

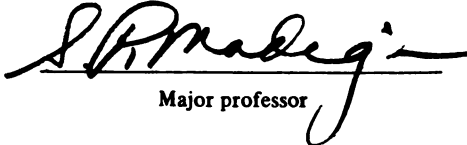




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On An Ivory in the Toledo Museum of Art

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THE ILLUSTRATION OF THE MEDIEVAL ROMANCE  
FLOIRE ET BLANCHEFLEUR  
ON AN IVORY BOX IN THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART

By

Theresa Lynn Weller

A THESIS

Submitted to  
Michigan State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

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ABSTRACT

THE ILLUSTRATION OF THE MEDIEVAL ROMANCE  
FLOIRE ET BLANCHEFLEUR  
ON AN IVORY BOX IN THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART

BY

THERESA LYNN WELLER

The purpose of this thesis was to identify the iconography of an ivory box in the Toledo Museum of Art, accession number 50.302. Medieval romances were surveyed as part of the research and the twelfth century romance of Floire et Blanchefleur is proven by this thesis to be the literary source of the iconography. Additionally, the date of the ivory has been determined through comparison to clothing styles, related ivories and to manuscripts to be circa 1350-1360. Finally, the evidence presented in this thesis relates the Toledo ivory box to another in the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad. The discovery of the iconography of this box is important because it is the only surviving ivory box to illustrate the popular twelfth century romance in its aristocratic form.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE IVORY BOX

This thesis describes the iconography of an ivory box owned by the Toledo Museum of Art. In researching the source for the subject illustrated on the panels, my initial search indicated a romance in which a daughter is reunited with her estranged father. There were several key elements in the panels that offered clues in my literary search. First, the lid, front and back are illustrated with couples exchanging gifts. However, the third and eighth scenes of the back are both illustrated with an individual holding a cup. Secondly, a bearded character wears a tuban, a fashion that does not appear in French garments of the mid-fourteenth century. Next, on the left end a male character plays chess outside a portcullis, while a woman watches from the parapet. Finally, a second woman plays a part in the drama. These elements of a cup, an individual wearing a turban, a game of chess outside a gate and a second woman were the clues that altered my interpretation of the illustration on the box when I discovered the twelfth century romance of Floire et Blanchefleur. The key elements described above are important to the romance and are fully discussed in the Iconography chapter, below.



By comparing the order of the romance to the order of the illustration on the the box, the likelihood that Floire et Blanchefleur was the source of the illustration was high. An indepth analysis of each frame of the ivory and the text of the romance provided conclusive proof that the source of the illustration was Floire et Blanchefleur. The following provides the evidence that supports this conclusion.

This thesis discusses a Gothic ivory casket owned by the Toledo Museum of Art. The catalogue number for the piece is 50.302. The ivory box is composed of five carved panels with scenes and ornament arranged on the lid and four sides. Each side is divided horizontally into two registers. The lid, front and back each comprise eight scenes, four in each register. Each side has four scenes, two in each register. In total, the Toledo ivory is made of thirty-two carved scenes, similar in shape and form to those on other ivory boxes of the period depicting scenes of romance.

The national origin of the ivory has yet to be determined and is still a matter for scholarly debate. It is considered to be North French or Flemish origin and dated to 1375-1400 by Dr. Richard Randall, Jr. of the Walters Art Gallery. Randall proposed this attribution and dates it in a letter of June 28, 1983 to the Toledo Museum of Art<sup>1</sup>, but did not offer supporting evidence. The date of

1375-1400 may have been based on Koechlin's observations. In his Les Ivoires Gothiques Français, Koechlin dates TMA 50.302 to the second half of the fourteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Recently, the Toledo museum revised their date to 1360-1375 without giving evidence for the change. This thesis will argue that the ivory may date to 1350 - 1360 and that it is of Northern French manufacture.

The scenes on the ivory box have never been seriously studied. Only a brief description of its iconography was written by Raymond Koechlin in Les Ivoires Gothiques Français and the Baboin Catalogue.<sup>3</sup> In the first volume of Les Ivoires Gothiques Français, he wrote,

Here we also find numerous scenes where it is difficult for one to succeed in recognizing the illustration of a romance, due to the general and vague appearance of the motifs; on the lid, front and back, there is hardly anything but gallant conversations; conversely, singular, precise episodes figure on the sides, but they remain incomprehensible without a conducting thread to a literary work. ... As it is, the casket leaves us strongly curious by its date, indeed the costumes of the figures, court clothes of the men and hair of the women tressed over the ears, indicate the second half of the fourteenth century, ....<sup>4</sup>

In the second volume Koechin describes the iconography of the ivory box. He describes each side, beginning with the top, by starting with the upper register reading left to right. According to Koechlin's work the order of 'reading' the ivory follows this manner: 1) the lid, 2) the front panel, 3) the back panel, 4) the right end (with the lock of the ivory facing the viewer), and, 5) the left end. (Please see the note at the end of Footnote 9.)

Cover. Upper Register (from left to right): 1. The young man and woman are in a garden, holding hands. 2. He catches her by the waist. 3. He caresses her. 4. They come to a chateau where one can see the gate. Lower register: 1. The young seated man offers a crown to the lady. 2. She places a cap of flowers on his head. 3. He caresses her cheek. 4. Seated under a tree, they stare at each other and pass from one to the other a hat of flowers.

Front. Upper Register: 1. They meet. 2. Standing on either side of the lock, they stare at each other. 3. A lone young man outside the gate of a chateau. Lower Register: 1. They hold hands. 2. The lone lady outside the gate of the chateau. 3. They take each other's hands again. 4. They are together in a wood. Back side, Upper Register: 1. The lady is alone outside the gate of the chateau. 2. He reappears and she gives him her hand. 3. He offers a object. 4. They embrace. Lower Register: 1. He takes her hands. 2. The gate of a chateau, on a terrace, there appears a personage, while outside a bearded old man hides behind the trees, seeming like a lookout. 3. The young man offers the lady a cap of flowers. 4. He finds himself alone outside the gate of the chateau.

Right side. Upper Register: 1. He kneels in front of her but the old man spies on them from the trees. 2. The young man, with his horse near to him, takes his leave of the lady. Lower Register: 1. She comes back to the chateau, from one of the windows one can perceive the old man. 2. She plays at a card table, in her garden outside the gate under the eyes of a house servant from the terrace. Left side, Upper Register: 1. The lady is in front of the chateau. 2. The friend retruns and she throws herself into his arms, but the old man spies on them. Lower Register: 1. A servant hiding behind the trees warns them of danger. 2. The young woman approaches the old man who watches them and gives him her hand.<sup>5</sup>

Koechlin made several errors in describing both the left and right ends in his description in both the Collection Émile Baboin and Les Ivoires Gothiques Français. On the left end the last scene of the lower register, Koechlin writes, "she plays at the card table in her garden, outside the gate under the eyes of a house servant on the terrace".<sup>6</sup> The figure at the chess table is clearly

male. This can be determined by his short robe and his long pointed shoes that are worn by the male figures throughout the ivory. Next, on the right end, in the Baboin catalogue, Koechlin writes of the last panel on the lower register, "...the young man approaches the old man and gives him his hand."<sup>7</sup> However, in Les Ivoires Gothiques Français, he corrects himself, "The young woman approaches the old man who watches them and gives him her hand."<sup>8</sup> He concludes with, "The subject has not been determined."<sup>9</sup>

In June of 1989, Dr. Richard Randall, Jr. of the Walters Art Gallery briefly included the Toledo ivory in his article "Medieval Ivories in the Romance Tradition."<sup>10</sup> Randall writes that the Toledo ivory is derived from the "Atelier of Boxes"<sup>11</sup> and this ivory and three others "appear to be later"<sup>12</sup> than the 1340-1360 date of the main group of ivories he discusses at length in the body of the article.

The chapter on Style will argue evidence that places the date of the Toledo ivory well within the period of the "Atelier of boxes" and more specifically within the range of 1350 to 1360.

The Toledo Museum of Art has not undertaken further research of the ivory's style or iconography. Thus to date, the only published information on the box since Koechlin is

that of Randall.

Because the subject matter has yet to be determined, it is customarily referred to as a, "multi-scened casket",<sup>13</sup> and a casket with "Romantic and galant subjects".<sup>14</sup> It will be shown that this ivory casket is of great importance to the study of ivories because of the specific romance that it illustrates. Based on a study of French Gothic romances this thesis will prove that the iconography of TMA 50.302 depicts a romance originating in twelfth century France known as the Roman de Floire et Blanchefleur. Furthermore, this ivory is the only known surviving illustrated version of this popular Gothic romance.

The Toledo Museum of Art's ivory casket, no. 50.302, measures 4 1/2" by 6 1/2" by 4 1/2". It is constructed of cream colored ivory and is adorned with copper alloy ornaments. These ornaments vertically divide the panels. The copper ornaments of the side panels are topped in a fleur-de-lis designed with a rosette in the center. The front panel contains two vertical copper ornaments with fleur-de-lis on the top and a rosette in the center. The ornaments divide the first and second panels and the third and fourth panels. The center top panel is divided by a copper lock and latch that is connected to the lid of the ivory. The four panels of the lid are divided by three

copper ornaments with fleur-de-lis at either end and a rosette in the center of the outermost two. The center ornament has a rounded triangular (almost elliptical) shaped pull for opening. The top of the pull is finished with a small round circle. The entire pull is decorated with tiny circles that are uneven in spacing but similar in size. The back panel is divided by three copper ornaments topped with a fleur-de-lis design and a rosette in the center. The copper ornaments appear to be made of one piece of metal and may have been decorated by the repoussée process. Each corner is also adorned with copper that is simple in design and bears no mark or ornamentation other than the scalloped edges that bracket the four sides of the ivory.

The Toledo ivory box, although in good condition for its antiquity, has suffered some damage. The ivory is cracked in several places, and will be described below. Dennis & Crane Associates cleaned the ivory for the Toledo Museum of Art in April, 1989. Their restoration report states that,

All cracking appears to be related to the insertion of rivets for the attachment of the gilded ornaments or to copper nails inserted through the moldings into the panels. ... All of the hardware is held by hide glue and the hinges are attached with a mixture of hide glue and fiber.<sup>15</sup>

The lid of the ivory has two cracks. Both cracks cross the entire surface of the ivory from left to right and correspond to the location of the nails that were used to attach the copper ornaments to the ivory. The front of the

ivory is badly cracked along the bottom. One crack begins at the lower left corner and continues into the third panel of the lower register curving downward to the base. The second crack begins at the right corner and arcs slightly upward, ending at the second panel of the lower register. The two cracks do not intersect. There is a third hairline crack in the last panel of the lower register above the second crack. There are two additional horizontal hairline cracks in the first and last panels of the upper register. The back panel has a large crack running from the right corner to the second panel of the lower register. There are additional hairline cracks in all remaining panels. The left end panel has one small vertical hairline crack in the right upper panel and corresponds to a nail in the horizontal ivory ribbing at the perimeter. An additional larger crack appears at the bottom left corner. The right end has a vertical hairline crack in the first upper panel that again corresponds to a nail in the horizontal ivory ribbing. There is also one very small crack in the near center of the last panel of the lower register. Although there are many cracks in the ivory box, they interfere minimally with the visual information needed for our examination.

The ivory consists of thirty-two scenes: eight panels each on the top, front and back of the ivory box and four panels each on either side. Description of the individual

scenes will follow below. The bottom is decorated with added horizontal strips of ivory ribbing and each corner has slightly elevated feet. The feet are an unusual if not a unique feature, as few ivory boxes of this period survive with similar feet. The interior of the ivory box is covered with metal plating that may be metal leaf.<sup>16</sup> The interior of the lid has a red design that appears to be the initials 'HR' or 'HB'. But the initials have been partly obliterated, making identification of them impossible. The upper lip and outer perimeter of the ivory box has additional horizontal ivory ribbing attached at the corners. The ribbing on the lip is made of two horizontal ivory bands while the lid perimeter has three horizontal ivory bands. These elements have been cut at forty-five degree angles at the corners and provide a finished appearance to the lid and sides.

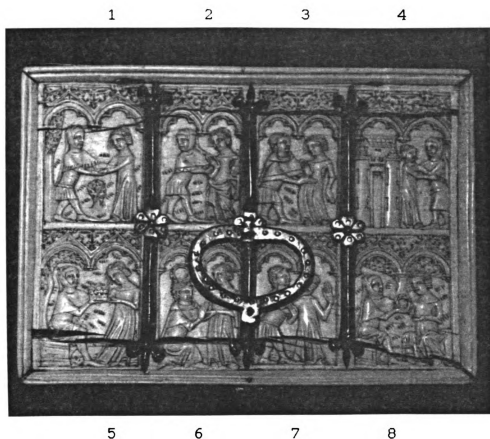
The top of each panel is a continuous frieze of architectural design, primarily two trilobated Gothic arches. The lid has arches unique to the four sides. These arches contain pointed gables with a three-pointed motif (trèfles graves) carved within the gable. The three-pointed motif is made of three prominent grooves. Adorning the sides and pinnacle of the gables are crockets and fleurons, respectively. The spandrel in between the two arches also repeats the trèfles graves but is inverted and has three additional subordinate marks that add to the triangularity



of the shape. The outer spandrels contain a similar trèfle grave at the center, but they have been modified for the space. These are comprised of five marks, three prominent and two subordinate, completely filling the spandrel with a decorative triangle.

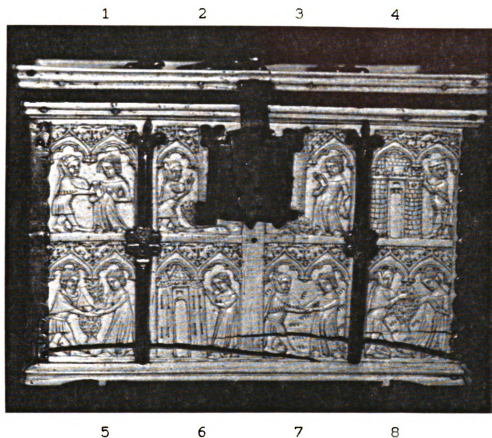
The architectural elements of the front panel continue the pointed-arch motif but without gables. The back and the right side-panel all have rounded arches. All have crockets and fleurons similar to those on the top panel. The left panel is unique in that three of the arches are pointed while the lower right corner panel arch is rounded. Each panel shares with the lid the elaborate trèfles graves in all the spandrels. Finally, each register is horizontally divided by a plain band of ivory that bears no carving.

The scenes will be described below, following this order: lid, front, back, left end and right end.



Lid:

- Scene 1: A man and woman hold hands in a garden.  
 Scene 2: A man and woman meet in a garden.  
 Scene 3: A man affectionately touches a woman in a garden.  
 Scene 4: A man and woman embrace outside a portcullis.  
 Scene 5: A man gives a woman a crown in a garden.  
 Scene 6: A woman crowns a man with a garland.  
 Scene 7: A man caresses the cheek of a woman.  
 Scene 8: A man gives a garland crown to a woman in the garden.



Front:

Scene 1: A man makes affectionate gestures to a woman.

Scene 2: A man stand alone and gestures.

Scene 3: A woman stands alone and gestures.

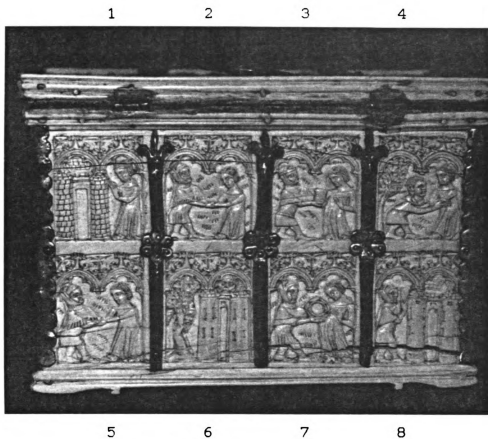
Scene 4: A man with a dagger stands outside a portcullis.

Scene 5: A man and woman hold hands in the garden.

Scene 6: A woman stands alone outside a portcullis.

Scene 7: A man and woman hold hands in a garden.

Scene 8: A man and woman stand around a tree in a garden.



Back:

Scene 1: A woman stands alone outside a portcullis.

Scene 2: A man and woman hold hands in a garden.

Scene 3: A man offers a cup to a woman.

Scene 4: A man and woman embrace.

Scene 5: A man and woman hold hands in a garden.

Scene 6: A bearded man stands behind a tree outside a portcullis.

Scene 7: A man offers a garland crown to a woman.

Scene 8: A man with a cup stands alone outside a portcullis.



Left End:

- Scene 1: A bearded man spies on a couple from behind a tree. The man kneels before the woman.
- Scene 2: A man holds the hand of a woman. Behind the man is a tower and a horse.
- Scene 3: A woman stands alone outside a portcullis while a bearded man watches her from the parapet.
- Scene 4: A man plays chess outside the portcullis, while woman watches from the parapet.



Right End:

Scene 1: A woman stands alone outside a portcullis.

Scene 2: A man and woman embrace in a garden, while a bearded man watches them from behind a tree.

Scene 3: A man and woman embrace in a garden, while a woman watches them from behind a tree.

Scene 4: From outside a portcullis, a woman approaches a bearded man and invites him to come from behind a tree.

## CHAPTER 2

### STYLE GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Toledo ivory has distinct carving characteristics that has few relatives. The figures are generally truncated with extraordinarily long arms and hands with long fingers. The torso of the male is overly long and results in short, squat legs. The most notable characteristic of all the figures is the brow line of each face. The brow line is deeply carved above the inner point of the eye and extends to the hair line in most scenes. The eyes are fully rendered with incisions demarcating both the upper and lower edges of the eye. An additional incision is made under the eye adding roundness to the shape of the eye.

There is little distinction between the faces of the characters. There has been no attempt made by the artist to give either masculine or feminine facial characteristics to the figures. All the figures share the extended brow, a squarish nose, and a small, slightly turned down mouth. Sexual distinction is, therefore, achieved by the hairstyles and a variety of garment styles worn by the figures.

The modelling of the garments reveals little of the underlying bodies of the figures. Presentation of the

figures is generally flat with little or no concern for depth or spatial perception. In considering the male figure in the second scene of the lid, the feet appear on the same plane, as they do in most scenes. There is also a lack of convincing musculature under the houce worn in most scenes of the ivory box. The female figure lacks a bust even though the garment worn by the female figures is form-fitting. Drapery of the skirt of the garments does not model the figure. The folds merely echo the stance of the figure and do not give any indication of mass or volume beneath.

The landscape of the ivory box is emphatically tilted upward in many scenes, (cf. L5-LR, L8-LR, B2-UR, B4-UR, etc.) The ground plane, or grass, is indicated by parallel grooves around the figures. In the scenes cited above the parallel grooves appear near and around the faces of the figures. Curiously, this motif is not repeated in every scene. Several such as B6-LR and LE1-LR that contain trees do not indicate the ground plane at all.

The architecture that appears on the box is diverse. There are three structures: two that vary slightly from scene to scene, and one that appears only in scene LE2-UR. The two structures that are most common throughout the ivory box are two-towered façade and an open gate. The first two-towered façade is smooth sided with slit windows, four



in each tower. The towers are joined by a crenelated parapet. Additional rooms can be seen rising behind the parapet. This structure hardly changes from one scene to another (fig. 1) except in LE3-LR, (fig. 2), where the artist has added a string course molding to the towers. This motif is unique to the ivory box.

The second structure with an open gate is of masonry. (fig. 3) Between the towers is a crenelated parapet and additional rooms of the structure can be seen beyond the parapet. Both structures feature tiled, conical roofs on each tower. A third structure representing the base of a tower, appears in LE2-UR, from the side. (fig. 4) The base of the structure is smooth-sided with several windows. Above a small row of windows is topped by a crenelated parapet. Rising above the crenelation is masonry.

The unique features of the ivory box, such as the variation of garments, the structures of scenes LE3-LR and LE2-UR will be addressed below.

Fig. 1  
Scene 4 of the  
Lid



Fig. 2  
Scene 3 of the  
Left End



Fig. 3  
Scene 1 of the  
Back



Fig. 4  
Scene 2 of the  
Left End

## ARGUEMENT FOR THE DATE AND COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

OF 50.302

### CLOTHING STYLES

Several sources offer supporting evidence for both country and time period in the form of the clothing worn by the characters. First, Joan Evans's Dress in Medieval France discusses the buttoned garment worn by the male figures. Evans writes that the House of Valois introduced the short robe (jaque) in 1340.<sup>17</sup> Another male garment, known as a pourpoint, was introduced in France about 1356, and, "...went out, ... about 1407."<sup>18</sup> Evans also describes hairstyles worn by both sexes during the reigns of Philippe de Valois to Charles V, 1328-1380,

The dressing of women's hair became more and more elaborate... the wide look at the temples continued in fashion. It was sometimes achieved by an arrangement of plaits, with frizzled ends appearing by the ears. ... When they were uncovered men wore their hair short or rolled over a bandeau at ear height.<sup>19</sup>

François Boucher in 20,000 Years of Fashion, concurs with Evans' date of 1340. He states, "From about 1340, ... the surcoat was replaced everywhere - or almost everywhere - by short garments, gippons or pourpoints."<sup>20</sup> Boucher describes the pourpoint as, "an outer garment fitting the chest and waist, with tight sleeves which always buttoned down the forearm."<sup>21</sup> Also Boucher writes of a garment

known as a cotte-hardie, which, "seems the name also given to the first short gowns for men."<sup>22</sup>

The houce, a hooded outer garment was also worn during the fourteenth century. Boucher writes that it "had become separated from the cloak by the end of the twelfth century".<sup>23</sup> It can be described as an outer, protective garment that covers the head and the upper torso to the elbow. During the fourteenth century the hood developed a liripipe that hung down the back (en forme) or was circled around the head (en cornette). In its infancy the liripipe was short, but, as time passed and the vogue for longer liripiping developed in other areas of clothing, most notably the sleeves, the liripipe on the houce also lengthened. Through an examination of manuscripts, an early date for the short liripipe of the houce of circa 1340 can be determined from Henri de Suse's Summa copiosa discussed below.<sup>24</sup> (fig. 21)

Long, elegant pointed shoes (poulaines) were worn during the second quarter of the fourteenth century. A very early example of the poulaine can be seen in Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meung's Le Roman de la Rose, of 1330.<sup>25</sup> (fig. 5) The male figures clearly wear poulaines, but we are unable to see them on the female figures. We can also turn to the same folio from de Suse's Summa copiosa of 1340 for an additional example of both sexes wearing poulaines.

Female garments of the second quarter of the fourteenth century became more form fitting and flattering. In the previous century and through the early decades of the fourteenth century, male and female garments shared a similar shapeless robe. Later, during the second quarter, a sinuous, tight fitting cotte became the vogue for women's wear. The neckline was deep and widely cut, exposing the shoulders. The sleeves were tightly fitted from the shoulders to the wrist. The bodice was fitted to the hips and the skirt was full. The Summa copiosa of 1340 demonstrates a surcotte with shallowly cut arm holes from the shoulder to the waist that reveals the under cotte. The surcotte developed into a high fashion garment with widely cut arm holes from the shoulder to the upper thigh and buttons running down the front. A representative example of this fashion can be seen in a statue of Jeanne de Bourbon circa 1365-1380.(fig. 6)

The male figure wears the jaque and houce throughout most of the ivory. Several scenes, (L6-LR, F8-LR, LE1-UR and RE3-LR) feature the buttoned sleeve of the pourpoint. The male figures wear the houce en forme, (L1-UR) (fig. 7) and en cornette, (F4-UR) (fig. 8) and completely thrown off (L3-UR) (fig. 9). The bareheaded figures sport the short curled hair discussed by Evans, above. The male figures also wear long poulaines in each scene. In one scene, F4-UR (fig. 9) a male figure wears a dagger on his left hip.

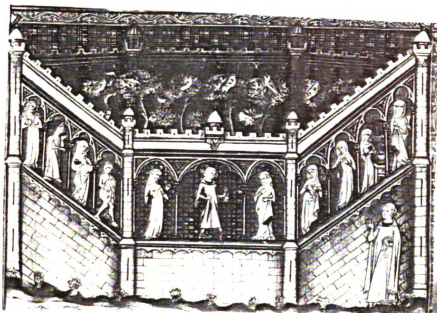


Fig. 5  
(a) Roman de la Rose



Fig. 6  
(b) Jeanne de Bourbon

Reprinted from Françoise Baron and others, Les Fastes du Gothiques (Paris, 1981), (a) fig. 249, 301-303; (b) fig. 68, 119-121.



Fig. 7  
Scene 1 of the Lid, liripipe en forme

Fig. 8  
Scene 4 of the Front  
liripipe en cornette

Fig. 9  
Scene 3 of the Lid  
housse thrown off

The female figures wear a greater variety of clothing styles than the male figures. In most scenes the female figures are dressed in a long robes, with wide, low necklines and tight fitting sleeves from shoulder to wrist. However, on the lid of the Toledo ivory, there are three derivations from this pattern. In the second scene of the upper register, (L2-UR) the female is wearing a gown that appears tight across the bodice but drapes around the hips with graceful folds of fabric falling to the ground. The unusual style of this garment will be explained later in this chapter. Next, in the following scene, (L3-UR) the female wears a surcotte over her belted robe. The style of this surcotte can also be dated from Summa copiosa of circa 1340. The surcotte has armholes that dip just to the waist and are only slightly cut out. There are no buttons down the center, nor is it as deeply cut as in the statue of Jeanne of Bourbon discussed above.

From our discussion of the clothing styles evidence thus emerges in support of a date for the ivory box to circa 1340 to 1360. The following discusses similarities of the ivory box to other ivories of the period, and to manuscripts. The evidence of these similarities will further pinpoint the date within that range. This study argues also a Northern French provenance for the piece.



## RELATED IVORIES

The following discussion demonstrates the relationship between sacred and secular ivory carvers. Several religious pieces share a similar iconography and style with the Toledo ivory. A figure on the lid in the second scene wears a garment that is tight across the bodice and gathers on the right hip. This figure corresponds closely with a number of Annuciation figures. The first, from the Kofler collection, #S-63, (fig. 10) the figure of Virgin Annunciate in the lower right hand corner similarly corresponds to the female figure on the lid of the Toledo ivory in the second scene. Both figures share the raised right hand and the left hand which grasps a book. Both figures stand with the weight on the right. The right side is emphasised by a gathering of cloth that drapes across the hips and falls to the ground in two layers. The outer drapery falls just below the knees while the under drapery falls to the ground. The Toledo ivory demonstrates a similar division and fall of drapery. The Kofler piece is dated to circa 1350.<sup>26</sup>

Additional support for the borrowing between religious and profane artists can be derived from a comparison between scenes two and three of the lid to an ivory diptych in the Victoria and Albert Museum (cf. Koechlin no. 782, Maskell



Fig. 10  
(a) S-63, Kofler Collection



Fig. 11  
(b) Koechlin no. 782

- (a) Reprinted from Hermann Schnitzler and others, Skulpturen (Luzern, 1964), fig. S-63.  
(b) Reprinted from Raymond Koechlin, Ivoires (Paris: 1968) Plate CXXXIV, vol. 3.

no. 6824-1858). (fig. 11) The Victoria and Albert piece is divided into four scenes, two on each side of the diptych. In the lower right corner two episodes from Luke are represented, the Annunciation and the Visitation. The Virgin Annuciate shares a similar iconography with the Kofler piece. The right hand is raised, while the left holds a book. In the Visitation, Elizabeth shares a joyous reunion with her cousin, Mary. Elizabeth stands in profile to the right while caressing her cousin's torso with her right hand. Mary holds up her right hand in between them while the left falls to her hip. The piece is dated by Koechlin to the mid fourteenth century.<sup>27</sup>

The second and third scenes of the lid, (L2-UR and L3-UR) (figs. 12 and 13) of the Toledo ivory follow a similar pattern. In the second scene the artist has replaced the angel Gabriel with a male figure who places his left arm around the female figure, with the right hand he touches her upper right arm. In the third scene the male figure more closely resembles the figure of Elizabeth. He stands to the right of the scene and touches the torso of the female figure. The female figure holds her right hand up between them, while the left hand falls gracefully to her side.

Scene 6 (fig. 14) of the lid corresponds with a mirror case at the Walters Art Gallery, (fig. 15) dated to the



Fig. 12  
Scene 2 of the Lid



Fig. 13  
Scene 3 of the Lid



Fig. 14  
Scene 6 of the Lid



Fig. 15  
Walters no. 333\*

\*Reprinted from Richard Randall, Masterpieces of Ivory (New York, 1985), fig. 333, 227.

second half of the fourteenth century.<sup>28</sup> The scene depicts two couples: the left-hand couple stand in a half embrace; on the right, the lover is crowned by his lady. Both couples stand under a crenelated parapet guarded by the god of love. Careful examination of the couple to the right reveals distinct similarities to scene 6 of the lid. The male figure is placed in a semi-kneeling position with praying hands raised. The woman touches his hands with her left and raises a garland crown over his head with her right hand, as in L6-LR. In examining the figures of the Randall piece, one can see liripipes on all the participants's garments. But, the most interesting feature that relates this piece to the Toledo ivory is the garment of the female figure on the left. Slight folds across the upper torso correspond to the Toledo ivory as well as the folio from the Summa copiosa, (fig. 21) discussed below. The weight of both figures rests on the right foot, creating a slight sway to the left. The folds in the skirt of the garments of both figures appear to share similarities as well. Definitive comparison is hindered, however, by deep cracking in the base of the Toledo ivory.

## A SISTER IVORY

In a letter to me regarding the Toledo ivory box, Richard Randall of the Walters Art Gallery wrote he thinks the ivory box, "has very few relatives".<sup>29</sup> I have since discovered only one work that has very distinct stylistic similarities to the Toledo ivory box. The ivory is located in the Hermitage in Leningrad, U.S.S.R.<sup>30</sup> The provenance indicates that the piece was formerly in the Basilewsky collection and was acquired by the Hermitage in 1885.<sup>31</sup>

Decorative Arts in the Hermitage offers a useful color closeup of one of the sides.<sup>32</sup> (fig. 16) The figures of the Hermitage ivory share similarly developed faces of the Toledo ivory. The noses are squarish, the mouths are small and slightly turned down, and, most remarkably, the figures share the same distinct brow line that is incised from just above the nose to the hairline. The eyes are similarly fashioned with incisions both above and below and an additional line is added just below the eye for roundness. The figures wear similar clothing to the Toledo ivory in that the garment on the males are long, and buttons appear on the sleeves of the undergarment. The female figure wears the same tight bodiced garment with small liripipes



Fig. 16  
Biriukova no. 116\*

Fig. 17  
Scene 8 of the Lid

Fig. 18  
Scene 4 of the Left End

\* Reprinted from Nina Biriukova and others, Decorative Arts in the Hermitage, (Leningrad, 1986), fig. 116.



finishing the hem of their sleeves. The closeup of the left scene shows a couple actively engaged in a game of chess. Behind their gaming table grows a tree. Others are standing behind them watching their play. The male figure is seated on a bench with his right foot extended under the gaming table. The female figure sits frontally and leans toward him slightly with her right hand raised. In the left hand she holds chess pieces she has won from him.

This scene relates to two scenes on the Toledo ivory. The first is the last scene of the lower register of the lid. (L8-LR) (fig. 17) The male figure gives his lady a garland crown. The couple is seated out of doors, he to the left, she to the right, with a tree in between them. He wears a long cotte that reaches his knees, and a houce worn en forme. With his right hand he holds the garland out to the lady. His right foot is extended between them. She faces frontally with her left forearm across her body. Her left hand reaches for the garland. Her garment has a tight bodice and sleeves. The sleeves are buttoned from the elbow to the wrist. The skirt folds around and between her knees. The branches and leaves of the tree also show similarities in the carving styles.

In comparing this scene with the Hermitage ivory, there are similarities between the folds of the hood of the houce on both male characters. Even more similar are the

folds of the garment of the women. The skirt has folds near the belly that are similar in both figures. Even more striking in similarity is the rendering of the folds between the knees and from the knees to the ground. In examining the feet of the individuals, his right foot reaches across to touch her right foot just peeking out from underneath the hem in both examples. A tiny pointed left shoe can also be seen in the same location of both female figures.

In the next comparable scene, located on the left end of the Toledo ivory, (LE4-LR) (fig. 18) the lover plays chess in front of a tree outside the portcullis while she watches from the parapet. The chess player in both the Toledo and the Hermitage ivories have positioned their shoulders almost frontally. In his right hand he holds a chess piece that he has removed from the board, similar to the Hermitage chess player. His right foot is extended under the gaming table. From the parapet the woman watches the lover and interestingly her head is bowed slightly toward him with her right hand raised as in the Hermitage ivory. Similarities also exist between the pedestal of the gaming table as it appears in both ivories. The top and base of the table the pedestal are decorated with two concentric rings, distinctly seen in the Hermitage as well as the Toledo example.

The Hermitage ivory box demonstrates an advance in the technical skill of the craftsman. The figures are more

deeply carved and the artist has learned to show emotions on the faces of the figures that are not evident in the Toledo ivory box. Nevertheless, the apparent figural similarities are intriguing. Of course, no definite conclusions can be reached without an examination of the other sides and lid of the Hermitage box. Nevertheless, this comparison of the two scenes indicates a strong likelihood that these two boxes were completed by the same hand or workshop.

## MANUSCRIPTS

That there may be relationships between the styles of manuscript painters and ivory carvers has been contested frequently in art historical literature. Randall sees the two traditions as quite separated in Gothic art. In Masterpieces of Ivory, he says "Despite the use of the rectangular format, Gothic framing, and similar subjects, the traditions seem to have developed differently."<sup>33</sup> And later, "The ivory carvers seem to have been following another set of criteria."<sup>34</sup> The Toledo ivory does indeed seem to have few stylistic relatives in French Gothic manuscripts. Nevertheless, I would like to introduce two that appear to be related to the Toledo ivory box, one indirectly and one very distinctly. The first comes from the atelier of Jean Pucelle and the second by a "quasi-contemporain" of Pucelle, a collaborator of the Master of Jean de Cherchmont.<sup>35</sup>

The first stylistic comparison to the Toledo ivory box emerges from the Breviary of Jeanne d'Evereaux.<sup>36</sup> (fig. 19) In folio 212v., showing Jonah emerging from the whale,<sup>37</sup> there is a castle in the background. On the left end of the Toledo ivory box, (LE3-LR) (fig. 20) a castle takes up most of the scene. A female figure stands outside



Fig. 19  
Vision of Obadiah: Breviary of  
Jeanne D'Evereux\*



Fig. 20  
Scene 3 of the Left End

\* Reprinted from Kathleen Moran, Jean Pucelle (Oxford, 1962), plate XVI a.

the portcullis while a bearded man watches her from a window above the parapet. This is the only scene in the ivory in which this castle utilizes string course molding on the twin towers. The slitted windows above and below the string course correspond to the Toledo ivory box, as does the curve of the parapet and the roofed structure above the parapet. The date of this work is estimated by Kathleen Morand to be circa 1334.<sup>38</sup>

The second and more precise demonstration of a collaboration between illuminators and ivory carvers takes place in a work of circa 1340, completed by a collaborator of the Master of Jean de Cherchemont in Amiens.<sup>39</sup> A folio (186v.) in Henri de Suse's, Summa copiosa,<sup>40</sup> (fig. 21) illuminated with the Tree of Affinity, shows a man and a woman on either side of a tree of consanguinity. The figures are elegantly attired in long, flowing robes with similarly extending hands. Careful examination of the female figure shows an extremely marked similarity to the female figure on the lid of the Toledo ivory box. (L6-LR) (fig. 22) In comparing these two figures several points of similarity can be made. Initial examination of the stance of each figure indicates a position with weight on the right foot, creating a slight sway to the right. Further examination reveals an exact duplication of the left hands of each figure. The fingers of the hand in both figures are together with the palm up, while the thumb is elevated,

creating a triangle. This gesture is not repeated in any other scene on the ivory. Finally, careful examination of the subject's clothing in the manuscript shows small liripipes hanging from the sleeves. These liripipes are distinctly different from those of the subsequent years of the fourteenth century because they are the hem of the sleeve not an attachment. The later liripipes are attached just above the elbow encircling the upper arm, and hang nearly to the ground. (cf. Guillaume de Marchaut, Fastes du Gothique, #283) The figure in the manuscript also wears a sheer garment that terminates at the wrist. The hem is seen at both wrists.

Following an examination of L6-LR, it appears that the garment of the female figure corresponds to the garment in the manuscript. The liripipe hanging off her left elbow is a termination of the sleeve, and not an attachment. A thin line is also incised at the wrist. As above in the discussion of the position of the female figure's left hand, in no other place in the Toledo ivory box do any of the figures have or wear liripipes on their sleeves. Because of the exact nature of these two figures, the evidence suggests that the Toledo ivory box is indeed of Northern French origin and perhaps from an atelier in Amiens.

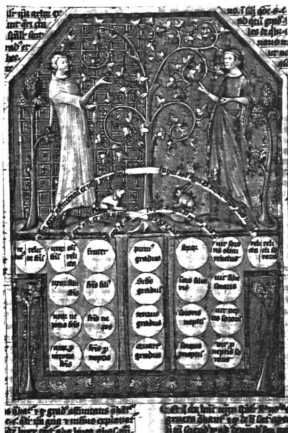


Fig. 21  
Summa copiosa\*



Fig. 22  
 Scene 6 of the Lid

\* Reprinted from Françoise Baron and others, Les Fastes du Gothiques, (Paris, 1981), Catalogue no. 255, 36.



## ICONOGRAPHY

The fourteenth century was a period of change. The church which had become strong during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, through the cult of the Virgin and the building of massive Gothic structures in her name, now lost many of its parishioners. Many men who went on crusades did not return, and during a two-year period at mid-century (1348-1350) nearly one-half the population of Europe was decimated by the Black Death. Aggressiveness that had been previously aimed at the infidel was now aimed at neighbors. Rooted in self-preservation and greed, war was everywhere causing many changes in the social and political structure of Europe.

The change in the organizational structure of Europe, however, created new order. The rise of new power altered the geographical distribution of wealth, thereby creating new centers of learning and artistic activity.

Literary developments around 1300 produced new and exciting non-liturgical works that were aimed at learned readers. Two such important works were the second part of Roman de la Rose and Divina Commedia.

These works helped to popularize culture, to broaden it down from schoolmen and clerics to intelligent laymen, especially those of the younger generation, who were eager to read and learn. They met with immense success. Expounded, discussed, read aloud in public, they became classics overnight. Their stock of knowledge and the way of life portrayed became a yardstick for subsequent generations.<sup>41</sup>

The underlying theme of these works and others was in opposition to the religious hierarchy which had dominated the preceding generations. Secular thought developed a means of expression, and seeking pleasure within the rules of chivalry became a popular pastime.

Artists were also involved in the secular revolution. No longer restricted to the old aristocracy and the church, the new wealth demanded luxury items. The artist became,

the servant of ordinary men, men with eager eyes who wanted him to show them - not, indeed, everyday reality, for art became more than ever a means of escaping reality - but the world of their dreams. <sup>42</sup>

One means of portraying those dreams was by producing representational art of secular stories, known as romances, such as Roman de la Rose. Roman de la Rose, inspired by court life of the twelfth century, was originally written by Guillaume de Lorris, who saw the perfect woman as a rose which "the perfect knight passionately yearns to pluck."<sup>43</sup> The second part of the poem was written circa 1300 by Jean de Meung. Other romans and poems had been written based on heroic figures of the past such as Charlemagne and King Arthur. Their exploits exemplified knightly virtues of

courtesy, generosity, and physical skill. Ceremonial ritual, jousting and courtly love play a part in the romans giving the readers a new means of ordering life.

But in what way were those thoughts and dreams ordered in representational forms? The medieval artists' method of illustrating visual images from a literary text or a verbally told story is strikingly different from the twentieth century. As John Stevens writes in Medieval Romance,

The medieval writer did not need exhorting to 'connect, only connect', because he inhabited a mental world in which all physical, mental and spiritual phenomena were enmeshed, woven together into a large web of connections whose beginning and ending was in God. This way of looking at things is not simply a theological exercise; to allegorize from the nature of an object is both to describe and to *explain* it. Since the establishment of modern methods of empirical scientific enquiry from the seventeenth century onwards we have found it harder and harder to take other kinds of explanation seriously.<sup>44</sup>

Medieval writers and artists were, therefore, searching for ways to depict the 'web' of their world which encompassed all realms of existence. The depiction of romances in medieval art was based on several factors. First, artists lived in a world supported by patrons. Their first duty was to produce works that were defined by the patron and that reflected their tastes. Such requirements and tastes were also filtered through the imagination of the artist, and this comprised contemporary symbolism and ideology as well as artistic style.



Fig. 23  
Ivory Mirror Case (a)

Fig. 24  
Ivory Comb (b)

Fig. 25  
Ivory Box (c)

Reprinted from Richard Randall, Masterpieces of Ivory, (New York, 1985), (a) fig. 320, page 223; (b) fig. 349, page 235; (c) fig. 337, page 228.

Artistic expression of the romans took form in ivory mirror cases, combs and boxes. (figs. 17, 18 and 19) Ivory sculpture became especially important during the fourteenth century particularly due to the sudden great availability of ivory from Africa.<sup>45</sup>

There are many examples of fourteenth century ivory boxes from many parts of Europe. Many have religious themes and others, like the Toledo ivory are secular in nature and are referred to as profane art. Secular ivory boxes generally portray popular romances well known throughout Europe such as Tristan and Isolde, the Chatelaine of Vergi, Aristotle and the Courtesan and Assault on the Castle of Love, the last whose iconography has no known basis in text. Other works are composites that show a variety of hunting scenes featuring couples on horseback, couples in a garden exchanging gifts and expressing their affection for one another.

Because the iconography of the Toledo ivory has in the past been considered to be a series of generalized representations of courtly love, little scholarly effort has been made to relate it to contemporary romances. As a part of the research for this thesis, I have undertaken an examination of such romances and one of them would seem most likely to be the textual source for the scenes on the Toledo box: the romance of Floire et Blanchefleur.

The romance of Floire et Blanchefleur exists in two distinct versions, one aristocratic and one popular. The oldest version of the text according to Laura Hibbard Loomis was composed in France between 1160-1170.<sup>46</sup> Loomis describes the two versions, "The first is an idyllic romance with the emphasis on sentiment and aesthetic detail; the second, full of action and stirring incident, is somewhat obviously modelled on the contemporary chansons de geste."<sup>47</sup> English translations appeared ca. 1250, of which Loomis writes,

The omission in the English romance of any of the traits peculiar to the second (popular) version indicates that its source is to be sought in the oldest French form.<sup>48</sup>

The following will summarize the tale in its aristocratic form. The romance focuses on two adolescents who were born on the same day and then raised together. The boy, Floire, is the son of a pagan king and the girl, Blanchefleur, is the daughter of a Christian woman of high lineage. As the children begin to grow, their love and affection for one another become apparent to the boy's parents. The king becomes concerned that his son will not look for a suitable wife when the time comes, and devises a scheme to separate the two. While Floire is away, the king arranges to sell Blanchefleur to traders bound for Babylon. After his return, Floire learns of his father's deceit and sets off to find his true love. Blanchefleur has been sold to the Emir of Babylon and has become his favorite. Floire eventually arrives at the castle where Blanchefleur is being

held and devises a plan to gain entrance to the tower where she lives. The young couple are reunited with the help of Blanchefleur's friend, Claris, but they are soon discovered. The two are to be put to death but are spared because of their strong love for one another. The Emir spares their lives and marries them. During the celebration a courier arrives and informs Floire that his father has died. Floire returns to his kingdom where he becomes the king and a Christian. The Emir and Claris are married and, like Floire and Blanchefleur, they all live happily together into old age.

It can be shown that this romance compares favorably to the carved scenes on the Toledo ivory. With this new information in mind, we can propose an identification of the scenes.

The lid demonstrates the youth of the two lovers, their love and inseparability. The front and back of the ivory demonstrates the separation of the lovers, Floire's travels to reach his beloved, and their constant thoughts of one another. The front also illustrates the Emir and his presence in the couple's life. The right side shows how Floire gains entrance to the tower that houses Blanchefleur and the left side demonstrates the help of Claris and the couple's happy reunion.

An in-depth study of the romance demonstrates that

several of the panels directly correspond to the actions of the figures on the ivory. The following recount in detail the aristocratic version from the old French as translated by Margaret Pelan in Floire et Blanchefleur and points out the activities illustrated on the ivory. A precise description of each of the scenes of the Toledo ivory follow the story summary. Finally, the scenes on the ivory box are compared to the lines of the Pelan text.

A king of Spain encounters a group of French knights who are escorting a young woman to St. James of Compostela. The knights fight a fierce battle but are finally killed. Fenis, the Spanish king, takes the woman, who is pregnant, to be a companion for his wife. The two women are well suited to one another and become fast friends. They soon discover that they are due to give birth to their prospective children at the same time. The children are born on the flowery day of Easter; a boy for the pagan queen and a girl for the Christian woman. Both children are named for their feast day, Floire and Blanchefleur. The Christian woman raises the children, who are inseparable, until the age of five. Fenis then decides that his son needs formal training. Upon hearing that he will be separated from Blanchefleur, Floire cries that he would not be able to learn without her. Fenis allows the two to remain together.

After attending school together for five years and fifteen days, Fenis becomes concerned that his son is far



too attached to the daughter of his mother's slave. Fenis declares to his wife that Blanchefleur must die. In order to save the girl's life, the queen suggests that Floire go to her sister's country, Montoire. The king and queen tell their son that Blanchefleur will join him as soon as her ailing mother dies. Her illness and impending death is a ruse and is the only way they can devise to separate the two. Within the promised fortnight Blanchefleur has not joined him, and Floire can neither eat nor sleep. A letter is sent to the king informing him of his son's condition, and again the king vows to kill Blanchefleur. The queen makes another suggestion to spare the life of the girl.

The queen suggests that they sell the girl to merchants from Babylon. They send for a bourgeois who speaks many languages and makes the arrangement for Blanchefleur's trade. Blanchefleur is bought for thirty gold marks, twenty silver marks and other luxury items. Among these luxury items is a rich golden cup. With the trade complete, Blanchfleur sails away to Babylon with her owners.

With the money from the sale, the king creates a false tomb for Blanchefleur. When Floire returns he is taken to the church to see the false grave. Floire becomes distraught and attempts suicide. His mother prevents him from killing himself and after much grieving and wishing for death, the king and queen decide to tell him that

Blanchefleur is still alive. The king gives the beautiful cup to Floire as a bounty to buy her back. The queen gives him a ring that will protect him. He takes his leave of his parents in order to find Blanchefleur.

While Floire travels in his search for his beloved no food or merrymaking can stop his thoughts of Blanchefleur. His travels take him far away to Babylon and in several places he stops, the people tell him of a similar, sorrowing maid who cries for Floire. Each time he hears news of her, Floire learns she is being sold to the Emir in Babylon. Upon nearing his destination, he asks a burgess how he might gain access to the Emir's palace. The burgess gives him a ring and tells him to find Daire. Daire tells Floire of the beautiful and mighty tower of the emir's palace and of the Emir's annual habit of choosing a new wife. This year rumor has it that Blanchefleur will be chosen.

Daire devises a plan so that Floire may enter the palace. He is told to disguise himself as a mason and to pretend to the porter that he wants to build a copy the Emir's tower in his own country. Thus gaining his confidence, the porter will wish to play chess with him. Daire advises Floire to bribe the porter with gold and his beautiful cup. Three days of chess playing pass and Floire gains the confidence and trust of the porter. Floire tells

him of his travels and of his love of Blanchefleur. The porter is sympathetic and tells Floire to return in three days because he will have devised a plan.

On the third day Floire returns and the porter puts him in a large basket of flowers that is being taken to the maid's tower. The basket is taken to the room of Blanchefleur's dear friend, Claris. When Floire surprises Claris, she runs screaming from the room. However, she realizes who he is and claims she has been frightened by a butterfly. Claris goes to Blanchefleur and asks her to come to her room without telling her that Floire is there. The young lovers are reunited and Claris keeps them hidden in her room.

It is the custom of the Emir that his two favorite ladies wait on him in the mornings and his two favorites are Claris and Blanchefleur. The first morning Blanchefleur does not attend the Emir and Claris makes a proper excuse for her. However, the second morning when she does not come, the Emir sends his chamberlain and discovers the two lovers sleeping together. After learning of the lovers, the Emir swears to kill them both. Instead he decides to let the lords of his court pass judgement on them. Judgement is passed that they both should die by burning. Floire insists that Blanchefleur take the protecting ring given to him by his mother, she will not have it and it falls to the floor.

Each offers to die for the other again and again. The court is touched by the two lovers and cries for their freedom. The Emir consents and asks to be told who Floire is and how he gained access to his palace. On hearing the story, the Emir has a change of heart and is happy that the two have been reunited. Floire and Blanchefleur are married with the Emir's blessing. The Emir stops his practise of selecting a new wife each year (the old one was killed) and is married to Claris, who dearly loved the Emir. Word reaches Floire at the Emir's court that his father has died. The two return home, ascend the throne and Floire becomes a Christian.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ICONOGRAPHY

Through a more complete understanding of the action of the text, let us now turn to a complete description of the scenes on the Toledo ivory and compare the passages with the illustrations.

The description as follows will be 'read' in this order: the lid, front, back, the left side and the right side. Each scene will be given a letter and number such as L1-UR, indicating the first panel of the lid in the upper register.

There are five separate individuals to be described, the two lovers, a man with a dagger, a bearded man and a second woman. All of these characters share similarly carved features, the most notable is the prominent line of the eyebrow which extends out to the temple. The eyes are fully rendered, with incised marks above and below defining the shape of the eye. Additionally, small marks beneath the eye give the figures' faces added roundness to the eye area. The noses are large and squarish. The mouths do not express any emotion and have a slight downward curve to them. The figures are not in correct proportion. They share elongated arms and especially elongated hands and fingers. The upper

torso is long on the male figure while the legs are short. The female figure is more balanced between torso and legs but still shares with the male the long arms, fingers and hands. Each scene contains two trilobated arches that have been previously described in Chapter I, Introduction.

The Lid: L1-UR: The lovers hold hands. A man and woman meet in an outdoor setting. The man stands to the left and the woman to the right in semi-profile. Brief parallel lines mainly grouped in fours to indicate grass, and a tree fills the space behind the man on the extreme left side of the panel. No horizon is present, yet the grass marks indicate a steeply inclining landscape. The couple stand apart and join hands in the center of the panel. Beneath their joined hands is a small shrub. The man wears a houce en forme with a liripipe over a buttoned and belted jaque which falls to the knee. The hem of the houce is decorated with a slashed hem. He also wears poulaines. He stands with his right foot forward with the left foot back. She mirrors his stance with the left foot forward, right foot back. The woman wears a simple cotte which falls to the ground and is slightly off the shoulder and has tight sleeves to the wrist. Her hair is styled so that it is parted down the middle of her head and both ears are covered with a bun. To indicate hair on the right side of the face, faint crosshatches have been incised in the panel.

L2-UR: Gestures of affection. The man and woman meet again outdoors, he to the left, she to the right. He stands in semi-profile and wears the same clothes as in the previous scene, with the exception of the hem of the houce, which now has a triangular motif on the hem. The jaque no longer shows buttons and is not belted. Poulaines are worn, and similar to L1-UR, the right foot is forward, the left foot is back. While looking over his right shoulder, he moves to embrace her with his left hand on her back and his right hand on her right arm. Standing frontally, she holds her right hand up in a gesture of virtue. In her left hand she holds a gift he has brought her. She stands with her weight on the right hip creating a graceful S curve with her body. Again, her hair is similarly arranged as in the previous panel, with incised cross hatches to the right of her face. Her clothing is more elaborate in that there are now elegant folds that fall from the hip to the ground in two layers. The first layer falls to the knee and the second to the ground. An outdoor setting is indicated by short parallel grooves bunched in groups of fours and fives representing grass.

L3-UR: Gestures of affection. The couple meet again, he to the left, she to the right. He now wears the houce with the hood off. His hair is short, parted down the middle and curls over his ears. The hem of the houce is plain. The jaque is belted and buttonless. He rests his

right hand on her stomach and his left hand is behind her. In a similar stance to the previous panel, she raises her right hand in a gesture of virtue while the left arm curves in an s-shape that mirrors her body. She stands frontally, with a sway to the right. Small shoes peek out from the hem of her long cotte. The cotte is belted and covered by a surcotte. Her hair as before is styled over the ears and crosshatched incisions have been made in the panel to the right of her face.

L4-UR: The lovers meet outside the portcullis of a castle. They stand in semi-profile, she to the left, he to the right. The portcullis fills the left half of the panel the couple fills the right half. The portcullis is framed by two towers with narrow windows on either side, two long ones on the upper part and two shorter toward the bottom. Placement of the windows on either side of the towers show the artist's concern for a sense of roundness. Both towers are topped with conical shaped tiled roofs. Above the portcullis is a crenelated balcony. Behind the balcony is an additional part of the castle with two small windows topped by a tiled roof. With the exception of the tiled roof the entire structure has been finished smoothly. The figures stand in a half embrace. She stands with her left arm around his back and her right arm reaches around his left side. She wears a simple cotte without decoration or



belt. Her right foot is forward, the left foot is back. He stands with left foot forward, right foot back and wears the buttoned, belted jaque and houce worn en forme with a long liripipe trailing down his back. His arms and hands get lost in the embrace and are not seen. An implication of his embracing gesture is made with delineating marks at the shoulders and upper arms that his right hand is behind her with the left somewhere in front of her.

L5-LR: He gives her a crown. The lovers meet in an outdoor setting indicated by the incisions of grass and a tree behind him. The boughs of the tree arch above him. He is seated to the left with his right foot extended and offers her a crown. She stands to the right and inclining her head accepts the crown. Small crosshatched incisions on the panel again indicate hair on the right side of her face. She stands with her weight on her left foot creating a graceful sway that is accentuated by the folds of her plain cotte. His left hand and her right is obscured by the crown. His right hand rests under the crown he offers while her left touches the edge of the crown. He wears a simple houce en forme without decoration, and a buttonless jaque.

L6-LR: She crowns him with flowers. He kneels before her on his left knee, right knee is raised. She crowns him with a floral garland. The hood of houce is off and his hair curls around his ears as in L3-UR. His jaque is plain and

without buttons. Close examination reveals buttons along the forearm of his right sleeve. His hands are raised and together as if in prayer. She stands frontally with her face in near profile and holds the crown above his head with her right hand and with her left gently touches his praying hands. She wears simple cotte with a liripipe falling from the left elbow. She stands on her right foot with a gentle sway to the left. Small pointed shoes peek out from under the hem of her cotte. This scene contains no incisions for grass, nor are there any incisions on the right side of her face indicating hair.

L7-LR: He caresses her. He stands to the left in near profile, right foot extended, left foot back. She stands frontally with hands raised, arms bent at the elbow. His hood is off and he caresses her under the chin on the neck. He wears a buttoned and belted jaque. She wears a plain cotte. Her hands are asymmetrical sized, with the left being noticeably larger than the right. Again, there are no incisions for grass or other indications of the setting.

L8-LR: He gives her a garland. The couple are seated outdoors. The lovers are both seated beneath a tree. Grass is indicated by incised grooves primarily in groups of four. He wears a plain undecorated houce en forme. He sits on a box or bench in profile, and wearing poulaines, the right

foot is extended. She sits nearly frontally, knees jutting into space. Her knees are slightly separated. She wears a simple cotte. Careful examination reveals tiny buttons along the forearm of the left sleeve.

Front Panel: F1-UR: The lovers meet. He stands to the left with the right foot extended, left foot back. He wears a buttoned jaque covered by a houce en forme with a slashed hem. He touches her with his right hand on her right upper arm. He stands in near profile. She stands frontally, weight on the right foot. The sway to the left is accentuated by the cotte she wears that trails off to the left corner of the panel. She has her hands raised in front of her breast, right hand palm out, left hand palm in. Hair to the right of her face is incised in the main panel with crosshatches. There are no incisions for grass or other indicators defining the location.

F2-UR: The lovers are divided by the lock, the male figure appears in the left side. He wears similar clothing to the previous panel, hooded houce en forme, and a buttoned jaque. The houce now has a plain hem. At his feet is a bush which curves around the base of the lock. He raises his hand in a gesture of greeting or farewell.

F3-UR: The other side of the lock, the female figure stands on the right side. She stands in a pose that is

very similar to L3-UR. Standing with her weight on the right foot, she sways gracefully to the left. As in L3-UR she wears a surcotte over the cotte. She faces us frontally, with her head in near profile. Crosshatching again serves for hair on the main panel next to the right side of her face. The gesture is identical to L3-UR, right hand raised, arm bent at the elbow, left arm mirrors the sway of her body. At her right foot is a small bush that fills the space beneath the lock. The folds of the gown is rendered similarly to L3-UR falling from the hip.

F4-UR: New architecture and a new character are introduced. A man with a dagger stands to the right of the portcullis of crenelated, masonry castle. He wears his dagger on the left hip. He stands in profile, left foot forward, right foot back. His left hand reaches out and rests on the castle wall, while he looks backward over his left shoulder. He wears a buttoned jaque and a houce en cornette. The houce is decorated with a triangular motif on the hem. The castle fills two-thirds of the scene and consists of two towers, a crenelation that encompasses the towers. Similar to the first castle described in L4-UR there is an additional structure beyond the crenelated balcony with two small windows.

F5-LR: The lovers meet out of doors. Similar to L1-UR, the lovers stand apart and hold hands over a shrub.

He wears a buttonless, belted jaque and a houce with the hood thrown off. His short hair curls over his ears. He stands with right foot forward, left foot back. She wears a plain off the shoulder cotte, with tight sleeves to the wrist. She mirrors his stance, with the left foot forward, right foot back. There are no incisions to indicate grass. Above the couples hands is another small shrub.

F6-LR: She stands alone outside the portcullis. She stands outside the portcullis of the smooth-sided castle, with her hands raised and head slightly bowed. She wears a simple cotte, off the shoulder with tight sleeves to the wrist. It appears that she stands with the left foot forward, but a deep crack in the ivory prevents a clear depiction of her stance. The castle is slightly varied from its first appearance in L4-UR, in that it lacks the structure beyond the crenelated balcony.

F7-LR: The lovers meet out of doors. This scene is similar to F5-LR, in that the lovers are standing apart while affectionately holding hands. He stands to the left in profile, wearing the buttoned jaque and the slashed hemmed houce, en forme. The tight sleeves of the jaque are also buttoned. He stands with the right foot forward left foot back, wearing poulaines. She stands frontally to the right, weight on the right foot wearing a plain off the shoulder cotte. The folds of the cotte accentuate the sway of the hips toward the right. Small pointed shoes peek out

from under the hem. The out of doors is indicated by parallel incisions of grass in groups of four, five and six. There are also cross hatched incisions to the right of her face indicating hair.

F8-LR: The lovers stand on either side of a flowering tree. He stands to the left, she to the right. He wears a plain, belted jaque, and a plain houce, en forme. He stands with the right foot forward, the left foot back. He reaches towards her with his right hand around the tree. Beneath his hand is a flower on the tree. She stands frontally with her weight on the left foot. She wears a simple cotte, tight sleeves to the wrist. Her right hand reaches around the back of the flowering tree, while the left rests on the chest. Her head is slightly bowed. The folds of the gown sway to the left accentuating her stance. Pointed shoes peek out from under the hem.

The Back: B1-UR: She stands alone outside the portcullis of the second castle. This scene is similar to F6-LR. The portcullis and its towers fill nearly two-thirds of the scene. Similar to F6-LR, the castle has been altered to omit the windows behind the crenelated balcony. She stands to the left of the structure in three-quarter pose. Her left hand is raised touching one of the towers. Her gown folds along the extended left leg.

B2-UR: The lovers meet out of doors. Similar to L1-UR, the couple stands apart and holds hands. He stands in near profile, with the right foot forward, the left foot back. He wears a plain jaque, without buttons or belt; a houce with a slashed hem, en forme. He also wears poulaines. She stands also in near profile wearing a plain cotte. She stands with the left foot forward, her gown folding around the extended leg. The out of doors is depicted by incisions of grass in groups of three, four and five. To the right of her face are incisions in the panel for hair.

B3-UR: The strange man offers her a cup. The third character, indicated by the houce worn en cornette stands to the left, she to the right. He wears a simple jaque, belted with no buttons, and pointed shoes. He stands with the right foot forward, left foot back. He offers her a cup. She stands in a pose similar to F8-LR, frontally, with her weight on the left leg, left hand raised to her chest. Her right hand and his left cannot be seen. A cross hatched web of incisions frames the right side of her face. An outdoor setting is indicated by parallel grooves in groups of five and six.

B4-UR: The lovers meet out of doors. In a gesture of affections the lovers meet under the boughs of a tree. He stands to the left, she to the right. He wears a simple

jaque and houce with the hood thrown off. He bends at the waist toward her with his right hand touching her upper left arm. He stands with the right foot forward the left foot back. She returns the gesture by reaching toward him with both arms. She wears a simple cotte and stands with the left foot forward. Her long gown drapes around her striding legs. He stands beneath a tree which mirrors his forward movement. Grass is indicated by parallel grooves in groups of four and five.

B5-LR: The lovers meet out of doors. This scene is a near duplication of B2-UR. He stands to the left, she to the right. He wears a buttoned jaque and a houce, en forme. Again, the right foot is forward the left foot is backward. They clasp each other's hands in the center of the panel. She wears a simple cotte, tight sleeves to the wrist. The out of doors is indicated by parallel grooves in groups of five and six.

B6-LR: A fourth character is introduced. The first portcullis is seen to the right and a tree with a bearded man hiding behind it is to the left. The bearded man wears a turban and a long robe. His face peers around the trunk of the tree and his torso is bent, mirroring a bend in the tree. Between the tiled conical roofs of the towers a large mask peers out.



B7-LR: The lover gives her a crown. In the out of doors with he standing to the left and she to the right, he gives her a crown. He wears a buttoned jaque and a plain hemmed houce, en forme. He stands in near profile with the right foot forward and the left foot back, wearing poulaines. He gives her the crown with his right hand. She stands frontally with her weight on her right foot. Her simple cotte and its folds emphasize the sway of her hips to the right. She accepts the crown with her left hand. Her head is slightly bowed. Grass is indicated by parallel grooves incised in groups.

B8-LR: He stands outside the portcullis with a cup. The lover stands outside the first portcullis holding up a cup in his right hand. He wears a buttoned jaque and a plain houce, en forme. He stands with the right foot forward and the left foot back. The portcullis and its towers are similar to the first appearance in L4-UR with the exception of the addition of two small square windows placed at the top of each tower. The architecture behind the crenelated balcony has also been altered.

The Left End (LE): LE1-UR: The lovers meet out of doors and are spied on by the bearded man. In this complex scene, the bearded man wearing a turban and a long robe peers at the couple from behind two trees. His back is bent and his right hand rests one of the tree trunks. The lover

kneels before the lady in a pose similar to L6-LR. He wears a plain jaque and a slashed hemmed houce, en forme. His hands are together as if in prayer and he looks up at her. His right knee is up and his left knee rests on the ground. He wears poulaines. She stands to the extreme right of the panel. She wears a simple cotte with buttons on the right sleeve. Her right hand is raised over the lover's head as if she will caress him. She stands with her weight on the right foot and her gown accentuates the sway of her body. The left arm and hand mirror the sway of the body. Small pointed shoes peek out from the hem of her gown. A web of crosshatched incisions frames the right side of her face representing hair.

LE2-UR: New architecture and a horse. The lady stands to the left and is met by the stranger (lover in disguise) in the center. To the right is a squared tower with eight small windows on the top. From behind the tower is a horse. The lady wears a simple cotte with buttons on the right sleeve. She stands frontally with her weight on the left foot. Small pointed shoes show from beneath her gown. The lover bends at the waist and takes her hand. He wears a belted jaque and a slash hemmed houce, en cornette. He also wears poulaines. The bottom part of the tower is squared and smooth with two small vertical windows half way up. Just below the crenelation are two rows of four small, square windows. Above the crenelation is masonry. The head

of horse and one foreleg juts from behind the tower. The horse is harnessed. Out of doors is additionally indicated by grouped, parallel grooves representing grass.

LE3-LR: Complex architecture. The bearded man wearing a turban peers out at the lady from a room in the castle. The portcullis has been expanded to include an additional structure. The castle fills two-thirds of the scene. In addition to the portcullis with the smooth towers, which is situated near the center of the scene, to the left is an attached structure with smooth walls and slitted vertical windows. From a parapet above the wall, the bearded man wearing a turban watches. He is sheltered by a tiled roof. The towers of the portcullis are similar to L4-UR but now have a string course molding added that separated the slitted, vertical windows. She stands to the right of the scene wearing a simple cotte. She stands with her weight on the right foot. Her hands are raised in front of her chest, arms bent at the elbows. The hands are not joined together. Her head is slightly bowed.

LE4-LR: The lover plays chess. The lover sits outside the portcullis of the castle while she watches from the crenelated balcony. He sits on a slab wearing only a simple jaque. The neckline of the jaque seen without the houce is similar in appearance to the lady's cotte, in that it is wide and bares the shoulders. Without the hooded houce the

lover's head is bare and his hair curls around his ears. The poulaines on his feet extend underneath the chess table. In his right hand he holds one of the pieces from the board. Surrounding him are grouped, parallel incisions for grass and behind the chess table is a tree. The right side of the scene is filled with the masonry portcullis. From the crenelated balcony, between the two towers, the lady looks down on the lover. Her right hand is raised.

The Right End (RE): RE1-UR: The lady stands alone in front of the portcullis. Similar to B1-UR, the lady stands in front of the portcullis of the structure. The portcullis is on the left side of the scene, while she stands to the right. She wears a plain cotte and stands with her weight on the right foot. The folds of her gown accentuate the sway of her body. Her right hand is raised, arm bent at the elbow. The left hand is down at her side, elbow slightly bent. There is a web of cross hatching near the right side of her face to indicate hair. Surrounding her are grouped incisions representing grass, and to the extreme right of the scene is a tree.

RE2-UR: The lovers meet and are spied on by the bearded man with the turban. The complex scene takes place in the garden where the bearded man spies on the lovers from between the leafy branches of a tree. His long robe and hand protrude from behind the trunk and lowest branches of the tree. His left hand reaches out toward the lovers. In

between the lovers and the bearded man is another tree. There are also groups of incised grooves indicating grass. The bearded man and the trees fill the left side of the scene while the lovers themselves fill the right side. The lovers stand apart but embrace each other, she standing to the left, he to the right. She wears a long plain cotte. She reaches toward him with both arms. To the left of her face is a web of incisions representing hair. He wears a belted jaque with a slash hemmed houce, en forme. Wearing poulaines, the left foot is forward the right is back.

RE3-LR: The final character is introduced. The lovers meet out-of-doors in the garden and are spied on by a woman. The lovers stand on the left side of the scene, he to the left, she to the right. They stand apart, but are embracing each other. He wears a buttoned jaque and a plain houce. The jaque is buttoned in the front and on the sleeve. The hood of the houce is off and his hair curls around his ears. There are several curious grooves in the panel to the left of his face that may indicate hair. He wears poulaines, right foot forward, left foot back. His right hand reaches toward her and touches her left elbow. She wears a plain cotte. Her arms extend toward him but we are unable to see her hands. Her back is slightly bent toward him. Her gown is very long and we are unable to see her pointed shoes. To the right of her face is a web of cross hatching to indicate hair. On the right side of the scene, a woman spies on the couple from behind a tree. Her face appears from beneath

the leafy boughs. Her hair is styled similarly to the lady and includes a web of cross hatching to the left of her face to indicate hair. Her back is bent and her left hand rests on the tree trunk. She wears a long robe that falls to the ground.

RE4-LR: The woman greets the bearded man. This last scene is divided neatly in half. To the left, the woman approaches the bearded man who stands behind a tree. To the right the portcullis of the smooth-sided castle appears. The bearded man still wearing his turban and long robe, with bent back, stands behind a tree. The woman approaches him and extends her left hand toward him. She wears a simple cotte without decoration. The portcullis with the smooth towers is similar to B8-LR, and has the small square windows at the top of each tower. Above the crenelated balcony appears additional tile work not previously seen.

The following will relate specific scenes to the lines of the romance in French as presented by Margaret Pelan. As described above the lid represents the youth of the lovers. However, in illuminating the front of the ivory the artist used the lock as the scene in which the lovers are physically separated (F2-UR). This scene corresponds with lines 360 - 367 recounting Floire's departure and his unhappiness due to the absence of Blanchefleur.

The next scene on the front, F4-UR, shows the trader from Babylon coming to the castle to make arrangements with the king. The scene is described in lines 420 - 429, which tell of the king's arrangement with a bourgeois who speaks many languages to find a trader for Blanchefleur on advice of the queen. The following scenes, F5-UR through F8-UR, portray the two lovers together in thought, with the exception of F6-UR, which shows Blanchefleur alone and may represent her sorrowing while Floire is in Montoire.

Scene three of the back, B3-UR, shows the trader with the cup he uses as part of the bounty for her purchase. The treasure acquired by the king is described in lines 430 - 433. Lines 434 to 496 describe the cup with which Blanchefleur is purchased. It is made of gold and is decorated with jewels and tells the story of the judgement of Paris.

The next two scenes, F4-UR and F5-LR indicate the thoughts of the couple and their desire to be together. Scene 6, F6-LR, introduces the Emir who waits alone at his castle. Scene 7, F7-LR, again shows an exchange of a garland crown, a symbol of love. The following scene, F8-LR, represents Floire's departure from his parents in search of Blanchefleur. With him he takes the beautiful cup, given to him by his father, in order to buy her back from the Emir, as in lines 961 to 967.

On the right side, first scene , RE1-UR, Floire dreams of being with Blanchefleur, yet the presence of the Emir still keeps them apart. In the second scene, RE2-UR, the panel demonstrates lines 1884 through 1897. Daire advises Floire to disguise himself as an engineer who is interested in building a tower similar to the Emir's in his own country. Daire tells Floire that the man is evil and to prove himself he must play chess with him. In RE3-LR, Blanchfleur waits alone under the watchful eye of the Emir. RE4-LR shows Floire playing chess outside the gate, while Blanchefleur remains captive within the castle of the Emir.

The left end shows the reunion of the lovers and the end of the story. LE1-UR shows Blanchefleur still pining for Floire. The reunion of the lovers and the story of his parent's treachery occur on LE2-UR, described in lines 2168 through 2267. LE3-LR concerns the friendship of Claris. (lines 2284 through 2339) The story comes to an end in LE4-LR, where Claris is chosen by the falling flower in the garden and marries the Emir, lines 2904 to 2916.

Through this examination of the text of Floire et Blanchefleur and a comparison of the iconography of the Toledo ivory casket with that text, it becomes clear that this ivory box does not deal with indeterminate subjects, but does indeed tell the tale of the two young lovers.



## CONCLUSION

The field of Gothic ivory studies is an important component in Art Historical research. The artist who created the Toledo ivory was retained by a noble (TMA 50.302 is illustrated with the aristocratic version of the roman) to create a token of love, a gift for someone he adored. Its personal nature and secular subject open the private doors of the Gothic period to scholars and give us a glimpse of something that is not recorded as an important event in history, but something uniquely personal and highly intimate.

The Toledo ivory has been clearly established by this thesis to be an ivory of great importance within the study of Gothic ivories. The "indeterminent scenes" label can now be discarded and replaced with a specific identification. The illustration of Floire et Blanchefleur is unique to the Toledo ivory box, although this romance was very popular in Gothic Europe. In two versions, one aristocratic and one popular, Floire et Blanchefleur was known by the peasant and noble alike.

Key panels of the ivory box correspond to the romance of Floire et Blanchefleur. The lid illustrates the youth

and blossoming of love between the two title characters. The front illustrates their separation; the fourth scene of the upper register shows the trader from Babylon coming to the castle of Floire's parents. The back illustrates the beautiful cup in the third scene of the upper register; the Emir wearing a turban, in the sixth scene of the lower register; and, Floire arriving at the castle of the Emir with the cup given to him by Fenis, his father, to buy Blanche fleur back.

The romance is conclusively illustrated on either end of the ivory box. On the left end, in the second scene of the upper register, Floire disguised as a mason stands outside the Emir's tower on the pretense of building a similar structure in his own country. The fourth scene of the lower register, illustrates Floire playing chess in order to gain the trust of the porter, and also to gain entrance into the Emir's castle where Blanche fleur is held.

On the right end, the lovers are reunited with the help of Claris, another of the Emir's servants and friend to Blanche fleur. The final panel of the lower register, illustrates Claris's love and subsequent union with the Emir.

The ivory box has been dated by the evidence presented herein to circa 1350 to 1360. This date has been

determined by a comparison of clothing styles, iconography of religious and secular works and of manuscripts. The folio from the Summa copiosa demonstrates clear similarity in gestures and clothing between the female figure of the manuscript and the female figure in the sixth scene of the lid. From this similarity emerges evidence that the Toledo ivory box is of Northern French origin, and may be related to an atelier in Amiens. Finally, the discovery of the Hermitage ivory box revealed stylistic and iconographical similarities to the Toledo ivory. Their similarity suggest the same hand or workshop in both works.

TMA 50.302 should now be reintroduced to the study of ivory with its proven contextual illustration. As the only surviving example of Floire et Blanchefleur, this ivory box is unique and deserves attention. The evidence I have presented here offers conclusive proof of its importance.

The study of Gothic ivories is challenging, and a great deal of work is waiting to be done. Through the efforts of this author, one mystery has been solved, though many more await the diligent and perservering.

APPENDIX 1  
EXTRANEOUS INFORMATION



# The Walters Art Gallery

600 NORTH CHARLES STREET, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21201 (301) 547 9000

June 28, 1983

Mr. William Hutton  
Senior Curator  
The Toledo Museum of Art  
Box 1013  
Toledo, OHIO 43697

Dear Bill:

Thank you for your good letter and the catalogue information on the ivories. I have decided that there is no time like the present to send you the present thinking on these pieces, though, as you are correct in pointing out, a little further study might change a few of them again.

Taking them in order, we propose:

- 49.38 - French (Paris), third quarter 14th century
- 50.299 - Mosan or German, third quarter 14th century
- 50.300 - French (Paris, 1370-1380 (complicated piece related to the great diptychs in Madrid (Koechlin 795), Berlin (Koechlin 788), V & A (291-1867), which stands between Paris and the Middle Rhenish group of the "Master of Kremsmünster).
- 50.301 - French (Paris ?), 1340-1350 - superb and unusual, the painting in the gable is unique, needs more thought.
- ✓ 50.302 - North French or Flemish, fourth quarter 14th century
- 50.303 - French (Paris), 1330-1350
- 50.304 - French (Paris), 1280-1300 - I agree basically with Chuck Little, but the period should be a bit longer than his 1280-1290.
- 50.305 - German (Middle Rhine), third quarter 14th century (Related to the Burrell Collection ivory, particularly the Child, and to the Virgin of Langenhorst).
- 57.20 - French (Paris) or north France (but in any case court circles). I have called the shop the "Atelier of the Boxes" as they specialized in boxes and tablet covers. Always very avant garde in stylish costume, and reflect a group of manuscripts made for Charles V and Duke of Berry).
- 69.296 - Probably 19th century romantic. The related piece in the Wallace collection is now doubted. They are very alike. If it is genuine, then the Wallace piece follows this as a model.

With the exception of the St. George, they are all very good ivories, and an interesting group. 50.300, 50.301, and 50.304 are superb.

For some reason, I have no glossy photo of 50.303.

Hope this will help for the moment, and when I have other thoughts or find more data, I will send it along.

With best wishes

Richard H. Randall, Jr.  
Curator of Medieval Art

# DENNIS & CRAINE

## A S S O C I A T E S

17 TUDOR STREET  
CAMBRIDGE, MA  
0 2 1 3 9

6 1 7 • 4 9 7 • 4 0 2 7

### RECORD OF TREATMENT

Object: Box

Artist/Date: North French or Flemish/1375-1400

Material: Ivory with Gilt Copper Alloy Ornaments,  
Copper Lock and Hinges

Dimensions: 4 1/2 in. x 6 1/2 in. x 4 1/2 in.

Owner: Toledo Museum of Art, 50.302

#### Condition Before Treatment:

The object is very dusty and dirty, particularly on the top surface. The ivory panels are cracked severely in the following locations:

Top - A large crack extending from the left edge (up about 1/2 in.) across to the lower right corner, a large crack from the left edge to the right about 1/2 in. from the top. The frame around the panel is separating at all but the upper left corner; the frame is loose at the lower edge, especially at the lower left corner.

Front - There are large, curving cracks along the bottom edge, two smaller cracks in the upper left corner and one smaller crack in the upper right corner.

Left Side (as facing the front) - Two fine cracks radiating down from the top edge, ca. 3/4 inch from the right and left sides. There is also a small, disfiguring restoration at the lower left corner in the molding.

Back - There are four intersecting curved cracks at the bottom and a series of five radiating cracks across the top edge. There is also a small, disfiguring restoration in the molding at the lower left corner.

Right Side (as facing the front) - There is one fine crack radiating down from the top 1/2 inch from the left edge, and a crack radiating up from the bottom edge in the center of the lower right section of the panel.

Bottom - There is a radiating crack from the left edge (as facing the front of the box) about 1 inch from the front, and a diagonal crack across the right edge to the back in the corner.

All cracking appears to be related to the insertion of rivets for the attachment of the gilded ornaments or to copper nails inserted through the moldings into the panels. Most of the cracks are visible in the curatorial file photograph (ca. 1950), except for the large crack at back edge of the top panel.

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There is hide glue and dirt in all of the cracks except for the large crack in the top panel at the back. All of the hardware is held by hide glue and the hinges are attached with a mixture of hide glue and fiber; there are hide glue residues scattered over the entire surface, particularly on the sides.

The copper and gilded ornaments are darkened with oxidation; the gilding is slightly abraded at high spots. The metals are dirty and slightly waxy.

The interior is dusty. It is covered with a thick white ground and painted (containing metal leaf?). There are severe cracks in the ground corresponding, generally, with cracking in the ivory. There are small losses at the attachment points for the lock and elsewhere along the cracks.

Treatment:

The object was dusted with a soft brush. All surfaces were cleaned with a dilute solution of Orvus detergent and water on a stencil brush, wiped clean and rinsed with distilled water on cotton swabs. The small restorations on the left side and the back were removed mechanically. Glue residues were removed as possible with distilled water on cotton swabs.

Copper nails were removed from the lower left of the top panel, the lower left of the left panel, the upper right corner of the top panel and two from the back corner of the bottom panel.

The hardware was cleaned with naphtha on cotton swabs. Gilding was further cleaned with 6% ammonium hydroxide and distilled water on cotton swabs. All metals were brush coated with 10% Acryloid B-72 in toluene/methyl, ethyl ketone/cellosolve acetate (6:3:1).

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**A S S O C I A T E S**

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Losses on left side and back, a small loss below the right hand hinge, and holes remaining where nails were removed, were filled with pigmented Victory White microcrystalline wax. Fills were inpainted with Gripflex paints, mixed with 10% Acryloid B-72 in toluene; the heads of the remaining copper nails were also inpainted as above.

The molding at the lower left corner of the top panel was stabilized with 50% Acryloid B-72 in acetone, applying adhesive to the ivory peg and the joint only.

Photography: 35 mm black and white and color slides, before, during, and after treatment.

Date: April 1989

KS



## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>See Appendix 1, Extraneous Information for a complete copy of this letter.

<sup>2</sup>Raymond Koechlin, Les Ivoires Gothiques Français (Paris:F. De Noble, 1968) vol. 2, 467.

<sup>3</sup>An excerpt from the Baboin Catalogue is found in the file of TMA 50.302 in the Toledo Museum.

<sup>4</sup>Ici aussi nous trouvons de nombreuses scènes où l'on arriva malaisément à reconnaître l'illustration d'un roman, tant les motifs paraissent généraux et vagues; au couvercle, devant et au dos, ce ne sont guère que conversations galantes; au contraire des épisodes singulièrement plus précis figurent sur les cotés, mais ils demeurent incompréhensibles sans le fil conducteur d'une œuvre littéraire. ... Tel qu'il est, le coffret demeure pour nous fort curieux par sa date; en effet les costumes des personnages, vêtements courts des hommes et cheveux des dames tressés sur les oreilles, indiquent la seconde moitié du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle... Koechlin, Ivoires, vol. 1, 522.

<sup>5</sup>Couvercle. Reg. sup. (de gauche à droite): 1. Le jeune homme et la dame dans un jardin, se tenant les mains. 2. Il la prend par la taille. 3. Il la cresse. 4. Ils se rapprochent du château dont on voit la porte. Reg. inf.: 1. Le jeune homme assis offre une couronne à la dame. 2. Elle lui pose sur la tête un chapeau de fleurs. 3. Il lui caresse le menton. 4. Assis sous les arbres, ils devisent, se passant l'un à l'autre le chapeau de fleurs.

Devant. Reg. sup.: 1. Ils se rencontrent. 2. Debout de chaque côté de la serrure, ils devisent. 3. Le jeune homme seul devant la porte du château. Reg. inf.: 1. Ils se prennent les mains. 2. La dame seule devant la porte du château. 3. Ils se reprennent les mains. 4. Ils sont ensemble dans un bois. Face post. Reg. sup.: 1. La dame est seule devant la porte du château. 2. Il reparait et lui prend la main. 3. Il lui offre un objet. 4. Il l'enlace. Reg. inf.: 1. Il lui prend les mains. 2. La porte du château, sur la terrasse duquel paraît un personnage, tandis que, devant, un vieillard barbu, chaché dans les arbres, semble faire le guet. 3. Le jeune homme offre à la dame un chapeau de fleurs. 4. Il se retrouve seul devant la porte du château.

Face latérale droite. Reg sup.:1. Il est à genoux devant elle, mais le vieillard les épie dans les arbres. 2. Le jeune homme, son cheval près de lui, prend congé de la belle. Reg. inf.: 1. Elle rentre au chateau, à une des fenestres duquel on aperçoit le vieillard. 2. Elle joue au jeu de tables, dans son jardin, devant sa porte, sous les yeux d'une servante demeurée sur une terrasse. Face latérale gauche. Reg. sup.:1. La dame est devant le chateau. 2. L'ami revient, elle se jette dans ses bras, mais le vieillard les épie. Reg. inf.:1. Une servante cachée dans les arbres les avertit du danger. 2. La jeune femme s'avance vers le vieillard qui les guettait et lui tend la main. Koechlin, Ivoires, vol. 2, 466-467.

Note: Koechlin confused his observations when describing this ivory box. If the ivory is facing the viewer, (look forward) the description provided by Koechlin is reversed, i.e., Face latérale droite should be the left side and Face latérale gauche describes the right side.

<sup>6</sup>Refer to the passage in its original form in Note 9, above.

<sup>7</sup>"...le jeune homme s'avancer ver le vieillard et lui prendre la main." Taken from the excerpt of the Baboin Catalogue in the file of TMA 50.302.

<sup>8</sup>Refer to Note 9 for the original text.

<sup>9</sup>Le sujet n'a pu etre déterminé. Koechlin, Ivoires, vol. 2, 467.

<sup>10</sup>Richard Randall, "Medieval Ivories in the Romance Tradition," Gesta 28 (June 1989): 38.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 32.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 38.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 38.

<sup>14</sup>Koechlin, Ivoires, vol. 2, 466.

<sup>15</sup>A complete report of the restoration by Dennis & Crane Associates can be found in Appendix 1, Extraneous Information.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Joan Evans, Dress in Medieval France, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1952), 28.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 29.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 35.

<sup>20</sup>François Boucher, 20,000 Years of Fashion, (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., n.d.), 194-195.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 196.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 428.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 198.

<sup>24</sup>Françoise Bacon and others, eds., les Fastes du Gothique: le siècle de Charles V, (Paris: Éditions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1981), figure no. 255, 36.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 302.

<sup>26</sup>Hermann Schnitzler, Fritz Volbach and Peter Bloch, Skulpture Elfenbein Perlmutter Stein Holz Europäisches Mittelalter, (Luzern: Verlag Räder & CIE Ag), 26.

<sup>27</sup>Koechlin, Ivoires, vol. 2, 282.

<sup>28</sup>Richard Randall, Masterpieces of Ivory, (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1985) figure no. 333, 227.

<sup>29</sup>Richard Randall, Baltimore, Maryland to Theresa Weller, Grand Blanc, Michigan, n.d., 1989.

<sup>30</sup>Nina Biriukova and others, eds. Decorative Arts in the Hermitage, trans. Ruslan Smirnov (Leningrad: Aurora Art Publishers, 1986), 115.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 116.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 116.

<sup>33</sup>Randall, Masterpieces, 181.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 181.

<sup>35</sup>François Avril, "Un cas d'influence italienne dans l'enluminure du Nord de la France au quatorzième siècle," in Studies in Late Medieval and Renaissance Painting in Honor of Millard Meiss, ed. Irving Lavin and John Plummer (New York: University Press, 1977) 32-42.

<sup>36</sup>Located at the Musée Condé, Chantilly, MS. 51, ex. 1877.

<sup>37</sup>Kathleen Moran, Jean Pucelle, Breviary of Jeanne d'Evereaux, "Vision of Obadiah: Jonah emerging from the mouth of the whale," (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), plate XVI-a.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 16.

<sup>39</sup>"...Le collaborateur du Maître de Jean de Cherchmont..." Avril, Studies, 38.

<sup>40</sup>Baron, Fastes, 36.

<sup>41</sup>Georges Duby, History of Medieval Art 980-1440, (New York:Skira/Rizzoli, 1986), Part 3, 16.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., Part 3, 12.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., Part 2, 203.

<sup>44</sup>John Stevens Medieval Romance, (London: Hutchinson, 1973), 151.

<sup>45</sup>Randall, Masterpieces, 16.

<sup>46</sup>Laura Hibbard Loomis, Medieval Romance in England, (New York, Burt Franklin, 1960), 184.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., 184.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 186.

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