Stained Glass and Liturgy: The Uses and Limits of an Analogy

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Throughout the history of the study of medieval art, scholars have made productive use of hermeneutic analogies.¹ In this way of thinking, certain works of art or certain categories of artwork are juxtaposed comparatively with other nonvisual medieval objects or other nonvisual cultural categories. There is perhaps nothing surprising about such an interpretive approach. One might say that these scholarly methods stem from the basic assumption that any given historical era contains a set of worldviews and a body of cultural artifacts that exhibit mutual, albeit complex, cross-influences. Thus, two cultural products from the same milieu may not have direct causal or historical connections, but instead may exhibit analogous features in form and/or content. It may even be argued that such an assumption is a requirement for much historical interpretation and interdisciplinary work in the humanities.

Taking a broad survey of the historiography of medieval art, such hermeneutic analogies have most often taken the form of image-text oppositions. Thus, for example, one regularly reads in the scholarship that public church art of the Middle Ages should be understood as a kind of visual sermon, directed principally toward the laity. Responsibility for this repeated recourse to homiletics and the perceived didacticism of medieval religious art may be laid at the feet of Pope Gregory the Great (d. 604), whose defense of Christian images for didactic purposes was echoed by medieval authors across the centuries.² It is rarer, although not unheard of, to see an actual work of art from the period compared to a specific, contemporaneous sermon.³ Thus, the art: sermon analogy gets used mostly in a loose fashion; in this way of thinking, the two cultural categories are roughly similar in their methods and goals, if not in the details of their specific manifestations.

Analogies are used regularly in the study of medieval architecture as well. Thus, for Erwin Panofsky, Gothic architecture was scholastic.⁴ The details of Gothic wall elevations could be seen as homologous to the structure of scholastic argumentation at that time. For Panofsky, the relationship was direct, even causal; today, scholars have tended to loosen Panofsky’s causal relation to form an analogy. In this spirit, the

Panofsky thesis was reformulated by Charles Radding and William Clark in their *Medieval Architecture, Medieval Learning*. In their study, architecture and scholasticism were viewed as analogous arenas of cognition and method, process, and product.

I propose to consider how stained glass and liturgy may be understood as analogous modes for representing (or re-presenting) the sacred in the central Middle Ages. My concern here is not only to discuss how individual liturgies may have shaped individual windows or glass programs but also to consider how our approach to each object-category may be mutually enlightening for the study of the other. A related question to be considered is how a parallel study of both liturgy and iconography may inform our current understanding of the social lives of medieval churches and the ways in which they created layers of meaning for their viewing publics.

This notion that glazing and liturgy may have worked collaboratively in the central Middle Ages is, in the end, not an especially daring claim, nor is it an especially unusual methodological approach. In fact, the study of stained glass has already been shaped fundamentally by analogy as a scholarly method. In recent years, analogical criticism has arguably been an important component of what may be called the narratological turn in the study of medieval windows. Scholars such as Wolfgang Kemp and Alyce Jordan, to name only two, have investigated the narrative modalities of glass in the 13th century; their work has uncovered rich parallels between windows and medieval rhetoric and preaching. Other scholars, such as Colette Manhes and Jean-Paul Deremble, have brought a structuralist methodology to the field, an approach that draws analogies between textual storytelling, especially in medieval hagiography, and images in glass.

In proposing that liturgy (specifically, liturgy as performance) be read as a practice analogous to the creation and presentation of glass, the idea of an analogy becomes an optic or a frame for enhanced understanding. My construction of this analogy (glass:liturgy) will admittedly be loose, but it is a looseness that I believe is not without rigor. In addition, I hope to generate some friction with this juxtaposition. When two objects are brought together in an analogy, one needs to consider their differences as well as their similarities. Those differences should, when appropriate, be used to allow the analogy in question to break down. Ideally, the study of liturgy as a performative mode will help us to see glass differently as a representational mode; conversely, the study of glass should potentially alter the ways in which we understand liturgy.

There is, of course, already a body of scholarship connecting glazing and liturgy. For the most part, scholars have considered causal relationships—how, for example, the choice of window subjects may have been influenced by the placement of altars and the ownership of relics. Claudine Lautier’s recent work on Chartres is an

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important example of research in this area, but other scholars have made important contributions. Margot Fassler, for example, has mapped out the liturgical underpinnings of specific iconographies, such as the Jesse tree, in both word and music.

In what new directions might this glass:liturgy analogy be taken? One might, for example, turn away from causal connections and look for parallels and resonances between the two fields. In what follows, two such resonant parallels will be considered. The windows discussed here date from the 12th and 13th centuries and can be described as either narrative or diagrammatic in content; the liturgical examples date from the same period. Whenever possible, the glass under consideration will be compared to liturgical texts found in manuscripts made for the church in question, as close in date as possible.


Lautier ([note 8], p. 21) notes that there was a Mary Magdalene altar at Chartres, in the nave on the north side, near her window. It may, however, postdate the glass. She also observes that relics of the saint were held at Chartres (pp. 11, 14, 26–27, and 51), and that there was a chapel in the crypt dedicated to her (pp. 19 and 27).

window at Chartres also contains one of the earliest visualizations of the legend that Mary died in France (Fig. 3, rows 7 and 8).

In keeping with the biblical narrative, Mary is shown as the first person to see the resurrected Christ as recounted in the Gospel of John (Fig. 2, row 5), and she is shown as “apostle to the apostles,” informing them of the Resurrection (Fig. 2, row 6). This epithet was given to Mary in the central Middle Ages to honor her special status among the earliest followers of Christ. In the subsequent scenes, Mary is shown arriving in France, the alleged site of her death (Fig. 3, row 7). The window concludes with her funeral and entombment, and the arrival of her soul in heaven, escorted by angels to see the throne of God (Fig. 3, rows 8 and 9).

The window omits the well-known medieval legend about Mary Magdalene’s retirement to the wilderness to live out her final years as a hermit. Instead, her arrival in France is juxtaposed with scenes depicting a bishop preaching to locals (Fig. 3, row 7). The bishop in question is most likely Maximinus, who, according to the apocryphal sources, traveled with Mary Magdalene, Martha, and Lazarus to France from the Holy Land. He then became the bishop of Aix. Lazarus, Mary’s brother in this version of events,
became bishop of Marseilles. Thus, one could potentially identify the bishop depicted in the window as Lazarus, but the figure in question is more likely Maximinus, because it is the latter who is mentioned in the Chartrain liturgy (more on this below).  

The window might be said to perform a commemoration of Mary’s life, or, in a related notion, it might be said to be the end product of a workshop’s performance as artisans and iconographers, re-presenting in a modern fashion the saint’s biography to their patrons and the audience for the window inside the cathedral. Along similar lines, the clergy at Chartres performed an annual commemoration of Mary’s life on July 22. There was likely a connection here between liturgy and window on several levels. The liturgical texts for the feast, which today can be recovered in medieval missals and breviaries, may very well have inspired the contents of the window, with its emphasis on biblical, post-biblical,

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and posthumous hagiography. Such events are, in fact, recounted in the surviving Chartrain liturgical manuscripts.\textsuperscript{15}

Beyond these broad characterizations, however, a narrative window such as this may be said to be performative on multiple levels. The makers of the window have, in a basic sense, performed or retold the saint’s life; the same may be said of the viewer who makes sense of the window, a notion I borrow from Madeline Caviness.\textsuperscript{16} At the same time, virtual performances are taking place within individual panels. The men and women represented in the window perform actions, many of them with anachronistic ecclesiastical or ritualistic components; thus, the term \textit{performative} is especially appropriate in this narrative context.

In this fashion, a hermeneutics of analogy, pairing window and liturgy, could potentially open up at least two levels of meaning: (1) the

\textsuperscript{15} In studying the feast of Mary Magdalene at Chartres, the following facsimile and manuscripts were consulted: \textit{Missale carnotense: Chartres codex 320: Faksimile}, ed. David Hiley, Monumenta monodica medii aevi, v. 4, Kassel and New York: Bärenreiter, 1992; and Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. lat. 17310 (missal), ms. lat. 1265 (breviary), and ms. lat. 1053 (breviary).

\textsuperscript{16} Caviness [note 7], p. 124.
liturgy for Mary’s feast day parallels the window in a broad sense, and (2) individual moments in the visual narrative also have a liturgical or quasi-liturgical character to them. For example, the window emphasizes not only Mary Magdalene but also a bishop, Maximinus, who is shown evangelizing the people of Gaul through preaching and also as the officiant at Mary’s funeral. The virtual laity and other members of the clergy in the window become idealized performers of Mary Magdalene’s cult, depicted in acts of devotional commemoration. In short, they create a community of viewers who are participants in the performed life of the saint, acting arguably as virtual analogues for the clergy and laity performing the liturgy within the cathedral of Chartres and its environs. As we will see below, this narratological feature of implied liturgical communities is not unique to this particular window.

If one chooses to interpret the window through the liturgical optic I am advocating, Maximinus should be seen as the window’s secondary protagonist. This is not such a far-fetched idea as it may seem at first glance; Maximinus was, in fact, regarded as a saint in the Middle Ages (his feast day was June 8). In the breviary readings found in medieval Châlons manuscripts for the feast day of Mary Magdalene, Maximinus is credited with overseeing the creation of her tomb, which he purportedly had decorated with a representation of the washing and anointing of Christ’s feet in the house of Simon.17 He thus becomes an iconographer as well as the curator of her cult site, where miracles take place. It may be said that Maximinus’s role as iconographer is not so different from the role of liturgical composers (and window designers) in that period.18 Liturgies also create virtual images in the minds of their performers and audiences. The episodic nature of the individual readings for a feast day such as Mary Magdalene’s, which had nine lessons at Chartres in the Middle Ages, creates a series of narrative moments akin to the structure of narrative windows at that time.

In the end, both the liturgy for a saint’s feast day and a hagiographic window such as this should be thought of as performances that represent the life of the saint. Both artifacts are created via conventions—the conventions of liturgy and the conventions of glass and image-making at that time. Representation or representation works to re-sanctify the saint, her remains, her cult, etc. It keeps her alive virtually in the devotional culture of the period and in the minds of individual Christians. In this respect, a window and a liturgical performance are examples of mediation, connecting the believer and the saint in heaven.19

In medieval Christianity, mediation between the earthly and the heavenly was inextricably linked with the notion of intercession. During both the Mass and the Office of Mary Magdalene at Chartres, the following short prayer was recited: “Grant to us, most merciful Father, that just as the blessed Mary Magdalene obtained pardon for her sins by loving our Lord Jesus Christ above all things, so may she obtain for us in the presence of thine eternal mercy a blessing.”20 The window itself provides a visual analogue for this liturgical request for intercession. Upon Mary’s death, the bishop Maximinus becomes a mediator between the saint and the people. He is a facilitator of the saint’s intercession in that he provides a burial space for the

17. See, for example, BnF ms. lat. 1265, fol. 270r.
20. “Largire nobis clementissime pater quod sicut beata Maria Magdalena dominum nostrum Iesum Christum super omnia diligendo suorum obtinuit veniam peccaminum ita nobis apud misericordiam tuam sempiternam impetret beatitudinem.” See Hiley [note 15], fol. 387r-v and BnF ms. lat. 17310, fol. 242v.
saint, which helps to ensure the survival of her cult. In the actual performance of the liturgy during the Middle Ages, the hope for intercession was voiced by the clergy; window and ritual thus collaborate in the request for intercession, and both position the clergy as vital intermediaries for lay Christians desiring a connection to the saint. With its two protagonists and its narrative movement from the life of Mary Magdalene to the importance of Maximinus as the bishop entrusted with her remains, the window can thus be read along with other contemporaneous windows dedicated to bishop-saints, a common category of narrative window at that time.\(^{21}\) With its episcopal emphasis, the Mary Magdalene window at Chartres works in a performative sense to map itself back onto the medieval world, the world of the cathedral and its environs, a notion to be explored further in the next section of this article.\(^ {22}\)

**Spatiality**

Medieval Christianity’s mediation of the sacred via art and liturgy also functions to transform space and place, and it is spatiality that forms the second thematic strand in my consideration of glass and liturgy as analogous object-fields in the central Middle Ages.\(^ {23}\) Here, both fields may be thought of as spatial practices that manifest the sacred in specific forms; once more, the analogy between glass and liturgy should be applied flexibly but with rigor. For example, architecture constitutes the foundational frame for windows as mediators of the sacred and for liturgy as staged performance. In both cases, the art and liturgy of church spaces in the central Middle Ages activate spaces and transform them. In both cases, the process is complex and varies over time and place.

At some sites, programs of glass worked holistically to transform spaces virtually, giving them added levels of meaning. At Canterbury Cathedral, for example, the ambulatory of Trinity Chapel, which contained Thomas Becket’s shrine from 1220, was lined with windows depicting the saint’s miracles as well as events from his life.\(^ {24}\) The miracle windows, especially, are rooted in a discourse on the sacred that is, at its heart, spatial; miracles take place both at the tomb and elsewhere. Seven such miracle windows survive in various states of preservation at Canterbury, cataloguing some of the miracles that were said to have taken place after Becket’s death in 1170. In addition, two windows seem to have been devoted to the actual life of the saint, thus bringing together his deeds and his cult in a typically medieval fashion. The scenes of the miracles map the saint’s intercessory power onto the landscape of medieval Christendom. Visitors to the tomb were enfolded into this discourse of intercession and transformation. A potentially complex relationship between virtuality and reality is thus created as the quasi-ritualized behavior of pilgrims bridges the gap between past actions and present desires.\(^ {25}\)

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22. On liturgical temporality, see Fassler [note 18].


At Reims Cathedral, the glass installed in the nave clerestory underscored Reims's status as the coronation church of France. Windows here featured figures of the kings of France placed over the archbishops of Reims. In the clerestory rosettes, figures of Christ and Solomon were used as examples of ideal kingship suspended above the actual French monarchs who were anointed in the space. Thus, at both Canterbury and Reims, the medieval viewer was sutured into a rich space of history where the particular was joined to the universal; the resulting transformations were defined in terms both spatial and temporal. Liturgical and paraliturgical actions further helped to actualize these spaces, bringing art and ritual together to transform the ecclesiastical spaces and to make them meaningful.

In the remainder of this article, I would like to return to the topic of narrative windows and to consider in particular their virtual spatialities and the ways in which those spatialities may be examined through a liturgical optic. Again, a single example will be used to gauge the potential advantages of this hermeneutic. There is at Chartres Cathedral a 13th-century window dedicated to the lives of Saints Savinian and Potentian (Figs. 4–6). It is located in the chapel of the martyrs on the north side of the cathedral ambulatory.

According to Christian tradition, Savinian and Potentian were martyrs of the fourth century who were credited with founding the diocese of Sens (in the Middle Ages, the diocese of Chartres fell under the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Sens). It was commonly asserted during the Middle Ages that both martyrs were among the so-called 72 disciples of Christ. Their window at Chartres is composed of 11 rows, with two individual scenes in each row (reading from bottom to top). However, there may be some disordering and some confusion in identifying the scenes and their original order. There are several donor images, as well as a secondary narrative involving a female saint who has traditionally been identified as Modeste, a martyr from Chartres.

The first row of the window contains, unusually for Chartres, both a narrative scene and a donor image, in this case a mason (Fig. 4). The narrative scene shows Christ blessing Savinian and Potentian, who are probably being presented by Saint Peter (according to tradition, it was Peter, in Rome, who sent Savinian and Potentian to evangelize Gaul). In the second row, it is Peter who blesses Savinian and Potentian, as well as a third missionary (likely Altinus, one of the pair’s followers), and the three missionaries arrive at the city of Sens. Subsequent rows emphasize the Christianization of Sens and neighboring cities by both the window’s titular saints and their followers. The third row shows the conversion of figures inside a house, as well as the baptism of two followers, generally identified as Serotinus and Eodaldus, who according to tradition are made deacons and later themselves evangelize Chartres, Orléans, and Paris.

The fourth row shows Savinian, dressed as a donor image, in this case a mason (Fig. 4). The narrative scene shows Christ blessing Savinian and Potentian, who are probably being presented by Saint Peter (according to tradition, it was Peter, in Rome, who sent Savinian and Potentian to evangelize Gaul). In the second row, it is Peter who blesses Savinian and Potentian, as well as a third missionary (likely Altinus, one of the pair’s followers), and the three missionaries arrive at the city of Sens. Subsequent rows emphasize the Christianization of Sens and neighboring cities by both the window’s titular saints and their followers. The third row shows the conversion of figures inside a house, as well as the baptism of two followers, generally identified as Serotinus and Eodaldus, who according to tradition are made deacons and later themselves evangelize Chartres, Orléans, and Paris.

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28. Lautier [note 8], p. 19) mentions an altar to Savinian and Potentian as one of the five main altars in the crypt. She also notes that the cathedral owned relics of the two saints (pp. 24 and 52). On the origins of their cult at Chartres, see Yves Delaporte, “Les Saints Savinien et Potentien et leur culte dans le diocèse de Chartres,” La Voix de Notre-Dame de Chartres, v. 66, November 1922, pp. 171–175. More generally, see Augustin Fliche, Les Vies de saint Savinien, premier évêque de Sens: Étude critique suivie d’une édition de la plus ancienne vita, Paris: Société Française d’Imprimerie et de Librairie, 1912.
30. For a liturgical reading that mentions Serotinus and Eodaldus as deacons, see Paris, BnF ms. lat. 15182 (a Parisian breviary of the 15th century), fol. 400v.
Row five shows Peter and Paul appearing in a night vision to Savinian, and two of the saint’s followers appearing before a ruler (Fig. 5). Row six shows a baptism and the building of a church. Row seven shows five saints before a city, and a bishop-saint (probably Savinian) with two nimbed companions. These last three scenes may be thought of as deliberately vague, for as we will see, the liturgical readings used to celebrate Savinian and Potentian’s feast day mention multiple cities, multiple followers, and multiple persecutions being part of the evangelization of Gaul. Row eight depicts an interrogation and a martyrdom. The interrogator is likely the local governor Severus, and the martyrs are probably Savinian and his follower Victorinus (a local convert), although there is some room for debate here as well.

This eighth row is perhaps an end point of the narrative, for the remaining scenes in the

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31. This event is also mentioned in BnF ms. lat. 15182, fol. 401r.
window turn to other themes and concerns. The ninth row shows donor figures, and rows 10 and 11 depict the scenes identified as the life of Modeste (Fig. 6). According to the textual tradition, she visited Eodaldus and Altinus while they were imprisoned at Chartres. In the window, however, she is shown attending to three male saints in prison. The final row of scenes depicts her martyrdom.

If we turn to the liturgical texts used to celebrate the feast day of Savinian and Potentian at Chartres and in other dioceses, we find striking similarities not only in content but also in narrative structuration. Breviaries from Chartres, as well as from Sens and Paris, typically feature nine readings for this feast day. The specific content of these readings varies from manuscript to manuscript, but certain themes

FIG. 5. Savinian and Potentian window (rows 5–8), first quarter of the 13th century. Cathedral of Notre-Dame, Chartres, France. (Photo courtesy of Painton Cowan)

32. The manuscripts consulted for the feast day of Savinian and Potentian include three breviaries for the use of Chartres (Paris, Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal, ms. 103, fols. 241r-242r; Paris, BnF, ms. lat. 1265, fols. 336v-336v; and Paris, BnF, ms. lat. 1053, fols. 386v-387v), a breviary for the use of Sens (Paris, BnF, ms. lat. 1028, fols. 257r-257v), and a breviary for the use of Paris (Paris, BnF, ms. lat. 15182, fols. 400v-401v). The latter two are available online at gallica.bnf.fr.
and textual strategies are commonplace. The breviary readings typically unfold as a kind of sacred genealogy. Peter sends Savinian and Potentian to Gaul. They take with them a follower (Altinus); almost immediately upon reaching their destination, new followers join them (Eodaldus, Serotinus, Victorinus). Altinus and Eodaldus evangelize Orléans, Chartres, and Paris. They not only convert residents of those cities but also build churches there; for example, Agoadus and Agilbertus are mentioned as specific converts in Paris. Victorinus and Potentian evangelize Troyes and build a church there. Potentian succeeds Savinian as bishop of Sens when the latter is martyred. All of these characters are persecuted and then martyred by different officials at different places and times.33

FIG. 6. Savinian and Potentian window (rows 9–11), first quarter of the 13th century. Cathedral of Notre-Dame, Chartres, France. (Photo courtesy of Painton Cowan)

33. The persecutors are named in the liturgical sources as Severus (in Sens), Quirinus (in Chartres), Egrippinus (in Paris), and Montanus (in Troyes). An examination of the manuscripts cited in note 32 reveals that each lists a different combination of these named authorities.
Overall, the genealogy articulated in the breviary readings can also be said to create a kind of sacred map, linking the martyrs to the different cities that they evangelized through baptism, preaching, and church building. The generic scenes in the Chartres window thus resonate with the liturgy; the window’s two titular saints and their followers perform ritualized and/or repetitive actions that can be interpreted as taking place in different cities at different times. Both space and time fold into each other in manifold ways in this mode of historical narration.

Turning to a Chartres missal from that period, one sees that the prayers and chants used for the feast day Mass of Savinian and Potentian are drawn from the body of prayers known as the Common of Saints. The prayers used here are especially popular for feasts dedicated to multiple martyrs. These generic, multi-use texts thus unite Savinian, Potentian, and their followers with other groups of martyrs of the Christian tradition, just as the window at Chartres joins Savinian and Potentian to the other martyrs depicted in glass in the martyrs’ chapel, where Savinian and Potentian’s achievements are commemorated.

How, then, does the parallel reading of window and liturgy help us to see more richly the cultural work performed in the commemoration of Savinian and Potentian at Chartres Cathedral in the 13th century? The window itself is structured not so much as a linear narrative but more as a loose association of iconic scenes featuring a relatively large group of martyr-saints for a window of that time. The saints generally perform easily identifiable acts of evangelization. Some of these feature a liturgical or quasi-liturgical component (the baptisms, the preaching, the creation of churches, the blessing of a city). In the actual liturgy, as performed at Chartres in the Middle Ages, the clergy would have voiced the lives of Savinian, Potentian, and their companions, thus placing the two bodies of clergy in what may be thought of as parallel spaces—real and virtual. In the window, Savinian and his followers form a kind of bishop-and-chapter corporate body. They are shown as something of an ideal hierarchy here. It is an ideological portrait of a harmonious clerical body. There is thus a kind of temporal play here between past and present, with the clergy at Chartres standing as the successors of the saints.

The virtual emphasis on urban spaces in the window and in the liturgical readings is also worth noting briefly. Sens and perhaps other cities constitute the setting for the majority of the scenes in the window; the events of the saints and their companions’ lives transform the city and its spaces into sacred realms. This can be seen as broadly analogous to the 13th-century liturgy at Chartres in which the clergy processed to various sites of the city recounting the stories of Christianity as included in the liturgical offices of the time.

For example, during the three so-called Minor Rogation days, the clergy of the cathedral processed to multiple sites within the city, including three to five different churches on each day. These liturgies had a markedly penitential

34. See, for example, Paris, BnF ms. lat. 17310 (a noted Chartres missal of the mid-13th century). One can then use the CANTUS database (cantusdatabase.org) to study the common chants found for Savinian and Potentian’s feast (e.g., “Justi epulentur et exultent” and “Justorum animae in manu dei sunt”).

35. The other windows in the chapel are dedicated to Theodore and Vincent, Pantaleon, Stephen, and Chéron.

36. Jordan (in “Stained Glass and the Liturgy” [note 6]) writes of the conflation of “past and present” in the Sainte-Chapelle windows so as to articulate a tangible continuation of sacred history in contemporary life” (p. 279). This is not unlike what is happening in the Savinian and Potentian window at Chartres. On the complex relations between history, liturgy, and performance, see Susan Boynton, “Writing History with Liturgy,” in Representing History [note 18], pp. 187–200 and 252–256.


38. This feast at Chartres is discussed in Guest, “Space” [note 10], pp. 222–223.
character to them (as they did throughout the Latin West), but they were also used to pray for good harvests (also typical). Thus, an image such as Savinian marking the city walls of Sens with a cross would have resonated with viewers as having contemporaneous analogues. In short, the narrative windows at Chartres and other churches of that time produced specific cultural geographies through their use of virtual spaces, just as the stational liturgies of these cathedrals produced similar cultural geographies through the staging of rituals in a wide range of actual places. Viewing these different cultural geographies (the virtual vs. the real) as fundamentally homologous allows us to write an enriched history of the Gothic cathedral as a space of richly embodied cultural narratives.

Just as the windows of that time depict a wide range of sacred spaces, the ecclesiastical spaces of the central Middle Ages were regularly subdivided into complex sets of performative sites. These locations included choir enclosures, altars, chapels, and reliquaries/relics. This fragmenting of the church interior allowed for the creation of sacred itineraries within the context of liturgical practice. Alongside this, stational liturgies regularly required cathedral clergy to venture outside their home churches into the spaces of their cities and beyond.39

All of these spatial practices, architectural decoration and liturgy, seek in that period to remake the spaces of the medieval world in the name of the sacred. At a time of growing secularization in Europe, we should not underestimate the importance of such a project. Cities, for example, were sites of conflict and competition at that time; in this new world, the authority of cathedral clergy was being challenged on multiple levels, from the social to the economic to the religious.40

**Conclusion**

As a way to bring this discussion to a close, it is worth considering, if only briefly, how we might begin to define the limitations of this glass: liturgy analogy. Where does the homology fail? Many answers could be given. The above analysis has concentrated principally on narrative picture cycles in stained glass. In taking a broader view, thinking about such windows in the 12th and 13th centuries in conjunction with contemporaneous liturgies, it strikes me that the glass is at once a more heterogeneous body of material, arguably more modern, and perhaps more engaged with the world outside the material enclosure of the church.

This is not to say that liturgical hagiography in that period does not concern itself with the world outside the church walls—it certainly does. Glass artists in that period, however, would seem to have been intentionally reckoning with the changing secular world in ways that liturgy does not, even though we must not

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think of liturgy as static and rooted entirely in tradition at this time. The windows of that time show a remarkable interest in the details of everyday life—from donor images to the anachronistic presentation of saintly biographies. As an art of virtual spaces, the narrative windows of that period re-present the past, reviving it and reactivating it in complex ways. Past is mapped onto present in this anachronistic discourse of time and space. Within the conventions of the liturgy, some of this is seen as well, but to my mind the windows of the period are more emphatic in their modernism, something perhaps not as easily achieved in the Latin texts of the liturgy. In the end, one might say that the voices of the liturgy are present in the glass, but that many other voices speak there as well.

41. New feasts and new liturgies were, of course, created throughout the Middle Ages. On the related issue of how sermons were changing in that period, see Kemp [note 3], pp. 154–159.
43. See the work of Nagel and Wood [note 19].
44. For a critic of the notion of Gothic style as a form of medieval modern, see Paul Binski, “The Heroic Age of Gothic and the Metaphors of Modernism,” Gesta, v. 52, no. 1, 2013, pp. 3–19.