

The illustration is a medieval-style painting. In the center, the Virgin Mary is depicted in a long, flowing white robe with a blue mantle. She holds a white lily in her right hand and has her left hand resting on the head of a man kneeling before her. The man is wearing a dark tunic with a red and black diamond pattern and is looking up at Mary with a reverent expression. In the background, a group of men in white robes are watching the scene. To the left, there is a large, ornate golden altar or shrine. The overall style is characterized by soft, blended colors and a focus on religious iconography.

JAN M. ZIOLKOWSKI

READING THE JUGGLER OF NOTRE DAME

Medieval Miracles and Modern Remakings



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7. The Fiddler and the Holy Face of Lucca

The community of Lucca lies west of Florence in the Arno Valley, in the central Italian region of Tuscany. It is the capital of the province named after it. Though the Italian *Volto Santo* and English “Holy Face” may refer to any representation of the face of Christ, the terms are mostly used in reference to a [statue on a cross](#) in the cathedral dedicated to Saint Martin in this city. The piece resides in a *tempietto* or “little temple” to the side of the nave. This free-standing chapel is an octagon of marble that was constructed in 1484 specifically to house the image.

The polychrome artwork of cedarwood depicts a [bigger-than-life Christ](#), measuring roughly nine feet high and eight wide, on a cross fourteen feet high and eight and a half wide. He is clad in a [long-sleeved tunic](#) that envelops him from his wrists to his ankles. The garment is cinched at the waist by a knotted cord that hangs down in two prominent strands. Christ appears to be alive and standing against or hovering parallel to the cross, rather than dangling from it.

The carving is called the Holy Face because of the remarkable head. It is framed by long ample hair, thick down to the shoulders, with an effect compounded by a flowing two-pointed beard. Its eyes, open wide, are fashioned of crystal and lend the face vividness. From the Middle Ages on, the impact of the ensemble has been intensified by further dress-up. From early on, the statue has been outfitted, sometimes permanently but often only temporarily, with additional clothing, a crown, and shoes or slippers, all frequently embellished with gems, precious metals, and costly textiles.

The appearance, symbolism, and provenance of the sculpture have given rise to much puzzlement and speculation. Its iconography has elicited comparison with monumental statues figuring Christ that have been associated with, among various other locations, Beirut as well as with Catalonia. In the latter region, such representations are known as the *Majestat*- or “Majesty”-type.

Tradition held that vials of Christ’s blood and other precious remains of the crucifixion were preserved in a hollow at the back of the head on the Holy Face. As a result, the story of the sculpture in Lucca became connected with the [cult of Holy Blood](#) in Fécamp, which a local confraternity of jongleurs there helped to disseminate. In medieval legend, the Holy Face was also associated with a [textile imprinted with the image of Christ](#). In modern scholarship, speculation has been rife about when the

crucifix arrived in Lucca and about when this putative original was replaced by a later replica, if in fact such a substitution was ever made.

The Latin legend has been dated to the late eleventh century. Though new physical evidence supports the assertion that the Volto Santo could be as old as the late eighth century, no documentary evidence of the object has been confirmed from before 1100. Compounding the uncertainties, the suggestion has been floated that the depiction of Christ now in existence replaced a much older predecessor that was lost to decay. In the Middle Ages, no such doubts hobbled the ascent of the Holy Face to fame. The statue is even mentioned by [Dante Alighieri](#).

According to what is reported in Latin, the body of the *imago crucifixi* or "image of the Crucified" was carved after the ascension of Christ by Nicodemus, a Pharisee who is mentioned three times in the [Gospel of John](#). If we accept the account, this man profited from his eyewitness memory to capture the features of his master as he had looked on the cross. When the would-be artist could not complete the head or at least fell asleep before he had done so, an angel finished the work—hence the epithet *holy* by which it is known to this day. This angelic contribution plants the Holy Face squarely in the category designated by the technical term *acheiropoiotos*. This adjective in Greek, meaning "not made by (human) hands," has been applied to a small class of miraculous icons. The report continues by describing how the sculpture, after being hidden in a cave for centuries, was transported miraculously to Lucca in the early Middle Ages.

In the Tuscan city the figure attracted wide reverence well into the sixteenth century as the object of a pilgrimage cult. However, it also sparked considerable skepticism already in the High Middle Ages. [Boncompagno da Signa](#), an Italian teacher of prose composition and other aspects of rhetoric who lived from about 1170 to about 1240, described the questions surrounding the Holy Face in one of his principal writings. The passage, despite its length, merits translation in full:

"A doctor of law is reproved, who was a detractor of the image that is venerated at Lucca by Christians."

You ought deservedly to be labeled a dunce of law rather than a doctor of law, seeing that against the binding force of the law you presume to detract from the law, not taking into account what is ordained in the law against heretics and their supporters. For you corrupt the legal code as you presume to commit offense in words against God himself, who is the author and agent of the law, not considering that on this account you render yourself notorious and afford an example of evildoing to the less foresighted.

Behold, you assert that the holy and venerable image of the crucifix, which is revered in the church of Lucca by the gentiles and peoples, was made from bentwood, which a woodworker polished by his craft, first cutting away from it with an adze and a hatchet the wood that had been exposed to fire and transformed into soot and ash. But the remaining part of the wood was entrusted to a talented sculptor, who with delicate hewing and craftsmanship distinguished limbs in it, installing in it eyes of crystal in the head and slippers of silver on the feet. Afterward he clad the entire ensemble in gold

with a diversity of colors, surmounting its head with a crown inset with precious stones and girding its loins with an exquisite belt.

You say too that it is repainted every single year, to the end that it seem more beautiful. And you pronounce that there are ants inside the substance of the wood, saying that those miracles which have been written about the image have been adorned with lies and invented out of greed for acquiring. And that it was not true or even closely similar to the truth that it cast off a silver slipper to a performer who with a sweet melody was playing a harp before it. Regarding which matters you seem to be mistaken according to the opinion of certain people, because many believe, and the report has gone forth throughout the world, that the cord with which that image is girded bestows joy upon a woman giving birth.

And though [Placentinus](#) said that fools would put small coins there, you ought not to imitate Placentinus regarding such matters, but may it please you to believe that that image is not God but shaped in honor of him. For this reason you ought to hold it in reverence and honor, like a seal that represents the image of Caesar but is not Caesar, and yet respect is shown to the golden or waxen shape, and the emperor's majesty is very much venerated and feared in this intermediary form.

The ample dossier of miracles about the Holy Face includes one, probably put to parchment in the twelfth century, that features a jongleur: Boncompagno alludes to this tradition fleetingly in his third paragraph. In this so-called fiddler's miracle, a performer arrives in Lucca and plies his craft by belting out hits from his repertoire on the piazzas, but to no avail: he cannot coax from his audiences the smallest coin in recompense. Finally, fatigued and famished, he enters Saint Martin's, kneels before the precious crucifix, plays his viol, and croons praise songs. God manifests his favor by causing the figure of the Holy Face to look upon the musician and to drop into his lap a silver slipper from its right foot. As in many stories starring jongleurs, this miracle pits the protagonist against an ecclesiastic antagonist—a bishop or beadle. This opponent restores the footgear to the statue, but the miracle repeats itself. Eventually the church authorities are obliged to repurchase the miraculous object at a steep price.

It requires little effort to imagine the utility of this narrative to professional performers, who could wield it to their advantage in soliciting compensation from noble audience members while fending off hostility from churchmen. As chance would have it, a [medieval French epic](#) from the cycle about the legendary ninth-century personage Guillaume d'Orange, William of Orange in English, provides vivid realization of this very hypothesis. This *chanson de geste* from the second half of the twelfth century is called *Aliscans*, after the fictitious battle with which it is chiefly concerned. The location of the combat has been presumed to be the necropolis in Arles called Alysamps. This place name, with its two main constituents reversed, equates to Champs-Élysées in French, meaning "Elysian Fields" in English. But to the point: the epic poem incorporates a passage that touches upon the fiddler's miracle precisely in the context of soliciting donations from those who can afford to be liberal. By implication, the generosity of the statue puts stingy listeners to shame.

- Indeed, I can tell you and affirm to be true
 4760 that a decent person (if he does not want, by God,
 to give anything from his possessions) ought not listen to a jongleur,
 who does not know how to work for a living in other fashion,
 nor can make claim for his service.
 If such a person does make him a gift from them, then let him be.
 4765 You can prove this by the Holy Face of Lucca
 who threw him his slipper from his foot;
 then it became necessary for him to buy it back at a dear price.
 People should love jongleurs greatly:
 they crave joy, and love to sing of it.

The motif of the projectile footwear attests to the attentiveness that the original teller of the story showed to the reality of the statue on the cross. Among many aspects that make the figure distinctive, one is that its lower extremities are not nailed to the cross; another is that the feet are shod in silver shoes or velvet slippers.

A [thirteenth-century poem](#) that advocates for professional fiddlers and their repertory contains quatrains that sum up the story beautifully:

- The sweet Mother of God loved the sound of the viol;
 in the city of Arras she performed a lovely generosity:
 she gave to the jongleurs the worthy Holy Candle,
 80 that the prior of Celle would not dare to bear away.
- She did them another good deed, I can well retell it.
 A jongleur was singing to amuse the people;
 neither noble nor peasant has interest in giving him anything,
 but the Holy Face of Lucca gave him its shoe.
- 85 There is great meaning when the Virgin Mary
 is there with the angels in beautiful company.
 Out of her great generosity she gave them the candle,
 which no one dares to take away because she has great authority.

The most important text in establishing the legend of the Holy Face is a [mysterious dossier](#), designated *Relatio leobiniana* or "The Report of [Leobinus](#)" for short, that survives in at least [nineteen manuscripts](#). Entitled in its full glory "The Report of Deacon Leobinus on the Revelation or Discovery, Transference, and Miracles of the Venerable Face of Our Lord, Jesus Christ," this comprehensive account sets forth bare-bones information in Latin prose regarding the origins of the image, its discovery in the Holy Land, and its transference to Lucca by way of Luni, a town in eastern Liguria.

The document begins with a prologue by the alleged author in which he professes to feel obliged to share what he has seen with his own eyes and heard from reliable witnesses. After this preamble, Leobinus proceeds to the *revelatio* and *inventio*.

In hagiography, an “invention” generally tells how a saint’s bodily remains were unearthed, but here a Bishop Geoffrey on pilgrimage in Jerusalem is induced by a miraculous “revelation” to discover the Holy Face in the basement of a house that belongs to an individual named Seleucius.

In short order the object is entrusted to a ship that, without crew, sails, or oars, transports its precious cargo divinely from the shore of Joppa to the Italian port of Luni. In the *translatio*—the report of a relic’s transfer from one place to another—the deacon relates how Bishop John of Lucca was motivated by an angelic vision to secure the transfer of the Holy Face to his see. Leobinus dates the triumphant arrival in 742. By way of conclusion, he signifies that he was in Jerusalem in the service of Bishop Geoffrey when this sequence of wonderful events began. He attests that the Holy Face contains the crown of thorns and some of Christ’s clothes, that the place where it was carved witnessed extraordinary cures, and that contact with wood shavings from the manufacture of the likeness healed all manner of infirmities. At this juncture the writer concludes.

The composition was eventually complemented by a sort of appendix supplied by another author or group of authors. This supplementary dossier documented the rise of the cult surrounding the relic, with a special focus on the miracles it occasioned. Only the original portion, ascribed to Leobinus, is put into English here as the first item in this section.

The name of the churchman by whom the text was purportedly written calls to mind in the first instance a sixth-century saint of France, called Lubin in modern French, and in the second the late eighth-century English-born Apostle of the Frisians. The latter is known in Latin as Lebuinus, in vernacular languages as Lebuin, Lebwin, and Liafwin. In no case does such onomastic speculation take us far, since whatever the ramifications of the name, this alleged deacon is otherwise unattested. What counts is the narrative ascribed to Leobinus or Leboinus, since it was foundational for the later hagiography: it offers the oldest record of the genesis and of the chain of custody that led to the presence of the sculpture in Lucca and its prominence as a miracle-generating object.

The tale of “The Fiddler and the Holy Face of Lucca,” like those of “The Jongleur and the Black Virgin of Rocamadour” and “The Jongleurs and the Holy Candle of Arras,” is attached irrevocably to one cathedral and one cult. It highlights an entertainer, his performance before an image, his recompense from on high, and his vindication in the face of ecclesiastic opposition. Does the absence of the Virgin Mary alter the fundamental significance of the story, or is it just one of many variables?

A. “The Report of Deacon Leobinus”

Here begins the report of Deacon Leobinus on the [revelation or discovery](#), [transference](#), and [miracles](#) of the venerable face of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Deacon Leobinus, the least of Christ's servants, sends greeting to all brothers, observers of the orthodox faith serving God throughout all regions of the world in Lord Jesus Christ, everlasting author of eternal salvation.

What we have seen with our eyes and heard with our ears from religious men and have committed to tenacious memory, we do not dare to deny to those who desire to know, but instead, overcome by brotherly love, we rejoice, like attentive cupbearers, in offering drink to you who are thirsting. For in Holy Writ the servant is branded as bad and ungrateful, and is damned for his faults to deserved punishment, he who did not strive to give freely what he received freely, and who did not share [the talent entrusted](#) him by his lord with brothers wishing it and who did not bring it back to him redoubled by most attentive care.

And so, to strengthen the holy Church, to instruct the faithful who desire to know, to refute or, all the better, to convert non-believers, we have decided to offer with our stylus for the memory of posterity a few things concerning the revelation or discovery and transference of the most sacred Holy Face and also concerning the miracles that either we have seen ourselves or have learned about through the report of respectable men, so that it will be fruitful for those invited to [the Lord's Supper](#) and not burdensome to those easily wearied readers.

On the Revelation

To fulfill a vow the respectable man, Bishop Geoffrey, from below the Alps, went off to Jerusalem and stayed there an exceedingly long time owing to the manifold and major illness of his companions. While passing through the holiest places by day and night out of concern, devoted to prayer, fasting, and alms, he merited an angelic vision. For after very long prayer, when he wished to refresh his tired limbs in sleep, he sought out his bed and went to sleep. An angel of the Lord stood near and addressed and consoled him with such a speech:

"Rise up, servant of God, and with diligent inquiry seek out near your lodgings the most Holy Face of the author of our salvation, which is to say, the redeemer of the world, carved by Nicodemus and do it, when found, reverence with worthy veneration. So go to the home of the most Christian man [Seleucius](#) that adjoins your lodgings and there you will find the most Holy Face located in a crypt."

[This Nicodemus](#) is moreover the one who, the sacred history of the Gospel tells, for fear of the Jews came first by night in stealth to Jesus. After being steeped by him and learned in the dogma of holy rebirth, he departed full of faith. In truth, after the resurrection and ascension of the Lord he blazed with such ardor from the presence of Christ that he always carried Christ in his heart and always had him on his lips.

Having then taken note most attentively of the shape of Christ's body in its dimensions and distinguishing features, and having also achieved a mental description of his lineaments, he carved the most Holy Face not by his own but by divine craft. Christ's grace, which can never be absent from those wishing well and doing well, stood by his good intention.

On what basis it is called the Holy Face, I will relate in a few words. For just as a face when seen testifies to the person whose face is seen, so the form of that precious face portrays our redeemer incarnate and hanging for us on the cross as if represented in his sure lineaments.

Accordingly, the blessed man had him before the eyes of his mind and, perceiving him with his bodily eyes, as if he gazed upon Christ, he took solace in the likeness of him. When the previously mentioned Nicodemus, dear and most welcome to God, had a presentiment that the end of life was approaching for him, he conferred the splendid work to be overseen and honored by a certain [Issachar](#), who feared and worshipped the heavenly power. After he did this, his soul, released from his body, sought places of quiet, while his body was placed near his forefathers.

After [Nicodemus] died in Christ, [Issachar], the one who had received the holiest gift, so that the disclosure of such a great matter would not inflame the Jews against him, shut it away in a hiding-place inside his house and showed to it the respect owed it. In this fashion down to our times, through one generation after another it has been revered most devoutly by those faithful to Christ, even though in secret.

On the Discovery of the Holiest Face

After having been cheered by dialogue with the angel, the bishop who has been previously mentioned woke up from sleep and told his comrades everything in order. Having heard this, without any doubt hindering their faith, they sought out, investigating earnestly, the place stipulated. By persistent inquiry they ascertained who and where the keeper was of such a great gift. After discovering him by the grace of God and asking him to show the gift of their salvation, they at length constrained him by clever devices, despite his at first shamelessly refusing, to uncover so glorious a treasure—by openly asserting, to the Jews and gentiles living there, that the cross of our redeemer was worshipped and revered in his home. The keeper of the blessed cross was overcome by entreaties and threats, and he was vanquished by the greatest grief. As Christ's clemency had effect, he disclosed unwillingly to them the place in which the holy work, as has been said, stood hidden through the period of many years. Then, weeping for joy, they rendered boundless thanks to the savior of all, that in those times he conferred heavenly advantage upon his faithful to the greatest possible extent. At length, at the bidding of the bishop who has been mentioned before, the aforesaid keeper deservingly received a weight of gold.

The reverend prelate, devoting himself to prayer with monks and companions, was greatly concerned by what device or by what skill the revered token of the Holy Cross should be transferred to the places of Italy. At last, it is determined collectively that the holiest work, stowed appropriately in a ship, should be conveyed under the guidance of God all the way to the regions of Rome. Therefore the bishop, attended by a retinue of monks and companions, singing heavenly hymns unendingly with heart and mouth, went off, transporting the token of the Holy Cross to the seashore where it is called [Joppa](#). There, finding a heaven-granted ship of greatest solidity, they stowed in it with greatest reverence the most precious treasure. Embellishing it marvelously, they covered it, illuminated by a great many [candles and lamps](#), from the top down with [pitch](#) and with other things befitting the work, just as the holy history of Genesis relates concerning Noah's ark.

Then the bishop with the monks devoted himself to prayer, and all pray with a shared wish for the indescribable goodness of the Lord that such a great and so special a place should be enriched by such a great gift. In this place countless peoples of the Christian faith should assemble devoutly and faithfully, and they should give thanks for being protected and defended constantly by his supervision and protection.

The ship is reported to have proceeded immediately across the deep sea, with no mortal rowing (for no one was inside it), but with the power of God alone at the helm, through the long circuits of the sea. It came ashore at the port of [Luni](#). The townspeople of that place, not very content with what was rightly theirs, are known, because of spending their time on the coast, to have had this custom for a long time, that they persisted in crimes and pillage at sea. Therefore, perceiving the unaccustomed size and appearance of the ship, they wondered strongly upon seeing no mortal being upon it. So they arranged to seize the ship and wishing to open it, they pondered breaking it. But the ship, with the sacred goodness of God at the helm, withdrew far from them, as divine providence foresaw them to be filled with persistent wickedness. Then certain people of the same city on another day, looking on with measureless anger, attempted to do the same thing with a great vanguard. The compassion of God opposed them, that the opportunity of perpetrating the aforethought crime would not be allowed.

In the meantime, the mayor of the aforesaid city questions what should be done about a ship of this sort. His agents said in response that they had never seen a vessel of this sort. "In it no mortal being is evident and yet it does not seem to be devoid of human helmsmanship. Yesterday, from when dawn dispelled the dark all the way to sunset, and today, sweating away from much toil, we undertook to seize it, which seemed to very many of us near, but we were unable to have effect in the matter." For this reason, it is given to be understood for certain that this can hardly take place without its being the will of God.

How It Was Transferred to Lucca

At the same time the bishop who was in charge in the city of Lucca was named John, a man certainly pleasing to God, propped up by his authority and having every title to respect. This man embellished the church of Lucca in many aspects.

To him as he was sleeping an angel then appeared and spoke to him in a heavenly voice. "Arise," he said, "servant of Christ, and direct your steps and those of your brothers in haste to the port of Luni. For there you will find a ship, in which an image of the savior of the world is placed that shows how he suffered for humanity on the cross. The Pharisee Nicodemus, who saw and touched Christ, hid it. Through your merits you have obtained from the Lord to bring it into this city." Having said all these things, the divine messenger departed.

The venerable bishop, most joyful about the vision of the angel, proceeded without any delay to the place with the clergy and the most devout people and found everything just as the angel had said. The inhabitants of Luni exerted themselves with twinned effort, with oars and sails. In competition, they rowed, shouted together with their voices, and made signs with their hands and nods. Friend encouraged friend. But they profited not at all by their planning.

It was a marvelous thing and unheard of until now: the wind and wave drove the vessel toward the shore, but the power of God cast it far back. Small wonder indeed that those who do not seek God with a devout mind earn the right in no way to find him. In the meantime, the saintly Bishop John cautions them little by little to rest and to beseech the aid of God. Then the devout servant of God, with the banner of the Holy Cross, singing with spiritual hymns and canticles, with mouth and heart, proceeded with the highest reverence.

Why say more? The ship, which was putting the impious to flight, offered itself spontaneously to the pious faithful and displayed to them the precious and invaluable treasure bestowed by God's kindness. Opening the ship and perceiving God's mighty works, they poured forth tears for joy and, singing an angelic hymn, they rendered thanks for God's mercy.

In the meantime, strife began to arise between the people of Lucca and those of Luni over who should be considered preferable for the gift. Then the servant of Christ, Bishop John, having entered a sound counsel, implored the Lord's mercy and, warned by the divine spirit, granted to the bishop of Luni with kindly love a glass ampoule filled with Christ's precious blood, which he found there, and with great glory carried to his city, with Christ as guide, the most precious Holy Face.

Hearing this, the portion of the clergy and people who had remained in the city went forth from the happy city. The venerable clergy and religious people, the most devout female sex, old men and younger ones, boys and girls go forth to meet the Holy Cross, and just as long ago [the boys of the Jews sang](#) with voice in harmony to the Lord as he came to the Passion: "Blessed, who comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna on high," so too they shouted the same to the Lord's face, and those instructed by the Holy Spirit added: "Behold, the [lamb of God](#), behold, who bears the sins of the world, have mercy upon us, King of Israel." Therefore, with such great jubilation and such great triumph, the Lord's face was introduced into the city of Lucca in the year from the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ [742](#), in the time of [the most serene kings](#), in the second year of their reign. It was placed in the [church of Saint Martin](#), in which the episcopal see is located, near the double doors of that same basilica toward the eastern direction.

I, Leobinus, who have written these words, have been the humblest deacon of venerable Geoffrey, from below the Alps, and, as I sojourned with him in Jerusalem, I came to know the matters described below from most religious [Syrian men who guarded the Lord's sepulcher](#). For they asserted, on the evidence of the Holy Spirit, that the [crown of thorns](#), which Pilate's soldiers had placed on Christ's head, and part of his clothes were stored in the same place. Also, in the [grove of Ramoth-Gilead](#), in its hidden places where [for fear of the Jews](#) Nicodemus made the tomb, a fountain arose suddenly, as it was being made. People who drank from it or who washed clean with it while touching a place of sickness were immediately healed of whatever infirmity by which they were held back. But as the rumor gathered strength, a multitude of the sick, blind, lame, paralyzed, and sufferers from other infirmities ran together there in competition. The lord of the place, drunk with the venom of greed, recognized this. Hoping for corrupt gain, he put the water out for sale. Once this had been done, the fountain, having dried up by God's just judgment, appeared nowhere any longer. For God's boons are not bought or sold for a fleeting price but free by the grace of Christ.

The saintly men who have been mentioned added a detail concerning the woodchips and the small pieces of the precious face that were left over as it was sculpted, and that remained as it had been transported there: if they touched part of a weakened or infirm body, they restored without any delay its original good health, in such a way that if an eye, foot, hand, or some other limb had been injured, it would be healed if touched by a small piece of the same most holy element, through the assistance of him who lives and rules in the oneness of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

To this point, Leobinus has written. In what follows the venerable, God-fearing clerics of the same church commit to writing, that these things not be handed over to oblivion for eternity, what they know either from truthful men or also what they have heard and recognize for certain, from the sick themselves who are now healed.

B. "The Silver Shoe of the Holy Face, Offered Miraculously to a Pauper"

The legend of the Holy Face became linked with a narrative about the wondrous experience of a jongleur with the precious shoes or slippers that shod the feet of the image. This tale sometimes led off a dossier of more than ten miracles ascribed to the sacred carving. To supplement the report of Leobinus, it is translated here from Latin prose [edited from two thirteenth-century manuscripts](#). Among its notable features, this version of the story fails to flag the protagonist outright as a professional entertainer. Yes, he is presented as a devotee of the Holy Face who happens to carry a viol on his shoulder and to be an able singer. From these two traits we are well in our rights to infer that he is a jongleur. Additionally, the text concludes by emphasizing the inversion of the [Cinderella motif](#): the miracle explains why the silver shoe no longer fits properly on the foot of the image.

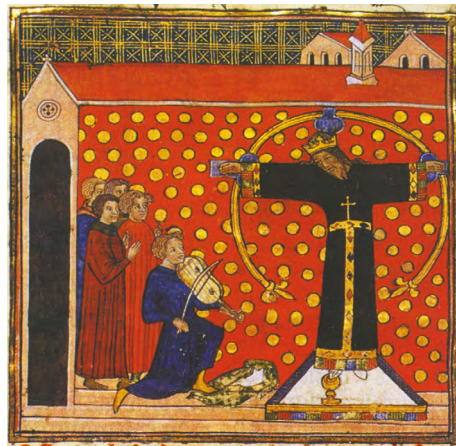


Fig. 10: The jongleur before the Holy Face. Miniature, fifteenth century. Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Palatinus Latinus 1988, fol. 1r.

Likewise, it seems hardly right to pass over in utter silence what almighty God deigned to effect in the same way through the most venerable sign of the Holy Face.

A young man from the region of Gaul [longed to set out for the Lord's tomb in Jerusalem](#), because he had heard quite often that the glorious sign of the most Holy Face represented the true appearance and likeness of the Savior. About to make the journey, he committed himself to his planned intention of traveling by way of Lucca, so as to see the image that had been produced of that man, for whose tomb he was readying himself with all longing. So, having obtained the occasion, and fortified with the [sign of the cross](#), he approached Lucca as a pilgrim and was inflamed with such yearning love that he could not stand still until without delay he arrived at the church and [hospice](#) of blessed Martin.

But soon, as he retreated devoutly with an immense number of pilgrims within the chapel of the most venerable Face and looked with bodily eyes upon the truest appearance

and likeness of the savior, he prostrated himself in prayer, rejoicing and exulting. While he prayed there longer and persisted in it, he began to burn inwardly with such great love for him whose surest likeness he was allowed to look upon outwardly, that he stood up with his face and chest drenched in the most copious tears. When standing too, he remained fixated to such a degree that he wished in no way to avert his line of sight from the sign of the marvelous cross.

Next, seeing the countless crowd of faithful which had come together from sundry parts of the world out of respect for the beneficent cross, he was poor in material things but rich in merits to approach most humbly [the most holy foot of the Face](#) with his gifts. He thought himself unworthy, as if a person who approached empty-handed before others, and he began in shame to have uncertainty about what to do. So, resorting to the musical instrument that he held hanging against his upper arm, he desired in lieu of a present to offer a gift as he was able, meaning obviously, the praises of his music-making. He began to sing with such great sweetness hymns in honor of the most Holy Cross that he soothed with extreme delight the hearing of everyone standing near.

Almighty God, who is the [true searcher of the secrets of the hearts](#), regarded with kindness his servant's great faith and most pious devotion to the venerable sign of the most Holy Face, and he did not want to hold him any longer in needless uncertainty of anxiety, but he deigned to show him, powerfully and marvelously, the gift of his grace. For immediately, what is a marvel to say, a silver shoe sprang forth from the right foot of the Holy Face by the power alone of God and fell into the lap of the singer. Then the young man, astonished by such a great miracle, and reflecting with much fear upon what had happened, marveled intensely and reverently at the magnitude of the gift, and considered the magnificence of the gift and the ever so marvelous power of highest God: he began to think with uncertainty inside himself what to do. He is drawn in various directions, but stunned by the marveling of his mind, he was unsure what resolution to reach. So, going out of the chapel, he retired into part of the church. As he turned over many things in his mind there for quite a while, at length, as it is believed, he was inspired by divine inspiration and returned to the chapel and to the foot of the most glorious Holy Face. What earlier he had held in dread when destitute, he approached as a suppliant and with all humility, and he offered that silver shoe, bestowed upon him by divine grace, as a gift to almighty God in honor of the Holy Cross.

The countless crowd of pilgrims and very many others who had come together from neighboring places for the sake of prayer saw this remarkable miracle most openly, and raised their voices in praise of the savior; and at their shouts the whole city ran up. On all sides an assembly of peoples took place, of men and women, rendering thanks and praise to almighty God that he wished through the miraculous sign of the Holy Face to show such miracles to his faithful. So that at no time any misgiving of doubt about so great a miracle should arise in the minds of listeners, but it should remain to posterity an everlasting token, it was accomplished by God's dispensation that that shoe did not attach and fit any longer on the right foot of the most revered cross and it could be fitted by no human being exactly as it had been previously.

