

Modern Medieval Pilgrimages: The Nineteenth-Century Struggle for the Soul of Lourdes

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Voyages to pilgrimage sites, particularly those dedicated to the Virgin Mary, increased dramatically in the last decades of the nineteenth century in France.¹ From retracing the path of medieval pilgrims to Chartres to visiting more recently consecrated shrines that sprang up after contemporary Marian apparitions in La Salette, Lourdes, and Paris, the French rushed to these sites to worship.² An improved economy, the increased accessibility of train travel, and the growth of modern marketing techniques attracted pilgrims and tourists, who visited religious sites in increasing numbers throughout the century.³ The most popular of these was Lourdes. By 1900 more than half a million people a year came to visit the miraculous spring the Virgin Mary had revealed in 1858. The amount of attention devoted to the miracles of Lourdes was such that even well-known novelists Emile Zola and J.-K. Huysmans published works about the phenomenon. *Lourdes* (1894) and *The Crowds of Lourdes* (1906), respectively, became best-sellers.⁴

But as pilgrims, tourists, and curiosity-seekers flocked to Lourdes, many of them were disillusioned by their experience. They complained -- to the Church, in letters to the press, and in their correspondence -- about the rampant harassment of pilgrims by street vendors and beggars; the overabundance of tacky stores and restaurants selling cheap religious trinkets; and about the sheer number of people packed into the small town at the height of the August pilgrimage.⁵ The brunt of the pilgrims' dissatisfaction fell upon the missionaries of Notre-Dame de Garaison, better known as the Grotto Fathers, the order that had singlehandedly created the site in the 1860s. Republican writer Emile Zola so despised them that in his novel they became diabolical croupiers who exploited others to fill the Lourdes coffers

and to build their own, exclusive empire. As his protagonist looks at their residence, he hears the sound of “a giant rake, scraping through the valley, gathering pilgrims, gold, and the blood of the crowds.”⁶

But why would ostensibly peaceful visits to a miraculous shrine elicit such negative reactions? Discourse surrounding Lourdes suggests that visitors were troubled by the clash between modern and medieval: this sanctuary was created entirely in the nineteenth century, yet devoted itself to resurrecting the medieval cult of Mary. Pierre Froment, the protagonist of Zola, attributes his sense of unhappiness with Lourdes to this “discrepancy between the extremely modern milieu and the faith of centuries past, whose resurrection was being attempted.”⁷ This comment indicates a personal disappointment with Lourdes, while it reveals the contemporary belief that the Church Fathers were trying to renew or rebuild the faith of the past through the experience of Lourdes. This essay explores the nineteenth-century French expectations, beliefs, and attitudes toward Lourdes expressed in newspaper articles, Church documents, publicity material, and the writings of Zola and Huysmans in order to better understand how stereotypes about the Middle Ages were often responsible for disappointment about the Lourdes experience.

Explicit links to resurrecting the past -- especially a medieval Catholic past -- became increasingly prominent in the 1870s, with the establishment of an annual “National Pilgrimage.” These organized pilgrimages began in 1872, immediately following the humiliating French defeat in the Franco-Prussian war and the bloody civil unrest of the Commune. They offered discounts of 20-30% on train travel, printed guidebooks to accompany the trip, and housing options for the sick.⁸ The Lourdes fathers advertized the national pilgrimage as a way of making amends for the sins of post-Revolutionary France and as a way of returning to the “good” religious values of the Ancien Régime. *L’Univers*, a Catholic newspaper,

applauded the Church's goal of linking the modern phenomenon to the faith of the past: "The pilgrimages [...] *remake* a Christian France, the France of our ancestors, the true, unique French fatherland. The effects are evident, an abundance of graces are diffused; there is hope in the air" (October 24, 1872. Cited in Kselman 120—my emphasis).

Explicit links to the Middle Ages became even stronger in the 1870s. Where earlier Church articles and documents described simple "processions" to the Grotto, after 1875, the Church insisted upon using the world "pèlerinage" -- pilgrimage -- which it applied with insistence to its voyagers.⁹ The journey itself was highly ceremonial and orchestrated to link the pilgrims to their ancestors. Before the departure, pilgrims received manuals, many of which were published by the Church as advertizing promotions for Lourdes.¹⁰ Such guidebooks generally defined the word pilgrimage and linked it to the travelers' forefathers:

[...] a pious process performed through a public procession to a privileged sanctuary in order to enter into more intimate communication with God [...] we go on pilgrimages to do as did our fathers *sicut fecerun patres nostri*; because pilgrimages have always been in the morals of humanity as well as in Church tradition.¹¹

After the introduction, the manuals give a brief history of pilgrimages and present daily prayers, prayers for specific places during each day of the pilgrimage, and the texts and music for songs. Each guidebook generally closes with a brief section describing the tourist sights of Lourdes and its surrounding area and provides a list of hotels. As Régine Pernoud points out in her introduction to a 1496 pilgrimage manual, medieval and modern versions of such manuals follow roughly the same format of giving the pilgrim historical and geographical information as well as doctrinal guidance (18-19).

The nineteenth-century Church's use of pilgrimage manuals to insist upon "resurrecting," "recreating," and

allowing modern worshipers to “relive” the traditions of the past firmly anchored the experience of Lourdes to the public’s imagination of medieval pilgrimages, and especially the Crusades. Another way of doing this came through the Pope. Pius IX renewed the tradition of marking pilgrims -- specifically those to Lourdes -- with the red cross, as Church Fathers had in the First Crusade. Such insignia thus distinguished pilgrims from mere pleasure seekers while insisting upon the holy mission--the crusade--of their bearers.¹² The red cross emblazoned on chests or on banners is ubiquitous in nineteenth-century paintings dedicated to the Crusades.¹³ The sight of pilgrims wearing the red cross, brandishing banners,¹⁴ and pushing or carrying the sick is an image that calls to mind this artistic *topos*.

The ceremonies surrounding the red crosses were elaborate. Before their departure, pilgrims would gather in their churches to receive their crosses--small pins or badges bearing the red cross--which would be blessed with the pilgrims.¹⁵ The manuals describe such ceremonies in detail and place great emphasis upon the need for spirituality during the voyage: “Pilgrimages to the Grotto of Lourdes would deviate from their goal, they would lose all merit if, by our fault, they were to be transformed into simple tourist excursions [...] A pilgrimage is an act of expiation, not a pleasure trip.”¹⁶ The religious material prepared pilgrims for entering into a mystical state in which they would forget the material world and their senses: they were to cultivate “the spirit of piety, charity, and penitence.”¹⁷ All of these ceremonies and writings explicitly linked the modern journey to the traditions of French forefathers, thus preparing pilgrims for arrival in a mysterious, immaterial, neo-medieval world of prayer and canticle.

Imagine the shock when they arrived in the bustling commercial city of Lourdes! Joseph Demarteau, a Belgian pilgrim who wrote letters home during the 1906 pilgrimage, was taken aback by the crush of the crowds, which constitutes his first description of the city (19).

Another 1906 visitor, the Benedictine oblate J.-K. Huysmans, also remarked upon the seething masses—to such an extent that he changed the title of his exploration from *The Two Faces of Lourdes* to *The Crowds of Lourdes*. He was disgusted by the abundance of vendors, the cheapness of the religious trinkets, and the difficulty of getting through them to arrive at the Grotto: “it is unbridled competition, boutiques throughout the city waylaying you at every step; you come, go, and swerve, in the middle of all of this hubbub, but you always end up, one way or another, at the grotto.”¹⁸ Pilgrims were shocked by the urbanization of Lourdes, which offered creature comforts for the traveler. They could stay in luxurious hotels, eat in fine restaurants, and enjoy twenty-four hour electricity. Even the miraculous spring was modernized for consumer convenience: the Fathers of the Grotto had rerouted the spring into taps so that visitors could use faucets to pour their fill of water.

It is, in fact, autobiographical and fictional narratives about the city that most clearly reveal the extent to which travelers imagined Lourdes as a neo-medieval fantasy. Pierre Froment, the protagonist of Zola’s novel, lingers upon the pious activities of the pilgrims in the train bound for Lourdes. But once they arrive, the town clashes with their medieval expectations:

[Pierre] recalled old cathedrals shivering with the belief of the masses; he saw once again the antique liturgical objects; imagery, silver and gold plate, saints of stone and wood, whose force and beauty of expression was admirable. It was because, in those far off times, workers believed, gave their flesh, gave their soul, in the overwhelming naivete of their emotion [...] and today, architects built churches with the tranquil science they put into building five-story houses, just as religious objects, rosaries, medals, statuettes, were mass produced in populous part of Paris, by fast-living workers [...] All of this, brutally, clashed with the

attempted resurrection, with the legends, ceremonies, and processions of dead ages.¹⁹ Zola's indignation results from the disparity between modern mass-produced goods and "the attempted resurrection" of medieval traditions. He feels tricked by the marketing that brought him to Lourdes to experience a faith like that of the Middle Ages, when, in reality, the town wanted to enrich itself.

Both authors lament not only the commercial frenzy that reigns at Lourdes, but also the ugliness of its infrastructure, which was built by the Church for administrative and practical purposes, and not to encourage worship. They were, perhaps, correct, since government reports reveal that throughout the building process the Grotto fathers placed a great deal of emphasis upon impressing pilgrims with sweeping vistas and good views.²⁰ Although today Lourdes is one of the premier shrines in the world, a sophisticated tourist destination served by highways, rail, and plane and visited by nearly six million pilgrims per year, the place where the Virgin appeared to Bernadette Soubirous 141 years ago belonged to the remote and difficultly accessible countryside of the Pyrenees mountains. It was only in 1862, at the pressure of local crowds who began worshiping without Church approval, that the Church built a shrine (Baumont 85-96 and Kaufman 102).

The entire Domain was thus built from scratch in the late nineteenth century. Church Fathers chose a spot outside of the city in order to free up the town's avenues and to provide an impressive effect.²¹ Within the space they constructed a complex that would eventually grow--as an increasing number of visitors required more space--to include three churches, a processional staircase, bathing pools, the miraculous cave itself, stations of the cross, and a park. Today the Domain comprises nearly 125 acres. Once the shrine was established, in the 1860s, everything possible was done to bring people to Lourdes. The Fathers of the Grotto carefully bought land, cooperated with government

officials to build the pilgrimage center and police it; they changed the course of a river, subsidized railroad lines, highways, and finally electricity; and they regulated the commerce of religious trinkets, relics, and votive candles. The Grotto had its own electrical plant, a candle factory, and a printing press, which published two magazines devoted to the pilgrimage. It was also during this decade that they began the systematic marketing of the miraculous water of Lourdes (Kselman 163).

Both Zola and Huysmans portray this monopolistic planning of Lourdes and its churches as barely religious, and practically sacrilegious. Huysmans lambasts the aesthetics of the basilica, especially in contrast to its medieval counterparts:

Thin, narrow, without an ornament of value [...the Basilica] demonstrates the aesthetics of a cork merchant: the smallest village chapel, built in the Middle Ages, seems, in comparison to this contraband Gothic, a masterpiece of finesse and force [...] in the Middle Ages were cathedrals not constructed for [the people]; were statues, tapestries, retables, all of the magnificent works that now adorn our museums [...] not created to enhance, in their eyes, the prestige of the Church and to help them pray?²²

Mundane, technologically advanced, and commercial planning clashed, for pilgrims, with the medieval atmosphere they expected to discover at Lourdes. Pierre Froment dreams of the city as it must have been before all of this construction.

And this olden day Lourdes, this city of peace and belief, the only possible cradle in which the legend [of Bernadette] could have been born [...] another age was recalled, a small city, with its narrow streets paved with stones, its black houses with their frames and marble, its antique church [...] peopled with golden visions and flesh tones."²³

Pierre's dreams of the Middle Ages reflect his nostalgia for an alternative to the modern city.

Both authors chastize the town of Lourdes for corrupting an idyllic setting and unique religious experience in order to get rich, yet they differ in attributing blame for the creation of the Lourdes Empire. Zola, a staunch Republican, clearly identifies the Grotto Fathers for shutting out all competition, for running operations in the town, and for killing the peoples' inherent purity and faith:

[...] the Grotto fathers minted coins, financed inns and votive candle boutiques, sold water from the spring, despite the fact that they were forbidden from engaging in any kind of commerce, according to a formal clause in their contract with the village. The entire country rotted, the triumph of the Grotto had brought such a rage for lucre, such a burning fever to possess and to delight oneself, that, under the driving rain of millions, an extraordinary perversion worsened every day, changed the Bethlehem of Bernadette into Gomorrah and Sodom [...] [...The Fathers] are singing victory, they are the only ones left. This is what they wanted, to be the absolute masters, to keep for themselves all the power, all the money...[...] their terror of competition motivated them to push away religious orders that tried to come here [...] And the city belongs to them, and they hold their shop here; here they sell God, wholesale and retail.²⁴

Huysmans, too, insists that Lourdes is a Sodom and Gomorrah, but he blames the greed of the villagers—who want to “bleed” the pilgrims (213)—and whom the Church tries to keep in check. Despite their differences, both authors agree that the town has sold out by building a modern empire. For them it is unconscionable to make money from a religious site. Their concerns about money and religion reflect one of the great fears of believers in

the late nineteenth-century: that mass production and commercialism would cheapen the authenticity and uniqueness of religious experience (Kaufman 11).

Lourdes does not live up to these authors' dreams of discovering a primitive faith or communing in Gothic cathedrals full of gorgeous donated art, largely because of their pre-conceived notions about the pilgrimage experience. Nearly every one of their condemnations of Lourdes has its root in the city's inability to conform to their nostalgia for the Middle Ages. The words that occur over and over again to describe "good" religion—that of the Middle Ages—are "purity," "naivete," "faith," "simplicity," "belief," and "primitive." Their recurring images are cathedrals, banners, original, hand-made art, gold and silver, and kneeling worshippers.

Such ideal attitudes toward medieval pilgrimages derive primarily from wishful thinking and artistic representations of the past. The Middle Ages had their share of sin and commercialism—even in the fourth century Jerome called Jerusalem "worse than Sodom" (Jacques 34-35)—and the commerce of pious objects, traffic in relics, and the buying of posthumous pilgrimages was common (Jacques 34-36). Chaucer gives us a good idea of the morals of some of his pilgrim contemporaries in the *Canterbury Tales*. The late nineteenth-century embrace of so-called medieval values of humility, simplicity, and charity evolved largely from accepted ideas inherited from Romantics like Chateaubriand, who, in *Le Génie du Christianisme*, had portrayed medieval worshippers as simple believers communing in nature. Zola's vision of the past clearly relies on such images: "There weren't any non-believers, they were the people of primitive faith; on mornings of celebrations each corporation marched under the banner of its saint, brotherhoods of all sorts reunited the whole city into a single Christian family."²⁵

Zola and Huysmans were not alone in idealizing the faith of the Middle Ages. As Richard Griffiths has shown in *The Reactionary Revolution*, a study of the Catholic

Revival of the late nineteenth century, the Church eagerly embraced idealized images of a simple, pious, generous Middle Ages in order to provide their followers with an alternative to the increasing materialism and anticlericalism of society.²⁶ France foundered morally in the aftermath of the dissolution of the Second Empire as it tried to establish itself as a secular Republic (this did not occur until 1905, with the separation of Church and State). Church leaders, increasingly pushed out of political spheres, hoped that renewing the spiritual traditions of the Middle Ages could attract more voters while restoring solid moral ground in a time when mass production, greed, and interest in all things material had taken root among the bourgeoisie. Could publicizing mass pilgrimages in which people returned to the faith of their forefathers bring France back to a time of moral stability and support of the Catholic Church?

Both Huysmans and Zola's conclusions about Lourdes attempt to answer this question. Despite his many complaints, Huysmans admits that the crowds are probably not much worse than those of the Middle Ages and that the spirituality of Lourdes is probably similar: "To summarize, at Lourdes, we witness a revival of the Gospels; we are in a lazaretto of souls and we disinfect ourselves with the antiseptic of charity"²⁷ He feels that the spirit that reigns at Lourdes is socially productive, one that would have potential for fraternity among social classes if the sentiment could last beyond the pilgrimage itself:

There is, in this city of Our Lady, a return to the first ages of Christianity, a flowering of tenderness that will last, as long as we stay under pressure, in this haven of the Virgin. We have the impression of a people composed of various fragments and nonetheless united as never a people has been [...] it is the temporary fusion of castes; here society ladies bandage and wipe workers and peasants, gentlemen and bourgeois become the oxen of artisans and boors

and turn themselves into bath boys, to serve them.²⁸

For Huysmans, returning to the faith of the past could potentially improve society. Zola, however, contests Catholicism as a social model because it rejects independent thought and action:

The naive faith of the child who kneels and prays, the primitive faith of young nations, bent under the sacred terror of their ignorance, was dead [...] the attempt of this resurrection of total faith, devoid of revolt and examination, the faith of dead centuries, was doomed to failure. [...] Never again would the entire nation prostrate itself, as the old believing nation had, in cathedrals of the twelfth century, exactly like a docile herd in the hands of the Master²⁹

Both authors comment upon Lourdes as a neo-medieval revival and reflect their nostalgia for living in a simple, pre-determined, and ordered society. They accept the Church's attempt to use Lourdes to resurrect the "true faith" and the traditions of the past.

It is thus ironic that the Church's creation of Lourdes reproduces just the material temptations it was trying to thwart. While pilgrimage manuals instruct pilgrims to avoid concupiscence, curiosity, and greed (1898 8-9), pilgrims were easily distracted by the commercial offerings of the city. Their letters and accounts of Lourdes do not dwell upon the spirituality, but on materiality--their activities, the sites they visit, and the miraculous healings they witness--they describe Lourdes as a cash-producing theme park, a private empire run by the Grotto Fathers. The Church's use of rhetoric linking modern pilgrimages to those of the Middle Ages thus produced an interesting contradiction: it dampened--with the words and images of its neo-medieval publicity--the commercial attraction it was creating at Lourdes. By inventing an appealing image of medieval piety to attract the faithful, it ended up "selling" the very pilgrimages it was trying to purify of commercial content. Such

contradictions suggest that the Fathers of Lourdes were, perhaps, less interested in renewing the links between modern and medieval pilgrimages, than by using the Middle Ages as a marketing device, a way of attracting more people to the miracles of Catholicism. It may also have served as an ideal behind which they could hide their guilt about profiting economically from religious travel.

The contradictions surrounding Lourdes—modern and medieval, economic and spiritual, political and altruistic—reflect the complex relationship late nineteenth-century France maintained with the Middle Ages and its traditions. Despite the fact that many people understood that their dream of the Middle Ages was based on stereotypes, they longed to hold up such an ideal model for their contemporaries. At a time in which commerce, monopolies, and private empires continued to exert their power over modern life, the Middle Ages became a positive spiritual model from which modern society could take solace, if only in dream.

Notes

- 1 See Sandra Zimdars-Wartz, *Encountering Mary from La Salette to Medjugorje* (Princeton, 1991) for more about Marian apparitions of the nineteenth century. For a history of belief in the Immaculate Conception and its resurgence in the nineteenth century see Edwin O'Connor, *The Dogma of the Immaculate Conception: Its History and Significance* (South Bend, 1958). Jean-Emmanuel Drochon gives a comprehensive idea of the number of pilgrimage sites and their value for late nineteenth-century believers in *Histoire illustrée des pèlerinages* (Paris: Plon, 1890).
- 2 See the graph by Georges Bertrin of pilgrimages to Lourdes (reproduced in Kselman 165).
- 3 See Weber 22, 67. Other reasons for increased interest in religion stem from the humiliating defeat of the Franco-Prussian war and the sense that this event was punishing France for the years of sacrilege following the French Revolution. As Kselman has pointed out, both Marian apparitions and pilgrimages jumped sharply in 1872 and 1873, the years immediately following the Franco-Prussian war as pilgrims attempted to atone for the sins of their contemporaries (113-116). René Rémond has argued that the Assumptionist Fathers, responsible for establishing the national pilgrimage at Lourdes in the wake of the Franco-Prussian loss, used this event to mobilize believers in the late part of the century. See *The Right Wing in France from 1815 to de Gaulle*, Trans. James M. Laux (Philadelphia, 1966): 184-188.
- 4 The Charpentier-Pasquelle press published 88,000 copies of *Lourdes* in its first printing. This is at least 10,000 more copies than any other first printing of Zola's work (From the table in Colette Becker, "Zola," 2548). *Les Foules de Lourdes* sold 17,000 copies in its first month of sales alone (See Baldick 344).

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- 5 See Kaufman, pp. 114-130. She prints extracts from believers, the Catholic press, and the anticlerical press.
 - 6 “Tout sortait de là pourtant, et tout y aboutissait. Et le jeune prêtre croyait entendre le muet et formidable coup de râteau qui s’étendait sur la vallée entière, ramassant le peuple accouru, ramenant chez les pères l’or et le sang des foules” (191). Unless otherwise indicated all translations are mine.
 - 7 “[...] désaccord entre le milieu tout moderne et la foi des siècles passés, dont on essayait la résurrection” (345).
 - 8 See Kaufman, pp. 99-104 for the history of the development of the national pilgrimage.
 - 9 This difference in terminology in the weekly publication, *Le Pèlerin*, is noted by Baumont in *Histoire de Lourdes* (Toulouse, Privat, 1993), p. 230.
 - 10 See Kaufman, pp. 107-108.
 - 11 “C’est une démarche pieuse faite par manière de procession publique vers quelque sanctuaire privilégié, pour s’y trouver en communication plus intime avec Dieu [...] nous allons en pèlerinage pour faire comme ont fait nos pères *sicut fecerun patres nostri*; car les pèleringages ont toujours été dans les moeurs de l’humanité, aussi bien que dans la tradition de l’église” (Manuel 1899 92, 95).
 - 12 An 1899 pilgrimage manual for Lourdes explains that this tradition had recently been “resurrected” by Pope Pius IX (Pope from 1846-78) to identify pilgrims: “N.T.S.P. le Pape Pie IX daigna donner de sa main aux pèlerins, comme emblème de leur croisade pacifique, la croix de laine rouge avec la devise: Christo Domino servire; Servir le Christ, Notre-Seigneur. La croix est donc aussi l’insigne propre aux pèlerins de Notre-Dame de Lourdes” (86).

- 13 See for example, Larivière, “Bataille d’Ascalon (Musée du Château de Versailles); Victor Schnetz, *Procession des croisés conduits par Pierre l’Ermite et Godefroy de Bouillon autour de Jérusalem, la veille de l’attaque de la ville*” (Musée du Château de Versailles); or Signol, “Prise de Jérusalem” (Musée du Château de Versailles) in which red and white crosses and banners abound. See also works of painters of the “troubadour genre.” “*Le Style Troubadour*,” Musée de l’Ain (Bourg-en-Bresse, 1971).
- 14 The first national pilgrimage was marked by its abundance of banners: four hundred banners from Marian shrines all over France came together in a giant procession at Lourdes. See Kselman pp. 118-119.
- 15 This description comes from the 1899 pilgrimage manual (91). In *Lourdes*, Zola’s protagonist remarks upon his cross. Government reports considered the red crosses pilgrims wore as subversive symbols: “...exterior signs designed to bring about hostile protests...” Letter from the Minister of the Interior describing problems with pilgrims in the North (AD Hautes-Pyrénées 1m232). Cited in Kaufman 45.
- 16 “Les Pèlerinages à la Grotte de Lourdes déviaient de leur but, ils perdraient tout leur mérite si, par notre faute, ils venaient à se transformer en simples excursions de touristes [...] Un pèlerinage n’est pas un voyage de plaisir, mais d’expiation” (1899 8).
- 17 “l’esprit de piété, de charité et de pénitence” (1899 7).
- 18 “[...] c’est la concurrence effrénée, le raccrochage sur le pas des boutiques dans toute la ville; et l’on va, l’on vient, l’on vire, au milieu de ce brouhaha, mais toujours pour aboutir par un chemin ou un autre, à la grotte” (80).

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- 19 “Il évoquait les vieilles cathédrales où frissonnait cette foi des peuples, il revoyait les anciens objets du culte, l’imagerie l’orfèvrerie, les saints de pierre et de bois, d’une force, d’une beauté d’expression admirables. C’était qu’en ces temps lointains, les ouvriers croyaient, donnaient leur chair, donnaient leur âme, dans toute la naïveté de leur émotion [...] Et, aujourd’hui, les architectes bâtissaient les églises avec la science tranquille qu’ils mettaient à bâtir les maisons à cinq étages, de même que les objets religieux, les chapelets, les médailles, les statuettes, étaient fabriqués à la grosse, dans les quartiers populeux de Paris, par des ouvrier noceurs [...] *Tout cela, brutalement, jurait avec la résurrection tentée, avec les légendes, les cérémonies, les processions des âges morts*” (345–my emphasis).
- 20 An 1899 government report lists the reason for building a new central avenue as the Church’s goal of having: “the pilgrim [...] be sparked at first glance by the spectacle before his eyes” (Cited in Kaufman 103).
- 21 According to Baumont, they even tore down three houses in the old city to enlarge the perspective as pilgrims walked down the hill from the old part of town (194).
- 22 “Mince, étriquée, sans un ornement qui vaille, [...] elle (the Basilica) relève d’une esthétique de marchand de bouchons: la moindre des chapelles de village, bâtie au Moyen Age, semble, en comparaison de ce gothique de contrebande, un chef-d’oeuvre de finesse et de force [...]” (77) est-ce qu’au Moyen Age les cathédrales n’ont pas été construites pour lui [le peuple]; est-ce que les statues, les tapisseries, les retables, toutes les oeuvres magnifiques qui parent maintenant nos musées, n’ont pas été créées pour rehausser, à ses yeux, le prestige de l’Eglise et l’aider à prier?” (127)

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- 23 “Ah! cet ancien Lourdes, cette ville de paix et de croyance, le seul berceau possible où la légende pouvait naître [...] Un autre âge s'évoquait, une petite ville, avec ses rues étroites, pavées de cailloux, ses maisons noires, aux encadrements et marbre, son antique église [...] peuplée de visions d'or et de chairs peintes” (338).
- 24 “[...] les pères de la Grotte battaient monnaie, commandaient des hôtelleries et des boutiques de cierges, vendaient l'eau de la source, bien qu'il leur fût défendu de se livrer à aucun négoce, d'après une clause formelle de leur contrat avec la commune. Le pays entier se pourrissait, le triomphe de la Grotte avait amené une telle rage de lucre, une fièvre si brûlante de posséder et de jouir, que, sous la pluie battante des millions, une perversion extraordinaire s'aggravait de jour en jour, changeait en Gomorrhe et en Sodome le Bethléem de Bernadette (240). [...] Ils chantent victoire, il n'y a plus qu'eux. C'était ce qu'ils désiraient, être les maîtres absolus, garder pour eux seuls toute la puissance, tout l'argent...[...] leur terreur de la concurrence les a poussés jusqu'à écarter de Lourdes les ordres religieux qui ont tenté d'y venir [...] Et la ville leur appartient, et ils y tiennent boutique, ils y vendent Dieu, en gros et en détail!” (311).
- 25 “Il n'y avait pas d'incrédules, c'était le peuple de la foi primitive, chaque corporation marchait sous la bannière de son saint, des confréries de toutes sortes réunissaient la cité entière, aux matins de fête, en une seule famille chrétienne” (92).
- 26 *The Reactionary Revolution* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1965).

- 27 “En résumé, à Lourdes, on assiste à un renouveau des Evangiles; on est dans un lazaret d’âmes et l’on s’y désinfecte avec les antiseptiques de la charité” (262). “La Vierge a voulu des foules, ainsi qu’au Moyen-Age, Elle les a; sont-ce les mêmes? sans doute, l’âme ingénue et la foi naïve des vieilles paysannes n’a guère changé; l’existence même que ces multitudes mènent ici, couchant dans le Rosaire, mangeant sur les bancs et sur les pelouses, rappelle la vie des cohues d’antan, couchant dans la cathédrale de Chartres—dont le pavé s’inclinait en pente exprès pour qu’on pût le nettoyer à grande eau le matin, —ou campant autour de la Vierge noire, en plein air, dans les plaines de la Beauce; mais tout s’est encanaillé; la magnificence de la cathédrale, l’attrait des costumes, l’ampleur des liturgies tutéiaires ne sont plus. Lourdes, né d’hier, s’est développé dans l’insalubre berceau de notre temps et il expire le fétide relent des industries...” (259)
- 28 “Il y a dans cette cité de Notre-Dame un retour aux premiers âges du christianisme, une éclosion de tendresse qui durera, tant que l’on restera sous pression, dans ce havre de la Vierge. On a l’idée d’un peuple composé de fragments divers et néanmoins uni comme jamais peuple ne le fut [...] c’est la fusion temporaire des castes; la femme du monde y panse et y torche l’ouvrière et la paysanne; le gentilhomme et le bourgeois deviennent les bêtes de trait des artisans et des rustres et se font garçons de bains, pour les servir” (183).

- 29 “La foi naïve de l’enfant qui s’agenouille et prie, la primitive foi des peuples jeunes, courbés sous la terreur sacrée de leur ignorance, était morte. [...] la tentative de cette résurrection de la foi totale, de la foi des siècles morts, sans révolte ni examen, devait échouer fatalement. L’histoire ne retourne pas en arrière, l’humanité ne peut revenir à l’enfance, les temps sont trop changé, trop de souffles nouveaux ont semé de nouvelles moissons, pour que les hommes d’aujourd’hui repoussent tels que les hommes d’autrefois. C’était décisif. [...] Jamais plus la nation entière ne se prosternerait, comme l’ancienne nation croyante, dans les cathédrales du XIIe siècle, pareille à un troupeau docile sous les mains du Maître. (394-395).

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