

## Devotional Objects in Book Format: Diptychs in the Collection of Margaret of Austria and her Family

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**S**MALL DEVOTIONAL DIPTYCHS FEATURE quite prominently in the private collections of members of the Burgundian–Hapsburgian dynasty from the late fourteenth to the early sixteenth centuries. This study explores the significance of this particular art object within the context of the development of private worship in the Late Middle Ages with special reference to Margaret of Austria and her great grandfather Duke Philip the Good.

In documentary sources of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries diptychs are generally described in terms of their physical structure: ‘a panel consisting of two pieces’, ‘a double panel’, ‘a panel with two leaves’.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Panel: ‘Ungs tableaux de deux pieces’; from J. Labarte, ed., ‘Inventaire du Mobilier de Charles V, Roi de France (1380)’, in *Collection des Documents inédits sur l’histoire de France*, (Paris, 1879) 226; cited in D. Eichberger, *Bildkonzeption und Weltdeutung im New Yorker Diptychon des Jan van Eycks* (Wiesbaden, 1987) 117. There is a full list of the inventories referred to in abbreviated form in the footnotes in the Appendix below. Double panel: ‘Double tableau de Nostre Dame, d’ung coust saint Jehan et de l’aultre sainte Marguerite... X livres’ 1535 (Le Glay (1839), 484). This entry refers to one of the diptychs by

Such descriptions make clear the distinction between the shape of the diptych and that of a single panel or a triptych.<sup>2</sup> Sometimes, however, diptychs are described in more evocative terms as 'panels made in the shape of books' or even more specifically as 'panels made in the shape of a book of hours'. In an inventory dating from 1521, for example, which lists objects inherited by Margaret of Austria from her father, Emperor Maximilian, one particular diptych is described as 'a small gold panel made in the shape of a book'.<sup>3</sup> The same object is described in more detail in a later inventory as: 'a small rectangular gold panel, in the manner of a book of hours, which opens with hinges, on which are depicted Our Lady and Saint Louis, etc.'<sup>4</sup> Another diptych in the same inventory is described as 'a small gold panel in the shape of a book of hours, with two enamelled images, one of Our Lady and the other of St Barbara . . .'.<sup>5</sup> This particular paraphrase of the term 'diptych', likening it to a devotional prayer book, invites further enquiry.

The most apparent reason for the analogy between a double panel and an opened book of hours is their formal similarity: both objects are generally small in format and therefore portable; both can be opened and closed, and secured with clasps; and both sometimes contain full-length images on facing leaves. These general similarities have been discussed in some detail in relation to the Wilton Diptych in the National Gallery in

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Michiel Sittow, which is described in more detail in the 1516 and 1523–4 inventories; see n. 3. Panel with two leaves: 'Ung tableau a double feullet.' The same object is described in 1516 as: 'Ung petit tableaul a double feullet de la main de Michiel, de l'ung des coustez de Nostre Dame . . . de l'autre coustez d'ung Sainct Jehan et de Saincte Marguerite, faiz a la semblence du prince d'Espaigne et de Madame' (Le Glay (1839), 481); and in 1523–4 as: 'Item, ung aultre petit de N(ost)re Dame d'ung costel et de saint Jehan l'Evangeliste et de sainte Marguerite, tirez apres le vif du feu prince d'Espaigne, mary de Madame, aussy apres le vif de Mad. Dame' (Michelant (1871), 93).

<sup>2</sup> This terminology is used so consistently that the shape of only one object—listed in the 1523–4 inventory—is unclear: 'Item, ung aultre petit tableau de N(re) Dame en chief ou est la representation de l'empereur moderne et de Madam a genoux, adorant ladicit ymaige, dessus ung blason aux armes d'Espaigne et de Bourgogne et quatre blasons es quatre coins' (Michelant (1871), 83–84).

<sup>3</sup> 'Un petit tableau d'or, fait en forme de livre = 4 onces, 2 est, donne a Madame (l'archiduchesse Marguerite), porte ici pour la moitie de sa valeur = 40 livres, 17 sols, 6 deniers' (Finot (1895), 183).

<sup>4</sup> 'Ung petit tableau d'or quarre en facon d'heures, que se ouvre a charnières, ou quel sont une ymage de Notre-Dame et une ymage de saint loys esmaillez. A l'entour des deux tableaux sont six grains de balay, quatre de saphiz et dix perles, entremeslee de feuillage, esmaille de vert, pesant . . . 4 onces 3 estrellins' [19/3/1531] (Voltelini (1890), IX, No. 80). Margaret bequeathed this to her nephew, King Charles V; see n. 32.

<sup>5</sup> 'Une tablette d'or en facon d'heures, ou sont deux ymages esmartees, unde de Notre-Dame, et l'autre de sainte Barbe, et n'y a qu'ung fermeillet, l'autre est tumbée, pesant . . . 1 once 5 1/2 estrellins' [19/3/1531] (Voltelini (1890), IX, No. 82). This was also left to Charles V; see n. 32.

London (Figs 85–86), and the double page composition on pages 10–11 of the *Très Belles Heures de Notre Dame* (Brussels, Bibl. Royale, MSS 11060–1; Figs 87–88) both of which date from the last decade of the fourteenth century.<sup>6</sup> In these works the owners, Richard II and Jean de Berry respectively, are portrayed in the company of their patron saints on the left half of a double page or panel, at a respectful distance from the object of their devotion, the Virgin and Child, who face them on the other half.

These two types of objects, however, which were very popular with the aristocracy of the late medieval period,<sup>7</sup> have more in common than their purely formal qualities. While the role of the book of hours as an aid to personal prayer has long been recognized, Kermer argues that the diptychs listed in royal and ducal inventories also played an important part in the daily devotions performed by their owners.<sup>8</sup> His interpretation rests mainly on the analysis of written sources, but it can also be substantiated by reference to works of art. Two excellent examples are provided by works belonging to Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy (1396–1467).

A miniature illustrating the *Traité sur l'oraison dominicale* (Brussels, Bibl. Royale, MS 9092, f. 9, c.1457; Fig. 89) demonstrates how diptych and private prayer book could function in tandem.<sup>9</sup> By contrast to the priest shown publicly celebrating Mass in front of a large triptych, the duke kneels apart in a secluded tent-like structure; an illuminated prayer book lies open on the *prie-dieu* before him and a small diptych hangs on the wall directly above it. This displays an image of the Virgin and a portrait, perhaps of Philip himself.

Another devotional object in the duke's collection combines text and image in unusual fashion (Vienna, ON MS 1800; Pl. 8 and Fig. 90). It consists of a prayer book surmounted by a small diptych in a wooden frame, showing two devotional images, the *Trinity* on the left and the *Coronation of the Virgin* on the right.<sup>10</sup> Both illuminated manuscript and diptych are

<sup>6</sup> See J. Dunkerton, S. Foister, et al., *Giotto to Dürer, Early Renaissance Painting in the National Gallery* (New Haven & London, 1991), 136–39; and Eichberger, *Bildkonzeption* (1987), 42–43.

<sup>7</sup> King Charles V, for example, kept five diptychs in the study of his residence at St Germain-en-Lai: two painted double panels, two reliquary panels, and one ivory diptych. See Eichberger, *Bildkonzeption* (1987), 117.

<sup>8</sup> W. Kermer, *Studien zum Diptychon in der sakralen Malerei von den Anfängen bis zur Mitte des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Neunkirchen, 1969), 4.

<sup>9</sup> See L.M.J. Delaissé, *Middeleeuwse Miniaturen van de Librije van Bourgondie tot het Handschriftenkabinet van de Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België* (Amsterdam, 1960), 172–75; and H. van Os et al., translated M. Hoyle, *The Art of Devotion* (Princeton, 1994), 161.

<sup>10</sup> The diptych which is parchment on wood is dated c.1430; the manuscript: is c.1450. See O. Pächt, U. Jenni and D. Thoss, *Flämische Schule I*, (Vienna, 1983) 19–23; D. Thoss,

permanently linked together by a single leather binding and were obviously designed to be used in conjunction with each other, so that as the owner prayed from the book he could fix his gaze on the images of the diptych that represented the object of his devotion. Interestingly, the manuscript opens with an illustration of Philip praying with his son Charles the Bold, before an altar surmounted by an opened diptych (Pl. 8).

In this context, it should be noted that diptychs were not the only artefacts that imitated the format of the book. Occasionally, late medieval inventories mention small objects that take the concept of a picture book *en miniature* even further. A fifteenth-century Burgundian inventory itemizes a 'little book comprising eight leaves of gold and enamel, containing several histories such as the Annunciation, Nativity, Circumcision, and others from the life of our Lord'.<sup>11</sup> The selection and ordering of these scenes indicate that this metal artefact imitated a book of hours not just in form, but also in content, since the sequence, which starts with the Annunciation, Nativity and Circumcision, resembles that used conventionally to illustrate the Little Office of the Virgin.

Earlier devotional diptychs were frequently made from expensive materials such as enamelled gold or ivory and were mostly owned by important noble families; but the popularity of this format led to a dramatic increase in the production of painted diptychs in the course of the fifteenth century.<sup>12</sup> The idea of possessing a copy of a famous devotional icon combined with a life-like portrait of oneself became so fashionable that wider sections of the community, common burghers as well as nobility, commissioned these works from the leading artists of the day. In a diptych now in Antwerp, for example, Abbot Christiaan de Hondt is depicted praying in front of a well-known Marian image, a copy of *The Virgin in the Church* by Jan van Eyck (Figs 91–92).<sup>13</sup> What at first glance looks like a rendering of the Abbot's private bedroom is probably a conventionalized setting. A very similar composition is used for a diptych of almost identical dimensions, now in Ghent, which was commissioned

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*Flämische Buchmalerei, Handschriftensätze aus dem Burgunderreich* (Vienna, 1987) 27–28; and O. Mazal and D. Thoss, eds, *Das Buchaltärchen herzog Phillips des Guten von Burgund. Codex 1800 der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek in Wien*. (Lucerne, 1991).

<sup>11</sup> Cited in R.W. Lightbown, *Medieval European Jewellery* (London, 1990), 217.

<sup>12</sup> For examples of devotional diptychs in ivory, see van Os, *Art of Devotion*, Pls 1 and 6.

<sup>13</sup> Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, by the Master of 1499; each panel is 315x146 mm. See P. Vandenbroek, *Catalogus schilderkunst 14e en 15e eeuw, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten* (Antwerpen, 1985) 125–30; and P. Eeckhout, 'Les trois diptyques du Maître 1499', *Bulletin-Musées royaux des beaux-arts de Belgique, Miscellanea Philippe Roberts-Jones* (1985–8), 49–62.

by Margaret of Austria, the regent of the Netherlands (Figs 93–94).<sup>14</sup> Margaret's *prie-dieu*, too, is placed in a domestic interior which includes a stately bed, a cupboard with a variety of vessels and a lit fire-place. The coat-of-arms on the mantelpiece and carpet clearly identify her as the dowager duchess of Savoy and regent of the Netherlands. While there are no grounds for assuming that either of these paintings portrays its owner's personal apartments accurately, it is nevertheless of interest that both the abbot and the archduchess are depicted performing their religious duties in the privacy of their home and not in a church. And although the similarity of the settings indicates the application of a standard formula, these representations nevertheless testify to contemporary religious practices such as the placing of a small devotional image next to the bed.<sup>15</sup> The Ghent diptych surfaced for sale on the French art market in 1971 and has not yet attracted much attention.<sup>16</sup> This small double panel is, nevertheless, of particular importance for the current discussion, since it is one of twelve devotional diptychs which can be linked to Margaret of Austria's patronage or to her collection. Most of these objects are now lost, and their appearance has largely to be reconstructed from detailed inventory descriptions which were kept for housekeeping purposes and clarification of ownership. The Ghent diptych, however, matches one of the inventory descriptions; the entry reads: 'Received after this inventory was made, a double panel; and one panel is (an image of) Our Lady dressed in blue, holding her child on the right, and on the other (panel) is Madame on her knees, adoring the said child.'<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Ghent, Museum voor Schone Kunsten; each panel is 305x146 mm. Some art historians have attributed this second diptych also to the Master of 1499. Paul Vandebroek, however, questions the quality of the Ghent diptych and points out that the left panel has been repainted almost completely. The right panel, which contains the portrait of Margaret of Austria, has been partially repainted (Vandebroek, *Catalogus*, 127).

<sup>15</sup> The diptych in the de Hondt panel depicts a Virgin and Child and a Crucifixion. Margaret owned at least one picture for the head of a bed: 'Ung tableau d'or de bonne grandeur pour pendre a ung lict, ouquel est ung dieu de pitie avec Nostre-Dame et saint Jehan, esmaillez d'azure, rouge et violet, et derriere est escript: Nate Jesu fili David miserer mei; pendant a une chainette et ung crochet, le tout d'or, pesant . . . 1 marc 1 once 13 1/2 estrellins' [9/3/1531] (Voltelini (1890), no. 91).

<sup>16</sup> See Eeckhout, 'Trois diptychs', 60; and Brussels, Palais des Beaux-Arts, *Albert Dürer aux Pays-Bas: son voyage (1520–21), son influence* (Brussels, 1977), 120.

<sup>17</sup> 'Receu puis cest inventoire fait ung double tableau; et l'ung est N(re) Dame habille de bleu, tenant son enfant droit, et en l'aultre Madame a genoux, adorant ledit enfant'. (Michelant (1871), 87). This entry states that the picture entered the collection after 1524; but if Margaret commissioned the work herself, it is unlikely that it was executed much before that date. The match with another entry suggested by F. Baudson in the exhibition catalogue is untenable, as is her suggestion that there may have been a third panel; see Brou, Musée de Brou, *Van Orley et les Artistes de la cour de Marguerite d'Autriche* (Brou, 1981), 54–55.

This late example of the most common type of devotional diptych showing the patron facing an image of the Virgin and Child maintains the spiritual power and meaning characteristic of the genre since its inception. Portrayed with prayer book and joined hands, symbols of steadfast devotion, Margaret entreats the Virgin Mary's intercession with her divine son, on behalf of herself and the whole human race.

In order to establish a precise historical context for a more detailed examination of the selection and display of such devotional images in Margaret of Austria's residence in Mechelen, it is appropriate to recall the basic facts of her life and the ways in which she expressed her piety throughout it.

Margaret was born in 1480, the daughter of Emperor Maximilian and Mary of Burgundy; she and her brother, Philip the Fair, were the sole heirs to the Burgundian-Hapsburgian dynasty, which was then attempting to dominate the political landscape of Europe.<sup>18</sup> Astutely arranged marriages formed an important role in the political strategy of the family.<sup>19</sup> This may explain why Margaret was betrothed three times and widowed twice before settling into a more regular lifestyle in the Netherlands, of which she was appointed regent in 1507.<sup>20</sup> While she exerted considerable power over the fate of the Netherlands during her rule (1507–15 and 1518–30), her official titles are a better indication of the wide sphere of her personal influence. They also point to the sources of the revenue on which she drew to finance her court and various projects. In 1523 Margaret's official titles were, 'Archiduchesse d'Autriche et de Bourgoigne, duchesse de Savoye, contesse de Bourgoigne, de Charrolais, de Romont, de Baugey, de Villars, dame de Salins, de Malines, de Chastelchinon, de Noyer, de Chaulcins, de la Parriere, des pays de Bresse, de

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<sup>18</sup> For the life of Margaret of Austria, see M. Bruchet, *Marguerite d'Autriche, Duchesse de Savoie* (Lille, 1927); G. De Boom, *Marguerite d'Autriche-Savoie et la Pre-Renaissance* (Brussels, 1935); and G. Königsberger, *Erzherzogin Margarethe im politischen Dienst ihres Vaters Kaiser Maximilian I, von 1506–1515* (Diss., Graz, 1980).

<sup>19</sup> The two diptychs of Philip the Fair (London, National Gallery) and Margaret of Austria (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum), for example, were probably commissioned in relation to negotiations between the Spanish and the Hapsburgian families, which ultimately led to the double marriage of Margaret of Austria to Juan of Castille and Philip the Fair to Joanna of Castille; see *Porträtgalerie der Geschichte Österreichs von 1400 bis 1800, Katalog der Gemäldegalerie* (Vienna, 1976), 57–58.

<sup>20</sup> See M. Debae, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale Albert 1er, *La Librairie de Marguerite d'Autriche* (Brussels, 1987), XIV–XV.

Vaulx, and de Faucigny'.<sup>21</sup> These villages, counties and duchies were the site of her active support of monasteries, churches, and hospitals.<sup>22</sup>

That Margaret's major activity as a patron of the arts was in the area of religious projects and commissions is by no means unusual. As recent studies of Isabella of Portugal, Isabella la Catolica, and Margaret of York have shown, this was the case with a number of noble women in late medieval society.<sup>23</sup> Examples drawn from three key areas of her patronage will help to indicate the nature and range of these religious interests.

After the death of her last husband, Duke Philibert of Savoy, in 1504, Margaret embarked on an unusually large and costly project, the building of the church and convent of Brou in her county of Bresse.<sup>24</sup> Undertaken in fulfilment of a pledge given by her mother-in-law, Marguerite de Bourbon, to build a memorial church as a token of gratitude for the recovery of her husband from a serious illness, it was a project to which Margaret had a deep personal commitment and one which she pursued with extraordinary persistence and even a grain of stubbornness, despite major financial and organizational difficulties. Both the church and associated Augustinian convent feature prominently in her last will.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, from the outset, the church, St Nicholas in Brou, was destined to become Margaret's burial site. It was not only built to contain her funerary monument, together with those of her late husband and her mother-in-law, but also to house a lavishly decorated private chapel for the archduchess. The church featured stained glass windows, choir-stalls and many other objects paid for by Margaret and her courtiers.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Lille, Archive du Nord, B 2312, no. 81524, cited in Bruchet, *Marguerite d'Autriche*, 57, n. 1.

<sup>22</sup> Perhaps the most telling document is her testament, drawn up in 1508 and only added to at the time of her approaching death in 1530; it is fully reproduced in J. Baux, *Histoire de l'Eglise de Brou* (Bourg-en-Bresse, 2nd ed., 1862) 345–67; see also De Boom, *Marguerite d'Autriche-Savoie*, 110–14.

<sup>23</sup> See W. Blockmans, 'The devotion of a lonely Duchess', in T. Kren, ed., *Margaret of York, Simon Marmion and 'The Visions of Tondal'* (Malibu, 1992) 29–46; N. Morgan, 'Texts of devotion and religious instruction associated with Margaret of York', in Kren, ed., *Margaret of York*, 63–76; and C. Lemaire, M. Henry and A. Rouzet, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale Albert 1er, *Isabelle de Portugal, Duchesse de Bourgogne, 1397–1471* (Brussels, 1991).

<sup>24</sup> See J. Baux, *Histoire*, 24; and M Horsch, 'Architektur unter Margarethe von Österreich, Regentin der Niederlande (1507–1530)', in *Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen en Schone Kunsten*. jg. 56, 58 (1994), 1–236.

<sup>25</sup> Baux, *Histoire*, 349–54.

<sup>26</sup> M.-F. Poiret, *Le Monastere de Brou. Le chef-d'oeuvre d'une fille d'empereur* (Paris, 1994). A letter written by her secretary from Brou in 1512 refers to a secret walkway which led from Margaret's private apartments in the monastery across the choir-screen to her chapel situated behind her own funerary monument on the northern side of the church. (E. Tremayne, *The first Governess of the Netherlands, Margaret of Austria* (London, 1908), 299).

Her will and inventories indicate very clearly that Margaret saw the convent and the church of Brou as the final destination for many of the devotional objects in her private collection, especially relics and religious images.<sup>27</sup> Among the objects which were sent to Brou in 1532, for example, were an *Ecce Homo* image<sup>28</sup> and a *Vera Icon*.<sup>29</sup>

According to Margaret's will, five of the devotional diptychs in her collection were earmarked for the prior and religious of the convent in Brou, but only one of these, a very old painting with Passion scenes, was actually delivered there.<sup>30</sup> Contrary to her wishes, the other four entered the collection of her niece, Queen Mary of Hungary.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>27</sup> 'Item, donnons et legons a lesglise de nostre couvent de saint Nyclas toutes les saintes reliques que avons et aurons au jour de nostre dict trespas, tant de fust de sainte croix, du saint suaire, ossements de saints et saintes et tous aultres images de saints et saintes que avons et seront trouvees a nostre dict trespas et qui pourroyent servir a decourer icelluy nostre dict couvent, lesquelles voulant incontinant estre pourtees au dict couvent et que noz dicts exequuteurs sur noz dicts biens facent faire casses et reliquieres a leur bon advis pour mettre les dictes reliques' (Baux, *Histoire*, 352).

<sup>28</sup> 'Item, tabula in qua est depicta ymago ipsius Domini Nostri ad formam ECCE HOMO, que verba sunt pendientia in ejus collo et in alia manuum tenet flagellum et in altera harundinem, et fondus ejus est colore rubeo dipictus' [12/6/1532] (Bruchet, *Marguerite d'Autriche*, 429).

<sup>29</sup> 'Item, aliam tabulam in qua est caput quod fertur esse depictum ad veram effigiem Christi, et in duobus lateribus ejusdem tabule scriptum est litteris aureis, et est ipsa tabula vitro clausa et fermata' [12/6/1532] (Bruchet, *Marguerite d'Autriche*, 429).

<sup>30</sup> 'Item, ung aultre double tableau assez vieux, figure de Passion N(re) S(gr) et aultre mistere, donne a Madame par Mons(gr) le conte d'Hocstrate.' A remark on the margins reads: 'Delivre aux prieur et religieux de Brou . . .' [1523-4] (Michelant (1871), 86). This is also confirmed by a list in Latin of objects received by the prior of Brou on 12 June 1532: 'Item, tabul antiquam in qua est dipicta Passio Christi cum aliis ministeriis' (Bruchet, *Marguerite d'Autriche*, 430). Other objects initially destined to go to Brou were still in the palace in Mechelen in 1535, when they were valued by Bernard van Orley, probably with the intention of giving the priory in Brou financial remuneration for the undelivered works: '. . . et fere extimation des tableaux et peintures qui sont esdis cabinetz et librairie que Ma dite feue dame a legue en son cloistre de Brou les Bourg en Bresse, affin que si il plaisoit a la Royne, a qui appartiennent presentement les dis cabinetz et librairie retenir les dis tableaux . . .' (Lille, Arch. Nord., B459, no. 22932, in Bruchet, *Marguerite d'Autriche*, 256). This list and accompanying evaluations were transcribed by Le Glay with the 1516 inventory fragments (Le Glay (1839), 483-84). See also Finot (1895), 212-13.

<sup>31</sup> The four diptychs are described in the inventories: 'Double tableau de Nostre Dame, d'ung coust saint Jehan et de l'aultre sainte Marguerite . . . X livres' (Le Glay (1839), 483-84); 'Aultre double tableau; en l'ung est Nostre-Seigneur pendant en croix; en l'aultre l'histoire de saint Gregoire . . . IIII livres' (Le Glay (1839), 484); 'Double petit tableau de Chipres; en l'ung est l'ascension Nostre Seigneur, et en l'aultre l'assumption Nostre Dame . . . XL livres' (Le Glay (1839), 483); and, 'Riche double tableau de Nostre-Dame, double par dehors de satin broche . . . C livres' (Le Glay (1839), 483). For Mary of Hungary, see B. van den Boogert, 'Macht en Pracht. Het Mecenat van Maria van Hongarije', in Utrecht, Rijksmuseum Het Catharijneconvent and S'Hertogenbosch, Noordbrabants Museum, *Maria*



In addition to the largesse shown towards the men's convent in Brou, Margaret bestowed extensive patronage on a newly founded women's order, the so-called 'Annonciades'.<sup>32</sup> In 1517, shortly after its institution, she established a community in Anes, close to Bruges. In the late 1520s Margaret herself seriously considered giving up her position as regent of the Netherlands in order to retire into this order.<sup>33</sup> In addition to pledging many liturgical garments and objects to the foundation, she commissioned her court artist Bernard van Orley to paint a large altarpiece now in Brussels (Centre publique d'Aide Sociale) for the main altar of its church. The triptych shows the *Death and the Assumption of the Virgin* on its central panel.<sup>34</sup>

Another large altarpiece, with a representation of the Virgin Mary, was commissioned for the Sainte Chapelle of Chambéry in Savoy.<sup>35</sup> Not long after Margaret's final departure from Savoy, this church became a focal point of her patronage because it possessed a relic of the Holy Shroud (now in Turin). This widely venerated relic, which had fallen into the hands of the dukes of Savoy in 1453, attracted visitors of the highest rank, including King Francis I, the Cardinal of Aragon, and Philip the Fair.<sup>36</sup> Margaret of Austria fostered the cult which developed around the Holy Shroud and expressed her own veneration for this precious relic by giving orders to her goldsmith, Lievin van Lathem, to make a gilded silver shrine to protect and embellish it.<sup>37</sup> This extraordinarily expensive object, which was delivered to the Sainte Chapelle in 1509, was not the only tribute paid to the relic by the archduchess. In addition to donating the shrine, she also commissioned van Orley to paint an image of the Holy

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*van Hongarije, Konigin tussen Keizers en Kunstenaars, 1505–1558* (Zwolle, 1993). Charles V also received two splendidly jewelled diptychs from his aunt. For their descriptions see nn. 6 and 7. These are listed, together with most of the precious jewels, in the 1535 inventory; but they do not appear in the inventories of 1516 and 1523–4, perhaps indicating that such valuable things were itemized separately from the rest of Margaret's possessions.

<sup>32</sup> A.-J. Wauters, 'Orley, Bernard van', in *Biographie Nationale de Belgique*, vol. XVI (1901), col. 261.

<sup>33</sup> Baux, *Histoire*, 106–10.

<sup>34</sup> See Wauters, 'Orley', cols 261–62 for payment to van Orley for 'un beau tableau ou il peinte et figuree la Remembrance de Marie morte, lequel la dicte dame a envoye au couvent des Sept Douleurs Notre-Dame a Bruges'.

<sup>35</sup> Bruchet, *Marguerite d'Autriche*, 371, Pl. XLIV.

<sup>36</sup> Bruchet, *Marguerite d'Autriche*, 140. It is now generally agreed that the shroud is a medieval forgery; see W.C. McCrone, 'The Shroud of Turin: Blood or artist's pigment', in *Acc. Chem. Res.* 23 (1990), 77–83; and London, British Museum, *Fake? The Art of Deception* (London, 1990), 284.

<sup>37</sup> Bruchet, *Marguerite d'Autriche*, 139. Liévin van Lathem is not identical with the Flemish painter and illuminator called Liéven van Lathem (c.1430–1493).

Shroud on white taffeta.<sup>38</sup> This she kept in a cupboard of the bedroom of her main residence, presumably so that she might have a memento of the relic near her.<sup>39</sup>

Such was the nature of Margaret's patronage towards the religious institutions of her realm. Let us now turn to the devotional objects commissioned or acquired for her permanent home, the Palais Savoy in Mechelen.

Soon after Margaret's return to the Netherlands in 1507, she established herself in Mechelen, where she had already spent some time in her childhood at the court of her close relative, Margaret of York, the third wife of her grandfather Charles the Bold. Following in her namesake's footsteps, she herself now ruled over a courtly household of more than 150 people.<sup>40</sup> Margaret's residence, which consisted of several older buildings and some new additions, had been built under the supervision of the Flemish architects Anthoon and Rombout Keldermans.<sup>41</sup> The suite of rooms which comprised her private apartments can be reconstructed from both civic records and the inventory of 1523–4.<sup>42</sup> Eight rooms, housing her private possessions, can be identified: chapel, library, the 'premiere chambre', followed by the adjoining 'riche cabinet', the 'seconde chambre a chemynee', followed by the 'petit cabinet', the 'cabinet empres le jardin', and a separate room to house treasures, such as jewels and other objects made from gold and silver.<sup>43</sup> The majority of her religious artworks—paintings, sculptures and decorative textiles—were housed in three of these rooms: the 'seconde chambre a chemynee' with the adjoining 'petit cabinet' and the 'cabinet empres le jardin'. No major works of religious art were kept in the chapel, the library, the 'premiere chambre', or the 'riche cabinet' at the time when the inventory was taken.

Of the eleven diptychs mentioned in the various inventories of Margaret's collection, eight can be associated with a specific location in the palace; three are listed without reference to a specific room.<sup>44</sup> In 1523, five

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<sup>38</sup> Wauters, 'Orley', col. 261.

<sup>39</sup> 'Item, la pourtraiture du saint Suaire de Nre Sgr, fete en toille' [1523–4] (Michelant (1871), 91).

<sup>40</sup> This figure is for the year 1525; see Bruchet, *Marguerite d'Autriche*, 71.

<sup>41</sup> See *Bouwen door de eeuwen heen, Inventaris van het cultuurbezit in België, Architectuur, deel 9n: Stad Mechelen/Binnenstad* (Ghent, 1984), 262–69.

<sup>42</sup> J. Grootaers, 'Aspecten van het burgerlijk interieur te Mechelen c.1480–1530, Hof van Margareta-Hof van Cortenbach', in Mechelen, Stedelijk Museum, *De Habsburgs & Mechelen* (Mechelen, 1987), 39–47.

<sup>43</sup> Brussels, Algemeen Rijksarchief, Stadsrekening Mechelen, no. 412303 (1524/25), f. 201v: 'Inde camere vanden jouweelen . . . Item aen bancken daer men de cofferen metten jouweelen op stelt'.

<sup>44</sup> The Erard de la Marck diptych was added later to the inventory; the two gold metal diptychs bequeathed to Charles V, mentioned in note 33, appear only in the 1531

of the eight diptychs were kept in the 'seconde chambre a chemynee'; three others were in the adjoining 'petit cabinet'. These two rooms, which contain by far the greatest concentration of religious artworks in her apartments, were also the most private of Margaret's rooms, one being her bedroom, the other her study.<sup>45</sup>

Certain kinds or types of diptychs can be distinguished among this collection. Since devotional diptychs with donor portraits were so popular in fifteenth-century northern Europe,<sup>46</sup> it is not surprising that this type features prominently in Margaret's collection: she had five of them, four of which depicted members of her family. Reference has already been made to the diptych in Ghent showing Margaret at prayer before the Virgin and Child which entered her collection after 1523 (4s 94–95). One of the most valuable devotional portrait diptychs in her collection represented her grandfather, Charles the Bold,<sup>47</sup> another double panel portrayed her grandmother, Isabella of Bourbon.<sup>48</sup> The double panel with the portrait of Charles the Bold, which had been valued at the considerable sum of '100 livres', is described in the inventory as a 'rich and very exquisite double panel' depicting our Lady and the Duke of Burgundy.<sup>49</sup> Charles was shown dressed in gold brocade and kneeling in front of the Virgin with a book of hours on the *prie-dieu* before him. The formula chosen for this diptych is clearly quite similar to that employed for the Ghent picture.

A fourth diptych of small dimensions is similar. Here Margaret and her first husband, Juan, the Prince of Spain, were depicted in the guise of

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inventory, which clarifies inheritance and, unlike the standard housekeeping inventories, is not concerned with the location of the object.

<sup>45</sup> In some cases the main purpose of a room can be deduced from the heading used: e.g., 'librairie'. In others, this must be deduced from the list of contents and other clues. The 'seconde chambre a chemynee', for example, has some very personal belongings and is the only room that contains a bed. This, together with the fact that it had heating, makes it reasonable to assume that it was Margaret of Austria's bedroom.

<sup>46</sup> See J. Friedman, *The Half-Length Devotional Portrait Diptychs in the Netherlands* (Los Angeles, 1977); L. Campbell, *Renaissance Portrait: European Portrait Painting in the Fourteenth, Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (London, 1990); and P. Pieper, 'Ein Diptychon der Spätgotik als Andachtsbild', *Pantheon*, 50 (1992), 21–23.

<sup>47</sup> 'Item, ung riche et fort exquis double tableau de N(re) Dame, double par dehors de satin brochier, et Mons(gr) le duc Charles de Bourgogne painct en l'ung desdits fulletz, estans a genoux, habille de draps d'or a ung coussin de velour noir et une heure estant sur son siege devant luy, le bors dudit tableau garnie de velours vers, avec trois ferrures d'argent dore servant audit tableau' [1523–4] (Michelant (1871), 88).

<sup>48</sup> Le Glay (1839), 481: 'Ung petit tableaul d'une Nostre-Dame et de madame de Charorlois, de illuminure, mise en ung estuy ensemble' [1516].

<sup>49</sup> 'Riche double tableau de Nostre-Dame, double par dehors de satin broche . . . C livres' [1535] (Le Glay (1839), 483).

their respective patron saints, St Margaret and St John.<sup>50</sup> This work was executed by one of Margaret's favourite painters, Michiel Sittow, and was kept in the 'petit cabinet'.

Yet another diptych in her collection combined portraiture and devotional image. Right towards the end of her life Margaret received one or possibly two large diptychs showing her close political adviser, Cardinal Erard de la Marck, opposite the Virgin Mary and Christ Child.<sup>51</sup> The diptychs were executed by her court painter Jan Vermeyen. A portrait painting in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam has been identified as one half of this work and another panel in Haarlem has been suggested as its companion-piece.<sup>52</sup> Erard de la Marck was not only an influential political ally, he was also a financial backer of the Hapsburg family.<sup>53</sup> This interesting commission testifies to his importance as a personal adviser at Margaret's court, since it is the only diptych in her collection which portrays a high ranking courtier rather than a family member.

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<sup>50</sup> This diptych is described three times in the inventories: 'Ung petit tableau a double feullet de la main de Michiel, de l'ung des coustez de Nostre Dame . . . de l'autre coustez d'ung Saint Jehan et de Sainte Marguerite, faiz a la semblence du prince d'Espagne et de Madame' [1516] (Le Glay (1839), 481); 'Item, ung aultre petit tableau de Nre Dame d'ung costel et de saint Jehan l'Evangeliste et de sainte Marguerite, tirez apres le vif du feu prince d'Espagne, mary de Madame, aussy apres le vif de Mad. Dame' [1523-4] (Michelant (1871), 93); and, 'Double tableau de Nostre Dame, d'ung couste saint Jehan et de l'aultre sainte Marguerite . . . X livres' [1535] (Le Glay (1839), 484). See J. Trzina, *Michel Sittow, Peintre revelais de l'Ecole brugeoise (1468-1525/6)* (Brussels, 1976), 90-91; and C.T. Eisler, 'The Sittow Assumption', in *Art News* 64 (1965), 34-37.

<sup>51</sup> 'Ung tableau, paintct d'ung couste d'une Nostre Dame et de l'autre du cardinal de Liege, fermant a deux fuilleztz' [1531] (Zimerman (1885), CXXI); and, 'Deux tableaux receuz de M(e) Jehan, le peintre, semblables; en l'ung est N(re) Dame et en l'Aultre Mons(gr) de Liege' (Michelant (1871), 97). The wording of the latter entry, which occurs as a later addition among other portraits by Vermeyen, seems to indicate two diptychs; Horn, also, cites Vermeyen's request for payment outstanding on four panels: 'Ledit Jehan a fait et delivre a ma dite dame quatre grans tableaux assavoir: deux a la figure du cardinal de Liege et autres deux a l'ymage de Notre Dame; pour le bois, estoffes d'or, d'azur et autres... XXI' (H.J. Horn, *Jan Cornelisz Vermeyen, Painter of Charles V and his Conquest of Tunis: Paintings, Etchings, Drawings, Cartoons and Tapestries* (Doornspijk, 1989), I.61). It seems, therefore, that Margaret at some stage commissioned two sets of double panels from Vermeyen. Yet another diptych with similar iconography is recorded as having already been divided into two in the 1523-4 inventory: 'Item, ung double tableau dont l'un N(ot)re Dame et l'autre le cardinal de Liegne, laquelle N(ot)re Dame a este delivree audit couvent de Brou et le Cardinal demora decha' (Michelant (1871), 86). Since Vermeyen only entered Margaret's service c.1525, it is doubtful that this diptych was also made by him.

<sup>52</sup> See J.P. Filedt Kok, W.Th. Kloek and W. Halsema-Kubes, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, *Kunst voor de Beeldenstorm, Noordnederlandse Kunst 1525-1580* (S'Gravenhage, 1986), no. 78; and *Maria van Hongarije*, no. 34 (322-23).

<sup>53</sup> See H. Lonchay, 'Erard de la Marck', in *Biographie Nationale de Belgique*, (1894-95), XIII, cols 497-542; and Horn, *Vermeyen*, 8, n. 52.

While devotional portrait diptychs were well represented in the collection in Mechelen, a similar number concentrated exclusively on religious subject-matter. Six of the eleven diptychs in Margaret's collection depicted either a selection of narrative scenes from the life of Christ and the Virgin, or a combination of individual saints. Two small diptychs made of enamelled gold and precious jewels, for example, showed an image of the Virgin and Child combined with a representation of St Louis and St Barbara respectively.<sup>54</sup>

Margaret received many religious objects as gifts from the Spanish royal family, from the time of her marriage to Juan of Castille in 1497 until she left Spain in 1499. Liturgical objects and tapestries with religious subject-matter were given to her by her parents-in-law, Isabella of Castille and Ferdinand of Aragon, both of whom were known for their conscientious observance of the strict devotional practices characteristic of Spanish lifestyle at the time.<sup>55</sup> Isabella, called 'La Catolica', was herself an active patron of the arts and it may be assumed that she left a lasting impression on the seventeen year old Margaret.<sup>56</sup> A shared interest with her Spanish connections in religious artefacts by Flemish artists is apparent in Margaret's acquisition of a fragmentary set of paintings formerly belonging to her mother-in-law. *The Temptation of Christ in the Desert* (Fig. 95) and *The Marriage Feast at Cana* (Fig. 96) by Juan de Flandes initially formed part of a set of forty-seven individual panels which had been commissioned by Isabella of Spain for a polyptych-altarpiece.<sup>57</sup> This project was not completed during Isabella's lifetime and the separate panels were sold off after her death in 1505. It seems that Margaret instructed her treasurer, Don Diego Flores, to purchase some of these on her behalf from Isabella's estate.<sup>58</sup> For reasons unknown, he acquired only thirty-two of the forty-seven panels; some of the other paintings were

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<sup>54</sup> See nn. 6 and 7.

<sup>55</sup> 'Libro de las joyas de oro e plata, perlas y pedras y otras cosas deazienda de la camera de la muy alta y ecelente dona Margarita, princesa de Castilla, las quales se entregaron a su alteza en la cibdad de Granada en beynte e ocho dias de setiembre de noventa e nueve anos en presencia de museur de Sanpique e museur de Bere, sus embaxadres, las qualas son las siguientes . . .'. [28/9/1499], Granada (Inventory published by R. Beer in *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses*, 12 (1891), CX-CXXIII [Reg. 8347]).

<sup>56</sup> See F. Sanchez Canton, *Libros, Tapices y Cuadros que collecciono Isabel la Catolica* (Madrid, 1950).

<sup>57</sup> See E. Bermejo, *Juan de Flandes* (Madrid, 1962); J. Sanchez Canton, 'El retablo de la Reina Catolica', *Archivo Espagnol Arqueologia* 6 (1930), 97-133. Ch. L. Ishikawa, *The 'Retablo de la Reina Catolica' by Juan de Flandes and Michel Sittow* (Diss., Bryn Mawr College, 1989).

<sup>58</sup> Diego is described as 'conseiller, tresorier et receveur general de Madame l'Archiduchesse d'Autrice' [9/6/1514] (Finot (1895), 224). See M. Davies, *Les Primitifs Flamands, The National Gallery, London*, III (Brussels, 1970), 14-17.

purchased by the Marquesa de Denia. When the thirty-two paintings reached Mechelen, Margaret was faced with a fragmented collection of small but artistically very accomplished panels. The series contained scenes from the childhood, Passion and Resurrection of Christ, as well as several images depicting the life of the Virgin Mary. From their ensuing history it is clear that Margaret cherished these panels both for their quality as works of art and as a memento of the close dynastic ties between the Spanish and the Hapsburgian royal houses. She recognized their potential for use in her private devotions, and consequently set out to transform them into fully functional objects. By 1530, twenty-two of the paintings had been remounted to form two diptychs, a small one incorporating two panels and a larger one incorporating twenty.

For some twenty years after their acquisition, however, the majority of these pictures were kept as separate panels in a wooden box in Margaret's bedroom, occasionally being shown to interested visitors.<sup>59</sup> *The Ascension of Christ* (Fig. 97) and *The Assumption of the Virgin* (Fig. 98) by Michiel Sittow were the first to be redeployed. By 1516, they had been made into one small devotional diptych, set into a frame made of cypress wood. As a result, in inventories from 1516 and in 1523–4 it is listed under a separate entry as an independent object.<sup>60</sup> It is obvious from the various written descriptions that this newly created double panel was not permanently displayed on the walls of Margaret's private apartments, but was kept in a protective leather box inside a cupboard in her bedroom. Her intention to use these precious panels by Sittow and De Flandes as aids for her private devotion is borne out by the fact that she created not

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<sup>59</sup> 'Trente petis tableaux, tous d'une grandeur, de la vye et passion de Nostre-Seigneur qui sont deans une layette de sapin ou y en avoit XXXII; mais les deux qui estoient faiz de la main de Michiel sont estez prins pour faire ung double tableaul, lequel est touche cy devant, et est enchassey de cipre; et sont l'assumpcion de Dieu et celle de Nostre-Dame. Nota qu'il fault quatres pieces pour l'accomplissement de la passion: ung Dieu qui porte la croix, ung autre cruciffie, ung dessendu de la croix et ung mis au sepulcre; qui sont IIII pieces; aussi il fault l'assumpcion de Nostre-Seigneur' [1516] (Le Glay (1839), 482). In 1521 Dürer recorded his visit in his diary as follows: 'Ich bin auch bey frau Margareth gewest und hab sie mein kayser sehen lassen und ir den schenken wollen. Aber do sie ein solchen mißfall darinnen hett, do führet ich ihn wieder weg. Und den freytag wis mir frau Margareth all jhr schön ding; darunter sahe ich bey 40 klainer täfelein von öhlfarben, der gleichen jch von reinigkeith und guth darzu nie gesehen hab . . .' (H. Ruppich, *Dürers schriftlicher Nachlaß* (Berlin, 1966–7), 199.

<sup>60</sup> 'Ung double tableaul de la main de Michiel de l'Assumpcion de Nostre-Seigneur et de celle de Nostre-Dame; qui a une coustode couverte de cuyr' [1516] (Le Glay (1839), 481); 'Item, ung double tableau de bois de cypres, eng l'ung est portrait l'Assumption N(re) S(re) et en l'aultre l'Ascension de N(re) Dame, auquel tableau il y a deux ferrures d'argent' [1523–4] (Michelant (1871), 89); and 'Double petit tableau de Chipres; en l'ung est l'ascension Nostre Seigneur, et en l'aultre l'assumption Nostre Dame . . . XL livres' [1535] (Le Glay (1839), 483).

just the small diptych with the *Ascension* and the *Assumption* but also a second one of much larger proportions. Some time after 1526 twenty paintings from the same series were mounted into a diptych with an ornate gilded silver frame, which carried Margaret's enamelled coat of arms, angels, and ornaments on it. This work which seems to have involved incorporating twenty paintings into two large 'super-panels' was further embellished when the individual panels were reset into an ornate silver frame some time after 1526. This large and luxurious diptych was later given a place of honour in the 'riche cabinet' which probably served as Margaret's main reception room; it was located next to the portrait gallery.<sup>61</sup>

Whereas the small diptych by Sittow was kept in a cupboard, Margaret chose to display the majority of the religious paintings on the walls of her bedroom, the so-called 'seconde chambre a chemynee' and the small study or 'petit cabinet'—it should be recalled that diptychs comprised only a small part of her collection; in all, she kept thirty-three art works with religious subject matter in her bedroom.<sup>62</sup> The walls of both rooms were covered with green taffeta and in the larger room, the 'seconde chambre a chemynee', sixteen small and large curtains of the same material functioned as covers for some of the paintings.<sup>63</sup> In addition to the Sittow paintings, other particularly valuable artworks, such as the diptych of Charles the Bold, were kept in the cupboard. The written sources indicate that the larger devotional paintings were generally displayed on the bedroom walls. One of the diptychs listed in this category was a painting which had been given to Margaret by Antoine de Lalaing, the Count of Hoogstraten. It represented various scenes from the Passion of Christ and is described as being 'assez vieux'.<sup>64</sup>

Twelve religious art works are listed as being housed in the adjoining 'petit cabinet'; these include several small sculptures of saints, one triptych and two diptychs.<sup>65</sup> Most of these objects were small in scale, including the diptychs such as the double panel depicting Margaret and Juan mentioned earlier.<sup>66</sup> The other diptych in this room juxtaposed *The*

<sup>61</sup> The mounted diptych measured approximately 880x990 mm.

<sup>62</sup> Michelant (1871), 74–91.

<sup>63</sup> 'Item, ladite chambre a chemynee toute tendue de taffetas verd, avec XVI courtines de mesmes taffetas, que grandes que petites, servants a la couverture desdites painctures et aultres choses estans en ladite chambre; le tout double de boucran noir, reserve lesdites courtines' [1523–4] (Michelangt (1871), 87); 'Item, ledit petit cabinet tout tenduz de taffetaf vert, double de boucran noir' (Michelangt (1871), 97).

<sup>64</sup> See n. 32.

<sup>65</sup> Michelant (1871), 91–97; this count does not include the later additions to the inventory, starting with the 'Jesus taille en marbre'.

<sup>66</sup> See n. 3.

*Crucifixion of Christ with The Mass of Saint Gregory* and is listed as a work by Rogier van der Weyden.<sup>67</sup>

The contents of these two rooms, when compared with the rest of her private apartments, suggest that Margaret considered the bedroom and study to be the most suitable location for the display of her religious art works. It comes as a surprise that her private chapel seems to have been decorated only with a large gold-metal cross and some liturgical furniture and textiles. In a recent article, Guy Delmarcel suggests that a series of square-shaped Passion tapestries and an accompanying *ciel* were commissioned to decorate Margaret's court chapel.<sup>68</sup>

No altarpiece or religious panel painting of any sort is recorded in the inventory drawn up in 1523–4, although the list of contents and the description of the chapel interior clearly indicate that Mass was celebrated there.<sup>69</sup> Two missals and three book of hours, for example, were housed in the chapel.<sup>70</sup> It is of particular interest for the study of private devotional practice that book of hours were kept in various parts of the palace. In all, Margaret of Austria possessed at least twelve such prayer books, which were variously housed in the chapel, library, and study.

Three book of hours with 'illuminations and historiated initials' are mentioned among the small number of books kept in the 'petit cabinet'.<sup>71</sup> That Margaret actually used these prayer books in her study or the neighbouring bedroom is suggested by another entry in the same section of the inventory. This describes a small ivory casket with silver book-marks kept there 'to be put into the Hours'.<sup>72</sup> Closer study of the contents

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<sup>67</sup> It is described three times in the inventories: 'Ung petit tableau d'ung cruxefix et d'ung Saint-Gregoire. Fait de la main de Rogier' [1516] (Le Glay (1839), 481); 'Item, ung aultre double tableau; en l'ung est N(re) S(gr) pendant en croix et N(re) Dame embrassant le pied de la croix, et en l'aultre, l'histoire de lanesse Mons(gr) saint Gregoire' [1523] (Michelant (1871), 93); and, 'Aultre double tableau; en l'ung est Nostre-Seigneur pendant en croix; en l'aultre l'histoire de saint Gregoire . . . III livres' [1535] (Le Glay (1839), 484). See n. 33.

<sup>68</sup> G. Delmarcel, 'De Passietapjten van Margarets van Oostenrijk (c.1518-1524). Nicuwe Gegevens en Documenten', in *Revue Belge d'Archeologie et d'Histoire de l'Art* 61 (1992), 147.

<sup>69</sup> Michelant (1871), 11–16.

<sup>70</sup> Michelant (1871), 15.

<sup>71</sup> Three extant book of hours have been identified with Margaret of Austria: Vienna, ON MS 1862; see Debae, *Librairie* cat. 37, 129–32 and Thoss, *Flämische Buchmalerei*, 107–108; Vienna, ON MS 1858 (*Croy Hours*); see F. Unterkircher, *European Illustrated Manuscripts in the Austrian Library* (London, 1967), 235–38; and London, BL Add. MS 34294 (*Bona Sforza Hours*); see T. Kren, ed., *Renaissance Painting in Manuscripts, Treasures from the British Library* (New York, 1983), 113–14; and J. Duverger, 'Gerard Holrenbault (1465–1540) hofschilder van Margareta van Oostenrijk', in *Kunst, Maandblad voor oude en jonge Kunst* 4 (1930), 81–90.

<sup>72</sup> 'Item, ung petit coffret d'ivoire auquel il y a plusieurs legieres enseignes d'argent, a mettre dedans Heures' [1523–4] (Michelant (1871), 94).



of the 'seconde chambre a chemynee' reveals that this room was furnished not only with a bed, a table, chairs, chests and a writing desk, but also with a kind of altar. The first three entries for the 'seconde chambre a chemynee' list a complete set of altar hangings comprising a baldachin, a wall covering and an altar frontal, each made of gold brocade and blue velvet.<sup>73</sup> A cushion of the same material is also mentioned, probably for Margaret to kneel on during prayer. The accounts of the city of Mechelen tell us that in 1518–9 the carpenter Gheerden van den Veckene made a small footstool for Margaret's bedroom, 'for my Lady to kneel upon'.<sup>74</sup> The existence of an altar-like structure in Margaret's apartments indicates that private worship was carried out in various venues and in different ways. The decoration of the 'seconde chambre a chemynee' and the 'petit cabinet' with a large number of religious art works is further indication that the Regent frequently performed her devotions in the seclusion of her own bedroom or study.<sup>75</sup>

The study of Margaret of Austria's inventories and related sources thus provides an insight into the spiritual life of this sixteenth-century ruler, showing that as well as her political and family responsibilities, she was consistently concerned with religious matters. This concern embraced not only the foundation and endowment of churches and religious institutions and the establishing of specific commemorative ties with such places on behalf of herself and her family; it also involved, in addition to frequenting places of public worship, the carrying out of devotional exercises within the privacy of her own apartments. The diptychs in her

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<sup>73</sup> As with the chapel, the altar can only be identified from descriptions of its decoration: 'Premier, ung petit docelet de drapt d'or rez, bande sur les coustures de velours bleu, en maniere de losaigne a semlable M par dessus, contenant de longueur, deux aulnes et III carties et de deux drapts d'or de large; les goutieres de mesmes, doublee de satin bleu fraigees de fil d'or, soie noire et blanche, avec le ciel dudit docelet qu'est de damas jaulne, contenant de longueur I aulne et demy cartie eschars et de la largeur II aulnes' [1523–4]; 'Item, ung petit devant d'haustel ou frontal, de mesmes drapt d'or audit docelet et bande aussi de mesme, frange de fil d'or, soie blanche et verde, contenant de longueur une aulne demie et deux drapts d'or de large'; 'Item, ung petit coussin de drapt d'or trait double de velours vert' (Michelant (1871), 74).

<sup>74</sup> Brussels, Algemeen Rijksarchief, *Stadsrekening Mechelen*, no. 41297, f. 212v.

<sup>75</sup> While the altar in Margaret's bedroom can only be reconstructed from the furnishings listed in the inventories of her private apartments, an unequivocal remark, relating to another room in the same palace, can be found in the account books of the city of Mechelen. Two records pertaining to the financial year 1529–30 refer to an altar in the apartment of Monsieur de Rosimbos, her close adviser and 'Premier Maître d'Hotel'. Again, Gheerden van den Veekene was paid for the carpentry work, this time on an altar, which was used for celebrating Mass; see Brussels, Algemeen Rijksarchief, *Stadsrekening Mechelen*, no. 41308, f. 203: 'Item van een autær daermen misse op doet in de camere van mynen heere van Rosimboz', and also f. 218v. I wish to thank Dr Wim Huesken for transcribing these records for me.

collection together with evidence, both visual and literary, about those belonging to her grandfather Philip the Good, demonstrate how these small double panels, which often included an image of the donor as well as a religious subject, were associated with the private domain. Their description as 'objects in the shape of a book' is expressive of the related functions of the diptych and the personal prayer book or book of hours in late medieval devotional practice.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> I gratefully acknowledge the financial assistance of the Australian Research Council and the contribution of my research assistant Lisa Beaven to the first draft of this paper. I also thank Anne van Buren for her useful comments on a later version of this paper.

## Appendix

The following are the reference works mentioned in footnote 1; they are cited in abbreviated form throughout the paper.

ZIMERMANN (1885): 'Inventaire des parties de meubles estans es cabinetz de Madame en sa ville de Malines, estans a la garde et charge de Estienne Luillier, varlet-de-chambre de ma dite dame, lequel en doit respondre a Richard Contault, garde-joyault de ma dite dame, et le dit Contault en tenir compte a icelle ma dite dame' (Vienna, Habsburg-Lothringisches Familienarchiv, Familienurkunden no. 1174 (1524, April 20), published by H. Zimerman, in *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 3 (1885), XCIII–CXXIII.

MICHELANT (1871): 'Inventaire des vaisselles, bijoux, tapisseries, peintures, manuscrits, etc. de Marguerite d'Autriche, régente et gouvernante des Pays-Bas, dressé en son palais de Malines, le 9 juillet 1523' (Paris, BN, no. 128 des Cinq Cents de Colbert), published by H. Michelant in *Academie Royale des Sciences des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Bulletin* 3 ser. 12.2 (1871), 3–75 and 83–136.

LE GLAY (1839): Different fragments of an inventory of books, art objects and textiles, drawn up in 1516 in Mechelen (Lille, Archives Départementales du Nord, B.3509/3510) published by A. Le Glay, *Correspondance 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, 468–77.

FINOT (1895): The fragments transcribed by Le Glay were published in a more accurate form by J. Finot, 'Fragment d'un inventaire de tableaux et d'objets d'art', in *Inventaire sommaire des archives départementales du Nord, antérieures à 1790* (Lille, 1895), Series B, VIII.208–12.

VOLTELINI (1890): List of objects which Charles V inherited from Margaret of Austria on 19/3/1531, published by H. von Voltelini, 'Urkunden und Regesten aus dem K.u.K. Haus, Hof- und Staatsarchiv', in *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 11 (1890), Reg. 6286, V–XII.

VOLTELINI (1892): 'La troisième des meilleurs et plus riches baghues, délaissées part la dit feu seigneur empereur, avecq une autre bague qui choisirons a nostre plaisir et discretion pour avoir de tant meilleure souvenance s'icelluy feust seigneur (Maximilian) et de nous' (Brussels, 18 September 1520), published by Hans von Voltelini, 'Urkunden und Regesten aus dem K.u.K. Haus,-Hof- und Staatsarchiv', in *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 13 (1892), Reg. 8649, XXVIII.



Figure 85. King Richard II praying to the Virgin and Child (left panel).  
*Wilton Diptych*. The National Gallery, London. 475×292 mm.



Figure 86. King Richard II praying to the Virgin and Child (right panel).  
*Wilton Diptych*. The National Gallery, London. 475×292mm.



Figure 87. Jean, Duc de Berry, praying to the Virgin and Child (left page).  
*Très Belles Heures*. Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, MS 11060–11061, p. 10.  
 275 × 185 mm.



Figure 88. Jean, Duc de Berry, praying to the Virgin and Child (right page).  
*Très Belles Heures*. Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, MS 11060–11061, p. 11.  
275 × 185 mm.



Figure 89. Philip the Good in his private prayer tent. *Traité sur l'oraison dominicale*.  
Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, MS 9092, f. 9. 400×290mm.



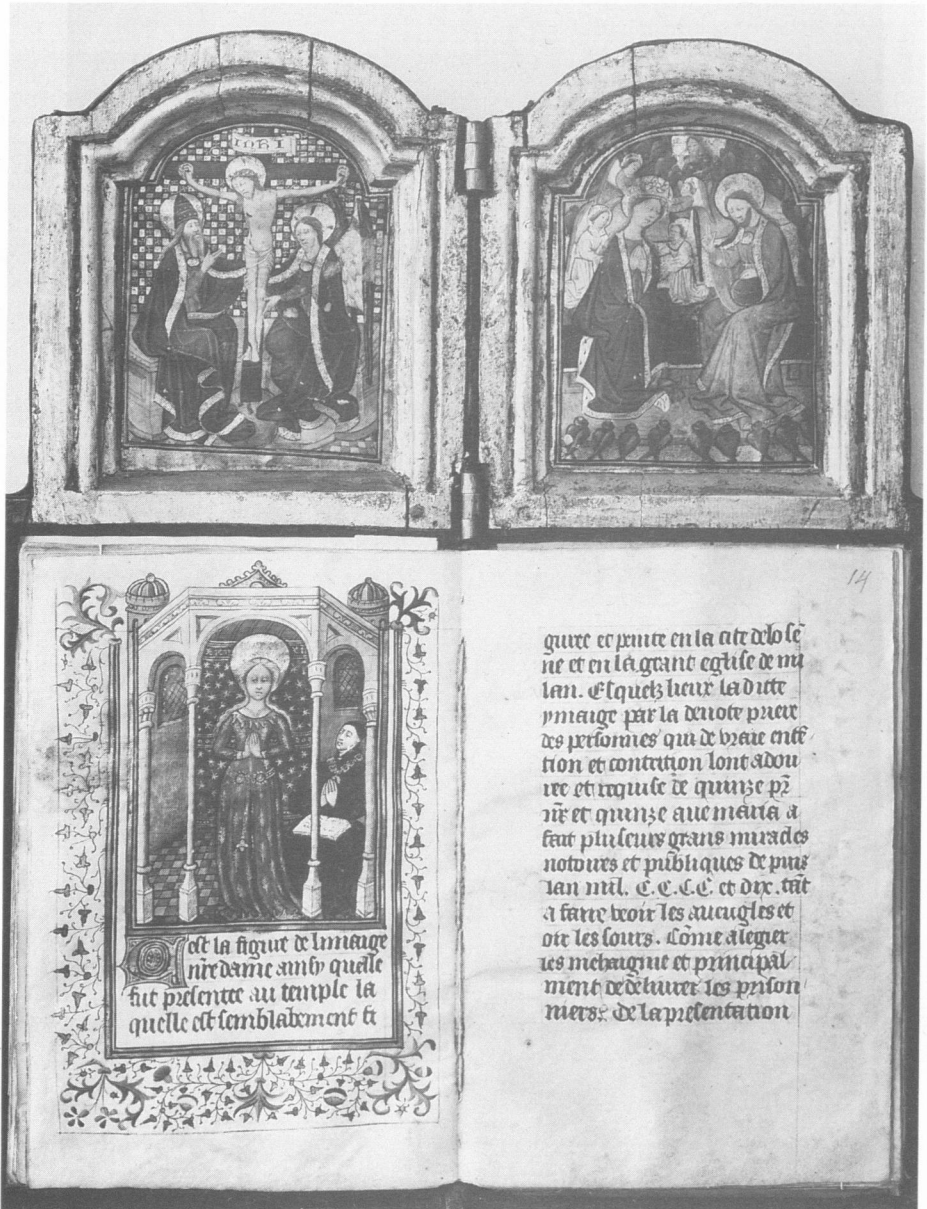


Figure 90. Philip the Good praying to the Virgin. Diptych and book. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS 1800, ff. 13v–14. 185×130mm (page size).



Figure 91. Master of 1499. *Virgin in the Church* (left panel). Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten. 310×145mm.

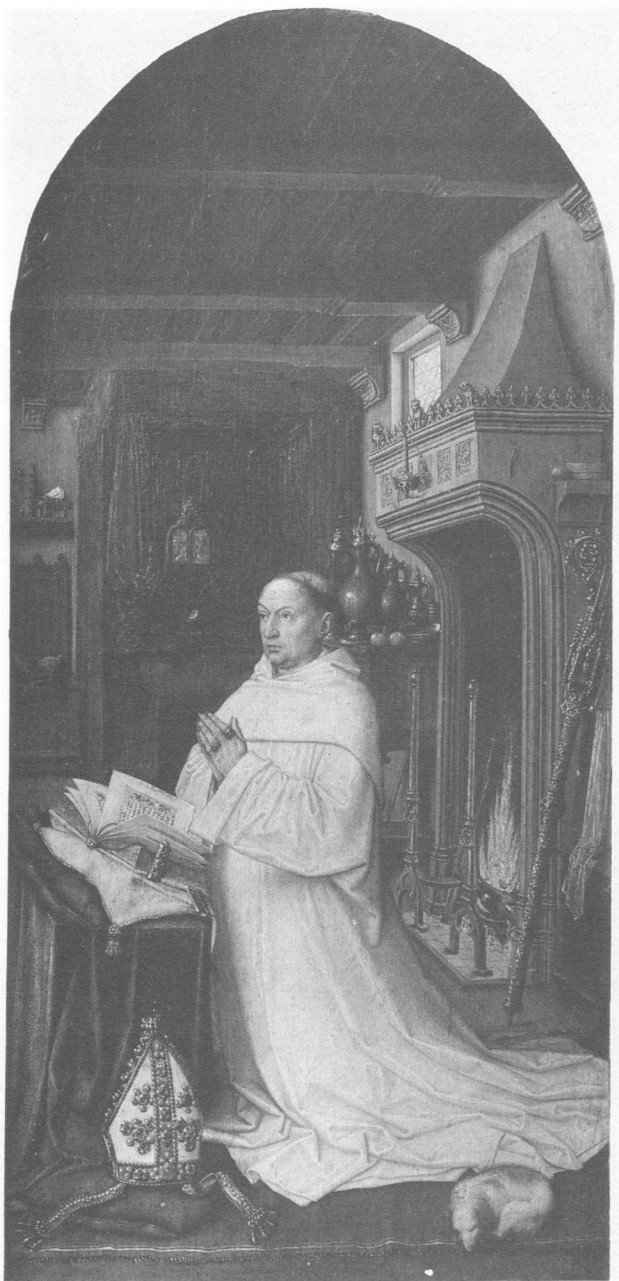


Figure 92. Master of 1499. *Christiaan de Hondt praying* (right panel). Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten. 310×145 mm.



Figure 93. Anonymous Master. *Virgin and Child* (left panel).  
Ghent, Museum voor Schone Kunsten. 305 × 146 mm.



Figure 94. Anonymous Master. *Margaret of Austria praying* (right panel).  
Ghent, Museum voor Schone Kunsten. 305×146 mm.



Figure 95. Juan de Flandes. *The Temptation of Christ*. Washington, National Gallery of Art, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund. 210×155mm.



Figure 96. Juan de Flandes. *The Marriage Feast at Cana*. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Jack and Belle Linsky Collection. 210×155 mm.



Figure 97. Michiel Sittow. *The Ascension of Christ*. Collection of the Earl of Yarborough. 210×155mm.



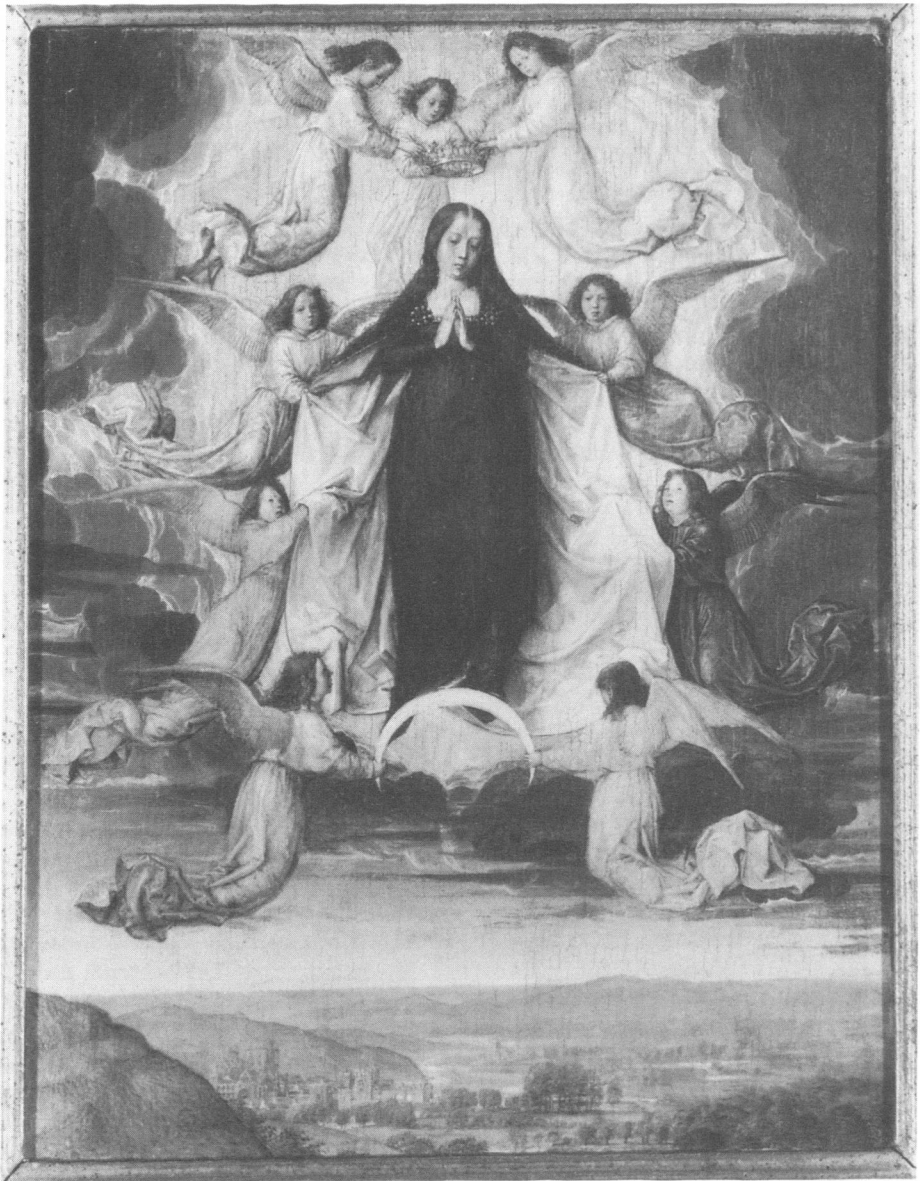


Figure 98. Michiel Sittow. *The Assumption of the Virgin*. Washington, National Gallery of Art, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund. 210×155mm.