we have tended to evaluate buildings according to a stylistic progression and a generally accepted belief that stylistic modes appear in sequential fashion. This does not appear to be a fruitful approach to Poitiers.[3]

An overview of the site reveals a harmonious unity and coherence that emanates from the overall structure and its elements of decoration.[4] Only a close scrutiny of the architecture and sculptural elements unveils many dissimilarities in the details. Indeed, a projection of twentieth-century views of the historical past, resting on a nineteenth-century attempt at positivist classifications, emphasizing a progression of styles, should not contaminate a researcher's understanding of this cathedral's history. Instead, it is imperative that, as far possible, its evolution be understood in terms of prevailing contemporary beliefs and ways of thinking.[5]

The mostly oral society of the twelfth century lacked precise tools to measure elapsed time accurately. Thus, the perception of time varied, and this absence of precision affected people's understanding of history. Time was both compact and unending, the "past" being a blurred concept in which yesterday merged with Roman antiquity.[6] Reliance on the visual memory of images that immediately "spoke" to the mind fostered a sense of permanence in lieu of change. In this context, the Cathedral of St. Pierre should be viewed in terms of an art historical development which finds its roots in antiquity. It is important to remember that the terms "Romanesque" and "Gothic" cover many different types of church constructions.[7] Apart from some basic similarities, people built their churches to accommodate their needs, the requirements of the liturgy, and local customs. At all times, religious buildings reflected the desire of the clergy to present a certain image of the Church and of themselves to their flock.[8]

1.2. Origins and Location of the Cathedral up to 768 A.D.

The area in which the cathedral now stands was first developed during the Roman occupation of Gaul. At the end of the first century A.D., various structures, mostly utilitarian, already occupied the eastern side of the hill.[9] With the evangelization of Gaul, and after walls were erected in the fourth century, Poitiers' east side was dedicated to religious buildings.[10] The only fourth-century religious structure standing today is the Baptistery of St. John that probably dates from the episcopacy of St. Hilary (350-368), the first bishop of Poitiers whose life is documented.[11] Excavations have also revealed the remnants of fourth-century religious buildings in the area around the cathedral.[12] According to legend, St. Martial (third century A. D.) requested that a church be built at Poitiers in honor of the holy Apostle Peter.[13] It is probable that a church already existed in this location when Queen Radegund built a funerary church (c. 560), for the nuns belonging to her foundation, the convent of St. Croix (fig. 24). [14] While the exact location of the original cathedral cannot be ascertained, material evidence shows that the present structure is the last in a series of churches to be erected on this particular spot.[15]

1.3. History of the Cathedral (768-1137 A.D.)

The cathedral is first mentioned by name in a text of 768 A.D., known as the "Diplôme de Pépin."[16] However, no record survives to describe what the eighth-century cathedral looked like. While Saracen forays into Poitou ceased after 732,[17] periodic Norman invasions and the state of perpetual unrest that existed during the ninth and most of the tenth centuries were not conducive to the flowering of new styles of architecture, or to the construction of permanent structures made of durable materials.[18] When erecting a building possibly doomed from the start, prime consideration was given to its immediate usefulness, not to the quality of its construction.[19] The only other concern was to finish it as quickly and cheaply as possible.[20]

Although the thirty-seven year reign of William V the Great (993-1030) produced a prosperity and stability that favored new constructions made of durable material, it took a devastating fire, that burnt part of Poitiers in 1018, to motivate William V to begin rebuilding and renovating the town. [21] Between 1018 and 1024, the Cathedral of St.

Pierre was enlarged and rebuilt in stone.[22] Partially reopened to the public for worship in 1021,[23] the newly finished cathedral was consecrated in October 1024.[24] While another fire broke out in 1083, neither tradition, nor textual evidence indicates that the cathedral suffered from this blaze.[25]

The cathedral is next mentioned on the occasion of a council that took place at Poitiers in 1100 during which William IX was excommunicated by Pierre II, bishop of Poitiers.[26] Because it was the official church of Poitou in which all important ceremonies and gatherings took place, and because it was meant to reflect the power and wealth of its ruler, it was necessary, in fact mandatory, that the cathedral be kept in the best possible condition. In spite of their disputes with the clergy, neither William IX nor William X would have let the cathedral fall into a state of disrepair serious enough to threaten its structural integrity. No major and potentially destructive conflicts took place in Poitiers during the eleventh century. Since there is no record of work being done to the cathedral during that period, one can assume that it was in good condition.[27]

This assumption is confirmed by the fact that all the churches of Poitiers -- except the cathedral -- had either been rebuilt or renovated when Eleanor inherited Aquitaine in 1137. The coronation of Louis VII and Eleanor as rulers of Aquitaine on 2 August 1137, shortly after their wedding in the Cathedral of St. André at Bordeaux,[28] required that the cathedral be in a good state of repair. While draperies and ornaments that were customarily placed on the walls on such occasions hid surface defects, they could hardly have concealed crumbling walls, or a falling roof. It seems highly unlikely that renovation or rebuilding of the cathedral was contemplated at this time, especially since the bishop of Poitiers, the aging Guillelmus II (d. 1140), was unable to efficiently conduct the affairs of his diocese and had seriously compromised its finances.[29] If it can be assumned that the cathedral was architecturally sound as late as 1137, other developments may have prompted its reconstruction some thirty years hence. These developments will be examined below.

2. History of the Cathedral after 1137

The politics of Poitou, Aquitaine, France and England, together with societal factors such as a growing population, an increase in wealth and in the general welfare of

the people, and strong religious feelings led to an urban renewal that emphasized church architecture and decoration. Eventually, just as they had outgrown the city walls, the Poitevins probably outgrew their cathedral, forcing secular and religious leaders to modify, then rebuild it, restructuring the available space in order to accommodate their needs. When studying the history of the cathedral after 1137:

> It is important to remember that St. Pierre does not represent by any means a spontaneous and continuous campaign of building. Rather it appears to have been a case of remodeling and refurbishing of the church, which gained momentum and scope in favorable periods, but suffered long delays which inevitably broke stylistic continuity.[30]

In fact, before contemplating the problem of dating the beginning of its reconstruction, it is necessary to analyze the evidence provided by archeological research, and by the examination of the fabric of the cathedral, its architectural and sculptural elements, and their placement within the confine of its walls.

2.1. Archeological Evidence Related to the Building of the Cathedral of St. Pierre

The site on which the cathedral was built has never been thoroughly explored. Auber mentions that in 1848, he discovered "des fragments de colonnes et de chapiteaux dans une fouille pratiquée au milieu de l'édifice."[31] Archeological research performed in 1891 by Camille de la Croix revealed the existence of pieces of pavement that he attributed to the eleventh-century cathedral. He found this pavement 2.2 meters below the floor of the present church, at the same level as what he described as the remains of the apse of a small Merovingian church.[32] However, C. de la Croix was not given permission to pursue his research, and no further excavations have taken place. Deploring this lack of information, André Mussat was prompted to state that "à vrai dire il est rare d'être aussi mal renseignés que nous le sommes sur les édifices antérieurs à la construction gothique que nous avons sous les yeux."[33]

At least one fact can be gleaned from C. de la Croix's findings. The floor of the current cathedral was raised by 2.2 meters. What could have possibly motivated the builders to raise the floor level of the new church? First hand examination of the topography reveals that the cathedral is built on a hillside. According to Yves Blomme's

measurements, the floor of the church at the eastern end of the choir is approximately 2 meters above the level of the street. This means that the floor of the eleventh-century church would have been almost level with the area -- now a street -- that faces the eastern end of the church, a fact that Auber had already noted.[34] Considering that the parvis of the existing cathedral is 3.7 meters below the street that faces its western end, it also means that the eleventh-century cathedral was probably not as long as the existing one, otherwise the front of the church would have been 5.7 meters below ground level and would have required the removal of a great quantity of earth and the building of earthenworks that far exceeded the abilities of eleventh and twelfth-century builders and the power of their tools.

A rather simple expansion to the east was impossible because of the close proximity of the walls of the Convent of Ste. Croix to the southeast corner of the cathedral (fig. 24). Perhaps fearing ground slippage, and the loss of integrity of structures built further up the hill, the builders followed the only other option available to them in order to enlarge the church: they raised its level. Laws of physics would later validate what close and accurate observation revealed to the medieval architect and builder.[35] The massive structure of the cathedral -- it is about 100 meters long -- and the incline of the land mandated the construction of a wide foundation and of a large plinth. This construction was also necessary to give added support to the flat chevet and nave walls, and to enable them to withstand the great lateral pressure as well as the gravitational forces that were applied to them by water (from rainfall) and by the saturated earth.

2.2. Architectural and Sculptural Evidence

Although the archeological findings are rather scanty, the architectural evidence is overabundant, which renders the task of interpreting it rather confusing. While re-use of older objects and attachment to established forms emphasize a society's need for security and comfort, experimentation is the hallmark of change, and a sign of hope and confidence in the future. Architecturally and sculpturally the Cathedral of St. Pierre seems to be a remarkable mixture of old and new which reflects the contemporary political problems and societal concerns of the Poitevins. Several conclusions can be drawn from the architecture: the twelfth-century cathedral was built from east to west during several campaigns; some

architectural and sculptural elements from the eleventh-century church were probably re-used; and these elements, Romanesque in style and subject matter, are concentrated in the eastern part of the cathedral, and especially in its southeast corner.[36]

Starting with the first point, all researchers agree that, as was customary, the reconstruction of the Cathedral of St. Pierre began at its eastern end.[37] Once the builders had settled the problem of enlarging the church, leaving the old structure intact, they proceeded to erect the chevet wall to just above the three bays and below the arcature that runs the full width of the upper part of the exterior of the wall.[38] While this wall may reflect influences from English architecture,[39] Grinnell was of the opinion that "in elevation, the chevet is typically Poitevin Romanesque in its use of superimposed arcades."[40] Later, René Crozet held a similar belief when he wrote that "on ne saurait dire davantage que la cathédrale poitevine entreprise peut-être au temps d'un évêque anglais, soit pour autant un édifice de type anglais. Par tous ses caractères, elle se rattache à l'art gothique de l'Ouest."[41] The latest research looks back to antiquity for models, both pagan and Christian, and especially to the architecture of churches that were most likely to be observed by the crusaders traveling through Middle-Eastern countries.[42]

Additionally, the flat chevet may be the result of the observation skills and of the pragmatic thinking of the medieval architects and builders. Their decision to build such a chevet may have stemmed from inspecting old Roman and Gallo-Roman structures that were still available in twelfth-century Poitiers,[43] from a careful observation of the naturally sloping contours of the land, and from trying to gain as much space as possible in the interior of the church to accommodate the growing population. André Mussat's suggestion that:

> si le chevet de Saint-Pierre de Poitiers peut paraître une réaction contre l'académisme décoratif,... il est aussi en bien de ses aspects la reprise ou la continuation d'une pensée locale, mais vivifiée par les exemples juxtaposées du Nord déjà gothique et du Sud où triomphait les coupoles,[44]

certainly complements this assessment.

While researchers agree that the cathedral was constructed starting at its eastern end, and during several campaigns, the two latest investigations outwardly disagree about the progression of the work. Raguin argues that:

> more consistent with the evidence would seem a thesis that the building was laid out from east to west in its first campaign - if not every section of the lower levels, at least key elements to define the size of the building. For some sections, the walls up to the springing of the vaults were constructed, and then the vaults themselves. One may think of the construction of the cathedral in successive layers, not vertical sections.[45]

While Raguin postulates that the building was developed in successive horizontal layers,[46] Yves Blomme is of the opinion that:

> une première campagne de travaux consista à élever l'envelope des deux travées orientales [bays VII and VIII in fig. 24] ainsi que l'amorce de la suivante.[47]... La seconde campagne ne concerna pas seulement l'élévation des murs des travées VI et V. En effet, nous pensons que c'est alors que l'on entreprit le voûtement des deux travées orientales, ainsi que celui du croisillon sud.[48]

Instead of being contradictory, perhaps, unwittingly, these two theses complement each other. Observation <u>in situ</u> shows both horizontal and vertical breaks in the fabric of the cathedral.[49] It is certainly conceivable that undefined "key elements" may have been established and perhaps partly built as markers to facilitate the job of the builders. Concurring with Raguin's theory, Blomme also wonders "si le tracé au sol de la tour [nord], et peut-être le creusement de ses fondations, ne précédèrent pas aussi la seconde campagne."[50] The examination of the plan and architecture reveal that any deviation from the square when establishing the placement of these "key elements" may have helped compound the original error of alignment. This error was probably due to a 6° rotation of the north end of the chevet wall towards the east indicating that the new cathedral's outline was drawn and perhaps its foundation were laid during the month of December.[51] As a result, the eastern wall of the tower framing the north side of the western façade is not square with the north nave wall, and forms an outside 96° angle with it.[52] Thus, the tower turns inward, towards the western façade.[53]

The inside angle formed by the chevet and the south wall of the nave is 96°. As a result, this wall shows a marked deviation that can be observed <u>in situ</u>, and on the plan (fig. 24).[54] The extra 6° was the cause of structural problems that were potentially serious

enough to have brought the first campaign of construction to a halt and are today threatening the integrity of the cathedral.[55] Stopping the first campaign would account for the vertical break in the fabric of the cathedral noticeable between bay VII and bay VI. By extrapolating from the given data, Blomme found that if the 6° deviation had not been partially corrected, it would have resulted in the western façade being 11.20 meters wider than the chevet.[56] In looking at the plan (fig. 24), it is clearly visible that the builders must have rapidly realized that they were seriously diverging from the perpendicular, and that the north and south walls did not follow a parallel course. Starting with bay VI, they attempted to correct the misaligned south wall by angling it back towards an imaginary line, perpendicular with the chevet wall.[57] Yet, the builders were never completely successful. An outward bulge remains between the end of bay VII and the beginning of bay III, and the western façade is still 4.5 meters wider than its eastern end.[58] Because of this curvature, the southwestern tower is pulling away from the nave wall, and is being restored today. While Raguin does not address this issue, Blomme wonders if the change in the orientation of the chevet did not compound the deviation of the walls, which could also be due to the fact that work proceeded in an area that was encumbered by existing structures, including the eleventh-century cathedral.[59] The effort of the builders to incorporate parts of the eleventh-century church walls into the new framework, as medieval reconstruction often did, also possibly affected the direction of the walls.[60]

The custom of cannibalizing older buildings that had outgrown their usefulness was prevalent in the Middle Ages. In fact, the protracted reconstruction that went on at Poitiers could not have been ex nihilo, since such a program would imply a complete, or nearly complete, closure of the church for an indefinite period, and a disruption of church services, which, does not seem to have been the case at Poitiers.[61] Contrary to today's consumeristic society, medieval culture encouraged the practice of a strict economy. The scarcity of some natural resources, and the loss of knowledge that led to the inability to duplicate some types of tools, or objects, forged a strong belief in the benefits of recycling for future use. In a building, part of the structure, such as columns, foundations, and perhaps parts of walls, sculptural components, such as modillions, capitals, and corbels, and other elements of decoration, such as stained glass windows, were often preserved and

incorporated into the new construction, or removed and kept for later use. Robert Grinnell's research led him to believe that "...the archaic nature of the bases and capitals of the blind arcade lining the interior walls, and the archaic corbels, and modillions found throughout the church suggest the re-use of many of the embellishments and perhaps entire wall-surfaces from the previous structure." [62]

A cursory examination of the interior of the cathedral reveals a great homogeneity of forms and decorations that belies its protracted construction, leading Henry Kraus to assert that "much of Poitiers cathedral's architecture is marked stylistically by what have been loosely called 'Romanesque survivals'."[63] However, closer observation shows that the concentration of elements, the style and subject matters of which associate them to Romanesque structures, was more pronounced in the eastern area of the cathedral. Details, such as the three window openings in the chevet wall that are rounded at the top, decorated only with moldings, and free from any other decorative carvings, clearly relate them to architectural forms prevalent in Romanesque churches. The approximately 370 capitals and 320 modillions (267 of which are visible today) enable the observer to follow the evolution of the sculpture from Romanesque to Gothic.[64] Thus, in the choir area, grotesque masks, sirens, animals and humans playing musical instruments, and acrobats clearly identify the sculptures as Romanesque.[65]

Because of their subject matters and style, these sculptures were possibly part of the "alia diuersarum spetierum ornamenta," mentioned in the Planctus, that Bishop Gilbert commissioned in order to embellish the cathedral. While these sculptural elements were employed comprehensively in the southeastern area of the cathedral, their distribution, together with other external and internal architectural evidence that includes stereotomic details and lapidary marks left by masons, seem to show a progression of construction not only from east to west but also from south to north.[66] As a result, Blomme believes that the first campaign of reconstruction probably started at the southeast corner.[67] As further evidence, Blomme mentions that this area contains the only pier, the base of which is devoid of all decorations as though it were kept unadorned to serve as a giant marker.[68]

Raguin noted that "the concern of this society was in general to preserve tradition," and that "the building [Cathedral of St. Pierre] stood as an accretion and/or revision of

elements that may reflect a continuing tradition."[69] Perhaps because it was surrounded by remnants of classical buildings, Poitevin society was attached to its past. In a conservative society, any kind of stylistic data must be analyzed with caution, because archaizing items may be introduced to mitigate the people's fear of change.[70] In fact, in order to be thorough, it is advisable to bolster stylistic indicators with other factors that will help confirm the true origin and age of elements being analyzed. Towards this end, while examining the overall fabric of the cathedral, it might be rewarding to conduct a search for sites of experimentation, thereby pinpointing the incorporation of new ideas.

Pertinent examples are found in the eastern area of the cathedral. Looking at the vaulting of the three absidiols carved out of the chevet wall reveals that, in the southern absidiol vault, the two diagonal ribs are clumsily abutted to the moldings that outline the arch band of the vault, while keystones were used in the other two, to harmoniously join the ribs to the arch band.[71] The vaults of bay VII and VIII and of the south transept are heavier and of a different design from those in the rest of the church. In these vaults, the four diagonal ribs, decorated with a large flat band between two moldings, are non-penetrating. Apart from the massive appearance of the vaults, the lack of penetration of the ribs is noticeable only when one examines the joints between each segment on their extrados.[72] This design illustrates the builders' first attempt at building domical vaults at this site. The other vaults of the cathedral have a different profile. Starting with bay VI, the diagonal ribs, that are reinforced by liernes formed of a single torus, harmoniously join a historiated keystone, at the apex of each vault.[73]

Overall architectural evidence shows that the reconstruction of the cathedral started in its eastern part. Experimentation in the architecture as well as the distribution of Romanesque forms and sculptural elements suggest that the southeast area was the most likely starting point. The slight change of orientation of the chevet wall seems to have had a domino effect, causing problems in the orientation of the walls which perhaps brought construction to a halt rather rapidly, before the vaults could be built. The "key elements," possibly the foundations of the corner towers, that may have been laid to mark the overall outline of the new cathedral, may have compounded the problems from the very beginning.[74] Recent research, conducted by both Raguin and Blomme, places the

vaulting of the two easternmost bays in the late 1160s. It is also conceivable that some of the sculptural elements were part of the numerous ornamenta that Bishop Gilbert ordered for what he believed would be a renovation campaign that later blossomed into a rebuilding of the cathedral. After all, such a development had an illustrious precedent in the case of Abbot Suger and the Basilica of St. Denis.

2.3. Dating of the Reconstruction of the Cathedral

In Yves Blomme's words, "la discussion relative à la datation de ces deux premières campagnes est rendue particulièrement difficile par la carence presque totale des sources écrites."[75] The key word in the prior sentence is "presque." One factor, that can facilitate research, has come to the fore recently. With the help of powerful photographic equipment, the faded date inscribed on the keystone of the central vault of bay VIII is now more clearly legible. Other factors are also significant in finding a terminus a quo for the cathedral: the content of the Planctus and De commendatione should be analyzed closely, and can effectively help secure a terminus post quem and a terminus ante quem for the beginning of the campaign of renovation of the cathedral that may have been part of the first campaign of reconstruction. Finally, the date written by the sixteenth-century Poitevin chronicler, Jean Bouchet, may prove to be a viable terminus a quo for the beginning of the second building campaign. Since the histories of the cathedral and of the Crucifixion window are related, the following paragraphs are devoted to finding the most likely dates for the first two campaigns of reconstruction of the cathedral.

2.3.1. 1167: Date on the Keystone of the Central Vault of Bay VIII

Until recently, the date found on the keystone of the central vault of bay VIII had not provided any reliable information because it is faded, impossible to read with the naked eye and difficult to decipher even with a pair of binoculars. As attested by Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," the lack of legibility brought to the fore many fanciful readings and interpretations.[76] In fact, Auber mentions that the seventeenth-century author Jean Besly, gave, "dans une lettre à M. de la Rocheposay, évêque de Poitiers, jusqu'à vingt et une explications différentes."[77] As revealed in a photograph taken by Yves Blomme, the most likely reading of this inscription made up of thirteen letters is the following: IN QUO

A[nno] MCLXVII.[78] Since this writing is found on the central vault of bay VIII, this would mean that the second campaign would have started earlier than 1167.

The question is, how much earlier? Reasoning backwards in time, it is certainly possible that this second campaign started c. 1162, as can be deduced from Jean Bouchet's writings that will be examined below. Taking into account an interruption in the work between the first and second campaigns, due not only to construction problems, such as the deviation of the nave walls from the perpendicular, and probably the need to start dismantling the choir area of the eleventh-century cathedral,[79] but also to the political problems associated with the see of Poitiers that were addressed earlier, a date c. 1150, proposed by Yves Blomme, for the beginning of the first campaign, is entirely possible:

> Une fois le chantier devenu vraiment actif, il faut encore tenir compte d'une inévitable interruption entre les deux premières campagnes. Même si celle-ci fut brève, et même si le voûtement des travées orientales intervint en cours et non au terme de cette seconde campagne, il paraît raisonnable de reporter le début des travaux aux alentours des années 1150.[80]

Although this date coincides with the campaign of renovations in which Gilbert de la Porrée was involved between 1148 and 1154, it is only based on circumstantial evidence. It is impossible to confirm c. 1150 as the date when the first campaign of reconstruction started.

2.3.2. The Planctus, the De Commendatione, and the Dating of the First Campaign

It is undeniable that the cathedral was the site of some type of work during the latter part of Gilbert de la Porrée 's episcopate. His participation in a campaign of embellishments is verifiable through contemporary texts, and started c. 1148/1150.[81] When Dean Laurent wrote the Planctus, he not only wanted to give homage to Bishop Gilbert, but as his words, alia diuersarum spetierum ornamenta quibus templi faciem exornaret, clearly mean, he also wanted to thank Bishop Gilbert for "providing many types of other decorative elements to improve the general appearance of the cathedral."[82] The text of the Planctus led Grinnell "to raise the suggestion that perhaps work had been going on, at least sporadically, from the date of Gilbert's episcopacy."[83] As stated in the De commendatione, Bishop Gilbert had strengthened the finances of his diocese:

> Ecclesiam uero nostram quam inuenit et grauibus implicitam questionibus et, ut ita dixermus, quasi tributariis exactionibus, sub deodali tamen nomine, a multis et

> maioribus terre nostre uiris alligatam, deo auxiliante, penitus absoluit. Redditus uero episcopales in terrarum suarum restitutione, in aliarum adquisitione mirabiliter ampliauit.[84]

Thus in 1150, he was in a position, rarely found thereafter in the history of the cathedral, to launch a campaign of embellishments which, according to the Planctus, was extensive. Bishop Gilbert would certainly not have been alone in his manner of approaching the refurbishing of a church, and in turning it into an almost complete reconstruction. Records show that Abbot Suger followed such a path when the Basilica of St. Denis was rebuilt. In Chapter 24 of De administratione, Suger mentions that he first repaired and repainted the "old walls."[85] Then he adds: "while this was being completed at great expense, I found myself... encouraged by the counsel of wise men and by the prayers of many monks to enlarge and amplify the noble church... and I set out at once to begin this very thing."[86] This prompted Eleanor S. Greenhill to state that "these measures suggest that Suger did not originally have in mind a fully developed plan for the reconstruction. On the contrary, he approached the task only slowly and piecemeal."[87] Bishop Gilbert could conceivably have followed the same path. A close examination of the life of Bishop Gilbert shows that the first years of his episcopate were spent in other pursuits, and that only after he returned from the Council at Reims (March 1148) did he devote all his time to the care of his diocese and of his cathedral. As Grinnell states, "it was, indeed, this trial that led him to concentrate his energies on the church at Poitiers."[88]

Preliminary work on the cathedral, the planning of the renovations, possible changes and steps taken towards an actual rebuilding, the laying of the new foundations around existing structures, then the building of the new chevet and nave walls, to the western end of bay VII, and up to the planned level of the vaults, could easily have taken several years. As shown in the previous chapter, after the death of Bishop Gilbert, the rapid changes in the hierarchy of the clergy of Poitiers between 1154 and 1162, and the two periods when the see was empty (4 Nov 1158 to 26 Mar 1159, and 27/28 March 1161 to Pentecost 1163), may have slowed down construction considerably, if not actually brought it to a stop. While, perhaps, work continued through the first period of vacancy that followed the death of Bishop Calo (3 September 1154 - 4 November 1158), the first

campaign of reconstruction probably ended before or, at the latest, with the death of Bishop Laurent on 27/28 March 1161.[89] Such considerations led Grinnell to believe that:

> In its older portion, the structure and decoration of St. Pierre bear witness to a certain thriftiness of program -- in the re-use of materials and the conservatism of innovation -- that might be taken to reflect a cathedral chapter morally inclined to continue the work undertaken by their distinguished prelate Gilbert, but lacking in leadership and strong initiative.[90]

However, Jean de Bellesmains' long tenure (1163-1182) brought the stability needed to resume the work, and start the second phase of reconstruction

2.3.3. The Year 1162, Jean Bouchet's Annales d'Aquitaine, and the Dating of the Second Campaign

The date 1162 was mentioned earlier as the date given for the beginning of the reconstruction of the cathedral. Two questions pertaining to this date come to mind: Within what context was this date found? Does it really pertain to the reconstruction of the cathedral ? At first glance, it would seem difficult to give much credence to a date ascribed to an event four hundred years after it is supposed to have taken place, especially when the source(s) on which the information is based is(are) unknown. Over the centuries, from being a mere assumption, the date 1162 became an accepted fact.[91] However, as André Mussat mentions, "Aucun texte contemporain ne vient corroborer cette tradition."[92] A close analysis of Jean Bouchet's text shows that he does not make any mention of 1162 in relation to the beginning of the construction of the cathedral. Taking as a reference the year 1161, Jean Bouchet wrote:

> L'année apres le dict roy Henry fect reparer plusieurs villes chasteaux et places fortes de Normandie et d'Aquitaine et fect croistre la ville de Poictiers du circuit qu'elle a de présent... En mesme temps le roy Henry a la requeste de madame Alienor son espouse, fect comacer le beau et sumptueux edifice de l'Eglise cathédrale de Saint Pierre de Poictiers.[93]

As is clearly written, Jean Bouchet uses the phrase "en mesme temps," only in relation to Eleanor's request. Referring to Walter Ong, Orality and Literacy, Raguin comments that "oral societies, which include pre-Gutenberg Europe, lived in a continual present manipulating memory and preserving equilibrium by retaining or sloughing off memories according to their relevance."[94] As M. T. Clanchy, From Memory to Written Record: England, 1066-1307, states "Remembered truth was...flexible and up to date."

In the mostly oral society of the twelfth century in which people, even kings, had no sure way to measure time and considered it a malleable commodity, a phrase such as "en mesme temps," should be considered only as an approximation, and certainly should not be given its modern interpretation of "at the same time."[95]

However, Jean Bouchet's writings should not be dismissed as inconsequential. Bouchet did write that Henry II "fect comacer" the cathedral. The dates 1161/1162 may have cropped up because they correspond to Henry II's presence in his continental domains. Records show that, during those years, Henry was engaged in restoration and construction on the continent -- especially in Normandy and Anjou.[96] Henry's building efforts in Poitou were apparently limited to the ducal palace and the new wall around Poitiers.[97] In fact, no contemporary text even alludes to Henry's interest in the cathedral.

Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," suggested that Henry started the rebuilding of the cathedral in 1162 because he wanted to win over the populace of Poitiers.[98] As Grinnell pointed out, it seems unlikely that if this was Henry's purpose, he waited ten years (1152 to 1162) to accomplish it.[99] Yet, Auber is probably correct in his assumption. In 1162, moved by political ambition, Henry was trying to appease both his secular vassals and the clergy of Aquitaine. Revolt was already brewing in Poitou because Henry II wanted to implement a policy of total control not only of his lay vassals, but of the clergy of Aquitaine, shortly after Louis VI and Louis VII had granted them freedom from interference in ecclesiastical elections. While constructions of a secular nature, such as new walls to protect the expanding town, may have fostered Henry's hope to improve his relationship with the lay people of Poitiers, a gift to the cathedral chapter may have served to stop the angry rumblings of the Aquitanian clergy and finally ease Jean de Bellesmains into the bishop's seat in 1163, a year after Henry II had imposed him as the new bishop.

Given this set of circumstances, the pragmatic Henry would not have hesitated to make a gift for the restoration or rebuilding of the Cathedral of St. Pierre, the bishop's church.[100] This donation could have given a new impetus to the second campaign of reconstruction at a time when the ambitious Jean de Bellesmains was taking his first significant step up the ladder of the Church's hierarchy. Thus, Jean Bouchet was probably right in following "tradition" and reporting that Henry II started the reconstruction of the

cathedral. However, as has been shown earlier, it was most probably the second campaign of reconstruction that started then, not the first.

Pending other archeological, architectural, or textual discoveries, the three factors mentioned above can be regarded as the most solid evidence that can be obtained to set a terminus a quo for the beginning of the first and second campaigns of reconstruction. However, the other evidence discussed below is circumstantial and depends on intangibles such as the personality and character of the people involved in the political, cultural and religious evolution of Poitou, France and England during the twelfth century, and on what motivated the people's reactions to this evolution. When performing such an analysis, it is helpful to remember that the circumstantial evidence that will be introduced is not always specific to the reconstruction of the Cathedral of St. Pierre, but can also be used in conjunction with the dating of the Crucifixion window.

2.4. Patronage of the Renovation/Reconstruction of the Cathedral of St. Pierre

Taking into consideration the sequential development of the rebuilding of the cathedral during several campaigns, and the possible dates 1150 and 1162/63 for the beginning of the first and second campaigns respectively, it is necessary to start a search for possible patrons. While different reasons may have motivated them, the important figures on the French and Poitevin scenes, in 1150, both secular and religious, were Louis VII, Eleanor and Bishop Gilbert. In 1162/63, the players had changed: while Eleanor remained, her husband and the bishop of Poitiers had been replaced, respectively by Henry II and Jean de Bellesmains. Although their motivations varied, all would have probably responded positively to a proposal to participate in a restoration and possible rebuilding of the Cathedral of St. Pierre.

During the fifteen-year rule (1137-1152) of Louis VII and Eleanor, revenues were sizable enough to enable Louis VII to contribute to the support of all the churches of his kingdom,[101] and to allow Eleanor to indulge her artistic aspirations. As Greenhill states, "Eleanor would have surely done her part to inspire the king with that policy of 'grandeur and illusion' which, according to Marcel Pacaut, marked the early years of Louis' reign."[102] On several occasions during her early years at the court of France, Eleanor had

shown the powerful hold that she exercised over the French king. She was also known at court for her stubbornness and tenacity. During the late 1140s, Eleanor may have turned her ambitions from the political arena, where she had failed thus far, [103] towards a more rewarding position as patron of the arts.[104] Advised by Suger, the king, who deplored Eleanor's meddling in the affairs of state, would have welcomed and encouraged her new interest, especially since the queen's concerns were beneficial to his propagandistic schemes.[105] Louis VII would have been content to satisfy Eleanor's artistic penchant since it corresponded with his own pursuits, both material (for the aggrandizement of his lineage) and spiritual (to assuage his guilt and find forgiveness).

As a young woman, Eleanor was able to see and perhaps admire the newly reconstructed and decorated churches of Poitiers. As queen, accompanying Louis VII on his tours of inspection, Eleanor visited the main cities of the Capetian kingdom where the cathedrals were being renovated or rebuilt on a grander scale. She also witnessed the consecration of the new choir in the Basilica of St. Denis, in June 1144. In her article, "Eleanor, Abbot Suger, and St. Denis," Eleanor S. Greenhill has already built a convincing case for the contribution of Eleanor and Louis VII to the rebuilding of the Abbey Church of St. Denis.[106] In a letter dated 23 May 1973, sent to Eleanor Greenhill, Sumner McK. Crosby referred to the lack of reference to royal bequests in Suger's De Administratione, when he stated that "many things seem to have been taken for granted, such as royal gifts to the Abbey."[107] It is probable that this was also the case for the cathedral at Poitiers.

If Eleanor participated in the cathedral's renovation efforts while she was married to Louis VII, it had to be before their departure on the Second Crusade in the spring of 1147, or after their return in 1149, and before their divorce in early 1152. In fact, Auber mentions that in a charter dated 16 October 1149, "Eléonore, qui pouvait être guidée par des motifs réellement plus patriotiques, s'était empressée, avant même son retour à Poitiers, de confirmer les privilèges de la cité, les donations pieuses de son père Guillaume X, et celles de ses ancêtres."[108] Eleanor's diligence indicates that she was interested in her capital and in its religious foundations while she was still queen of France. It would seem odd that, having witnessed the blossoming of the Basilica of St. Denis and the dedication of its new choir in 1144, Eleanor would not have been inspired to participate somehow in

the renovation/rebuilding of the cathedral of the capital of her personal domain. Eleanor could not have ignored the fact that other cathedrals were being rebuilt and were nearing completion. The royal portal of the cathedral of Chartres, built after the fire of 1134, was finished c. 1150.[109] In 1158, Bishop William of Passavant dedicated the newly transformed nave of the Cathedral of St. Julien at Le Mans.[110] The nave of St. Maurice at Angers was completed in 1153.[111] These are but a few examples relatively close to Poitiers. It is also quite possible that, using the Basilica of St. Denis as a precedent, Eleanor convinced Louis VII to participate in some way in its renovation. After all, Jean Bouchet reports that she convinced Henry II in 1162 to participate in this effort. However, even if she were unable to persuade Louis VII, she certainly had the means to commission part of the work herself.

After Eleanor's return from the Second Crusade, learning that Gilbert de la Porrée, bishop of Poitiers (1142-1154), had started a renovation campaign some time after his return from the council at Reims, c. 1148,[112] Eleanor was perhaps prompted to help him. Gilbert de la Porrée, "was acquainted with Suger and the architectural currents set in motion by the abbot of St. Denis."[113] He also "became interested in putting the arts to the service of religion."[114] Furthermore, he was familiar with the work that was taking place at the Cathedral of St. Julien at Le Mans, and also had witnessed the reconstruction of the Cathedral of Notre Dame at Chartres while he was chancellor of the school. All these reasons motivated him to embellish the Cathedral of St. Pierre, and possibly influenced him to start renovating it. The roles that Henry and Jean de Bellesmains played in the instigation of the second campaign were analyzed earlier.

Another element that must not be ignored is the cathedral fabrica, that was created in the late fifth century by papal decree. According to this decree, one-fourth of all ecclesiastical revenues of a particular diocese were to be set aside for construction and repairs to the cathedral.[115] Besides the income received from church properties, donations provided the main source of revenue. It was very important for the bishop, and the cathedral chapter, to receive gifts not only from the king, but from all other donors, such as the Poitevin laity. While donations made by lay people could be used throughout the church, Canon Law prescribed that all sacred images destined to be displayed in a church

were to be approved by an Ordinary, like the bishop of Poitiers.[116] Church law also stipulated that the upkeep of the church was to be divided amongst the faithful and the clergy: the decoration and care of the sanctuary being reserved for the clerics. Although Eleanor, Louis VII, Henry II, Gilbert de la Porrée, Jean de Bellesmains and the cathedral chapter were all possibly involved with the embellishment and rebuilding of the cathedral at various points in time during the twelfth century, the rich and powerful were conceivably not the only contributors. While the reduced size of the figures in the donors' panel indicated their relative unimportance, according to a code well-understood by all members of medieval society, their qualities as co-donors and, perhaps, the size of their gift rendered them valuable enough to be inscribed in the history of their cathedral. The eighteenth-century chronicler, Dom Fonteneau, agreed with such an assertion since he thought that the renovation/rebuilding of the cathedral was almost entirely due to the generosity of the people of Poitiers when he wrote:

> On ne trouve pas que le vaisseau de l'église cathédrale de Poitiers soit redevable de sa construction à la piété d'aucun prince. Je crois qu'il fut le fruit des œuvres pieuses, des aumones, de ces mains secourables, manus adjutrices par lesquelles les évêques et les papes des XIIe et XIIIe siècles accordaient des indulgences, qu'on appelait indulgences pécuniaires.[117]

In conclusion, Romanesque architectural and sculptural elements, the breaks in the fabric of the cathedral and the deviation of the nave walls that suggest an interruption of construction, the inscription on the keystone of the central vault of bay VIII dating from the second campaign, the Planctus and the De commendatione, and Jean Bouchet's date of 1162 are not contradictory. This evidence seems to authenticate both the physical progression of the rebuilding as shown in the fabric of the cathedral, and its historical development through a first campaign that started as a series of embellishments, then turned into renovations c. 1150, finally becoming a reconstruction, that lasted through a second campaign starting c. 1162/1163. While these factors only apply to the first and second campaigns, since the primary aim of this research is directed at the Crucifixion window, these are the only two campaigns that are examined within this context.

3. The Crucifixion Window

3.1. Dating of the Crucifixion Window

In Grodecki's words, "les documents directs sur la date et sur la provenance de ces verrières [the three chevet windows] font défaut."[118] As a result, the Crucifixion window is plagued by the same problem of dating that surrounds the cathedral as a whole. The following paragraphs are dedicated to finding a terminus post quem and a terminus ante quem for its design, manufacture and installation. In the introduction to his unpublished Ph. D. dissertation devoted to the study of form and symbolism in the Crucifixion window, Robert Grinnell states that "one of the first problems facing any historian is the problem of time." To which he adds, "There is no textual indication which serves to date the window of Poitiers."

Indeed, the two-line inscription on each side of the donors' panel, that was possibly the only unquestionable source for a date and for the names of the donors, was almost entirely destroyed during the sixteenth-century wars of religion.[119] It seems that when Frovignault and Robin restored the window in mid-sixteenth century, the Poitevin clergy and the inhabitants of Poitiers had already forgotten when the donation was made and by whom, and were unable to supply any information to them.[120] While they were presumably aware of Jean Bouchet's dating, c. 1162, they must have also realized that it only pertained to the reconstruction of the cathedral, not to the design or manufacture of the window, and should not be used in this context. In fact, Jean Bouchet makes no mention of 1162 as the date inscribed on the Crucifixion window. Later restorers, Reverad and Descantes, whose examination of the cathedral's windows in 1775 was, in the words of Raguin, "meticulous," were not asked to make changes to the inscription that had become meaningless.

Contrary to sixteenth-century restorers, until recently, most researchers have accepted the traditional date of 1162 as the terminus post quem for the window. In Le Vitrail Roman, Louis Grodecki asserted that, René Crozet had once and for all settled the identity of the donors and the question of the dating of the window "on stylistic and historical grounds."[121] However, while Crozet reaffirmed that the reconstruction of the Cathedral of St. Pierre started in 1162, he did not venture to give a date for the Crucifixion

window, concluding instead, "quand à marquer la place du vitrail de Poitiers parmi les vitraux du XIIe siècle, c'est là une tâche que d'autres ont abordée."[122] "Others" remain nameless, and Crozet did not settle the problem of dating the window. In her recent essay, related in part to the Crucifixion window, Raguin upholds Crozet's and Grodecki's dates, stating that "the stylistic evidence of both glass and architecture suggests a date of around 1160-70."[123] All the arguments from available documents presented so far in favor of 1162 as a terminus post quem for the Crucifixion window, are based on a date of uncertain origin given for the beginning of the reconstruction of the cathedral, not for the window.

Grodecki did not take into account Grinnell's introduction of a plausible argument in favor of a date earlier than 1162 for the Crucifixion window, and preferred 1165-1170 for what Crozet called "raisons historiques et stylistiques."[124] However, not all art historians agree with these later dates. Grinnell believed that the Crucifixion window was part of the program of renovation started by Gilbert de la Porrée. The evidence that was developed earlier in the text narrows the period in which the Crucifixion window was probably designed and created. Contemporary records -- the Planctus and the De commendatione -- concur with Grinnell who maintains that the architectural and sculptural evidence supports his theory that the window may have been part of the ornamentation planned for the refurbishing of the eleventh-century cathedral and re-used when it was rebuilt.[125] Further evidence, such as the apostle missing from the right panel of the Ascension, a part of whose garment is still visible in Delacroix's lithograph of 1848 (fig. 6), and in Durand's photographs taken before Louis Steinheil's 1883-1885 restoration of the window, led Grinnell to believe that the window was moved, cut and re-used. Always cautious, Grinnell wrote:

> While such evidence drawn from the architecture and decoration of St. Pierre is decidedly circumstantial,... it strengthens the plausibility of Steinheil's observation... that the Crucifixion window might well have been re-cut in order to fit for its present location.[126]

In view of the different stages of construction and variations noticeable on the chevet wall, in the walls of the nave and in architectural elements such as the bases of columns, and the construction of the vaults, Grinnell's assessment that the window was re-cut before being installed in the central bay of the chevet wall is entirely possible, and

even probable. Yet, his findings remain inconclusive, because he failed to consider the possibility that a lack of precision in the plans, often drawn on wood, by twelfth-century architects may have caused a discrepancy in the size of the bays. Compounding the inaccuracy of architectural drawings, a full size sketch of the window was usually made to scale on a whitewashed table also used to cut and assemble the glass.[127] These methods could easily lead to variations in both the sizes of the bay and of the window. Such an hypothesis, as a difference in the size of the window from plan to finished product, is not farfetched. When these variations occurred during construction, the dimensions of the window could be more easily altered than the size or shape of the bay by cutting the window to size, or by adding a large border around it. In the case of the Crucifixion window this would explain the partly missing figure of an apostle, the last bit of which was removed by Steinheil, in 1883-1885.[128]

Xavier Barbier de Montault, in "Le Vitrail de la Crucifixion à la cathédrale de Poitiers," reports that Steinheil commented to him that "les dimensions de la fenêtre à remplir furent mal prises dès le principe," resulting in a window that did not fit at the time of installation.[129] At this point of the analysis, it is particularly important to report Barbier de Montault's words regarding Steinheil's remarks about the Crucifixion window:

> Dans la lithographie de la verrière, il n'y a à droite que cinq apôtres visibles; du sixième, on n'aperçoit que le vêtement. M. Steinheil m'a fait observer qu'à certaines coupures, sensibles surtout à un des anges de l'Ascension, on pourrait conjecturer que ce vitrail, fait sur de plus grandes dimensions, a été réduit latéralement pour pouvoir s'adapter à un cadre nouveau: on a donc fait la bordure indépendamment des sujets. Je préfère cette explication à celle qui m'a été suggérée, que quelques parties du vitrail pourraient être antérieures au vitrail lui-même et avoir été empruntées à une verrière préexistente. Quoi qu'il en soit, l'idée de M. Steinheil prouve un fin observateur, et je devais ici en tenir compte, car elle est fort ingénieuse. Il n'y a pas d'exemples de mutilations analogues faites systématiquement: la nécessité seule a pu les imposer.

Barbier de Montault added that he also felt that the size of the window had to be altered because "un temps assez long s'écoula entre la construction de la fenêtre et la clôture définitive."[130] Steinheil's keen observations, and Barbier de Montault's assessment that the window was made a long time before it was actually installed coincide with the timeframe established by the Planctus and De commendatione, and Blomme's and Raguin's findings.

If a window were commissioned c. 1148/1150 as part of what started as an embellishment /refurbishing campaign that turned into the first rebuilding campaign of the cathedral, it could not have been installed until the vaults of the choir area (bay VIII & VII) were completed during or at the end of the second campaign, c. 1167. While the evidence of both architecture and glass seems to fit the above scenario, no solid proof exists to support it. However, no incontrovertible evidence exists to support the proposal that the window be dated c. 1165-1170.

In a 1995 article, "Les monuments médiévaux," Marie-Thérèse Camus certainly concurs with Barbier de Montault's proposal of an earlier date when she mentions that "l'œuvre [the Crucifixion window] qui pourrait être du début de la seconde moitié du XIIe siècle, est d'une grande lisibilité et d'une composition rigoureuse."[131] It is interesting to note that at different times and places, through research on location, and through an inductive process derived from the architecture, the plan of the cathedral, and the study of the window, different people: a historian of architecture, Yves Blomme, several art historians, Xavier Barbier de Montault, Robert Grinnell, Marie-Thérèse Camus, André Mussat, and Hubert Le Roux,[132] and a stained glass specialist and restorer Louis Steinheil, have arrived at the conclusion that the terminus post quem for the cathedral and especially for the Crucifixion window should be pushed back to c. 1150.

3.2. The Crucifixion Window - Its Donors and Designer(s)

Since no textual evidence survives to identify the donors accurately, it is necessary to evaluate what significance a date, c. 1150, would have on the identification of the donors both secular and religious. Looking back at the history of the period, Eleanor was duchess of Aquitaine and queen of France. Politically, in 1150, she had lost part of the overwhelming influence that she first had on the king. As Elizabeth A. R. Brown suggests, "Eleanor was outwardly docile for the next four years [between 1148 and 1152]. She accepted the peace the pope arranged between Louis and herself on their return to the West, and she dutifully produced another daughter, Alix." [133] However, Eleanor was not the kind of person to stay idle. Since "her compliance between 1148 and 1152 was only superficial,"[134] an artistic endeavor, such as her participation in the commissioning of the

refurbishing/rebuilding of the cathedral of her own estates may have provided an outlet for her mounting frustrations.

Once the subject of long debates, the identity of the woman in the donors' panel can no longer be doubted: she is Eleanor of Aquitaine. Her personality, actions, and the influence that she wielded on the politics and culture of her time make her stand out from the historical context of the twelfth century.[135] While no portrait of the queen exists, the rendition of her features in the donors' panel shows a great similarity with a recently found head of a queen (fig. 25) that was originally part of the series of kings and queens that adorned the great portal of the Basilica of St. Denis before the French Revolution, and are believed to date "before 1151."[136] In The Royal Abbey of St. Denis in the Time of Abbot Suger, Sumner McKnight Crosby is of the opinion that these statues were the "symbols, not the portraits of the kings and queens of France."[137] However, in "Eleanor, Abbot Suger and Saint-Denis," Greenhill noted, "there is about these early ensembles an air of secular magnificence and an acceptance of profane and youthful feminine beauty more in accord with courtly than monastic art."[138] If, as Greenhill concludes, "it is possible that those portals could have been the expression of the munificence and dynastic connections of the young queen whose worldly propensities so scandalized Saint Bernard," it is also possible that their "profane and feminine beauty" reflects Eleanor's.[139]

If the queen were willing to commission part of the sculptural decor of the Basilica of St. Denis, she could certainly have participated in Gilbert's efforts of renovation and embellishment of the cathedral of her own domain. What better way than by commissioning a stained glass window in which she would be represented? In this, she would have followed the king's example, since the patronage of at least one stained glass window at St. Denis, the Tree of Jesse window, has already been linked to the "ambitions of the French crown."[140] While her interest in the Basilica of St. Denis depended to a great extent upon her position as Capetian queen, Eleanor always had a vested interest in the Poitiers cathedral. Despite her long life (1122-1204) and long political career, there were periods more propitious than others when she would have had the time, the means and the opportunity to participate in artistic endeavors. As shown above, the period 1148-1151

would have been favorable with all the prerequisites for the queen to indulge in such a venture.

Iconographic details found in the donors' panel seem to relate better to the king of France than to the king of England. As described earlier in the text, the episode of the commune of Poitiers and the terrible fire at Vitry-en-Perthois resulted in the king's abandoning festive garments for the drab garb of the penitent and enticed him to make the journey, unprecedented by a king, to the Holy Land to obtain forgiveness. In the donor panel, while not grey, the garments of both king and queen are unusually plain. Yet, their colors are significant for religious symbolism, especially in France where blue and white have traditionally been associated with the Virgin. Since Louis VII did not discard his royal garments until after 1143, he could certainly be the king represented in a window commissioned after 1148.

One more intriguing clue is provided by a string of tri-lobed fleurons forming a border around the quatrefoil. This new element gains significance in the light of Michel Pastoureau's arguments:

> Sous l'influence de Suger, conseiller de Louis VI (1108-1137) puis de Louis VII (1137-1180), et de saint Bernard (1091-1153), qui vouaient tous deux une dévotion particulière à la Vierge et qui se sont efforcés de placer le royaume sous sa protection, Louis VI d'abord, Louis VII ensuite ont peu à peu introduit la fleur de lis dans leur mise en scène symbolique; puis en ont fait un usage privilégié au sein du répertoire emblématique de la monarchie française.[141]

On the seal that Suger designed as part of his "propaganda" to legitimize the Capetians as directly chosen by God to be the rightful heirs to the crown of France, the king is represented holding a fleur-de-lis that looks remarkably like the tri-lobed fleurons of the Crucifixion window's border.[142] The significance of this fleuron, and of its use as a framing device, will also be explored when examining the symbolism of the window.

The marriage of Eleanor and Henry Plantagenet probably took place in the Cathedral of St. Pierre in May 1152. An art historian recently suggested that Henry II offered a stained glass window to the Cathedral of St. Pierre, in expiation for Thomas Becket's murder (29 Dec 1170).[143] However, such an hypothesis is farfetched, especially when considering that the first rebellion against his authority in Aquitaine and Poitou dates from 1168, and that in 1169 Henry had divested himself of Poitou, giving it to Richard.

Why then would he commission a stained glass window in a cathedral that was no longer part of his territorial holdings? As Grinnell mentions "from that time apparently he had very little interest in these domains. He does not mention them in his will of 1182."[144] If any date is to be considered at all, it has to be 1162. However, as shown earlier in the text, 1162 refers only to the beginning of the second campaign of reconstruction of the cathedral, not to the donation of the window. It is logical to think that, if 1162 referred to the donation of the Crucifixion window, the sixteenth-century glass painters, who were certainly no more ignorant of tradition than Jean Bouchet, would have restored the date to the window when they repaired it.

As explained above, there is enough physical and stylistic evidence to imply the possibility that an indeterminate amount of time elapsed between the planning, manufacture and installation of the window. However, even if it were planned as part of the renovations executed for Bishop Gilbert, it could not have been installed until after 1167, when the vaults of the eastern part of the choir were finished. This timeframe coincides with Eleanor's return to Poitiers, as duchess of Aquitaine, a time when she was particularly angry at Henry because he had deeply wounded her pride and brought great shame on her by the public display of his adulterous conduct. Even though Henry was the king in 1168, she perhaps saw a kind of poetic justice in being represented for posterity next to her first husband to whom she bore no hatred. Such an action would be in character with the proud Eleanor. However, only circumstantial evidence, and that deduced from the personality of the queen and the presumed timing of the event, can account for such a possibility. The identity of the donor/king in the window will remain difficult to ascertain pending the improbable discovery of new sources of information. Since unidentified Poitevins are portrayed behind the monarchs in the donors' panel, it is probable that they were involved in donating funds for the window.[145]

The next element of the puzzle involves the religious patrons. With the help of the cathedral chapter, the person in charge of the cathedral was the bishop. But which one? This depends on the date that will finally be accepted for the window. As shown earlier, according to contemporary sources (the Planctus and the De Commendatione), only one twelfth-century bishop, Gilbert de la Porrée, bishop of Poitiers between 1142 and 1154, is

known to have embellished the cathedral. While superlaudatory, the Planctus and the De Commendatione give several examples of Gilbert's accomplishments as bishop, and of the keen interest he showed in the construction and/or reconstruction and beautification of buildings under his care.[146] These texts especially emphasize his enthusiasm in embellishing the Cathedral of St. Pierre. Thus, while it is impossible to know what Gilbert had in mind when he embarked on a grand scale beautification program, perhaps, in the manner of Suger at St. Denis, it may have grown into a rebuilding of the cathedral.[147]

From a philosophical and theological point of view, Gilbert would have been entirely capable of designing the window. It is quite probable that, even if Gilbert was not the designer, he and/or his writings provided the major input that helped to shape it, and inspired the symbolism of its contents. While he was chancellor of the school at Chartres, Gilbert had developed a deep devotion to the Blessed Virgin. As mentioned above, his dedication was shared by Louis VII, Suger, and St. Bernard of Clairvaux.[148] Gilbert's interest in the Trinity has already been explored. Thus, the tri-lobed fleuron in the border of the quadrilobe could have been used as a symbolic representation of the Trinity and as an attribute of the Virgin.

Even in the absence of solid proof, Auber, Grinnell and Grodecki agree that Gilbert and/or his writings played a part in the elaboration of the Crucifixion window.[149] While Grodecki did not state that the Crucifixion window was designed under Gilbert's guidance, he was moved to write that it was "une oeuvre d'une admirable densité de signification théologique, probablement inspirée des écrits de l'évêque de Poitiers Gilbert de la Porée."[150] Grodecki wrote several papers that include the Crucifixion window; yet, he did not pursue his research on Gilbert or his writings as the possible source for the window's design.[151] In the latest article that treats the subject of the glazing program at Poitiers, Raguin makes no allusion to Gilbert.[152] Yet, undoubtedly, work was done to the cathedral during his episcopate. Furthermore, Gilbert was probably one of the persons whose erudition was used as a source for the complex design of the Crucifixion window and the many symbols included in its form and content. He may also have been one of the persons who commissioned its manufacture.

Conclusion

Concerning the history of the Cathedral of St. Pierre, the little archeological evidence that is available today has shown that the level of the twelfth-century church was raised two meters. Architectural evidence, and Romanesque structural and sculptural elements, that were conceivably part of Bishop Gilbert de la Porrée's campaign of embellishments, have revealed that the eastern end of the cathedral was rebuilt first, and that work probably started at the southeast corner. Breaks in the fabric of the cathedral, deviation in the walls of the nave, and differences in the vaultings between the eastern part of the cathedral (Bays VII and VIII, and south crossing) have helped to establish that the cathedral was rebuilt during several campaigns. During the first, the chevet wall and the walls of the nave were raised to the beginning of the crossing, and the foundations of markers, such as corner towers, may have also been built to help in outlining the perimeter of the new cathedral. The vaults over bays VII and VIII and over the south transept were erected during a second campaign. Several factors promote this architectural and sculptural evidence: the date painted in ochre color on the keystone of the central vault of bay VIII, that could not have been inscribed until the vaults were finished, c. 1167; the data found in Bishop Gilbert's eulogies, the Planctus and the De commendatione, that relate Gilbert's accomplishments during his tenure as bishop, 1142-1154; and the date that Jean Bouchet mentioned in Les annales d'Aquitaine, in relation to Eleanor's request to Henry II to help start a building campaign, most probably the second one.

The history of the cathedral while separate from the history of the Crucifixion window is intricately linked to it. The most likely female patron of both cathedral and window is Eleanor. She had the means, the ambition and determination to become involved in such a project, especially during two periods, 1148-1151 and in 1168-1173. These periods coincide with dates recorded above that were critical to the reconstruction of the cathedral and the manufacture and installation of the window. The mystery surrounding the identity of the male donor cannot be so easily solved. While it is likely that Henry II made a gift to start the second campaign of reconstruction, evidence in the window itself, its recutting and the representation of certain details, such as the fleuron

border and the color of the monarchs' garments, show that it may have been finished before 1162. If the window were part of the embellishments planned by Gilbert de la Porrée, this would mean that the king could also be, and probably was Louis VII. However, more evidence concerning the king in the donors' panel will have to be found before his identity can be asserted without the shadow of a doubt. Pending new discoveries, the researcher will have to be content to state that, pushed by their queen, Eleanor, both kings may have donated funds towards the renovation/reconstruction of the cathedral. There is a strong possibility that Henry II's probable bequest made in 1162 arrived too late to benefit the manufacture of the Crucifixion window. However, Louis VII's unrecorded yet possible donation towards the renovations started by Gilbert de la Porrée could have been used towards that very end. Further analysis of the symbolism in the design and contents of the Crucifixion window is the subject of the next chapter and will reveal that it was probably based, at least in part, on the philosophical and theological ideas and writings of Gilbert de la Porrée.

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[1] Réau and Cohen, L'art du Moyen Age, 11, "Le terme de gothique... apparaît pour la première fois à la Renaissance et il a été forgé par les humanistes italiens qui appliquent l'épithète méprisante et réprobative de maniera gotica à un art considéré comme une invention des Goths;" ibid., 13, "L'archéologue normand Arcisse de Caumont proposa en 1824, dans son Essai sur l'architecture religieuse du Moyen Age, l'appellation d'art roman."

[2] Gimpel, Cathedral Builders, 3; Raguin, "The Architectural and Glazing Context," 169.

[3] Raguin, "The Architectural and Glazing Context," 169.

[4] It would be interesting to compare the cathedral of St. Pierre at Poitiers with the church of St. Pierre at Souvigny where the church seems to be a puzzle with missing or ill-fitting parts.

[5] Raguin, "The Architectural and Glazing Context," 170.

[6] Walter J. Ong, Orality and Literacy (1982):passim; Raguin, "Architecture," 169; Brian Stock, The Implications of Literacy (1983):passim.

[7] Vergnolle, L'art roman, 36, "Il n'existe aucun plan type de cathédrale..."

[8] Ibid., 36-37.

[9] Camille de la Croix "Étude sommaire du baptistère Saint-Jean de Poitiers," Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest, 2e série, IX (1901/03):601-609; F. Eygun, "Le baptistère Saint-Jean de Poitiers," Gallia, (1964):137-170; see also Nelly Le Masne de Chermont, "Les fouilles de l'ancien évêché de Poitiers," Aquitania, V (1987):149-175; from the same author, "Poitiers, espace Devenir, fouilles de l'ancien évêché," Romains et barbares entre Loire et Gironde, IVe-XIe s. (1989):49; and Brigitte Boissavit-Camus, "L'environnement du baptistère," Le baptistère Saint-Jean de Poitiers, (1991):6.

[10] Boissavit-Camus, "L'environnement du baptistère," 3; Le Masne de Chermont, "Les fouilles," 137-170.

[11] Hiernard & Bourgeois, "Quand Poitiers," 19.

[12] LeRoux and Forget, Poitiers/Cathédrale, 2; Andrault, Poitiers, 31; Boissavit-Camus, "L'environnement," 3-5; Blomme, "La construction," 7-65.

[13] Crozet, "Recherches sur la cathédrale," 363, "elle est perpétuée par une peinture murale de la chapelle Saint-Martial du Palais des papes d'Avignon, exécutée vers 1344-1346, par Matteo de Viterbe."

[14] Since the Church of St. Radegund was to serve as a burial shrine, it was built outside the Gallo-Roman wall (see C. H. Kneepkens, "À propos des débuts de l'histoire de l'église funéraire Sainte-Radégonde de Poitiers," Cahiers de civilisation médiévale, XXIX, 4, (Oct/Dec 1986):332).

[15] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," XVI (1848/49):18-20; Blomme, "La construction," 7-65; Mussat, L'architecture gothique, 241-267; Henry Kraus, A prix d'or, le financement des cathédrales, (1991):268-303; Jean Smith-Lozinski, "The Cathedral of St Pierre, Poitiers, an Architectural History Through the First Building Campaign," Ph. D. dissertation, (1960):passim; Jean Smith-Lozinski, "Henry II, Alienor of Aquitaine and the Cathedral of Poitiers," Colloquium sur Henri Plantagenêt et son temps, Fontevraud, (29 September - 1st October 1990):passim.

[16] Jules Tardif, Monument Historiques - inventaires et documents publiés par ordre de l'Empereur (1866):51-52, "... ad sanctum Petrum Pectavensis ecclesiae," from the original text aux Archives nationales, K5, no. 9; Crozet, "Recherches sur la cathédrale et les évêques de Poitiers," 363.

[17] Date of Charles Martel's victory at Poitiers.

[18] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," XVI, 17-19.

[19] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," XVI, 15; ibid., 17, "...et parce qu'elles étaient de bois, elles brûlaient facilement."

[20] Dillange, Les comtes, 121.

[21] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," XVI, 30; ibid., 50; Grinnell, "The Crucifixion window," 4. Le Roux and Forget, Poitiers, 3.

[22] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," XVI, 56; Grinnell, "Iconography and Philosophy," 174.

[23] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," XVI, 50.

[24] Crozet, "Recherches sur la cathédrale et les évêques," 363; Grinnell, "The Crucifixion Window," 5; LeRoux and Forget, "Poitiers," 3; Richard, Histoire, I, 52.

[25] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," XVI, 50; Grinnell, "The Crucifixion Window," 5; Kneepkens, "À propos des débuts de l'histoire de l'église funéraire Sainte-Radégonde," 335.

[26] Dillange, Les comtes, 168; Grinnell, "The Crucifixion Window," 5.

[27] Dillange, Les comtes, 178-79. The cathedral is mentioned once more when, in 1113, Pierre II, bishop of Poitiers excommunicated William IX because he had repeatedly failed to heed the bishop's demands to stop levying taxes on church property.

[28] For Louis and Eleanor's wedding, see Bur, Suger, 162; and Dillange, Les comtes, 208; both give Bordeaux and 25 July 1137 as the place and date of the marriage. Mussat, L'Architecture gothique, 245, believes that Eleanor's two marriages took place in the cathedral St. Pierre. For the date of Louis' and Eleanor's coronation as rulers of Aquitaine, see Bur, Suger, 162 (from Orderic Vitalis Ecclesiastical History, M. Chibnall, ed., VI (1978):491; and Michel Dumontier, L'Empire des Plantagenêts, (1980):78).

[29] Besly, Evesques de Poitiers, 99. His successor Grimoard was bishop for not even a year, dying on 7 April 1141; Nielsen, Theology and Philosophy, 29.

[30] Grinnell, "The Crucifixion Window," 26.

[31] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," XVI, 56.

[32] Ibid., 10-11; Camille de la Croix, Mélanges archéologiques. La chapelle Saint-Sixte et les cathédrales de Poitiers (1907):passim.

[33] Mussat, L' Architecture gothique, 245, and n. 9.

[34] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," XVI, 56.

[35] Newton's Three Laws of Motion.

[36] Le Roux and Forget, Poitiers - Cathédrale, 25.

[37] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," 84; Le Roux and Forget, Poitiers - Cathédrale, 4; Blomme, "La construction," 13; Mussat, L'architecture gothique 252; Raguin, "Architecture," 178.

[38] Blomme, "La construction," 16.

[39] For English influence, see Clapham, English Romanesque Architecture (1965):82.; Grinnell, "The Crucifixion window," 30-31; and Mussat, L'architecture gothique, 251-52.

[40] Grinnell, "The Crucifixion Window," 30 and n. 86.

[41] Crozet, "Recherches sur la cathédrale et les évêques," 368.

[42] For Middle Eastern influence, see Blomme, "La construction," 17; For Classical influence, see Pierre Héliot, "Origine et extension du chevet plat dans l'architecture religieuse de l'Aquitaine," Cahiers techniques de l'art, III, 2 (1955):23-41.

[43] Hiernard & Bourgeois, "Quand Poitiers," 9-13. Remnants of Roman monuments (still available to the twelfth-century observer) included: the amphitheater, the baths of St. Germain, three aqueducts, and public and private buildings that were all outside the Medieval fortifications; ibid., 15, for map.

[44] Mussat, L'architecture gothique, 252.

[45] Raguin, "Architecture," 178.

[46] Giving an example of a similar construction, Mussat, L'architecture gothique, 58, states that starting in 1138, "La construction [de l'église St. Laumer de Blois]...se fit par tranches horizontales."

[47] Blomme, "La construction," 13.

[48] Ibid., 26.

[49] Ibid., 13, "On observe facilement à l'extérieur, un peu à l'ouest du contrefort qui sépare les travées VI et VII, un 'coup de sabre' dans toute la partie supérieure du mur, aussi bien au nord qu'au sud. Cette rupture est d'ailleurs la plus nette qu'on puisse voir dans tout l'édifice."

[50] Ibid., 31.

[51] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," 16 (1848):76-77.

[52] Blomme, "La construction," 31.

[53] Ibid., 31.

[54] Ibid., 62, and note 13; the plan in fig. 24 was established by Yves Blomme using plan no. 16.733 (Paris, Archives de la Direction du Patrimoine), and two eighteenth-century plans, plan no. 25065 and another unnumbered, both at Poitiers' Médiathèque.

[55] Since the cathedral is approximately 100 meters long, a simple calculation shows that the width of the façade would have acquired 10.51 extra meters on that side alone, due to the extra 6° (tan θ = opposite side / adjacent side; tan θ = tan 6° = .1051; adj. side x (tan θ) = opp. side; 100(.1051) = 10.51 meters.

[56] Blomme, "La construction," 19-20. His calculations reveals that the width at the western end would have been 41.40 meters.

[57] Ibid., 21, "Dès la travée VI, le mur sud revient légèrement vers l'axe de l'édifice, dessinant avec les deux travées précédentes un angle de 3,5°."

[58] Today, the width of the cathedral at the chevet wall is 30.20 m, while it is 34.75 m at its western end (see Blomme, "La construction," 20-21).

[59] Ibid., 13.

[60] See plan of the church of St. Pierre at Souvigmy, in Chaudagne, Souvigny, 40.

[61] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," XVI, 9, "Mais nous pouvons croire, eu égard aux habitudes des Chapîtres, que le nôtre aura tenu à rester chez lui... Il fut donc convenu tout d'abord, croyons-nous, que les murs de l'église nouvelle s'élèveraient en dehors de celle qu'elle allait remplacer, et que l'office canonial continuerait de se faire dans le choeur de celle-ci."

[62] Grinnell, "Iconography," 174; A. Rhein, Congrés archéologique de France (1912):252-269.

[63] Henry Kraus, Gold was the Mortar: The Economics of Cathedral Building, (1979):161; René Crozet, "Survivances romanes à la cathédrale St-Pierre de Poitiers," Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest, 4e série, 3 (1955):245-48.

[64] Le Roux and Forget, Poitiers - Cathédrale, 25.

[65] For the sculptural program at St. Pierre, especially in the choir area, see Françoise Brisset, "Étude 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 (1978):482-510; and Bénédicte Fillion, "La première sculpture de la cathédrale Saint-Pierre de Poitiers. Chœur et transept," (Ph. D. Dissertation, Poitiers, 1992):passim.

[66] Blomme. "La construction," 16.

[67] For lapidary signs, see M. Vincent, "Signes lapidaires de Poitiers," Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest, VII, 3e série, (1925-1927):675-717; and Blomme, "La Construction," 24.

[68] Blomme, "La construction," 13; Grinnell; "The Crucifixion Window," 26; and Rhein, Congrès Archéologique, 260.

[69] Raguin, "The Architectural and Glazing Context," 170.

[70] Grinnell, "The Crucifixion Window," 23.

[71] Blomme, "La construction," 16.

[72] Mussat, L'architecture gothique, 250.

[73] Ibid., 255.

[74] Raguin, "The Architectural and Glazing Context," 178.

[75] Blomme, "La construction," 26.

[76] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," 38-39 and figs. 1 through 4.

[77] Ibid., 39.

[78] Blomme, "La construction," 27.

[79] Ibid., 26; Mussat, L'architecture gothique, 256.

[80] Blomme, "La construction," 28.

[81] For the Planctus and De Commendatione, see, Häring "Epitaphs," 68-72, and 78-80.

[82] Harïng, "Epitaphs," 70.

[83] Grinnell, "The Crucifixion Window," 25.

[84] Harïng, "Epitaphs," 80 for the Latin text; ibid., 76, for the English translation.

[85] Erwin Panofsky, ed. and trans, Abbot Suger - On the Abbey of St. Denis and its Art Treasures (1979):42-43; Greenhill, "Eleanor," 87.

[86] Panofsky, ed. and trans, Abbot Suger, 43-45.

[87] Greenhill, "Eleanor," 87.

[88] Grinnell, "The Crucifixion Window," 25.

[89] For the dates mentioned in the text, see Harïng, "Epitaphs," 67.

[90] Grinnell, "Iconography and Philosophy," 174.

[91] Raguin, "The Architectural and Glazing Context," 179.

[92] Mussat, L'architecture gothique, 245.

[93] Bouchet, Annales D'Aquitaine (1524), fol. LXII.

[94] Raguin, "The Architectural and Glazing Context, " 170 and 189 note 2; see also Ong, Orality and Literacy, 96-99.

[95] Blomme, "La construction," 27, "elle prend le sens de 'en ces années-là', incluant donc une certaine imprécision."

[96] Dillange, Les comtes, 238; Favreau, "Poitiers," 26; see also Robert Favreau, "La ville de Poitiers à la fin du Moyen Age," Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest, 4, XIV (1978):50, n. 203; Pernoud, Aliènor, 172, "Henri est un prince bâtisseur et cette activité correspondait sans le moindre doute au goûts d'Aliénor. Ainsi vont-ils entreprendre la construction d'une nouvelle résidence à Poitiers où sera bâtie la grande salle du palais, agrandir le chateau d'Angers, et celui de Rouen...A Bures, ils font édifier un vérirable palais..."; Richard, Histoire des comtes de Poitou, 133, and n. 3.

[97] Blomme, "La construction," 27, "la Chronicum Comitum Pictaviae nous apprend que 'Rex Henricus et Alienoris regina Pictavum auxerunt longoque muro circumdaverunt"; ibid., 27, "Alfred Richard place l'achèvement de l'enceinte en 1161, en s'appuyant sur le chroniqueur Robert de Thorigny (see also Robert Favreau, "La ville de Poitiers à la fin du Moyen Age," 50 and n. 203).

[98] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," 16 (1848):72.

[99] Grinnell, "The Crucifixion window," 8.

[100] Dillange, Les comtes, 238, and Pernoud, Aliènor, 172.

[101] Greenhill, "Eleanor," 82; and Pacaut, Louis VII, 34.

[102] Greenhill, "Eleanor," 103; Pacaut, Louis VII, 83.

[103] See above Chapter III, paragraph on Eleanor of Aquitaine and Louis VII (1137-1152).

[104] A position that she later developed when she once again lived in Poitou from 1068 to 1073.

[105] See above chapter IV.

[106] Greenhill, "Eleanor," passim.

[107] Greenhill, "Eleanor," 95, and 111 n. 130.

[108] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," 16, 70; M. Thibaudeau, Abrégé de l'histoire du Poitou, II, (1783): 417.

[109] Jeauneau, L' âge d'or des écoles de Chartres, 35.

[110] Mussat, et al., La cathédrale du Mans, passim; Mussat, L'architecture gothique, 98 and n. 12.

[111] Mussat, L'architecture gothique, 177.

[112] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale," 16, 63-67; Grinnell, "Iconography and Philosophy," 174.

[113] Grinnell, "The Crucifixion Window," 25.

[114] Grinnell, "Iconography and Philosophy," 174.

[115] R. Branner, "'Fabrica, opus', and the Dating of Medieval Monuments," Gesta XV (1976):27-30; M. David, "La Fabrique et les manoeuvres sur les chantiers des cathédrales en France jusqu'au XIVe siècle," Études d'histoire du droit canonique dédiées à Gabriel Le Bras II (1965):1113-1130; R. Naz, ed., Dictionnaire du droit canonique V (1953), cols. 791-798, under heading "Fabrique."

[116] T. Lincoln Bouscaren and Adam C. Ellis, Canon Law (1939):717, canon 1279, paragraph 1, "No one may place or cause to be placed in churches, even though they be exempt, or in other sacred places, any unusual image, unless it has been approved by the Ordinary of the place."

[117] Blomme, "La construction," 28 (Source: Poitiers, Médiathèque, MS Dom Fonteneau, XIV, 243); Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," 4 (1850), 5 (Source: Dom Fonteneau, XVIII, 505).

[118] Grodecki, "Les vitraux de la cathédrale de Poitiers," 139.

[119] For a summary of the different theses regarding the possible identities of the donors, see Crozet, "Le Vitrail de la Crucifixion à la cathédrale de Poitiers," 220-22; and above chapter II, n. 88; for the inscription see, Crozet, "Le vitrail de la Crucifixion," 219, "Les archives des Monuments historiques contiennent un rapport daté de 1883. Dans ce rapport, l'inscription est déclarée 'illisible', coupée, mélangée, remontée sans ordre et contenant des pièces étrangères... L'inscription a été cependant 'religieusement conservée'."

[120] For the list of the restorers who worked on the stained glass at Poitiers and the dates of restorations, see Raguin, "The Architectural and Glazing Context,"186-189.

[121] Grodecki, Le Vitrail Roman, 286, n. 73; Grodecki, "A Stained Glass Atelier," 108, n. 4; Crozet, "Le Vitrail de la Crucifixion," 218.

[122] Crozet, "Le vitrail de la Crucifixion," 231.

[123] Raguin, "The Architectural and Glazing Context," 179.

[124] For Grinnell's argument, "Iconography and Philosophy," 174; for Grodecki's, Le vitrail roman, 286.

[125] Grinnell, "Iconography and Philosophy," 174-75, passim.

[126] Grinnell, "Iconography and Philosophy," 171-196, especially 174.

[127] Sarah Brown and David O'Connor, Glass Painters, (1991):52-53.

[128] Jane Hayward, "The Lost Noah Window from Poitiers," Gesta XX/1 (1981):129-139, see 129, "in 1882, Louis Steinheil... began restoration of the three east windows of the cathedral of Poitiers;" Grodecki, "Les vitraux de la cathédrale de Poitiers," 141, "...enfin en 1884....Le peintre verrier Steinheil, aidé par Leprévost de Paris, a été chargé de 'remettre en ordre' les trois verrières du chevet."

[129] Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail de la Crucifixion," 17-45 and 141-168; Ibid., 28.

[130] Barbier de Montault, "Le Vitrail de la Crucifixion," 28.

[131] Marie-Thérèse Camus, "Les monuments médiévaux," Archéologia, 6H (1995):40, "L'artiste a représenté le Christ en croix, non de bois mais d'orfèvrerie, bleu et rouge, pour mieux illustrer son triomphe sur la mort. L'oeuvre [crucifixion window] qui pourrait être du début de la seconde moitié du XIIe siècle, est d'une grande lisibilité et d'une composition rigoureuse."

[132] Hubert Le Roux, "La cathédrale de Poitiers," Le Picton, 17 (sept./octobre 79):3,"Les archéologues, eux, placeraient volontiers la date un peu plus tôt [que 1162]."

[133] Elizabeth A. R. Brown, "Eleanor as Parent, Queen and Duchess," William W. Kibler, ed. Eleanor of Aquitaine Patron and Politician, 14.

[134] Brown, "Eleanor as Parent," 14.

[135] Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail," 146-153; and P. Boissonnade, "Le vitrail de la crucifixion à la cathédrale de Poitiers. Sa date probable et la personnalité du donateur," Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest, (1928-1930):803-815, using a hypothetic reconstruction of the inscription based on assumptions, these two authors argued that the donor was the Count de Blason. Crozet, "Le vitrail de la crucifixion à la cathédrale de Poitiers," 222; and A. Ramé, "Observations sur le vitrail de la crucifixion à la cathédrale de Poitiers," passim, refuted their arguments.

[136] Greenhill, "Eleanor," 94, "The royal connotations of these statues, however, seems beyond question."

[137] Sumner McK. Crosby, et al., The Royal Abbey of St. Denis in the times of Abbot Suger, (1981):37.

[138] Greenhill, "Eleanor," 94.

[139] Ibid., 94.

[140] Alexander, "Iconography and Ideology: Uncovering Social Meanings in Western Medieval Christian Art," 1-44, see 16; James R. Johnson, "The Tree of Jesse Window of Chartres: Laudes Regiae," Speculum 36 (1961):1-22.

[141] Pastoureau, "Le roi aux fleurs de lis," 68.

[142] Dumontier, L'empire des Plantagenêts, 84, "Sceau de Louis VII, collection G. Devautour."

[143] Madeleine Caviness, The Sumptuous Arts of the Royal Abbeys of St. Rémi and Braine, (1990):49.

[144] Grinnell, "The Crucifixion Window," 9; for more details about Henry II's gifts in this will of 1182, see Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," 4 (1850):6.

[145] Auber, "Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers," XVII, 538, had already proposed that the small figures behind the king and queen in the donor panel were "nos ancêtres, les fidèles poitevins."

[146] Häring, "Epitaphs," 71, from the Planctus, "Quomodo edificauit domos, circumduxit muros uelud edificans nobis civitatem nouam, civitatem munitam, urbem fortitudinis nostre, Sion, ipsa se opera indicant, ipsa loquuntur;" ibid., 80, from the De Commendatione, "Canonicorum que ita dicitur canonicam multum ampliando ipsamque claudendo decenter ornauit."

[147] Grinnell, "Iconography and Philosophy," 174.

[148] See above note 147.

[149] Auber, Histoire, 64; Grinnell, "The Crucifixion window," 25; Louis Grodecki, Le vitrail roman, 286, n. 73, "Poitiers."

[150] Grodecki, Le vitrail, 286, n. 73 "Poitiers."

[151] Grodecki's other writings included the Crucifixion window, yet made no mention of Gilbert as a possible source of inspiration (see Grodecki, "le Vitrail et l'architecture au XIIe et au XIIIe siècles, Gazette des Beaux Arts (1951):5-25; Grodecki, "les Vitraux de la cathédrale de Poitiers, Congrès d'archéologie (1951):138-163. Grodecki, "A Stained Glass Atelier of the Thirteenth Century," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 11 (1948):87-111).

[152] Raguin, "The Architectural and Glazing Context," passim.

CHAPTER VII

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE CRUCIFIXION WINDOW

> Il n'est point de période d'histoire dans laquelle le symbolisme joue un si grand rôle.[1]
>
> Marie-Madeleine Davy
> Initiation à la symbolique romane

> During the early Christian and medieval centuries everything could be or become a symbol, a sign, an image of God or of the kingdom of God.[2]
>
> Gerhart B. Ladner
> God, Cosmos and Humankind

As material images of the immaterial, symbols are spread layer upon layer on the physical world.[3] At any time, the gaze of a person is informed by a variety of concerns stemming from the culture in which he/she lives. For most medieval people, nothing was ever quite as it appeared to be on the surface. To an almost universal set of superstitious convictions, remnants of an earlier age, were added elements of Christian symbology, informed by pre-Christian philosophical teachings, like Pythagorean mathematics, musical harmony and cosmology,[4] Vitruvian teachings on symmetry and proportions,[5] and cosmological concepts, especially those found in Plato's Timaeus. All of these writings were favorite sources of learning at the School of Chartres.[6] Aiming to educate the people, the clergy used the knowledge they drew from these writings as the foundation for the imagery decorating the exterior and interior of religious structures. Twelfth-century clerics would have agreed with Umberto Eco, Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages, that "it is undeniable, of course, that art for the Medievals was above all didactic."[7] As a result, contemporary art works, such as the Crucifixion window, were designed with specific purposes in mind: to awaken human beings to a higher level of understanding, to teach them to look beyond the reality of forms to find the signs that would bring them to a better comprehension of the hidden world of the spirit, and to increase their appreciation of the holy mysteries of the Christian faith.[8]

These were the main reasons why twelfth-century Western European Christian art was produced. These reasons did not prevent the introduction of non-religious elements in specific art works. Contemplating the way advertising both influences and reflects our

own late twentieth-century society, Jonathan Alexander rightly wonders, "why should we not aim to read medieval imagery in the same sort of way in terms of role models, social practices, and an encoded value system of social mores?"[9] Indeed, this is the way it should be approached. Although the Church "both communally and through its individual members was, throughout the period, a patron of art and artists on an enormous scale based on its huge resources,"[10] political patrons with secular concerns affected the art that was produced even when this art was installed in church settings. As a result, non-religious elements, representing contemporary political and social concerns, were included in art works such as the Crucifixion window.

The symbolism latent in most of the iconographical components of the window was and still is, at least superficially, familiar to a lay audience. People had acquired a common awareness of these themes because, as Jonathan Alexander noted, "the visual messages were hammered home by their iconographical similarity until they were taken for granted and thus became an unquestioned part of everyday experience."[11] However, the symbolic meanings attached to the Crucifixion window's location, and to the arrangements of the various scenes within the window, associated with the numbers and geometry underlying the invisible framework of its composition and some specific parts of its contents (such as the various borders), make this particular window unique, and its complex symbolism difficult to comprehend.

Some specific items depicted within the composition contain symbolic references to the rulers of Aquitaine, Poitou, and perhaps France. For the most part, however, the window was designed to explain dogmas and to illustrate the liturgy, while expressing the beliefs that pervaded twelfth-century society. The complexity of the several layers of symbolism contained in the window strongly suggests that an erudite mind, steeped in philosophy and theology, must have contributed to its production. Gilbert de la Porrée had such a mind. As the bishop of Poitiers between 1142 and 1154, he also had the opportunity and the means to participate in the symbolic design of the Crucifixion window.

The following paragraphs will first examine the twelfth-century Western Christian conception of the world and the general symbolism that emerged from this conception; next, the influence that the beliefs of the age had on the placement, design and realization of

the Crucifixion window; and then, the several layers of symbolism contained in the Crucifixion window, and the manner in which they pertain to contemporary political, cultural and religious history.

1. The Medieval Conception of the World and its Symbolism in Twelfth-Century Western European Society

> N'oublions pas qu'au Moyen Age l'homme vit beaucoup plus en harmonie avec la nature et qu'il n'a pas subi les multiples déformations d'un monde civilisé, fermé au contact personnel avec le cosmos.[12]
>
> Marie-Madeleine Davy
> Initiation à la symbolique romane

Twelfth-century people perceived the world in which they lived in a way that is totally different from their post-modern, twentieth-century descendants. Most people today base their understanding of the nature of the universe -- cosmology -- on scientific findings. The cosmos is first and foremost material, and is made up of a combination of observable objects ruled by complex scientific laws that are quantitative in nature. However, a twelfth-century person lived in a pre-Cartesian world. Cosmology and cosmography were not based on scientific facts, but on a body of beliefs, derived from philosophical and theological systems adopted by and adapted to the Christian faith, in which the metaphysics of Plato and, starting in the twelfth century, the rediscovered theories of Aristotle, played an increasing role.[13] The twelfth century is well known for its "rediscovery" of classical texts, especially the writings of Cicero, Virgil, Boethius, Seneca, and even Ovid, whose profane Ars amatoria was avidly studied by clerics, monks, and even nuns for its supposed allegorical content.[14]

Borrowing from Platonic philosophy and the teachings of Pythagoras on numbers,[15] St. Augustine (354-430 AD) clearly stated that "whatever has been rightly said by the heathen, we must appropriate to our uses."[16] Boethius (480-524) also embraced these fundamental principles when he wrote his treatise on music, De institutione musica. [17] Expressing the ideas of his time and summarizing the neo-Platonic tradition transmitted through the writings of John Scotus Erigena, and borrowing from St. Augustine, the twelfth-century philosopher and theologian, Hugh of St. Victor, wrote at length about the nature of the visible world in the Didascalicon.[18] For Hugh of St. Victor and for twelfth-

century philosophers and theologians, such as Gilbert de la Porrée, whose studies were also based on Platonic theories, and Augustinian and Boethian philosophy and theology, the visible world was but an harmonious reflection of the invisible world,[19] in which numbers and proportions played an important, organizing role and "la diversité ordonnée concourt à la beauté du Tout."[20]

The Church taught this vision of the world to the laity, adding that the duty of human beings was to search for signs of the invisible, spiritual, and divine in the visible, physical, and human world.[21] Pervading society at large, such beliefs reinforced the idea among the faithful that life was but a pilgrimage necessary for human beings to purge themselves of evil in order to attain perfection.[22] The twelfth-century Christian understood his/her role in life. According to Marie Madeleine Davy, "Relié à un monde invisible dans lequel il se meut, il sait d'où il vient et où il va."[23] The perceived duty of Christians was to decipher signs of eternal perfection in the imperfect, created world in order to use them as guiding lights to find their way to salvation.

Although the importance of the role that Christianity played in medieval society is being questioned today, independently of how deep and widespread Christian beliefs truly were, one undeniable fact remains: twelfth-century Western European society was de facto immersed in Christian ideology.[24] The life of a twelfth-century person was regulated by the dictates of the Church that sometimes only formed a veneer over an underlying framework of superstitious beliefs, part of the collective memory of a not-so-distant past.[25] Even for a lay person, the world was both divinely ordained and a reflection of the divine order, and symbolism was a tool needed to grasp otherwise unattainable divine truths. In such a world, everything seemed possible. As Umberto Eco remarks, "the Medievals inhabited a world filled with references, reminders and overtones of Divinity, manifestations of God in things."[26] A twentieth-century person would reject phenomena, ranging from fantastic animals (such as griffins or unicorns) to miraculous events (such as relics refusing to be moved), as fancies of an overactive imagination, because they were not based on logic and hard scientific facts. However, a person living in the twelfth century would have considered them normal and part of every-day life.[27]

With the passage of time and changing ideologies, le langage de l'image has become hard for twentieth-century people to decipher.[28] However, the simple people, the twelfth-century rustici, had no trouble understanding it, because, in an illiterate society, symbols that are concrete representations of abstractions belonged to a language common to all and addressed "le génie populaire au goût du concret."[29] In his Disputatio Iudei et Christiani, Gilbert Crispin, Abbot of Westminster (1085-1117), puts the following words in the mouth of a Christian answering a Jew who is questioning the use of images in Christian temples: "Just as letters are shapes and symbols of spoken words, pictures exist as representations and symbols of writing."[30] By the twelfth century, not only was it taken for granted that images were to the illiterates what books were to those who could read, but this precept had become a part of Canon Law.[31]

It is no wonder then that secular powers should want to benefit from this extensive use of images installed in the environment of churches, the only structures common to all, to record what they considered to be important memories and/or to insinuate their own propaganda. When considering the capacity of churches to store memories and mediate the transfer of ideas, it is vital to remember that, as a structure, a church was the center of life of any village or town. It was a place where the performance of rituals loaded with symbolic meanings added another dimension to people's lives.[32] For example, the ceremonial that took place prior to the construction of a church was a ritual of appropriation, delineating a sacred space and establishing a new link between Heaven and earth.[33] Unlike a pagan temple, a Romanesque church was not simply built "à l'image de l'homme," it was constructed with the perfect man, the Incarnate Word of God, Jesus Christ, as model.[34] When construction was considered complete, the ceremony of consecration was seen as transforming a mere stone building into a sacred locus symbolically set apart, as though suspended between Heaven and earth.[35] No longer considered only as the "house of God," it was now "un temple sacré, symbole de l'univers."[36] Since the church was built on holy ground, an area shared by the finite and the infinite, it was a place of communion with the divine through Christian liturgy. Abbot Suger expressed this aspect of twelfth-century mentality best when he wrote:

> Thus, when -- out of my delight in the beauty of the house of God -- the loveliness of the many-colored gems has called me away from external cares, and worthy meditation has induced me to reflect, transferring that which is material to that which is immaterial, on the diversity of the sacred virtues, in some strange region of the universe which neither exists entirely in the slime of the earth nor entirely in the purity of Heaven; and that, by the grace of God, I can be transported from this inferior to that higher world in an anagogical manner.[37]

Having surveyed the environment in which twelfth-century symbolism evolved, one must keep in mind what the Church as an institution, and churches as structures, meant to a twelfth-century person. One must also remember that art was primarily commissioned by the clergy and was installed mainly within churches. However, it was also used to memorialize past events and served as a vehicle for secular propaganda. Thus, the next section will investigate the various aspects of the symbolism of the Crucifixion window, starting with the meaning of its placement within the overall context of the cathedral. However, before pursuing this analysis, it is necessary to remember that there is no simple and straightforward way to explore such a rich symbolic image as the Crucifixion window.

2. Symbolism and the Placement of the Crucifixion Window

> There are four cardinal points -- north, south, east and west. It should be immediately clear that the direction of the rising sun obviously indicates that we ought to pray inclining in that direction, an act which symbolizes the soul looking towards where the True Light rises.[38]
>
> From a prayer by Origen (c. 185 - c. 254)

Because of the important role that they played in the life of the community, religious foundations, such as churches and especially cathedrals, were the depositories of the majority of twelfth-century art. Different from the houses of men, the temple of God, the church, was built on a cosmic scale, as a microscopic interpretation of the macroscopic universe.[39] Each part of the church had a specific meaning and purpose, the most important and sacred area being its eastern part, known as the sanctuary. This is where the unbloody re-enactment of the sacrifice of Calvary takes place on the main altar during Mass.[40] Any element of architecture, or any ornament placed in that area, was closely related to the scriptures and to the liturgy of the Mass; it also had to be approved by the ordinary, the bishop of the diocese.[41]

The placement of the Crucifixion window on the east/west axis of the cathedral at the center of the chevet wall meant that, upon entering the cathedral, the gaze would travel unobstructed to the wall opposite the western entrance, and the eyes would automatically focus on the bright area represented by the Crucifixion window.[42] As Rudolf Arnheim carefully noted, "only when a work occupies a central position in its larger spatial context can it be truly self-sufficient and at the same time an integral component of the whole setting."[43] Because an image is stable, its center attracts the eye; it is the place of choice usually reserved for the most meaningful representations. In the case of a church, this prominent place is reserved for the portrayal of some aspects of the Divinity; in this instance, several episodes of Christ's life are illustrated in the Crucifixion window. In addition to its centralized location, elements of composition were also instrumental in establishing the symbolism of the window. Therefore, the next section will explore proportions, postures and gestures, and what and how these factors add to the symbolism of the window.

3. Symbolism, Proportions, Postures and Gestures

> Une image est composé d'éléments (personnages, objets...) un peu comme un phrase l'est de mots. L'homme étant, dans la pensée du Moyen-Age, au centre de la création voulue par Dieu, la figure humaine tient le premier rôle dans l'image médiévale.
>
> Pierre-Gilles Girault
> Un language sans parole: L'image au Moyen Age

The proportional sizes of figures, their individual postures and gestures, and the location of various figures and ornamental elements within the overall composition of the Crucifixion window are all part of a wordless language that was the most basic form of symbology conveying meaning to most members of twelfth-century society. As was usual in medieval art, the sizes of the figures found in the Crucifixion window are proportional to their hierarchic significance. Their sizes are also related to the degree of importance of the event described, and to the plane -- whether material or spiritual -- in which the described events are occurring. Thus, because it is the largest figure in the window, the figure of Christ on the cross suggests that He is the most important person represented not only in the Crucifixion panels but in the entire window. As the symbol of the redemption of

humanity, the Crucifixion is also the most significant event in Christ's life. The importance of this particular event also explains the large sizes of the other participants: the Virgin, Longinus, St. John, and Stephaton, on respective sides of the Cross.

In the Ascension panels, the figures of Christ in a mandorla, and of two angels, are smaller than the figure of Christ in the Crucifixion panels, yet larger than the figures that are watching from below. In this instance the proportional difference exists because the events are occurring in a different plane. While Christ and the angels belong to the Heavenly realm, the apostles and the Virgin watching the ascending Christ are part of the historical world. Again, from a human perspective, the Ascension is not as critical to salvation as the Crucifixion, which is the primary event determining the redemption of humanity. In the window, once again because of the difference in sizes, it is possible to conclude that the designer treated the Resurrection as a part of Christ's life necessary, yet subordinate, to the Crucifixion and Ascension. By the simple use of proportions, the Crucifixion is established as the quintessential event of Christ's human life and is made to dominate the whole representation.

Of the figures portrayed in the lower third of the window, St. Peter is the largest because he is the central figure in the events taking place in historical time, yet he is considerably smaller because his death on the cross is only meaningful if it is seen as a mirror image and symbol of Christ's Crucifixion. The figures in the lower third of the window are participants in historical events, and are valuable only as <u>exempla</u>. Thus, they are placed furthest from the important events portrayed in the upper part of the window, indicating the relative insignificance of creatures vis-à-vis the Creator.

In addition to the proportional differences, the postures and gestures of the figures represented in the various episodes also help to actualize their degree of importance, and the varying intensity of the drama. The hieratic, frontal pose identifies the figure in the mandorla as the risen and ascending Christ,[44] while his static position in majesty, framed and isolated, symbolizes the eternity and divinity of Christ. As François Garnier, <u>Le langage de l'image au Moyen Age</u>, states:

> la longue durée, pour l'homme du Moyen Age, c'est l'éternité, donc l'absence de temps, d'évolution.... La forme la plus répandue de cette figuration de l'infini dans

> le temps est la position en majesté. Une telle qualité ne convient qu'à Dieu et par extension à ceux qui partagent la vie céleste.[45]

The position of the figures, and all the attributes that are part of the window serve to indicate who or what they are, what role they play and how important that role is relative to the others. For example, the crossed legs of some the apostles below the ascending Christ symbolize movement, while their upraised hands indicate supplication. The tightly folded hands and closed posture of the Virgin symbolize her pain and sadness. The book that Christ is holding in His veiled left hand symbolizes that Christ as God is omniscient and holds the absolute truth,[46] while St. John's firm and protective hold on the book that he is carrying points to the book's value, and also helps identify the bearer as the Evangelist, the writer of the Apocalypse. The above examples were given to show the importance of proportions, positions and gestures in medieval art, especially in the Crucifixion window, and to familiarize the reader with the mentality of twelfth-century people. However, the list is not exhaustive, because each position, posture, and gesture plays a meaningful part in the unraveling narrative portrayed in the window.

While sizes, proportions, gestures and attributes are essential to the symbolic interpretation of this image, the underlying framework of its composition also plays a determining role. Governing the geometry are numbers with their unique form of symbolism. The next paragraphs will uncover the symbolism latent in the numbers associated with the window's design and components, and in the geometric figures used as the framework of the window.

4. Symbolism, Numbers, Geometry, Golden/Divine Proportion, and the Crucifixion Window

> Le symbole numérique est sans doute celui qui a connu le plus grand succès au Moyen Age.[47]
>
> Marie Madeleine Davy
> Initiation à la symbolique Romane

> En réalité aucune branche de la pensée médiévale ne semble avoir avoir échappé entièrement à l'influence du symbolisme numérique.[48]
>
> Vincent F. Hopper
> La symbolique médiévale des nombres

Before pursuing this investigation, lest the reader believe that this research has suddenly been overcome by "un délire d'interpretation" and by "un système préconçu," it must be understood that only an exhaustive examination of this window has led to the forthcoming results.[49] It is also necessary to remind oneself constantly about the medieval mind set, and the beliefs that it fostered. If we apply the principles of thought, already mentioned, to the symbolism of numbers as they occur in the Crucifixion window, a richer meaning is brought to the foreground.

For twelfth-century people, whether literate or not, order meant harmony, symmetry, and proportion, which are all based on numbers. In fact, because numbers are related to one another, they are also related to proportion.[50] Already Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, and Polyclitus believed that numbers were the basis of all things.[51] The theories on which this claim is based were adopted, interpreted, and "christianized" by St. Ambrose, St. Augustine (who was instrumental in sanctioning a definitive recognition of the symbolism of numbers[52]), Boethius, and, closer to the twelfth century, by commentators such as Isidore of Seville, Rabanus Maurus, and their twelfth-century followers, such as Hugh of St. Victor, all of whom were fascinated with numbers to the point that they divided their writings into numbers of books and chapters that have esoteric meanings.[53]

Summarizing these theories, Philippe Seringe, Les symboles, wrote that "le nombre engendre la réalité; la réalité n'est que l'apparence du nombre."[54] In this case, "Le nombre" must be understood as "L'Unité," and in Christian interpretation, "c'est l'absolu, c'est Dieu."[55] Because odd numbers cannot be divided into whole equal parts except by themselves, their square root, or by other odd numbers, they express the male principle, are stable and cannot be transformed.[56] On the other hand, even numbers can be divided into whole equal parts by both even and odd numbers, and are identified with multiplicity. As "the matrix," they represent the feminine principle.[57] For Hugh of St. Victor and his contemporaries, although the number two "fait penser aux choses éphémères et corruptibles,"[58] it also symbolizes Christ's two natures, the human and the divine.[59]

Unlike the number two, three evokes perfection, because there are Three Persons in One God.[60] St. Augustine's essay on the Magnitude of the Soul makes a clear reference

to the fact that while two cannot be expressed in a closed geometric figure, three can be represented by a triangle, a form often used to symbolize the Trinity.[61] Thus, in Christian doctrine, God being a pure spirit, the part of a human being that most closely reflects the image of God is the soul. Since God, the Holy Trinity represented by the number three or by a triangle, is the summit of perfection, and since anything outside of God can only add to His perfection extrinsically, four and the square/rectangle (the geometric figures that the number four represents), refer to the body because it is an extrinsic adjuvant to the soul of a human being.[62] Thus, for St. Augustine, three and four respectively represent the world of the spirit and the world of the flesh.[63] By derivation, while one, as the indivisible unit, and three, as the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity, symbolize both God and God's divine nature in Three Persons,[64] four, as the number associated with the temporal, can also represent human nature.

According to the twelfth-century poet and mystic, St. Hildegard of Bingen, a human being can be divided into five equal parts both horizontally and vertically. Thus, five is the number that best identifies a human being who possesses five senses and five extremities.[65] As the number of man, five results from the addition of four, the physical part of a human being, plus one, the Word, the divine breath which in a human being forms the soul. The only other numbers found in elements of the window are eight and ten. Eight not only represents the level of eternity found in the eighth heaven,[66] but as the number of petals in a flower, it is associated with the regenerative powers of Baptism and Resurrection, and is often found in medieval images.[67] Synthesizing St. Augustine's writings on numbers in Contra Faustum, Vincent Hopper, in La symbolique médiévale des nombres, concludes that "étant donné que l'univers est constitué de 7, 8 est le nombre de l'Immortalité."[68] This interpretation was upheld by Hugh of St. Victor, in De scripturis et scriptoribus sacris, for whom the number eight "qui vient après sept," represents "l'éternité après le changement du temps."[69] Eight is also the number signifying eternal salvation through the sacrifice of Christ.[70] This is exemplified in St. Ambrose's statement concerning the baptistery of St. Thecla in Milan:

> The eight recesses of this church are erected for the sacred rites. Its baptismal fonts have eight angles, as it is fitting for its gifts. It was propitious to establish this

> place reserved for sacred baptism on this sacred number; it is salvation that people receive in this place.[71]

Christianizing the Pythagorean conception that ten is the most perfect number,[72] Hugh of St. Victor believed that ten is perfection through faith.[73] As Ana Maria Quiñones' research shows, "le dix était considéré comme le nombre de la perfection, de l'Orient ancien à saint Jérôme, à travers l'école pythagoricienne."[74] Through the symbolism of numbers, the physical world is once more perceived as a reflection of the invisible world, leading Gerhart B. Ladner, God, Cosmos and Humankind, to point out that:

> The inconstant material world was borne up by the eternally unchanging realities of the numbers, for God had made them the basis of his creation. In such a conception, geometry and arithmetic were most intimately connected.[75]

Given the prevalence of number symbolism, one can also assume that they played an important part in the elaboration of the geometric framework of the window.[76] Elisa Maillard, "Structure géométrique du vitrail de la Crucifixion de la cathédrale Saint-Pierre de Poitiers," brings to light how deeply ingrained in medieval mentality were the notions of harmony and symmetry involving geometric figures and their design according to the golden proportion.[77] In fact, the designer and craftspersons who produced the Crucifixion window based their calculations for its entire framework, and the individual frames of each part of the composition, on the golden mean/number/ section, Φ, an irrational number also known as the golden or divine proportion.[78]

In addition, "scholars have long recognized that the patterns within stained glass windows, constituted by the supporting armature and leading which held the glass in place, were regarded, in the Middle Ages, as an expressive form in their own right."[79] Henri Focillon, in L'art d'occident, also proclaimed that "le plomb n'est pas monture seulement, il est dessin, il est valeur; il écrit puissamment la forme et il fait chanter le ton."[80] In the Crucifixion window, the hidden patterns formed by the geometric figures that were used to establish the basic framework of the window play an equally important role in its symbolic meaning.

The simplest examples of the complex relationships of form and numbers are found in the relationship between lines readily found or suggested in the window design.[81] For example, the length and width of the crosses of Christ and of St. Peter were conceived

according to the rules governing the golden proportion, which states that the shorter line is to the longer as the longer is to the whole.[82] As its design is based on the square/rectangle and on the circle, the window is imbued with symbolism associated with human life, time, God, Christ (as the Word Incarnate), the Holy Trinity and eternity; in other words, it is a theophany.[83] Other geometric figures, such as isosceles and equilateral triangles, ten-pointed stars, pentagons, decagons and the perpendicular and diagonal lines, that are derived from and contained within these forms, also contributed to the symbolic interpretation of the design. A few examples will suffice to illustrate these points.

All the lines, real or implied, that project from various points and that, when drawn, form an intricate grid, were obviously used to position the figures within the window and to highlight strategic events or significant figures or areas within the figures. For example, two diagonals which form the sides of a five-pointed star, cross on the left side of Christ, in the area where the heart is. This pinpoints the area of the heart, and would have been the point of entry for the lance that penetrated His side, if the wound were actually shown.[84] Not to show the wound that is implicit in the picture is another way to acknowledge the two natures in the one person of Christ, because as man He is dead or dying, but as the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, He is immortal.

Another example is also related to geometric figures: the Ascension panels are inserted in a circle the curvature of which is determined by the arch of the window. This circle has the same diameter as the adjacent circle circumscribing the body of the Crucified Christ from the top of His halo to the bottom of the cross. An isosceles triangle can be drawn using, as the base of the triangle, the iron bar that is part of the armature, and that separates the apostles in the Ascension panel from the patibulum -- the horizontal member of the cross. The two other sides of the triangle are drawn starting from the two points where this circle intersects the iron bar to the point marking the half of the vertical member of the cross where these two circles touch. From the same two points mentioned above, parallel lines, perpendicular to the iron bar, can be drawn to the point where they meet with the circle thus forming a rectangle. Interestingly, the figure of Christ is circumscribed by these three geometric figures.

Working from the inside out, one finds that the body of Christ is, for the most part, contained within a triangle; then His whole body is set within a rectangle, and finally He and most of the scene of the Crucifixion is circumscribed by a circle. The circle with no beginning and no end is associated with God because it symbolizes the eternal and unchanging.[85] Thus, it can also signify the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, and the divine nature in Christ. The rectangle with four sides -- the construction of which follows the rules of the golden proportion -- serves to identify the temporal and the human nature in Christ. The triangle represents the Blessed Trinity, the Three Persons in the One God. Thus, by this geometric construct, Christ is identified as the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, as a person with both a human and a divine nature, and as the One God. As Davy states, it is as though "par l'Incarnation, Il [Christ] unit sa divinité à l'humanité, lie le ciel à la terre, et jette dans le cercle une forme de carré qui correspond à la forme de l'homme."[86]

Following this line of investigation, it is apparent that the quadrilobe is formed by four smaller circles drawn within the perimeter of the lower rectangular portion of the window. A square can be drawn by connecting the points where these four circles intersect. The arrangement of these geometric figures, four small circles in which a square/rectangle is inserted to form a quatrefoil, then circumscribed by a large square, indicate the presence of the Creator in the created world: a simple reality for the medieval person who "tended to look upon nature as a reflection of the transcendent world."[87] All these geometric figures are part of the medieval language without words, "for medieval theories of art are invariably theories of formal composition, not of feeling and expression."[88] While this is not an exhaustive analysis, it is sufficient to show that the window is indeed based on a complex geometric framework, with rich symbolic connotations related to the nature of the cosmos, God and man.

Beyond the internal, hidden, geometric construction based on the rules of the golden proportion, in shape and composition this window also represents a door. The top part of the window imitates the shape of a church tympanum, within the rounded arch of a portal that identifies the door as a triumphal pathway. Christ in his mandorla and the two angels resemble the figures of Christ in Majesty so often found on the tympana of twelfth-century churches. The register, in which the Blessed Virgin and the Apostles stand, can be

compared to a lintel. Symbolically, the lintel represents an intermediary zone between Heaven and earth.[89] As a horizontal support, the lintel helps bear the weight of the wall, and is therefore an intrinsic part of the whole building. Without the lintel, the tympanum and the wall above would collapse. Thus, the apostles and the Virgin symbolically are portrayed as bearing the weight and supporting the Universal Church founded by Christ. However, because it helps support the lintel and the fabric of the church above and on the sides, and because it rests solidly on the ground, the central pier or trumeau is essential to the construction of a portal. In the window, the vertical member of the cross acts as the trumeau of the door symbolized in and by the window. Rudolf Arnheim pointed out that while "the weight of a central axis, be it vertical or horizontal, divides the two parties effectively, ... the dividing axis commonly carries a bridging element as well."[90] In this case, as a vertical link between Heaven and earth, the cross of Christ is also a type of axis mundi.[91] According to the scriptures, Christ opened the doors to salvation. Christ himself said "I am the door. Whoever enters through me will be safe..."(John 10:9). Metaphorically, and in Christian reality, the crucified Christ is the door that leads to eternal life.

Whether or not one is conscious of these factors, numbers (and especially the golden proportion), together with real and imaginary lines, and all the connecting, and intersecting points that are inherent to the construction of the window guide the eye and influence the way one sees the imagery. The placement of the window right above the altar of sacrifice, on which the sacrament of the Holy Eurcharist takes place during the liturgy of the Mass, brought another dimension to the way the window was viewed. Keeping in mind Barbier de Montault's comment on the window, "c'est une page de synthèse catholique,"[92] the next few paragraphs will examine the influence of dogmas and the liturgy on its symbolism.

5. The Liturgy and The Symbolism of the Crucifixion Window

The location of the window in the chevet wall demonstrates that it had a powerful doctrinal significance. While it could be used as a source of material for homilies,[93] it was meant to serve as a focal point for the prayers of the priest performing the Holy Sacrifice

of the Mass, which is at the core of the liturgy.[94] It could also help the faithful visualize what occurred on Calvary and focus on what was happening on the altar during the Canon of the Mass. Thus, the relationship of the window to the dogmas and the liturgy is the subject of this part of the inquiry.

The divine mysteries performed in a church perpetuate the presence of the Logos in the created world, and channel God's graces through the re-enactment of the sacrifice of Christ, the Word Incarnate.[95] The images in stained glass speak directly and clearly to the mind of the observers, and explicate the difficult concepts behind the Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ, as both God and man. The cross serves to remind the participants that the cross is both an instrument of death and a sign of Christ's victory over death. It is a symbol of contradiction, because from Christ's death on the cross stems life eternal.[96]

The Crucifixion window is a veritable synthesis and synopsis of the Mass. References to the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, to Christ's dual nature, and direct allusions to the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity are encountered at each stage of the Eucharistic celebration.[97] Prior to the changes introduced by the Ecumenical Council, Vatican II, immediately after the consecration of the bread and wine, the priest who offered the Eucharistic sacrifice pronounced the words:

> Unde et memores, Domine, nos servi tui, sed et plebs tua sancta, ejusdem Christi Filii tui Domini nostri tam beatae Passionis, nec non et ab inferis resurrectionis, sed et in caelos gloriosae ascensionis offerimus praeclarae majestati tuae de tuis donis ac datis, hostiam puram, hostiam sanctam, hostiam immaculatam, Panem sanctum vitae aeternae, et Calicem salutis perpetuae.[98]

Meanwhile his gaze rose to the images represented in the window that enhanced and explicated what was happening on the altar to the participants. As a prayer preliminary to the consecration of the bread and wine, during the offertory, the priest had already invoked the Holy Trinity, in the Suscipe, sancta Trinitas. The preface to the Eucharistic prayer of consecration read on Holy Trinity Sunday and on Sundays without proper prefaces, the Vere dignum et justum est, makes explicit mention of the Holy Trinity: "Qui cum unigenito Filio tuo et Spiritu Sancto, unus es Deus, unus es Dominus; non in unius singularitate personae, sed in unius Trinitate substantiae."[99] During the prayers before the

consecration, the priest also invoked the saints, especially the Virgin Mary and the patron saints of the church, seeking their help and protection. In this case, the priest also prays for the intercession of SS. Peter and Paul whose martyrdoms were portrayed in the lower part of the Crucifixion window.[100]

Notwithstanding the significance of its location, and its powerful connection with the dogmas expressed in the liturgy of the Mass, the symbolism of the Crucifixion window is also affected by the light that shines through it and by the meaning that twelfth-century Western Europeans gave to the play of light on images in stained glass. Thus, the mechanics of vision also influenced the way the window was designed and the kind of symbolism that it contains. The next paragraphs are dedicated to the medieval understanding of the mechanics of vision and to the symbolism of light as they are applied to the Crucifixion window.

6. Symbolism, Vision and Light

Pelago eterni luminis, et luminosae eternitatis.[101]

St Bernard of Clairvaux
De diligendo Deo, XI

Twelfth-century people were fascinated with the notion of light, both natural and symbolic. This fascination encompassed all facets of society and spilled over into contemporary writings and art works.[102] St. Bernard viewed paradise as "a sea of eternal light and an eternity full of light." The light of dawn breaking the pall of night symbolizes the light of truth that awakens and illuminates the soul.[103] As a consequence of the sustained warming trend, mentioned earlier in the text, twelfth-century people were able to enjoy the light and warmth of the natural sun. The benefits that the physical sun provided increased the material welfare of humanity, and probably exerted some influence on the continued importance of light as a symbol of the salutary enlightenment of the soul. From a material point of view, the emphasis that twelfth-century philosophers and theologians placed on light and its divine essence greatly influenced the builders who strove to find solutions to the growing demand to bring more light into churches.[104]

While the Crucifixion window, placed in a location that receives the first rays of the sun, was meant to fulfill such a need, it was also a natural avenue for exploiting the

symbolism of light. In order to acquire a better grasp of the symbolism of light, it is necessary to first comprehend how the medieval world understood the mechanics of vision. As other branches of twelfth-century knowledge, contemporary understanding of vision and light relied on Platonic theory, adopted and adapted by St. Augustine, that Margaret Miles summarizes as:

> a ray of light, energized and projected by the mind toward an object, actually touches its object, thereby connecting viewer and object. By the vehicle of the visual ray, the object is not only 'touched' by the viewer, but also the object is 'printed' on the soul of the viewer. The ray theory of vision specifically insisted on the connection and essential continuity of viewer and object in the act of vision.[105]

Thus, twelfth-century philosophers and theologians understood vision to be an interactive, willed exchange between the viewed object and the viewer, in which light played a bridging role. They also believed that Christ was Sol invictus and Sol salutis, thus identifying Him with the life-giving warmth of the sun.[106] The light of the natural sun that shone through the Crucifixion window made it possible to see and therefore "touch" the events that were represented on the glass, and to imprint these images on the souls of the viewers. Adding yet another dimension, in Sermo I, in dedicatione ecclesiae, Hugh of St. Victor declared that "stained glass windows can be compared to the minds of men through which divine knowledge shines and is dispersed to others."[107] Not only was light/knowledge absorbed by the receptive window/mind, but the window/mind reflected part of this light/knowledge, then transformed and refracted the rest, spreading it to humanity at large. Hugh of St. Victor's appropriate comparison of the minds of human beings to stained glass windows, and his keen observation of the mechanics of vision demonstrate how prevalent the preoccupation with light had become and how ingrained in medieval mentality was the six-hundred year old mandate to enlighten the minds of illiterate people.[108]

In the medieval system of beliefs, light was a link between the supernatural level of metaphysics, in which a knowledge of God is possible, and the material level of natural understanding that humanity was trying to attain. The light, symbolizing the Logos, passes through the window on which Christ, the Logos Incarnate, is represented. It links the chief events in the life of Christ, that happened at precise moments in the distant past,

to their continuing remembrances and re-enactments during the Mass and throughout the liturgical year.[109] Facing east, the Crucifixion window is metaphorically closest to the life-giving light of the Creator that symbolically pours through it. According to the Scriptures, Christ ascended towards the East (Ps. 67:34), and at the time of His second coming, He will appear in the East (Matthew 24:27).[110] Thus it is doubly fitting to represent the Ascension of Christ on a stained glass window in such a location. At the end of the Mass, after pronouncing the "Ite Missa est," in pre-Vatican Council II liturgy, the priest read the last gospel, always the same, (John I:1-14), in which St. John compares Christ, the Logos and the Incarnate Word of God, to the Lux Hominum, the Light of humanity, a light so strong and diferent that "in tenebris lucet et tenebrae eam non comprehenderunt."

During Advent, the period before celebrating the birth of Christ, the liturgy is filled with reference to humanity waiting for the life giving light of the God Incarnate. Hymns, like the Creator alme siderum, Aeterna lux credentium, invoke God as "Benevolent Creator of the planets, Eternal light of the faithful." [111]

Through the hymns that were dedicated to the Divine Light, humanity found comfort in times of great distress. Such was Anatolius' eighth-century hymn that "shows the Divine Light freeing men from trials."[112] Light is also used in a hymn commemorating SS. Peter and Paul's day of martyrdom. The Decora lux aeternitatis, contains allusions to God as the "Splendid and Eternal Light whose joyous fire bathes the day in which the two apostles were born to eternal life."[113] The light of the Logos was also associated with the Blessed Trinity. In the fourth century, St. Hilary of Poitiers composed the Lucis largitur splendide, a hymn in honor of the Holy Trinity, praising It as "far brighter than our earthly light,..Thou Radiance of the Father's light."[114] Light and especially the light of the sun became prime metaphors for the Trinity in hymns like O Lux Beata Trinitas, written by St. Ambrose (c. 340 - c.397).[115]

Combining the symbolism of light with the symbolism of the cross, St. John Chrysostom referred to the cross as a "candelabra of light which illuminates the world."[116] St. John Chrysostom's words seem most appropriate for the cross as it is represented in the Poitiers Crucifixion window, glowing fiery red behind the sacrificial altar. Because of

its imposing size, this particular image was meant to leave a profound imprint on the mind of the people who looked at it, sometimes daily. Keeping in mind that another role of light is to color the world, the next section will explore the symbolism of colors as they occur in the Crucifixion window.

7. Symbolism and the Colors of the Crucifixion Window

One of the most accessible and most pervasive forms of symbolism that had, and still has, the greatest impact on everyday life is the symbolism of colors. Twelfth-century people, whether literate or not, were particularly fond of bright colors. As Umberto Eco mentions in Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages,

> The most obvious symptoms of qualitative aesthetic experience was the medieval love of light and color... when it came to their experience of colour -- of gems, materials, flowers, light, and so on -- the Medievals revealed instead a most lively feeling for the purely sensuous properties of things... Their love of color and light...was a spontaneous reaction, typically medieval, which only afterwards came to be expressed scientifically within their metaphysical systems.[117]

The common people liked colors, and their interest made them give their full attention to the image. At first glance, prior to perceiving any form, colors are the most distinctive features of the window. In the twelfth century, the physical universe is often compared to a book scriptus digito dei, from which even an illiterate person can draw some meaning by simply perusing it and enjoying the colors and forms of images inserted within its cover.[118]

Two primary colors, a light sky blue and a blood red, dominate the composition of the window. While the cooler blue tone restrains and keeps the red in check, pulling the forms of the design into the background, warm red pushes the representation to the foreground of the picture plane. From a purely aesthetic viewpoint, by pushing some elements forward, the red acts as a potentially overwhelming barrier that almost bars the gaze from penetrating farther into the composition. However, it is balanced by the blue that outlines, envelops, and restrains the effects of the bright glaring red. Thus, in the Crucifixion window the master craftsman has achieved a balance within the image.

For early Christian writers, such as Pseudo-Dionysius, who was known through John Scotus Erigena, De divisione naturae, [119] and who greatly influenced twelfth-century

thinking, red was an incandescent, active color.[120] As the color of blood, red symbolizes Christ's blood shed in order to redeem humanity. By derivation, it became the color of martyrdom. [121] For this reason, on the feast days of martyrs the priest wears red vestments. However, red is also the symbol of the sins of humanity. In the Apocalypse, the great whore of Babylon personifies the evil of sin. She is described as being "clothed in purple and scarlet," "riding on a scarlet-colored beast" and "drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" (Apoc. 17: 3-5). While the blood of Christ is not shown, the profusion of red in the window implicitly conveys the sacrificial qualities of the representation centered around the crucified Christ. As Gerhart Ladner so appropriately states, it is as though "all other symbolic meanings were, needless to say, overshadowed by the symbolic reality of the blood shed by Jesus."[122]

Blue is the color of the sky, of the ether that was believed to envelop the earth. Thus, it is both serene and mysterious,[123] and symbolically, it is the color of purity. The Ascending Christ is wrapped in a blue cloak, which also covers His left hand that is holding the golden/yellow book of knowledge, as though Purity beheld Wisdom. The Blessed Virgin often wears a type of blue mantle, similar to the one she is wearing in the Crucifixion panel. According to Pope Innocent III (1198-1216), De sacro altaris mysterio, blue symbolizes the inner peace resulting from a clean conscience.[124] As the color of heaven, blue can also be a metaphor for the divine world of the spirit, contrasting with the red of human life and, by derivation, of the historical world.

At first glance, the background of the Crucifixion window appears as a sea of red. Upon closer examination, the panels representing what could be termed "human" events, such as the Crucifixion and the condemnation of St. Peter and martyrdom of St. Paul, are portrayed against a solid red background. Interestingly, St. Peter's crucifixion is set against a blue background. However, it is contained within a red border, and Peter's cross is red. With this device the artist accomplished two things: he made the purple-robed figure of St. Peter more visible, and he posed the question of the symbolic meaning of the blue within the red. By this artifice, St. Peter's sacrifice is portrayed as a sure way to be worthy of eternal life in heaven -- indicated by the blue of the background -- because he has suffered martyrdom, as indicated by the red of the border.

Yellow represents the life-giving warmth of the sun and, consequently, Christ as Sol invictus and Sol salutis.[125] Because it is the color of gold, "un metal inaltérable," it can also be regarded as a symbol of eternity.[126] Considering the seven colors of priestly vestments, Honorius of Autun related them to seven virtues, associating yellow with wisdom.[127] In the window, in both the Crucifixion and Ascension panels, St. John is attired in a long yellow tunic, while in the Ascension panel only, St. Peter is wearing a yellow mantle. Wisdom can be attributed to St. John, whose Apocalypse was the source of many sermons and wonderful carvings on twelfth-century tympana aimed at spreading knowledge and wisdom. It probably seemed fitting to a twelfth-century audience that the head of the Church, the apostolic saint and first pope, St. Peter, should also wear the color of wisdom. But when crucified, St. Peter is clothed in the purity of a white tunic with a blue sash, and wrapped in a regal purple, shroud-like mantle.

To these three primary colors were added two shades of purple, a flesh tone (derived from ochre that has oxidized in places), various shades of green, white which can be decomposed into all the colors of the rainbow, and black, a negation of all colors. Because of the high price of the dye, purple was, from antiquity, a color reserved for royalty. However, in Christian symbology and liturgy, some shades of purple can also be considered as the color of penance.[128] Even today, during the seasons of Advent and Lent, two periods that symbolize times of penance before the birth and resurrection of Christ, a priest wears purple vestments.

Hugh of St. Victor wrote that green was "the most beautiful of all colors because it was a symbol of spring and an image of rebirth,"[129] and of the Resurrection of Christ.[130] In the panel below the ascending Christ, the Virgin is wearing a green cloak rather than a blue one. In this instance, the Virgin, embodying the new Church, represents the hope that humanity is placing in the person of the Resurrected Christ who is shown ascending to Heaven. In the Ascension and Crucifixion, at least one main piece of Christ's clothing is purple, yet in both cases the purple is contained within a green border. The association of these two colors can have several meanings. Christ, the King, not only brings hope to mankind, but it is as though green (hope) was keeping purple (sadness and mourning) in

check, making bearable the penitential wait that precedes the first and second coming of Christ.

Because it contains all the colors of the spectrum, Wassily Kandinsky described white as a color that "regorge de possibilitées vivantes."[131] It is a sign of purity, particularly fitting for Christ who is the perfect man.[132] White is often used in combination with blue as an expression of the light (white) coming from the heavens (blue). These two colors are also attributed to the Virgin because they convey ideas of purity.[133] In France, until recently, people who were consecrated to the Blessed Virgin, especially young children, wore blue and white almost exclusively.

By the choice of colors, Christ on the cross, the Word Incarnate, and the ascending Christ can all be understood as symbolizing the cosmos created by the Fiat, the Second Person of the Trinity.[134] In his Letter LXIV (64) to Fabiola, St. Jerome interpreted the colors of the high priest's vestments, white, purple, violet and red -- described in detail in the book of Exodus (28: 1-35) -- as a symbolic illustration that "the high priest is praying for the entire cosmos, because the colors that he wears while praying correspond to the four elements of the cosmos, namely: white for earth, purple for water, violet for air, and red for fire."[135] Important for this analysis are the colors which symbolize the cosmos. In turn, the cosmos is a reflection of God himself, a manifestation of the Creator in the created world, in short, a theophany.[136] To the forms of symbolism already examined is added another form, the primary purpose of which seems to be related to socio-political concerns.

8. Symbolism, Collective Memory and Propaganda

In addition to their primary significance, a few symbols, either colors or objects, incorporated into the design of the Crucifixion window had political and cultural overtones. These overtones apply especially, but not exclusively, to the elements that are confined to the outlying areas of the image, such as the donors' panel, the different framing devices used in the window, and its overall frame. Because these motifs are part of an image fulfilling a religious function, they received the attention of, and were gazed upon by the people who attended church services. In the Middle Ages, this meant that the majority of

people would be exposed to these motifs. Incorporating sensitive cultural and political motifs, religious images were used to memorialize past events, preserve them and assimilate them into the collective memory. Several elements in the Crucifixion window have a symbolic significance specific to the importance of Poitiers, a religious center on the road to Santiago de Compostela, the capital of a duchy whose rulers had participated in the first and second crusades, and a town whose population was very involved in its religious life and interested in the welfare of its cathedral. At least two elements comply with the known propaganda used by the king of France and abbot Suger (the fleuron border and the blue and white colors of the monarchs' attire), and perhaps refer to Louis VII and Eleanor as heirs to the past glory of the Merovingian and Carolingian kings.[137] The following paragraphs will examine the symbolism of the Crucifixion window as it relates to pilgrimages, especially to Santiago de Compostela, to the first and second crusades, to the population of Poitiers and to the king and queen of France.

Since Poitiers was built at the confluence of two main roads, its inhabitants were familiar with the sight of pilgrims wearing conch shells, around their necks or attached to their garments, and holding walking sticks in one hand to help them on their long trek. These staffs called bordóns or bourdons had practical uses. They served to chase away stray animals and help fight occasional thieves. However, as alter lignum crucis, symbol of the wood of the cross, the bourdon was believed to be a powerful deterrent against the attacks of the Devil.[138] The image of the three Marys carrying these large walking sticks in the Crucifixion window was a permanent reminder to all pilgrims that a piece of the wood of the True Cross was preserved as a relic at the convent of St. Croix, facing the eastern end of the cathedral. The bourdons were also reminders of the importance that pilgrimages, especially the one to Santiago de Compostela, held for the Aquitanians and their rulers.

Another detail of the same panel links the three Holy Women, symbolizing all pilgrims, to the Resurrected Christ. The three Holy Women are portrayed holding large eggshape containers. While the egg was known since antiquity and through various cultures as the symbol of spring and renewed life, according to Christian symbology, the egg -- and especially the ostrich egg, because it symbolizes the Virgin birth -- represents

the Resurrection of Christ.[139] Another detail, the stained glass replica of the Holy Sepulchre, may have had a two-fold purpose. It may have been intended to memorialize the participation of Duke William IX in the First Crusade, while it may also have served as a record of Eleanor's and Louis VII's participation in the Second Crusade, and their visit to Jerusalem.

Used in the right place, colors can also have political connotations. Blue and white, the two colors worn by the king and queen in the donors' panel, and the plainness of their attire, are a testimony to the monarchs' profound devotion to the Virgin. They should be considered not only as donors, but as models to be followed. Just as they placed themselves under the protection of the Virgin and were her humble servants, so should the Poitevins -- the small figures kneeling behind the monarchs -- place themselves under the protection of their rulers and serve them. As mentioned earlier, during the twelfth century, the devotion to the Virgin was shared by many who otherwise would have had little in common. Gilbert de la Porrée, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, and Suger (who advised Louis VII to dedicate the kingdom of France to the Blessed Virgin), all professed their attachment to the Virgin.[140] However, no mention is made of Henry II having dedicated himself or his kingdom to the Virgin. This is another piece of circumstantial evidence that should be kept in mind when making the final determination about the identity of the donor king in the window.

Cluniac influence and allusions to the pilgrimage roads are also found in the border of the Crucifixion window. The fern is a vegetal motif that is used extensively in the border of the window. Medieval people relied on plants to treat their illnesses. Various types of ferns belong to the one species of plant that enjoyed a privileged status at all levels of the population for its purported curative powers of both body and soul.[141] In Diversarum naturarum creaturarum, the twelfth-century mystic and writer, St. Hildegard of Bingen, wrote at length about the fern, to which she attributed healing powers that extended even to the soul.[142] Because of their perceived healing properties, carved or painted ferns designated individual churches as places of healing and succor.[143] Their presence was interpreted as the symbol of protection against the Devil, and brought

comfort and solace to people who feared the outside world with its variety of real or imagined dangers.[144]

The Cluniacs encouraged the belief that the fern was a powerful deterrent against the attacks of the Devil, because of the conviction pervading medieval society that the Devil was at work in the surrounding world -- thus explaining the suffering that people endured during life -- and that human beings needed to protect themselves and to be protected by the Church against his attacks.[145] It is no wonder that decorations featuring ferns are prevalent in churches located on the pilgrimage road to Santiago, that were built or renovated by people associated with or under the direct control of the Cluniacs.[146] Different types of ferns adorn the capitals of churches from Normandy to Spain.[147] At Poitiers, examples of ferns are found on the capitals at the collegial church of St. Hilaire-le-Grand, and in the Crucifixion window at the Cathedral of St. Pierre. At the end of the pilgrimage road, ferns are carved on capitals of the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela.[148] These representations of a specific type of plant life symbolized the association of the cathedral at Poitiers and the Crucifixion window to the other churches of the pilgrimage roads and to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, and were an allegorical representation of the universality of the Church.

However, keeping in mind that the first meaning of the fern is to be considered "comme symbole d'humilité et, par extension, de vie humble,"[149] it is important to recognize that part of the plant life in this particular border may symbolically represent the humble people of Poitou ready to protect the Church (which is symbolized by the depiction of the major events of Christ's life in the window) and their monarchs (represented in the donors' panel). These ideas were politically correct in a feudal society in which meek obedience, especially on the part of the peasants and the poor, was a prerequisite not only to endure the injustice and prejudices of the privileged classes, but also to survive.[150] Their presence in the window was meant to show their allegiance to both temporal and celestial rulers. However, their placement in an outlying area of the image also signified that they were only ancillary to the events represented above them. As mentioned earlier, it seems that the Poitevins, represented by the ferns, were also

symbolically included in the picture frame as primary elements in the defense of the Church.

9. Symbolism, Borders, and the Frame of the Crucifixion Window

9.1. Symbolism of the Borders inside the Crucifixion Window

> The two devices [limits and frames] are, first of all, instruments of order or orientation. They serve to indicate what places exist, where they are, and how they relate to one another... The frame defines the picture as a closed entity, a center that exerts its dynamic effects upon its surroundings as well as upon its own inside field.[151]
>
> Rudolf Arnheim
> The Power of the Center

Framing a large image, the border of the Crucifixion window is unusually wide. Physically and symbolically, the frame delineates and sets apart an area that is different from its surroundings. The border of any representation acts as a constraining device, limiting but also protecting the space in which the events are illustrated. The frame also indicates that the episodes shown within its parameters belong to another reality and time. However, the elements depicted in the frame, at the periphery of the main representation, are important because they add another dimension to the meaning of the window, yet are removed from the main action developed in the center.[152] As the finishing touch, the border could serve as a summary of the symbolism contained within the image. Keeping this in mind, the next paragraphs will first explicate the symbolism contained in the several borders that separate the different spaces within the window, then the symbolism in the overall frame.

Within the window, the border that outlines the cross of Christ and complements its symbolic meaning is the first framing device to attract the eye. With its tonal uniformity, the bright red of Christ's cross contrasts with its border made up of blue leaves, the black outlines of which make them appear darker and greenish in the light. It is as though the foliage were acting as a barrier stopping the effluence of red, symbolizing the spilling of the blood of Christ, and at the same time absorbing the nutrients from its very essence. In fact, the greenish/blue plants belong to one of the approximately two thousand species of acanthus,[153] that were widely used in the decorations of Romanesque churches.[154] According to Ana Maria Quiñones, Symboles végétaux, the acanthus plant has a dual

symbolic meaning.[155] The fleshy leaves of certain cultivated species symbolize the human flesh and its weaknesses which cause the sins directly responsible for the death of Christ.[156] However, its reputation as a hardy plant made it the plant of choice in a funerary context, and fostered a belief in its regenerative properties. Thus, in Christian symbolism, it also came to signify the immortality of the soul and the potential for human beings to be reborn to a new life.[157]

In the case of the Crucifixion window, the proximity of the acanthus leaves to the red cross and to the dying Christ emphasizes the transformation of the flesh, at the time of Resurrection, from a natural to a glorified state through the salvific power of the cross, the instrument of death from which eternal life sprang. The association of the cross with the Tree of Life is most clearly expressed in an almost contemporary mosaic (c. 1125-1128), adorning the apse of the church of San Clemente in Rome, in which the cross seems to grow out of an acanthus plant. These two representations are tributes to the widespread use and similarity of meaning of symbolism throughout Western Christendom, and to the ingenuity of the artists who succeeded in suggesting similar concepts through different media.

A border of acanthus leaves delineated on both sides by a white fillet has been added around the almond-shaped mandorla formed by the intersection of two circles. The colors of the acanthus leaves have been arranged as though to imitate a rainbow. This is most appropriate for this border, because a rainbow is a symbolic link between heaven and earth, the arc of the covenant of the Old Testament.[158] In the window, the resurrected Christ standing half on wavy clouds and half on the border of the mandorla represents the new covenant established between God and humanity through the sacrifice of His only Son, Jesus Christ, the Word Incarnate.

In his analysis of the "Iconography and Philosophy in the Crucifixion Window at Poitiers," Robert Grinnell mentioned "a blue band with a curious T-shaped imbricated border ...symbolically separating the sacred space occupied by the Crucified Christ from the narrative events portrayed below."[159] Because he also found remnants of "a similar border under the arms of the cross in 1882," Steinheil restored it to its original place.[160] The "T" can also be seen as a "Tau," an ancient symbol of life, that was understood and

often used by Christians as a cross.[161] In "Images of Divine Order and the Third Mode of Seeing," Madeline Caviness acknowledges that, according to the first mode of seeing by which an image speaks immediately and intuitively to the mind, "the 'T' or 'Tau' naturally suggested the Cross."[162] The colors of the T- shaped designs -- blue, violet, yellow and green -- are the same as those found in the garments and attributes of the Ascending and Crucified Christ, and of the acanthus leaves that form the border of the mandorla. By the bias of colors, shapes and plant life, Christ is once more identified as the ever-living God (purple), the hope of humanity (green) whose perfect wisdom (yellow) and purity (blue) will guide the just, those marked with the sign of the "Tau" (Ez., 9:4), towards eternal life.

As a finishing touch, the white border, that circumscribes the center square of the quatrefoil and separates the scene of St. Peter's crucifixion from the events represented in the lobes, not only contains and delineates this part of the narrative, but because it is white, the color of purity, it is another way to indicate that St. Peter is reborn, that his sins have been washed away in the blood of his martyrdom -- the red band immediately bordering the white fillet on the inside.

Also in the lower part of the window, the frame around the quatrefoil made up of three-lobed, yellow fleurons bordered by two white fillets is highly significant from a religious, cultural and political viewpoint. According to Ana Maria Quiñones, the three-petaled fleuron is a primitive form of a certain species of lily, or fleur-de-lis, known as Iris Florentina.[163] It is the flower that best represents the "virginal purity of the Blessed Virgin Mary."[164] However, from all antiquity the three-lobed fleurons had been associated with royal power. Michel Pastoureau, Traité d'héraldique, is very clear when he mentions:

> cette fleur semble avoir toujours conservé, depuis la haute Antiquité jusqu'au Moyen Age, son rôle d'attribut de la souveraineté: c'est en ce sens qu'elle apparaît déjà sur certains attributs royaux carolingiens et othoniens, sur le sceptre des rois capétiens depuis Robert le Pieux, au revers des monaies de Louis VI... D'autre part, dans le cours du XIe siècle, cette fleur se charge d'un fort contenu religieux, soit christologique soit marial; c'est probablement sous l'influence de saint Bernard et de Suger que Louis VII -- qui fut avec saint Louis le plus pieux des rois de France -- adopta comme figure héraldique cet emblême qui symbolisait à la fois la dignité royale et la piété chrétienne de sa personne et de son lignage.[165]

The presence, in the Crucifixion window, of a frame of fleurons/fleurs-de-lis circumscribing an area in which an unknown king is represented as the donor of a window

that can plausibly be dated before 1150, strongly suggests that the king may be Louis VII, the first husband of Eleanor of Aquitaine. This tentative conclusion is reached when one takes into account the symbolic significance of a border as a protective device, considers the meaning of the colors, yellow for the border, and blue and white for the king, and weighs the importance of the motif of the fleuron/fleur-de-lis for this Capetian king. Particular borders in the window emphasize a specific aspect of the symbolism of the overall representation. However, the frame of the overall image was probably used as a global synthesis, adding a final touch to the various layers of meanings. The next paragraphs will make a detailed examination of the symbolism of the border that frames the entire window.

9.2. Symbolism of the Frame of the Crucifixion Window

When a church was consecrated, [166] the pope preferably, but more often a bishop would perform another elaborate ritual that included tracing a cross in the form of an X (cross of St. Andrew) amidst ashes scattered on the ground of the nave. The celebrant would join the ends of the arms of the cross to form a square, and would inscribe the Latin alphabet on one of its arms, and the Greek one on the other, starting with A, and ending with Ω. This ceremonial was a symbolic appropriation of the area delineated by the walls of the church. The two Greek letters A and Ω are a sign for the Logos, with no beginning and no end, they have come to represent the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, or the divine nature in Christ. [167] The X formed by the cross is the Greek letter that begins the name of Christ, ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ in Greek. X is also the Roman numeral ten, and the Pythagorean and Platonistic symbol for what Jean Hani, Le symbolisme du temple chrétien, refers to as "l'Unité multiple de la Création dans sa perfection."[168] Together with the X, the P (Rho, the second letter of the name of Christ in Greek) forms the chrismon, which was often used in paintings and sculptures with A and Ω (sometimes drawn in small characters, α and ω), to symbolically bear witness to the two natures of Christ. The association of the cross of Christ with the alpha and omega occurs widely in medieval art.[169]

The large frame surrounding the Crucifixion window delineates and isolates its inside space. However, to the imaginative mind lost in meditation, the white interlace that forms various figures (the 8 laid horizontally, "∞", the circles and the elongated hearts) also seems to protect the inner space of the window. Remembering that the window is set within the most sacred area of the cathedral, it is possible to decompose the interlacing figures forming an "∞" into the small characters α and ω, and to interprete these figures as symbolizing Christ, the Word Incarnate. This is especially relevant since in the Apocalypse, God pronounces the following words: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End." (Apoc., 21:6). To incorporate elements of decoration that resemble the α and ω in a framing device would certainly be a clever way to show that God is all encompassing, that He is, indeed, the Beginning and the End that delineates the finite macroscopic world, represented in this case by the microcosm inside the window. This interpretation follows contemporary representations of similar cosmic themes, for example, at Vézelay. Furthermore, the same pattern is one of the elements carved on the sides of the Calendar of Souvigny, an octagonal pillar that is adorned with carvings representing the cosmos.[170] Allowing for the difference in media, the intertwined figure-of-eight designs are remarkably similar (see fig. 22).

The white interlace laid on a blue ground is also a Marian symbol, and a sign of purity and of heaven. The white interlace forms other patterns such as the circles that readily suggest the eternal cosmos, and by abstraction, God. By association, the heart-shaped figures and the circles suggest the love of God that protects not only what is contained within the white interlace of the border, but also sets aside and forms a shield around the events represented within the window.

Without specific identification, plants in general were interpreted as signs of a peaceful environment.[171] As part of a border, plants defined an area where peace reigned, separated both from the turmoil of the outside world and the events depicted in the window. The plant life in the border of the Crucifixion window is depicted in the form of blue palmettes, rosettes, and ferns. Palmettes and rosettes are commonly used in Romanesque art to allude to the divinity. In Christian symbolism, while the palmette has several meanings, i.e., the triumph of the martyrs over death,[172] the triumphal entry of the

faithful into Heavenly Jerusalem,[173] the immortality of the soul,[174] the glorious resurrection of Christ and the redemption and salvation of humanity,[175] it is often considered as the symbol of victory over death, especially Christ's victory, and as such symbolizes the Resurrected Christ.

Among the early Fathers of the Church, Origen, Bede, and St. Augustine compared Christ to a perfect flower.[176] In Christian art, the rosette can be considered as the flower that best signifies divine perfection. Because they are made up of two different yet equally divided colors, the eight-petaled rosettes (which symbolize God), circumscribed by a white fillet, can be construed as representating Christ's two natures. Combining the symbolisms of numbers and plants, the eight-petaled rosette is the sign of resurrection and of eternal life.[177] The particular composition of the eight-petaled rosette will be further analyzed with the symbolism of the window as seen through the philosophy and theology of Gilbert de la Porrée.

Inside the heart-shaped figures of the border ending in "∞", two young blue curly leaf-like fern fronds, and two larger and more mature yellow fern leaves flanking a large green palmette grow from a green calyx. Close observation reveals smooth, leaf-like fronds and curly shoots that are specific to a particular species of fern that was indigenous to this area of France and the mountainous areas of Northern Spain.[178] As mentioned above, a long-lasting warming trend had brought a regrowth of the forest and its underbrush.[179] The relatively cool, shady and protected areas of the forest facilitated the growth of ferns. Because of its strength, concealed under an apparent fragility, and because it lived under the cover of trees, like the poor under the protection of their lords, the fern symbolized humility, and a humble life devoted to service.[180] Since the representation of ferns is located at the periphery of the window, it can be construed as a type of shield protecting the image. As already mentioned, people were familiar with ferns to which they attributed well-founded curative powers of both body and soul, that were duly recorded by St. Hildegard of Bingen.[181]

In the border of the Crucifixion window, the humble ferns within the interlace were potentially understood to be metaphors for the people of Poitiers, of Poitou and, by extension, of the entire universe. These ferns are held within the protective enclave formed

by the heart-shaped interlace ending in figures-of-eight, that are possibly interpreted as symbolic representations of the α an ω, God, the Protector of all things, and they draw their sustenance from the long yellow petal of the eight-petaled rosette, symbolically representing Christ's divine nature. By this device, with the help of God Who surrounds them, the Poitevins, and all humble people, can also be seen not only as being under the protection of the Almighty, but also as being a part of the defensive mechanism of the Church and its dogmas, which are clearly represented in the window, and to some extent, as defenders of the historical monarchs portrayed in the donors' panel

10. Symbolism, Gilbert de la Porrée, His Philosophy and Theology

Gilbert de la Porrée's fondness for books is addressed at length in the Planctus and De commendatione and needs no further elaboration. Since Gilbert lived in Laon for several years while he was a student, it is almost certain that he had access to the cathedral library and its illuminated manuscripts. While it cannot be confirmed, Gilbert's detailed studies of the writings of St. Augustine lead one to believe that if he had a chance to closely examine any of the illuminated manuscripts of Augustinian texts, for example, Quaestiones in Heptateuchon (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS Latin 12168), he would have spent time studying them and admiring their illuminations. In view of the origin of this manuscript, of Gilbert's stay in Laon, of his special knowledge of the works of St. Augustine, and of the importance that writings on the Trinity had come to play in his life, it certainly is plausible that the part of the illumination on the frontispiece of the manuscript representing the two entwined letters of the Greek alphabet, A, and minuscule ω, could have inspired in some way the interlace motif represented in the Crucifixion window. This finding is particularly relevant since in both cases -- the window and the manuscript -- the A/α and Ω/ω designs are associated with the cross of Christ.

While the examples mentioned above depend upon a possible collaboration of Gilbert de la Porrée in the design of the window, other parts of the window can be construed as images in glass of his philosophy and theology. If indeed Gilbert desired to explain the philosophical and theological issues that had caused him to be summoned to Paris and then Reims, he may have wished to take the opportunity to make his beliefs

explicit within a non-verbal environment. The problems encountered when using images, or elements of images, to explain the difficult and abstract concepts of the Incarnation and of the Trinity need no further elaboration.

Since the beginning of the Christian era, artists, designers and craftspersons have struggled with the challenge of conceptualizing abstract dogmatic teachings, by producing concrete images. The Incarnation and the Trinity proved to be by far the most difficult concepts to explicate and therefore visualize. Thus, they gave birth to an original imagery that was often, yet unwittingly, fraught with elements that may be thought of as heretical,[182] as in the case of the Trinity by Andrei Rublev (Russian, 15th cent.), who represented the Trinity as three separate and distinct yet almost identical winged beings.[183] The twelfth-century designers and craftspersons who tackled the design of the Crucifixion window faced such a challenge when they were asked to represent the major scenes of Christ's life for the enlightenment of the literate and illiterate alike. As shown in the examination of the iconography of the window, models were available. However, in no other image are the major events of Christ's life represented in a similar composition, and in combination with the martyrdoms of the patrons saints of the church and donors.

This particular window reflects a fascination with trying to understand and explicate dogmas, like the Incarnation and the Trinity, that can only be accepted as articles of faith. Yet these dogmas were the most interesting and troublesome for the twelfth-century believers, and plunged contemporary philosophers and theologians into endless debates. As discussed above, Gilbert was not only the bishop of Poitiers, but also a philosopher and theologian who spent the greatest part of his life studying, teaching and writing about the Incarnation, and the Trinity, before starting a beautification program of his cathedral. There is a definite possibility that he commissioned the Crucifixion window, or a major part of it, and that he may have also planned or at least consulted in its design. While the evidence is decidedly circumstantial, it is based on the latest research and consistent with the thrust of Gilbert's philosophy and theology.

Remembering that one of Gilbert's most important concerns was related to the manner in which the mystery of the Incarnation and Trinity could be explained to a limited human intellect, the symbolism of the window will be examined for traces of Gilbert's

attempts at such explanations. In examining the areas which best represent Gilbert's theological concepts, it is interesting to note that the figures used are either semi-stylized plants or geometric figures. The eight petals of the rosette grow out of a pistil that is designed as a white circle containing a white cross. In the mystery of the Incarnation, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity unites his divinity, symbolized by the circle, to His humanity, usually represented by a square. However, as Marie Madeleine Davy points out, "par la rédemption, le Christ fait éclater le carré et le brise...il ne reste plus du carré que la croix."[184] At the center of the rosettes, the square has been transformed into a cross signifying that Christ has succeeded in breaking the bondage that enslaved humanity, and that Resurrection is indeed possible. Through Christ's Incarnation, death and resurrection, the relationship between the Creator and His creatures has been forever changed.[185] The infinite chasm between the human and the divine has been bridged.

From the primary unit at the center of the rosette grow the eight petals of the rosette that symbolize the Incarnate God born into the historical world of the flesh, symbolized by the red of the background. The eight petaled rosettes, represented in the border, are composed of four short, blue petals, symbolizing Christ's pure human nature, and four, long, yellow petals in the form of palmettes, alluding to Christ and His divine nature as the fountain of all wisdom. This ornamental and apparently insignificant rosette is invested with a symbolism that can plausibly be viewed as an interpretation in stained glass of Gilbert de la Porrée's understanding of the Incarnation as a compositio, in which the two natures in Christ are not apposed, nor mixed, but are united and operate in a divinely ordered compositio. The difference in sizes between the blue and yellow petals, is a reminder that Christ's divine nature is infinite while His human nature is finite, and as such, the divine nature in Christ is superior to His human nature. Though both are conjoined in the one Person of Christ, His divine nature is the principle that determines His highest mode of operation, and designates Him as a divine Person symbolized by the white circular fillet that envelops the rosette.

Another important area of the design seems to find its root in Porretan theology. The shining background of the mandorla, behind the ascending Christ, forms a regular pattern made up of red octagons in which blue squares have been interspersed at regular

intervals. Although backgrounds of intermixed red and blue irregular patterns can be found in other stained glass windows,[186] a pattern identical or even similar to the one represented in the Crucifixion window is encountered in no other extant stained glass window. The octagon, or eight-sided figure, symbolizes immortality and divinity. In this case, the immortality of the divine nature of Christ is symbolized by the red octagons. The blue squares represent the human nature of the divine Person, known as Jesus Christ. Christ's two natures are not mixed (commixtio) like black and white that make up grey, so as to form another nature;[187] nor are they apposed (appositio), like two blocks of metal without the possibility of a relationship between the two.[188] In this manner, the Incarnation of Christ is illustrated in a regular compositio, such as the one that Gilbert de la Porrée believed exemplified the way Christ's two natures co-existed in the one Person, Jesus Christ. Finally, the Crucifixion window contains one of the simplest yet most powerful representations of the Trinity in the central panel portraying the Resurrection. Because of its very simplicity, it was meant to be understood by all who saw it. However, it is almost impossible to prove that this was the product of the mind of Gilbert de la Porrée. Whoever was responsible for this part of the design has simply represented the Three Persons of the Triune God as three identical oil lamps burning brightly while they are held within a simple container in the form of an equilateral triangle, another symbol of the Trinity.

Conclusion

Moved by a compelling desire to educate contemporary society and to influence its culture, twelfth-century philosophers and theologians frequently inspired artists and, by their writings, guided their efforts, helping them to incorporate various layers of symbolism. Not everyone would be able to grasp every aspect of the symbolism that was represented in the art objects, yet every image contained enough of the most simple forms of symbolism to satisfy the perceived requirements of the literate and illiterate alike. Because of the wealth of symbolism contained in the Crucifixion window, it has proven impossible to examine every element for its potential symbolic function. However, some conclusions can be drawn from the uncovered data. The symbolism found in the Crucifixion window

finds its roots in a remarkable medley of superstitious beliefs (some dating back to pre-Christian antiquity), and of Greek and Latin philosophies, which include theories of numbers, harmony and symmetry, transformed and adopted by Christian philosophers and theologians, from which evolved a "language without words" that was familiar to most members of twelfth-century society. Everyone doubtless understood that the central location of an art work, such as the Crucifixion window, in the chevet wall at the eastern end of the sanctuary, meant that it was important and portrayed some aspects of God, or some events in Christ's life. Everyone was presumably familiar with the symbolic meanings attached to proportions (such as large/important/powerful, vs. small/trivial/ powerless, or bigger equals better), to gestures, and to postures that they often used amongst themselves to communicate. The hidden meanings of colors and numbers, especially those of the first decade which can be easily counted on one's fingers, were also probably known to most people. Elements such as the bourdons, or the Holy Sepulchre, were symbols of events which were still present in the minds and dear to the hearts of the Poitevins. Almost every individual who gazed at the window would have recognized himself/herself in one of the small figures kneeling behind their rulers in the donors' panel.

To the clergy was reserved the duty to explicate the symbolism contained in the images of the Crucifixion window and explain their relationship to the liturgy of the Mass and to the Nicene Creed. Whether most people were able to see the window close enough to identify the plant life and interpret the symbolism contained within the design of the frames and in the various backgrounds is difficult to determine. However, it is probable that only a few had the time, the necessary knowledge, and the opportunity of viewing the window at close range and at sufficient length to decipher the most intricate forms of its symbolism. The specificity of complex designs, such as the eight-petaled rosettes of the border, and the octagons and squares forming the background of the mandorla, show a strong link to the philosophy and theology of Gilbert de la Porrée.

The different levels of symbolism are directed towards a didactic goal, namely to teach Christian doctrine to all people by revealing different aspects of God and His creation, and to guide them towards salvation. However, the current political powers also

exerted an influence on the production of the window in their attempt to promote their own particular agenda, which also included the desire to memorialize past events, preserve them, and assimilate them into the collective memory. In view of the complexity of its layers of symbolism, it is possible to conclude, with Louis Grodecki, that the Crucifixion window is "une oeuvre d'une admirable densité de signification théologique, probablement inspirée des écrits de l'évêque de Poitiers, Gilbert de la Porrée."[189] However, one can also add that this window is a reflection of the twelfth-century Christian vision of the cosmos as a representation of the invisible world of the spirit in the visible world of the flesh; in short, it is a theophany.

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[1] Davy, Initiation, 34.

[2] Ladner, God, Cosmos and Humankind (1995):7.

[3] Ladner, God, Cosmos, 260-61; ibid., 264-65.

[4] Umberto Eco, Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages (1959/1986):30-33.

[5] Eco, Art and Beauty, 29.

[6] Ibid., 33, "The School of Chartres... developed a kind of 'Timaeic' cosmology."

[7] Ibid., 60.

[8] Davy, Initiation, 115.

[9] Alexander, "Iconography and Ideology:," 1; Ibid., 9.

[10] Ibid., 5.

[11] Ibid., 1.

[12] Davy, Initiation, 114.

[13] Jean Hani, Le symbolisme du temple chrétien (1990): 21-22.

[14] Davy, Initiation, 21 and n. 9; see also Ladner, God, Cosmos, 110-114.

[15] Pythagorean theories are studied in the works of his followers (see Ladner, God, Cosmos, 105).

[16] St. Augustine, On Christian Doctrine, William Benton, ed. II (1952): 40.

[17] Eco, Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages, 29-31.

[18] Davy, Initiation, 171; see also Hugh of St. Victor, Didascalicon, Patrologia Latina (PL) 176, 815.

[19] Twelfth-century philosophers and theologians discovered the works of Plato through Scot Erigen (see E. de Bruyne, Études d'esthétique médiévale, II, 212).

[20] Davy, Initiation, 19.

[21] Hugh of St. Victor, PL 176:815A, "Quaeramus pulchrum illud, pulchorum omnium pulcherrimum." (see also Davy, Initiation, 171; and Bruyne, Études, 211).

[22] Davy, Initiation, 32 and 171; see also Ladner, God, Cosmos and Humankind, 214.

[23] Davy, Initiation, 87.

[24] Ibid., 33.

[25] Ladner, God, Cosmos, 116.

[26] Eco, Art and Beauty, 53.

[27] This pre-Cartesian understanding of the world and its phenomena is latent in twentieth-century people who are ready to accept the existence of extra-terrestrial beings without any formal proof.

[28] François Garnier, Le langage de l'image au Moyen Age, II (1989), passim.

[29] Étienne Delaruelle, La piété populaire au Moyen Age (1980): 273.

[30] Gilbert Crispin, Disputatio Judei et Christiani (1092-93) in B. Blumenkranz, ed., Stromata Patristica et Medievalia 3 (1956):67 (See Camille, "Seeing and Reading," 32 and n. 29).

[31] Aemilius Friedburg, ed., Decretum magistri Gratiani, (1879):1360; Bouscaren, and Ellis, Canon Law, 2.

[32] For example, the various rites of Spring skillfully replaced by Christian feasts such as Corpus Christi, or the celebration of the Summer equinox taken over by the feast of St. John, in which pagan practices, such as the jumping over a fire, a sort of rite of passage, linger on today.

[33] For the rituals of appropriation and consecration, see Hani, Le symbolisme, 34; and Davy, Initiation, 187.

[34] Davy, Initiation, 187; based on St. Paul (Ephes. 2:21).

[35] Hani, Le symbolisme, 16.

[36] Davy, Initiation, 29.

[37] For the Latin, see Panofsky, ed. and trans., Abbot Suger, 65.

[38] From a prayer by Origen in John J. O'Meara, ed. and trans., Ancient Christian Writers (1954):136; see also Hani, Le symbolisme, 52; Davy, Initiation, 196.

[39] Hani, Le symbolisme, 48-49.

[40] For the Mass as true sacrifice, see St. Irenaeus, Adversus haereses, (in William A. Jurgens, The faith of the Early Fathers, 95, 232, [4, 17, 5], from Migne, Patrologia Graeca (PG) 7, 433-1224); see also St. Cyprianus of Carthage, Treatise on the Lapsed (251 AD), (PL 4, 465-494, in Jurgens, Early Fathers, 218, 551 and 552a); and St. Cyprianus, Letter of Cyprian to a Certain Cecil, (in Jurgens, Early Fathers, 232-33, 582-584). This list is not exhaustive.

[41] Bouscaren and Ellis, Canon Law, 717, canon 1279.

[42] The mechanics of vision as they were understood in the Middle Ages will be analyzed below.

[43] Rudolf Arnheim, The Power of the Center, (1988):57.

[44] Girault, Un langage sans parole, 10.

[45] Garnier, Le langage de l'image, II, 50.

[46] Ibid., 53.

[47] Davy, Initiation, 245-46.

[48] Vincent F. Hopper, La symbolique médiévale des nombres (1995):77.

[49] Beigbeder, Le lexique des symboles, 313.

[50] Davy, Initiation,, 246.

[51] Eco, Art and Beauty, 28-29.

[52] Ibid., 60.

[53] For example, St. Augustine, Civitas Dei, and Rabanus Maurus, De Universo, are arranged in 22 books, because the Old Testament is divided into 22 Books and the number of the letters in the Hebrew alphabet is also 22 (see Hoper, La symbolique médiévale des nombres, 66).

[54] Philippe Seringe, Les symboles (1995): 343.

[55] Hopper, La symbolique médiévale des nombres, 63; Seringe, Les symboles, 343.

[56] Davy, Initiation, 168.

[57] Ibid., 168; Seringe, Les symboles, 344.

[58] Hugh of St. Victor, De scripturis et scriptoribus sacris, quoted in Roger Baron, Science et sagesse chez Hugues de Saint Victor (1957):124.

[59] Seringe, Les symboles, 344.

[60] Ibid., 344.

[61] St. Augustine, "The Magnitude of the Soul," in Roy Joseph Deferrari, et al, eds., Writings of Saint Augustine (De musica) II (1953): 8:71-72.

[62] Beigbeder, Le lexique des symboles, 319; see St. Augustine, On Christian Doctrine, 16 & 17.

[63] Hopper, La symbolique médiévale des nombres, 64 (quoted from St. Augustine, On St. John, IX, 14, Marcus Dods, ed. and trans., The Works of Aurelius Augustine, 15 vols).

[64] Ibid., 57.

[65] Beigbeder, Lexique, 323-24; Davy, Initiation, 166-68; Hopper, La symbolique médiévale des nombres, 65; Seringe, Les symboles, 350.

[66] Hani, Le symbolisme, 88.

[67] Beigbeder, Lexique, 336; Olivier Beigbeder, "Symbolisme des chapiteaux de la nef d'Anzy-le-Duc," Gazette des Beaux-Arts (Oct. 1962):381-400, see 397; Quiñones, Symboles, 186.

[68] Hopper, La symbolique médiévale des nombres, 64-65, and n. 70 (St. Augustine, Contra Faustum, XVI, 29).

[69] Miquel, Dictionnaire des symboles liturgiques, 200, quoting from Hugh of St. Victor, De scripturis et scriptoribus sacris, in Roger Baron, Science et sagesse chez Hugues de Saint-Victor (1957):124.

[70] Hopper, La symbolique médiévale des nombres, 83; Seringe, Les symboles,357.

[71] Quoted in Beigbeder, Le lexique des symboles, 330; Mâle, L'art religieux du XIIIe siècle, 13-14, St. Ambrose's poem was "une inscription destinée au baptistère de Milan, publiée par Gruter, Inscriptiones antiquae, 1166, n. 8."

[72] Ibid., 72.

[73] Hugh of St. Victor, De scripturis et scriptoribus sacris, in Baron, Science et Sagesse, 124.

[74] Quiñones, Symboles, 186; and Beigbeder, Lexique, 337-38.

[75] Ladner, God, Cosmos, 110.

[76] For the importance of numbers, see Davy, Initiation, 243-247; Eco, Art and Beauty, 34-35; Hani, Le symbolisme du temple chrétien, 41-49; Hopper, La symbolique médiévale des nombres, 11-85.

[77] Elisa Maillard, "Structure géométrique du vitrail de la Crucifixion de la cathédrale Saint-Pierre de Poitiers," Actes du quatre-vingt-septième congrès national des sociétés savantes (1962):329-337.

[78] The Golden mean/number/section is a proportional relation that is "obtained by dividing a line so that the shorter is to the longer as the longer is to the whole." (see Horst de la Croix, et al., Gardner's Art Through the Ages, (1926/1991):1101; and Edward Lucie-Smith, Dictionary of Art Terms, (1993):90.); Φ (phi) is believed "to express the secret of visual harmony" (see Lucie-Smith, Art Terms 90); Davy, Initiation, 198).

[79] Stephen Nichols, Romanesque Signs (1983):101.

[80] Henri Focillon, Art d'Occident, II (1992):568-69.

[81] Maillard, "Sructure géométrique," passim (this study is not exhaustive).

[82] The width of the cross of Christ is 2.22 m.; its length is 3.59 m.; by applying the golden proportion, the following result is obtained: 2.22:3.59 = 0.617; 3.59: (3.59+2.22) = 0.618; the proportion 1.618.... or Φ, is known as the golden /divine proportion; 0.618...=1/Φ or approximately 8/13. Thus, the shorter line is to the longer as the longer is to the whole. St. Peter's cross: L = 2.9m.; W = 1.8m.; 1.8:2.9 = 0.620; 2.9:(1.8 + 2.9) = 0,617. About the golden number, see Henri Bilheust, L'art des batisseurs romans (1996):passim; Marius Cleyet-Michaud, Le nombre d'or (1993):passim.

[83] Davy, Initiation, 186.

[84] For the diagonals and how they were drawn, see Maillard, "Sructures géométriques," 331.

[85] Davy, Initiation, 186; see also Honorius of Autun, De gemma animae, PL 172:590 ff.

[86] Davy, Initiation, 187; Miquel, Dictionnaire des symboles liturgiques, 35.

[87] Eco, Art and Beauty, 4.

[88] Eco, Art and Beauty, 41.

[89] Beigbeder, Lexique, 313.

[90] Arnheim, The Power of the Center, 137.

[91] Beigbeder, Lexique, 280.

[92] Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail de la Crucifixion," 26.

[93] For the ritual orientation of churches, see Jean Daniélou, Théologie du Judéo-Christianisme, (1980):292, and his quotes from "Les Actes d'Hipparque et Philolée;" see also Hani, Le symbolisme, 51-58.

[94] Hani, Le symbolisme, 33, "Tout édifice sacré est cosmique, c'est-à-dire qu'il est a l'image du monde;" ibid., 49, Dans la conception traditionnelle et sacrée, le temple est en lui-même déjà, et avant toute action liturgique, une 'révélation divine'. Il continue la révélation consmique du Verbe, du Logos, dans la création....résidence de Dieu parmi les hommes...lieu de Sa Glorification et de la spiritualisation des hommes et du monde entier par la Sainte Liturgie."

[95] Hani, Le symbolisme, 49; Ladner, God, Cosmos, 217-218.

[96] Beigbeder, Lexique, 162, "Le croisement signifie à la fois le bien et le mal, comme la croix du Christ instrument de son supplice et signe de la redemption de l'homme..."; Gérard de Champeaux and Dom Sébastien Sterckx, Le monde des symboles (1989):370-73.

[97] Morin, Missel, "Ordinaire de la messe," 721-771.

[98] Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail de la Crucifixion," 25; Morin, Missel, 752-74.

[99] Ladner, God, Cosmos, 222; Morin, Missel, 744.

[100] Barbier de Montault, "Le vitrail," 26; Ladner, God, Cosmos, 222; Morin, Missel, 744.

[101] St. Bernard of Clairvaux, De diligendo Deo, XI, PL 182: 993; Davy, Initiation, 157.

[102] Davy, Initiation, 157, "Dans la Chanson de Roland, le soleil ruisselle sur l'armée; Durandal, l'épée de Roland, flamboie comme le soleil. Les jeunes filles ont des cheveux dorés,...leurs tresses blondes imitent les rayons du soleil. Les chevaliers apparaissent beaux comme le soleil."

[103] Ibid., 190.

[104] Davy, Initiation, 156, and 196.

[105] Margaret Miles, "Vision: The Eye of the Body and the Eye of the Mind in Saint Augustine's De Trinitate and Confessions," The Journal of Religion, 63, 2 (April 1983):124-142, see 127 for quote.

[106] Davy, Initiation, 196, Stressing the symbolism of the orientation of a church, Davy states that "L'abside de l'église romane donne sur le soleil levant, symbolisant le soleil du salut (sol salutis); lieu béni d'où viendra, à la fin des temps, le soleil de justice (sol justitiae) pour juger tous les hommes."

[107] Hugh of St. Victor, Sermo I. in dedicatione ecclesiae, PL 177, 902-03, "Fenestrae vitreae sunt viri spirituales per quos nobis divine cognitio illuscet."

[108] Henricus Denzinger and Adolfus Schönmetzer, S.J., Enchiridion Symbolorum, (1965):163, St. Gregorius I Magnus, Epistola Litterarum tuarum primordia ad Serenum episc. Massiliensem, (October 600 AD) PL IX, 105, "Nam quod legentibus scriptura, hoc idiotis praestat pictura cernentibus, quia in ipsa [etiam] ignorantes vident quod [quid] sequi debeant, in ipsa legunt qui litteras nesciunt; unde [et] praecipue gentibus pro lectione pictura est."

[109] Ladner, God, Cosmos, 217.

[110] Davy, Initiation, 196.

[111] Morin, Missel, 88.

[112] H. Flanders Dunbar, Symbolism in Medieval Thought (1961):509.

[113] Morin, Missel, 960, "Decora Lux aeternitatis auream, Diem beatis irrigavit ignibus."

[114] Dunbar, Symbolism, 507, "Reference should be made also to the hymn by St. Ambrose, 'Splendor Paternae gloriae'."

[115] Dunbar, Symbolism, 507 and 511.

[116] Miquel, 100-101.

[117] Eco, Art and Beauty, 43-44.

[118] Davy, Initiation, 171.

[119] Ibid., 129.

[120] From Pseudo-Dionysius, Celestial Hierarchy, in Miquel, Dictionnaire, 89.

[121] Seringe, Les symboles, 326.

[122] Ladner, God, Cosmos, 116.

[123] For more information on the color blue, see Michel Pastoureau, "Vers une histoire de la couleur bleue," preface to the catalog of the Sublime indigo Exhibit, Marseille (1987):19-27; and John Gage, "Colour in History: Relative and Absolute," Art History, I, 1 (March 1978):105-130, see 110.

[124] Pope Innocent III, De sacro altaris mysterio, I, 32, PL 217, 786 C-D.

[125] Miquel, Dictionnaire, 213; Seringe, Les symboles, 327.

[126] Seringe, Les symboles, 327.

[127] Honorius of Autun (Augustodunensis), Sacramentaire XXIX, PL 172: 762D - 763A (Miquel, Dictionnaire, 90-91).

[128] Seringe, Les symboles, 326.

[129] Hugh of St. Victor, "De Tribus Diebus," 12, PL 176: 821 (Book VII of the Didascalicon, also quoted in Eco, Art and Beauty, 46).

[130] Ibid., 324-35; Miquel, Dictionnaire, 90-91.

[131] Wassily Kandinsky, Du spirituel dans l'art (1969):126-128.

[132] Seringe, Les symboles, 328; Miquel, Dictionnaire, 90.

[133] Seringe, Les symboles, 325.

[134] Madeline Caviness, " Images of Divine Order and the Third Mode of Seeing," Gesta XXII/2, 109.

[135] St. Jérôme, "Lettre LXIV à Fabiola," Correspondance, III (1953):132; Yves de Chartres, Sermo III, PL 162, 521C (quoted in Miquel, Dictionnaire, 89).

[136] Davy, Initiation, 150.

[137] See above Chapter IV, 80, n. 67.

[138] Melczer, The Pilgrim's Guide, 57.

[139] Hall, Illustrated Dictionary, 22-23; Miquel, Dictionnaire, 211; Seringe, Les symboles, 118-121.

[140] Pastoureau, "Le roi aux fleurs de lis," 68.

[141] Ibid., 63-64.

[142] Hildegard of Bingen, Diversarum naturarum creaturarum, Liber primus, De Plantis, 47, PL 197, 1147-1148).

[143] Quiñones, Symboles, 63.

[144] Ibid., 63.

[145] Ibid., 63, "c'est précisément le symbole de la fougère qui répondait le mieux aux exigences dogmatiques de l'ordre de Cluny, à la base de la création et de la diffusion de l'art roman."

[146] For ex., Diego Gelmirez, the Cluny trained archbishop of Santiago; see also Quiñones, Symboles, 62.

[147] For a list of the different churches in which a representation of ferns can be found, see Quiñones, Symboles, 64, 73; Ibid., illustrations nos. 27, 32, 33, 37, 39, and 42.

[148] For other churches decorated with ferns, see Quiñones, Symboles, 64.

[149] Quinõnes, Symboles, 62.

[150] Ibid., 62.

[151] Arnheim, The Power of the Center, 51 and 56.

[152] Ibid., 56-58.

[153] Quiñones, Symboles, 33.

[154] Ibid., 39, "L'acanthe, sauvage ou cultivée, est partout dans l'aire d'expansion de l'art roman. Il n'est pas de région, de pays, dont elle soit absente."

[155] Ibid., 36, and 39.

[156] Ibid., 40, "Ainsi donc, la feuille d'acanthe pourrait avoir transmis à des fidèles illettrés l'idée de 'la fragilité de l'homme devant le péché'... Elle obsédait les directeurs spirituels de l'Église du Moyen Age qui jugeaient sans doute leur société trop sensibles aux attraits de la chair."

[157] Ibid., 40, "...le même élément végétal [the acanthus leaf] a pu renfermer un autre concept,...la capacité de régénération de l'homme, l'immortalité de l'âme."

[158] Hall, Illustrated Dictionary, 106.

[159] Grinnell, "Iconography," 172. Crozet, "Le Vitrail," 228, "curieux ornements en forme de T de diverses couleurs, imbriqués les uns dans les autres."

[160] Grinnell, "Iconography," 172.

[161] Hall, Illustrated Dictionary, 6.

[162] Caviness, "Images of Divine Order ," 105-06.

[163] Hall, Illustrated Dictionary, 146; Quiñones, Symboles, 96; Ibid., 274 n. 146 and 147.

[164] Hall, Illustrated Dictionary, 146; Quiñones, Symboles, 98; Louis Réau, Iconographie de l'art chrétien, I (1955):133.

[165] Pastoureau, Traité d'héraldique, 162.

[166] For the ritual used to consecrate a church , see Hani, Le symbolisme, 51-58.

[167] Ibid., 57.

[168] Ibid., 57.

[169] Especially in illuminated manuscripts (see the frontispiece of St. Augustine, Quaestiones in Heptateucon, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS Latin 12168).

[170] Chaudagne, Souvigny, 33.

[171] Quiñones, Symboles, 19, "elle [la flore] cherchait surtout à transmettre la paix, calme, harmonie , équilibre à une société qui en manquait."

[172] For the meanings of the palmette, see J. Daniélou, "La palme et la couronne," Les symboles chrétiens primitifs (1961):9-31; and F. Cabrol, et al., "Palmes," Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie, 947-961; and Ladner, God, Cosmos, 146; ibid., 227-28; For the palmette as a sign of victory, Hall, Illustrated Dictionary, 153; Miquel, Dictionnaire, 224; Quiñones, Symboles, 146 and 278 n. 268; Seringe, Les symboles, 225; Honorius of Autun, Sacramentarium VIII, PL 172, 744D.

[173] Quiñones, Symboles, 146, and 278 n. 271. E. S. Whittlesey, Symbols and Legends, 266.

[174] Miquel, Dictionnaire, 223; Quiñones, Symboles, 146, and 278 n. 269.

[175] J. Chevalier et A. Gheerbrant, Dictionnaire des symboles (1982):578; Quiñones, Symboles, 278, n. 269; Seringe, Les symboles, 225.

[176] Quiñones, Symboles, 186 and 281, n. 378.

[177] Ibid., 191.

[178] Ibid., 58.

[179] About climactic changes, see above Chapter IV.

[180] Quiñones, Symboles, 62, "Cette plante herbacée...exerçait un charme profond, dû à son aspect fragile et délicat, encore accru par celui des endroits où elle pousse: bois sombres, lieux écartés, presque secrets. Ces qualiteés n'étaient pas passées inaperçues aux yeux des Pères de l'Église puisque leurs commentaires présentent la fougère comme symbole d'humilité et, par extension, de vie humble et retirée, de franchise et de sincérité."

[181] For the curative power of ferns, see Quiñones, Symboles, 61-63; and Hildegard of Bingen, De Plantis, 47, PL 197:1147-1148.

[182] Rudolf Berliner, "The Freedom of Medieval Art," Gazette des Beaux-Arts, 6, XXVIII (1945):264-288; ibid., 265, fig. 1, representing Christ being helped down from the cross by angels while a smiling Virgin holds his right hand (Novgorod, Russia; Cathedral, Korsunski gate; German sculpture, about 1152); ibid., 270, fig. 2, showing the Annunciation (Wuerzburg, Marienkapelle, German, 1435) in which the infant Jesus is represented sliding down a scroll towards a kneeling Virgin!

[183] Bernard McGinn, John Meyendorff, and Jean Leclercq, eds., Christian Spirituality - Origins to the Twelfth Century (1992):33.

[184] Davy, Initiation,187.

[185] Ibid., 187.

[186] For ex., the twelfth-century stained-glass window at Le Mans representing the Christ of the Apocalypse.

[187] Gilbert uses both colours and metals to explicate his theory; see, Häring, The Commentaries on Boethius, 294:85-87 (PL 64, 1381C, CEut 4, 33-42).

[188] Ibid., 290:71-81 (PL64, 1379D, CEut 4, 12-13).

[189] Grodecki, Le vitrail, 286, n. 73 "Poitiers."

CONCLUSION

A thorough examination in situ, and a comprehensive analysis of the evidence, have reaffirmed the uniqueness of the window. While the Crucifixion window suffered from the onslaught of fanatical vandalism and from misguided and sometimes clumsy restorations during the past eight hundred years, most of its twelfth-century glass has been preserved, except for the very important date and donors' name. The shape of the window, the type, quality and exceptional state of preservation of the glass, the thick iron armature, the squareness of the panels of glass, their heavy leading, and the sharply outlined figures (drawn to indicate a potential for movement), all help to place the design and manufacture of the window well within the twelfth-century artistic mode of representation. These intrinsic elements, the composition of the window and its frame, and the arrangements of the scenes are unique to the Crucifixion window. While windows representing Christ's life exist in other cathedrals of Western France, such as Chartres, Bourges and Angers, no other contemporary stained glass window portrays the same scenes with a representation of the crucified Christ that dominates the composition.

An analysis of the iconography of the window reaffirms the close ties that the individual scenes in the window have to representations of similar events in other media such as book illuminations, enameled metal works, monumental and relief sculptures, and mural paintings. The iconography also illustrates the uniqueness of the window, since a similar combination of all these scenes was not found in any other twelfth-century artistic representation. Furthermore, two iconographic details are also helpful in establishing a terminus ante quem for the window: the triumphant Christ alive on the cross, showing little sign of His impending death, was replaced in the early thirteenth century by the suffering Christ in the throes of agony; and the pointed helmets and long shields worn by the guards in the Resurrection panel are known to have become obsolete after 1180.[1]

Examination of the window also reveals that the two-line inscription flanking the donors' panel is now irretrievably lost. Thus, before evaluating the remaining circumstantial evidence concerning the dating of the window and the identity of the donors, it should be clearly stated that no incontrovertible proof has been discovered to

unquestionably date the window, or name the patrons. An examination of the political, cultural and religious history of Western France, an analysis of Gilbert's eulogies and of some of his philosophical and theological writings, and an investigation of the history of the cathedral of St. Pierre and of the symbolism contained in the window only offer clues as to the possible dating of the window and the identities of the donors and designers.

However, this examination of circumstantial evidence has revealed that the twelfth century was a period of political, cultural and religious changes. Politically, after 1137, the duchy of Aquitaine was no longer an independent power. Indeed, after 1152 (date of Eleanor's marriage to Henry), it became a source of conflict between England and France, producing a climate that was not favorable to large-scale church building or renovation, which may explain the protracted period of reconstruction of the cathedral.

This set of circumstances could not fail to affect patronage and the design of the window. The figure of the woman in the donors' panel is almost certainly Eleanor's. However, not until August Auber published his "Histoire de la cathédrale Saint-Pierre de Poitiers," in 1848/49, was the male donor tentatively identified as Henry II. Yet, an analysis of the circumstantial evidence seems to favor Louis VII. The twelfth century was marked by the desire of the Capetian kings to reaffirm their authority over the territories formerly held by the Carolingians in Western France. This led to a well-orchestrated propaganda program that reached its apogee while Suger was the councilor of Louis VII. As a means to enforce Capetian ideology, Suger planted visual images that attempted to convey the validity of the king's claims as the heir to Carolingian and Merovingian power. Louis' and Suger's concerted efforts left their mark on secular objects such as the new seal created for Louis VII, featuring the king with a fleuron/fleur-de-lis in his right hand, sitting on the ancient throne of the Merovingian king Dagobert. Their program may also have left its imprint on the lower part of the Crucifixion window. A border made of tri-lobed fleurons, an emblem newly adopted by the French king, and the plain blue and white attire of the monarchs in the donors' panel serve to identify the French influence. The Capetians had adopted blue and white as the official colors of France because they had consecrated their kingdom to the Virgin.

While Louis was married to Eleanor, France experienced a well-documented flowering of the arts. Louis VII's donation to the churches of his kingdom increased during his years of marriage to Eleanor because he was able to use the income from the duchy of Aquitaine. In the latter years of her marriage to Louis VII, the proud Eleanor may have exchanged the political arena, where she had failed, for the arena of artistic patronage. Perhaps she even convinced Louis to participate in the renovations that Bishop Gilbert had started at the Cathedral of St. Pierre c. 1148. The portrayal of the Poitevins behind their monarchs in the donors' panel, and their potential representation as the lowly ferns in the frame of the window, may also point to a desire on the part of the patron(s) to appease the people of Poitou by showing to the world at large that they, the Poitevins, were participants, albeit on a diminished scale, in the commission of the major window of the official church of Poitou. Viewed in this light, such a detail would also favor Louis VII as the male donor.

While this circumstantial evidence was presented to bolster Louis VII's possible donation and his efforts to include some propagandistic elements, arguments in favor of Henry's patronage of the Crucifixion window are few. Henry II was vying for power in Aquitaine. After his marriage to Eleanor in 1152, his ambition and desire to impose his will on the rebellious Aquitanians, both secular and religious, resulted in endless fighting. As a gesture of appeasement, and perhaps in order to facilitate his desire to impose Jean de Bellesmains as bishop of Poitiers, Henry may have made a donation in 1162. This is the date mentioned in Jean Bouchet's Annales d'Aquitaine relative to the beginning [of the second phase] of the cathedral's reconstruction. While Bouchet's date can be associated with the second campaign of reconstruction of the cathedral, there is no reason why it should be extended to the window. Contrary to details in the design and iconography of the window that may be associated with Louis VII and the French influence, no elements of design or iconography can be linked to the counts of Anjou, or to the English kings. These arguments, based on elements of design, on political events, and on the personality of the rulers are circumstantial. While they accurately present data that seem to favor Louis VII, they cannot be considered as being incontrovertible proofs.

Secular donors were often joined in their donations by religious patrons who had to approve the image installed in their church. In fact, it was mandatory for the religious leaders to approve all representations to be located within the sanctuary. In the case of the Poitiers cathedral, contemporary texts, the Planctus and the De commendatione, eulogizing Bishop Gilbert (1142-1154), refer to his patronage of an extensive campaign of embellishment and renovation. However, these texts make no mention of the Crucifixion window. Yet, the eulogies confirm that changes were being made prior to Gilbert's death. Perhaps these changes led to some major reconstruction of the cathedral (as was the case for the contemporary rebuilding of the abbey church of St. Denis). The facts that Gilbert knew Abbot Suger and was aware of his work at St. Denis, that Gilbert was at Chartres when the cathedral was partially rebuilt after the fire of 1134 and endowed with magnificent stained glass windows, and that Gilbert appreciated art to the point that, as the Planctus and De commendatione report, he did not hesitate to spend large sums of money, logically lead one to believe that Gilbert may have planned the chevet windows as part of the beautification program of the cathedral. But again, both documents are not specific enough to assert that the Crucifixion window was part of Gilbert's beautification program. Today, all researchers agree that this window is the oldest in the cathedral, and that it belongs to the twelfth century.

Although the contents of the Crucifixion window and its frame reflect the general religious convictions that permeated the twelfth century, the subtlety of both representation and composition bears a definite relationship to Gilbert's expressed beliefs, and to his punctilious attention to the slightest details capable of representing them. Gilbert was all the more careful since he had to defend his views before Pope Eugenius III on two different occasions. What was at stake was not so much the semantics -- the intrinsic meaning -- of Gilbert's writings, but the syntax -- the arrangement of the words -- that he used to express his thoughts recorded in written form. This problem arose in part because of the change that was occurring during the twelfth century when a society that had relied on orality as the only means of communication, and trusted memory as a way to secure the past, gradually became a society that depended increasingly on the written word to act as its memory bank and as the repository of important past events. The shift in forms of communication from

oral and concrete to written and abstract resulted in an overzealous scrutiny of the written text. Thus, the person(s) who advised the designer(s) of the window -- perhaps Gilbert de la Porrée -- may have wanted to convey in images -- a familiar expression of thoughts and beliefs in an illiterate society -- the meaning that words, couched in written form, could fail to adequately communicate. Gilbert was very concerned with trying to understand and explain two key mysteries in Church dogma: the two natures in Christ (Hypostatic Union), and the three Persons in One God (the Holy Trinity). He expressed the idea of the union of two natures in One Person by the term compositio. He explained his concept of the three equal Persons in One God through a philosophical analysis of the id quod/id quo.

In the Crucifixion window, the influence of Gilbert's thoughts, writings, and understanding of the word compositio is perhaps best illustrated in the use of the regularly interspersed blue squares (humanity) and red octagons (Divinity) to address the issue of the Hypostatic Union. The meaning of the word compositio may also have been visually expressed in the frame of the window in which are represented eight-petaled rosettes composed of four short, blue petals, symbolizing Christ's perfect human nature, alternating in a regular compositio with four, long, yellow petals in the form of palmettes, alluding to Christ and His Divine Nature as the fountain of all wisdom. Gilbert's thoughts on the Holy Trinity are perhaps best reflected in the Resurrection panel where three identical oil lamps burning brightly are held within a simple container in the form of an equilateral triangle, another symbol of the Trinity. The one container, the id quod, representing the Three persons in One God, gives "light" and meaning to the Resurrection. It is comprised of three separate oil lamps, each one equal and providing the same light, the id quo.

Poitevin culture may have left its mark on the Crucifixion window. The regrowth of the forest, after invasions and destruction had depopulated entire regions of Western France, probably furnished models for the plant life found in the window, including the fern with its special symbolic meaning. Invasions, followed by immigration, also brought new inhabitants to Western France. Improved growing conditions favored an increase in population. As a result, the clergy felt that the newly arrived inhabitants, some of them only marginally Christian, needed to be taught the basics of the Christian faith. In addition,

the growing and more affluent population required new and improved churches. Regrowth of the forest also helped to rekindle older beliefs in tree spirits that the twelfth-century clergy fought to erase with the use of didactic tools, such as the Crucifixion window, the content of which could be efficiently used in sermons. Indeed, it was probably conceived first and foremost as a didactic tool for the literate and illiterate alike. In the mostly oral society of the twelfth century, concrete images expressed their meanings directly to the minds of the viewer. While images did not lie, the "written word" was only an appearance; it was an obstacle placed between the ability to know and the object to be known, and because it was not always understood, it was often viewed as being magical. In Phaedrus, Plato, who was so avidly studied at Chartres, exclaims: "For this discovery of yours [writing] will create forgetfulness in the learners' souls, because they will not use their memories..."[2] Often seen as a threat, the written word was considered with suspicion. Pressed by circumstances, Gilbert may have thought it expedient to have recourse to images to express his beliefs.

From a religious viewpoint, twelfth-century society was preoccupied by the problem of redemption. The Crucifixion window could be viewed and studied by all as a compendium of the religious truths that had to be learned and understood in order to be effectively redeemed. It provided an incentive for everyone to lead a virtuous life, and to remind them that life is but a pilgrimage. Various images in the window provided an immediate association with the concept of pilgrimage, and reminded the viewer that each human being should hope for an afterlife and the possibility of forgiveness. The window also invited everyone to seek redemption through the contemplation of the mysteries represented therein, and through its symbolism, which was an attempt to explicate these infinite mysteries to the finite human mind.

My research indicates that the primary significance of this particular window was to explain visually the dogmas of the Church to a twelfth-century audience. While the window is the result of eight hundred years of iconographic tradition influenced by changing politics, economics and especially dogmatic refinement, this research also indicates that there is a strong case in favor of Gilbert de la Porrée, and his philosophical and theological writings on the Trinity and the Incarnation, as one of the sources (if not the

only source) for the symbolism contained in the form and composition of the window and its framing devices.

Twentieth-century society which values the material and pragmatic, which thrives on ever-increasing speed, yet is often at a loss to find a purpose for its own existence, has reduced symbolism to its minimum impact and even sloughed it off as no longer meaningful and even obsolete for modern humans. Even the Catholic Church today has lost the meaning of many of its symbols, and, therefore, has discarded them. It is no wonder that the Crucifixion window is a mystery for many today. Yet, its symbolic beauty appeals to the inner self and awakens sensory perceptions deeply buried in the inner consciousness that is a part of the collective memory of Western Civilization. Perhaps, this is the reason why, as a member of late twentieth-century society, it seemed to me that the symbolism was the hardest, yet the most rewarding aspect of the Crucifixion window to comprehend and explain to a contemporary audience. By exploring twelfth-century politics, culture and religious concerns, and their influence on artistic representations, it is hoped that this research has successfully explained the relationship between form, content, composition and symbolism of a twelfth-century stained glass window to a twentieth-century audience.

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[1] Bernadac, Saint-Gilles de Montoire (1995):22 (see above Chapt. II, 41, n. 49.)

[2] Plato, Phaedrus, 275 AB, in Benjamin Jowett, ed. and trans., The Dialogues of Plato 3 (1953):184.

Fig. 1: The Crucifixion Window - Cathedral of St. Pierre at Poitiers, France

Fig. 2: View of the Chevet Wall and of the North-East Side - Cathedral of St. Pierre at Poitiers, France

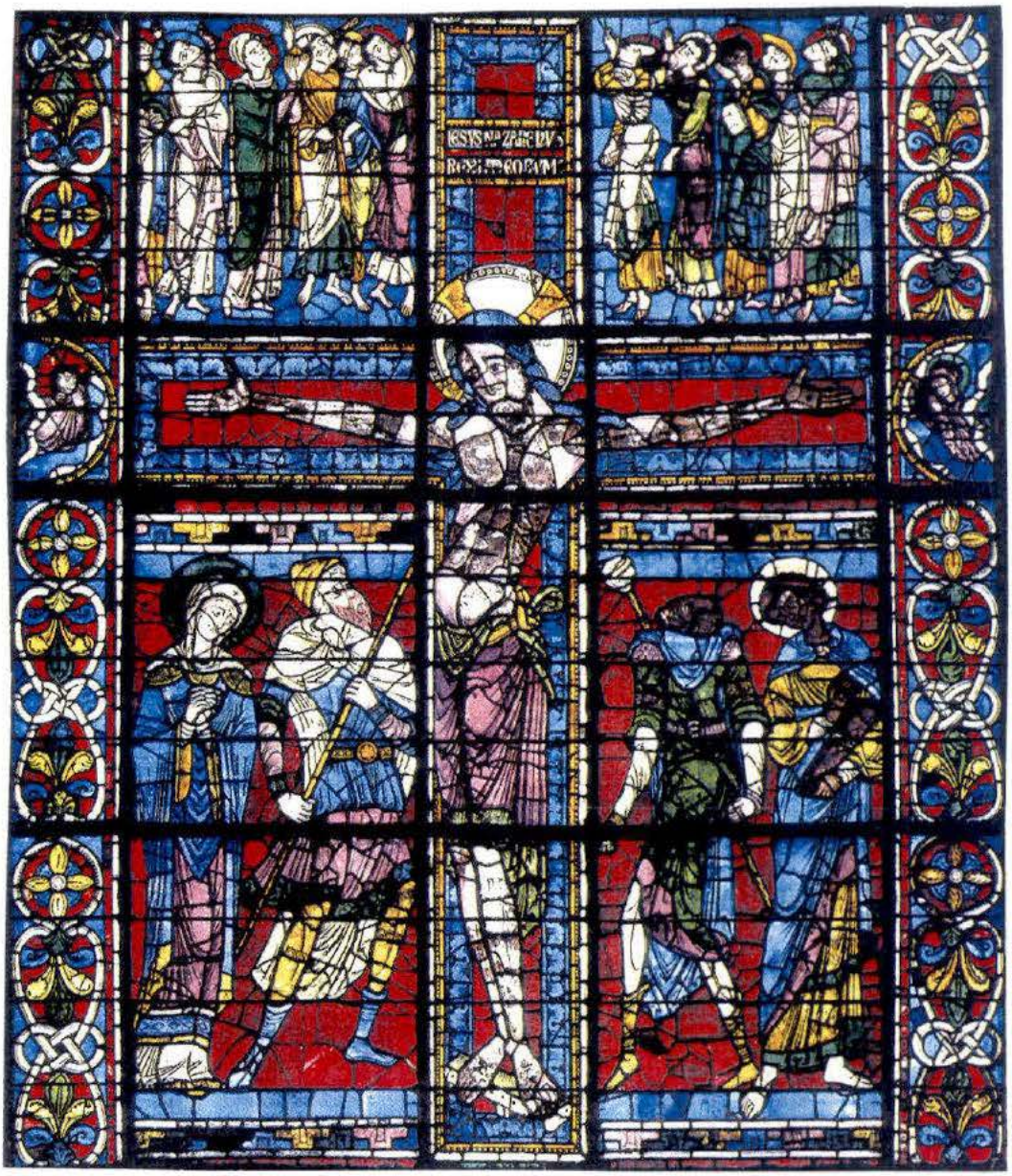

Fig. 3: Crucifixion Panels - Detail of the Crucifixion Window - Cathedral of St. Pierre at Poitiers, France

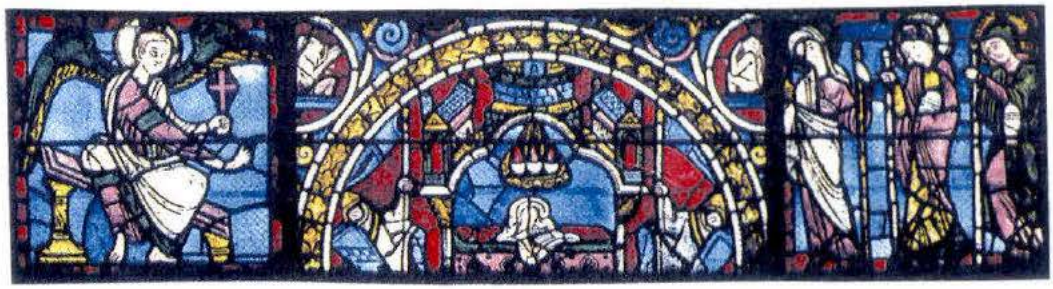

Fig. 4: Resurrection Panels - Detail of the Crucifixion Window - Cathedral of St. Pierre at Poitiers, France

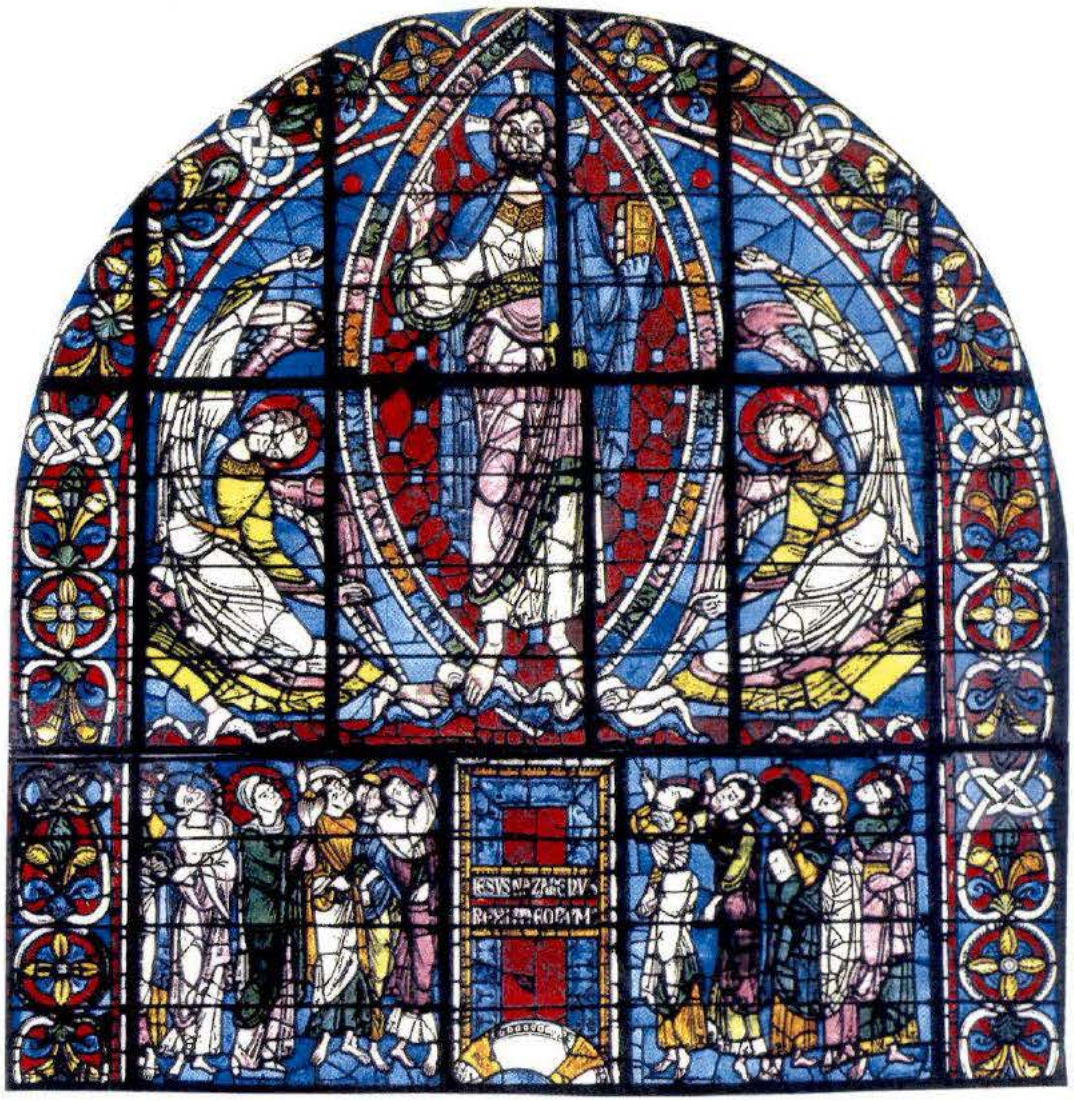

Fig. 5: Ascension Panels - Detail of the Crucifixion Window - Cathedral of St. Pierre at Poitiers, France

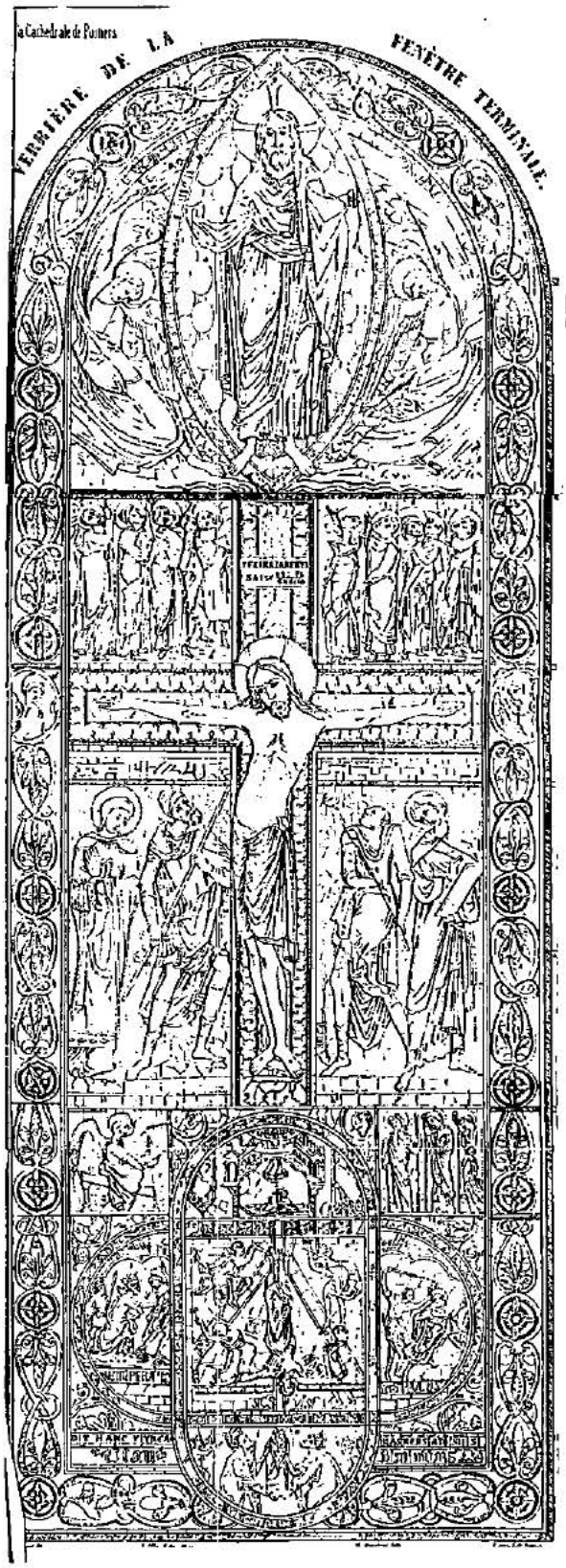

Fig. 6: Cl. Delacroix - Lithograph of Crucifixion Window - c. 1848

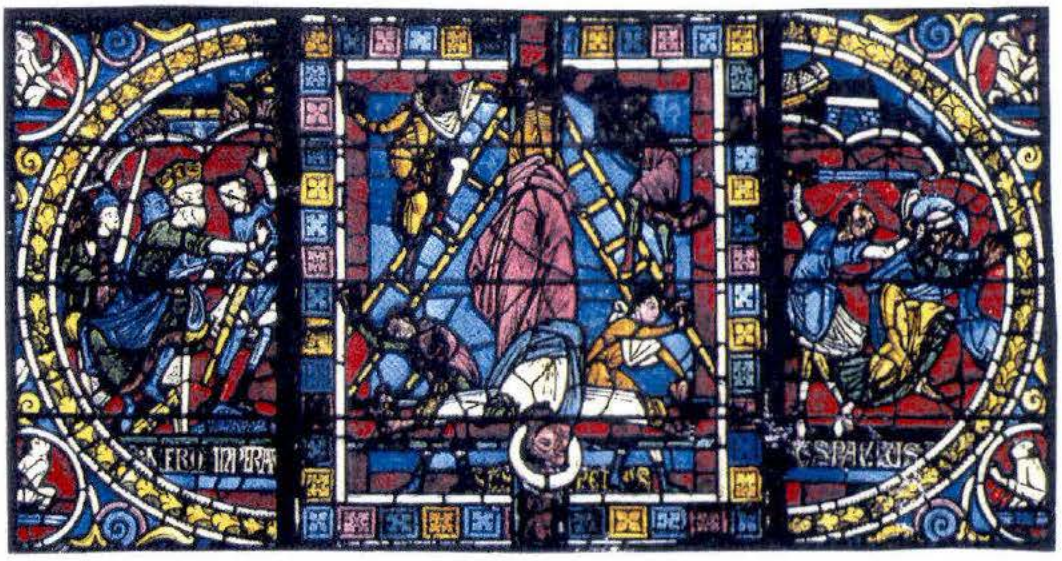

Fig. 7: Martyrdoms of SS. Peter and Paul - Detail of the Crucifixion Window
Cathedral of St. Pierre at Poitiers, France

Fig. 8: Donors' Panel - Detail of the Crucifixion Window - Cathedral of St. Pierre at Poitiers, France

Fig. 9: Detail of the Border - Crucifixion Window - Cathedral of St. Pierre at Poitiers, France

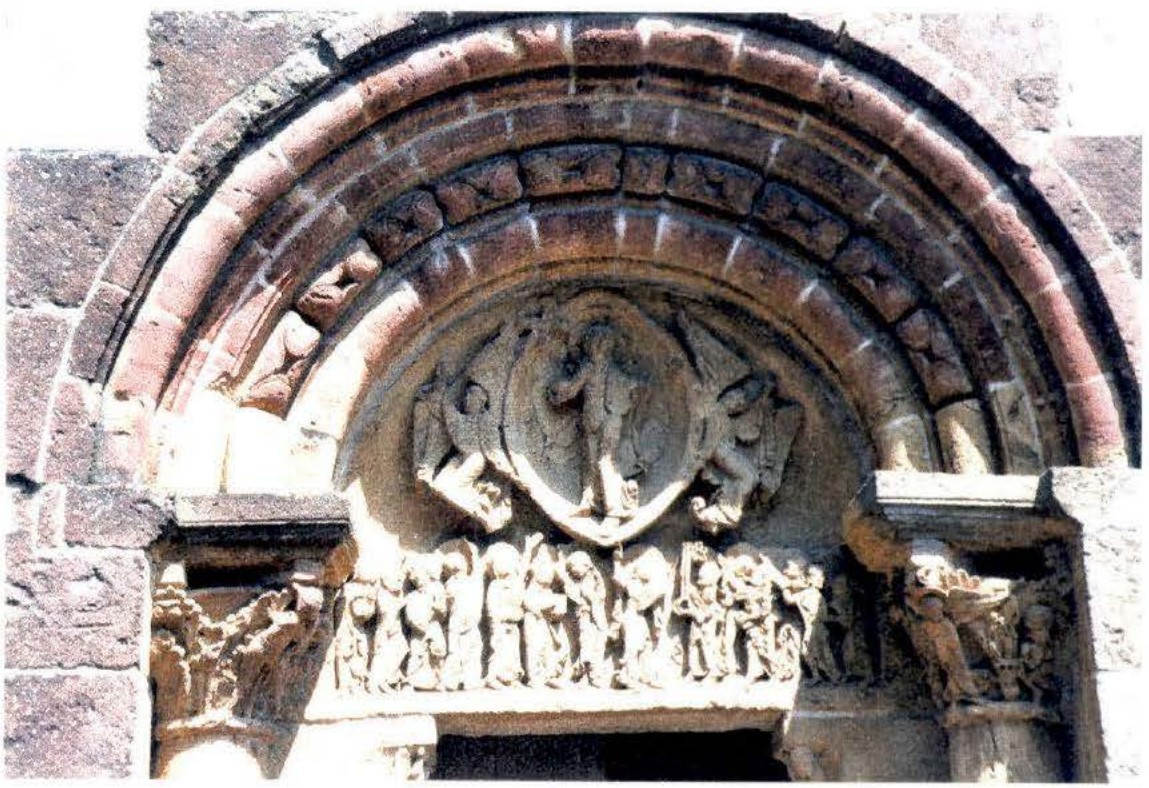

Fig. 10: Ascension of Christ - Tympanum of the Church of Montceaux-l'Étoile, France

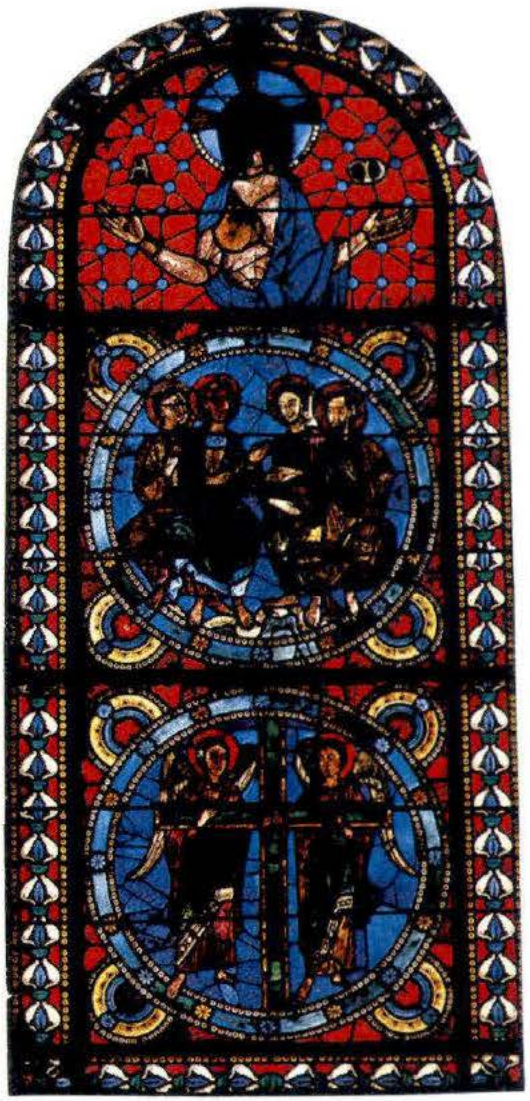

Fig. 11: Bust of the Resurrected Christ - Last Judgment Window - Cathedral of St. Julien at Le Mans, France

Fig. 12: Christ in Majesty - Rose Window of the Last Judgment - Collegiate Church of Mantes-La-Jolie, France

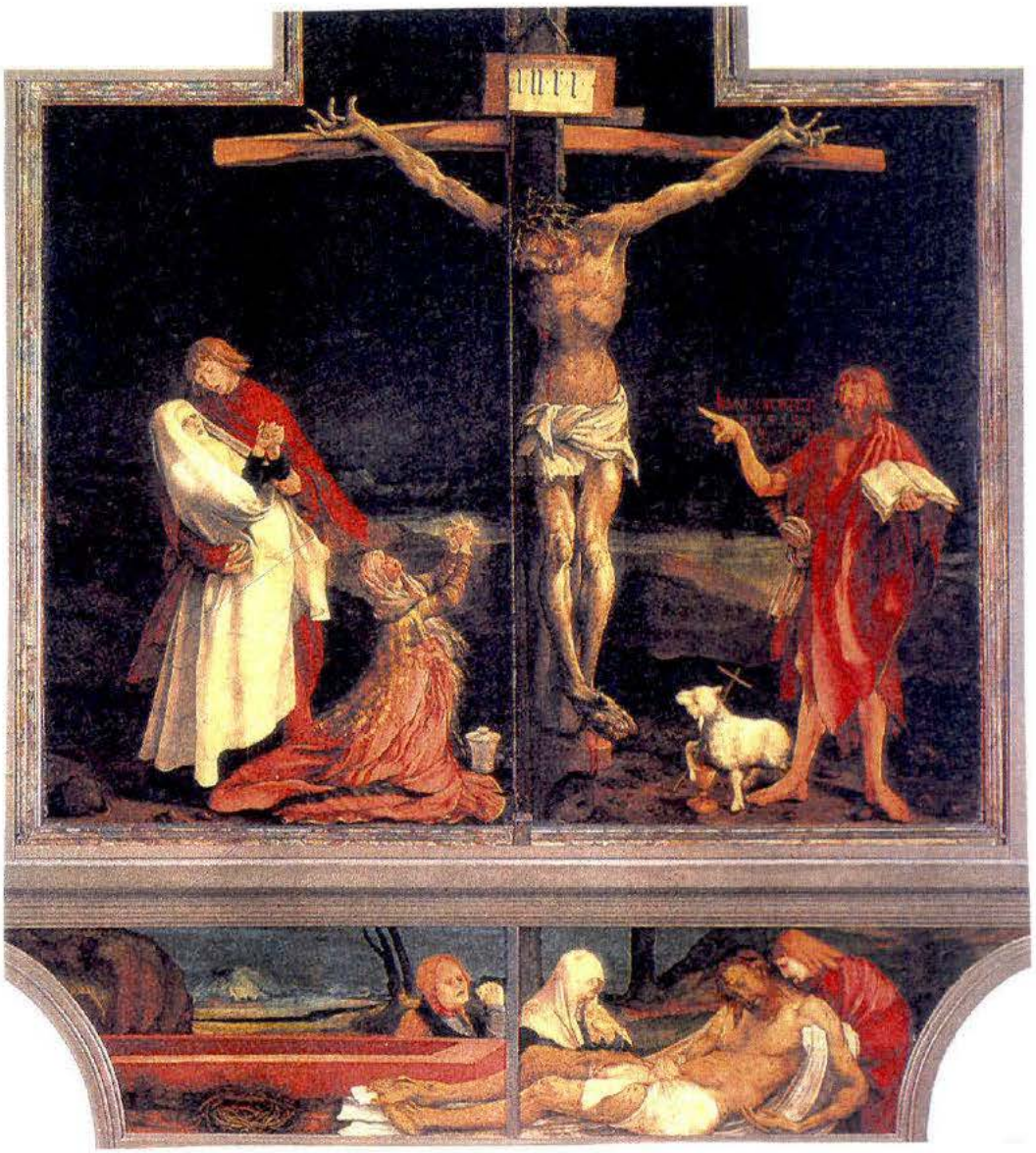

Fig. 13: Grünewald (Mathias von Aschaffenburg) - Crucifixion with St. Sebastian and St. Anthony - Detail of Issenheim Altarpiece

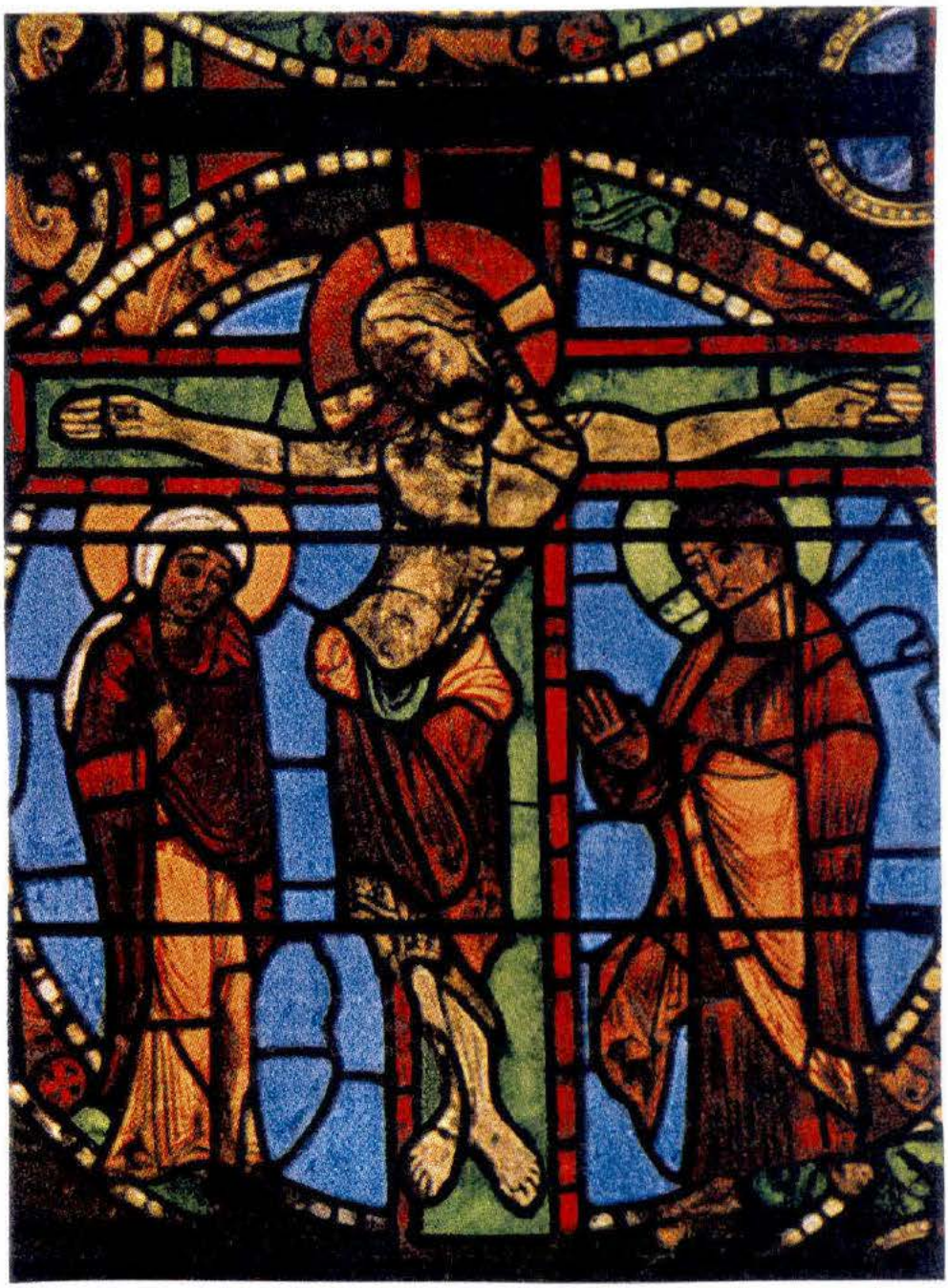

Fig. 14: Crucifixion - Detail of Passion Window - Western Façade - Notre Dame Cathedral at Chartres, France

Fig. 15: Crucifixion - Detail of Redemption Window - Notre Dame Cathedral at Chalons-en-Champagne, France

Fig. 16: Scourging at the Pillar - Detail of the Passion Window - Notre Dame Cathedral at Chartres, France

Fig. 17: The Ascension - Rabbula Gospels

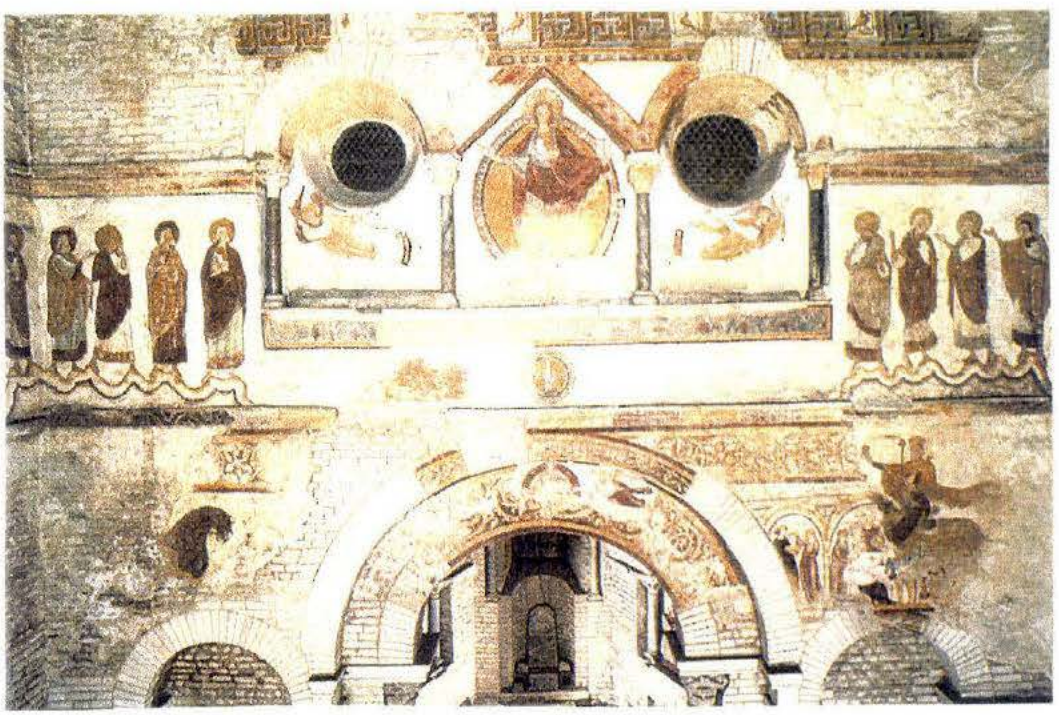

Fig. 18: The Ascension - Detail of Painting on Eastern Wall - Baptistery of St. John at Poitiers, France

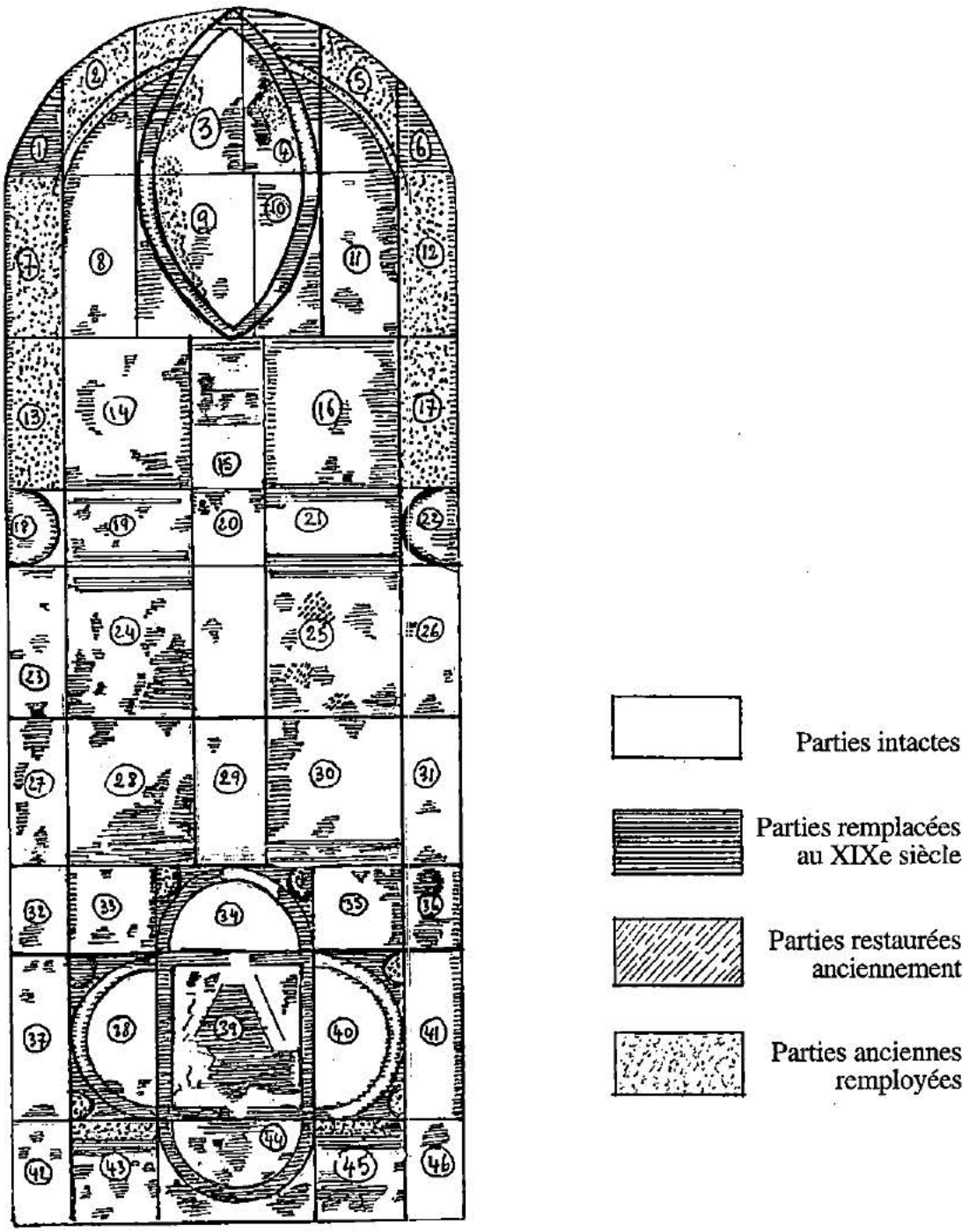

Fig. 19: Copy of Sketch of the Crucifixion Window - From Original by E. Rayon

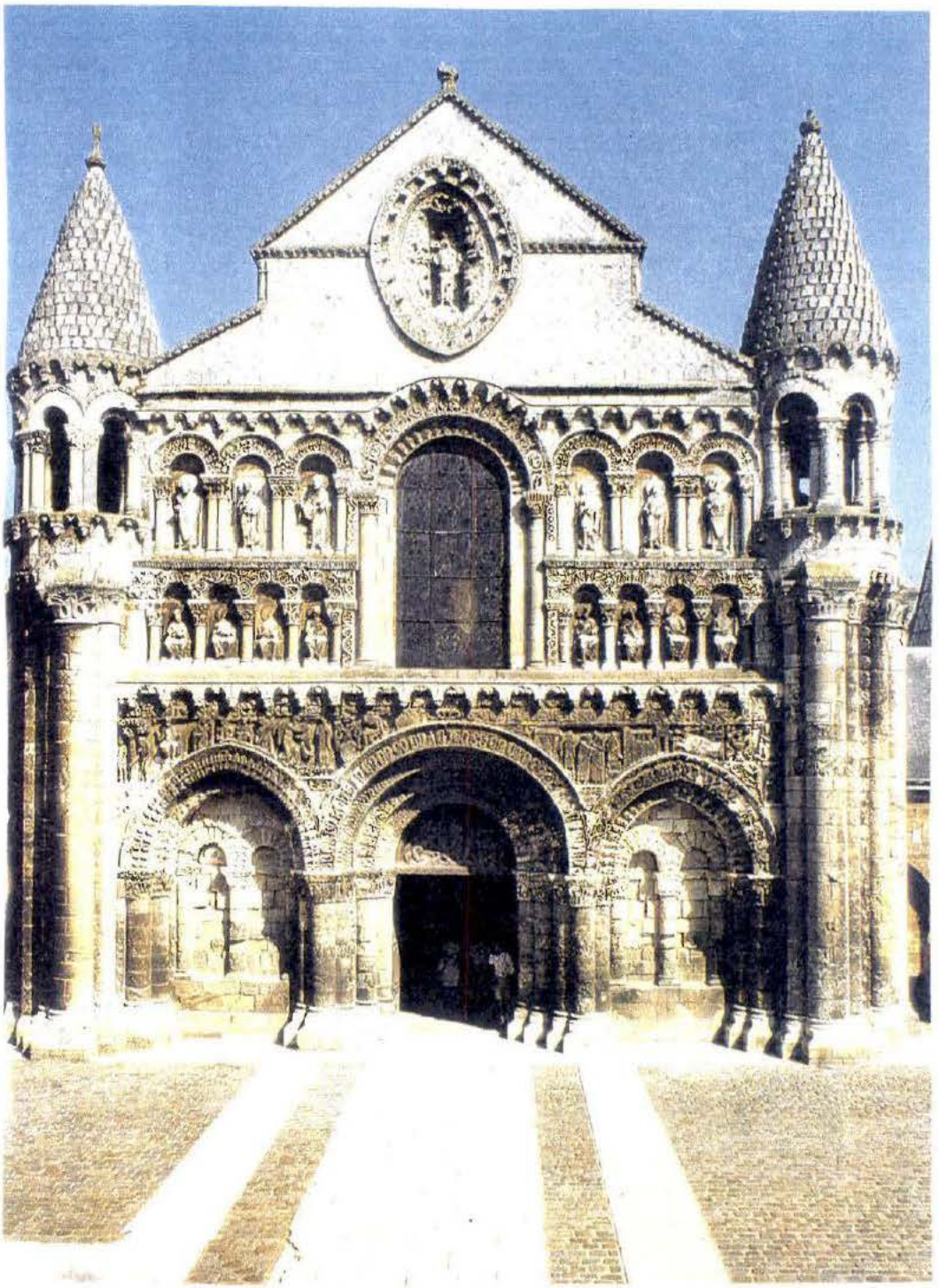

Fig. 20: Christ in Majesty - Ascension - Façade of the Church of Notre-Dame-la-Grande at Poitiers, France

Fig. 21: Crucifixion of St. Peter - Nave of the Church of St. Genest at Lavardin, France

Fig. 22: Calendar of Souvigny - Detail - Musée of Souvigny. Souvigny, France

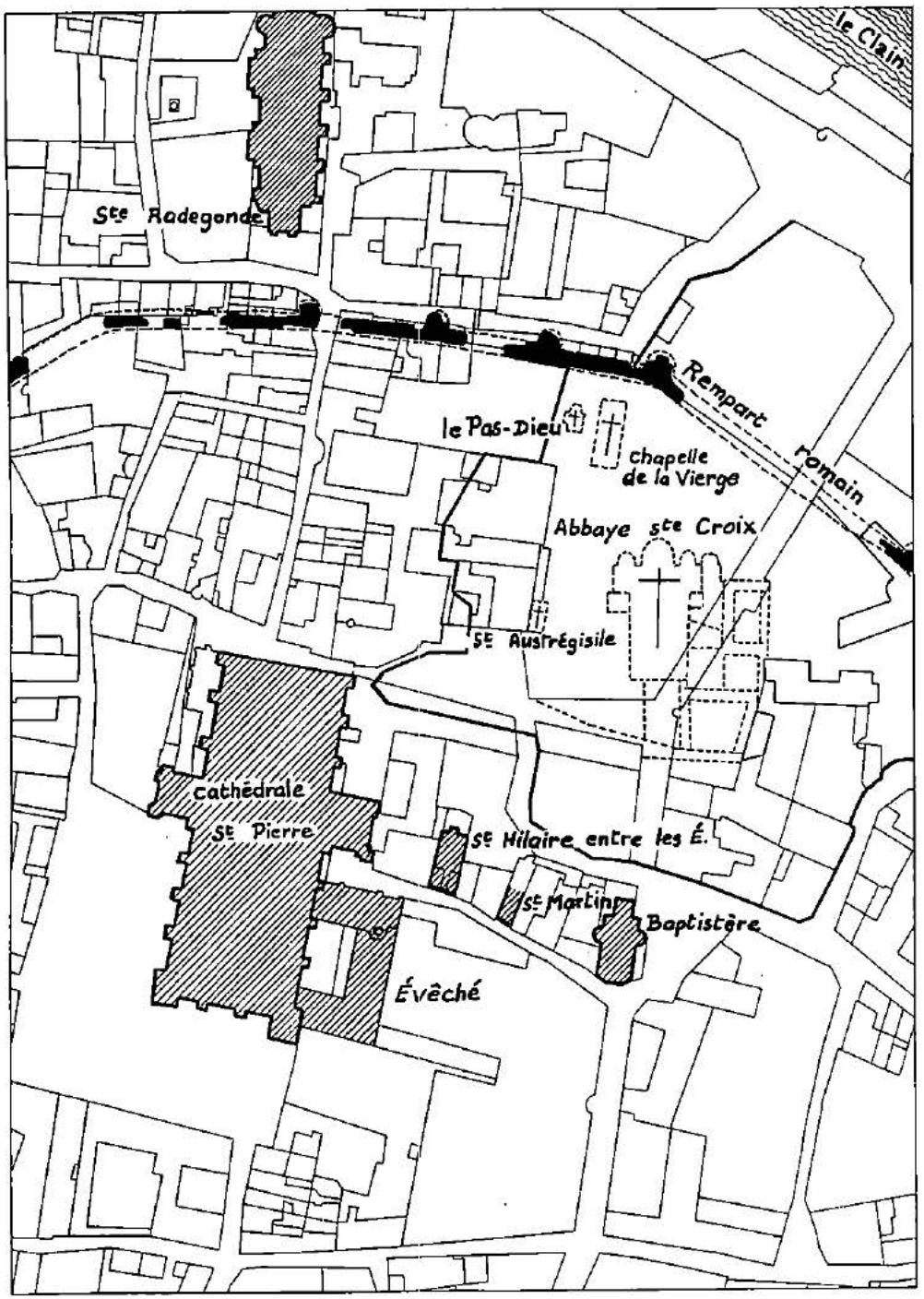

Fig. 23: Plan of Eastern Area of Medieval Poitiers. From "Parcellaire de l'Ancien Plan Cadastral."

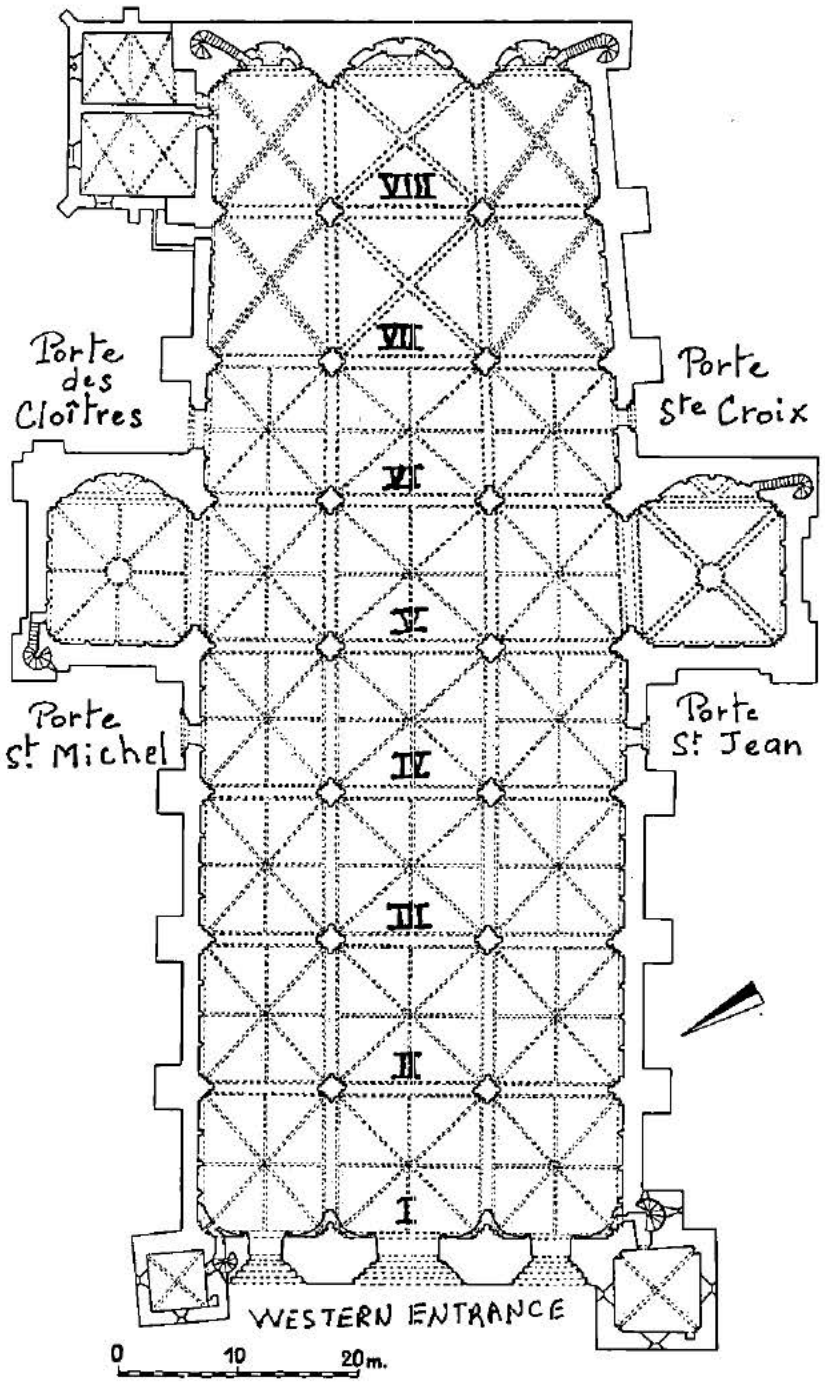

Fig. 24: Plan of the Cathedral of St. Pierre. Poitiers, France

Fig. 25: Head of a Queen from Central Portal of Abbey Church of St. Denis - Collection Jean Osouf. Paris, France

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