ignate either the daily Hours of the liturgy as a whole or the special set of services, often including the Mass, for a particular feast. All of these special Offices required new texts and new or adapted melodies for the Proper of each service, especially Vespers, Matins, and Lauds. The new chants therefore include hymns, responsories, and antiphons for psalms and canticles. In later Offices, the texts of all these items were normally the same kind of rhymed and rhythmic poetry that characterized the later sequence. That the volumes of the *Analecta Hymnica* contain over 850 such rhymed Offices is a measure of their enormous popularity.[1]

ADDITIONS TO THE MASS

By comparison to the Offices, the Mass showed itself much more impervious to penetration by poetic texts, particularly of the modern, rhymed variety. Tropes and sequences, of course, did introduce such poetry in the later stages of their development, as did on occasion the verses of Alleluias. On the whole, however, the chants of the Mass Proper continued to draw on the Bible for their texts, even for feasts that were newly added to the Church calendar. Only in a few exceptional cases were Proper chants provided with poetic texts. Curiously, the practice seems to have been confined to Offertories and Communions, perhaps because these chants had lost any semblance of psalmodic form. The volume of *Analecta Hymnica* devoted to tropes of the Mass Proper (Vol. 49) includes forty-two "rhythmic Offertories," and twenty-seven "rhythmic Communions." Almost invariably these chants are for feasts of the Virgin Mary or individual saints. Most of them, moreover, come from sources dating from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. There are even a few instances when the entire Proper of the Mass is set in rhymed poetry. Peter Wagner quotes one such example as a "curiosity" and comments that "no proof is needed that works of this sort belong to the period of liturgical degeneracy."[2]

A more fruitful and acceptable means of embellishing the Mass had been found long before the scattered attempts to introduce poetic texts into the Mass Proper. Just as tropes expanded individual chants, so introductions, interpolations, and conclusions expanded the form of the Mass itself. The official items of both Proper and Ordinary remained unchanged to form a structural frame that could support a multitude of local additions, some of which themselves became part of the official Mass liturgy. When we recall the form of the Mass as outlined in Chapter V, we may well be surprised to find that the Ordinary in the *Liber Usualis* (p. 1) has a full page of text *before* the Introit. Similarly, the

1. See Bibliography.
2. P. Wagner, *Origin and Development of the Forms of the Liturgical Chant* (London, 1907), p. 261, n. 1.

dismissal *Ite, missa est* is followed by a prayer and a final Gospel reading. The Ordinary chants, moreover, begin with what are called "The Asperges" (LU, p. 11), chants to be sung during the sprinkling of altar, clerics, and congregation with holy water. In medieval practice, further additions—both textual and musical—often expanded these introductory and concluding ceremonies to even greater lengths. Interpolations within the Mass also enriched its musical contents. At some points in the service, notably the Communion rites, the insertion of extra music became a generally accepted practice for solemn feasts and even for ordinary Sundays. Added music was also provided for Masses celebrated in connection with such special ceremonies as royal weddings, the installation of bishops, and the coronation of kings. As indicated earlier, the original function of much religious music cannot now be determined. We do know, however, some of the music that was commonly added to the Mass, and scholars have identified a few pieces, both monophonic and polyphonic, that were composed for the coronations of particular French kings (see Chapter X, p. 242 and fn. 2).

LITURGICAL DRAMA

The introduction of dramatic representation is perhaps the most interesting and surely the most unexpected way in which the medieval Church expanded and embellished its liturgy. The recorded history of liturgical music drama begins with a scene depicting the encounter of

The three Marys at the tomb of Christ. A scene from the earliest liturgical drama.

the three Marys with an angel (or angels) at the tomb of Christ on Easter morning. Usually named from its opening words, "Quem quaeritis" (Whom are ye seeking), the "play" in its simplest form consists of only three lines of dialogue:

> Angels: Whom are ye seeking, O servants of Christ?
> Marys: Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified, O servants of heaven.
> Angels: He is not here. He is risen as He said. Go and proclaim that He has risen.

In this form, however, the dialogue does not appear as a play at all, but in a St. Gall manuscript that dates from c. 950, as an introductory trope to the Easter Introit *Resurrexi* (AMM, No. 5), in which Christ himself announces "I have risen." Another version, the first to have been preserved, is found in a Limoges manuscript dated 923–934. Also attached to the Easter Introit, this version, curiously, is more complex than the later one from St. Gall. It appears to be embedded within another trope of the Introit, but the three-line nucleus is itself expanded by a second speech of the three Marys: "Alleluia, the Lord is risen. Today the strong lion, Christ the Son of God has risen. Give thanks to God, say Eia!"[3]

The manuscripts give no indication that either of these two earliest versions of *Quem quaeritis* was dramatized, although they were probably sung responsorially or antiphonally as was usual for the Introit itself and as a number of later sources specify for the trope. Our first evidence of dramatic representation comes not from a musical source, but from the *Regularis concordia,* a manual of ceremonial usages for the Benedictine order in England. Drawn up between 965 and 975 by Ethelwold, Bishop of Winchester, the *Regularis* gives an unusually full account of how the *Quem quaeritis* play was to be performed after the final responsory of Matins on Easter Sunday.[4]

It is generally assumed that the indications of dialogue in Ethelwold's description are the textual incipits of the chants that were sung. If this be true, the play begins with the three-line nucleus from St. Gall and the added speech of the Marys from Limoges. In two further additions the angel sings a liturgical antiphon, "Come and see the place where the Lord was laid," and the Marys respond with another antiphon announcing that "The Lord who was hung upon the cross for us has risen from the sepulcher, alleluia." The performance then returns to the regular liturgy of Matins with the singing of the *Te Deum* accompanied by the traditional pealing of bells.

Only a few years later than the *Regularis concordia,* the Winchester

3. For transcriptions of the first tropes from St. Gall and Limoges (the latter incomplete), see NOHM, 2, pp. 178–79. A later version from Limoges may be found in P. Evans, *The Early Trope Repertory of Saint Martial de Limoges* (Princeton, 1970), p. 155. The first play, from the Winchester Troper, is recorded in HMS, 2, with a transcription of the music in the accompanying booklet.

4. For one translation of this account, see Reese, MMA, p. 194.

Troper (c. 980) preserves a complete version of the play with music. Although this version lacks the detailed stage directions of Ethelwold's description, its contents differ in only two respects. The first is the insertion of still another liturgical antiphon as the angel's final speech. After the Marys have seen that the tomb is empty, he tells them, "Going quickly, tell the disciples that the Lord is risen." The play then ends with the antiphon of the Marys announcing that "The Lord has risen." Omission of the *Te Deum* is the second and more significant difference from the *Regularis* version, for it shows that the play was not performed at the end of Matins. If we can trust its placement in the Winchester Troper—which otherwise gives an accurate sequence of liturgical events—this version of the play served as a prelude to the Blessing of the Paschal Candle, part of the ceremonies of the Easter Vigil service.

In spite of chronological discrepancies that had to be explained away or ignored, the early appearances of the *Quem quaeritis* dialogue just described have provided the chief basis for the orthodox explanation of how liturgical drama originated. According to that explanation, the simplest form—the three-line nucleus—must have been the earliest, was probably composed at St. Gall, and began as a trope of the Easter Introit. When the trope was later expanded and performed as a Visitation to the Sepulcher at the end of Matins, liturgical drama was born. In this view, then, dramatic representation was a direct outgrowth of the process of troping.

Various objections to this traditional explanation have been raised in the past, but only recently have serious doubts as to its validity been accompanied by proposals of more credible alternatives. In a series of brilliant essays, O. B. Hardison, Jr. analyzed the place of drama in the liturgy and examined the numerous "manuscript anomalies" in the transmission of the *Quem quaeritis* dialogue as trope and play.[5] Hardison concluded that the play must have come first and probably originated as an addition to the ceremonies of the Easter vigil.[6] A later article reported Hardison's discovery of remarkable textual parallels between the *Quem quaeritis* play and portions of a ninth-century Easter Vespers that "is emphatically a commemoration of the rites of Holy Saturday."[7] Still later research by Timothy McGee into the liturgical placement of *Quem quaeritis* has shown that, when the dialogue came before the Easter Mass, it normally formed part of a larger processional ceremony preceding but

5. *Christian Rite and Christian Drama in the Middle Ages;* see especially the fifth essay, "The Early History of the *Quem quaeritis.*"

6. Following the papal decree of 1960, the Easter vigil is included in the "restored Ordo of Holy Week" in later editions of LU, pp. 776_{I-MM}.

7. O. B. Hardison, Jr., "Gregorian vespers and Early Liturgical Drama," *The Medieval Drama and its Claudelian Revival,* ed. E. Catherine Dunn *et al.* (Washington, D.C., 1970), p. 37.

separate from the Mass itself.[8] From the evidence of some eighty manuscripts of the tenth to twelfth centuries, McGee came to doubt that the little dialogue was ever regarded as a trope directly connected with the Easter Introit. Instead, he concluded that it was "a separate, self-contained ceremony," which might or might not be called a trope, depending on the meaning given that term in various parts of western Europe. It is not unreasonable to suppose that this ceremony may have included representational elements from its very beginning. A number of sources indicate performance as a dialogue, and some specify that it was sung "at the sepulcher" (*ad sepulchrum*) or "at the visitation to the sepulcher" (*ad visitandum sepulchrum*). Transference of the ceremony from the procession before the Mass to the end of Matins, which was supposed to come at dawn, would then reflect a desire to conform more closely to the women's arrival at the sepulcher "very early in the morning" (Luke 24:1).

That McGee's investigations partly confirm and partly modify Hardison's conjectures is obvious. The old hypothesis that liturgical drama developed from the process of troping preexistent chants is no longer tenable. Both representational scenes and tropes, to be sure, resulted from the same impulse to embellish and, perhaps, to humanize the rituals of the Church, but they developed independently. Occasional relationships between them are merely incidental and do not imply lineal descent of one from the other.

Whatever the origin of the Easter play, it obviously served as a model for a Christmas play representing the shepherds' visit to the stable in which Christ was born. This play, which first appears in eleventh-century sources, begins with the words "Quem quaeritis in praesepe, pastores, dicite" (Whom are ye seeking in the manger, shepherds? say!). The shepherds reply: "The Saviour, Christ the Lord, . . ." Two more speeches follow, the second of which is completed by the Introit of the Christmas Mass, *Puer natus est nobis* (Unto us a Child is born; LU, p. 408).[9] That this play so often introduced the Mass seems to confirm the orthodox hypothesis that liturgical drama evolved from tropes. Another Christmas play, *The Visit of the Magi,* again raises doubts, however. Most examples of this play are attached to Matins and appear to be independent compositions. Much more diversified in content than the shepherd plays, they often expanded into highly complex episodic forms. The visits of the shepherds and the Magi were sometimes combined in a single play, which might also include elaborate scenes at King Herod's court. Such scenes naturally suggested dramatization of the Slaughter of the Innocents and the Lament of Rachel. Another play that

8. Timothy J. McGee, "The Liturgical Placements of the *Quem quaeritis* Dialogue," JAMS, 29 (1976), pp. 1–29.

9. For the melodies of the first two speeches, see NOHM, 2, p. 196. A complete setting of the text is available in Evans, *The Early Trope,* p. 129.

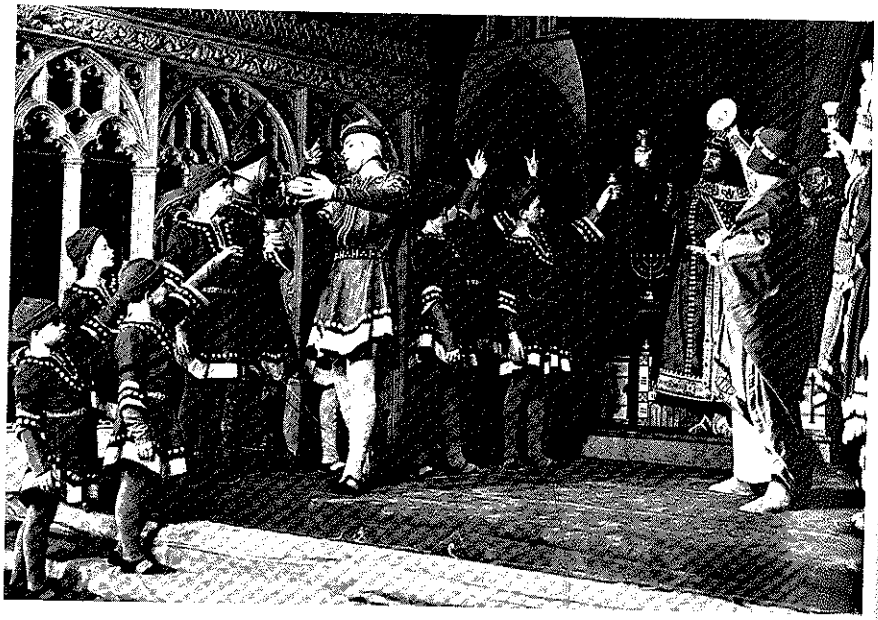
appeared in the eleventh century, the *Ordo prophetarum* (Procession of the prophets), was also performed during the Christmas season. Based on a sixth-century sermon, it assembled various Old Testament characters, as well as pagans such as Vergil and the Sybil, who prophesied the coming of Christ.

Not until the twelfth century do Easter plays begin to approach the richness and complexity of Christmas plays from the previous century or of contemporary plays on other subjects. Only then were new episodes and scenes added both before and after the central dialogue at the sepulcher. The various episodes related to the Resurrection, like those related to the Nativity, were sometimes performed on different occasions as separate playlets, sometimes combined in a longer, continuous play. Some details of this accumulative process will appear later in the present chapter. The Easter and Nativity seasons were naturally the favorite times for the production of liturgical drama, and they inspired the vast majority of plays that have been preserved. Indeed, fewer than twenty surviving plays from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries are based on other subjects. Dramatized stories from the Old Testament include those of Isaac, Joseph and His Brothers, and Daniel. The number of stories provided by the New Testament was scarcely greater: the Annunciation, the Raising of Lazarus, the Conversion of St. Paul, and the Wise and Foolish Virgins. Curiously, eight plays—almost half of those unconnected with either Easter or Christmas—are not Biblical at all but are devoted to the miracles of St. Nicholas, which seem to have been among the most popular tales of medieval religious mythology.

The expansion of liturgical drama from simple dialogues to lengthy plays with scenery and costumes naturally depended on the introduction of new texts and new music to which those texts could be sung. Throughout their history, the liturgical plays remained sung rather than spoken drama. In a very real sense, therefore, they are music-dramas. Some writers have even gone so far as to call them "medieval operas." The name is misleading only if we think in terms of opera as we know it now. Medieval opera was acted and sung, certainly; but until late in the fourteenth century the few references to instrumental participation mention only the organ and sometimes bells, and then only to accompany the concluding choral chants such as the *Te Deum* and *Magnificat*.[10] Moreover, the music was entirely monophonic, single-line melodies that retained the notation and, to some extent, the character of plainchant. Within these restricted limits, however, the music of medieval opera displays considerable diversity.

Whatever their origin may have been, the melodies of the *Quem quaeritis* dialogues for Easter and Christmas matched the style of the In-

10. See W. L. Smoldon, "The Music of the Medieval Church Drama," MQ, 48 (1962), pp. 493–94.



Belshazzar's Feast from the Play of Daniel, as produced by the New York Pro Musica, Noah Greenberg, director, at Wells Cathedral in England.

troits with which they first appeared. In the plays, additional texts taken from the liturgy—antiphons, the *Te Deum,* and, later, sequences—normally retained their traditional and relatively simple melodies. They were thus in perfect accord with the already prevailing style—partly syllabic, partly neumatic—which set the standard for later additions requiring new melodies for nonliturgical texts. More elaborate styles with melismatic passages were usually reserved for laments or other situations in which their dramatic and emotional intent is obvious. It is curious to note, however, that later plays of German origin show a decided tendency toward melismatic elaboration.[11] Interesting and beautiful as some of these German melodies may be, they are often less effective dramatically than the simpler melodic style to which the French plays adhered. Even in medieval opera, apparently, the typically French principle of subordinating music to words was well established.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a new development came with the introduction of rhymed poetic texts into liturgical drama. This development coincided with the appearance of the new poetic forms in the sequence and in the many rhymed Offices that date from the same and later centuries. The new plays now exhibit great variety in their textual, and consequently their musical, structure. In some of the musically most interesting, poetic forms—often as a sort of set piece—alternate with the prose dialogues and liturgical chants. In others, older prose texts were remodeled into poetry and provided with modified or completely new melodies. The process was occasionally carried to such extremes that almost the entire text was cast in poetic forms, with little or

11. For examples see GD, 5, p. 325, and Smoldon, ibid., p. 487.

no dependence on liturgical texts and melodies. The result of this process is nowhere more evident than in *The Play of Daniel,* perhaps the best known because the most widely performed of all medieval dramas. Except for two concluding items—one stanza of a hymn and the *Te Deum*—the texts and melodies of this play are entirely nonliturgical. Their diverse forms and styles make *The Play of Daniel* one of the most fascinating examples of medieval dramatic art.[12]

REPRESENTATIVE PLAYS FROM FLEURY

Perhaps the most important collection of liturgical dramas is the "Fleury Play Book," so called from the monastery of St. Benoît-sur-Loire from which it comes.[13] The ten plays in this thirteenth-century manuscript presumably formed the dramatic repertory of the monastery and represent all types of the later liturgical drama both in subject matter and in methods of construction. The first four deal with the miracles of St. Nicholas. Then come two plays for the Christmas season and two for Easter. The last two plays are based on the Biblical stories of the Conversion of St. Paul and the Raising of Lazarus. All of the plays close with a liturgical chant, usually the *Te Deum,* but their texts as a whole are of three different kinds: 1) almost exclusively rhymed poetry; 2) almost exclusively the prose of liturgical chants; and 3) a mixture of the two. Comments on plays representative of each can at least suggest the differing musical forms and styles to which each gave rise.

PLAYS WITH LARGELY POETIC TEXTS

The Play of Daniel belongs to the class of plays with largely poetic texts, but its great variety of textual forms and musical settings makes its position unique. As a rule, plays in this class are much more limited in both their textual and musical resources. Frequently, indeed, a single poetic form, and even a single melody, will serve for an entire play. This is the case in the first two miracles of St. Nicholas in the Fleury Play Book and also in the final play, *The Raising of Lazarus.* The practice may have been suggested by contemporary performances of the epic *chansons de geste* (songs of deeds), in which one or two melodic formulas served for hundreds of lines of text (see Chapter XII). The liturgical plays are not

12. *The Play of Daniel* is a performing version edited by N. Greenberg, recorded on Decca Records (DL 9402; stereo, DL 79402). An edition by W. L. Smoldon simply gives the original melodies in unmeasured note values.

13. The original name, Fleury-sur-Loire, was changed to St. Benoît-sur-Loire when relics of St. Benedict were brought to the monastery, which is situated on the Loire River some miles above Orléans. The Fleury Play Book is now in the Municipal Library of Orléans (MS. 201).

nearly as long, but the constant repetition of a single melody can scarcely be called dramatic.

A more imaginative procedure lends considerably greater interest to the fourth miracle of St. Nicholas, *The Son of Getron*. The story is a simple one. The servants of a pagan king kidnap a small boy, who serves for a year as a page in the king's household. St. Nicholas then intervenes and miraculously returns the boy to his parents. The text still makes use of a single poetic form: four-line stanzas with ten syllables in each line. Variety comes, however, from assigning a distinctive melody to each character, including the chorus of servants. Departures from this principle of musical characterization are few but dramatically effective. At first it may seem incongruous that the mother should lament, and her comforters console, to the same melody. Yet this unusual repetition of one melody does make a point. From despair and lamentation, the mother gradually becomes more hopeful. Finally, on the advice of her comforters, she concludes the scene with a prayer for the intercession of St. Nicholas. The double meaning that the melody thus acquires becomes clear when it later reappears in the mouth of the boy lamenting his fate as a servant of the pagan king. By abandoning his own melody, the boy recalls both his mother's anguish and her prayer to St. Nicholas. In this subtle way the music prepares the audience for the intervention of the saint that is soon to bring the play to a happy ending. Fittingly enough, the mother's closing song of rejoicing uses a new melody that borrows a prominent motive—a melismatic descent stepwise through the interval of a fifth—from the son's melody. It is perhaps an exaggeration to see in *The Son of Getron* an "early experiment with the Wagnerian *leitmotif*,"[14] but certainly the suggestive power of music has here been used to good effect.

PLAYS WITH LARGELY LITURGICAL TEXTS

A good many plays follow the example of the early Easter plays, drawing their texts largely from liturgical chants. Antiphons were the favored form for use in this class of text, but longer chants, as well as tropes and sequences, were also included. For the most part, of course, these are prose texts, either taken directly from the Bible or elaborated from simpler Biblical phrases. Usually, the plays retain the melodies to which their texts are sung in the liturgy; but now and then a liturgical text will appear with what seems to be a newly composed melody. Because even these new melodies do not radically depart from traditional plainchant style, plays of this kind seem more sober, more severe, and—to us, perhaps—more truly liturgical than plays that use rhymed and rhythmic poetry.

14. *The Son of Getron*, ed. by C. Sterne, p. 1 of Introduction.

Of the ten plays in the Fleury Play Book, only *The Appearance at Emmaus* belongs in the class with largely liturgical texts. According to Rembert Weakland, "almost the whole of [this] Peregrinus Play . . . is composed of chant antiphons."[15] (The term *peregrinus* ["stranger" or "traveler"] identifies plays that deal with the meeting of the risen Christ with two disciples travelling to Emmaus [Luke 24:13–52].) Rubrics in the manuscript tell us that the play was performed at Vespers on Tuesday after Easter, and some of its antiphons are still in use during the Easter season. Christ's first chant, for example, *Qui sunt hi sermones* (What manner of communications are these; Luke 24:17), is now the antiphon for the *Magnificat* at Vespers on Monday after Easter (LU, p. 788). Not all the play's antiphons have remained in the liturgy, and some texts that do remain have different melodies.[16] It is not surprising, therefore, that the liturgical nature of many chants has gone unrecognized. Unfortunately, lack of recognition has led to mensural transcriptions that, to quote Weakland again, "can be seen at once to be capricious."[17] Whatever one's theories with regard to the rhythm of early plainchant may be, by the twelfth century it must certainly have been performed in unmeasured note values. In a play such as *The Appearance at Emmaus,* then, mensural transcriptions, either in free or in triple rhythms, can have no place. The contemporary way of singing plainchant—as far as we can know it—must provide the only basis for modern interpretations of liturgical dramas that draw the bulk of their material from the liturgy itself.

PLAYS WITH A MIXTURE OF POETIC AND LITURGICAL TEXTS

The Easter and Christmas plays were originally mixtures of new prose texts and liturgical chants. At first, expanded scenes and added episodes followed the same procedure. Where chants alone proved inadequate for dramatic dialogue, the new prose texts were given musical settings that matched the style of the chants with which they appeared. Later additions introduce rhymed and rhythmic poetry in different places throughout the plays. Many fully developed plays, therefore, combine liturgical chants and dramatic dialogue in prose with set pieces having poetic texts. This mixture of different textual types has suggested to some scholars a comparison with the operatic recitative and aria. The resemblance becomes even more pronounced if we grant that the poetic texts should be performed in triple meters. The style of the set pieces

15. R. Weakland, "The Rhythmic Modes and Medieval Latin Drama," JAMS, 14 (1961), p. 136.

16. Compare *Videte manus meas* (Behold my hands) in LU, p. 792, with the version in E. de Coussemaker, *Drames liturgiques du moyen âge,* p. 199.

17. JAMS, 14 (1961), p. 136. The edition referred to is G. Tintori, *Sacre rappresentazioni,* a complete transcription of the Fleury Play Book.

then contrasts strikingly with the prose dialogues sung in free, unmeasured rhythms.

Two of the more extended Fleury plays illustrate such mixtures of poetry, prose, and liturgical texts: *The Representation of Herod* and *The Slaying of the Children*. These two plays dramatize the entire Christmas story from the vision of the shepherds in the field to the slaying of the children, the death of Herod, and the return of the Holy Family from Egypt. In their modern revival they have been performed and published as a single play under the title *The Play of Herod*.[18] In this edition, an acting version is followed by a literal transcription and facsimiles from the Fleury Play Book. Interested students thus have a unique opportunity to study medieval dramas in their original form as well as in their modern dress. Let us at least mention a few of the items that make *The Play of Herod* characteristic of its class.

One of the first contrasts between poetry and prose occurs when Herod sends a soldier to question the Three Kings. The soldier (*armiger*) addresses the Magi in prose, but they reply in rhymed verse (Nos. 14 and 15).[19] Poetic texts often emphasize the emotional climax of a scene after a series of prose dialogues. Thus in the long scene at Herod's court (Nos. 16–38), the King learns the purpose of the Magi's visit and summons the Scribes to say what they find in the Prophets. When the Scribes report that the Prophets foretold the birth of Christ in Bethlehem, Herod flies into a rage. His son Archelaus interrupts and the two alternately sing four-line stanzas to the same melody (Nos. 39–41). After this outburst, the return to prose for the final chant of the scene is particularly effective. Herod falsely asks the Magi to bring back word of the newborn child so that he too may go and offer homage to him.

The second part of *The Play of Herod* reaches its emotional peak with the Lament of Rachel over the slain children (Nos. 17–23; AMM, No. 28). In this famous scene, as in *The Son of Getron*, the solo lament alternates with ensemble chants of the "consolers." Rachel's lament is much more extended, however, and its structure and style are both more varied and more expressive. The first three numbers—two laments with an intervening consolation—are stanzas of rhymed verse with the same poetic rhythms. They are also related musically through the use of similar opening motives and a recurring cadential pattern. Beginning with the second chant of consolation, another group of three numbers (20–22) draws on a sequence of Notker for its text. The lines are therefore irregular in length and without rhyme. Continuing this re-

18. Edited by N. Greenberg and W. L. Smoldon, recorded on Decca Records (DXA 187; stereo, DXSA 7187).

19. Musical items are numbered consecutively but begin again with No. 1 in the second section of the play. The same numbering appears in both the literal transcription and the acting version, but in the latter, numbers with letters indicate repeated or added items. No. 6a, for example, is a motet of the late thirteenth century; Nos. 55a and 56a are repetitions of No. 55.

turn to older textual types, Rachel's final lament closes the scene with a liturgical antiphon. The melody for Notker's text seems to have been newly composed for Fleury, but the antiphon has its traditional melody.[20]

The complete text for the scene of Rachel's Lament may seem a curious mixture of styles, but the progression from "modern" rhythmic poetry back to a Biblical—and liturgical—text can only have been deliberate. It is surely significant, too, that the antiphon was sung at Lauds on Good Friday and thus suggests the coming Resurrection. In the Fleury play, indeed, an archangel raises the children to heaven immediately after Rachel's exit. Excerpts from the lament have often been quoted, but the rather lengthy scene must be studied and heard in its entirety for full appreciation of its effect. In the words of its modern editor, we have here "one of the most remarkable examples of the use of dramatic melody that can be found in medieval times."[21] Smoldon's qualification "one of" might well be eliminated from this statement.

A final comment on *The Play of Herod:* the opening episode is a complete shepherds' play, including the familiar dialogue of the midwives and shepherds. Curiously, however, the first two words, "Quem quaeritis," are sung to the beginning of the Easter melody, which is here transposed to lead smoothly into the traditional melody of the Christmas trope. Thus *The Play of Herod* relates the birth of Christ with His Resurrection and subtly reminds us that liturgical drama began with the scene at the empty tomb.[22]

LITURGICAL DRAMAS AND VERNACULAR PLAYS

The propriety of the term *liturgical drama* has sometimes been questioned, but a number of considerations justify its continued use. With few exceptions, the texts were entirely in Latin. The actors were clerics, and the action took place within church walls. Most important of all, liturgical drama never lost its original connection with the liturgy itself. Plays continued to serve as a postlude to Matins, as an interpolation into Lauds or Vespers, and even, on occasion, as a prelude to the Mass. To deny their function because the Church never recognized them as part of the official liturgy is to misrepresent the attitude of the Middle Ages toward its religious observances. We have seen before, and shall often see again, that medieval men felt free to embellish and expand the universal liturgy of the Church in a great variety of ways. Among those ways, liturgical drama is one of the most interesting and attractive.

20. See LU, p. 690: *Anxiatus est in me spiritus meus* (My spirit is overwhelmed within me), Psalm 142 (143):4. Despite numerous variants, the two versions are obviously the same melody.

21. *The Play of Herod,* p. 78.

22. The same procedure occurs in a thirteenth-century Magi play from Rouen; see Coussemaker, *Drames liturgiques,* pp. 235–41.

The term *liturgical drama* also provides a useful means of distinguishing the Latin plays of the Church from miracle and mystery plays in the vernacular. By the end of the thirteenth century, the independent development of liturgical drama seems to have been completed. In cathedrals and especially in monasteries, performances of Latin plays as adjuncts of the liturgy continued well into the sixteenth century and perhaps even later. After 1300, however, religious plays in the language of the people captured the popular imagination and experienced the greatest development. Modern terminology makes a distinction—not observed in the Middle Ages—between miracle plays, which portray the miracles of the Virgin Mary or the lives and miracles of saints, and mystery plays based on stories from the Bible. Both kinds are found in Latin plays of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, as we have seen, and the same centuries saw the first appearances of both kinds in French. From the beginning, apparently, vernacular plays were not performed in church as an addition to the official liturgy, although throughout their history the great majority continued to betray their ancestry by ending with the *Te Deum*. Despite the occasional introduction of other liturgical chants, perhaps the chief distinction—after that of language—between liturgical and vernacular drama was the latter's use of spoken rather than sung dialogue. In large part, presumably, this change occurred because the actors were now laymen, not clerics who were trained singers. Minstrels often took part in performances both as singers and instrumentalists, but more and more the miracle and mystery plays became spoken dramas with incidental music.

Freed from the restrictions of the Church, the vernacular plays treated their Biblical or legendary subject matter with great freedom and a lively sense of humor. Scenes with the devil in hell seem to have been particularly popular. More than miracle plays, mysteries grew in length and elaboration until, by the fifteenth century, their performances often extended over several days and covered the entire story of the Bible from the Creation of Man to the Last Judgment. Music continued to serve as an ornamental adjunct to these plays, but little that was composed specifically for them has survived. The texts that were to be sung were often in the poetic forms characteristic of secular song from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries, and we may assume that their musical settings were also characteristic of their age. In some cases, indeed, we find no more than a direction that some chanson or motet should be sung. Suggestions for the use of instrumental music are common but even less specific as to what the musicians played. Because of this characteristic indifference to music on the part of playwrights, or scribes, the mystery plays must remain more a part of theatrical than of musical history. And that, after all, is perhaps where they belong. Rather than foreshadowing the development of opera, they are much more the ancestors of Shakespeare.