

These and other developments are several of the many strands that form the rich historical tapestry of the choir of Notre Dame. Taking the very largest view, we can first see the broad outlines of the Merovingian populace and clergy singing and acclaiming simple liturgical song in responsorial fashion, then a physically separate clerical choir immured in the chancel of the Gothic church away from the populace, and finally a group of specialist musicians, with a core of about a dozen singers, who sang not only plainsong but several types of composed and improvised polyphony which only they could execute. Not until after the Revolution, with the destruction of the **rood** screen and the later *grille*, did it physically become possible to reunite populace and clergy, and only in the present century, after the Second Vatican Council, did the untrained unison voice of the people again provide most of the music of the service.