

INTRODUCTION

Performing Gender in the Burgundian Netherlands

On June 22, 1478, Philip the Fair, the only son of Maximilian I and Mary of Burgundy and heir to the Valois Burgundian-Hapsburgian empire, was baptized in Bruges. Moments after the ceremony, Margaret of York, dowager duchess of Burgundy and step-grandmother to Philip, strode toward a teeming crowd of curious onlookers gathered in the marketplace. Hoisting the naked child above her head, she called for the spectators' attention. An anonymous chronicler recorded what ensued: Margaret, 'took [the infant's] testicles in her hands and she spoke, "Children, see here your newly born lord Philip from the Emperor's side." The crowd, seeing that it was a son, was overwhelmingly happy, thanking and praising our beloved God for granting them a young prince.'¹

The brazen exhibition of Philip's genitalia seems unusual if not extreme by modern standards. It may well have surprised the audience that witnessed it that day in Bruges. Yet that Margaret of York undertook her course of action in a packed civic space highlights the degree to which gender was a matter of public dispute in the Burgundian Netherlands. The transmission of sovereignty through the male but not the female line is in fact but one aspect of such contentious conflict, in this case signaling the debate over European systems of inheritance that privileged men. These patterns received new emphasis in the well-known deliberation over Mary of Burgundy's succession to the Burgundian patrimony after the death of her father, Charles the Bold, in 1477. Even as Philip the Fair could claim sovereignty through his sex, Mary of Burgundy's was hotly contested because of hers.

Margaret of York's public presentation of her grandson's nude body brings to mind Judith Butler's tripartite paradigm of gender as, 'anatomical sex, gender identity, and gender performance.'² This model distinguishes anatomical bodies, male or female, from the gendering of those bodies

¹ Cited in Peter Arnade, *Realms of Ritual: Burgundian Ceremony and Civic Life in late Medieval Ghent* (Ithaca, 1996), 22.

² *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York, 1990), 137.

through societal expectations and norms, that is, social constructions of gender. It then queries to what degree such genderings are 'performed' or not 'performed' according to expectation, or, in other words, whether individuals conformed to or breached these constructions, an approach in which some gendered identities fall outside of the strict binary male/female couplet. The account of the aftermath of Philip the Fair's baptismal ceremony informs us about the first two aspects of Butler's model. The infant's genitalia identifies his body as male (anatomical sex), onto which expectations for particular behaviors and attitudes were socially grafted (gender identity – here masculinity and, specifically, claims to and expectations for political sovereignty). The passage is necessarily silent on whether or not Philip carried out masculinity to expectation, of course, since he was only an infant at the time.³ However, the degree to which Burgundian men performed masculinity, and women performed femininity in keeping with social norms, as well as other considerations about gender – by which I mean the examination not only of ideologies and performances of femininity and masculinity but also of relations, especially those of power, between women and men – can be extensively probed through an abundance of other sources, including visual evidence. Certainly some scholars in the field have made gender analysis a major objective in their work, including historians Eric Bousmar, Martha C. Howell, and, collaboratively, Marc Boone, Thérèse de Hemptinne, and Walter Prevenier, and art historians Ann M. Roberts, Pamela Sheingorn, and Diane Wolfthal.⁴ Yet Burgundian scholarship unfortunately continues

³ Philip the Fair is treated by Jean-Marie Cauchies, *Philippe le Beau: Le dernier duc de Bourgogne* (Turnhout, 2003).

⁴ Only the authors' most recent publications can be cited here; additional references are provided in the Bibliography. For Bousmar, see 'Neither Equality nor Radical Oppression: The Elasticity of Women's Roles in the Late Medieval Low Countries,' in *The Texture of Society: Medieval Women in the Southern Low Countries*, ed. Ellen E. Kittell and Mary A. Suydam (New York, 2004), 109-127; Howell, *The Marriage Exchange: Property, Social Place, and Gender in Cities of the Low Countries, 1300-1550* (Chicago, 1998); Boone, et al., 'Gender and Early Emancipation in the Low Countries in the late Middle Ages and Early Modern Period,' in *Gender, Power and Privilege in Early Modern Europe: 1500-1700*, ed. Jessica Munns and Penny Richards (Harlow, 2003), 21-39; Roberts, 'The Horse and the Hawk: Representations of Mary of Burgundy as Sovereign,' in *Excavating the Medieval Image: Manuscripts, Artists, Audiences (Essays in Honor of Sandra Hindman)*, ed. David S. Areford and Nina A. Rowe (Aldershot, Eng., 2004), 135-150; Sheingorn, "'Illustis patriarcha Joseph': Jean Gerson, Representations of Saint Joseph, and Imagining Community among Churchmen in the Fifteenth Century,' in *Visions of Community in the Pre-Modern World*, ed. Nicholas Howe (Notre Dame, Ind., 2002), 75-108; Wolfthal, 'Picturing Same-Sex Love: Images by Petrus Christus and the Housebook Master,'

to lag behind other humanities fields that have long recognized it as a rich and productive mode of critical inquiry.

This book demonstrates the viability of gender methodologies for Burgundian studies by exploring two of the era's most copious visual genres: books of hours and devotional portrait diptychs. My specific purpose is twofold. First, I aim to identify and interrogate pictorial constructions of masculinity and femininity forwarded by the works in regard to the expectations, experiences, and practices of devotion. Second, I will demonstrate that patrons and spectators of both sexes manipulated the books and diptychs to challenge and negotiate the boundaries and hierarchies of gender. Devotional works, including those investigated here, are especially advantageous for such study since both women and men made significant claims to authority in and through religion, which necessarily dispatched hierarchical concerns to the forefront. When considered thusly, books of hours and devotional portrait diptychs emerge as critical and often contentious sites for navigating, negotiating, and transacting gender.

Gendering Books and Diptychs

Books of hours were liberally churned out for lay worshippers from their inception around 1300 through their gradual decline in the sixteenth century. The insatiable desire for the volumes over such a lengthy period can be explained first and foremost by the potency of the books' major prayer cycle, the *Officium parvum*, also known as the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary or simply the Hours of the Virgin. The Hours relate the story of Mary as it pertains to the conception and infancy of Christ, rounded out by the triumph of her death, ascension, and coronation. In illuminated books of hours, images adorned the major textual components and in some cases subsidiary ones as well. The Virgin is also a major focus of the majority of devotional portrait diptychs, which are comprised of two separate painted panels that are hinged or otherwise joined together to form a single, self-contained, autonomous work. A portrait of a devotee (usually a solitary individual but on occasion two or three figures or even a group) in half or full length appears on one side; the pious worshipper prays to holy figures, usually the Virgin and Child, in the facing image. In

in *Troubled Vision: Gender, Sexuality and Sight in Medieval Text and Image*, ed. by Robert Mills and Emma Barker (New York, 2004), 17-46. Readers may also wish to consult the studies by Andrea G. Pearson, Dagmar Eichberger, Jean C. Wilson, and Craig Harbison cited in the Bibliography.

some cases, however, the supplicant is depicted with the adult Christ carrying the cross or as the Man of Sorrows. The diptychs appeared around 1400 at the Valois court with Duke Philip the Bold and at the English court with Richard II of *Wilton Diptych* fame (Figure 18), and then gradually burgeoned as a pictorial type over the next several decades, especially among the dukes of Burgundy.⁵ John's son, Duke Philip the Good, was especially desirous of the paintings, and this carried into the tenure of his progeny, Charles the Bold. By the later part of the century, the increasingly powerful and affluent urban patricians and then the clergy, in the southern Low Countries in particular but also in France and Germany (albeit living in or connected to the Low Countries), began to procure the images with zeal. The works were later produced at the court of Margaret of Austria, who ruled the Netherlands as Regent for her father, Maximilian of Austria, from 1507 to 1530. Within two or three decades of Margaret's death, however, the works ceased to be produced.

Books of hours and devotional portrait diptychs beg comparative examination, for the two types were intimately connected in the minds of contemporaneous viewers. In addition to their mutual focus on the Virgin, numerous inventory entries from the Franco-Burgundian and Hapsburgian courts unambiguously describe similarities in format between the books, or books in general, and diptychs, if not necessarily portrait diptychs on panel. One scribe, for instance, recorded a work in the form of 'a small rectangular gold panel, in the manner of a book of hours, which opens with hinges [. . .].'⁶ Furthermore, the first known portrait in diptych format (Figure 9) appeared in a breviary (the more complex volume of prayers from which books of hours derived); it depicts the book's original owner, Catherine of Valois (d. 1346).⁷ By the early fourteenth century, John of Berry requested a portrait diptych for his *Brussels Hours* (Color Plate IV and

⁵ Laura D. Gelfand, 'Fifteenth-Century Netherlandish Devotional Portrait Diptychs: Origins and Function' (Ph.D. diss., Case Western Reserve University, 1994), argues that the Valois Dukes 'popularized' the diptychs and situates the works in regard to contemporaneous spiritual trends, especially purgatory. Her later assertion that the diptychs played a key role in forwarding Valois political aspirations, including those of Margaret of Austria, runs parallel with conclusions in my earlier article, 'Margaret of Austria's Devotional Portrait Diptychs,' *Woman's Art Journal* 22 (Fall 2001/Winter 2002): 9-25.

⁶ From an inventory of possessions inherited by Margaret of Austria from her father, Maximilian I, made in 1521, cited with additional examples by Dagmar Eichberger, 'Devotional Objects in Book Format: Diptychs in the Collection of Margaret of Austria and her Family,' in *The Art of the Book: Its Place in Medieval Culture*, ed. M. M. Manion and B. J. Muir (Exeter, 1998), 292.

⁷ Sold at Sotheby's, London, June 7, 1932, lot 2; present location unknown.

Figure 15) and from there diptychs appear in books of hours with some frequency, both prior to and coinciding with the production of panel diptychs. For these reasons, Laura Gelfand has posited, and rightly so, that devotional portrait diptychs evolved directly from books of hours.⁸

Whether considered separately or in comparison, books of hours and devotional portrait diptychs provide fortuitous opportunities to query gender since both types were clearly associated with one or the other sex. Portraits of the original owners of the works, which are standard features in devotional portrait diptychs and integrated into scores of books of hours, provide the most reliable evidence of this situation. For this purpose it is advantageous to define 'portrait' loosely, to include, first, of course, likenesses that aspire to physiognomic accuracy. Second, I include figures that were or seem beyond doubt intended to represent particular persons, even if their specific identities are now lost to us, not by their physical features but via costumes, attributes, heraldry, or other telling markers of the kind. Importantly, in all surviving devotional portrait diptychs and nearly every book of hours surveyed for the present study, the sex of the person depicted is absolutely unambiguous. Indeed, the certainty of this point is essential for mapping patterns of gender in the works.

More specifically for books of hours, while it may be impossible to personally survey the thousands of examples distributed worldwide, reliable statistics can be gleaned from published descriptions, which permit access to 500 volumes and over 150 portraits therein.⁹ A meticulous survey

⁸ 'Fifteenth-Century Netherlandish Devotional Portrait Diptychs,' 30-37.

⁹ Lilian M.C. Randall, *Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the Walters Art Gallery*, I: France, 875-1420; II: France, 1420-1540; III: Belgium, 1250-1530 (Baltimore, 1989, 1992, 1997); Victor Leroquais, *Les livres d'heures manuscrites de la Bibliothèque nationale*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1927) and *Supplement aux livres d'heures manuscrites de la Bibliothèque nationale: Acquisitions récentes et donation Smith-Lesouef* (Macon, 1943); Dale L. Morgan and George P. Hammond, eds., *Bancroft Library. A Guide to the Manuscript Collections* (Berkeley, 1963); Camille Gaspar and Frederic Lyna, *Les principaux manuscrits à peintures de la Bibliothèque royale de Belgique*, 3 vols. (Brussels, 1937), reprint (Brussels, 1984); Margaret M. Manion, *Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in New Zealand Collections* (Melbourne, 1989); L.M.J. Delaisse, James Marrow, and John de Wit, *Illuminated Manuscripts. The James A. de Rothschild Collection at Waddesdon Manor* (Fribourg, 1977); Yolanta Zaluska, *Manuscripts enlumines de Dijon* (Paris, 1991); William M. Voelkle and Roger S. Wieck, *The Bernard H. Breslauer Collection of Manuscript Illuminations* (New York, 1992); C.W. Dutschke, *Guide to Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the Huntington Library*, 2 vols. (San Marino, 1989); Barbara A. Shailor, *Catalogue of the Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Yale University*, 3 vols. (Binghamton, 1984); Koert van der Horst, *Illuminated and Decorated Medieval Manuscripts in the University Library, Utrecht* (Cambridge, Eng., 1989); Dagmar

of these sources permits me to confirm what already has been proposed in general: women owned the volumes over men in a ratio of three-to-one.¹⁰ Portraits in devotional portrait diptychs, by contrast, disclose the genre as unquestionably male. Although fewer examples survive, the statistics by percentage are even more compelling than for books of hours: of the 46 diptychs that survive in tact or can be reliably reconstructed, 36 represent men, two show a man and a women together, and two portray families; only six depict women without men (see Appendix). Thus, the ratio of the diptychs with male to female sitters is better than six-to-one. Of the six women's diptychs, the earliest represents Jeanne of France, fourth daughter of Charles VII of France and later Duchess of Bourbon. The second is a painting by Jan Mostaert, an artist active at the court of Margaret of Austria, and depicts, most likely, Mary of Burgundy.¹¹ This diptych was probably commissioned by Margaret, Mary's daughter, as a commemorative image. The last four diptychs portray Margaret of Austria herself (two of these survive as single panels). A diptych commissioned by Jeanne de Bouvais, abbess of the Cistercian convent of Flines (Color Plates VI and VII and Figures 45 and 46), shows a standard formula on the interior – a monk, in this case, before the Virgin and Child – but breaks from tradition through its inclusion of a portrait of Jeanne on the verso of one wing. Furthermore, numerous single-panel paintings of men at prayer that were likely components of devotional portrait diptychs survive,¹² but to my knowledge the only solitary portrait of a woman that could have been part of a diptych is Margaret of York's portrait in the Louvre, which may just have easily been part of a marriage triptych made at the time of Margaret's wedding to Charles the Bold in 1468 (the original frame, which could shed light on this issue via indication of hinges, for instance, is no longer extant). Textual descriptions of diptychs enhances the evidence. While lost diptychs depicting men are described in many fifteenth and sixteenth century inventories – examples appear throughout this study – I have found only one viable written reference to a woman's diptych, a painting included in an inventory of the contents of Margaret of Austria's

Thoss, *Flämische Buchmalerei, Handschriftenschätze aus dem Burgunderreich* (Vienna, 1987).

¹⁰ Roger S. Wieck, *Time Sanctified: The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life*, 2nd ed. (New York, 2001) and Sandra Penketh, 'Women and Books of Hours,' in Smith and Taylor, eds., *Women and the Book*, 266-281.

¹¹ Appendix, no. 38. See Colin Eisler, *Early Netherlandish Painting, The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection* (London, 1989), 208-211, with bibliography.

¹² The well-known portrait of Louis de Gruuthuse, counselor to Philip the Good and Charles the Bold (Bruges, Groeningemuseum) is but one of many examples.

art collection in Mechelen produced in 1516. The work is described as 'a small painting, one of Our Lady and [the other] of madame Charorlois [Isabella of Bourbon, Margaret's grandmother], in illuminated form, arranged together with one another.'¹³ The diptych was apparently comprised of two miniatures that had been mounted in such a way as to facilitate their exhibition as 'a small painting.' Thus, it seems likely that the double image originally was part of an illuminated manuscript and was subsequently excised for display. A second entry from the same inventory has been described as a diptych by modern writers:

[. . .] a large painting of Our Lady of Sorrows in two wings [*à deux feulletz*]. One wing depicts a Saint Elizabeth and madam Isabelle of Portugal, and in the other a Saint Catherine. On the exterior is a nun of the Order of the Annunciation, wearing white and black. The painting was given to Madam [Margaret of Austria] by Katherine du Buisson.¹⁴

If the painting were a diptych it would be difficult to determine how the image of the Virgin would fit into the format if one wing portrays St. Elizabeth and Isabelle of Portugal and the other St. Catherine. It seems more likely that the saints were in wings to either side of a larger panel representing the Virgin, in a triptych rather than a diptych. In this case, the phrase '*à deux feulletz*' is either an error in transcribing the number of panels in the work or a reference to the wings only.

Even if we account for losses over the years, then, and especially if we factor in single panels of men at prayer, the evidence for the sexes of the sitters in devotional portrait diptychs is fully persuasive of the works as a male genre. The very limited number of diptychs depicting female devotees suggests that men did not commission the paintings for women, nor did women commission them for themselves even in moderate numbers. This pattern cannot be attributed simply to lack of financial means or control, since some women living during the period in which the works flourished, such as Margaret of York and Mary of Burgundy, freely

¹³ 'Ung petit tableaul d'une Nostre-Dame et de madame de Charorlois, *de illuminure*, mise en ung estuy ensemble [my emphasis].' A. le Glay, *Correspondence de l'Empereur Maximilien Ier et de Marguerite d'Autriche, sa fille, gouvernante des Pays-Bas de 1507 à 1519, publiée d'après les manuscrits originaux* (Paris, 1839), II: 481.

¹⁴ 'Ung grant tableaul d'une Notre-Dame de piteye a deux feulletz; deans l'ung y a une Sainte-Elizabeth et madame Ysabeaul de Portugal, et en l'autre une Sainte-Katherine, et au dehors une annunciade de blanc et de noir, qui a este donne a Madame par Katherine du Buisson,' in A. le Glay, *Correspondence de l'Empereur Maximilien*, II: 481. The work is described as diptych by, among others, Monique Sommé, *Isabelle of Portugal, duchesse de Bourgogne. Une femme au pouvoir au XVe siècle* (Paris, 1998), 453.

committed considerable resources to other types of artworks. Both of these women and many others could easily have afforded multiple diptychs of their own (Margaret of Austria would eventually see the benefit of this), but in general did not acquire them at a rate anywhere near that of men, if at all. Thus, in the rare instances in which women did commission works of the kind, it is worth asking why. Furthermore, because the diptychs include portraits of men who identified themselves differently from one another – as laymen and clerics to provide just one example – they permit us to explore a range of masculinities, which also can be compared with gender ideologies forwarded by works in other formats, such as triptychs and manuscript illuminations.

'Private' Images as Agents in Social Transactions

In order to understand books of hours and devotional portrait diptychs as potent agents in gender negotiations, it is first essential to address the issue of privacy. Art historians have nearly consistently described both types of works as 'private' objects made solely for use in the sitters' personal devotional practices, a view that necessarily renders them socially irrelevant. Sixten Ringbom forwarded this widely accepted argument for the diptychs in particular through the only truly convincing depiction of such a painting in fifteenth-century northern European art.¹⁵ The image, which represents Philip the Good at Mass, marks the opening of the major text in the *Traité sur l'oraison dominicale* made for the Duke around 1457 (Color Plate I and Figure 1). According to Ringbom, Philip, desiring a 'private' and 'empathic' spirituality practiced outside of the Church proper, away from the watchful eyes and control of clerics, undertakes his 'personal intercourse with the Divinity' in 'the privacy of a tent' set up within the space of a church or chapel. The enclosure separates the Duke from the courtiers and clerics in his presence, and yet still affords him a view of the altar, where the Mass takes place. Books aid both the liturgy

¹⁵ *Icon to Narrative: The Rise of the Dramatic Close-up in Fifteenth-Century Devotional Painting*, reprint (Doornspijk, 1984): 30-33. Possible devotional portrait diptychs appear in two other paintings, one an *ex voto* attributed to Giovanni Francesco de' Manieri, published by Norman E. Land, ed., *The Samuel H. Kress Study Collection of the University of Missouri*, Museum of Art and Archeology, University of Missouri-Columbia (Columbia, Missouri, 1999), 41-44, and the other a miniature in Philip the Good's copy of Ghillibert de Lannoy, *Livre de l'instruction d'un jeune prince* from ca. 1460, Bibliotheque royale de Belgique, ms.10976, fol. 10r. As discussed below, diptychs portrayed in diptychs of Chrétien de Hondt and Margaret of Austria are not portrait types.



Figure 1 (see also Color Plate I). Jean le Tavernier, *Philip the Good at Mass*, from the *Traité sur l'oraison dominicale*, ca. 1457. Brussels, Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, Ms. 9092, fol. 9. Copyright Bibliothèque royale de Belgique.

and Philip's private worship: the priest reads from a bulky missal that weighs down on an imposing altar, while the Duke reads from a manageably-sized personal prayer book, in all probability a book of hours (the text is illegible), which rests on a *prie-dieu*. Images are also present. An altarpiece with narrative scenes of the Passion adorns the altar and a 'picture used for private devotion' hangs before Philip. This 'cult image' is a devotional portrait diptych. Close inspection of the original image reveals that it represents the Virgin holding the Infant Christ and a kneeling, prayerful figure, who must be Philip the Good.

Ringbom's reading of the miniature at first seems to have merit, for the solitude afforded by the oratory reaches to the very heart of privacy as the modern mind knows it. Both the book of hours and the devotional portrait diptych invoke a range of qualities we attach to privacy, such as internalization (reading and meditating), intimacy, and ownership. Heraldic devices and mottoes in the works, along with other features such as portraits of identifiable individuals, the physical proximity in these portraits of the devotees to the holy figures they revere, the small sizes of the diptychs in comparison to altarpieces, and the ease at which an individual could transport a painting of the kind all seem to bolster this interpretation. Added to this are the documented practices of enclosing panel portraits in bags, cases, or shutters; pictorial representations of painted diptychs hanging over the heads of beds in the presence of solitary worshippers, such as in the well-known diptychs by the Master of 1499 depicting Chrétien de Hondt, abbot of the Cistercian house of Les Dunes at Bruges from 1495 to 1509 (Figure 47) and Margaret of Austria (Figures 53)¹⁶; and the concealment of the contents of books of hours between covers. Described in these ways, the works can seem so private, and so personal, that it is difficult to imagine either the sitters' desire to reveal them to others or the relevance of the works to a wider audience.¹⁷ Books of hours

¹⁶ The former includes a depiction of a diptych of the Lamentation and Crucifixion, while the latter shows a Virgin and Child and a Crucifixion. For the concealment of portraits, see Lorne Campbell, *Renaissance Portraits. European Portrait-Painting in the 14th, 15th, and 16th Centuries* (London, 1990), 65-67.

¹⁷ See Erwin Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, reprint (New York, 1971), I: 294-298, whose views were upheld by Gelfand, 'Fifteenth-Century Netherlandish Devotional Portrait Diptychs,' *passim*; Angelica Dülberg, *Privatporträts: Geschichte und Ikonologie einer Gattung im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert* (Mann, 1990); Suzanne Bäuml, 'Studien zum Adorationsdiptychon Entstehung, Frühgeschichte und Entwincklung eines privaten Andachtsbildes mit Adorantendarstellung' (Ph.D. diss., Ludwig-Maximilians Universität, 1983); Guy Bauman, *Early Flemish Portraits, 1425-1525. The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* (Spring 1996); Jane B. Friedman, 'An Iconological Examination of the Half-Length Devotional Portrait Diptych in the

and devotional portrait diptychs, it would thus seem, are quintessential private artistic formats.

Upon closer scrutiny of the image, however, Ringbom's argument quickly unravels. To be sure, the Duke is partially surrounded by a canopy and curtains, but these differentiate more than segregate him from the larger space of the chapel and the other figures that occupy it.¹⁸ Indeed, he is far from fully sequestered. Philip shares his immediate physical space with his chamberlain, who is himself inside the canopy and thus party to the ducal devotions. In drawing back the curtain, the attendant not only allows Philip visual access to the Mass, but in turn permits the clerics and ducal entourage that populate the larger space to see the prince at worship. While the monks' choir remains attentive to its music, the courtiers' attention is drawn to the Duke through a series of complementary bodily postures, restrained gestures, and subtle gazes that emphasize his physique. Specifically, the individual standing closest to the canopy, robed in green and sporting a dark gray cap, turns slightly to his right, toward Philip's space. He cocks his head toward the baldachin while simultaneously reaching out in the same direction with outstretched hand. This gesture is parenthetically reciprocated by the chamberlain, whose open palm encourages scrutiny of his master's piety, as does the arc of his upper body and turn of his head toward the Duke. Encouraged to witness Philip's devotion, the figure to the far right of the canopy glances sideways toward the sovereign (Figure 2): he is a visual participant, as it were, to the Duke's spiritual practices and probity.

At the nucleus of this strategic exchange, in which Philip's personal spirituality is suitably dramatized and played out on public turf, are the paraphernalia of personal piety: a book of hours and a devotional portrait diptych. These items could not be more deliberately placed to suggest their centrality in courtly social transactions, as the body of the prince, the book, and the painting are the central elements on the diagonal axes that splay across the nucleus of the image (Figure 3). The portrait element in the diptych reinforces the Duke's devotional veracity, as a repeat performance of sorts paralleling the main portrait of the illumination. But there is more. Facing both Philips – the one in the diptych and the one beneath the baldachin – are the two most revered personages in the Christian faith, the

Netherlands, 1460-1530' (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1977); and Lloyd Benjamin, 'The Empathic Relation of Observer to Image in Fifteenth Century Northern Art' (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina, 1973).

¹⁸ Indeed, it has been argued, and accurately in my view, that 'any moment of final privacy' was impossible and even undesirable in early modern Europe. See Patricia Fumerton, *Cultural Aesthetics: Renaissance Literature and the Practice of Social Ornament* (Chicago, 1991), 67-77.



Figure 2. Detail of Figure 1.

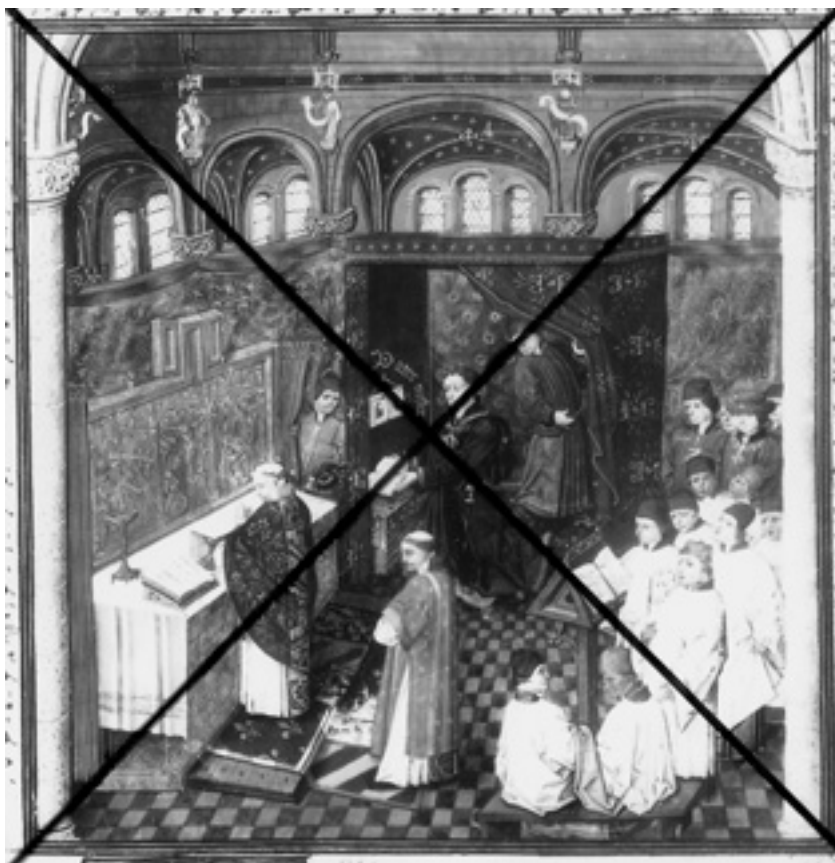


Figure 3. Schematic drawing of Figure 1 (author). Photo: Michael R. Zarrett.

Virgin Mary and Christ. Philip himself is the only figure in the miniature for whom this sort of intimate access to the purveyors of salvation is claimed: no one else has a devotional portrait diptych. As the Duke's personal spirituality is a part of a system of social exchange through which he negotiated and cinched power, so too are the diptych, and the book of hours as well, key ingredients in maintaining hierarchical relationships and procuring submission. Thus, the miniature seems far less concerned with keeping the Duke's personal devotion private than it is with orchestrating it along the lines of a public spectacle. It is also worth noting that the miniature itself would have had an audience in the form of chamberlains, artists, and those who had access to the library; the large size of the manuscript – 274 folios measuring approximately 16 x 11½ inches – in

comparison to smaller, personal volumes such as books of hours, strongly suggests its employment for public reading, a daily practice at the court that at times involved religious texts.¹⁹ Through the ritualization of daily matters, including personal devotion, rulers flaunted their power in order to solidify it, to encourage and secure compliance and reverence.

The evidence for stagings of personal devotion by the Burgundian Dukes is not only visual but textual. An example appears in a description of the celebrations of an alliance between Charles the Bold and the Dukes of Savoy and Milan in the church at Trier in 1475 recorded by Johanne Petro Panigarola, the Milanese ambassador to the Burgundian court.²⁰ Charles entered the church amid all the customary regal fanfare, bedecked in a luxurious golden, sable-trimmed robe and a hat in which, 'the pearls and gems were so closely packed that one could not see the plume, though the first branch of it was as long as a finger.' Charles, 'stayed in his oratory, which was hung round as usual with curtains of black silk. After a time the curtains were drawn aside. His lordship was on a dais three steps high under a canopy, gold above and below, richly embroidered with the arms of Burgundy.' Clearly, neither the Duke nor those in his presence saw a conflict in staging personal worship for political gain. Panigarola, in fact, seems to have been accustomed to it, noting that the Duke's oratory was draped around 'as usual.' Returning to visual examples, a double-sided sheet with images of Emperor Maximilian I of Austria, husband of Charles the Bold's daughter, Mary of Burgundy (Fig. 64 discussed in Chapter Five), suggests that he too exploited this connection later in the century.

By Charles's day, then, the use of personal piety to forward supremacy was a time-tested, highly successful conceit among the Burgundian dukes, one that would have proven highly advantageous for Burgundian princes. The importance of religion as an ideal aspiration in a ruler's life – a marker of leadership – was expounded in the model of an ideal lord forwarded in the medieval mirrors of princes. In these texts, which circulated widely within the courts of Europe and were reinterpreted by Burgundian court chroniclers, the first and foremost duty of kinship was to uphold the Christian faith.²¹ Harmony and prosperity, it was believed, could not be achieved and sustained within Christendom

¹⁹ Discussed by Joyce Coleman, *Public Reading and the Reading Public in Late Medieval England and France* (Cambridge, 1996), 109-128.

²⁰ Milan, Archivio di Stato, Pot. est. Borgogna 516-517/21-23, cited in Richard Vaughan, *Charles the Bold: The Last Valois Duke of Burgundy*, new edition (Woodbridge, 2002), 169-170.

²¹ See, among others, Graeme Small, *George Chastelain and the Shaping of Valois Burgundy: Political Culture at Court in the Fifteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 1997), 162-196.

without a ruler's steadfast and genuine commitment to his religion. The chroniclers, too, in relating proper princely outlooks and behavior, cast the Duke as a defender and promoter of their religion. Sympathetic to ducal ambitions, the official accounts portray Philip as aggressively promoting the aims of the Church by broadening the scope of Christendom via crusades and also by staunchly supporting the papacy. Reading such actions, and personal piety as well, as public spectacle dovetails exceedingly well with the aims of the Burgundian theater-state aptly identified and explored by authors such as Wim Blockmans, Walter Prevenier, and Peter Arnade, through which the key players at court shored up political might and social control.²²

Books, Diptychs, and Spectators: The Documentary Evidence

If the miniature in Philip the Good's the *Traité sur l'oraison dominicale* is not alone convincing of the potential of books of hours and devotional portrait diptychs to negotiate social relationships and hierarchies, documentary evidence in the form of inscriptions, inventories, and wills, dating as early as the first decade of the fifteenth century, signals numerous instances and situations in which the works passed beneath the eyes of spectators. First, as will be discussed at length in Chapter One, books of hours were used in teaching and, also, were carried and used in public, specifically in church: prayers included in some volumes are those said at Mass, which strongly suggests the use in houses of worship as Virginia Reinburg has proposed.²³ Both the books and the paintings were handled and at times keenly observed by functionaries, such as chamberlains who set up oratories and scribes who produced wills and inventories. An example for a diptych is found in the inventory of Duke Philip the Bold's possessions made shortly after his death in 1404, where a scribe recorded 'a small painting in wooden panels opening in two leaves. On one side is an image of Our Lady and on the other my departed Lord [Philip] and my Lord of Flanders [John the Fearless].'²⁴ Clearly, more than a passing glance was required for the scribe to complete the description. What is more, he organized the list according

²² Prevenier and Blockmans, *The Burgundian Netherlands* (Cambridge, Eng., 1986), 223 and Arnade, *Realms of Ritual*, 1-35.

²³ 'Prayer and the Book of Hours,' in Wieck, *Time Sanctified*, 42.

²⁴ 'Ung petit tableau des bois carré ouvrant a deux feuillés, dont a l'un des costés a ung ymaige de Nostre Dame et de l'autre costé feu mondit seigneur et monseigneur de Flandres.' Chrétien C.A. Dehaisnes, *Documents et extraits divers concernant l'histoire de l'art dans la Flandre, l'Artois et le Hainaut avant le XVe siècle* (Lille, 1886), II: 850.

to location, beginning with the Duke's chapel and oratory, and then by categories, such as vessels of crystal and silver gilt, silver-gilt vessels of other sorts, banners, robes, tapestries, and embroidered tapestries. He did not record the diptych with the other paintings Philip owned and kept in these spaces, but rather in a section of objects termed *cornés*. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, this term was used to designate ornaments that outfitted religious spaces in a very specific way: such objects were placed at the corners of altars. The inclusion of the diptych with the *cornés* suggests that the painting was intended for display on the altar of the chapel, where it would have been visually accessible.²⁵ A similar argument for public display has been made for the *Wilton Diptych* (Figure 18).²⁶ A small chapel at Westminster Abbey is equipped with a wide ledge, approximately 30 inches in length, that would have provided an appropriately-sized support for the open diptych. The subject matter of the painting is also suited to the chapel: the latter had a Marian dedication, at least from the second half of the fourteenth century, when it was called St. Mary de la Pew (today Our Lady de la Pew). Richard also had an oratory at Westminster Palace, also called St. Mary de la Pew, at his residences at Sheen, King's Langley, and Eltham, where he could easily have used his diptych. The royal chamberlains who set up the painting in the space were viewers by default; other individuals who had access to the chapel, such as celebrants, assistants, family members, and guests, also likely would have had visual contact with the work.

Additional evidence abounds for spectator interaction with specific devotional portrait diptychs in a range of circumstances. An eighteenth-century drawing of Philip the Good's father, Duke John the Fearless, possibly after a portrait by court painter John Malouel, may represent half of a devotional portrait diptych of John (Figure 17). A painting on canvas of the Virgin and Child now in Berlin seems to have once been paired with the Malouel portrait. A canvas painting of John the Fearless was recorded at the ducal mausoleum at the Chartreuse de Champmol in Dijon as late as 1791, suggesting the continued presence of the work in this semi-public

²⁵ 'Cornes de l'autel,' in Edmond Huguet, ed., *Dictionnaire de la langue française du seizième siècle* (Paris, 1934), II: 552.

²⁶ The display and audiences for the work were discussed most recently by Dillan Gordon, *Making and Meaning: The Wilton Diptych* (London, 1993), 59-67; Maurice Keen, 'The Wilton Diptych: The Case for a Crusading Context,' in *The Regal Image of Richard II and the Wilton Diptych*, ed. Dillan Gordon, Lisa Monnas, and Caroline Elam, intro. Caroline M. Barron (London, 1997), 189-196; and Katherine J. Lewis, 'Becoming a Virgin King: Richard II and Edward the Confessor,' in *Gender and Holiness: Men, Women and Saints in late Medieval Europe*, ed. Samantha J.E. Riches and Sarah Salih (London, 2002), 86-100.

space.²⁷ Furthermore, early evidence strongly suggests that Jean Fouquet's *Melun Diptych* from ca. 1450 (Figure 20), which depicts Étienne Chevalier and his patron saint Stephen with Mary and the Christ Child, was one of three works of art that Chevalier used as tomb markers for his burial place in the chancel of Notre-Dame de Melun.²⁸ An inscription on the verso of the *Diptych of Joos van der Burgh* (Figure 22) indicates that the painting was installed over the tomb of he and his wife, Catherine van der Mersch, at the church of St. Walburge at Furnes.²⁹ The *Diptych of Lodovico Portinari*, attributed to the Master of the Legend of St. Ursula and likely made around 1479 when Lodovico inherited his uncle Accerito's estate and moved to Florence from Bruges (Appendix, no. 11), may have been destined for display in the family chapel dedicated to St. Egidio at S. Maria Nuova in Florence.³⁰ The semi-private chapel of the family of Joris van de Velde and Barbara la Maire in Onze-Lieve-Vrouwkerk in Bruges (Appendix, no. 37) was the intended location for the enormous diptych of the couple and their seventeen children by Adraien Isenbrant, in which the prayerful family portrayed on the left-hand panel faces the Virgin of the Seven Sorrows on the right.³¹ Bernardijn Salviati, canon of Saint Donatian in Bruges, bequeathed a devotional portrait diptych portraying the Canon in prayer before the Virgin (Appendix, no. 26) to one Martine as indicated in the records of the distribution of his estate,³² and Margaret of Austria inherited a devotional portrait diptych representing her grandfather, Charles the Bold (now lost).³³ An entry in the 1492 inventory of the possessions of Lorenzo

²⁷ Millard Meiss and Colin Eisler, 'A New French Primitive,' *Burlington Magazine* 102 (1960): 233-240. For the human presence in the space, see Jeffrey Chipps Smith, 'The Chartreuse de Champmol in 1486: The Earliest Visitor's Account,' *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 106 (1985): 1-6, and Sherry C.M. Lindquist, 'Women in the Charterhouse: The Liminality of Cloistered Spaces at the Chartreuse de Champmol in Dijon,' in *Architecture and the Politics of Gender in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Helen Hills (Aldershot, Eng., 2003), 177-192.

²⁸ Claude Schaefer, 'Le diptyque de Melun de Jean Fouquet conservé à Anvers et à Berlin,' *Jaarboek van het Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp* (1975): 10-11.

²⁹ Colin Eisler, *Les Primitifs Flamands, I, Corpus de la Peinture des Anciens Pays-Bas Méridionaux au Quinzième siècle*, 4, *New England Museums* (Brussels, 1961), 19.

³⁰ Dülberg, *Privatporträts*, 178 and Eisler, *Les Primitifs Flamands*, 103.

³¹ For the location and a reevaluation of the painting's date, see A. Janssens de Bisthoven, 'Een nieuwe datering voor twee aan Isenbrant toegeschreven Schilderijen,' in *Miscellanea Jozef Duverger* (Ghent, 1968), 175-186.

³² Lorne Campbell, *The Fifteenth Century Netherlandish School. National Gallery, London* (London, 1998), 38.

³³ H. Michelant, 'Inventaire des vaisselles, bijoux, tapisseries, peintures, manuscrits, etc. de Marguerite d'Autriche, régente et gouvernante des Pays-Bas,

de' Medici in Florence describes a diptych portraying a Burgundian duke.³⁴ A diptych of Philip the Good was recorded in the 1501 inventory of the objects in the hospital of the Hôtel Dieu at Beaune, founded by Burgundian Chancellor Nicholas Rolin in 1443, where it hung in the main chapel. If the painting were a gift from Philip, the Duke likely would have presented it to the Hôtel sometime between the mid-1440s and 1462 when Rolin died.³⁵ Finally, Hans Memling's *The Diptych of Martin van Nieuwenhove* of 1487 (Color Plate V and Figure 31) remained with the sitter's descendants until 1640.³⁶

Multi-generational audiences for books of hours and diptychs such as Martin van Nieuwenhove's painting is indicated not only by inventories and wills but also by later additions to the works, including portraits or other markers of identity of subsequent owners. *The Diptych of Chrétien de Hondt* (Figure 47) depicts the supplicant in prayer before the standard figures, the Virgin and Child. On the verso of the right-hand wing is the *Salvator Mundi*, which was part of the initial commission of 1499 (Figure 48). Opposite it, on the left-hand panel, is a portrait of Robert de Clercq, Chrétien's successor as abbot of Les Dunes. As Robert holds the crozier of an abbot, his portrait must have been added sometime after 1515 when he assumed the office. Here, then, is a clear example of the appropriation of a diptych by a later observer. Furthermore, the painting apparently remained meaningful for Les Dunes through time, since it was saved from the iconoclasm of 1566, the destruction of the abbey in 1578, and the community's move to the refuge of the abbey in Bruges; it remained in its possession until the dissolution of the community in 1827, when it was acquired from Nicolas de Roovere, the last abbot, and eventually came into the collections of the Museum voor Schone Kunsten in Antwerp.³⁷ The Le

dressée son palais de Malines, le 9 juillet 1523,' Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, no. 128 des Cinq Cents de Colbert, *Académie Royale des Sciences, des Lettres, et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique* sér. 3, vol. 12 (1871): 88.

³⁴ Eugène Müntz, *Les Collections des Médicis au XVe siècle. Le Musée, la Bibliothèque, le Mobilier* (Paris, 1888), 84.

³⁵ The presence of the painting at the Hôtel Dieu at Beaune is documented by the Abbe J.B.C. Boudrot, 'Inventaire de l'Hotel-Dieu de Beaune (1501),' *Mémoires de la société de histoire, d'archéologie et de littérature de l'arrondissement de Beaune* (1874): 123. Jeffrey Chipps Smith, 'The Artistic Patronage of Philip the Good' (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1979): 301, posits the gifting of the diptych by the Duke to Rolin during the period indicated.

³⁶ J. Geldhof, *Pelgrims, dulle lieden en vondelingen te Brugge 1275-1975* (Bruges, 1975), cited by Dirk de Vos, *Hans Memling: The Complete Works* (Antwerp, 1994): 282, n. 4.

³⁷ See Paul Vandenbroeck, *Catalogus schilderkunst 14^e en 15^e eeux, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten* (Antwerp, 1985), 125-130, and A. Monballieu,

Clercq addition is not the only extant example of appropriation. X-ray examinations of the *Diptych of Joos van der Burgh* (Figure 22) reveal that the sitter's heraldic device has been over-painted: beneath the uppermost paint layer are the arms of Simon van der Burch, Josse's son. The features of the portrait have also been modified. Simon's name appeared as part of an inscription on the original frame (now lost); the letters S and B present below and on both sides of the blazon also link the painting to Simon. Thus, the diptych initially portrayed Simon but was tailored later to Josse. If the repainting seems to have occurred near or after the death of Simon in 1518,³⁸ it seems plausible that the changes were ordered by Simon himself or perhaps another member of the van den Burch family. Loose parallels to this type of practice for books of hours are additions recording family history, which shaped the volumes into critical sites for genealogical record-keeping and repositories of family history.³⁹

Finally, by the early sixteenth century if not before, patrons commissioned devotional portrait diptychs depicting friends and family and housed the works in domestic settings accessible to invited guests. Around 1530, for instance, Margaret of Austria ordered at least two and perhaps three devotional portrait diptychs representing her political and financial advisor, Cardinal Erard de la Marck, from court painter Jan Vermeyen. A portrait of Erard now in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and a Virgin and Child panel in the Frans Hals Museum in Haarlem may once have comprised one of these works (Figure 61). As we will see in Chapter Five, an inventory of the possessions Margaret kept in her palace at Malines indicates that she displayed one example in her bedchamber. (Did she present the other to Erard as a gift?) Perhaps surprisingly, Margaret at times invited certain individuals into her bedroom, where she stored a devotional portrait diptych representing her father, Charles the Bold, and also one of herself (Figure 53). The Regent, it is documented, welcomed Albrecht Dürer into her chamber during a visit in 1521 to show him several panels by Juan de Flandes stored with the diptych of Charles.⁴⁰ Dürer could not have seen Margaret's diptych, though, since his visit predates the arrival of the painting in her chamber in 1523. The less-than-private nature of the private spaces where diptychs were presumably kept is also revealed in a fifteenth-century treatise on spiritual practices written for a layman, which encourages the pious practitioner to invite others into his most

'Diptyque de Christian de Hondt,' in *Primitifs flamands anonyms. Catalogue avec supplément scientifique* (Brussels, 1969), 59-60.

³⁸ Suggested by Eisler, *Les Primitifs Flamands*, 20.

³⁹ Kathleen Ashley, 'Creating Family Identity in Books of Hours,' *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 32 (2002): 145-165.

⁴⁰ Jane Campbell Hutchison, *Albrecht Dürer: A Biography* (Princeton, 1990), 169.

private spaces: he is instructed to go 'to that secret place, and send for William Bonet or Sir William Trimenel or others as you please, and confer with them there until vespers.'⁴¹ An example of the gifting of a diptych from the monastic sphere is the painting commissioned by Jeanne de Boubais (Color Plates VI and VII and Figures 45 and 46) mentioned above. Jeanne is portrayed on the verso of the diptych, with a Cistercian cleric, likely her confessor, Guillaume de Bruxelles, on the inner panels. It is likely, as I argue in Chapter Four, that Jeanne commissioned the work for presentation to Guillaume.

Clearly, then, even as worshippers put their books and paintings to use in their personal devotions, they also knew that both types could and would come under the scrutiny of spectators. In some cases they deliberately facilitated such interactions, thus purposefully rendering the works public. It is hardly necessary to amass an array of documentary evidence to effectively argue the public nature of devotional portrait diptychs, however. One simple observation says it all: if the two types were exclusively private – if they were indeed continually sequestered and inaccessible to others – they would not have reached ubiquitous status. Indeed, in terms of the diptychs, the three most seemingly private examples made by Rogier van der Weyden for court functionaries Laurent Froimont, Jean Gros, and Philippe de Croÿ (Figures 19, 28, and 29), which are remarkably similar to one another and in fact formulaic in composition, figural identity (aside from specific sitters, of course), bodily poses, and settings, simply could not have been produced in a vacuum. One can envision the enterprising Rogier, who built his artistic career largely around portrait-painting, enthusiastically introducing the type to prospective clients and encouraging them to order diptychs of their own. To Rogier's great pleasure, willing sitters eagerly complied. It is also easy to imagine these men in turn showing their prized portraits to others, especially those produced by the leading artists of the period, such as Rogier and Hans Memling, and those individual approaching Rogier or other artists to order their own examples. In these moments of contact, the diptychs became critical sites of social exchange, functioning much like the formal court portraits that circulated throughout the region and across Europe, designed to convey information and largely to bolster the status of the sitters. Given that the paintings almost always represent men – they are, that is, necessarily gendered masculine – the transactions in which the works engaged were also gendered.

⁴¹ William A. Patin, 'Instructions for a Devout and Literate Layman,' in *Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays Presented to Richard William Hunt*, eds. J.J.G. Alexander and M.T. Gibson (Oxford, 1976): 400.

Devotional Portrait Diptychs in Gendered Relationships

The miniature of *Philip the Good at Mass* allows us to explore such transactions of gender through its characterization of the relationship between the Duke and his son and heir, Charles the Bold, then Count of Charolais, since the figure outside of the ducal oratory, furthest to the right (Figure 2), is none other than Charles. This identification is confirmed by the chain of the Order of the Golden Fleece, the chivalric and military order founded and ruled by Philip and eventually by Charles. Although other miniatures from the court show an array of men sporting the chain, here only Philip and the figure to the far right wear it, a distinction which, at the hyper-sensitive display culture of the Burgundian court, could point to no other possibility.⁴² Properly identifying the figure as the Count leads us to consider the miniature in regard to an explosive confrontation that erupted between Philip and Charles in the family chapel at the ducal palace of Coudenberg in Brussels in January of 1457, as the production of the manuscript was underway. Indeed, even if the manuscript's program of illumination was determined prior to the conflict, the miniature could have been altered in response, much as when Jean Wauquelin changed the plans for illuminations in the *Chroniques de Hainaut* midway through the project.⁴³ Conversely, beholders could easily have linked the infamous incident with the miniature for reasons I will make clear, even if this reading was not the artist's intention.

In summary, after a series of heated clashes between father and son over court appointments from which the Duke emerged victorious, Charles could no longer restrain himself. He shouted at his father, turned on his heels, and stormed out under the protective escort of his mother and loyal confidant, Isabelle of Portugal.⁴⁴ Philip was left behind with his retinue, fuming at his son's audacity and embarrassed that his courtiers had witnessed the Count's insolent behavior. The Duke was so angered that he rode blindly into the night, became disoriented in the dark forest surrounding the palace, and finally was forced to spend the night in

⁴² Arnade, *Realms of Ritual*, 9-35, treats the display aspect of the court.

⁴³ Anne van Buren, 'New Evidence for Jean Wauquelin's Activity in the *Chroniques de Hainaut* and for the Date of the Miniatures,' *Scriptorium* 26 (1972): 249-268.

⁴⁴ The incident is recapped by Richard Vaughan, *Philip the Good: The Apogee of Burgundy*, new edition (New York, 2002), 338-339. For Isabelle and Charles, see Monique Sommé, 'Une mère et son fils: Isabelle de Portugal, après son départ de la cour (1457-1471), et Charles le Téméraire,' in *Autour de Marguerite d'Écosse: Reines, princesses et dames du XVe siècle. Actes du colloque de Thouars (23 et 24 mai 1997)*, ed. Geneviève et Philippe Contamine (Paris, 1999), 99-121.

disreputable lodgings. Upon his return Philip excluded Charles from nearly all affairs of state. For his part, Charles withdrew from the court at Brussels where Philip was often in residence. The rift between the two was not repaired until 1463, and then only after the intervention of the States General of the Burgundian Netherlands. All of this was in fact a subject of discussion and authorship at the court, as evidenced by accounts of the incident and its fallout in the Burgundian chronicles.

The miniature presents an entirely different view of events, however, one that seems directly inspired by the *mêlée* in the oratory but judiciously edited to forward ideals of male leadership and the courtly hierarchies that sustained it. The Duke, paradigmatically presented before his son, undertakes his devotions with somber and appropriate reverence. Charles responds by adopting a complacent, flaccid posture, with his head down and eyes averted toward Philip. In respectful acquiescence to his father and compliant with the directions of the courtier who urges him to regard the Duke, the Count has clearly fallen in line with the court's expectations. Furthermore, indicative of Charles' banishment from governance, his figure is sidelined in relation to the main scene. In a court culture that affirmed honor, 'not only by official appointments but by proximity to the Duke,' the tangential position of Charles' figure imparts his relegation at the court.⁴⁵ This arrangement is unusual, as exemplified by the presentation scene in the first volume to one of the most celebrated manuscript commissions by the Burgundian Dukes, the *Chroniques de Hainaut*, which was completed at Philip's order in 1448 (Figure 4).⁴⁶ Here the sprightly thirteen-year-old Count regards translator Jean Wauquelin offering the bound volume to Philip, himself a model of stately magnificence. The physiques of father and son complement one another, as each curves back slightly at the shoulders; the opposing arcs create a mirror image of sorts. Philip is the sovereign, no doubt, but Charles is his heir designate. In comparison, the message in the miniature from the *Traité* is especially prickly: the Count has squandered his father's favor and is thus relegated to the outer reaches of the miniature's frame. No longer energized, his figure is modestly restrained – flaccid, one could say – in contrast to his true behavior on that winter's day in 1457.

Just as important, however, is that Isabelle of Portugal, who whisked her son away from the chapel after his tantrum, is nowhere to be found.

⁴⁵ Quote from Arnade, *Realms of Ritual*, 15.

⁴⁶ Analyses of the frontispiece include C. Van den Bergen-Pantens, ed., *Les Chroniques de Hainaut. Ambitions d'un prince bourguignon* (Turnhout, 2000) and Cyriel Stroo, *De celebratie van de macht. Presentatieminiaturen en annoverwante voorstellingen in handschriften van Filips de Goede (1419-1467) and Karel de Stoute (1467-1477)* (Turnhout, 2002).



Figure 4. After Rogier van der Weyden, *Jean Wauquelin Offers his Translation to Philip the Good*, from the *Chroniques de Hainaut*, 1448. Brussels, Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, Ms. 9492, fol. 1. Copyright Bibliothèque royale de Belgique.

Here, exclusion is telling: the chain of command is exclusively homosocial. The model of power it so successfully forwards, is one in which hierarchies of political and social control were forged by men, in relation to men. Front and center in all of this, of course, is Philip's devotional portrait diptych, which intervenes to advance the proper pecking order and to offer a paradigm of masculine sovereignty for the disobedient heir apparent. The book of hours, too, enhances the message of power for, as I will demonstrate later, the volumes were potent symbols of feminine religious authority which, by this time, were strategically appropriated by men to augment their own status.

Gender and Power

My interest in the negotiations and hierarchies of gender in Burgundian devotional art has led me to draw from recent work in gender studies, history, religion, and literature, where scholars are engaged in a richly layered theoretical dialogue about masculinity and femininity. Most writers define gender as a socially constructed condition in which a multiplicity of meanings and associations come to be grafted onto male and female bodies to shape the identities, experiences, responses, and interrelations of men and women. The view of gender as a fabricated condition, as opposed to a 'natural' bodily state, has its roots in feminist studies of the 1970s, particularly in Simone de Beauvoir's succinct declaration that 'one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman.'⁴⁷ Beauvoir's revisionist view ultimately made it possible to see womanhood as multifarious, as a process of wide-ranging identity formations that responded to a complex and shifting set of societal pressures and experiences. The latter, it became clear, rendered femininity diverse, variable, and subject to constant redefinition over time and place. In the meantime, however, cautionary messages warned against defining 'woman' as some sort of essentialist 'other' to be assessed against the normative 'man.' Such an approach does a disservice to men as well as women, for it forwards a static masculinity to which all men were subordinated rather than a range of masculinities that were in play simultaneously.⁴⁸ It also divests men of agency, an issue that has long been in play in feminist scholarship in regard to patriarchal structures. Yet recent work has revealed that masculinities can be conflicting and hierarchical, and men in disadvantaged positions – men who identified themselves as operating outside of norms of masculinity – could use their agency to circumvent their marginalized status. Indeed, as I will argue, especially in Chapter Three, masculinity is just as multifaceted and subject to clefts and transformations as femininity, and agency is a critical area of study for both.

While masculinities and femininities can and should be explored as separate, self-contained subjects, it is essential that we also consider their intersections, an area that remains largely under-explored for the Burgundian Netherlands and for the art of fifteenth-century northern Europe in general. Such an approach can illuminate many things, not the

⁴⁷ *The Second Sex*, trans. H.M. Parshley (New York, 1974), 301.

⁴⁸ See the insightful discussion by Kathleen P. Long, "Introduction," in *High Anxiety: Masculinity in Crisis in Early Modern France*, ed. Kathleen P. Long (Kirksville, Mo., 2002), ix-xvii.

least of which is power relations between the sexes and between groups and individuals of the same sex who identified themselves differently. Power between women and men is at the heart of Joan Wallach Scott's widely influential definition of gender, which she sees as 'a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power.'⁴⁹ For Wallach and many other feminist scholars, the study of power relations means the study of patriarchy, or, simply put, the oppression and control of women by men. Certainly patriarchy must be a central consideration for a study of gender in the Burgundian Netherlands, for while figures such as Margaret of York, Mary of Burgundy, and Margaret of Austria wielded palpable authority and commanded substantial respect, they did so under patriarchal constraints, which shaped, among other things, the inheritance of patrimony as we have seen, and challenged women in the political, familial, and religious spheres (denial to access to the priesthood is the most blatant example of the latter). To be sure, Burgundian men and women shared many common goals, interests, and points of agreement, yet patriarchy, and the tensions that inevitably resulted from it, were irrefutable facts of life.

The women considered here, however, as I will demonstrate, were highly capable of exercising agency to circumvent patriarchal expectations when they saw fit, and in this sense they exercised considerable authority.⁵⁰ The Burgundian Duchesses, for instance, emerge as individuals of agency albeit while grappling with preconceived expectations for their sex (as men did, too) and in a societal microcosm, the court, where patriarchy was the norm. A model for power recently proposed by Joanne E. Sharp, Paul Routledge, Chris Phalo, and Ronan Paddison helps us to see more specifically how this is so. Following Michel Foucault, the authors argue that power has, 'positive and negative dimensions, operating in ways which can be repressed and progressive, constraining and facilitative, to be condemned and celebrated.'⁵¹ These pairings bring to mind the

⁴⁹ 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,' *American Historical Review* 91 (1986): 1053-1075, quote on 1067. Whitney Davis, 'Gender,' in *Critical Terms for Art History*, ed. Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff, 2nd ed. (Chicago, 2003), 330-344, attempts to divest gender of power and thus should be used with caution.

⁵⁰ Allen J. Frantzen, 'When Women Aren't Enough,' *Speculum* 68 (1993): 446, notes the possibility of a reversal in the normative hierarchy in western culture: gender is a tool by which we can understand, 'why some women are more powerful than some men.'

⁵¹ 'Entanglements of Power: Geographies of Domination/Resistance,' in *Entanglements of Power: Geographies of Domination/Resistance*, ed. Joanne P. Sharp, Paul Routledge, Chris Philo, and Ronan Paddison (London, 2000), 2.

dominance/resistance couplet, which scholars traditionally have seen as reinforcing 'the idea that it is the figures and processes of domination that exclusively hold power.'⁵² Power, the authors argue, cannot be considered solely in regard to domination, however, for there is considerable power in resistance: by exercising it, one exercises power. Thus, we can and must speak of a 'resisting power.' While it may seem that dominance and resistance ultimately would become indistinguishable from one another, they are not: 'there *are* still the oppressed of the world.'⁵³ This statement brings us back full circle to patriarchy, to signal that women's resistance to patriarchal structures and expressions, exercised to any degree whatsoever, must be considered powerful and ultimately empowering, and thus we must also see women who resisted as powerful. This model of power also recognizes that some men considered themselves marginalized or threatened in regard to other men; some women saw themselves disadvantaged vis-à-vis other women. For those in situations like this, resistance, again no matter to what degree or in what form, was power. Moving beyond theoretical to historical considerations, the incorporation of resistance into the discourse of power has important implications for Burgundian studies in particular, for it broadens the discussion beyond the traditional preoccupation with dominating power in the political, economic, and social arenas.⁵⁴ Additionally, by integrating books of hours and devotional portrait diptychs into the interdisciplinary theoretical discourse on gender and power, and by interrogating them in regard to gendered devotional experiences and practices, I hope in turn to contribute to the range of humanistic disciplines on which my study necessarily relies: art history, history, religion, literature, women's studies, and the burgeoning field of men's studies. This objective is augmented by depictions of courtly, monastic, and urban sitters in devotional portrait diptychs, which permit an examination of gender in these critical, diverse spheres.

⁵² Sharp, et. al., 'Entanglements,' 9.

⁵³ Quote from Sharp, et al., 'Entanglements,' 21, paraphrasing E. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London, 1993).

⁵⁴ See Prevenier and Blockmans, *The Burgundian Netherlands*, 223; Arnade, *Realms of Ritual*, 1-35; Robert Stein, ed., *Powerbrokers in the Late Middle Ages. The Burgundian Low Countries in a European Context* (Turnhout, 2000); Wim Blockmans and Antheun Janse, eds., *Showing Status: Representations of Social Positions in the Late Middle Ages* (Turnhout, 1999); Jean-Marie Cauchies, ed., *A la cour de Bourgogne. Le duc, son entourage, son train* (Turnhout, 1998); and for the visual arts in particular, Marina Belozerskaya, *Rethinking the Renaissance: Burgundian Arts Across Europe* (Cambridge, Eng., 2002), esp. 47-145.

The five chapters that follow explicate the participation of books of hours and devotional portrait diptychs in performances, negotiations, and hierarchies of gender. These goals are best served not by a survey of the works, however, but by examining selected examples in their specific socio-religious milieus. A common thread throughout is the manipulation of the types by marginalized or imperiled figures in order to resist societal norms and assert their own status. Chapter One argues that laywomen forged books of hours into potent symbols of feminine religious clout and autonomy, principally by linking them to the incarnational piety of religious women undertaken outside of clerical intervention. I will show how books of hours belonging to two specific women, the Burgundian Duchesses Margaret of York and Mary of Burgundy, reflected and participated in shaping a consequential, distinctive feminine identity and community at the court, through which they circumvented patriarchal control and gender stereotypes. Chapter Two assesses the male response to the book of hours as a signifier of female empowerment. I will argue that laymen, who considered themselves threatened in religion in relation to women, appropriated the book of hours to counteract their own precarious status in the faith. Chapter Three furthers the discussion of men on the fringes, arguing that certain devotional portrait diptychs painted in Bruges, where debates over masculinity were highly contentious, forward an alternative masculinity grounded outside the norms of marriage and procreation – namely, in virginity. The two remaining chapters address instances in which women boldly modified or severed the masculine gendering of devotional portrait diptychs by commissioning examples including their own portraits. Chapter Four queries the diptych from the convent of Flines in regard to reforms that reallocated authority away from abbess Jeanne de Boubais, the patron of the work, to her male superiors. I will argue that Jeanne commissioned the diptych for a cleric portrayed on its inner panels to suggest not resistance to, but rather compliance with this loss of power and with the directives of reform. Lastly, Chapter Five probes four diptychs commissioned by and depicting Margaret of Austria. The images, I will show, synthesize some of the most compelling signposts of masculine and feminine authority to advance an uncompromising message of sovereignty and supremacy for Margaret's regency.

Books of hours and devotional portrait diptychs provide a rich and highly productive evidentiary basis for the study of gender. Certainly many works in these categories and others that fall outside the scope of this book suggest that men and women aspired to perform gender according to expectation; such images promoted norms and stability in masculine and feminine identities, roles, behaviors, and attitudes. Those who broke from these expectations, as is the case with many of the sitters discussed here,

were perhaps unusual in this regard. In most cases, they did so only after finding themselves in unusual or difficult circumstances that required extraordinary responses. In such instances, as the evidence attests, they daringly fissured, breached, recalculated, and recalibrated the boundaries of gender to their own advantage.