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Holding Hands in the Virgin Chapel at Beauvais Cathedral

Michael W. Cothren

Detailed stylistic analysis was at the heart of the mid-twentieth-century revitalization of art historical interest in stained-glass windows.¹ As a result of the restorations following World War II, this major medium of medieval painting had recently become more readily accessible, and the enhanced availability allowed scholars to identify and assess the character of individual workshops and artists within and among glazings. The method deployed in this inquiry was far from innovative. Rooted in ancient Greek and Italian Renaissance attempts to determine and express those particular visual features that individualize the work of great artists, the modern 'science' of connoisseurship was outlined by Giovanni Morelli late in the nineteenth century and codified, even popularized, as an interpretive practice in the work of Bernard Berenson and his followers into the first half of the twentieth.² It was a venerable art historical tradition when Louis Grodecki—student of eminent formalist Henri Focillon—wrote the foundational publications for modern stained-glass studies, concentrating on establishing the relationship between style and workshop as an organizing factor in both the creation and the study of medieval glazings.³

¹ This article benefited greatly from the very helpful comments of my colleague and friend Mary B. Shepard and from the feedback of the anonymous readers who evaluated my essay in the early stages of editing this volume. I am singularly indebted to Susan Lowry for her sharp editorial skills, her wise counsel, and her enduring love and support in so many ways for so many years.

² For a brief, thoughtful introduction to 'Connoisseurship,' with a list of principal sources—including the primary works of Morelli and Berenson as well as secondary methodological assessments—see the article under that name by Enrico Castelnuovo and Jane Anderson, *The Dictionary of Art*, Jane Turner, ed., 34 vols (New York, 1996) 7:713–5.

³ Grodecki's pathbreaking article outlined a method for the study of stained glass that identified style with workshop: 'A Stained Glass *Atelier* of the Thirteenth Century: A Study of the Windows in the Cathedrals of Bourges, Chartres and Poitiers,' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 11 (1948): 87–111. See also the following representative studies where he puts this method into practice: 'Le maître de saint Eustache de la cathédrale de Chartres,' in *Gedenkschrift Ernst Gall*, ed. Margarete Kuhn and Louis Grodecki (Munich, 1965), 171–94; in Marcel Aubert et al., *Les vitraux de Notre-Dame et de la Sainte-Chapelle de Paris*, Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi, France, vol. 1 (Paris, 1959), esp. 91–93. It is also the backdrop for his

Though in some circles connoisseurship seems even more old-fashioned now than it was at the middle of the twentieth century, postmodern practitioners still seek meaning in close readings of stylistic distinctions. Recently, attention has been paid to the sorting of individual 'hands' within the execution of a single window as well as to the definition of the window's overall stylistic character in relation to Grodecki's workshop model.⁴ Not only is it possible to identify individual painters working collaboratively to produce stained-glass windows; it is clear that the observations gathered in this exercise, far from being ends in themselves, actually serve to open up possibilities for broader questions and richer understandings concerning the way stained-glass windows were made, perhaps even about the way production and reception could have been, and may still be, related. The relationships are tricky and definitive conclusions may be elusive, but without deploying the traditional exercise of close visual analysis to sort glazings and windows among identifiable makers, underlying questions will remain unasked.

In the course of a broader study of the stained glass of the Cathedral of Beauvais, I had the rare privilege of examining the three windows of the Virgin Chapel from close range on a scaffold erected directly in front of them.⁵ This axial choir chapel was glazed during the 1240s with a stained-glass triptych that still looms as a radiant altarpiece within a privileged liturgical space.⁶ The opportunity provided by the scaffolding allowed me to divert my art historical attention from seemingly weightier issues of reception, meaning, and heritage so that I could explore, verify, and expand stylistic observations and hypotheses about production that I had developed while examining these windows through binoculars or by pouring over photographs. Perhaps the most stunning confirmation was the clarity this proximate investigation brought to my sense that the central window (fig. 2.1)—dedicated to the Maternity of the Virgin,⁷ a

two magisterial surveys: *Le vitrail roman* (Fribourg, 1977); and with Catherine Brisac, *Le vitrail gothique au XIII^e siècle* (Fribourg, 1984).

⁴ For example, see Claudine Lautier, 'Les peintres-verriers des bas-côtés de la nef de Chartres au début du XIII^e siècle,' *Bulletin monumental* 148 (1990): 7–45; Michael W. Cothren, 'The Infancy of Christ Window from the Abbey of Saint-Denis: A Reconsideration of its Design and Iconography,' *Art Bulletin* 68 (1986): 398–420; Elizabeth A. R. Brown and Michael W. Cothren, 'The Twelfth-Century Crusading Window of the Abbey of Saint-Denis: "Praetitorum enim Recordatio Futurorum est Exhibitio,"' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 49 (1986): esp. 33–35.

⁵ For the spectacular opportunity to study the windows of the Virgin Chapel for eleven days from an interior scaffolding installed during Spring of 1999 by the Direction Régionale des Affaires Culturelles de Picardie, Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication de France, I am deeply indebted to Claudine Lautier of the French Corpus Vitrearum and the late Michel Caille, then Conservateur en chef des Monuments Historiques, who worked on my behalf to make this extraordinary opportunity possible.

⁶ The dating of this ensemble, the subjects of the individual windows, the sort of program they might create as a triptych, and explorations of the sources and meanings of their stylistic diversity are discussed in some detail in Michael W. Cothren, *Picturing the Celestial City: The Medieval Stained Glass of Beauvais Cathedral* (Princeton, 2006), 4–99.

⁷ In referring to this visualized account of the early life of Jesus within a Virgin chapel as a 'Maternity of the Virgin lancet,' I pay tribute in following the example of Madeline Caviness in 'Stained Glass Windows in Gothic Chapels, and the Feasts of the Saints,' in *Römisches*

2.1 Beauvais, Cathedral of Saint-Pierre, A, axial window in the Virgin Chapel, ca. 1245: *Left lancet*, Jesse Tree; *Right lancet*, Maternity of the Virgin, and Rose, a Sacramental Crucifixion; with B, a chart showing the distribution of work among three artists. (Panel 10b and the lobes of the rosette are modern.)

Jesse Tree, and a Sacramental Crucifixion—was executed by a group of distinguishable painters who had worked within a shared regional glass-painting tradition.⁸ The overall style of the window is strikingly conservative for the period (fig. 2.2). Compact, stiffly posed, and intricately articulated figures conform to rectilinear compositional principles, eschewing narrative expressiveness for the stodgy and schematic stability of an old-fashioned local tradition. Yet even if this cohesive stylistic vision characterizes the window as a unified formal whole, under close examination, evidence of regular variations in the realization of standard articulation formulae stood out with real clarity to support sorting its execution among a set of definable painters. Subtle differences in conception and execution from panel to panel, figure to figure, reveal the collaboration, and allow the identification, of three distinguishable artistic hands who shared in the production of the window.⁹

The first and most prolific painter—whom I will name the ‘hard hand’—embodies most purely the generalized stylistic profile for the window as a whole.¹⁰ The work of this artist (figs. 2.2 and 2.3) is characterized by firm, precise painting and hardness of line. Even when loops are employed to relieve the stiffness of the drapery, the painted lines which define them still taper carefully to sharp, brittle points. Broad, unarticulated areas of clothing frequently contrast with densely painted ones. Outlines of figures are especially crisp; poses are stiff. Facial expressions are consistently alert and tightly controlled. Although drapery conventions point to plasticity, tight painting, linear precision, and emphatic outlines conspire to lend a sense of flatness to human forms and faces. The articulation systems used by the ‘hard hand’ lean toward the creation of pattern, rather than conforming to the demands of naturalistic description. The overall feeling is wiry, tense, tight, precise, hard.

I detect a subtle relaxation in the work of a second painter, whom I designate as the ‘trough hand,’ in reference to the long, illusionistic recessions filled with half-tone wash that appear within broad expanses of drapery. This artist

Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Herziana: Kunst und Liturgie im Mittelalter ed. N. Bock, S. de Blaauw, C. L. Frommel, and H. Kessler, *Akten des internationalen Kongresses der Bibliotheca Hertziana und des Nederlands Instituut te Rome, Rom, 28–30 September 1997* (Munich, 2000), 139.

⁸ For the regional extension of this style, see Michael W. Cothren, ‘The Choir Windows of Agnières (Somme) and a Regional Style of Gothic Glass Painting,’ *Journal of Glass Studies* 28 (1986): 40–65.

⁹ For another instance where close formal analysis has allowed the identification of several artists working within a shared stylistic tradition, see Elizabeth Carson Pastan, ‘“And he shall gather together the dispersed”: The Tree of Jesse at Troyes Cathedral,’ *Gesta* 37 (1998): 233–36. At Troyes, however, where Pastan distinguished four hands, one of the artists deviates so significantly from the work of the other three that she proposes a gap between two campaigns of execution. At Beauvais, we are clearly dealing with three artists working at the same time and within the same artistic formation.

¹⁰ The work of this painter is found in the lower nine panels of the Jesse Tree (1a–9a), as well as in one additional king (17a) and two other prophets (22a and 25a); most of the lower part of the Maternity lancet (panels 1b–9b and 11b); and the three-panel central scene of the Crucifixion in the rose (4a/b, 7a/b, and 10a/b). In all, this artist seems to have been solely responsible for twenty-three panels and to have shared the execution of one (6b) with the ‘trough hand.’

2.2 Beauvais, Cathedral of Saint-Pierre, lower portion of the Maternity of the Virgin lancet painted by the "hard hand" (with the exception of the figure of King Herod who greets the Magi in panel *6b*, assigned here to the "trough hand").

A

B

2.3 Beauvais, Cathedral of Saint-Pierre, examples of painting by the "hard hand" in the Maternity of the Virgin lancet: A, 8b, detail, Virgin and Child receiving the Magi; B, 6b, detail, Three Magi standing before Herod.

contributed but a single figure to the Maternity lancet (King Herod at the right in 6b on fig. 2.2), working predominantly in the Jesse Tree on a series of five figures of prophets and kings (e.g., fig. 2.4b and 2.4d).¹¹ Evoking a sense of three-dimensional form was clearly more important to this artist than tight patterns, sharp outlines, or precise painting. Expressions on the broadened faces are more relaxed and less focused, at times even vacuous, but never tense like those attributed to the 'hard hand.' Figural outlines are somewhat softer. Postures are more relaxed, conveying a sense of grandeur rather than alert involvement. The painting, though just as careful, seeks a different overall effect with more fluid lines realizing a more relaxed rendering of the shared systems of articulation.

¹¹ The figure of King Herod who greets the Magi in panel 6b of the Maternity lancet (fig. 2), and panels 11a, 14a, 19a, 20a, and 21a in the Jesse Tree.

2.4 Beauvais, Cathedral of Saint-Pierre, four prophets from the Jesse Tree lancet: A, 7a, painted by the "hard hand"; B, 19a, painted by the "trough hand"; C, 9a, painted by the "hard hand"; D, 21a, painted by the "trough hand."

The comparison between these two artists may be clearest when juxtaposing two sets of prophets from the Jesse Tree that were painted by each using the same two models or cartoons (fig. 2.4).¹² The poses, outlines, basic configuration of drapery, and facial types of these standing figures were clearly imposed on both painters from a full-scale drawing or workshop pattern, but distinct artistic temperaments are embodied in the way the formulae were realized. Through the interior articulation of drapery, the 'trough hand' gives the figures a greater sense of plasticity—both in terms of underlying body mass and within the depth of the enveloping fabric itself (fig. 2.4b and 2.4d). This is especially noticeable in the pull of the mantle over the right leg of one of the prophet types (fig. 2.4d). The heads painted by the 'trough hand' are noticeably broader and more rounded. Eyes are opened wider, and the more relaxed lines that define them take more arched curves, emphasizing roundness rather than flatness. This allows the creation of the iris as a separate rounded form rather than an adjunct mark pulled from, and contiguous with, the outline of the eyes. Hair is enlivened with fewer but more relaxed waves, and they curve around contours to convey three-dimensionality, in contrast with the tight surface configurations that craft the crisp coiffures of the 'hard hand' figures. The latter painter's penchant for bold—at times double—'chin' contours to underline beards works to counteract a sense of recession (fig. 2.4a and 2.4c), whereas the tapering, serpentine strokes defining the bases of beards on the prophets painted by the 'trough hand' (fig. 2.4b and 2.4d) imply foreshortening.¹³

The more extensive work of a third painter—the 'soft hand'—is concentrated in the upper parts of both lancets and the marginal panels of the rose (fig. 2.1b).¹⁴ This artist's figures are characterized by even more relaxed, at times even flabby, outlines (fig. 2.5). Detailed but disorganized, the painting seems haltingly executed, antithetical to the confident precision characterizing the work of the 'hard hand.' Broad areas of drapery are generally filled with a

¹² For another instance of two artists, distinguishable by temperament but working with the same cartoon, see Meredith Parsons Lillich, *The Armor of Light: Stained Glass in Western France, 1250–1325* (Berkeley, 1994), 213–17.

¹³ It is quite interesting to trace this difference between the work of these painters from figures to ornament, where it is more subtle, but still apparent. For instance, in the delineation of the foliate flourishes beneath the feet of the kings in the Jesse Tree, the flattened buds with berries reserved as stark outlines within a dark field prevalent in the kings of the 'hard hand,' are replaced by the 'trough hand' with fleshy leaves filled with contour lines that evoke, even outline, a sense of three-dimensionality. Even more subtle is the distinction between the crowns of the 'hard hand' Magi in 6b and the 'trough hand's' figure of Herod in the same panel.

¹⁴ To this artist can be assigned panels 10a, 12a, 13a, 15a, 16a, 18a, 23a, 24a, 26a, and 27a in the Jesse Tree; panels 12b–15b and possibly the leftmost figure in panel 9b of the Maternity lancet; and the figures of John and the Virgin in panels 6a/b and 8a/b flanking the Crucifixion in the rose. It is possible that this group of panels, though unified by stylistic variant, might represent the work of two artists rather than one. Panels 10a, 12a, 16a, and 18a seem lower in quality than the other panels of this group. Figures are flabbier and more vacuous; painting is more disorganized. This distinction could, however, be the by-product of uneven conservation. These panels have more cracked pieces, more and clumsier re-loaded repairs, and more significant passages of modern replacement than others in the group. Indeed they are among the least well-preserved panels in the entire lancet.

2.5 Beauvais, Cathedral of Saint-Pierre, portions of the axial window painted by the "soft hand": A, details of the upper portion of the Maternity of the Virgin lancet showing, 12*b*, the Massacre of the Innocents, and, 13*b*–14*b*, the Flight into Egypt; B, 24*a*, Prophet from the Jesse Tree.

repetitive series of bunched lines or small loops (e.g., upper body of the female figure in the Massacre of the Innocents in fig. 2.5*a*), lacking either the tension created by the 'hard hand' through the opposition of densely and sparsely articulated passages (e.g., fig. 2.3) or the three-dimensionality implied by the depressed folds favored by the 'trough hand' (e.g., fig. 2.4*d*). Likewise, faces have neither the crisp precision of the flat patterning favored by the 'hard hand' nor the relaxed plasticity of the 'trough hand's' work. Possibly due in part to this relaxed conception and articulation, both individual figures and narrative enactment are bland and detached, hesitant rather than bold in demeanor and presentation (e.g., fig. 2.5*a*).

Teasing out the formal distinctions that enabled me to attribute the execution of the Maternity and Jesse Tree window to three distinct artistic hands is relatively straightforward. All that is required is looking within and beneath the larger stylistic system that unifies the window as an artistic whole to

discover individual idiosyncrasies and Morellian motifs manifesting artists' habits of working or thinking. But for meaningful interpretation, for developing a richer understanding of the working practices and organizational structures of the human beings who created medieval stained-glass windows, sorting and holding these hands is a beginning rather than an end. The primary challenge rests in seeking significance in this distribution of labor, either to construct or to evoke a larger interpretive context for artistic creation.

For instance, is it significant that most of the work of the 'soft hand' appears in the upper registers of both lancets or the marginal panels of the rose, while the painting of the 'trough hand' is most prominent in the upper half of the Jesse tree (fig. 2.1b)?¹⁵ Were these two painters considered less gifted by patron or workshop, and their panels relegated to remote reaches where it would be less available for close scrutiny? After all, the more painstaking painting of the 'hard hand,' embodying most consistently the stylistic profile of the window as a whole, is concentrated in the lower registers of each lancet, closest to viewers and therefore more immediately visible than the upper reaches of the window. The 'hard hand' was also responsible for the crucial scene of the Crucifixion, an iconographic keystone with enhanced visibility at the center of the rose.¹⁶ Because of the privileged location of this artist's work within the window—both visually and iconographically—I am tempted to designate the 'hard hand' as the 'master' or 'principal painter' of the workshop or team that was responsible for its creation. Unfortunately, we have no way of knowing if artists who made medieval windows organized themselves along such hierarchical lines, nor if our own assessments of quality and representativeness coincide with the unknowable judgments of those who organized the collaborative production of medieval stained-glass windows,¹⁷ not to mention

¹⁵ Of course in the case of the modular design of the Jesse Tree, where there is little clear narrative or chronological progression of unlabeled kings and prophets to help establish their stacking order, it is impossible to be sure if the arrangement today reproduces the original installation. But the placement of the three panels of the top register is secured by the pointing of the lancet opening, and these panels were executed by the 'soft hand.' Could the clustering of the work of the 'hard hand' near the bottom here be the result of modern aesthetic preferences?

¹⁶ The stylistic relationship between the Crucifixion and the lower panels attributable to the 'hard hand' is not immediately apparent since the upper scene is more monumentally painted, presumably an acknowledgement of the need to take into account the greater distance that separates the top of the window from viewers. In *Picturing the Celestial City*, 15–24, 110, I argue for a programmatic assessment of this particular scene within the glazing of the church as a whole—viewed not only within the confines of this one chapel but from within the main choir, where it coordinates with the celebration of the Mass on the main altar and the later Eucharistic crucifixion in the axial clerestory window looming above both. This would make a bolder articulation in the rose even more understandable.

¹⁷ There is no extra-visual evidence for making such hierarchical distinctions among the artists who worked on a medieval window: Michael W. Cothren, 'Suger's Stained Glass Masters and Their Workshop at Saint-Denis,' in *Paris: Center of Artistic Enlightenment*, ed. George Mauner, et al., *Papers in Art History from The Pennsylvania State University* 4 (University Park, Penn. 1988), 51–53. For what we do know concerning the organization of medieval stained-glass workshops, see also Meredith Parsons Lillich, 'Gothic Glaziers: Monks, Jews, Taxpayers, Bretons, Women,' *Journal of Glass Studies* 27 (1985): 72–92; Sarah Brown and

the expectations of those who 'consumed' them within their original devotional and liturgical contexts. What's an interpreter to do?

No single monument holds the key to unlock the door out of this art historical cul-de-sac. There is no reason to assume a standard or standardized way of working, or of organizing the work involved in making medieval windows. Even within the microcosm of the Virgin Chapel at Beauvais this is not the case. The artists who painted the side wings of the glazing triptych worked within two other divergent stylistic traditions. The left window embodies a precisely painted mannerist transformation of the classicizing Muldenfaltenstil that had flourished in northeastern France in a variety of media around the year 1200. Oddly proportioned figures are posed in movement along languid curves within crowded compositions, often stepping in unison with awkward elegance and dance-like postures.¹⁸ The style of the third window looks forward rather than back, conforming to a cosmopolitan Parisian avant-garde trend characterized by airy compositions, emphatic silhouettes, heightened legibility, streamlined painting, narrative austerity, and simplified compartments and ornament. The emphasis shifts from interior delineation to the clearly defined and elegantly cut contours of whole forms, often indicated with the broad strokes of lead lines.¹⁹ As with the axial window, my close examination of the flanking windows revealed subtle stylistic differences that seem to betray the 'handwriting' of individual painters within the teams of artists who executed them. But whereas the variations in execution within the axial window can be convincingly keyed to a panel-by-panel distribution of work among distinguishable makers,²⁰ this is not the case in the other two windows in this same chapel. Isolated heads, drapery flourishes or ornamental motifs stand out here and there, but there are fewer deviations from a pervasive stylistic uniformity, and I could discern no pattern in their distribution. At times I wondered if these seemingly deviant details represented the incursion of later restorers rather than the individual hands of original makers. Does this greater degree of uniformity indicate a more cohesive workshop practice, the strong hand of a domineering master painter, or my lower sensitivity to the sorts of variation that marked the work of individual makers in these two stylistic traditions? It is difficult to know, but one thing seems clear to me: interpreters should be cautious not to generalize

David O'Connor, *Medieval Craftsmen: Glass Painters* (Toronto, 1991); and Madeline H. Caviness, *Stained Glass Windows*, *Typologie des sources du Moyen Age Occidental* 76 (Turnhout, 1996), esp. 30–38 and 67–69; all with references to earlier literature and more detailed studies of individual sites. One of the most thorough, intelligent, and revealing explorations of a particular instance is Madeline Harrison Caviness, *Sumptuous Arts at the Royal Abbeys in Reims and Braine: Ornatus Elegantiae, Varietate Stupendes* (Princeton, 1990), 98–128.

¹⁸ Cothren, *Picturing the Celestial City*, 58–71.

¹⁹ Cothren, *Picturing the Celestial City*, 88–96.

²⁰ There seem to be two deviations in the Maternity lancet from the panel-by-panel distribution of work by these painters. The panel portraying the Magi before Herod (fig. 1, 6a) was clearly a collaboration; the Magi were painted by the 'hard hand' and King Herod by the 'trough hand.' Although I am less certain in the second case, the 'soft hand' may have painted the figure at the left in the scene of the Annunciation to the Shepherds (9a).

too broadly from any one particular example since at Beauvais artists, gathered into three possibly independent groups to work at the same time and in the same place, seem not to have followed the same working procedures in the projects assigned to them.²¹

But the situation is even more complicated, involving a number of interpretive possibilities as well as variations in the evidence itself. For example, not all formal variations within standardized systems or patterns need indicate evidence of corporate execution; distinctions may mean different things in different contexts. Madeline Caviness's pioneering study of the relationship among a series of stylistically linked glazings at Canterbury, Braine, Saint-Remi at Reims, and Sens, traced the way artists moved with patterns from church to church, introducing variations to tailor their designs to the demands of individual sites.²² She has also explored how during the glazing of the choir clerestory at Saint-Remi, variations from figure to figure within an individual program can represent the evolution of workshop attitudes to the execution of reused cartoons formed during sequential critique and revision over the process of an extended glazing campaign, here with an eye to enhancing legibility and accommodating design to the conditions of viewing dictated by lofty location when windows were installed within the building.²³

But even if we should be cautious in generalizing broadly from any one example and even if we acknowledge interpretive flexibility in assessing the significance of individual situations themselves, internal stylistic variations in the painting of the axial window in the Virgin Chapel at Beauvais still reveal to me the hands of three distinguishable artists who shared execution of a single window rather than the evolution and correction of a team style in the process of executing a shared design over time and space. Other art historical interpreters, faced with a similar situation, have come to a similar conclusion. Some have mapped such variations in painting on a hierarchical model of labor organization, confident of their ability to relate their assessment of quality to individual members situated within a stratified workforce, even if the style of argument verges on circularity. Jane Hayward, for instance, discovered within a single 'composite panel' of fourteenth-century Norman grisaille, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, six distinct 'glaziers' marks' distributed over sixteen whole or partial quarries, each of which she coordinated with the stylistic 'handwriting' of six individual painters. Her assessment of the relative

²¹ At Saint-Denis during the middle of the twelfth century, even within an individual 'workshop' the distribution of work between two definable painters changes in character from window to window. In one case (Maternity of the Virgin window) they divided their labor panel by panel, but in another (*Crusading* window) they seem to have shared in the execution of individual panels: Cothren, 'Suger's Stained Glass Masters,' 48–50.

²² This work, presented initially within the extensive investigations of Caviness, *Sumptuous Arts*, has been revisited and refined in Madeline Harrison Caviness, 'Tucks and Darts: Adjusting Patterns to Fit Figures in Stained Glass Windows around 1200,' in *Medieval Fabrications*, ed. Jane Burns (London, 2004), 105–19, and the web supplement at <http://www.tufts.edu/~mcavines/glassdesign.html>.

²³ Caviness, *Sumptuous Arts*, 107–17.

'control' and 'crudeness' of these painters' quarries inspired her to identify each with a specific position within a hierarchically structured work force, embodying within her summary statement a set of undocumented and unexamined—if logical or even traditional—assumptions:

Surely what can be suggested by these quarries is that they are the work of three different journeymen (glaziers 1–3) and that there were three apprentices (glaziers 4–6), all of whom were learning the art of glass painting by assisting with the routine work of painting quarries. The wild-rose pattern, one of the most common of all motifs for glazing in the years following the invention of silver stain, would have been an ideal teaching exercise. The use of individual marks by apprentices was probably an attempt to isolate their work from the output of the paid journeymen.²⁴

Whereas the scrutiny that allowed Hayward to coordinate style with makers' marks in this panel is impressive and instructive, I would prefer at Beauvais to adopt a somewhat more cautious and flattened model for the organization of labor among the three painters I have identified in the axial Virgin Chapel window. Perhaps they were of equal standing within a collective workshop, agreeing as a group how their individual painting styles might best be mapped over the expanse of a large narrative window on which they would collaborate. But it is quite tempting for me to speculate that the 'hard hand'—whose painting I find the most assured and controlled and whose scenes occupy privileged positions within the window—was the master or principal painter of a collaborative team, all of whom may have been 'master painters' on their own. Firm conclusions and broader generalizations must await the assessment of other evidence from other sites; much work remains to be done before we can catalogue with any authority the way variations in standardized formulae document the human dimension of the production of stained-glass windows. Although the method that has been and will be used to assemble the evidence necessary to chart this larger history is old-fashioned formal analysis, its use has the potential to bring new life to our understanding of the creative process that produced the stained-glass windows that inspire the art historical scholarship of a continually enlarging art historical workshop organized by the international Corpus Vitrearum project. My goal in highlighting here the discovery of three hands at work in one window at Beauvais, as well as in holding back on generalizing too boldly from this one example of connoisseurly differentiation, is to challenge my colleagues, present and future, to make this sort of close visual analysis a priority in researching stained glass so that one

²⁴ Jane Hayward, *English and French Medieval Stained Glass in the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, edited and expanded by Mary B. Shepard and Cynthia Clark, *Corpus Vitrearum, United States of America, Part I*, 2 vols (New York, 2003), 2:25–27. On the question of when marks on individual pieces of glass within a panel might be artists' marks and when they might be installation or assembly marks, see Madeline H. Caviness and Suzanne M. Newman in *Medieval and Renaissance Glass from New England Collections*, ed. Madeline H. Caviness, exh. cat., Busch-Reisinger Museum of Harvard University (Medford, Mass., 1978), 43; and Michael W. Cothren, 'Production Practices in Medieval Stained Glass Workshops: Some Evidence in the Glencairn Museum,' *Journal of Glass Studies* 41 (1999): esp. 127–34.

day we will have sufficient evidence to generalize with more confidence. That could have a powerful impact on the sorts of conclusions we will be able to form from the medieval material that remains.