Christian Rite and Christian Drama in the Middle Ages
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ESSAY VI

From *Quem quaeritis* to Resurrection Play

I

Between the tenth and the twelfth centuries there is a marked increase in the number, variety, and complexity of extant liturgical dramas. This increase cannot be taken as evidence of gradual, incremental growth. As far as manuscript chronology goes, the history of the *Quem quaeritis* is one of long periods of stagnation alternating with abrupt and unexplained changes. To make the situation still more complicated, during the eleventh century, when the *Quem quaeritis* shows little or no change from tenth-century forms, Christmas plays appear both in simple and highly elaborate versions having the qualities of self-conscious drama. One complex Latin Resurrection play survives from the twelfth century; yet along with several elaborate Christmas plays this century produced complex Latin dramas on Lazarus, Daniel, and St. Nicholas, and two highly finished vernacular plays, the *Seinte Resureccion* and the famous *Mystère d'Adam*, which incorporates episodes on Cain and Abel and the prophets of Christ in what looks like a fragmentary Old Testament cycle.

This summary raises at least three fundamental questions. What justification is there for speaking of the development of liturgical drama as a slow, continuous growth from simple to elaborate forms? What evidence exists that the complex Resurrection play can be studied without consideration of the fact that complex Christmas plays precede it by as much as a hundred years? And is it proper to assume that Latin plays regularly precede their vernacular equivalents, in view of the fact that the earliest plays on Adam and Cain and Abel are in French?

Knowledge of the history of liturgical drama is heavily dependent on the manuscripts that have survived. Since the survival of manuscripts is a matter of chance, it is limited and tentative. On the other hand, the fact that many important manuscripts have undoubtedly been lost cannot justify indifference to the chronology of those we have. While chronology cannot solve all of the problems involved in the development of the Easter
play, it can serve as a frame to limit speculation by telling the critic, “This approach is contrary to available evidence”; or “This approach fails to take into account important precedents.” Once the chronological frame is established, the critic can proceed with some assurance to matters of literary form, dramatic technique, themes, influences, and the like—in short, to matters involving the relation of liturgical drama to drama in general.

II

The situation indicated by tenth-century manuscripts of the *Quem quaeritis* is extremely fluid. The nine surviving manuscripts are evenly divided between those intended for Easter Mass, those intended for matins, and those with ambiguous liturgical associations. The Mass texts have brief rubrics or none at all, and their dialogue consists of the angel’s query, the reply, the *Non est hic; ite nuntiate*, and either the *Resurrexit* (*Surrexit*) antiphon plus the *Resurrexi* Introit, or the *Resurrexi* by itself. Supplementary material is limited to commands (*Psallite, dicite, iubet Dominus*) and exclamations (*Hora est, eia, alleluia*). The *Regularis concordia* text, associated with matins, is much more elaborate. It has detailed instructions as to the method of presentation and acting of the piece, and it includes the *Resurrexit* antiphon, the angel’s command *Venie et videte*, and a second resurrection antiphon, *Surrexit Dominus*. The Winchester text is associated with the *Benedictio cerei*. Its rubrics are brief, but it has the fullest dialogue of any tenth-century version, and, in fact, is more developed than all but two eleventh-century versions. In addition to *Resurrexit Dominus* and *Venie et videte*, it includes the command *Cito euntes dicite*, followed by *Surrexit Dominus*. No Christmas or other plays survive from the tenth century, and it is probable that none existed.

There are a great many contrasts between the tenth and eleventh centuries. In contrast to the nine versions of the *Quem quaeritis* definitely assignable to the tenth century, some forty-five versions survive from the eleventh century.¹ Almost all of these are associated with either Easter Mass or matins. In other words, the fluidity of tenth-century placement has been replaced by a quite definite convention, a situation contrary to

¹ This and later counts are based on the texts and references in Young, *DMC*, I, *passim*. It is impossible to make an absolutely accurate count because several manuscripts are either of uncertain date or dated X–XII C. For simplicity, I have assigned texts dated XI C. and XI–XII C. to the eleventh century, and texts dated XII C. and XII–XIII C. to the twelfth century. For a more exact enumeration of the manuscripts, see Appendix II.
what one would expect if the origin of the *Quem quaeritis* were the Mass Introit or matins. The texts of the eleventh-century versions—with one exception—show no advance whatsoever over tenth-century versions. The Introit versions have few rubrics or none, and no Introit version carries the dialogue beyond the *Ite nuntiate* and the reply (*Resurrexit, Surrerxit, Resurrexi*). Some slight experimentation is evident in the supplementary antiphons. A text from Bobbio includes *Pascha nostrum . . . immolatus est* and *Hodie exultent iusti.* Texts from Limoges and Ripoll (XI–XII C.) include *En ecce completum est,* and three manuscripts, two from St. Gall and one from Bonona, include several antiphons evidently used as processions. One text, from Limoges, begins with *Ubi est Christus meus.*

The *Visitatio* manuscripts are equally undeveloped. Most are simply adaptations of the Introit version and lack even the elements found in the *Regularis concordia.* Only seven *Visitatio* texts are as complete as the *Regularis.* One of these is simply the eleventh-century manuscript of the *Regularis,* and four others are dated XI–XII C. No other *Visitatio* manuscripts unambiguously assignable to the eleventh century include the *Veni et videte,* and the only text which includes this and the *Cito euntes* together is the eleventh-century copy of the Winchester troper. Four texts show the same sort of experimentation with antiphons that is evident in the Introit versions. In three, *Et dicebant invicem: Quis revolvet* precedes the dialogue proper. The fourth is the *Visitatio* from Aquileia. This text, for which there is no tenth- or eleventh-century precedent, begins with *Quis revolvet,* emends o *Christicolae* to o *tremule mulieres,* and substitutes *cito euntes* for the traditional *Ite nuntiate.* In place of *Resurrexit Dominus,* the Marys sing *Ad monumentum venimus;* and in place of *Veni et videte* and *Cito euntes,* there are two antiphons related to the "race" of Peter and John (*Currebant duo* and *Cernitis, o socii)—the first appearance of these texts in liturgical drama.

This concludes the brief register of eleventh-century experiments with the *Quem quaeritis.* On the record, eleventh-century versions are less "developed" than tenth-century ones. Since only nine tenth-century manuscripts survive, in contrast to approximately forty-five eleventh-

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2 *DMC,* I, 207. These are marked *Item Trophi* and hence may be separate compositions.

3 *DMC,* I, 207, 209, 212, 226, 570, 571. The Ripoll text (p. 570) also begins with *Ubi est Christus.*

4 *DMC,* I, 581 (*Regularis*); and 263, 583, 590, 598.

5 *DMC,* I, 586.

6 *DMC,* I, 259, 263, 590.

7 *DMC,* I, 628.
century ones, it is impossible to ascribe this situation entirely to the vicissitudes of manuscript survival. The proper conclusion is that between the tenth and eleventh centuries, at the time when the placement of the *Quem quaeritis* was becoming codified, the dialogue of the piece was simplified along the lines established by the St. Gall manuscript of ca. 950. The Aquileia version suggests some slight progress toward increasing freedom of treatment, but it remains isolated. The tradition behind it cannot have been widespread.

The lack of development in the eleventh-century *Quem quaeritis* is placed in the sharpest possible relief if contrasted to the Christmas drama produced in the same period. Some twenty Christmas plays can be definitely assigned to the eleventh century. They are almost evenly divided between plays on the visit of the shepherds (*Officium Pastorum*) and plays on the adoration of the Magi (*Officium Stellae*). The shepherd plays are uniformly simple. They are all attached to the Introit of Christmas Mass, and their dialogue is modeled on the *Quem quaeritis*. The Magi plays are most frequently attached to matins and are much more diversified. Three texts, one of them dated X–XI C., are fragments of what must have fairly complete Nativity plays, and two texts, from Compiègne and Freising, are elaborate, self-conscious dramas that differ from all eleventh-century Easter texts in quality as well as length. Finally, the Freising manuscript, by joining the visit of the Magi to the visit of the shepherds, with a reference to the Slaughter of the Innocents, provides an early instance of the impulse to combine episodes into larger dramatic units. This same impulse is evident in manuscripts from Limoges and Einsiedeln (both XI–XII C.) in which Christmas episodes are grouped together instead of being separated by intervening liturgical texts. Although the number of eleventh-century Christmas manuscripts is less than half that of Easter manuscripts, five highly developed Christmas plays survive, as against not a single complex Easter play. The obvious conclusion is that no complex Easter plays have survived because none were written.

The situation in the twelfth century confirms this view. There are some thirty-five *Quem quaeritis* manuscripts from the period. Only one of these, a text from Ripoll, is in any way comparable in scope and technique to the five eleventh-century Christmas plays previously mentioned. All but nine of the texts simply continue the tradition established in the tenth

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8 *DMC*, II, 443–46.
9 *DMC*, II, 53–56 (Compiègne), 93–97 (Freising).
10 *DMC*, II, 453–54, 456 (Limoges); I, 598 (Einsiedeln fragments).
11 *DMC*, I, 678–81. I have not included the Einsiedeln text (I, 390–92) because it is dated XII–XIII C.
century, exhibiting no greater tendency to experiment with supplementary antiphons than is observed in eleventh-century texts. In the nine complex texts the race between Peter and John appears six times; the scene between Mary Magdalene and Christ in the garden (Hortulanus) appears four times, twice in conjunction with the Peregrini rather than the Resurrection play; and the Victima Paschali appears three times. In one of the texts, from Augsburg, the antiphon Currebant duo is the only addition to the traditional Visitatio text, and it is therefore less developed than the eleventh-century version from Aquileia. Three others (Vienna, Cracow, Graz) add the race and supplementary antiphons. A text from Sicily adds only the Planctus Mariae. In the other four texts innovations occur in groups. The St. Lambrecht Visitatio includes the race between Peter and John, the Victima Paschali, and two vernacular songs. This version marks the first use of vernacular singing in the Latin Easter play, although there is rather extensive French dialogue in the Limoges Sponsus (XI–XII C.) and French is used throughout the Trois Maries, La Seinte Resureccion, and the Mystere d'Adam. The Prague Visitatio includes the Hortulanus episode, followed by the race between Peter and John. The Ripoll manuscript, the most complex of the group, includes the Planctus Mariae, a spice-merchant scene with dialogue, the Hortulanus scene, and the scene on the road to Emmaus, the latter two separated from the earlier material by the rubric Versus de Pelegrinis. Finally, in a Sicilian manuscript following Norman usage, the Hortulanus and Victima Paschali are incorporated into an elaborate play labeled Versus ad faciendum Peregrinum.

All of these versions seem timid when placed against the background of developments in twelfth-century drama apart from the Latin Easter play. Rather full Latin plays survive on the themes of the appearance of Christ on the road to Emmaus (Peregrini), the visit of the Magi (Stellae), the Antichrist, Daniel, Lazarus, and St. Nicholas. The highly finished Mystere d'Adam, which is written in French and includes episodes on Cain and Abel and the prophets of Christ, comes from the twelfth century. If Grace Frank's dating of the vernacular Seinte Resureccion in the late twelfth century is accepted, a vernacular Easter play covering the period from the Deposition from the Cross to the appearance at Emmaus was

13 DMC, I, 310.
14 DMC, I, 32, 34, 629.
16 DMC, I, 363–65. For the Sicilian text, see I, 269.
16 DMC, I, 664–65.
17 DMC, I, 678–81.
being performed on a fairly elaborate stage before the common people
well before any hint of a comparable Latin play can be found. In sum,
while only one moderately complex version of the Latin Easter play can
be ascribed definitely to the twelfth century, elaborate dramas with cyclic
overtones survive on several other topics in both Latin and the vernacular,
the latter being more developed than the former.

The situation in the thirteenth century is still more complex than that
in the twelfth. Fortunately, it has little bearing on the chronology of
liturgical drama. By the thirteenth century Latin precedents exist for the
complex forms of all but one of the important Christmas and Easter
dramas, vernacular dramas have appeared as well as Latin ones, and the
tendency to consider individual dramas to be components of larger cycles
is becoming marked. The single innovation is the Passion play, which
appears for the first time in the Benediktbeuern manuscript of the Carmina
Burana. It is clear that the use of the vernacular illustrated by the
Sponsus (XI–XII C.), the St. Lamprecht Visitatio (XII C.), and the
Mystère d'Adam (XII C.) persisted and increased. Jean Bodel, Adam le
Bossu, and Rutebeuf wrote noncyclic vernacular plays in the thirteenth
century, and although La Seinte Resurreccion is dated in the twelfth century,
the two surviving manuscripts come from thirteenth-century France and
England. Thirteenth-century fragments from Kloster Muri and Kloster
Himmelgarten suggest the appearance of the German cycle during this
period, although complete plays and developed cycles do not appear in
German manuscripts before the fourteenth century (i.e., the plays from
Innsbruck, 1391, and Vienna, XIV C.).

What is most distinctive about the development of the theater in the
thirteenth century is the tendency to consolidate and elaborate the com­
plex forms and cyclic tendencies that arose in the eleventh century in
connection with the Christmas plays. Fairly substantial Christmas cycles

19 Frank, Medieval French Drama, p. 88. The reference by Gerhoh of Reichersberg
(1093–1169) to “theatrical spectacles performed in the church” suggests the existence
of some sort of cycle with a fairly well-developed Resurrection play in the twelfth
century. This and similar references are, however, ambiguous. The plays may have
been vernacular or Latin adaptations of vernacular dramas, and in the absence of
manuscripts it is impossible to determine how substantial they were. If elaborate Latin
Resurrection plays were common in the twelfth century, it is extremely hard to under­
stand why only one of the thirty-five extant texts is at all developed, whereas several
complex Christmas plays survive from a much smaller total number of manuscripts.
Gerhoh’s comment is reprinted in Young, DMC, II, 524–25. See also Craig, ERD,
p. 102–5.

20 DMC, I, 518–33.

21 For French drama of the period, see Frank, Medieval French Drama, pp. 66–113; for
German drama, see Craig, ERD, pp. 102–5.
exist from the cathedrals of Laon and Rouen, while the Fleury playbook and the *Carmina Burana* preserve the most polished examples of liturgical drama that survive, grouped together in a manner indicating that—whatever the time of performance of the plays—they were considered parts of a larger cycle. In addition, references to the theater and ecclesiastical records from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries prove conclusively both the existence and popularity of religious plays throughout Europe. Perhaps the most famous of these is the reference in the *Cronaca Friuliana* to a complete cycle of religious plays performed at Cividale in northern Italy at Pentecost in 1298 and 1303. No matter what its progress elsewhere, the Corpus Christi cycle had reached something like its full dimensions in Italy by the end of the thirteenth century.  

To recapitulate, the Easter play was the first of the liturgical dramas to appear in Europe. Examination of the manuscripts suggests that it originated as a liturgical ceremony, rather than as a brief trope of the St. Gall type, and that in the tenth century there was some uncertainty about its proper placement, its mode of performance, and its text. In the eleventh century these questions were solved, and the *Quem quaeritis* became a formal and rigidly limited liturgical embellishment. The only significant eleventh-century additions are two antiphons relating the race of Peter and John. The Christmas play was produced by analogy to the Easter play. Because it was a free composition, unencumbered by tradition, its forms are far more various than those of the Easter play. Logically, one would assume that simple forms preceded complex ones, but there is no evidence of this. Until such time as manuscripts are dated more accurately or fresh texts are discovered, the possibility must be kept in mind that the Christmas play originated as a fairly elaborate composition, and that parts of this composition were extracted by clerics who wished to use them in connection with Christmas services in the same way that the *Quem quaeritis* was used at Easter.  

In the twelfth century, along with some thirty-five versions of the *Quem quaeritis* in its traditional form, there is one fairly elaborate version. There are no "transitional" manuscripts to show that this version was produced by gradual elaboration of simpler forms. In view of the proliferation of complex non-Easter plays in the twelfth century, there is a strong possi-

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22 Craig, *ERD*, pp. 100–1.  
23 There is one Christmas text that may be as early as the tenth century. This text, reprinted in *DMG*, II, 443, is evidently a fragment of a complex Magi play. In other words, the text that may be the earliest of all Christmas plays is not simple but relatively elaborate. The dating, however, is approximate, and the play may be from the eleventh rather than the tenth century.
bility that this play was produced self-consciously in imitation of another drama, perhaps the *Magi*. Another possibility that cannot be rejected flatly is that the Latin drama was an imitation of a vernacular drama, intended either as competition for the vernacular play or simply as a Latin redaction for the edification of a learned—hence Latin-oriented—monastic community. These possibilities are suggested by the nature of the historical evidence that survives, and if they are to be rejected, convincing reasons must be offered against them.

Because the major forms of liturgical drama, including cyclic combinations, are found in thirteenth-century manuscripts and references to dramatic productions, we may assume that by the year 1300 the "development" of Latin religious drama was complete. Later elaborations must be understood in the context of the vernacular cycles.

Manuscript chronology can take us no further. For additional understanding of the Latin Resurrection play, we must turn to the internal features of the plays themselves. Because they represent the earliest appearance of important innovations, three manuscripts are especially interesting: the *Visitatio* from Aquileia, containing the earliest form of the race between Peter and John; the *Visitatio* from St. Lambrecht, the only twelfth-century Latin Resurrection play with vernacular singing; and the Resurrection play from Ripoll, the only twelfth-century example of a complex Latin Easter play, the only one with an *unguentarius*, and the only one having cyclic qualities. Each of these plays is a definite step in the direction of increasing complexity. Criticism cannot assure us that they are the earliest instances of the innovations that they illustrate, but it can tell us something about the methods—and perhaps the motives—that produced them.

### III

The Aquileia *Visitatio* stands out against a background of a century or more of highly stylized drama which was fixed in text and in liturgical placement. If the *Quem quaeritis* originated, as has been suggested, in a ceremony intended to enhance the transition between the baptism and Mass of the Easter vigil, its meaning must have been almost purely liturgical. The sequence of its dialogue, the actions performed, and the costumes and stage props employed were dictated not by the needs of representational drama but by the sequence of events and ceremonies peculiar to the early vigil service. Nevertheless, like the Palm Sunday procession and the Maundy service, the *Quem quaeritis* ceremony has
strong representational elements. If it dramatized the transition from baptism to Mass, it also instructed the “unlearned common persons and neophytes” in the rudiments of divine history.

Teaching divine history is not as simple as it might at first seem. The *Quem quaeritis* teaches the facts of the Resurrection as recounted by three of the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Because these accounts are not perfectly consistent among themselves, a certain amount of conflation—such as might be found in a harmony of the Gospels—characterizes even the earliest *Quem quaeritis* texts, and minor variations occur in the number of angels, their placement, and so forth. But sacred history does not exist in a vacuum. By the ninth century the important events in the New Testament had been glossed, analyzed, interpreted, and reinterpreted in countless sermons, homilies, commentaries, and theological treatises. Being perhaps the central event of Scripture and of the Church year, the story of the Resurrection had accumulated a particularly rich store of associations. These may be considered the *dianoia* of the *Quem quaeritis* play. Although they may have had little significance for the “unlearned common persons,” it is clear from the surviving texts that they influenced both the shape of the dialogue and the mode of presentation. They may have furnished a motive for the continued performance of the piece as strong as that of popular appeal, especially in monasteries.

Amid the numerous and varied interpretations of the Visit to the Tomb, three are particularly widespread and authoritative. For Augustine, the most important feature of the Visit to the Tomb is that it furnishes “ocular proof” of the miracle on which the entire fabric of Christianity depends. In an Easter sermon addressed to the entire congregation, he wrote: “Let us believe in the Christ who was crucified and in the Christ who arose on the third day. This is the faith that distinguishes us from the pagans . . . and Jews. I know that you believe: you will be saved.”24 The theme recurs in sermons to the neophytes, in sermons to the faithful, and in sermons attacking the Gentiles, the Donatists, and the Manichees.25 It leads to emphasis on the “evidences” of the Resurrection—the abandoned graveclothes and, particularly, the appearance of Christ himself to Mary Magdalene.26

Symbolic elements also enter Augustine’s interpretations. The moment of the Resurrection is a turning point in history, symbolized by the light

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25 E.g., Sermons 116, 219–23 (all vigil sermons), 237, 238, 240–44, etc. (all in *PL*, XXXIX, 1070–1150).
26 Especially Sermons 234, 238, 243.
that turns night into day. The interpretation emphasizes the importance of the dramatic peripeteia and points the symbolism of the candle ceremonies so often incorporated into the Visitatio. Again, in a vigil service sermon, Augustine stresses the parallel between the Marys watching at the tomb and the faithful keeping watch throughout Easter Eve. This view anticipates the function of the Marys in the Visitatio as representatives of the congregation, through whom the people participate directly in the dramatized history. Finally, in his commentary on John, Augustine asserts that Mary Magdalene symbolizes the Church of the Gentiles (i.e., the Western Church), which did not worship Christ before the announcement of the Resurrection. Christ’s Noli me tangere means “do not believe in me as I am now; believe in me as I will be when I ascend to the Father.”

A second major contributor to interpretations of the Visit to the Tomb is St. Gregory. Gregory’s twenty-first homily on the Gospels, read during matins of Easter Day, is an extended interpretation of Mark’s account (16:1–7). Perhaps because he lived in an age after the great heresies of the early Church had been quelled, Gregory stresses the devotional symbolism of the visit rather than ocular proof. The parallel between the Marys and the Christian congregation is prominent: “We also, who believe in Him That was dead, do come to His sepulchre bearing sweet spices, when we seek the Lord with the savour of good living.... Those women, when they brought their spices, saw a vision of Angels and, in sooth, those souls whose godly desires do move them to seek the Lord... do see the countrymen of our Fatherland which is above.” The position of the angel on the right side of the tomb symbolizes eternity: “For what signifieth the left, but this life which now is? or the right, but life everlasting?” His white garment symbolizes both eternity and the joy of the Resurrection. Like Augustine, Gregory offers more particularized symbolic interpretations of various parts of the story. In the twenty-fifth homily, read at matins on Thursday of Easter Week, Mary Magdalene is interpreted as a symbol of the penitent who tearfully seeks Christ and is finally rewarded. In the twenty-second homily, read at matins of Low Saturday, Peter and John are interpreted as representatives of the Church

27 Sermon 221, 231, 233, PL, XXXIX, 1090, 1104, 1112.
28 Sermon 221, PL, XXXIX, 1090.
29 In Joannis evangelium, PL, XXXV, 1956–57. According to this interpretation the two angels at the head and foot of the tomb represent “the beginning and the end,” while Mary represents mankind’s acknowledgment of the sovereignty of Christ with her Rabboni quod dicit magister.
30 The Roman Breviary, II, 388.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid., pp. 396–97.
of the Gentiles and the synagogue: "They run both of them together, for from the time of her birth until now . . . the Church of the Gentiles hath run in a parallel road . . . with the Synagogue. . . . The Synagogue came first to the Sepulchre, but she hath not yet entered in; for . . . she will not believe in Him who died for her." 33

With Gregory we first encounter the type of detailed allegorical exegesis that is characteristic of the later Middle Ages. By the tenth century allegorical interpretations can be found for every detail of the Visit to the Tomb, but they do not seem immediately relevant. The third interpretation of sufficient importance to be an element in the dianoia of the Quem quæritis play is what may be called the liturgical interpretation. It is characteristic of Bede, Amalarius, and Pseudo-Alcuin and therefore may be taken as fairly typical of the period between the eighth and tenth centuries. In his commentary on Luke, Bede draws an emphatic parallel between the visit of the Marys and the priest's approach to the altar during the Eucharistic sacrifice. 34 This, says Bede, is the meaning of the episode juxta intellectum in contrast to its meaning juxta historiam. Amalarius and Pseudo-Alcuin elaborate this interpretation in their commentaries on the Mass. At the climax of the Mass, according to Amalarius, the clerics at the altar represent the Marys, the corporal and pall represent the gravedclothes, and at the moment of transition from sacrifice to Communion, the angel announces, Non est hie; surrexit. 35 This interpretation closely links the Quem quæritis to the Mass, and it appears in the period contemporary with the appearance of the Quem quæritis. It may have been involved in the composition of the original ceremony and almost certainly contributed to its initial appeal to the clergy.

Whether or not the Quem quæritis originated as a vigil ceremony, by the tenth century it is liturgically independent. If the exigencies of liturgical ceremony determined its original content and mode of presentation, these are no longer operative. In other words, it has passed over the line dividing ceremony from representation. Its new function is to present a number of facts derived from an historical source in as comprehensible a manner as possible. Freed of the limits of ceremony, it can include more history than the original, and it can substitute representational elements—costumes, realistic stage props, etc.—for liturgical ones. The more clearly the implications of the new situation are realized, the more prominent

33 Ibid., pp. 400–1.
34 In Lucæ evangclium expositio, PL, XCII, 622–24. For the relevant text, see Essay V, n. 33.
these elements become. A ceremony is neither true nor false in the normal sense of those terms, but a representation is by definition an imitation, a replica of the thing represented. Its effectiveness depends on its closeness to its subject, which, in the case of the Quem quaeritis, is sacred history. Two factors limit the development of representational elements in the Quem quaeritis. The first is the conservative force of tradition. The second is dianoia—the symbolic meanings attached to the scene. In general, symbolic meanings are best expressed in forms that are simple and stylized. In complex forms symbolic meanings are easily lost because of the interest in the forms themselves. The spectator is encouraged to ask "What happens next?" and to forget or ignore the question "What does it mean?"

Tradition and a lingering sense of the Quem quaeritis as symbolic statement help to explain why it remained static for two—and perhaps three—centuries, during which other Latin dramas reached a high degree of sophistication. The earliest signs of experimentation in the Quem quaeritis are so slight that thus far they have passed without comment. They are evident in a unique eleventh-century Visitatio doubtfully ascribed to Aquileia:

Finito tertio responsorio, visitatur Sepulchrum cum versibus, duo fratres in vice Mulierum sanctarum dicentes:

Quis revoluet nobis ab hostio lapidem quem tegere sacrum cernimus sepulchrum?

Angeli dicant:

Quem quaeritis, o tremule mulieres, in hoc tumulo plorantes?

Respondent fratres:

Iesum Nazarenum crucifixum querimus.

Angeli:

Non est hic quem queritis, sed cito euntes dicite discipulis eius et Petro quia surrexit Iesus.

Fratres vice Mulierum uenientes convertant se ad populum et ad chorum dicentes:

Ad monumentum venimus gementes, angelum Domini sedentem uidimus et dicentem quia surrexit Iesus.

Chorus cantet antiphonam:

Currebant duo simul.

Deinde ostendunt lintheamina duo fratres aliis dicentes:

Cernitis, o socii, ecce lintheamina et sudarium, et corpus non est in sepulchro inuentum.

Deinde

Surrexit.
CHORUS:

*Te Deum laudamus.*

POPULUS:

*Kyrieleison,*

*alta uoce.*\(^{56}\)

(See Appendix)

The most important feature of this text is its elimination of ceremonial elements. Procession, candles, thuribles, illumination, ringing of bells, and bishop (or abbot) in full regalia, all found in early *Visitatio* texts, have disappeared. This is understandable. They are meaningful in relation to the Easter vigil, not matins. Their absence results in a kind of realism by default. As vestigial ceremonial associations are pruned away, representational elements necessarily are thrown into sharper relief.

The Aquileia text, however, is not just dramatized history; in fact, it involves historical falsification. According to John 20:1–10, Peter and John visit the tomb, see the graveclothes, and “believe”; but they do not “display” the graveclothes to the Marys or the disciples. The Aquileia display of graveclothes is justified not by the desire to teach history but by the Augustinian interpretation of the Visit to the Tomb as ocular proof of the Resurrection. Since the graveclothes are displayed to the entire congregation and responses *alta uoce* are supplied for the people as well as for the chorus, the idea that the scriptural characters are representatives of the Christian community is also a part of the play’s meaning. In responding, the people become actors in the drama—the *socii* of Peter and John. In addition to justifying a departure from history, the emphasis on symbolism thus causes a certain indifference to realism, in that realism (or pure representation) postulates a sharp line between audience and actors.

In spite of its symbolism, the Aquileia *Visitatio* is a much more obvious dramatization of history than anything preceding it. A new line of scriptural dialogue is given to the Marys at the beginning. Unlike *Cernitis, o socii,* the antiphon *Quis revoluet* is Biblical, drawn from Mark 16:3. It extends the history backward a step from the angels’ query, and it serves as exposition by identifying whatever structure the Marys are approaching as a tomb closed by a stone. The substitution of *o tremule mulieres, in hoc tumulo plorantes* for the traditional *o Christicolae* is a case of historical improvisation. Neither form of address is justified by Scripture, but *o tremule mulieres* carries out the implication of Mark’s statement (16:5), “and they were affrighted.” The traditional form is appropriate to a ceremony in which representation is secondary (it is serviceable enough in any context), but the Aquileia form realizes more fully the implications

\(^{56}\) *DMC, I, 628.*
of the representational mode. Instead of identifying the Marys as Chris­
ticolae before they have spoken, the angels call them mulieres and comment
on the fact that they appear fearful and sad. In other words, the nexus
between action and dialogue, a fundamental condition of the representa­
tional mode, is tightened.

The same principle is evident in the treatment of the second statement
of the angels and the response of the Marys. The traditional text as found
in the Regularis concordia has Ite nuntiate, Resurrexit Dominus, Venite et videte,
and Surrexit Dominus sung alternately by the angels and the Marys. Judged
by representational standards, this sequence is (as Young has pointed out)
awkward and illogical. 37 It is best understood as a ceremonial survival
rather than as an addition to an already representational form. The
Aquileia text freely revises the entire sequence. The angels’ speech is a
conflation of Mark 16:7 and Matthew 28:7. It expresses the command to
announce the Resurrection in a way that foreshadows the concluding
episode, the race between Peter and John. The response of the women is
far more logical than in any earlier version. It is a traditional antiphon
based on Matthew’s statement (28:8), “they did run to bring his disciples
the word.” Like o tremule mulieres it must be considered improvisation. The
point is that it is not a flat statement—“He is risen, Alleluia!”—but a
description of what has occurred: “We came sorrowing to the tomb, and
we saw an angel of the Lord sitting there announcing that Jesus has
risen.” The realism of the announcement is enhanced by the fact that
before it is made the Marys, obeying the injunction cito euntes dicite
discipulis, move (correlative to euntes) toward the chorus and populus.

The concluding episode illustrates the tendency to amplify the history
presented in the drama by adding to the end as well as to the beginning.
“What happened after?” is as important a question as “What led up to
it?” The race between Peter and John is introduced by an antiphon which,

37 As Young says (DMC, I, 246–47):

A more decisive enlargement of the essential action of the little play arises with the
adoption of the antiphon Venite et videte locum ubi positus erat Dominus. This utterance
of the angels supplies a motivation for the act of raising the altar-cloth, or of peering
within the sepulchre, on the part of the Marys. In disposing of this speech within the
fabric of the performance, however, the writers seem not to have been very adroit. . . .
In the great majority of the plays the words Venite et videte are spoken after the Marys
have left, or turned away from, the sepulchre in order to make their announcement
to the chorus and congregation. This inept arrangement arises apparently from a
reverent unwillingness to disturb the original simple structure of the trope Quem
quaeritis—and from a lack of dramatic resourcefulness.

For an alternative explanation according to which the antiphon and its awkward
arrangement arise from the original ceremonial context of the Quem quaeritis, see above,
Essay V, p. 216.
like the introductory *Quis reueluet*, serves as exposition. There is no indication that a formal race occurred, and there is no suggestion that verisimilitude in the treatment of Peter and John extended beyond having *duo fratres* rather than one. The possibility cannot, of course, be ruled out, but it appears that the motif of ocular proof outweighs representation in the display of graveclothes and the concluding anthems.

### IV

Only two twelfth-century Latin texts are sufficiently elaborate to be considered transitional forms between the Aquileia *Visitatio* and the Ripoll Resurrection play. These are from St. Lambrecht and Prague. Since the Ripoll play is also from the twelfth century, there is no way of proving that the simpler texts represent a stage of development chronologically prior to the complex Resurrection play. They may well be *centos* of pieces used in other Easter plays; they may also be consciously simplified versions of a complex play, adapted for performance in the traditional manner. The Prague text is in essence the Aquileia version with the *Hortulanus* scene added. Its chief interest lies in the fact that it illustrates the tendency to amplify the story by adding at the end new episodes from Scripture. The St. Lambrecht text is more informative. It has substantial rubrics and is the only twelfth-century Latin Resurrection play to include vernacular singing. It is also one of the three twelfth-century texts to include the sequence *Victimae Paschali*:

Interim autem, dum est circa finem tercie lectionis, distribuat custos singulas candelassingulis fratibus, et diaconus reuestiat se stola candida, vadatque residere super Iapidem iuxta Sepulchrum. Cum uero secundo tercium responsorium fuerit inceptum, candelis omnibus accensis quas habent in manibus, cantor processionem ordinet ita. Primo scolares cum pedagogos, deinde abbas, post illum seniores, dehinc iuniores et indocti; sed illi qui in personis sanctarum Feminarum usitare debent Sepulchrum remaneant in choro et uelent capita sua humeralibus uel capitis capparum quas habent in se. Reliquus uadat, ut predictum est, ad locum Sepulchri conuentus, ibique silentio facit. Illi predicti tres remissa voce cantant:

*Quis reueluet nobis ab hostio lapidem quem tegere sacrum cernimus sepulcrum?*

Quibus respondeat leuita uice Angeli dicens:

*Quem queritis, o tremule mulieres, in hoc tumulo plorantes?*

Ad hec illi:

*Iesum Nazarenum crucifixum querimus.*
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Quibus ille subiungat:

*Non est hic quem queritis, sed cito euntes nunciate discipulis eius et Petro quia surrexit Iesus.*

Post hec illis accedentibus surgat et subleuet cortinam et Sepulchrum patefaciat, dicatque ad illos:

*Veni et uidete locum ubi positis erat Dominus, alleluia, alleluia.*

Qui uenientes inclinatis capitibus considerare debent intra Sepulchrum, et tollentes inde filacterium quo involuta Crux fuerat et sudarium quod fuerat super Crucis caput, ac inde recedentes stent ante proximum altare et uersi contra conuentum canant alta uoce:

*Ad monumentum venimus gementes, angelum Domini sedentem uidimus et dicentem quia surrexit Deus.*

Quo dicto, totus conventus concinat dicens:

*Dic nobis, Maria, quid uidisti in uia?*

Et unus ex illis tribus qui visitant Sepulchrum dicat clara uoce:

*Sepulchrum Christi uiuentis, et gloriam uidi resurgentis.*

Alter uero dicat:

*Angelicos testes, sudarium et uestes.*

Et tercius subiungat:

*Surrexit Christus, spes mea; precedet suos in Galilea.*

Post hec totus conventus concinat ita:

*Credendum est magis soli Marie ueraci, quam [Iudeorum turbae fallaci].*

Versus:

*Scimus Christum [surrexisse ex mortuis vere; tu autem, victor rex, miserere].*

Tunc incipientibus imponat cantor antiphonam:

*Currebant duo simul.*

Qua finita, ueniant illi tres supradicti ante aram proximam subleuantes linteamina, ut ab omnibus uideantur, ita concinentes:

*Cernitis, o socii, ecce linteamina et sudarium, et corpus non est in sepulchro inuementum.*

Atque mox extollant Crucem in altum sonora uoce concludentes ita:

*Surrexit Dominus de sepulchro.*

Quam simul cum eis concinat totus conventus. Post hanc incipiat abbassuel prior *Te Deum laudamus*; et hunc ymnnum canendo reuertatur in chorum, plebe conclamante *Christ ist erstanden.*

(See Appendix)
In two respects this text is more conservative than the Aquileia version of the eleventh century. The rubrics preserve a substantial amount of material that is ceremonial rather than functional. Candles are distributed, there is an illumination ceremony and procession, the graveclothes are transported to the altar for display instead of being shown at the tomb, and it is still important that a deacon and no other cleric shall represent the angel. The dialogue also retains ceremonial elements that conflict with the logic of representation. In the Aquileia text the command *Cito euntes* is immediately obeyed by the Marys, who turn to the congregation and recite the *Ad monumentum*. The St. Lambrecht text also substitutes *Cito euntes* for *Ite nuntiate*, but it does not drop the *Venite et videte* of the early ceremonial version. The result is a logical contradiction. The angel orders the Marys to “go quickly to the disciples” and in the next breath countermands the order with “come and see the sepulcher.” Only after they have inspected the graveclothes do they move to the altar to sing the *Ad monumentum*.

In addition to preserving a strong ceremonial flavor, the St. Lambrecht *Visitatio* places considerable emphasis on the motif of proof. The *Victimae Paschali*, although best understood in connection with representative elements, emphasizes the truth of the announcement of the miracle by repeating it. Conventual and vernacular responses provide confirmation while incorporating the congregation in the drama as “disciples.” As in the Aquileia version, the race between Peter and John is used to justify a public display of graveclothes, and is followed by two anthems, one for the clergy and one for the populus.

The representational aspect of the St. Lambrecht text, however, remains prominent. In the *Regularis concordia* the cleric representing the angel is described as *alba indutus* (“wearing an alb”), a ceremonial garment closely associated with the Easter vigil. In the St. Lambrecht text the angel wears a *stola candida* (“white stole”). In other words, it is not expressly required that the garment be a liturgical robe. The generalized reference suggests that the robe is understood in relation to the drama rather than to the liturgy—that, whatever its history, it is regarded as a costume. Again, the *Regularis* requires that the clerics playing the Marys be “vested in copes” (*cappis induti*). At St. Lambrecht they can wear either humerals or copes, and the important point is not what they use but that their heads be covered (*uelent capita*) in the manner of the women.

Verisimilitude of costume complements verisimilitude of dialogue and setting. The Marys are instructed to speak in a soft voice (*remissa voce*), and the ensuing exchange uses the Aquileia rather than the traditional
speeches. The rubrics indicate that the sepulcher is conceived realistically. It has a "stone" on which the angel sits and a curtain that can be raised for a dramatic revelation of the graveclothes. In spite of the awkward contradiction caused by the retention of *Venite et videte*, the inspection of the tomb is also intended as representational action: the Marys bow their heads, look inside, and remove the *linteum* (here called a *filactarium*—a fillet) and sudarium.

We now come to the *Victimae Paschali*. Interestingly, the St. Lambrecht text is the only *Visitatio* of the twelfth century that includes it. In both of the other twelfth-century manuscripts in which it occurs, it is part of the *Peregrini* rather than the Resurrection play and is sung by Mary Magdalene alone. Its primary function is to provide dialogue for the scene, only mentioned in Scripture, in which the Marys tell the disciples of the Resurrection. It is thus a substantial instance of historical improvisation. Such improvisation is a necessary consequence of the dramatic representation of an historical source. Scripture is explicit about major events, but minor ones are mentioned briefly or ignored. This is quite acceptable in a history intended for reading, but when the history is acted out "just as it must have happened," minor events cannot be omitted without creating gaps in the action. The Aquileia text uses the *Ad monumentum* antiphon to fill the gap left by the scriptural account. The St. Lambrecht manuscript retains this antiphon but increases the realism of the episode by providing a full dialogue between the Marys and the disciples. In this case the dialogue was already at hand in the form of a popular sequence used in the Mass that could easily be broken into the form of a question, a reply, and a joyous response to the reply. The fact that the *Victimae Paschali* is a Mass text may be irrelevant, but its use with the *Quem quaeritis* may indicate a survival of the Bede-Amalarius interpretation of the Visit to the Tomb as symbolic of the Mass sacrifice.

As has been noted, the response to the announcement of the Marys includes a *versus* for conventual singing and a vernacular song. These work against the logic of representation by making the congregation a participant in the drama. After the vernacular piece, the drama returns to the representational mode. The St. Lambrecht rubrics specify that the two clerics representing Peter and John be "an old man" and "a young man," respectively, that the young one arrive first but wait outside the tomb, and that the old one arrive later and enter it. The action faithfully

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39 *DMC*, I, 479, 681.

40 For the *Victimae Paschali* as a sequence, see Raby, *Christian Latin Poetry*, pp. 217–18. The hymn is usually assigned to Wipo and dated in the eleventh century. See also *DMC*, I, 273–75.
duplicates the historical source (John 20:3–8) and is explained by the *Currebant duo* antiphon, which is purely expository.

Curiously, the women at the altar sing *Cernitis, o socii* and display the graveclothes. In this detail the St. Lambrecht text is closer to the *Regularis concordia* than to Aquileia, where the graveclothes are displayed by Peter and John. The *Regularis* sequence has been amplified by a new antiphon (historical improvisation), but it still ends at the altar rather than the sepulcher. Evidently, it is a survival of the procession carrying the *linteum* and sudarium from the “sepulcher” to the altar for liturgical use. On the other hand, it is significantly less realistic than the sequence used at Aquileia. The variation illustrates a fact of considerable importance in the development of complex forms of liturgical drama. Although the dramatist is bound to his source when treating major episodes that are fully described, he has considerable freedom when treating minor ones that were created solely by the need for a smooth, uninterrupted sequence of events. Because his source gives him no assistance in such cases, he must be guided by the inner logic of representational drama. How much he should include, what order he should follow, what stage props should be used, and what dialogue should be provided are problems that can only be solved in terms of what seems dramatically effective. The St. Lambrecht text simply adds lines without changing the traditional form of the *Visitatio*. The race is arbitrarily inserted between the announcement of the Resurrection and the display of the graveclothes by the Marys. The Aquileia text, though considerably earlier, is much bolder. By having Peter and John display the graveclothes, it changes the ceremonial action into a smooth plot, in which the race and the display are a self-contained episode.

The Aquileia and St. Lambrecht texts illustrate both the limitations and the options present as the *Quem quaeritis* changed from a liturgical ceremony to a representative drama. The core of the play remains the same. It is essentially an objectification in historical terms of the transition from *tristia* to *gaudium*—from sorrow to joy—which is objectified in the Mass ritual and the cycle of the Church year. If the pattern is, as cultural anthropologists have claimed, an archetype, its connotation in medieval culture is wholly Christian. The first effect of the *Quem quaeritis* is to give this Christian form a local habitation and a name, to show that it exists in history as well as in the timeless present by expressing it in terms of linear time, fixed space, and logical cause and effect.

The implications of the shift from ritual to representation were not realized in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, nor, for that matter, are
they fully realized in the drama of Shakespeare. What we have at the beginning is a series of groupings that reveal the first influences of the new mode on the medieval dramatists. Because the Quem quaeritis is linked to an historical source, the most obvious option of the playwright is historical amplification; because the middle of the drama is complete in the earliest manuscripts, expansion takes the form of adding new parts at the beginning or the end. When this is done, certain gaps appear in scriptural accounts that must be filled by means of historical improvisations in order to keep the action continuous. Because such improvisations are not limited by source, they can be treated freely, in terms of the didactic or dramatic effect required.

Complementing the sense of the Quem quaeritis as imitation of events in the past, various devices of verisimilitude are used to enhance the illusion. Garments are understood as costumes; the sepulcher is shaped like a tomb and equipped with a stone; instructions require that the actors physically resemble the historical figures they represent. Equally important, the dialogue is interpreted in terms of cause and effect. A person who is supposed to be sad speaks sorrowfully; a happy one utters a joyful lyric. When a command is given, it is obeyed; and when a question is asked, an answer is given. In this suiting of the action to the words, a concern for characterization—especially for consistency of character—is evident. Finally, because representational drama is pointless unless it is understood by the audience, exposition appears in the form of antiphons explaining who the characters are, what the stage props represent, and what the action signifies. To define and intensify the response, lyrics are added that incorporate the audience in the action.

The earliest complex Latin Resurrection play is a twelfth-century text from Ripoll, first edited by Karl Young.41 It is disordered, has no rubrics, and may be two plays rather than one. What it shows beyond doubt is that a complex Resurrection play was in existence in the twelfth century and that it was associated closely with (if it did not include) the Peregrini play depicting the appearance of Christ on the road to Emmaus. Because all other complex Resurrection plays are later, there seems to be no point

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in attempting, with Wilhelm Meyer and K. Dürre, an elaborate reconstruction of the history of its various parts. In the Ripoll play these are:

1. An introductory speech by the Marys;
2. A lament by the Marys in which they state their intention to purchase ointment;
3. A speech by the ointment-vendor (mercator, unguentarius);
4. A reply by one of the Marys;
5. A long planctus;
6. The Quem quaeritis dialogue;
7. The Hortulanus scene;
8. The Victimae Paschali; and
9. A truncated version of the scene on the road to Emmaus, followed by the rubric Versus de Chrismate in Cena Domini.

Young's text is as follows:

**Verses Pascales de III Mariis**

Eamus mirram emere
cum liquido aromate,
ut ualeamus ungere
corpus datum sepulture.

Dicunt [Mariae:]  

Omnipotens Pater altissime,
angelorum rector mitissime,
quid facient iste miserime!  
5

Heu, quantus est noster dolor!

Amisimus enim solatium,
Ihesum Christum, Marie filium;
iste nobis erat subsidium.  
10

Heu,

Set eamus unguentum emere,
quo possimus corpus inungere;
non amplius posset putrescere.  
15

Heu,

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42 Meyer, *Fragmenta Burana* (Berlin, 1901), pp. 106–20; Dürre, *Die Mercatorszene im lateinisch-liturgischen, altdutschen und altfranzösischen religiösen Drama* (Göttingen, 1915), pp. 15–24. Meyer invented the term *Zehnsilberspiel* (*ten-syllable play*) for the hypothetical original form of this drama; Dürre argues on the basis of the Ripoll text that the earlier form of the play was in lines of eight syllables.

43 I have transposed and emended this rubric. For the manuscript form, see DMC, I, 678.
QUEM QUAERITIS TO RESURRECTION PLAY 241

Dic tu nobis, mercator iuuenis,
hoc unguentum si tu uendideris;
dic precium, nam iam habueris.
Heu,

Respondet Mercator:
Mulieres michi intendite.
Hoc unguentum si uultis emere,
datur genus mirre potencie,
quo si corpus possetis ungere,
non amplius posset putrescere
neque uermes possent comedere.

Hoc unguentum si multum cupitis
unum auri talentum dabis;
nec aliter umquam portabis.

Respondet Maria:
O mercator, unguentum libera.
Ecce tibi dabimus munera.
Ibimus Christi ungere uulnera.
Heu,

Cuncta, sorores, gaudia
deflorent in tristica
cum innocens opprobria
fert et crucis suspendia
Iudeorum inuidia,
et principum perfidia!
Quid angemus et qualia!

Licet, sorores, plangere,
plangendo Christum querere,
querendo corpus ungere,
ungendo mente pascere
de fletu, uiso uulnere,
dilecto magno federe
cor monstratur in opere.

Cordis, sorores, creduli
simus et bene seduli,
ut nostri cernant oculi
corpus Christi, uim seculi.
Quis uoluet petram cumuli
magnam sive uim populi?
virtus celestis epuli.
Tanta, sorores, uisio
splendoris et lustrascio
nulla sit stupefatio,
vobis sit exultatio.
Mors et mortis occasio
moritur uita uicio.
Nostra, surge, surreccio.

Hoc, sorores, circuitu,
lecto, dicite, sonitu
illis qui mesto spiritu
et proditio transitu
dux uicto surgit obitu
querantur lecto strepitu
... scis ... dux ortitu.

Quid faciemus, sorores,
graues ferimus dolores?
Non est, nec erit seculis,
dolor doloris similis.

Iesum gentes perimere,
semper decet nos lugere,
set ut poscimus gaudere,
eamus tumbam uidere.

Tumbam querimus non lento,
corpus ungamus unguento,
quod extinctum uulneribus
uiuis preualet omnibus.

Regis perempti premium
plus ualet quam uiuencium,
cuius amor solacium
iuuamen et presidium
et perenne subsidium
sit nunc et in perpetuum.

Vbi est Christus, meus Dominus et filius excelsi?
Eamus uidere sepulcrum.44

44 Printed by Young, DMC, I, 680, in association with the Ubi est Christus. Apparently in the manuscript the Ubi est antiphon is also given following the Eamus uidere, raising the possibility that its inclusion before the Eamus is a scribal error and that in the original the last of the seven-line stanzas was given as a unit preceding the Quem quaeritis dialogue. On the other hand, the conscious interruption of lyric units appears as a regular feature of the Ripoll text. See below, p. 247.
Respondet Angelus:

Quem queritis in sepulcro, Christicole?

Respondet Mariae:

Ihesum Nazarenum crucifixum, o celicole.

Respondet Angelus:

Non est hic, surrexit sicut predixerat; ite, nunciate quia surrexit dicentes.

Respondent Mariae:

Alleluia, ad sepulcrum residens angelus nunciat resurrexisse Christum.

Te Deum laudamus.

VERSUS DE PELLEGRINIS

Rex in acubitum iam se contulerat,
et mea redolens nardus spirauerat;
in hortum veneram in quern descenderat,
at ille transiens iam declinauerat.

Per noctem igitur hunc querens exeo;
huc illuc transiens nusquam reperio.

Angeli:

Mulier, quid ploras? Quem quieris?

Maria:

Occurrunt uigiles ardenti studio,
Quos cum transierim, sponsum inuenio.

Ortolanus:

Mulier, quid ploras? Quem quieris?

Maria:

Tulerunt Dominum meum, et nescio ubi posuerunt eum. Si tu sustulisti

eum, dicito mihi, et eum tollam.

Ortolanus:

Maria, Maria, Maria!

Respondet Maria:

Raboni, Raboni, Raboni!

Maria rediens dicat:

Die, impie Zabule, quid ualet nunc fraus tua?

Discipuli:

Die nobis, Maria, quid uidisti in uia?

Maria:

Sepulcrum Christi uiiuentis, et gloriam uidi resurgentis;

Angelicos testes, sudarium et uestes.

Angeli:

Non est hic, surrexit sicut predixerat uobis.
Discipuli:

Credendum est magis soli Mariae ueraci quam Iudeorum turbe fallaci.

Scimus Christum surrexisse a mortuis uere: tu nobis, Christe, Rex, miserere.

Qui sunt hij sermones quos confertis ad inuicem ambulantes, et estis tristes?

Alleluia.

Respondent duo:

Respondens unus cui nomen Cleophas dixit ei: Tu solus peregrinus es in Iherusalem et non cognouisti que facta sunt in illa his diebus? Alleluia.

Respondet:

Quibus ille dixit: Que?

Respondet duo:

Et dixerunt: De Ihesu Nazareno, qui fuit uir propheta, potens in opere et sermone coram Deo et omni populo, alleluia. Euouae.

(See Appendix)

If we begin with the middle of this drama, we find the Quem quaeritis (ll. 89–92) in the form established in the tenth century, retaining even the Te Deum. In other words, all amplification consists of additions to the beginning and end of the drama. Additions are of two kinds. Non-Biblical material, consisting of lyric stanzas, is used for the lament of the Marys and for a substantial scene in which they purchase ointment from the mercator. This material is quite different in tone from the stiff, formalized mixture of antiphons and quasi-Biblical dialogue used in the Quem quaeritis. Its rhyme schemes and eight- and ten-syllable accentual verse were familiar in twelfth-century vernacular poetry, as well as in Latin hymns and sequences, and must therefore be considered to be more “realistic” than the Quem quaeritis proper. The end of the Quem quaeritis is amplified in part by lyric material (Rex in acubitum), but chiefly by the addition of two brief dramatic episodes in the traditional formalistic manner—the Hortulanus and the Peregrini. The two quite different methods of amplification illustrate a point made in connection with the St. Lambrechit Visitatio. Whereas episodes dealt with fully in Scripture limit the dramatist, episodes created by historical improvisation can be treated with considerable freedom and shaped in ways that conform to the logic of representational drama rather than to historical sources.

The lyric material is of interest in itself. It comprises 94 of the 120 lines of the play. One group of stanzas (ll. 1–4, 69–80) consists of octosyllabic quatrains rhymed alternately a-a-a-a and a-a-b-b (ll. 69–72, 77–80). These stanzas are primarily a lament of the Marys as they proceed to the tomb to anoint the body, and they are unique to the Ripoll play. A second
group of stanzas found in both Latin and French in thirteenth-century plays recounts the purchase of the ointment from the mercator (ll. 5–33). These stanzas consist of three ten-syllable lines rhyming a-a-a with the refrain Heu, quantus est noster dolor, which is omitted in the stanzas assigned to the mercator. A third block of seven-line stanzas (ll. 34–68, 81–86, 88) has octosyllabic lines rhyming a-a-a-a-a-a-a. These stanzas are unique to the Ripoll play. They are unified by their prosodic form and also by the fact that all but the last begin with the word sorores used as a nominative of direct address. The last of the seven-line stanzas does not use this form and is interrupted after the sixth line with the nonmetrical Quem quaeritis line Ubi est Christus. . . . The fourth lyric block is the hymn Rex in acubitum, consisting of twelve-syllable quatrains rhymed a-a-a-a. This hymn appears at the beginning of the Peregrini episode (ll. 94–99, 97–98). It is apparently sung by Mary Magdalene as she proceeds from the tomb to the garden (in hortum veneram, l. 96), and it is interrupted by the angels' query, Mulier, quid ploras? (l. 100). It also is unique to the Ripoll play. The last lyric block is the Victimae Paschali, sung by Mary after seeing Jesus and used as a transition to the scene on the road to Emmaus. It is interrupted by a repetition of the angelic cry Non est hic (l. 112).

The bulk of the Ripoll play thus consists of formal lyrics used to amplify episodes only mentioned in Scripture or not mentioned at all. The most striking instance is the unguentarius scene. Mark mentions (16:1) the purchase of spices, but the details of the transaction are obviously a matter of indifference to him. On the other hand, the form of representational drama makes some depiction necessary as soon as the play is extended backward in time to a point before the purchase has been made. In the ceremonial version of the Quem quaeritis the clerics representing the Marys are already carrying the thuribles that represent the ointment boxes. This remained the case as long as a procession "with candles and thuribles" was part of the matins performance. When the procession was eliminated, as at Aquileia, the Marys either had to be given thuribles or had to acquire them on the way to the tomb. Although slightly awkward, the improvisation need have created no difficulty. In a ceremony actions are performed because they are necessary, not because they are logical. On the other hand, as soon as the Quem quaeritis comes to be regarded as historical representation, its actions are referred not to ceremony but to its source. From the representational point of view, the fact that the Marys begin their trip to the sepulcher without thuribles can only mean that they have not yet purchased the ointment. Moreover, since the actors are real people performing on the physical stage of the church, they must acquire the thuribles by a physical action performed during their journey.
This action can only be understood as the purchase of ointments mentioned by Mark. Once the action is understood in such terms, the ceremonial thuribles are transformed into imitation ointment boxes, just as the sepulcher has already become an identifiable tomb; and the cleric offering them is transformed into a spice merchant.

The logic of this process is quite clear. What cannot be known is whether it occurred in a series of steps or all at once. Meyer and Young believe that it began with a trip to a side altar to collect thuribles, was amplified by lyrics in which the Marys refer to purchasing ointments, and that these lyrics in turn suggested lines for a spice merchant. Unfortunately, the texts cited to illustrate the early stages of the process are from the thirteenth century, whereas the spice-merchant scene is already well developed and incorporated in a complex Resurrection play in the twelfth-century Ripoll manuscript.

However it originated, the mode of presentation of the spice-merchant scene is up to the dramatist. Latin texts containing the scene show a wide variety of treatments. In some cases the merchant appears but does not speak. In others, he demands exorbitant payment. In still others, he is a pious believer who offers his wares free of charge. He is sometimes alone, but sometimes has competition from another merchant or is rebuked by a shrewish wife. In contrast to these later treatments, the Ripoll text is surprisingly down to earth. The merchant praises his wares (there is no suggestion here either of satire or of the medicine man of folk drama whom Stumpfl considers his prototype), and quotes his price. Mary pays without comment and resumes her lament. The sequence is almost banal in its realism. It shows that where historical improvisation is necessary the medieval dramatist resorts to anachronism. He does not ask himself how merchants acted in the first century B.C. Instead he uses contemporary behavior as his guide, in the same way that illuminated manuscripts show Biblical characters dressed in medieval costumes and residing in medieval villages or castles. Anachronism is a form of verisimilitude in medieval drama and remains so in the drama of Shakespeare.

The beginning of the Ripoll play, then, is a rather substantial historical improvisation extending the action backward in time to a point before the Marys purchase their spices. The congregational procession of earlier Visitatio texts such as the Regularis concordia and St. Lambrecht has become a representation of the journey of the Marys to the tomb, and the inner logic of the representation mode has necessitated the creation of a scene in which the Marys purchase ointment. To provide dialogue the dramatist has used a method different in kind from the method of the episodes based on Scripture. In the place of antiphons and bits of scriptural paraphrase
he has adopted three lyrics, each using a rhyme scheme and prosody found in vernacular as well as Latin compositions, and each distinguished from the other two. Because of its dialogue form the decasyllabic poem (Omni-

potens Pater . . . ) has intrinsic representational qualities. The octosyllabic poems, on the other hand, are more purely lyric. Since both refer to a journey, they appear to be processional hymns. Although they may have been composed explicitly for the Quem quaeritis play, the fact that they are different in form and that each can stand alone as a complete poem suggests that—like the Victimae Paschali—they were originally independent of liturgical drama.

In any case, the Ripoll dramatist was aware of the difference between lyric and representation. The most interesting feature of the introductory lyrics is the way in which they are used. Instead of giving one lyric in its entirety, then the second, and then the third, the dramatist has freely intermixed the four- and seven-line octasyllabic stanzas, has eliminated the refrain line from the decasyllabic stanzas assigned the merchant, and (apparently) has interrupted the last seven-line stanza with the non-

metrical Quem quaeritis line, Ubi est Christus. The effect of each of these devices is to reduce the self-identity of the lyrics. They no longer stand out as set pieces but begin to resemble continuous dialogue. The treatment, though still highly formal, shows a conscious desire for verisimilitude. The dialogue is understood as a continuous development rather than as a series of recitations, and where the source material would give the latter effect if used in its original form, changes have been introduced. That these changes are made consciously is indicated by the fact that the Rev in acubitum and Victimae Paschali lyrics at the end of the play are similarly handled.

If the beginning of the Ripoll play is developed by historical improvisation, the end is developed by historical amplification. The Hortulanus and Peregrini episodes are derived from Scripture and presented with the same combination of antiphons and scriptural paraphrase used in the traditional Quem quaeritis. The episodes are found in two other twelfth-century plays, one a Visitatio and the other a Peregrini drama. Since the rubric Versus de Pelegrinis precedes the two episodes in the Ripoll text, it is likely that the dramatist simply added a pre-existing Peregrini drama containing the Hortulanus episode to the end of the Quem quaeritis. This raises the question of whether the Resurrection and Peregrini plays are to be considered a unit. The use of Rex in acubitum as a transition from the tomb to the garden

45 For versions retaining the refrain line, see DMC, I, 413–14, 439–40.
46 DMC, I, 479, 664.
suggests continuous action, but it could also be an expository introduction to a separate piece. For present purposes the question may be ignored. The Ripoll play anticipates several thirteenth-century versions in which the Hortulanus scene is unambiguously linked to the Resurrection, and the Ripoll scene of the meeting on the road to Emmaus is quite clearly continuous with the Hortulanus. Observations made on the assumption that it is a continuous play are probably valid for the Ripoll text and are certainly valid for the unambiguously continuous versions that it anticipates.

The Hortulanus episode enlarges the play historically. It is drawn from John 20:11–18. The motive for including it is doubtless that it is “part of the story.” A second motive, which cannot be evaluated from extant versions, may be that it provides even more vivid ocular proof of the Resurrection than the race between Peter and John. Its inclusion, however, is not an unmixed blessing. It increases the length of the play at the expense both of the unity of the dramatic structure and of the logic of representation.

The clouding of the play’s logic by the Hortulanus episode is evident in the inconsistency of Mary Magdalene. On hearing the angelic announcement of the Resurrection, she joins the other Marys in singing the joyful antiphon Alleluia, ad sepulcrum residens. Immediately thereafter she begins a lament. The Ripoll text emphasizes the sudden change in mood by having the question Mulier, quid ploras asked twice, as in John 20:13, 15. Evidently the episode is presented not because it is logical but because “that is the way it happened.” The point has implications for Renaissance as well as medieval drama. If character consistency is one of the requirements of representative drama, then drama based on a source considered to be historically true must often settle for something less than pure representation. In the Hortulanus episode fidelity to source results in what is pretty clearly a blemish. Mary has to be at the same time joyful and sad, believing and sceptical. In later drama, however, the same motive can result in a certain richness—a suggestion of some of the mystery of experience—that disappears in drama that conforms rigorously to didactic theories of behavior or “scientific” systems of psychology.

In addition to considering sources and techniques of representation, dramatic criticism involves aesthetic questions. No matter how a drama originated, a critic can always ask whether it is a good play. There is no evidence that aesthetic considerations entered into the ceremonial or early representational forms of the Resurrection play, but in spite of this fact the early forms inherit the well-defined comic structure of the Mass and
the Church year. The additions at the beginning of the Ripoll play enhance this structure by intensifying the threnos—the mood of despairing sorrow—that precedes the reversal objectified in the *Quem quaeritis* dialogue. In the St. Lambrecht *Visitatio*, the *Victimae Paschali* and the race between Peter and John have a similar effect at the end, since they enhance the joyous theophany. The *Hortulanus* episode is different from both of these earlier additions. John’s Gospel omits the angelic announcement at the tomb, and, consequently, the *Hortulanus* in its original location has the same function as the visit of the Marys in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. It is the moment of reversal from sorrow to joy on which the narrative hinges. The effect of adding it to the *Quem quaeritis* episode is not intensification but anticlimax. The outburst of joy associated with the Visit to the Tomb must be truncated, and the mood must shift abruptly back to lament. The lament leads, in turn, to a second “announcement,” with its own reversal and joyous conclusion. Both episodes are blunted. The visit episode cannot be properly “celebrated,” and the *Hortulanus* episode loses force because it has been anticipated. The placement of the *Victimae Paschali* after the *Hortulanus* episode, as a speech of Mary Magdalene rather than of all the Marys, may be a rather lame attempt to compensate for this flaw. More probably, it is simply because the dramatist found this arrangement in his source.

The last unit in the Ripoll play is an incomplete scene of the meeting on the road to Emmaus. There are three other twelfth-century versions of this episode, all of them more elaborate and all of them separated from the Resurrection play. Quite possibly the rubric *Versus de Pelegrinis* is misplaced and belongs properly between the last line of the *Hortulanus* (l. 114) and the first of the Emmaus episode (l. 115). If the play is read just as it stands in the Ripoll manuscript, the Emmaus episode involves exactly the same problems as does the *Hortulanus*. It is added because it is part of the story. On the other hand, it blurs the logic and structure of the play. The garden where Christ appears to Mary must suddenly become the road to Emmaus; the disciples who have just proclaimed the truth of the Resurrection (*Credendum est magis soli Mariae... Scimus Christum surrexisse a mortuis uere*) must once again appear to doubt it; and the plot is diluted by still another reversal-recognition scene.

One final word on the plot of the Ripoll play. Just as pure representation seeks character consistency and logical sequence based on cause and effect, it also strives for rationally defined unity, a point nicely illustrated by the neoclassic insistence on unity of action as well as unity of time and

space. The desire to depict events because they happened rather than because they are dramatically appropriate conflicts with the ideal of pure representation. Like indifference to character consistency, it can produce an extremely episodic structure, as witness the Ripoll manuscript, the Corpus Christi cycles, and Shakespeare's *Henry VI* trilogy. At the same time, it preserves elements of the ritual and mythic modes of drama against the incursions of rationalistic theories. Although little can be said for the Ripoll play when contrasted to the St. Lambrecht *Visitatio*, a great deal can be said for Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* in contrast to Dryden's *All for Love*.

VI

The development of the Resurrection play between the tenth and the twelfth century provides a unique case history of how the forms of ritual and myth are re-embodied in the modes of representational drama. It is of interest not only in relation to medieval drama but also in relation to later drama which preserves marked ritual elements. The principles governing this development are: (1) continuity of ritual form with amplification from the center outwards, (2) historical amplification, (3) historical improvisation, (4) verisimilitude, (5) fidelity to source a primary concern, and (6) aesthetic effect a minor concern or simply ignored.

Continuity of form is evidenced in the tendency of the *Quem quaeritis* dialogue to retain its original wording and central position in all stages of the development of the Resurrection play. In fact, when the Resurrection play becomes a part of the vernacular cycles, the episodes that precede and follow it have the character of enormous amplifications of its beginning and end. The Resurrection remains what it is in both Augustinian theology and the cycle of the Church year—the pivot on which the whole gigantic pattern of human history turns—and the center of the Resurrection play remains the depiction of the Visit to the Tomb. Whether the cycle takes the form of the German Passion play, which omits the Nativity episodes, or the English Corpus Christi play, its structure remains comic and its climax is the peripeteia of the Easter miracle.

Historical amplification is seen in the elaboration of the Resurrection play by the addition of episodes from Scripture. Because time is linear in representational drama, it extends backward and forward from the moment of the Resurrection. What events prepare for the Resurrection and what follow from it? From a Christian point of view, the answer is
simple and inevitable. Ultimately, everything that has happened since the beginning of time is in some sense a preparation. The fall of Lucifer is the first preparatory event, and the fall of Adam the second. Between Adam and Christ the sacred history of the Chosen People is so crucial that other histories may be ignored. The Old Testament is thus the primary or secondary source for plays preceding the Nativity, and from it are taken episodes having special didactic or typological significance—Cain and Abel, the Flood, Abraham and Isaac, the prophets of Christ, and the like. By the same token all events after the Resurrection are relevant to an understanding of its effects. Here sacred history is less useful. The Acts of the Apostles furnish some material (e.g., "The Conversion of St. Paul"), but for the most part the consequences of the Resurrection are symbolized by plays that foretell the final moments of human history—Antichrist and the Last Judgement. Medieval drama begins, as we have seen, in the timeless present of ritual. Curiously, the effect of the largest of the medieval cycles is that of a return to the timeless present. Human history emerges from eternity in the first episode and is lost within it once again in the last.

If historical amplification leads inevitably to a past and a future eternity, historical improvisation leads to the world of the here and now. Improvised scenes must be composed without scriptural precedent, and they are usually theologically unimportant. The dramatist must compose them by reference to what is probable and familiar. Because scriptural precedent is lacking, he can be brief and general, or he can invent characters, expand dialogue, and include satire or propaganda. Hence, while the Visit to the Tomb and the Adoration of the Shepherds remain stable throughout the history of medieval drama, tangential characters such as the unguentarius, Herod, Noah's wife, and Mac and Tyb multiply in number and variety. Indeed, in the Second Shepherds' Play the tangential action is far more elaborate than the Nativity episode, a fact that reveals not secularization but pious devotion to purity of source and tradition.

Verisimilitude is a corollary of the shift from ritual to representation. Its manifestations include imitative costumes and stage props, correlation of action with dialogue, use of popular lyric forms instead of liturgical antiphons and scriptural paraphrase, character consistency, anachronism, and elimination of ceremonial and symbolic elements. Strict verisimilitude is never achieved on the stage unless, perhaps, in the dramas of the school of Ibsen. Needless to say, it is found only in tentative and irregular forms in medieval drama, and when conflicts develop, it takes a second place to fidelity to source.
Like verisimilitude, concern for aesthetic effect is rudimentary in medieval drama and regularly yields to fidelity to source. In both cases the immediate results are unfortunate. From a rationalistic point of view, medieval drama is a tissue of impossibilities strung together on an absurd parody of a plot and staged with a bizarre mixture of improvisation and crude realism. This, of course, is not the attitude with which its contemporaries regarded it, nor is it the tradition bequeathed by medieval drama to the Renaissance. As study of the Resurrection play shows, liturgical drama is the outcome of a search for representational modes which preserve a vital relation to ritual. The contrast between the conservative drama of Renaissance England and the drama of sixteenth-century Italy, which was written in conscious rebellion against medieval tradition, suggests that this relation was worth preserving.