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Where Canons Dine and Kings Feast: A New Examination of the Refectory Corbels in Pamplona

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A New Examination of the Refectory Corbels in Pamplona

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by

Hannah Maryan Thomson

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Where Canons Dine and Kings Feast:

A New Examination of the Refectory Corbels in Pamplona

by

Hannah Maryan Thomson

Master of Arts in Art History

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Professor Meredith Marie Cohen, Chair

The fourteenth-century ashlar refectory that makes up part of Pamplona's cathedral complex stands apart from other medieval refectories because of its elaborate interior decoration. While medieval refectories tend to be austere, Pamplona's boasts extensive ornamentation; of particular interest are a series of fourteen corbels that depict imagery common in marginal sculpture. Scholars have often sought to apply allegorical or didactic meanings to such marginal forms, while overlooking both physical and functional contexts. In my thesis, I engage with recent scholarship on medieval aesthetics and sensory perception to recontextualize the fourteen corbels found in Pamplona's refectory.

The refectory and the sculptural decoration within it challenge the misconception of a strict division between the sacred and the secular in the Middle Ages. Pamplona's refectory merits further analysis because of its multivalent use as a dining room for the religious order of Augustinian canons that resided on the property as well as its secular function as a banquet hall

for coronation celebrations and signing of political treaties. Looking beyond traditional scholarship that understands Pamplona's corbels only as symbolic didactic images, I argue that they were integral to both religious and secular functions of the refectory especially through their visual aesthetic properties such as light and color, proportion and contrasts, and *varietas*. I explore the refectory as a multipurpose and secular location and outline the way in which the senses were appealed to for successful promotion of religious and secular goals. Before now, Pamplona's fourteen corbels have never been the primary focus of an art historical study.

The thesis of Hannah Maryan Thomson is approved.

Sharon Gerstel

Dell Upton

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Contents

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INTRODUCTION

Pamplona is perched on the foothills of the Pyrenees mountains, the capital of the province of Navarra in northern Spain. An outpost along the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela, remnants of the medieval city abound in the form of churches and defensive fortifications that attest to the city's importance during the Middle Ages. Today, a neoclassical façade fronts the late Gothic cathedral begun by Carlos III (r. 1387-1425) in 1394 and completed in 1501. Extant supporting structures to the cathedral include a thirteenth and fourteenth-century cloister, chapter house, kitchen and refectory (fig. 1). The Gothic cloister has gained popularity as a subject of art-historical analysis, while the other dependencies, namely the refectory, have been largely neglected. The refectory at Pamplona, replete with elegant visual decoration as well as a location of sensory stimulation, merits further analysis as a lively multivalent space that served Augustinian canons, Navarran nobility, royalty and even the poor (fig. 2).[1]

Located on the southwest corner of the cloister, the rectangular refectory was used as a dining room for the Augustinian canons that resided on the property as well as a secular space for coronation banquets and signing of political treaties. It was built during a rapid building campaign under the direction of Bishop Arnalt de Barbazán between 1328 and 1335.[2] Unlike

[1] To clarify, I am using 'Pamplona' here and throughout this paper as a metonym to refer specifically to the structures that comprise the complex of la Catedral de Santa María la Real de Pamplona.

[2] Also called Arnaldo de Barbazán in Spanish. The refectory's dimensions are: 31m long, 10.5 m wide and 13 m high. The keystones with the Evreux coat of arms, the royal family who ruled Navarra beginning in 1328, provides a *terminus post quem* for construction. An inscription from a refectory fresco now located in the museum of Navarra gives us the completion date: *Anno Domini M CCC XXX et V Dominus Iohannes Petri de Stella, archidiaconus Sancti Petri de Osun, fuit operarius ecclesie Beate Sancte Maria Pampilonensis. Fecit fieri istud refectorium et Iohannes Oliveri depinxit istud opus (In the year of our lord 1335 Master Juan Petriz de Estella, archdeacon of Saint Peter of Osun was the patron for the Blessed church of Saint Mary of Pamplona. He made this refectory and Juan Oliver painted this work).* The Spanish literature has translated *operarius* as *promotor* or *fabriquero*, that is 'patron' or 'foreman.' Juan Petriz de Estella appears to have been a wealthy canon who was especially interested and invested in construction and architecture. He was possibly educated in Toulouse. He may have controlled all the funds for construction, or oversaw the entire construction process. We're unsure if the Evreux monarchs were patrons for the refectory. Most think they likely were not, however the inclusion of their coat of arms has been used

other medieval refectories whose decoration is austere and minimal, Pamplona's refectory boasts elaborate interior ornamentation in the form of corbels, keystones, and window capitals. Of particular interest in this space are the fourteen corbels adorned with images that include hybrid musicians, mythical creatures, foliage, a man hunting a boar, and a griffin devouring a ram (figs. 3-6). These subjects represent fairly common imagery seen in marginal sculpture throughout western European ecclesiastical structures. In religious contexts, such depictions of fighting or hunting have traditionally been explained as allegorical struggles against sin or moralizing lessons about bravery. However, such interpretations often overlook the aesthetic value inherent in the creation of marginal sculpture and ignore both their physical surroundings and the events that occurred around them.

Investigations into the broader contexts of cathedral dependencies, a fairly recent development in medieval art history, are critical to a more comprehensive understanding of art, architecture, and society of the Middle Ages.[3] Although some of the refectory corbels have been interpreted in allegorical terms, specifically as symbolic lessons for Pamplona's religious community, scholars have so far insufficiently described the full function of these impressive examples of marginal sculpture.[4] This paper aims to recontextualize and reexamine Pamplona's fourteen refectory corbels with a perspective that considers both the religious and secular

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as evidence that construction could not have begun before 1328 when their dynasty came to power in Navarra, replacing the Capetian dynasty of rulers before them.
Clara Fernández-Ladreda and Joaquín Lorda, "Arquitectura," in *La Catedral de Pamplona 1394-1994, Tomo I*, ed. Ana Jaurrieta (Spain: Caja de Ahorros, 1994), 234.
For a longer discussion on the refectory keystones, see Javier Martínez de Aguirre and Faustino Menéndez Pidal. *Emblemas Heráldicos en el Arte Medieval Navarro* (Spain: Gobierno de Navarra, 1996).

[3] For further discussion, see Roberta Gilchrist, *Norwich Cathedral Close: The Evolution of the English Cathedral Landscape, v*ol. 26. (Boydell Press: 2005); Recent talks on the topic also took place at ICMS- Kalamazoo on May 22, 2015 during a panel entitled, *Art and Technology in the Cloister and Castle I and II*.

[4] See Eukene Martinez de Lagos, *Ocio, Diversion y Espectáculo en la Escultura Gótica: Las Iglesias Navarras como Espejo de una Realidad Artística Medieval* (2007) and Carlos Martínez Álava, "Escultura," in *La Catedral de Pamplona 1394-1994, Tomo I*, ed. Ana Jaurrieta (Spain: Caja de Ahorros, 1994), 274-353

functions of their particular location. Moreover, this series of marginal sculpture has never been the focus of an independent in-depth study.

Scholarship on marginal sculpture has in recent years moved from the confining religious-centric perspective to consider social and aesthetic motivations intrinsic in marginal forms. Most recently, Mary Carruthers argues that medieval aesthetics can explain profane images in ecclesiastical complexes. The refectory and the sculptural decoration within it challenge the misconception of a strict division between the sacred and the secular in the Middle Ages. Looking beyond traditional scholarship that understands Pamplona's corbels only as symbolic didactic images, I argue that they were integral to both religious and secular functions of the refectory especially through their visual aesthetic properties. In the following paper, I will first provide historiography on the subject of marginal sculpture that acknowledges the insufficiencies of the scholarship in analyzing Pamplona's corbels. Second, I will discuss medieval aesthetics and describe the way in which the fourteen refectory corbels epitomize the aesthetic qualities of light and color, proportion and contrasts, and *varietas*. Then, I will turn to an exploration of the refectory as a multipurpose location and outline the way in which the senses were appealed to for successful promotion of religious and secular goals. Finally, before concluding, I will address the historical and political context which further elucidates an understanding of Pamplona's emphasis on elaborate decoration in the refectory.

HISTORIOGRAPHY

Firstly, the term "marginal" must be defined: marginal sculpture comprises the less prominent forms on the interior or exterior of a church which may include corbels, bell towers,

and misericords. It stands in contrast against the "official" artistic program of Christian-centric sculpture of façades and portals.[5]

The often outlandish depictions of musicians, dancers, wild animals, monsters, urban life and even erotic figures that adorn marginal zones of churches defy typical categorizations of medieval art. In form, style, and subject, they arouse curiosity as well as confusion. In the nineteenth century, the peculiarity of these subjects left scholars to label marginal forms as purely decorative and devoid of significance.[6] Towards the end of the same century, Émile Mâle understood medieval art as didactic and saw value in grotesque creatures as representations of religious struggles.[7] Read through a religious lens, scenes of fantastical creatures or daily life might have functioned to promote Christian teachings through accessible imagery, especially as "negative *exempla*."[8] For example, cloister capitals depicting monsters from the monastery of Saint-Michel-de-Cuxa (ca. 1130-1140) have been explained as images meant to remind the monks of their continued struggle against the Devil.[9] While the didactic and allegorical perspective has permeated subsequent scholarship, the most recent studies of marginal images incorporate social, political, and aesthetic considerations.

In 1947, Meyer Schapiro published his pioneering article, "On the Aesthetic Attitude in Romanesque Art," where he posed the question, "are the religious and the ornamental the only

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[5] Nurith Kenaan-Kedar, "The Margins of Society in Marginal Romanesque Sculpture," *Gesta* 31, no. 1 (1992): 15.

[6] Kirk Ambrose, *The Marvellous and the Monstrous in the Sculpture of 12th-century Europe*, vol. 5. (Boydell Press: 2013), 7, 7n22. See also Charles Cahier and Arthur Martin. *Nouveaux Mélanges d'Archéologie d'Histoire et de Littérature sur le Moyen Âge*. (Firmin-Didot: 1877).

[7] Émile Mâle, *Religious Art of the Thirteenth Century in France* (Courier Corporation, 2012), vii, and Ambrose, *The Marvellous and the Monstrous in the Sculpture of 12th-century Europe,* 9-10.

[8] Ambrose, *The Marvellous and the Monstrous,* 9, 10, 10n 33.

[9] Mary Carruthers, *The Experience of Beauty in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 147 referring to Thomas E. A. Dale, "Monsters, Corporeal Deformities, and Phantasms in the Cloister of St-Michel-de-Cuxa," *Art Bulletin* 83 (2001): 402-436.

alternatives of artistic purpose?"[10] The article questioned the established belief that medieval art must be, and must only be, religious. Schapiro argued that Romanesque art is both aesthetic and individualized; he put agency into the hands of the makers, which had up until that point been reserved for the patrons alone. The margins constituted a space for artistic license to take precedence: because non-focal areas were less rigorously regulated, artisans took advantage of these spaces to express their own visions of the world.[11] Schapiro's article defined marginal sculpture as a field of study and provided a fresh perspective that looked beyond a decorative/sacred paradigm that had been established years earlier.

In her work on marginal sculpture, Nurith Kenaan-Kedar echoes Schapiro and proposes art makers used marginal sculpture to reflect contemporary society. Artisans, as "mediators between their own culture and that represented by [their] patrons" inserted characters from the periphery of medieval society like jugglers, musicians, or adulteresses into the visual culture of the time.[12] She suggests that marginal sculpture in the Romanesque period based their forms on traditional Christian characters but represented an "antimodel" which stood in contrast to official Christological church decoration.[13] That is, marginal sculpture replaced and subverted common religious figures with true-to-life medieval persons, complete with grotesque imperfections and emotive movements.[14] In the Gothic period, marginal sculpture became increasingly standardized, appearing in civic buildings and becoming much more prevalent throughout art and

[10] Meyer Schapiro, *On the Aesthetic Attitude in Romanesque Art* (Luzac & Company, 1947), 10.

[11] Nurith Kenaan-Kedar, *Marginal Sculpture in Medieval France: Towards the Deciphering of an Enigmatic Pictorial Language* (Scolar Press, 1995), 154.

[12] Kenaan-Kedar, "The Margins of Society in Marginal Romanesque Sculpture," 18.

[13] Ibid., 17.

[14] Ibid.

architecture.[15] Kenaan-Kedar enumerates the changing forms of marginal sculpture from the Romanesque to Gothic period, including the confluence of flora appearing in both "official" and marginal sculpture. Ultimately, she argues that marginal sculpture acts as moral imagery meant to realistically reflect or subvert contemporary society, which is not so different than unilateral allegorical or didactic readings proposed by previous scholars.[16]

Michael Camille and Kirk Ambrose both take a more social and political approach to deciphering category-defying marginalia. Instead of arguing that marginal forms mirror contemporary "low" culture as does Kenaan-Kedar, Camille interprets the playfulness of marginal forms as reaffirming medieval social hierarchies. At times they subvert the established hierarchies, but in so doing, they also reassert the power of such hierarchies.[17] For example, the contradictory image of a rabbit hunting a knight on a manuscript's edge acts to reaffirm the power of the knight by forcing the viewer to imagine the opposite—that is, the traditional image of a knight hunting a rabbit. Camille recognizes that marginalia should not only be considered "negative *exempla*" espoused with a didactic force, and observes that marginal images in their particular contexts may engender multiple meanings.[18] He has attempted to disrupt a traditional binary of secular and sacred that views marginal forms only within a theological framework through allegorical terms.[19]

Like Camille, Kirk Ambrose's more recent work moves away from allegorical perceptions that preclude socio-political interpretations. His focus is on a particular subset of

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[15] Kenaan-Kedar, *Marginal Sculpture in Medieval France*, 135, 143.

[16] Ibid., 77-78.

[17] Michael Camille, *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art* (London: Reaktion Books, 2013), 29-30.

[18] Ibid., 28, 31.

[19] Ibid., 29

marginal imagery: monsters. Ambrose suggests that Romanesque monsters reinforced political, social, or religious ideals for patrons and visitors.[20] Because representations of twelfth-century monsters often displayed a more empathetic side of such creatures, they should not be interpreted exclusively as fear-invoking didactic images, according to Ambrose.[21] Like Schapiro, he also recognizes marginal sculpture as an area for artistic experimentation, because monstrous hybrid forms allow for extensive artistic experimentation by mixing human and animal anatomy in a number of ways.[22] Although Ambrose observes flaws in understanding marginal sculpture only as negative examples, his alternative interpretations still view them as primarily didactic images, just in a different form.

Mary Carruthers deviates from traditional didactic or decorative interpretations and recognizes the aesthetic value of marginal sculpture. For Carruthers, medieval aesthetics were rooted in sensory perception. In fact, Carruthers identifies an aesthetic experience as a mixture of "formal qualities and sensory perceptions."[23] The playful objects of medieval art, which included marginal sculpture, were neither intended to instruct nor moralize, but rather were intended to evoke a sensory response with their aesthetic properties.[24] Such a response could elicit delight and encourage memory in the viewer.[25] Carruthers's work is groundbreaking because she argues that the driving force behind medieval sculpture or architecture was aesthetic.

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[20] Ambrose, *The Marvellous and the Monstrous,* 13.

[21] Ibid., 4-5.

[22] Ibid., 6.

[23] Carruthers, *The Experience of Beauty in the Middle Ages*, 139.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ambrose, *The Marvellous and the Monstrous,* 11; Carruthers, *The Experience of Beauty in the Middle Ages*, 169; see also Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, no. 10. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

An aesthetic line of investigation, like that of Carruthers's, has yet to be considered in the study of Pamplona's marginal sculpture. One of two scholars to recently include Pamplona's corbels in broader art-historical studies is Eukene Martínez de Lagos. She takes an allegorical approach in her study of profane images across Spanish ecclesiastical structures. In her chapter discussing scenes of hunting in marginal sculpture, she uses examples of Pamplona's refectory corbels. She explains the contradiction of including images of hunting in a religious environment as representations of allegorical fights against evil.[26] In this way, inclusion of such images in a religious context becomes less blasphemous. However, Martínez De Lagos uses only the examples that can explicitly be explained allegorically—namely the boar hunt (fig. 7) and bull fighter (fig. 8). She ignores the other corbels as well as the context within which they sit—surrounded by other sculpture, in a refectory with very specific functions.

Carlos Martínez Álava, in the monograph on the cathedral of Pamplona, suggests the corbels' imagery related to the contemporary philosopher Ramon Llull (1232-1315), the philosopher, mystic, and missionary from Majorca.[27] According to Llullian philosophy, existence was organized into hierarchical levels in which humans were inferior to God but superior to sentient animals, plants, and organisms.[28] Martínez Álava identifies a common thread throughout the corbel series: the incorporation of humankind in the natural world and their hierarchical role above animals.[29] However, there are several corbels, most notably the musician and juggler images, that do not include animals in their imagery and therefore seem to contradict this theory.

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[26] Martínez de Lagos, *Ocio, Diversion y Espectáculo en la Escultura Gótica,* 343, 500-501. All of chapter 2 focuses on marginal imagery of hunting.

[27] Martínez Álava, "Escultura," *La Catedral de Pamplona 1394-1994*, 303.

[28] Ibid.; For more on Llull's life and work see Anthony Bonner, *The Art and Logic of Ramon Llull: A User's Guide*, (Brill, 2007); Josep M. Ruiz Rimon and Albert Soler Llopart, "Ramon Llull in his Historical Context," *Catalan Historical Review*, 1, (2009): 47-61.

[29] Martínez Álava, "Escultura," *La Catedral de Pamplona 1394-1994*, 303.

Martínez Álava proposes that the entire series of corbels in the refectory may even refer to a now lost medieval text, either inspired by or directly drawn from Ramon Llull.[30] Although the corbels clearly take inspiration from a newly formulated interest in nature in medieval philosophy and sculpture—all but two include either floral or animal forms—the rather generic marginal images of Pamplona's corbels do not lend themselves well to being interpreted as a specific narrative from any particular text.[31]

Current investigations into the meaning and function of Pamplona's refectory corbels have not managed to stray far from traditional allegorical and didactic interpretations. This approach, while generally applicable, frequently interprets these forms in isolation, disregarding both the broader physical contexts and varied uses of the religious space they inhabit. Martínez de Lagos, whose study of iconography is useful in its own right, disregards the refectory context completely, focusing only on the symbolic meaning of the carved subject matter of the corbels. Martínez Álava, while presenting a thought-provoking hypothesis, unfortunately has no textual documentation to corroborate his idea. The corbels should not be analyzed in terms of the symbolism of their individual scenes; rather, they should be understood in their context as a group within the multipurpose refectory. The following passages aim to reexamine the function of the corbels considering Carruthers's scholarship on medieval aesthetics and recent publications on the senses in the Middle Ages.

AN AESTHETIC APPROACH

The approach taken here has the potential to illuminate a function of the refectory corbels

[30] Ibid.

[31] For more on nature see, Marie-Dominique Chenu, Jerome Taylor, and Lester K. Little, eds., "Nature and Man—The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century," in *Nature, Man, and Society in the Twelfth Century: Essays on New Theological Perspectives in the Latin West*, vol. 37 (University of Toronto Press, 1997): 1-48.

that has so far been overlooked by previous scholarship. Scholars have attempted to explain the symbolic imagery of the corbels and discover a cohesive thread or intent behind their profane subject matter. While not disregarding intent, I aim to primarily recognize the effect the corbels may have had in terms of medieval aesthetics within the physical and functional context of the refectory and look beyond the particular subjects they depict. Carruthers writes, "the aesthetic experience…[is] brought about through the agency in the artefact of its various and varying colours (visual, verbal, or sonic.)"[32] The artifact, in this case the corbels, has the ability to generate an aesthetic experience which thus incites a shift in perception that may be pleasurable, tragic, or instructive to a visitor of the refectory.[33] The role of the corbels is to produce an experience which in turn benefits the viewer; whatever the particular or varied reaction, the stimulation of the mind and the act of perception spurred on by aesthetic qualities of the art objects is the goal.[34] The principal qualities of medieval aesthetics that concern the following discussion are light and color, proportion and harmony, contrasts, and especially *varietas*.[35]

Light actively gives form and color to the objects it illuminates and was therefore regarded as the predominant aspect of medieval aesthetics. Since antiquity, light has been considered both "the manifestation of…form" and the "condition of…visibility."[36] Its mystery and ability to generate form and color led a wide array of medieval thinkers to philosophize and create literature about light. Robert Grosseteste (1168-1253), the theologian and bishop of Lincoln,

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[32] Carruthers, *The Experience of Beauty in the Middle Ages*, 154.

[33] Ibid., 155.

[34] Gary Iseminger, "Aesthetic Experience," in *The Oxford Handbook of Aesthetics*, ed. Jerrold Levinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 101.

[35] Monroe C. Beardsley, "Aesthetic Experience Regained," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism,* vol 28. no. 1 (1969): 5.

[36] Edgar De Bruyne*, The Esthetics of the Middle Ages*, trans. Eileen B. Hennessy (New York, 1969), 55-56.

explains, "light is truly the principle of all beauty."[37] Long before Grosseteste, Dionysius the Areopagite, or Pseudo-Dionysius, the fifth or sixth century theologian, considered God the "Father of Lights" and the world a conglomeration of objects made up of "material lights."[38] All things and beings were connected to God through their reflection of light. In this way, any ordinary object touched by light had the ability to be elevated to a spiritual level.[39] Abbot Suger (1081-1151) was so affected by Pseudo-Dionysius's commentaries that he drew from his texts to justify the ornate decoration and use of light in constructing the first Gothic church, St. Denis in Paris.[40] Based on the writings of Pseudo-Dionysius, Suger described the way in which contemplation of the material urged a person into contemplation of the immaterial.[41] Objects of sculpture, through their "brightness" of craftsmanship and qualities of light brought a viewer closer to the divine.[42] St. Denis became a model for subsequent Gothic construction while Abbot Suger's writings remained significant throughout the Middle Ages, likely even in fourteenth-century Pamplona during the construction of the refectory.

At Pamplona's refectory, illumination would have been achieved mainly through candlelight because the narrow lateral windows allow a minimal stream of natural light to

[37] Quoted in Sarah-Grace Heller, "Light as Glamour: The Luminescent Ideal of Beauty in the Roman de la Rose," *Speculum* 76, no. 4 (2001): 934.

[38] Erwin Panofsky, *Abbot Suger: On the Abbey Church of St. Denis and its Art Treasures* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1946), 20.

[39] Panofsky, *Abbot Suger,* 20; "Every creature visible or invisible, is a light brought into being by the Father of Lights…As I perceive such and similar things in this stone they become lights to me, that is to say, they enlighten me."

[40] Panofsky, *Abbot Suger,* 18.

[41] Ibid., 21.

[42] Ibid., 23.

enter.[43] These windows originally lacked glass. They would have either been left open or covered in vellum or another semi-transparent material, with wooden shutters to block out bad weather.[44] The refectory's lack of natural light put emphasis on artificial light sources and their ability to illuminate the decorative forms within. John the Scot, the ninth-century neoplatonist commentator of Pseudo-Dionysius, recognized the anagogical qualities of such artificial light: "the material lights, both those which are disposed by nature in the spaces of the heavens and those which are produced on earth *by human artifice*, are images of the intelligible lights, and above all of the True Light Itself."[45] For John the Scot, both natural *and* artificial light had the potential to promote religious awakening; the luminous property of the light itself, not its source, was most important. Inside the refectory, candlelight would have glinted off of and danced across the images carved on the corbels, animating the surface and giving life to their static forms. The lion-tamer demonstrates the way in which the corbels have been carved almost entirely on the underside of the sculpted plane, facing nearly parallel to the floor (fig. 9). The particular angle with which the corbels are situated was intended for easy viewing by visitors looking up from below in addition, such extreme angles would have captured the limited artificial light in a deliberately artful way as well. The angled faces of the figures interact with the visitor and draw them in through the play of light and shadow that must have also accentuated the corbels' polychromy.

The reflection of light on an object revealed its chromatic surface and made color the most

[43] Fernández-Ladreda, *El Arte Gótico en Navarra,* 221-222.

[44]Ibid., 222; The curious molding shape, double window capitals, and evidence of hooks has led scholars to believe wooden shutters were originally installed in the lateral refectory windows.

[45] Quoted in Panofsky, *Abbot Suger*, 24. Italicization is my own.

immediately perceived aesthetic property in the Middle Ages.[46] For millennia, color has signaled culturally specific references that frame our physical spaces. In the Middle Ages, just like today, color easily recalled memories and associations.[47] Color had the ability to affect the body, to evoke recollections of nature or the world around them. For example, Hugh of St. Victor (1091-1146), a regular canon and theologian, described green as the most beautiful color because of its associations with springtime.[48] Certain writers also took a more scientific approach to color theory, like William of Auvergne (1190-1249) who said that "green…lies half way between white which dilates the eye and black which makes it contract."[49] Suger, guided by Pseudo-Dionysius, writes:

> When—out of my delight in the beauty of the house of God—the loveliness of the many-colored gems has called me away from external cares, and worthy meditation has induced me to reflect, transferring that which is material to that which is immaterial, on the diversity of the sacred virtues…and that by the grace of God, I can be transported from this inferior to that higher world in an anagogical manner.[50]

All of this— the escape from external cares, the reflection of sacred virtues, the transportation to a higher world—is achieved simply through the observance of *many-colored* gems. Light is intrinsically linked to color as the basis of that quality.[51] Suger's declaration demonstrates that bright, effulgent color, manifested through the reflection of light, was paramount to his aesthetic experience and therefore might have elicited a similar experience in Pamplona's refectory.

The polychromy on Pamplona's corbels plays a functional role in presenting a more visible subject to the viewer below, but more importantly for the purposes of the study at hand, color

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[46] De Bruyne*, The Esthetics of the Middle Ages,* 55; Carruthers, *The Experience of Beauty in the Middle Ages*, 44.
[47] Michel Pastoureau, *The Colour of Our Memories* (Polity, 2012), passim.

[48] Umberto Eco, *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages,* trans. Hugh Bredin (Yale University Press, 1986), 46.

[49] Ibid., 46.

[50] Quoted in Panofsky, *Abbot Suger*, 21.

[51] Eco, *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages,* 55.

had significant aesthetic implications. Although we cannot say for certain what the fourteenth-century polychromy looked like on Pamplona's corbels, we might compare it to the recently cleaned church façade of the nearby Iglesia Santa Maria la Real in Olite dating to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[52] The archivolts of leafy foliage alternate in color—red, green, yellow, green, yellow (fig. 10).[53] Here, the medieval painters have stressed each individual form with a variety of bright and naturalistic colors. Like Suger's "many-colored gems," the façade's extensive use of polychromy may have encouraged spiritual meditations.[54] However, the colors that adorned Pamplona's refectory remain a mystery; we are unsure whether the walls were painted, or if tapestries or other types of colorful embellishments were included. What is certain about the chromatic environment of Pamplona's refectory is that the lateral windows lacked stained glass, the corbels were painted in the fourteenth century, and a fresco of the Passion of Christ (1335), now in the Museum of Navarra, decorated the back wall beneath the rosette.[55] With an absence of stained glass, the color of the corbels may have been more notable. Although the full impact and variety of color is unknown in Pamplona's medieval refectory, the corbels' polychromy was one significant aspect of several properties integral to the aesthetic experience there.

The medieval conception of proportion was about harmony and unity. It grew out of contributions made by ancient and late antique thinkers that endured throughout the Middle

[52] Thank you to Txarli and Clara for generously inviting me on an excursion to visit the church of Olite during its cleaning and preservation process.

[53] Fernández-Ladreda, *El Arte Gótico en Navarra*, 229.

[54] See n50.

[55] *Pasión de Cristo*, painted by Juan Oliver in 1335. The mural has been removed from its original location and is now in the Museum of Navarra, this is the same fresco that provides the completion date for the refectory; for more on this topic see Santiaga Hidalgo Sánchez, "Aportación a la Lectura Iconográfica del Mural del Refectorio de Pamplona: la 'Compassio Mariae' en la Crucifixión y la Subida al Calvario," *Pulchrum: Scripta Varia in Honorem Mª Concepción García Gainza* (Gobierno de Navarra, 2011): 413-420.

Ages.[56] Pamplona's corbels represent unity through the balanced harmony of their individual forms and their strategic placement within the refectory. Galen (130-210 AD), a Greek thinker, writes, "beauty does not consist in the elements but in the harmonious proportion of the parts, the proportion of one finger to the other, of all the fingers to the rest of the hand…"[57] This idea goes back to the sculptors of ancient Greece who used ratios to construct the ideal heroic form. Medieval proportion focused not on a specific number but on the relationship of disparate parts relating to the whole in a unified and harmonious way. Grosseteste, writing a thousand years later, still echoes Galen: "beauty is a concordance and fittingness of a thing to itself and of all its individual parts to themselves and to each other and to the whole, and of that whole to all things… ."[58] The importance of proportion and unity persisted throughout the Middle Ages, contributing to the form and composition of Pamplona's corbels. For example, the wild man (fig. 11) and seated prince (fig. 12) have both been delicately planned and executed to skillfully balance figure and flora to create a diverse but unified scene. The wild man is surrounded by three monkeys, the smallest of which emerges from the wall on the far right to balance out the largest monkey positioned above the wild man's right shoulder. A pomegranate plant wraps around the wild man and his monkey companions, yet there is a balance between the chaotic plants in the background and the serene frontal figure. The floral background does not overpower the main figure, and the disparate parts—leaves, monkeys, and man—relate to each other in a balanced, unified, and proportional way.

The corbels are evenly distributed around the room (seven on either wall, equidistant apart)

[56] For a discussion on quantitative aesthetics (proportion) and qualitative aesthetics (light) see Eco, "The Aesthetics of Light," in *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages,* 43-51.

[57] Quoted in Eco, *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages*, 29.

[58] Quoted in Carruthers, *The Experience of Beauty in the Middle Ages,* 48.

creating a series of distinct objects that are organized in a unified way that emphasizes contrasts. The fourteen corbels may be roughly sorted into three thematic groups—musical/juggling scenes, hunting/violent scenes, and mythical/exotic beasts. Interestingly, there is a clear strategy that places all of the musical scenes on the eastern wall of the refectory, while the hunting or violent scenes all lie on the western wall (fig. 13). [59] Playful musical scenes, like the musician group (fig. 14), oppose sanguinary hunting ones like the griffin killing a ram (fig. 15), highlighting their difference. The organization of purposefully contrasting images on opposite walls aims to create a shift in one's perception to elicit a more acute aesthetic experience.[60] Such an experience may even have produced tears, either of laughter or empathy, which were often seen as a form of cleansing that was beneficial to good health in the Middle Ages.[61] Although each scene features different subjects, the corbels are nevertheless unified and harmonious through the use of contrasting images. Therefore, more important than the individual imagery rendered on the corbels is the whole series as a group that specifically highlights contradictory images.

Additionally, in the center of the opposing walls of the refectory sit a pair of contrasting subjects—a bullfighter and a lion-tamer (fig. 16). Marginal imagery is often set up in pairs; here, the two figures reveal distinct ways of subduing animals—on the eastern wall through a bull fight and on the western wall through domestication.[62] The bullfighter uses brute strength without weapons to overcome, but not kill, the beast. According to Martínez de Lagos, early

[59] The bull fighter is not a violent or hunting scene, unlike the other violent/hunting scenes that show blood or death, it is strictly a performance. It has been a common stadium sport in Navarra for centuries and possibly millennia, see Martínez de Lagos, *Ocio, Diversion y Espectáculo en la Escultura Gótica,* chap 3. esp. 370-373.

[60] Carruthers, *The Experience of Beauty in the Middle Ages,* 22, 140.

[61] Ibid., 142-44.

[62] Kenaan-Kedar, *Marginal Sculpture in Medieval France*, 151; Martínez Álava, "Escultura," *La Catedral de Pamplona 1394-1994,* 300.

bullfighting was an arena sport meant to showcase man's strength and valor. After the participant was able to control, subdue, and bring the bull to the ground, it was released. The sport was about submission, dominance, bravery, and even performance, but not killing.[63] In contrast to this approach, the lion-tamer shies away from force, instead using training and care to create a docile lion and demonstrate dominance over him.[64] A traditional analysis might recognize an allegory in these two images that rest in the center of the canons' refectory, but in fact, the importance lies less in their symbolism and more in their aesthetic relationship to each other as images of contrasts.

In addition to their role as independent aesthetic modes, light, color, and proportion contribute to *varietas*, one of the most important aspects of medieval aesthetics. *Varietas*, literally "variety," is characterized by diverse formal qualities that rest somewhere between the chaotic and the dull. *Varietas* comprises variegated textures, contrasting colors, shifts in light and shade, and distinct forms and compositions.[65] A useful analogy to understand *varietas* is that of a chorus—a singular voice gives way to the harmony of many distinct voices singing in unison.[66] It was also a major contributor to the medieval conception of beauty because *varietas* mimicked, and went beyond, the variety seen in nature.[67] According to Carruthers, beauty was also very much rooted in producing human sensations which was often achieved through *varietas*.[68]

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[63] Martínez de Lagos, *Ocio, Diversion y Espectáculo en la Escultura Gótica,* chap 3. esp. 321-328. These performances also typically involved music.

[64] Martínez Álava notes the similarity of the lion-tamer scene to a drawing and description by Villard de Honnencourt which describes the system of reward and punishment in training animals, "Escultura," *La Catedral de Pamplona 1394-1994*, 299-300.

[65] Carruthers, *The Experience of Beauty in the Middle Ages,* 151.

[66] Ibid.*,* 141.

[67] Ibid., 189.

[68] Ibid.*,* 168.

Carruthers quotes Bishop Bernardino Gomez Miedes (1515-1589) to describe the function served by *varietas*: "…by means of the variations, [the mind] receives pleasures in both cases. Indeed a mind wearied by listening or looking is either made fresh by surprise or renewed by laughter."[69] In this way, *varietas* saturated medieval spaces in many forms in order to stimulate the mind and evoke beauty.

The corbels that decorate Pamplona's refectory employ *varietas* through a diversity of light and shade, a variety of flora, and a range of subject matter and composition. No matter their original fourteenth-century color, candlelight diversified the texture of the sculpture's surface by illuminating, then obscuring it. Additionally, no two types of floral patterns are repeated on the corbels. For example, the fruiting pomegranate vines, made up of small leaves nestled behind the wild man (fig. 11) stand in stark contrast to the ordered large-leafed plant that symmetrically frames the female laud-playing musician (fig. 17). Moreover, the subject matter and composition of the scenes are likewise varied. Even repeating themes, like the musician scenes for instance, vary in their representations—a single female musician (fig. 17) differs from the trio of animal-human hybrid musicians (fig. 14). Compositions shift between the more standard central, unmoving figures, like the seated prince (fig. 12), and scenes which display a dynamic composition, like the boar hunt (fig. 7). The craftsman, urged by a desire to create *varietas*, has broken free from the more standardized frontal composition to sculpt a more daring expression of figures on the boar hunt corbel. The artisans have taken advantage of a wide array of techniques to express *varietas* of surface, subject, and composition throughout the entire series.

Varietas plays such an important role in medieval aesthetics because of its utility in combatting *taedium* in the context of religious observance. *Taedium,* or boredom, was a dangerous sin for those devoted to continual prayer and meditation. Diverse and surprising forms

[69] Quoted in Carruthers, *The Experience of Beauty in the Middle Ages,* 155.

startle the viewer out of *taedium*.[70] In this way, marginal sculpture was not meant for the purpose of "moral pedagogy" or depicting a lesson against the temptations of sin which the canons might experience sometime in the hypothetical future. On the contrary, the lesson was immediately against *taedium* and achieved through aesthetic properties like *varietas*.[71] As Carruthers observed, the oft-quoted letter written by Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), the Cistercian reformer, to William of St. Thierry (1085-1148), concerning the distraction of sculpture in the cloister, reveals more than anything a response to *taedium*.[72] While Bernard describes in detail the sculpted monsters he so despises, he takes no notice of the architectural forms of the church he frequented regularly.[73] Though the subject matter of the cloister capitals appalled him, it brought him out of an indifference for art and architecture, shocked him into focus, and inspired him to write the letter. So although Bernard claims profane imagery has no place in a church context, the letter is nevertheless evidence that it elicited a significant embodied response of the type I argue is more helpful in understanding the refectory corbels than their specific individual images. The events that took place within the refectory, not just the inert decoration, were also aesthetic—the visual was just one aspect that enhanced the overall aesthetic experience.

THE SENSORY AND THE SECULAR

The refectory served as the canons' dining room as well as a civic event hall that was a location of ritual and performance, both religious and secular, that acted on the senses. Sensory perception is integral to the experience of faith as well as memory, imagination, and knowledge

[70] Ibid., 146.

[71] Ibid., 147-8.

[72] Ibid., 146. For an English translation see Caecilia Davis-Weyer, *Early Medieval Art 300-1500: Sources and Documents,* vol. 17 (University of Toronto Press, 1968), 168-170.

[73] Schapiro, "On the Aesthetic Attitude in Romanesque Art," 8-9.

and is thus salient to the present discussion.[74] The interaction of each of the senses made access to God and spirituality possible by turning an invisible entity into sensual perception and therefore an entity that could be felt, seen, heard, tasted, smelled, and worshiped.[75] In a church, liturgy was performed that activated all five senses in order to connect with the divine.[76] That is, liturgical ritual employed a "synthesis of the arts:" a fusion of visual decoration, auditory chants, burning incense and candles, tactility of sacred books and specialized vestments.[77] The German Benedictine monk Hrabanus Maurus (ca. 780-856 AD) acknowledged the use of varied objects to arouse the senses:

> [We] do our best to match ourselves to the ritual that we cultivate in our hearts; so that just as with the decorated walls of this very church, with many lighted candles, and with voices variously raised through litanies and prayers, through readings and songs we can more earnestly offer praise to God, so we should always decorate the recesses of our hearts with the essential ornaments of good works…[78]

This quotation illustrates that perception of several senses simultaneously offers an entry point to experiencing the divine and provides a mechanism for devotion. One must "decorate" the heart as the church decorates its interior. The same tactic of appealing to all the senses can be applied to the different functions of the refectory. The corbels acted as the visual backdrop for canonical meals that mimicked liturgical ritual through the choreography of text recitation, organized movements, candlelight, and the intake of food. When employed for a secular event, banquets and feasts in the refectory were an occasion for the host to exhibit magnificence as well as courtly values, likewise through a synthesis of each of the five senses—extravagant food, music,

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[74] Martina Bagnoli, "Sensual Awakenings," ed. Martina Bagnoli, *A Feast for the Senses: Art and Experience in Medieval Europe*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 13, 17.

[75] Palazzo, "Art, Liturgy, and the Five Senses in the Early Middle Ages," *Viator* 41, no. 1 (2010): 29-31, 33.

[76] Ibid., 31.

[77] Ibid., 26.

[78] Quoted in Palazzo, "Art, Liturgy, and the Five Senses in the Early Middle Ages," 27.

dance, fine clothes, and pleasant aromas.[79] The "sensory overload" was a marked difference from daily life, and therefore an exquisite feast occurring in the refectory was a memorable event.[80]

Pamplona's cathedral was home to regular canons, also called Augustinian or Austin canons, who based their way of life on the Rule of St. Augustine. The Rule was written by Augustine of Hippo in North Africa around the year 400 AD as a way to outline a communal way of life that still allowed the canons of his bishopric to participate in diocesan duties which often called them away from the cathedral itself.[81] Augustinian canons lived and prayed together as a community of priests but did not live a sequestered, or cloistered, life. Instead of outlining a strict and detailed way of life, the Rule of St. Augustine was based on a series of "exhortations and precepts."[82] Thus, it allowed each monastery or chapter that adopted the Rule to decide on their own system of implementation.[83] The basis of the Rule focused on communal living, the renunciation of the world, self-discipline, and communal and private prayer which became the basis for later Mendicant orders such as the Dominicans and Augustinian Friars (a Mendicant group not to be confused with the Augustinian *canons* that concern us here.)[84]

The order of regular canons arrived in Pamplona with the installation of Pedro de Roda as

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[79] Christina Normore, *A Feast for the Eyes: Art, Performance, and the Late Medieval Banquet* (University of Chicago Press, 2015), 102.

[80] Normore, *A Feast for the Eyes,* 103 quoting Marina Belozerskaya, *Rethinking the Renaissance: Burgundian Arts Across Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), 49.

[81] Daniel Marcel la Corte and Douglas J. McMillan, *Regular Life: Monastic, Canonical, and Mendicant Rules*, (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1997), 53.

[82] Frances Andrews, *The Other Friars: The Carmelite, Augustinian, Sack and Pied Friars in the Middle Ages*, vol. 2, (Boydell & Brewer Ltd, 2015), 93.

[83] Ibid., 93.

[84] la Corte and McMillan, *Regular Life,* 53; Hubert Schopf, "Augustinian Canons," in *Kulturgeschichte der christlichen Orden in Einzeldarstellungen*. eds. Dinzelbacher, Peter, and James Hogg, trans. Theodore J Antry and O. Praem, (1997):1.

Bishop in 1083.[85] Beginning in the twelfth century in Pamplona, all the members of the chapter, both those who held higher positions and the simple canons, were required to eat and sleep within the communal lodgings.[86] However, many of the canons retained their personal homes where their families or wards lived.[87] Over the years, the regular canons in Pamplona oscillated between practices that closely mimicked monastic orders, like complete silence in the dormitory, to near disregard of any semblance of religious communal life.[88]

Penalties were put in place for canons who failed to follow the rules in an attempt to allay decadent behavior. The penalties included such proclamations as, "those that dine in the refectory in the winter who leave without the permission of the one who is presiding, lose their dinner portion."[89] Moreover, in the 1260s, under Bishop Pedro Ximenez de Gazolaz (1242-1266), the prior, or head canon, was tasked with recording the names and indiscretions of any canons who broke the rules and reporting back to the bishop himself.[90] By the fifteenth century, Pamplona's regular canons reached a height of decadence: only one or two were attending matins in the morning, many were arriving late to processions if they arrived at all, they were not studying the Rule or scripture during free time, and they were spending the majority of their time

[85] Jesus Arraiza Frauca, "Liturgia y Culto," *La Catedral de Pamplona 1394-1994,* Tomo I*,* 13.

[86] Santiaga Hidalgo Sánchez, "El Claustro y las Dependencias de la Catedral de Pamplona: Espacio y Función," *Porticvm, Revista d´ Estudis Medievals* 3 (2012), 41; Her article uses the Spanish term, *dignidades* for canons who held specific offices.

[87] Ibid., 41.

[88] Ibid., 44.

[89] Translation of the author, "*Los que cenan en el invierno en el refectorio saliendo sin licencia del que preside, pierden la distribucion de la cena,*" Quoted in Hidalgo Sánchez, "El Claustro y las Dependencias de la Catedral de Pamplona," 42.

[90] José Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia de los obispos de Pamplona*, vol. 1, (siglo xiii), (Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 1985), 115-116.

in their own homes instead of within the communal chapter buildings.[91] However, there were continuous push-backs against such behavior; our best evidence of this push-back comes from a 1598 document entitled, "*Estado y descripción de la santa iglesia Catedral de Pamplona de Canónigos religiosos y regulares de la orden de San Augustín.*" It describes a model community devoted to the divine office, education, distributing alms to the poor, and serving the church unconditionally. This document provided a guide for their ideal behavior and community since the canons did not always rigorously follow their own rules.[92] In order to accomplish the kind of standards outlined in the document above, religious devotion was compulsory throughout all aspects of the day, including mealtimes located within the refectory.

For Pamplona's canons, dining was an extension of their religious duties and devotion which occurred in the refectory, a stage that included smells, sounds, and touch in addition to the accentuated view of the corbels. The Rule of St. Augustine chapter 3.2 reads: "when you come to table, listen until you leave to what is the custom to read, without disturbance or strife. Let not your mouths alone take nourishment but let your hearts too hunger for the words of God."[93] In this way, in addition to feeding the body, an Augustinian meal required the canons to cultivate the mind and heart by listening to the reader recite holy text for the duration of the dining period. Silence was observed throughout the meal and was broken only by the reader's recitation.

A fourteenth-century manuscript from the English Augustinian priory of St. Swithun in Winchester shows the lectionary used during meals contained "short exhortations [and] tales of

[91] Hidalgo Sánchez, "El Claustro y las Dependencias de la Catedral de Pamplona," 43.

[92] Ibid.

[93] La Corte and McMillan, *Regular Life,* 55.

saintly life."[94] Evidence of the book or text used at Pamplona does not survive, but whether in England or Pamplona, the recitation had a double function through content and sound. First, its sacred and motivational content had the ability to move the listeners, and second, its very resonance in a room of silence promoted concentration. In other words, the sensory aspect of the recitation was equally as effective a devotional mechanism as the words themselves.[95] For example, Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), describes Jesus as, "honey in the mouth, melody in the ear."[96] This quote illustrates the combination of taste and sound, described in St. Augustine's Rule as well, and demonstrates that the mixture has the ability to conjure religious thought. Eating and listening went hand in hand as an essential aid to piety; nourishment veritably promoted a healthy body and sensory perception promoted a healthy heart and mind.

In Pamplona, the canons' provisions consisted of meat, wine, fish, and bread as staples, but they were altered over time to reflect the regulations imparted by the chapter or bishop.[97] Evidence from other medieval refectories reveal the allowance of salt and the use of silver dishware to dine.[98] In Winchester, salt was precious enough that remnants left on the table would be collected and distributed to the poor.[99] Additionally, at St. Swithun, the canons ate with silver

[94] G. W. Kitchin, ed., *A Consuetudinary of the Fourteenth Century for the Refectory of the House of S. Swithun in Winchester, Bound with a Charter of Edward the Third Confirming and Enlarging the Privileges of St. Giles Fair, Winchester, AD 1349* (London: Warren and Son Printers and Publishers, 1886), 10.

[95] For more on sound in sacred spaces, see Deborah Howard and Laura Moretti, *Sound and Space in Renaissance Venice: Architecture, Music, Acoustics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Sharon Gerstel, "Monastic Soundspaces in Late Byzantium: The Art and Act of Chanting," in *Resounding Images: Medieval Intersections of Art, Music, and Sound*, eds. Susan Boynton, and Diane J. Reilly (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 237-263.

[96] Quoted in Bagnoli, "Longing to Experience," *A Feast for the Senses,* 39, see Bernard of Clairvaux's Sermons on the Song of Songs.

[97] Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia de los Obispos*, vol. 3 (siglo xiv), 24.

[98] Kitchin, *A Consuetudinary of the Fourteenth Century for the Refectory*, 26, 32.

[99] Ibid., 11.

utensils and plates.[100] Unfortunately, Pamplona's cutlery and tableware are no longer extant. However, even in a spiritual context, although meals were not lavish affairs, care was taken in the taste and presentation of food.

From a late thirteenth-century book of observances shared by two Augustinian priories in England, we know "the Fraterer is directed to render the [refectory] attractive, by providing fresh rushes to strew the floor, flowers and strong-smelling herbs to make an agreeable scent…"[101] More specifically, he would "throw flowers, mint and fennel into the air to make a sweet odor."[102] The refectory is meant to be "attractive," achieved through cleanliness and the scent of fresh herbs in addition to visual decoration. The sweet smelling herbs provide a tranquil condition within which to peacefully perform the ritual-like acts required in the refectory. Pavel Florensky (1882-1937), the Russian Orthodox priest and philosopher, maintains in a much later time period that the environment for perceiving art, which includes religious spaces, must be agreeable; in a foul smelling or poorly lit room, the true force or beauty of an object is lost.[103] Aromatic herbs, recitations, and utensils made of precious metals acted on the senses to drive spiritual meditation and faith. However, the refectory did not function solely as a canons' dining hall; it also served secular needs that similarly relied on the senses.

Several secular functions are recorded for Pamplona's refectory during the Middle Ages when the cathedral was, in addition to the religious center of the city, also the focal point of civil and political life. In the fourteenth century, under Bishop Barbazán, the refectory was used to

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[100] Ibid., 32.

[101] John Willis Clark, ed., *The Observances in Use at the Augustinian Priory of S. Giles and S. Andrew at Barnwell, Cambridgeshire* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), xc.

[102] Ibid, 155; "Frater" is another term for refectory. The "fraterer" was responsible for setting up and preparing the refectory, or frater, in a number of ways which are outlined in the text above.

[103] Pavel Florensky, "The Church Ritual as a Synthesis of the Arts," *Beyond Vision: Essays on the Perception of Art*, (London, 2002), 106.

feed the poor and the cloister to perform ablutions.[104] A document from 1307 reveals the chapter house was used as a meeting space for Navarran nobility, which might indicate the refectory was similarly employed to accommodate the court.[105] Another document from 1363 indicates the refectory provided the location to confirm the heirs to the kingdom and sign pacts concerning the relationship between the king and the city.[106] In 1390, Carlos III, The Noble, was crowned in Pamplona, and a banquet was held in the refectory to celebrate.[107] It is unclear when the refectory was first used as a banquet site, but by 1390 it certainly was used for this purpose and the tradition continued.[108]

Caroline Walker Bynum describes the types of social and political events that would have taken place in Pamplona's refectory in the Middle Ages: "the characteristic medieval meal was the feast, and it was more an aesthetic and social event than a gastronomic one. The feast was a banquet for all the senses; indeed food was almost an excuse for indulging senses other than taste."[109] A medieval feast involved music, dance, ephemeral sculpture and lavish food.[110] The visual aesthetic of the feast was at least as important than taste, if not more so. In the French court, for example, the *entremet* merged culinary, visual, and performing arts as focal points of

[104] Hidalgo Sánchez, "El Claustro y las Dependencias," 53.

[105] Ibid., 54.

[106] Javier Martínez de Aguirre and Faustino Menéndez Pidal, *Emblemas Heráldicos en el Arte Medieval Navarro* (Gobierno de Navarra, 1996), 293, 293n481.

[107] Hidalgo Sánchez, "El Claustro y las Dependencias," 54.

[108] Martínez de Aguirre and Menéndez Pidal, *Emblemas Heráldicos en el Arte Medieval Navarro*, 293.

[109] Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women*, vol. 1. (Univ of California Press, 1988), 60.

[110] Normore, *A Feast for the Eyes,* 9-11.

the banquet or feast.[111] A contemporary account of the banquet celebrating Louis XI's coronation describes the *entremet* as a spectacle containing elaborate edible sculptures made into the form of a deer, a peacock and even a unicorn.[112] The fifteenth-century Feast of the Pheasant held in Burgundy describes a performance that included, "fountains, automata, salt-cellars, and statues."[113] Moreover, banquets in the French court included performances by actors and guests alike. Professional actors and musicians were even imported from abroad for lavish banqueting events.[114] Speeches with political motivations were also common at banquets and feasts as a way to win support for a particular military campaign or to gain favor as a ruler.[115] Additionally, they were events integral to ethical instruction and teaching of courtly values especially for young men learning obedience and watchfulness.[116] At a medieval feast, music, performance, remarkable taste and smells, beautiful objects and clothing, would have been more extravagant than at the canons' daily meal, but were likewise employed to create a physical connection between the visitor and the event. The specific words of a speech and the memorability of extravagance could only go so far to promote the social or political goals of the feast; the sensory nature of the event was crucial. Considering the leniency of the Augustinian canons at Pamplona, it does not seem unlikely, especially in light of the ornate decoration, that the refectory was

[111] Ibid., "This tripartite combination is epitomized in a category or art production called *entremet* in Middle French, which combines all these elements [visual, performing, culinary.]" See pp. 22 for a longer definition of *entremet*.

[112] "In the middle of the meal various *entremets* were made and presented to the king and the princes at his table, which were very beautiful and sumptuous and made with beautiful imagination. The king was presented a flying deer, the Duke of Orléans a white swan, the Duke of Burgundy a lion, the Count of Charolais a pelican, the Duke of Bourbon a peacock, the Count of Eu a phoenix, the count of Étampes a unicorn…and each *entremets* was emblazoned with the arms of the one who was served." Normore, 11 quoting Georges Chastellain, Oevres, ed. M. le baron Kervyn de Lettenhove, (Brussels: R. Heussner, 1863-66), 2: 277-79.

[113] Normore, *A Feast for the Eyes,* 22.

[114] Ibid.*,* 38.

[115] Ibid., 9.

[116] Ibid.*,* 104.

always meant and designed to accommodate more than religious ceremony.

Specific accounts detailing the secular feasts in Pamplona's refectory are missing, but they may have resembled events like Louis XI's banquet. In 1363, Carlos III held his coronation in the cathedral of Pamplona and the subsequent celebratory feast in the refectory. The court of Navarra was likely not as sumptuous as the court of Louis XI, because it was a smaller kingdom, but the contemporary account of Louis XI's banquet reveals an event full of fantastic culinary creations that may have looked similar to Navarran celebrations.[117] It should be noted that the Kingdom of Navarra was closely tied to the French monarchy beginning in 1234 with the reign of Teobaldo I (Theobald IV of Champagne) and therefore courtly life might have been notably similar between the two regions. Moreover, a well known medieval cookbook, the *Viandier,* was written by Guillaume of Tirel (Taillevent), the chef of Jeanne d'Évreux, who was queen of both France and Navarra during the period of the refectory's construction.[118] Therefore, recipes and fantastical creations from Guillaume of Tirel's cookbook could have travelled to Pamplona with Bishop Barbazán, who visited Paris before constructing the refectory in 1319. This connection may indicate yet a closer tie between feasting culture in Pamplona and Paris, and a desire to emulate the richness of French court in art and actions.

The Pamplona refectory's use of figural sculpture sets it apart from comparable refectories. Most medieval stone refectories from Spain and France display austere walls, simple windows, and corbels, which may be geometric or floral, but are rarely figural.[119] Many of the refectories still extant are Cistercian, an order which specifically denounced artistic decoration, including

[117] See n112.

[118] Normore, *A Feast for the Eyes,* 23-25.

[119] Though my research is far from exhaustive, I have compared (mostly through photos) these other refectories: The Collège des Bernardins, Cistercian, Paris; Saint Martin des Champs, Paris 1230- 1240; the Piedra Monastery, Spain, twelfth century; the Cistercian Monastery of Santa Maria de Huerta in Spain, thirteenth century; and the Cistercian Monastery at Veruela, Spain.

The Collège des Bernardins in Paris (fig. 18).[120] In a multivalent space, such as Pamplona's refectory, it can be argued there was additional need for a rich decoration—it had to be a space both appropriate for exciting courtly feasts as well as subdued canonical meals. The Augustinian canons had no explicit regulations for artistic expression in their architecture, which allowed them the freedom to adorn their churches and dependencies in ways they determined suitable. Pamplona's refectory was doubtlessly always intended to be used as a secular event hall, because the leniency of the Augustinian Rule would have allowed such decoration while secular life encouraged it.

Bishop Barbazán, wanting to impress the monarchs, assert his authority, and leave his mark, used architecture to convey his message. This dynamic bishop was not only responsible for building the refectory, chapter house, and portions of the cloister, but he also played an important diplomatic role in restoring the troubled relationship between the Navarran people and the French royal family ruling *in absentia*. The traumatic events of the war of 1276, in which troops supporting the French-Navarran monarchs fought and killed local clergy and nobility, sacked the cathedral, and set fire to much of the city, resulted in continuous tension between the people of Navarra and the royal family. [121] In one dispute, the clergy and nobility thought it imperative for the king and queen to visit, but the Capetian and Evreux monarchs rarely traveled South to Pamplona.[122] Instead, Barbazán had to travel to Paris in 1319 in order to broker a deal between church and king that was many years overdue. This trip occurred before construction began on the Gothic refectory, and therefore the opulence of French court could easily have

[120] See n71.

[121] This war came about after many years of property disputes, especially between the Spanish inhabitants and French immigrants of Pamplona and a growing dissatisfaction about the absent royal family. For more information on The War of the Neighborhoods, see José María Doussinague, "La guerra de la Navarrería," *Institución Príncipe de Viana* 6, no. 19 (1945): 209-282.

[122] Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia de los Obispos de Pamplona, vol. 3 (siglo xiv),* 60.

impacted Barbazán's architectural goals in Pamplona. In 1329, Barbazán and others were successful in encouraging Philip and Jeanne d'Évreux to visit and be crowned in Pamplona's cathedral.[123] It is very plausible that when the king and queen visited for their coronation while the refectory was under construction, it and the other building campaigns in progress would have been key points of interest for the bishop to impress upon the royals. The refectory would have on the one hand bolstered the monarchy's own power and prestige as a Navarran extension of their French kingdom, but on the other hand, it would have acted as a subtle assertion of the bishop's own wealth and power as the respected local authority.

CONCLUSION

In the twelfth century, Richard of St. Victor recorded four distinct modes of seeing. Two are physical, two are spiritual and they are not mutually exclusive.[124] The first mode of seeing relates to the simple visual perception of an object, the second mode corresponds to an allegorical insight, the third mode is tropological and exists on a spiritual level, and the fourth mode is anagogical, as it transports the mind to "celestial contemplation without the intermediary of visible forms."[125] Like all things medieval, marginal sculpture was not one dimensional and it cannot be interpreted from a single perspective.[126] Pamplona's corbels were bound to resonate in a multiplicity of ways for their heterogeneous audience of canons, royalty, nobility, pilgrims, and the poor as well as the differing conditions of dining, banqueting, signing treaties, and alms giving. It would be inaccurate to definitively characterize the corbels by one mode of

[123] Ibid.

[124] Madeline H. Caviness, "Images of Divine Order and the Third Mode of Seeing," *Gesta* 22, no. 2 (1983): 115.

[125] Quoted in Caviness, "Images of Divine Order and the Third Mode of Seeing," 115.

[126] See Richard Krautheimer, "Introduction to an" Iconography of Mediaeval Architecture," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* (1942): 1-33.

interpretation. However, that does not preclude us from considering an aesthetic approach that understands the corbels as a group within the specific context of the refectory, set within its specific historical and political moment.

My approach departs from a traditional analysis of the symbolism and imagery of each individual scene represented on the corbels that has so far fallen short in understanding the significance of these objects. Instead, following the trajectory of Mary Carruthers, I have used medieval aesthetics as the basis of this investigation, and following Michael Camille's social approach, I have considered the refectory's diverse functions and broader context. Each corbel epitomizes medieval aesthetic ideals which are sharpened and amplified by their thoughtful placement that highlights contrasting imagery. Each aesthetic quality discussed contributed to an exhibition of *varietas* in the corbels that aimed to stimulate the mind, heart, and body and offered an important antidote to *taedium*. Moreover, the corbels act as a visual stimulus in a room devoted to ritual-like activity that engages all the five senses. Coupled with smells of herbs and candles, burnished devotional objects, music or silence, and culinary flavors, the corbels activated the senses to "learn spiritual things from corporeal ones, and the unknown from the known," to advance political aims, and to promote social mores and faith.[127] For an ambitious bishop eager to make a name for himself, an aesthetic event space was necessary to accommodate both canons and nobility and expedient to impress a family of monarchs who had seemingly abandoned their Spanish kingdom.

[127] Ibid.

Figures

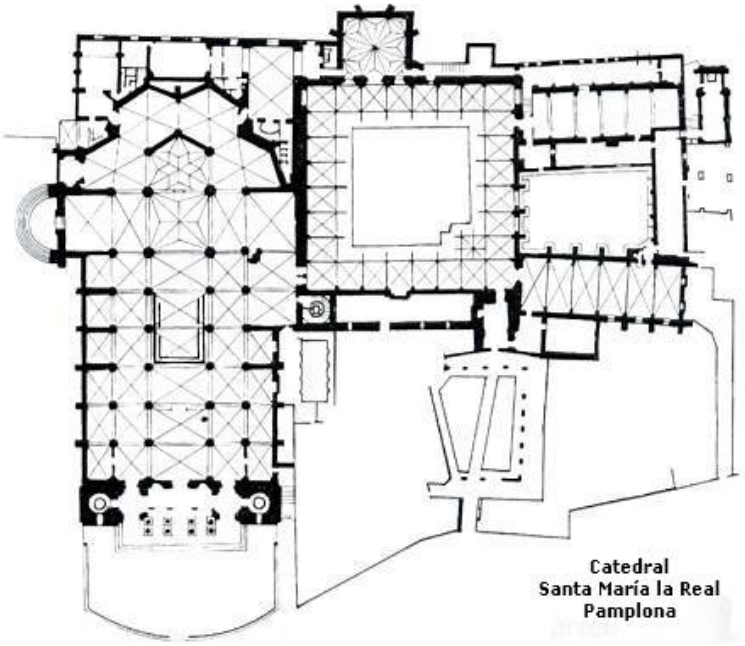

Figure 1: Plan of the Cathedral Complex at Pamplona.

Figure 2: The Refectory.

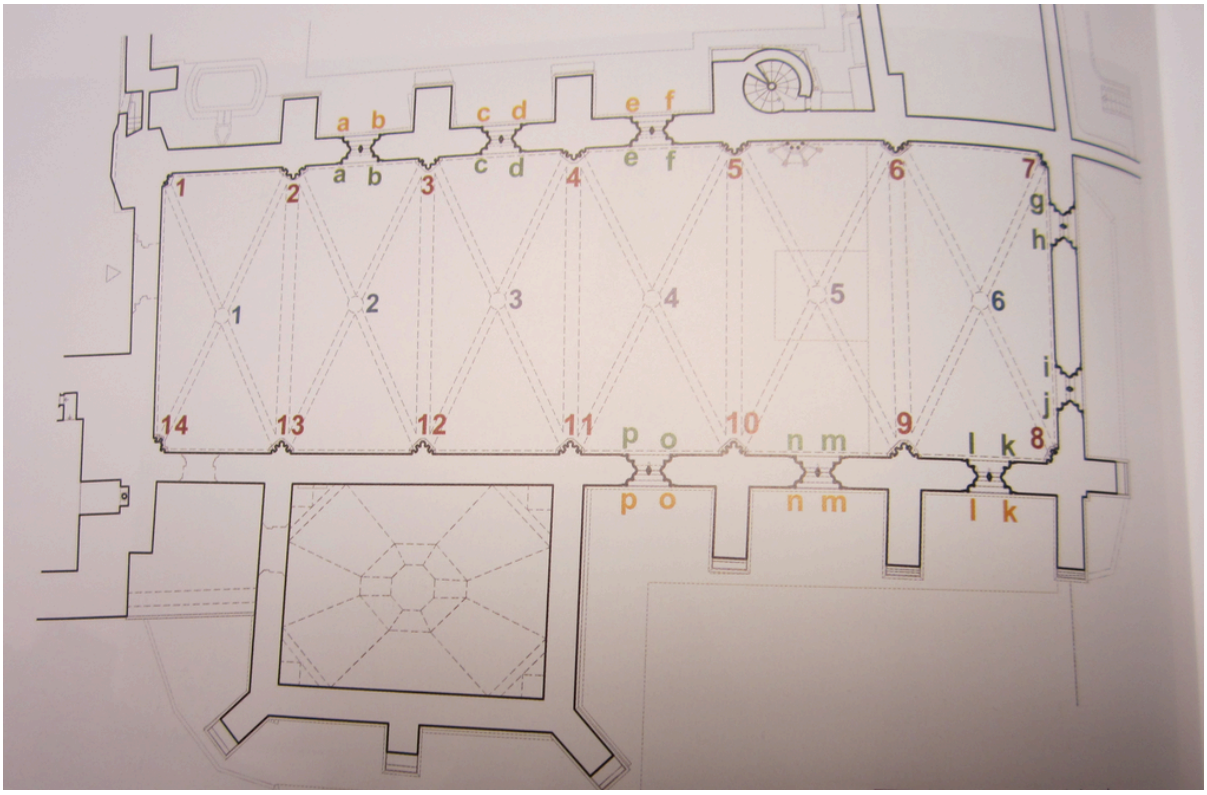

Figure 3: Map of the corbel locations by subject. From Fernández-Ladreda, *El Arte Gótico en Navarra*. 2015.

1. A griffin
2. Female musician playing a laud
3. Another musician playing a string instrument
4. Bullfighting scene
5. A musician flanked by two hybrids
6. A dragon with child
7. A cross-legged juggler
8. An animal, sometimes considered a monkey or a bear
9. Cross-legged prince holding a sword
10. A wolf, fox, and hen
11. A lion-tamer with dog
12. A boar hunting scene
13. A griffin killing a ram
14. A wild man surrounded by monkey

Figure 4: Corbels 1 -5. Photos by Carlos Martínez Álava.

Figure 5: Corbels 6-10. Photos by Carlos Martínez Álava.

Corbels 11-14

Figure 6: Corbels 11- 14. Photos by Carlos Martínez Álava.

Figure 7: The Boar Hunt. Photo by Carlos Martínez Álava.

Figure 8: The Bull Fight. Photo by Carlos Martínez Álava.

Figure 9: The Lion-Tamer. Photo by Carlos Martínez Álava.

Figure 10: Iglesia Santa Maria la Real, Olite, Spain. Photo by author.

Figure 11: The Wild Man. Photo by Carlos Martínez Álava.

Figure 12: The Seated Prince. Photo by Carlos Martínez Álava.

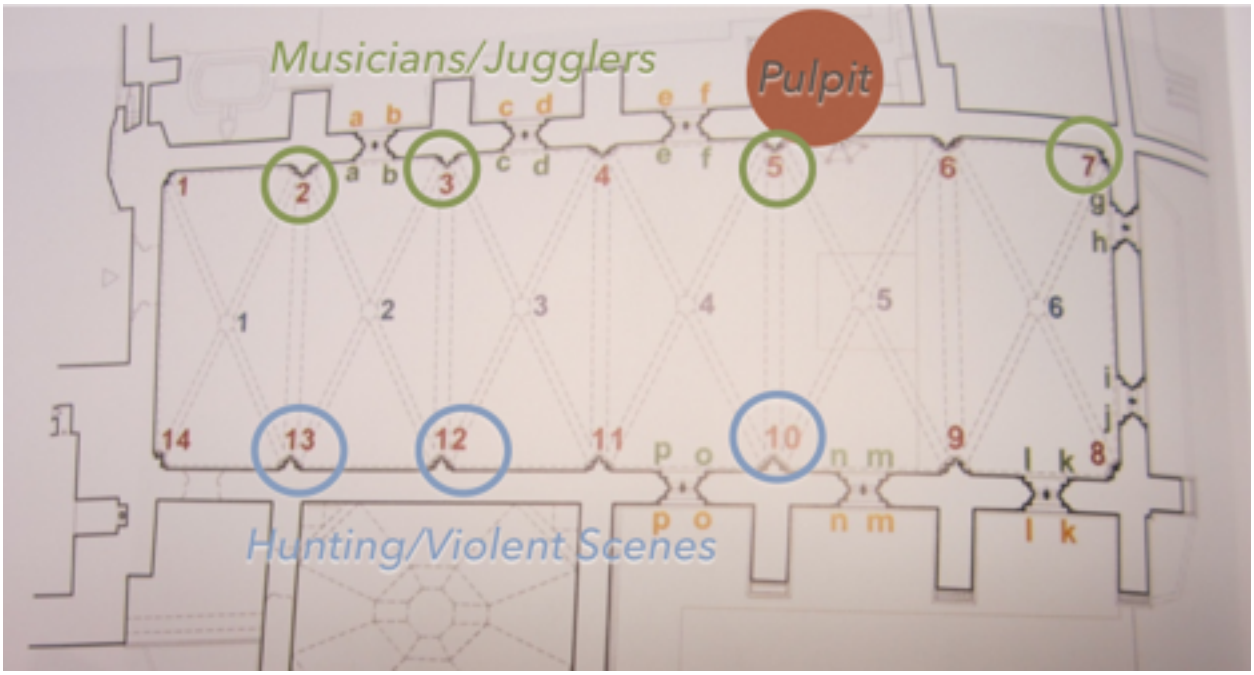

Figure 13: Diagram of Contrasting Images.

Figure 14: A Musician Flanked by Two Hybrid Creatures. Photo by Carlos Martínez Álava.

Figure 15: A Griffin Attacking a Ram. Photo by Carlos Martínez Álava.

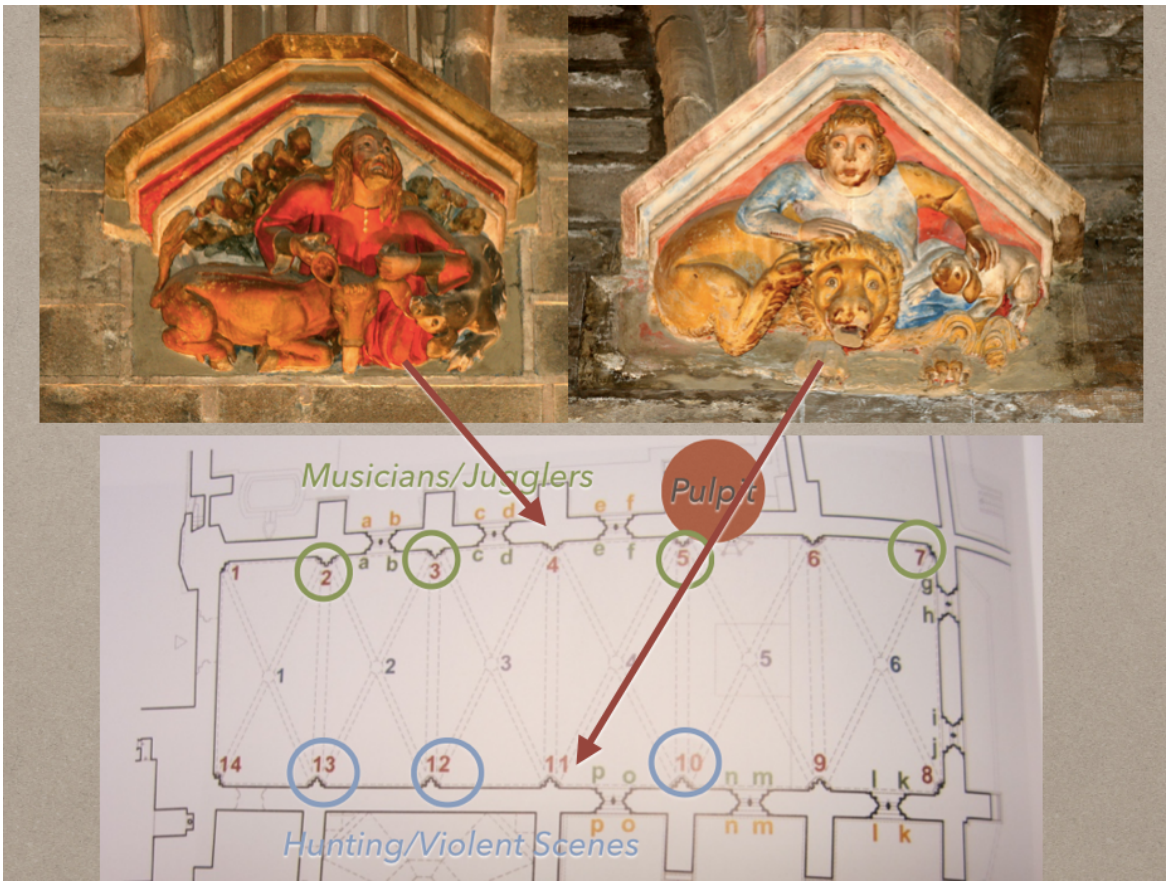

Figure 16: Central Contrasting Images.

Figure 17: A Laud-Playing Female Musician. Photo by Carlos Martínez Álava.

Figure 18: The Collège des Bernardins, Cistercian, Paris. Photo by author.

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