A Matter of Life and Death: Forms, Functions and Audiences for ‘The Three Living and the Three Dead’ in Late Medieval Manuscripts

by

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Department of Art
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Abstract

This dissertation examines approaches to illustrating the Three Living and the Three Dead, a moralizing tale known across Europe in the late Middle Ages. Illustrated versions of the texts survive in a number of different manuscript contexts. While the earliest depictions show an apparently benign conversation occurring between living and dead, by the late fifteenth century other ways of illustrating the tale had emerged. The most striking of these was the aggressive chase after the living by the dead, which most often accompanied the prayers of the Office of the Dead in Books of Hours. While previous art historical investigations have concentrated on localization, chronology, as well as stylistic and formal analyses, my project engages with the larger questions of function, audience, and the relationship between text and image.

The thesis begins by situating the Three Living and the Three Dead in the scholarship on the art of death of the late Middle Ages. The art of that period has long been perceived as a reflection of a time of decline. This perspective was established mainly through consideration of large-scale monuments, mostly French and primarily
displayed in public, funerary contexts. I expand the discussion to include small scale, private devotional images of death, and demonstrate that such images could serve practical and positive functions for their users.

The wide range of possibilities for illustrating the story in its early history is established in chapter 2. This overview is followed by a series of chapters that offer close examinations of individual manuscripts and establish the functions that the Three Living and the Three Dead served for their original users.

In sum, my project sheds light on the importance of the imagery of death and more specifically of the Three Living and the Three Dead in late medieval culture. It contributes to our understanding of a story that became popular across Europe in a variety of forms in response to the context in which it appeared, the function it was intended to serve and the audience for which it was intended.
Acknowledgements

As a first year graduate student at the University of Toronto, one of the courses I elected to take was a graduate seminar on medieval manuscript illumination, through which I first encountered the Three Living and the Three Dead in the Psalter of Bonne of Luxembourg (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art—The Cloisters, 69.86). I was spellbound. I found myself wondering: what was this fascinating story involving living and dead, and what was it doing in a Psalter? What meaning would it have had for the viewer? And was the story always depicted in this way? My interest in the story grew over subsequent years, and I decided to make it the focus of my doctoral dissertation.

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Introduction: Foundations and New Directions

The tale of the Three Living and the Three Dead, which speaks of a moralizing encounter between young men and animated corpses, first emerged in the late thirteenth century in Western Europe and became well known across the continent over the following two centuries. The story survives in many textual and pictorial variations, but all versions share some fundamental features, above all the opposition between living and dead. Versions of the tale known from France recount how three young men are confronted by three dead as they return from hunting and in the course of conversation one of the dead declares: “As you are, so we once were; as we are now, so shall you become.” This story was intended to encourage the young men, and by extension the reader or viewer, to live more virtuously and to pay more attention to the eternal soul than to worldly pleasures.

Previous scholarship on the Three Living and the Three Dead has been concerned with the issues of genesis, localization, typology and iconography. My dissertation builds on more recent approaches, including word and image studies, manuscript studies and reception theory, and engages in close readings of the illustrated tale as it appears in several different manuscripts, some of which are discussed in depth here for the first time. My investigation has revealed that there were several possible ways of representing the story and that the images were adapted to suit the needs of their particular audiences. Our understanding of functions of the Three Living and the Three Dead will be fleshed out in part through examination of the remaining contents of their respective manuscripts.
The Three Living and the Three Dead represents one of the earliest manifestations of the opposition between living and dead to emerge in text and image in the later Middle Ages. Scholarly interest in the story started to take hold in the mid-nineteenth century, with Georges Kastner’s work to identify and attribute the early French texts. Settings of the Encounter attributed to Baudouin de Condé, ¹ court poet to Margaret the Black of Flanders (d. 1280), Nicolas de Margival, as well as an anonymous author, were dated to the final quarter of the thirteenth century, while two other anonymous French texts were dated slightly later, to the early fourteenth century.² Stefan Glixelli, in his pioneering work of 1914, focused on the stylistic features of the various poems in an effort to establish a line of descent.³ Willy Rotzler argued in his study of the style of the poems that the texts of Baudouin de Condé and Anonymous IV were the earliest. He further suggested that the Encounter emerged as an admonishment of the aristocracy, motivated by the influence of confessors at court.⁴

A number of French and English painted representations of the story, showing living and dead in opposition, were catalogued and published during the early years of

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¹ For the poet Baudouin and his work, see Auguste Scheler, ed., *Dits et contes de Baudouin de Condé et son fils Jean de Condé* (Brussels: Devaux, 1866-1867).
³ Glixelli, *Les cinq poèmes*.
the twentieth century as well. The Three Living and the Three Dead in Paris, Bibl. de
l’Arsenal 3142 (fig. 1) was one of several representations to gain prominence in those
early years, possibly due to its association with Queen Marie de Brabant.

In opposition to the view by such scholars as Glixelli and Rotzler that the tale
emerged in France, others, including Pietro Vigo, Liliane Guerry and Hellmut
Rosenfeld, argued that the story must rather first have appeared in Italy. Vigo argued
that Cum apertam sepulturam, a Latin poem about three young men who come upon an
open coffin inhabited by a corpse, was preceded by a now lost Latin exemplar, which
must have predated all vernacular versions. Although the earliest surviving copy of
Cum apertam sepulturam, now in Ferrara, is thought to date only to the fourteenth
century at the very earliest, Vigo argued that orthographic clues pointed to a
twelfth-century source.

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5 Some of the early studies of French and English wall paintings include Willy Storck,
“Aspects of Death in English Art and Poetry,” Burlington Magazine 21, no. 113
(August 1912), 249–256, 314–319; Frederic Weber, Aspects of Death and Correlated
Aspects of Life in Art, Epigram and Poetry (London, 1922); Georges Servières, “Les
formes artistiques du dict des trois morts et des trois vifs,” Gazette des Beaux Arts 68
of the Three Living and the Three Dead in England,” Journal of the British

6 This image was published for instance in Storck, “Aspects of Death.”

7 Pietro Vigo, Le danze macabre in Italia (Bergamo, 1901), 82; Liliane Guerry, Le
thème du Triomphe de la Mort dans la peinture italienne (Paris: G. P. Maisonneuve,
1950), 48–57; Hellmut Rosenfeld, Der mittelalterliche Totentanz: Entstehung,

8 The first verse from the Ferrara text reads “Cum apertam sepulturam, viri tres
aspercierunt; ac horribilem figuram, intus esse cernerent…” The text survives in Ferrara,
Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea, MS Classe II, n. 211e. For a transcription of the Ferrara
text, see Pavel Chihai, Immortalité et décomposition dans l’art du Moyen Âge
the Ferrara copy of the text to the fourteenth century. Chihai, Immortalité et
décomposition, 60. Chihai and Rotzler mined the text for orthographic and stylistic
Pavel Chihaia also postulated that there was a lost Latin exemplar.\textsuperscript{10} In his view it was far more likely for a Latin poem to have been translated into Italian and Old French than vice-versa, revealing a presumption that an exemplar must have been in Latin and would always precede a vernacular.\textsuperscript{11} He claimed that this Latin source would also necessarily have emerged from an ultimately monastic or clerical context, which would subsequently have been transmitted to the laity in vernacular translations.

This rigid historical construction adopted by Chihaia, which restricted Latin to the use of the clergy and the inferior vernacular to the laity, inevitably fostered misrepresentations and misunderstandings of the ways texts and stories moved and were communicated. Our understanding of medieval literacy and accessibility to texts has moved beyond a consideration of which group could read what language, to a recognition that literacy was more fluid, involved communication in different languages, and entailed not only reading and listening and also looking.\textsuperscript{12} The clues and disagreed on the dating of the text, as Rotzler dated it to the fifteenth century. Rotzler, \textit{Die Begegnung}, 64.


10 Chihaia, \textit{Immortalité et décomposition}, 43–70.

11 This now outdated perspective on the unequal relationship between Latin and vernacular texts has given way to a view of texts co-existing and informing each other. The study of preaching practices and examinations of copies of sermons has been revelatory in this respect. See Beverly M. Kienzle, ed., \textit{The Sermon}, Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge occidental (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000); Carolyn Muessig, \textit{Preacher, Sermon and Audience in the Middle Ages} (Leiden: Brill, 2002).

emergence of the practice of silent reading was also transformative.\textsuperscript{13} It is overly simplistic to claim that the Three Living and the Three Dead must first have appeared in Latin and was later conveyed to lay audiences through vernacular versions. While literacy improved and new audiences for texts emerged as the Middle Ages progressed, it is important to recognize a flexibility to the transmission of the story, and that this occurred not only through physical copies of texts but through recitations and performances of poems, representations on parish church walls, and texts and illustrations in a number of types of manuscripts.

In Chihaia’s view, the source for the lost thirteenth-century exemplar of the Three Living and the Three Dead was a translation of \textit{Barlaam and Joasaph}, a Christianized version of one of the legends of Buddha already known in Latin translation by the mid-eleventh century.\textsuperscript{14} The lost thirteenth-century Latin text served as exemplar for both later Latin and vernacular poems (\textbf{fig. 3}). The establishment of Angevin power in the south of Italy after 1266 would certainly have eased the movement of ideas and documents between southern Italy and the courts of France and beyond.\textsuperscript{15}


\textsuperscript{15} After the Battle of Benevento in 1266 at which Manfred Hohenstaufen was defeated by Charles of Anjou, the Kingdom of Sicily passed into French control for the following century.
The existence of a painting of the Three Living and the Three Dead in a Franciscan grotto church near Melfi (fig. 4, 5), a town of great political and strategic import under Frederick II Hohenstaufen (fig. 6), has been used as evidence that the tale emerged first in southern Italy.\textsuperscript{16} Liliane Guerry dated the painting at the church of Santa Margherita to 1225.\textsuperscript{17} Her dating of this composition, which predated all other texts and images of the story by almost half a century, allowed her to make the case that the story first became known in Europe under the Hohenstaufen in the early thirteenth century.\textsuperscript{18} Others have followed Guerry in suggesting an early-thirteenth century date for the fresco.\textsuperscript{19} Unfortunately, these arguments have rested almost exclusively on stylistic analysis. This method is inherently problematic since painting styles can linger

\textsuperscript{16} Basilicata is located between Campania and Apulia and constitutes what might be called the arch of the Italian boot. Melfi is inland, and is located mid-way between Naples and Bari, South-East of Benevento. See fig. 6 for a map.
\textsuperscript{18} Guerry, \textit{Le thème du triomphe de la mort}, 48–57.
\textsuperscript{19} Annamaria Ciarallo and Lello Capaldo, “L’Incontro con Federico II e la sua famiglia: Il vero volto dell’imperatore,” in \textit{Il trionfo della morte e le danze macabre dagli atti del VI convegno internazionale tenutosi in Clusone dal 19 al 21 Agosto 1994} (Clusone, 1994), 515–523. Ciarello and Capaldo argued that the three living figures in the Melfi painting should be identified as Frederick II and his sons. Scaramella dated the painting to 1258–1266, which still dates to the period of Staufen rule. See Pierroberto Scaramella, “L’Italia dei trionfi e dei contrasti,” in \textit{Humana fragilitas: I temi della morte in Europa tra Duecento e Settecento}, ed. Alberto Tenenti (Clusone: Ferrari, 2000), 26. Friederike Wille has recently dated the mural to the Angevin period, around the end of the thirteenth century, which is a more suitable date given the chronology of the story of the Three Living and the Three Dead. See Wille, “\textit{Quod sumus hoc eritis},” 225–239.
for many decades after newer forms have taken hold elsewhere, making it almost impossible to provide an accurate date.

There are major difficulties, even contradictions, within the collection of arguments that favour the emergence of the tale in Italy. The surviving textual and pictorial documentation corresponding to *Cum apertam sepulturam* dates no earlier than the mid-fourteenth century. While the Melfi painting is held up as the earliest pictorial evidence for the story in Italy, it relates a completely different kind of Encounter than that described in *Cum apertam sepulturam*, which is held up by some as the earliest text. The surviving evidence complicates attempts to localize the origin of the story, but what does seem clear is that from at least the early fourteenth century, two modes of telling the story co-existed, that of the three living in conversation with the three dead, and that of the three living encountering the dead in open coffins, with the assistance of a hermit and reflecting on what they see. Within these two strands, however, were many variations that reflect dynamic interventions and which suggest that texts and images informed and influenced each other. Moreover, the wishes of patrons and the contributions of artists likely contributed to the transformations of the story.

Recent work in text and image studies has broken down the barrier that once existed between the study of texts and that of images, a division illustrated by the organization of Willy Rotzler’s book on the Three Living and the Three Dead. A great deal of literature on the relationship between text and image has appeared in recent years, and reference to only a few key studies will have to suffice here. Beat Brenk revealed through a close study of saints’ *vitae* that illuminations didn’t represent or
repeat exactly what was described in the text but rather expanded on key moments, or even commented on them, demonstrating a collaborative approach between designer and illustrator.20 Brenk’s findings triggered studies which showed that illustrations did not not simply literally depict what was described in the text but could engage with, even activate, the text. V. A. Kolve’s important work on Chaucer showed that the poet and his contemporaries engaged with the literary and pictorial traditions of the day, and that reading, writing and seeing were all linked activities in the Middle Ages.21 This method of understanding how literary and pictorial production occurred within a larger matrix has been important for my own work. Mary Carruthers also has broken down barriers erected in modern times between the verbal and visual by showing that in the Middle Ages no distinction was made between memories formed from verbal or visual sources; all memory occurred by means of images.22 While Carruthers’ work has been focused on the early Middle Ages, these conceptions persisted in the later Middle Ages as well.23 My work considers how textual and pictorial traditions informed each other and were mutually influential. This accounts to a considerable extent for the richness

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23 Carruthers, Craft of Thought, 5.
and diversity of the traditions of the Three Living and the Three Dead as they have come down to us.  

Much of the early scholarship on the Encounter was informed by the approaches of literary criticism, whose objective was to identify the (often lost) exemplar and to discover the lines of descent of other surviving examples. This method was significant not just for the study of texts, but also for the early study of manuscript illumination, as exemplified by the great manuscript scholar Kurt Weitzmann and his students, and was practiced by a number of scholars relevant to this study, including Glixelli, Rotzler and especially Chihaia. The presentation of Chihaia’s stemma in diagram form (fig. 3) betrays a debt to this method of literary analysis.

The scholarly interest in the origins of the Three Living and the Three Dead is related to the establishment of iconographic and textual types along geographical lines. Willy Rotzler classified surviving examples into groups according to iconographic features. One category, labeled the “Arsenal type”, was composed of examples representing living and dead organized into two groups of three as though in conversation, and was named for Arsenal MS 3142, fol. 311v (fig. 1). This category also featured an example from the Psalter of Robert de Lisle (fig. 32), a manuscript produced in England, but which was iconographically related. A second main group,

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composed primarily of fourteenth-century Italian examples, featured representations of the living, occasionally on foot although most often on horseback, approaching coffins containing three dead, usually in different stages of decomposition. A hermit often participated as the mediator between the living and the dead in these examples, possibly a response to the role of mendicants in preaching.\textsuperscript{26} The painting of the Three Living and the Three Dead of ca. 1335 from the Campo Santo, Pisa (\textbf{fig. 7}) constituted an example of this so-called “Italian type” as did a manuscript illumination from a fourteenth-century Florentine laudario (\textbf{fig. 8}).\textsuperscript{27}

Rotzler’s categorizations are straightforward and user-friendly, but unsurprisingly, many images did not fit into his rigid binary system. For those rogue images, Rotzler established a category of mixed forms, or “Mischformen”. This gathering of examples included compositions which combined features otherwise associated only with either French or Italian types. The image from the Psalter of Bonne of Luxembourg (\textbf{fig. 9}) of ca. 1349, for instance, shows the living on horseback, as per the Italian tradition, while the dead are shown standing, a feature of the “Arsenal type”. A wall painting at the east end of the north aisle at the Cathedral of Atri,

\textsuperscript{26} The insertion of a hermit into a number of Italian depictions of the tale reflects the importance of mendicant preaching as a source of moralizing teachings. For ways in which the preacher was represented in the Middle Ages, see Chiara Frugoni, “L’Immagine del predicatore nell’iconografia medievale, sec. XIII-XV,” \textit{Medioevo e Rinascimento} 3 (1989): 287–299. For the impact of vernacular preaching of the Dominicans on the composition of the Campo Santo fresco, see Lina Bolzoni, \textit{The Web of Images: Vernacular Preaching from its Origins to Saint Bernardino of Siena} (London: Ashgate, 2004).

\textsuperscript{27} The image of the Three Living and the Three Dead illustrates the lauda “Chi vuol lo mondo disprezzare” in a manuscript made in the mid-fourteenth century for the laudesi company of Santo Spirito in Florence. See Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Banco Rari 18 (olim Magliabechiano II. I. 122), fol. 134r. For a transcription of the text of the lauda, see Fernando Liuzzi, \textit{La lauda e i primordi della melodia italiana}, vol. 2 (Rome: La Libreria dello Stato, 1935), 416–417.
Abruzzo, also fell into Rotzler’s mixed forms category (fig. 10).\textsuperscript{28} Still other images, which did not approximate French or Italian images closely enough to be considered for inclusion in the mixed-forms department, were gathered in another category altogether, that of the variations on the Encounter, or “Varianten der Begegnung”.\textsuperscript{29} This one was made up primarily of examples from German manuscripts, several of which were unconventional and difficult to categorize according to Rotzler’s stemma. They were, as a result, poorly represented in his investigation as a whole.\textsuperscript{30}

The cursory treatment of the Three Living and the Three Dead in Germany may seem somewhat surprising, given that the primary authorities in the infancy of the scholarship were Germans themselves. A lower tolerance for less refined forms of imagery might have played a part in this neglect. A few of the German manuscript examples studied in this dissertation, in particular that in the Wolfenbüttel volume discussed in chapter 6, are of a lesser quality of execution than the examples produced for aristocratic audiences discussed in chapters 2 and 3, for instance. A tendency to privilege what was perceived as high art over low led to the dismissal of examples that we now recognize could contribute a great deal to our understanding of their original ownership and use. Illustrations in Nonnenbücher, for instance, had traditionally been overlooked in art historical scholarship because of what was perceived as their poor quality, yet Jeffrey Hamburger’s work demonstrated that the images were sophisticated responses to theological issues and to the contemplative world in which the nuns

\textsuperscript{29} Rotzler, *Die Begegnung*, 232–238.
\textsuperscript{30} His discussion of the German poems constituted a short chapter (“Deutsche Gedichte,” 48–61) and a small number of German illustrations were illustrated in “Paarweise Gliederung von Lebenden und Toten” (207–210).
lived.\textsuperscript{31} A focus on the functions and uses of such works bore much interpretive fruit, as it offered insight into the world of the nuns not achievable simply through formal and stylistic analysis.\textsuperscript{32} A shift of emphasis to the function and use of images, emblematic of the New Art History, has been influential for other works of scholarship on medieval topics in recent years.\textsuperscript{33} This approach forms the basis for my own study, which examines examples of the Three Living and the Three Dead produced for a variety of audiences and investigates how the story was transformed in order to suit audiences from different walks of life.

Much ink has been spilled not only over the question of origins and development of the Three Living and the Three Dead, but also over the role of the Encounter as a source itself for other motifs, such as the Dance of Death. The Dance presented a procession of corpses or skeletons leading men and women of different stations of life to their graves, sometimes pulling or pushing them along for good measure. The earliest documented example of this, dated to 1424, was painted on the enclosure wall of the cemetery of the Saints Innocents in Paris and was accompanied by

\textsuperscript{31} See in particular Jeffrey Hamburger, \textit{Nuns as Artists: The Visual Culture of a Medieval Convent} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
\textsuperscript{32} A focus on function and audience is characteristic of Hamburger’s other work as well. See for instance Jeffrey Hamburger, \textit{The Visual and the Visionary: Art and Female Spirituality in Late Medieval Germany} (New York: Zone Books, 1998); Hamburger, \textit{St. John the Divine: The Defied Evangelist in Medieval Art and Theology} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).
textual inscriptions recorded below the images. Although this particular painting is no longer extant at the Saints Innocents, transcriptions of the accompanying verses survive in the prints produced by Guyot Marchant, first published in 1485 and printed in other editions in subsequent years. Many murals of the Dance of Death from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries survive in a variety of architectural contexts, especially in France and Germany. The theme occasionally appeared in other media as well, such as manuscript illuminations and sculptural relief.

Scholars observed early on that the story of the Three Living and the Three Dead bore some strong similarities to the Dance of Death through the juxtaposition in both cases of living and animated dead figures. Emile Mâle, in his magisterial *L’art religieux au fin du Moyen Âge*, discussed the emergence of the imagery of death in the late fourteenth century and briefly discussed the Three Living and the Three Dead, but

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35 Scholarly literature on the Dance of Death, also known as the Danse Macabre or the Totentanz depending on its geographical location, is vast. Recent work includes Elina Gertsman, *The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages: Image, Text, Performance* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010); Sophie Oosterwijk and Stefanie Knöll, eds., *Mixed Metaphors: The Danse Macabre in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011). The Dance of Death appeared only rarely in Italy; there, the Triumph of Death became popular instead. The Triumph and the Three Living and the Three Dead appear together in several architectural contexts, such as the Campo Santo in Pisa and the Scala Santa at Subiaco, both of which date to the mid-fourteenth century. For the Triumph of Death, see Pierroberto Scaramella, “L’Italia dei trionfi,” in *Humana fragilitas*, 25–98, esp. 25–58.

primarily as a foundation for his extensive discussion of the Dance of Death.37 Stephan Cosacchi viewed the Three Living and the Three Dead, melded with the story of Everyman,38 as the precursor to the Dance of Death.39 Künstle also argued for the story of the Encounter as a precursor for the Dance.40 These scholars noted that the Three Living and the Three Dead existed for several centuries before the advent of the Dance of Death in the fifteenth century, and it was in the early sixteenth century that the Encounter began to diminish, while the Dance increased in popularity. They argued that the overlap suggested that the Dance of Death subsumed the Three Living and the Three Dead. More recently, the Dance has been investigated as a parallel phenomenon as opposed to a product of the Three Living and the Three Dead. It has been studied from the perspective of the ways in which it engaged the viewer and encouraged a performative response.41

It is clear that both Encounter and Dance were intended as moralizing motifs, and moreover that they were intended to demonstrate to the viewer that death levels all,

37 Emile Mâle, *Religious Art in France: The Late Middle Ages; A Study of Medieval Iconography and its Sources*, trans. Marthiel Mathews (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1949, repr. 1986), 318–355. Mâle declares that the representation of the corpse was first seen in the late fourteenth century (318), which is curious since he discusses thirteenth-century examples of the Three Living and the Three Dead (324). He might have meant to suggest that, prior to the fourteenth century, the dead were represented as skeletons instead of corpses, but this as we know from existing evidence is also inaccurate.

38 The allegorical morality play “Everyman” tells of a young man who is told by Death that the end of his life draws near. The man fights despair and fear, and after all his friends have deserted him and he loses his wealth, he realizes that his good deeds are all that he can take into the next life. Fifteenth-century versions of plays on this theme survive in Flemish and Middle English.


41 Gertsman, *Dance of Death*. 
to underscore the worthlessness of the physical body and the paramount importance of preparing the soul for death. Still, there were important differences between the two genres. The Encounter of the Three Living and the Three Dead almost always features three young men of high station, be they aristocrats or kings, while the Dance of Death always includes a greater array of individuals drawn from a number of different classes, and of both genders.\(^42\) Images of the Three Living and the Three Dead that include representations of women are very few.\(^43\)

The message also differs between the two themes. Rotzler delineated the distinctions between the imagery of the Encounter and of the Dance by stating that while the opposition between living and dead in the Encounter is presented as a lesson, in the Dance, in contrast, Death has come to take away those for whom it is too late to change their ways.\(^44\) Still, there is something of a give and take between the two. The late fifteenth-century representations of the Three Living and the Three Dead present the dead as violent corpses that seem intent on attacking the living, as will be discussed in Chapter 3, and these seem to have been informed by contemporary representations of the Dance of Death. The violent encounters between living and dead no longer offer the young men a chance to redeem themselves but seem to announce the end of life. It becomes clear that our understanding of the relationship between different traditions is enhanced by a recognition that these forms did not exist in their own discrete worlds.

\(^{42}\) For a discussion of the ways in which monumental images of the Dance of Death were designed to encourage performativity and the interaction of its viewers, see Gertsman, *Dance of Death*.

\(^{43}\) Examples of the Encounter that feature women include the Berlin Hours of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian (Berlin, KK-SMPK MS 78 B 12), fol. 220v; Berlin, KK-SMPK MS 78 B 14, fol. 277v; and London, BL Add. MS 35313, fol. 157v. These examples will all be discussed in Chapter 3.

\(^{44}\) Rotzler, *Die Begegnung*, 263.
but rather co-existed and informed each other, and were the agents of each other’s transformations.

Although it is clear that the theme of the Three Living and the Three Dead preceded the outbreak of the Black Death in 1348, the question remains what, if any, impact the experience of plague had upon the iconographical record of the Encounter. Millard Meiss argued, through an examination of an array of paintings including the Triumph of Death at the Campo Santo in Pisa, that paintings produced in Tuscany in the mid-fourteenth century registered, through a modification of style and substance, the impact of these traumatic experiences of losing loved ones suddenly. At the time that Meiss was writing, the Campo Santo fresco was believed to date to ca. 1350 and was thought to follow the earliest outbreak of the Black Death in Italy.45 The painting has since been reattributed to Buffalmacco and re-dated to the 1330s, however, predating the earliest outbreak of the Black Death in Tuscany.46 The redating of the painting obviously undermined Meiss’ argument that stylistic transformations could be explained through reference to cataclysmic events.

Still, it seems reasonable to contend that the profile of the story of the Three Living and the Three Dead could have been heightened following the outbreak of the plague. According to this view, the Black Death might have been at least partly responsible for the greater intensity and proliferation of Macabre imagery in later centuries. Critiques of Meiss’ work have pointed out that Meiss wrote his book in the shadow of World War II, and that he had anachronistically applied his observation of the impact of contemporary events on twentieth century painting onto the art of the Middle Ages. Critics also indicated that a causal relationship between plague and art could only be supported if it could be replicated in other areas of Europe affected by plague. In my view, the scope of Meiss’ project was sufficiently ambitious just dealing with Tuscany; broadening the scope any further would have stretched its limits. No other scholar has since applied Meiss’ thesis to paintings in other parts of Europe from the same period, but it seems reasonable to assume that an event as traumatic as the Black Death would have left a mark sufficiently deep on people that it would have manifested itself in cultural products of the age in some way. This could, for example, account in part for the shift to the aggressive as opposed to conversational encounter between living and dead that emerged by the mid-fifteenth century.

In a departure from the view that a cataclysmic event could effect cultural change, other scholars have argued for an interpretation of the emergence of the

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47 Meiss, Painting in Florence, 74.
48 Van Os, “The Black Death,” 239.
49 Binski, Medieval Death, 129.
50 Jacques Chiffoleau discusses concerns about death and dying in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and discusses the impact of plague on ways of seeing the world for the period. See Jacques Chiffoleau, La comptabilité de l’au-delà: Les hommes, la mort et la religion dans la région d’Avignon à la fin du Moyen Âge (vers 1320–vers 1480) (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1980).
Macabre as a result of changing attitudes towards death. Huizinga viewed the late Middle Ages as a period characterized by a fear of death, which was essentially responsible for the emergence of the Macabre.\textsuperscript{51} Philippe Ariès saw in the later Middle Ages a shift in emphasis from the community to the individual reflected most clearly in the preoccupation with individual death and judgment.\textsuperscript{52}

The number of surviving private devotional texts and images testifies to the fact that late medieval laypeople were especially concerned with taking charge of their own salvation by taking steps to prepare themselves for death as part of the larger economy of salvation, in addition to participation in the larger community of the faithful through attendance at mass. A number of social and theological factors account for this shift. One relevant development was the codification of the doctrine of Purgatory in the late thirteenth century. The notion of a third place had been debated even in the third and fourth centuries, as Ambrose, Augustine and others argued that a site in addition to Heaven and Hell was necessary for the sequestration of those souls not holy enough to go to Heaven but not evil enough to be consigned to Hell. While this notion continued to be debated for centuries, it was not established as doctrine until 1274 at the Second

\textsuperscript{51} Johan Huizinga, \textit{The Waning of the Middle Ages}, trans. F. Hopman (New York: Penguin, 1924); Johan Huizinga, \textit{The Autumn of the Middle Ages}, trans. Rodney Payton and Ulrich Mammitzsch (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). Huizinga’s perspective was extremely influential, and his legacy for the study of the art of death and of late medieval art in general will be examined in Chapter 1.

Council of Lyons. Since Purgatory was a place of cleansing, and the soul continued to benefit from the prayers of the living, the recitation of the Office of the Dead was fundamental to helping the souls of deceased loved ones. Prayers, the purchase of indulgences, the endowment of masses and chantries and the performance of works were all perceived to assist those who were believed to languish in Purgatory, but these were also in the best interest of those still on earth who could not be sure that they would not end up there themselves. It was also recognized that efforts to prevent oneself from landing in Purgatory also needed to be expanded. Clearly, such questions about what would happen to the soul, and inevitably by extension, what impact that would have on the body after death, started to concern people more than ever. I argue that heightened concerns about the fate of the body and the soul after death led to the expansion of categories of textual and pictorial production, which included the transformation of the Three Living and the Three Dead.

Certain literary versions of the Three Living and the Three Dead describe the punishments of the dead as a way of communicating to the living the urgency of doing whatever possible to avoid such an unpleasant fate after death. The early fourteenth-century Anonymous IV text contains reference to Hell as does an unillustrated fifteenth-century German poem preserved in one version in the so-called Hartebok.

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manuscript. In the “Van dren konyngen” text in the *Hartebok*, the dead declare that two of their number now reside in Heaven, but the third has unfortunately been damned, reflecting the currency of immediate judgment. Still other versions of the story contain specific reference to the fate of the dead as residing in Hell or Purgatory. An extensive narrative cycle laid out in the *bas-de-page* of the Smithfield Decretals manuscript of ca. 1340 presents in pictorial form the judgments anticipated by the living. Following the initial encounter of the living with the dead, the viewer-reader of the manuscript witnesses each of the living envisioning their fates: one sees himself in Hell (fol. 259v) (fig. 11), another visualizes himself in Heaven, cleverly represented as a little castle, with a gathering of souls visible through the main gates, (fol. 260r) (fig. 12) while a third envisions Hell (fol. 260v) (fig. 13). Following these visions, and the subsequent performance of good works, the kings die one by one. Their souls are judged immediately after death, and while all eventually go to Heaven, the fates of two of the kings literally weigh in the balance before the Virgin intervenes on their behalf. The implication is that due to the performance of such good works as clothing the poor, building a church and other activities, the three have been saved in the end, though the taint of sins committed earlier in life casts doubt upon the certainty of that salvation.

References to the judgment of the soul in the Smithfield manuscript focus on Heaven

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58 London, BL Royal MS 10 E IV. This manuscript will be discussed in Chapter 2.
and Hell, but Purgatory could have been excluded for practical reasons; it was a challenge to differentiate Hell from Purgatory in illustration.⁵⁹ The increased popularity and the heightened drama of images of the Three Living and the Three Dead after the mid-fifteenth century might be attributed in part not only to the popularity of the Dance of Death, but also to the influence of the reaffirmation of the Doctrine of Purgatory at the Council of Florence in 1439, as I discuss further in Chapter 3.

In addition to the Three Living and the Three Dead, there also emerged across Europe in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries a number of illustrated poems presenting allegorical debates that were responses to thoughts about the fate of the body and soul after death.⁶⁰ The *Visio Philiberti* recounts in Latin through a dream vision an argument occurring between body and soul of a deceased man.⁶¹ In an example from Rome, Bibl. Casanatense fol. 6v, for instance, the soul scolds the body for its lackadaisical behaviour, while the body retorts that it is the soul’s job to exert restraint, and that it should accept responsibility. The poem ends with the soul being dragged off to hell, after which Philibert awakens from his dream well motivated to better himself. This poem was disseminated all over Europe and by the fifteenth century was included in a number of miscellanies which featured a collection of moralizing tales, including Munich, BSB cgm 3974 and Rome, Casanatense MS 1404.⁶² A Middle English poem,

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⁵⁹ For the challenges around representing Purgatory, see Binski, *Medieval Death*, 188–199.
⁶² Fifteenth-century illustrated texts of this story appear in Munich, BSB cgm 3974 (to be discussed in Chapter 4) and Rome, Bibl. Casanatense MS 1404 (to be discussed in Chapter 5).
preserved in a Carthusian miscellany in the British Library, addresses a related subject, as it relays a dispute between the body of a deceased woman and the worms that approach her. This poem demonstrates that such moralizing texts were not by any means restricted to a critique of men. While the woman’s body cries out for the assistance of her knights in fighting off the pesky worms, the worms remind her that she is now beyond their assistance (fig. 14). A further example is ‘Der Ackermann aus Böhmen’, or the Ploughman from Bohemia, attributed to the lawyer Johannes von Tepl (d. 1400) which recounts the grief of the young man who lost his beloved wife in childbirth (fig. 15). As a result of his cruel loss, he takes Death to court, at which God the Father serves as judge. Following the trial, God rules in favour of Death, for all must die. This brief mention of just three allegorical debate poems, all of which emerged later than the Three Living and the Three Dead, exhibits the medieval interest in exploring in verse and image the implications of death for the soul and the body.

63 The ‘Disputacion’ is preserved on fols. 32v-35r in London, BL MS Add. 37049.
65 The image of Death and the Ploughman in dialogue is on fol. 12r in a fifteenth-century manuscript in Heidelberg, cod. pal. germ. 76 (ca. 1470). For the Heidelberg manuscript, see Wilfried Werner, ed., Cimelia Heidelbergensia: 30 illuminierte Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg (Wiesbaden, 1975), 87–89.
The *Ars Moriendi*, a manual of prescribed behaviours for dying well, emerged in the fifteenth century as a response to fears about dying unprepared and as a reflection of the desire to take greater charge of preparations for the passage into the next life.\(^67\) Ariès and Bynum have argued that these sentiments reflect a new sense of personal responsibility and the emergence of the individual,\(^68\) but death, or at least the desired “good death”, continued to be considered a communal affair, with the *moriens* surrounded by loved ones at the end. Jean Gerson, Chancellor of the University of Paris, composed a manual early in the fifteenth century to assist clerics at the bedsides of the dying. In the aftermath of the Council of Constance (1414-1418), the ideas of this manual were disseminated across Europe, especially through the networks of the Franciscans and Dominicans. While originally composed for use by a cleric at the beside of a dying individual, it came to be employed as a devotional aid to prepare the soul, so that when death inevitably came it would hopefully be a *mors bona*. Manuals intended for lay use survive in hundreds of manuscripts and incunabula.\(^69\) The shorter version of the text used in block books included allegorical illustrations of the five temptations facing the dying person and their relevant remedies.\(^70\) Its message was that

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\(^{68}\) Ariès, *Hour of Our Death*, esp. 95–139; Bynum, “Death and Resurrection,” 592.


\(^{70}\) The five temptations were the rejection of faith, despair, impatience, complacency and avarice, attended by demons, while the corresponding inspirations were the
while doubts and fears would inevitably emerge on the deathbed, the manner in which the \textit{moriens} confronted those fears would determine his or her fate. What these devotional and contemplative texts shared was an unmistakable desire to confront the fear of death head on, to allow the penitent to be as prepared as possible for death’s onset.

In addition to viewing the Three Living and the Three Dead through the lens of shifting attitudes towards death and manifested concerns about the fate of the body and soul after death in the late Middle Ages, my investigation is also directed to newer lines of inquiry concerning the relationship between text and image, the situation of images in their manuscript contexts and an analysis of the functions that the texts and images served for their audiences.

Illuminations were long reproduced in modern scholarly books in the manner of panel paintings, divorced from their original textual contexts. Only within the last few decades have illuminations begun to be reproduced as part of the larger manuscript page in photographs.\footnote{Manuscript scholars share a desire for greater availability of full page reproductions from manuscripts, but of course obstacles such as museum and library cutbacks, as well as the cost of re-photographing manuscript pages, present real challenges to this quest. When possible and affordable, however, I have endeavoured to provide full page reproductions to illustrate my arguments.} This change reflects a larger shift in thinking about the manuscript illumination as inextricably linked to the accompanying texts on the page.\footnote{Jonathan J. G. Alexander, “Art History, Literary History and the Study of Medieval Illuminated Manuscripts,” \textit{Studies in Iconography} 18 (1997): 51–65.} A study of all aspects of the folio reveals clues about the nature of the relationship

\begin{footnotesize}
\text{confirmation of faith, a hope for mercy through contribution, charity, humility and detachment, and these were accompanied by angels.}
\end{footnotesize}
between text and image. Often, the illumination displays differences from the text, and may include features not articulated in the accompanying passages. This observation leads to a consideration of larger questions about the relative autonomy of the illuminator, workshop practices, and the possibility of extra-textual references to larger pictorial networks. It may also reveal clues about the nature and level of literacy of the intended audience. It is crucial to consider the relationship of an image not only to the word on the page but also beyond, to a larger network of related texts and images, for this sheds light on the societal, artistic and literary contexts in which the image was produced and meant to be understood. Recent work on orality and literacy in court culture has shown that epic and verse narratives were transformed through performance and that each poet that picked up the tale contributed embellishments that resulted in what was essentially a refashioned work.

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A consideration of the place of the illumination within the manuscript as a whole is also fundamental for my project. A philological method gaining traction in recent years urges a rejection of the restrictive study of the relationship between a specific composition and its sometimes elusive exemplar to focus instead on the manuscript and its audience. The groundbreaking work of Stephen Nichols and Siegfried Wenzel has been particularly useful for my thinking about my own project.75 In several case study chapters in my dissertation, I examine examples of the Three Living and the Three Dead within their individual manuscript contexts. Case studies provide an opportunity to delve deeply into a few key examples while also featuring a broad range of contexts. I establish the relationship between text and image within each manuscript and argue that the particular manner in which the Three Living and the Three Dead was presented was intended to target a specific user or owner within the manuscript matrix. This has allowed for a recognition of the different ways in which a single story, the Three Living and the Three Dead, could be presented according to its different contexts and audiences.

An evaluation of the manner in which the theme was approached, both textually and pictorially, in different regions, and what that reveals to us about the ways in which the theme was meant to function in those areas, has not previously been investigated in depth. Some work has been done on the inclusion of the Three Living and the Three Dead alongside fables and romances in French and English compendia of courtly texts,

and amongst a series of moralizing texts when it was appended to the Psalter. Very little attention, however, has yet been devoted to the function that the Three Living and the Three Dead performed in German manuscripts, including miscellanies. The imagery of the tale, accompanied by short passages of text, appears in compendia of sermons, theological treatises and moralizing texts, intended for use in one case in a monastic context, and in another by a theologian, perhaps associated with a university, as I discuss in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively. An additional miscellany intended for use by a young woman includes the illustrated tale of the Encounter presented in yet a very different manner, as discussed in Chapter 6. What becomes clear through the series of case study chapters is that there was a variety of ways of illustrating the story according to the intended audience.

Finally, the role of the beholder in the viewing of images is also important to my project. Significant theoretical work on reception theory and performance has informed my approach to this topic. Barthes’ seminal essay “The Death of the Author” provides the reader with agency in the production of meaning. Barthes claimed that the text, far from being a closed document after its composition, is provided with meaning through its interpretation by the reader. This perspective has been widely influential for literary criticism, but has also taken hold in other disciplines, including Art

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78 Wolfgang Iser, The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response (Baltimore: The
This has led subsequently to the emergence of the line of inquiry into performativity, which examines how a work has been constructed in order to motivate participation on the part of the viewer, and investigates modes of interaction between beholder and object. Several of the representations of the Three Living and the Three Dead investigated in this study were clearly designed to implicate the viewer in very specific ways, yet this aspect of the imagery has only recently begun to be addressed in scholarship on the theme. Considerations of reception and performativity here will offer insights into the meaning of the depictions of the story for their viewers.

This study examines the story of the Three Living and the Three Dead as it was manifested in manuscripts produced north of the Alps in the late Middle Ages. This

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was a tall order, as it required a great deal of ground work in the historical and art historical literature important for the study of examples produced in a variety of regions over the course of three centuries. Apart from Rotzler’s study, which surveyed all of the examples of the Three Living and the Three Dead known at the time and situated them within iconographic and formal categories, other published studies on the theme have been focused on individual examples or groups of monuments located in specific regions. While such studies have established the meanings that the story held in specific locales, they have not addressed the differences in approach to telling the story apparent across Europe because of their geographical restrictions. My study stands apart as I closely examine manuscripts created in different parts of Europe but also intended for different audiences, which reveals the rich array of possibilities for telling this story and conveying its message.

In Chapter 2, I provide a foundation by discussing illuminated examples from French and English thirteenth- and fourteenth-century manuscripts that well illustrate how the Three Living and the Three Dead was presented in manuscript in its early history. The examples discussed were drawn from rich manuscripts including courtly compendia, Psalters, Books of Hours and a canon law volume of decretals. Living and dead are shown in conversation in each example discussed. I suggest that the employment of this iconographic type had less to do with the geographic location in which the illustrations were produced and more to do with the function that the images were intended to serve in their manuscript contexts. The representation of living and

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The bibliography on individual examples or monuments from specific regions is extensive. See the bibliography from *Vifs nous sommes* and volumes of *L’Art macabre* for examples.
dead interacting with each other conveyed the didactic and moralizing tenor of the
scene. This opposition between living and dead emphasized the story’s role as an
exemplum, as well as a speculum, for the living, both on the page and in the flesh.

The core of the dissertation, however, is focused on examples from north-
central continental Europe. In the early stages of my project, I consulted close to fifty
manuscripts in North American and European libraries. After sifting my preliminary
findings, I honed in on two Books of Hours (Berlin, KK-SMPK MS 78 B 12 and
London, BL, MS Add. 35313) and three miscellanies (Munich, BSB cgm 3974; Rome,
Biblioteca Casanatense MS 1404; and Wolfenbüttel, HAB Aug. 16.17 quarto) to serve
as case studies for this dissertation. These manuscripts have been understudied in the
literature and most effectively display the fascinating variety of approaches to the
illustration of the same story. The selected examples also reflect a range of audiences,
including Hapsburg women; students and teachers at a monastic school; a well-
educated theologian in Erfurt (or possibly Leipzig); and a young woman from
Strasbourg. My case study examples allow for the exploration of the activation of the
tale in a variety of contexts in northern Europe.

83 As I am dealing primarily with northern continental Europe in this project, I omit
discussions of Spanish examples. Spanish manifestations of the Three Living and the
Three Dead have also been relatively neglected in the scholarly record, however. For
the investigation of a few examples in Spain, see Margherita Morreale, “Un tema no
documentado en España: El ‘Encuentro de los tres vivos y los tres muertos’,” Boletín de
la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona 35 (1973–1974): 257–263. For
Macabre imagery in Spain, see Enrica Zaira Merlo, “La morte e il disinganno: Itinerario
iconografico e letterario nella Spagna cristiana,” in Humana fragilitas: I temi della
morte in Europa tra Duecento e Settecento, ed. Alberto Tenenti (Clusone: Ferrari,
2000), 219–250. A consideration of representations produced in Spain and Italy require
study under separate cover, however.
The examples selected for close readings in discrete chapters all fall within the fifteenth century, a period of relative neglect for the study of the Three Living and the Three Dead. Representations of the Encounter produced in France, England and Italy in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, discussed in Chapter 2, have received the lion’s share of the attention in the literature; most studies on Macabre art of the fifteenth century, on the other hand, have tended to focus on the Dance of Death in France and Germany at the expense of the Three Living and the Three Dead. A study of a variety of texts and images included in different kinds of manuscripts but all created during the same century assists with a consideration of the different forms that the tale could take, and the fact that context of use, audience and function were all inextricably linked to this transformation.

I judiciously invoke wall paintings of the Three Living and the Three Dead in this study, in particular those which play a major role in the historiographic record, such as the Campo Santo fresco attributed to Buffalmacco of ca. 1335, but otherwise do not pay sustained attention to wall paintings in this study. Frescoes in particular regions have been extensively studied elsewhere, and will not be addressed in depth here.84 The majority of murals in France and England are found in parish churches and most likely once served as pictorial exempla to which preachers could point during the

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84 For example, *Vifs nous sommes*, published by the Groupe de recherches sur les peintures murales, has investigated wall paintings of the Three Living and the Three Dead located in France. Volumes of the journal *L’Art macabre*, published by the Europäische Totentanz-Vereinigung, include articles on individual examples of the Three Living and the Three Dead, as well as the Dance of Death, from across Europe.
performance of sermons. Indeed, these paintings were referred to in the Middle Ages as *muta predicatio*. The paintings often appeared in the context of representations of the Virtues and Vices, among other moralizing subjects, and provided the gathered faithful ample opportunity to reflect on their own sinfulness. Although these wall paintings appeared in different physical and geographical contexts, they were all ultimately intended to convey the same message, that of the importance of reflecting on the state of one’s soul and preparing oneself for unexpected death. In contrast, the manifestation of the story in manuscript was intended for the eyes of only one individual, or in some cases for a small group of individuals. Wall paintings also tended to be more consistent in their iconography, unlike the manuscript examples under investigation here. I argue in this dissertation that the moralizing tale of the Three Living and the Three Dead, when introduced into manuscripts produced for different contexts, spoke in very different ways to its viewers.

My thesis begins with a consideration of the place of the Three Living and the Three Dead in modern scholarship on the art of death of the late Middle Ages. Johan Huizinga argued in *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, first published in the Netherlands in 1919, that the late Medieval period was a time of decline and excess. This view, which took hold and was widely held, has now for the most part been rejected in

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academic circles, and yet the association between the notion of decline and death imagery has persisted. I shift attention away from the large scale, primarily French monuments upon which Huizinga and his successors based their arguments, to focus on small, intimate images produced across Northern Europe that were used in private devotional contexts. This allows for a consideration of the practical and positive functions that the images served for their users.

This historiographical and methodological prologue is followed in Chapter 2 by an examination of the relationship between text and image in renditions of the Three Living and the Three Dead that survive in Northern European manuscripts. Images illustrating the moralizing tale in courtly compendia were very different from those that accompanied prayers for the dead intended for use in private devotion. I suggest that the selective and inventive ways in which the story could be depicted was inextricably linked not only to what type of text it accompanied, but also to the function that the image was intended to serve within the manuscript whole.

This foundation is followed by a series of case studies in which I investigate previously understudied examples of the Three Living and the Three Dead, situating them in their manuscript contexts and reconstructing their usage and function. The representation of the story that illustrates the Office of the Dead in the Berlin Hours of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian I (SMPK-KK 78 B 12), incorporating a portrait of Mary as one of the three living, serves as the focal point of Chapter 3. The introduction of a portrait of the Duchess into the composition on fol. 220v was a deliberate move to heighten the power of the image as a memento mori. This image would have worked together with the representation of Death personified on the opposing recto to produce a
customized experience of prayer. I discuss the opening from Mary’s book in tandem with that of another member of the Hapsburg family, likely her daughter Margaret, whose Book of Hours included exactly the same design for the Three Living and the Three Dead which is not known anywhere else. This composition was likely recognized as privileged, and its use might have been restricted to the Hapsburg circle.

Representations of the Three Living and the Three Dead were not reserved for aristocratic or royal viewers, however, as the examples in the German manuscripts I study in chapters 4-6 makes clear. The tale was in fact consumed in manuscript by a wider array of audiences, ranging from monastic communities to theologians and lay individuals. In Chapter 4, I investigate a bilingual miscellany now in Munich (BSB cgm 3974), which contains a *memento mori* cycle including the Three Living and the Three Dead. The array of Latin and Early New High German texts in this manuscript hailing from the monastery of St. Emmeram suggests that the manuscript was used to instruct young people in Latin and moral precepts, but was also used by monks for contemplation and the preparation of lessons. In Chapter 5, I examine a manuscript likely produced in a university context, either at Erfurt or Leipzig, now housed in the Casanatense Library in Rome, MS 1404. This collection, written in Latin and produced in the aftermath of the Hussite controversy, includes an illustration of the Three Living and Three Dead, accompanied by text in Latin, within the context of a larger *memento mori* series. The protagonists in the pictorial rendition of the Three Living and the Three Dead implicate the viewer in the composition but also direct the beholder to contemplate the other moralizing texts and images preceding and following it. In this context, the text and image of the Three Living and the Three Dead were used as a tool
to remind the viewer, who was likely a theologian, of the inevitability of death and the possibility of salvation through prayer.

Finally, Chapter 6 investigates a small, unassuming volume which once belonged to a young woman from Strasbourg. The compilation is unillustrated save the four folios telling the story of the Three Living and the Three Dead. The figures represented beside each of the six sections of text refer to a well-known monument of architectural sculpture in town, the figure of the Fürst der Welt on the cathedral façade. My study indicates that the manuscript, and the Three Living and the Three Dead itself, was customized for a young woman for use as a Hausbuch, a volume for consultation on local and domestic matters.

In sum, my dissertation takes a fresh approach to a number of images of the Three Living and the Three Dead. Some of the images discussed here have received no sustained attention in decades. My project sheds light on the importance of the imagery of death and more specifically of the Three Living and the Three Dead in late medieval culture. It will enhance our understanding of a story which became popular across Europe and took a variety of forms at different times depending on the context in which it appeared and the function it was intended to serve.
Chapter 1

A New Vision of Death: Confronting Huizinga’s Legacy for the Study of the Three Living and the Three Dead

The great cultural historian Johan Huizinga (fig. 17) suggested in his *Herfsttij der Middeleeuwen*, first published in 1919, that the fifteenth century did not usher in the Renaissance but was rather an “over-ripening” of the preceding era.¹ Since that time, most scholars have rejected Huizinga’s interpretation of the period as one of

¹ The term “over-ripening” is the closest English approximation of the term that Huizinga used in the original Dutch edition of *Herfsttij der Middeleeuwen*. A passage in the preface to the first English translation, *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, executed by F. Hopman reads “In history, as in nature, birth and death are equally balanced. The decay of overripe forms of civilization is as suggestive a spectacle as the growth of new ones.” (Italics my emphasis.) See Huizinga, *Waning*, 7. The term also appears in the more recent English translation entitled *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*. One passage of the preface reads: “This book is an attempt to view the time around the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, not as announcing the Renaissance, but as the end of the Middle Ages, as the age of medieval thought in its last phase of life, as a tree with overripe fruits, fully unfolded and developed.” See Huizinga, *Autumn*, xix. *Autumn* offers some decided benefits over the only previously available English translation, such as a configuration of chapters that more closely follows Huizinga’s Dutch division, the inclusion of previously omitted sections, photographic reproductions of many of the art works discussed in the text and Huizinga’s original scholarly references. It is curious that Huizinga would have approved an English translation in his own day that took such liberties with the text, its content and its organization, regardless of the elegance of Hopman’s translation. See Huizinga, *Autumn*, xiii-xv. While we must be mindful of the bias that Payton and Mammitzsch bear the Hopman original, the preservation of nuance and the closer reproduction of Huizinga’s original Dutch work make the more recent edition the preferable one. With respect to the title, *Autumn* is also closer in meaning to the Dutch word *Herfsttij* than is *Waning*, and yet Huizinga seems to have preferred *Waning* for the title of the 1924 English translation. He reportedly disliked the use of *Herbst* in the German translation in 1923, despite the fact that it was quite close to the Dutch *Herfsttij*. While *Autumn* seems like a more nuanced and less critical term than *Waning*, Huizinga may well have preferred the latter. See James Kennedy, “The Autumnns of Johan Huizinga” in *Studies in Medievalism IX: Medievalism and the Academy I*, ed. L. Workman et al. (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1997), 209–217.
Yet it is clear that his ideas have continued to influence scholarly debate in very specific ways, especially with respect to discussions about the art of death.

One distinguishing feature of the late Middle Ages is a body of texts and images traditionally referred to as the Macabre. This genre, which is characterized by the opposition of living bodies to decaying dead ones, includes such subjects as the Dance of Death, the Triumph of Death, and the Three Living and the Three Dead, as well as conversations between Death and the Living in the story of the Ackermann aus Böhmen, for example.

The emergence and subsequent waning in popularity of the genre of the Macabre coincides very closely with the parameters of the late Middle Ages, specifically the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Huizinga’s interest in the Macabre as a defining feature of the Late Middle Ages appears to have exerted some influence on the time frame of his study, not unreasonable given the obvious relationship between death and decay. The Macabre could even be construed as a metaphor for the late Middle Ages in Huizinga’s estimation. In light of the inextricable link between the study of the Macabre and that of the late Middle Ages, it is intriguing that even as historians and art historians have rejected Huizinga’s larger claims about the late Middle Ages as a period of decadence, his argument that the Macabre embodied decline continues to be accepted.3

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2 Recent general works on the history of the late Middle Ages promote a picture of the period less as one of decline and more as one of creative transformation in the face of the many challenges that people faced. See for instance John Aberth, *From the Brink of the Apocalypse: Confronting Famine, War, Plague and Death in the Later Middle Ages* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

3 While Huizinga’s characterization of the late Middle Ages has made it a concept with which to contend, scholars have questioned the merits of the terms that are currently in
This chapter investigates the notion of Macabre as articulated by Huizinga and perpetuated over subsequent decades by art historians. It argues that Huizinga’s perspective on late Medieval attitudes towards death was necessarily limited due to the evidence on which he drew, which was restricted mainly to monumental images displayed in funerary contexts. When private devotional images and their functions are introduced into the discussion, it becomes clear that not all images of death were as negative a force in people’s lives as earlier scholars of the Middle Ages have asserted. With my particular focus on manuscript illuminations of the Three Living and the Three Dead, I argue that representations of death and the dead in devotional contexts were tools that assisted people as they prepared for death and the life after death. The use of these images would have assisted viewers in a prescribed process of prayer and thus would have left them in a less fearful and rather more optimistic and hopeful frame of mind.

Before examining Huizinga’s perspective on the period as a whole and on the Macabre in particular, it is instructive to consider the etymology of the term. This process will help to sketch out what the term meant during Huizinga’s time and will shed light on how its negative associations developed and took root. An assessment of the scholarly climate in which Huizinga was writing will determine how Herfsttij was received and how the ideas took hold in Europe and North America after its translation and dissemination to new audiences. “A Vision of Death”, the chapter from Herfsttij that will serve as the focus of this dissertation chapter, has been mined by art historians use to describe it. Some, for example, have rejected the idea of a late Middle Ages at all, proposing instead a “Long Middle Ages” that would include both periods, even extending down to the Enlightenment. See Jacques Le Goff, *The Medieval Imagination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 10.
writing about the Macabre, most recently Binski,⁴ Camille,⁵ and Gertsman.⁶ Once assessing how scholars of Huizinga’s own time and those of later decades absorbed and transmitted his ideas, we can begin to critique and transform entrenched assumptions about the Macabre.

Around the middle of the nineteenth century, artists, musicians and writers were swept up in a Romantic fascination with the art and culture of the late Middle Ages, and this included the art of death. Franz Liszt, inspired by the Triumph of Death fresco at the Campo Santo in Pisa during his visit there in 1838, wrote his Totentanz in the 1840s and completed it in 1858, while Camille Saint-Saëns composed a Danse Macabre in 1874. Early filmmakers too were inspired by the idea of the Macabre as expressed in a number of influential silent films. In Fritz Lang’s Der Mütter Tod of 1921, a young man is abducted by Death, and his fiancée confronts Death in an attempt to get him back. This confrontation between a young woman and Death evokes the subject of Hans Baldung Grien’s paintings of Death and the Maiden. Fritz Murnau’s Faust of 1926 begins with a scene of skeletons riding through the air on horseback, while the Devil overshadows a late medieval town and brings plague upon it. The cultural production of the mid to late nineteenth century, when dealing with the theme of death, often made reference to the art and culture of the late Middle Ages.

Scholars of literature and cultural history also investigated the Macabre at that time, and this interest was conveyed partly through attempts to identify sources for the term itself. The earliest known recorded mention of the word, in the form of Macabré

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⁴ Binski, Medieval Death.
⁶ Gertsman, Dance of Death.
rather than Macabre, appears in *Le Respit de la Mort* by Jean le Fèvre, dated to 1376.\(^7\)

Some scholars, including Gaston Paris, believed that Macabré as used in le Fèvre’s poem must have referred to a person, perhaps the artist of an early painting of the Danse Macabre or the author of the textual passages that accompanied that painting.\(^8\)

Others suggested that Macabre could be the corruption of another name, that of the biblical Judas Maccabeus, who had urged the Jews to pray for the souls of the deceased.\(^9\) Mâle suggested that Macabre might have been derived from Macabré, in turn from *Machabaeum*,\(^10\) and Sperber articulated the possibility that the term Macabre as derived from *Machabeum* could have become associated with the dead due to a passage from the book of Maccabees II, 12:46, which discusses the importance of prayers said for the souls of the deceased.\(^11\)

That the Dance of Death and the Book of Maccabees were thought by the late Middle Ages to be connected is made clear by the fact that the *Danse* is described as that of the Maccabees in three early editions of the *Danse Macabre*.\(^12\) Further folkloristic associations developed over time and the *Danse*
came to be associated with wild dancing and even dancing gravediggers.\textsuperscript{13} This notion is reflected in contemporary images such as Michael Wolgemut’s \textit{Totentanz} from Hartmann Schedel’s Nuremberg \textit{Liber Chronicarum} of 1493 (\textbf{fig. 18}). This image depicts the dead frenetically dancing by a grave. In addition, there exist many painted examples of the Dance of Death that show living and dead in a long line, with the dead shown dancing most enthusiastically. In the late fifteenth-century Dance of Death mural painted at the church of St. Nikolaus in the Hansa town of Reval, for example, one of the corpses dances while carrying a coffin, and another plays the bagpipes. Others just dance while holding hands with the living (\textbf{fig. 19}).\textsuperscript{14} This was clearly also informed by contemporary popular belief in revenants that emerged from their graves at night to dance in cemeteries.\textsuperscript{15}

The name of the Egyptian monk Macarius has been proposed as the source for the term Macabre. This figure is often described and depicted conversing with a skull or skeleton,\textsuperscript{16} as may be seen for example at the Campo Santo in Pisa (\textbf{fig. 20}) in a fresco of the \textit{Thebaid}, a representation of the anchorites in the desert, dated to ca. 1335 (\textbf{fig.})

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\textsuperscript{14} For the cultural associations of dancing, and the inextricable link between death and dancing in the Late Middle Ages, see Gertsman, \textit{Dance of Death}, 51–75.
\textsuperscript{16} The desert father Macarius (d. 391) was described in his \textit{vita} as included in the \textit{Legenda Aurea} as routinely sleeping on dead bodies and of conversing with a skull. He was thus certainly associated with the dead by the mid-thirteenth century, but his story was known much earlier. For Macarius’ \textit{vita} as it appears in the Golden Legend, see Jacobus de Voragine, \textit{The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints}, trans. William Granger Ryan, vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 89–91.
\end{flushright}
Over time, Macarius came to be associated with the hermit who serves as intermediary between the living and dead in Italian renditions of the story of the Three Living and the Three Dead, including the fresco in the Pisan Campo Santo. He is here, however, no longer conversing with a skull, but rather with three young men standing before three dead in their coffins (fig. 17). However, both Joseph Polzer and Lina Bolzoni have identified the hermit in the Campo Santo fresco of the Three Living and the Three Dead simply as an anchorite. It is reasonable to assume, however, that the representation of the hermit in the Three Living and the Three Dead at Pisa would easily have been conflated with the figure of St. Macarius, especially since the anchorite was depicted contemplating a skull in the Thebaid fresco on the adjacent wall in the Campo Santo (see fig. 22). It is unlikely that the name of Macarius was a source for the term Macabre, but individuals did start to connect Macarius and Death by the late Middle Ages.

Some have instead attempted to tie the term Macabre to an Arabic source. Van Praet claimed that Macabre was derived from the term *maqabir*, which means tomb. His argument is weakened, however, by the fact that there is no record until the nineteenth century of such a word in circulation in the areas of Europe in which texts and images of the Three Living and the Three Dead and the Dance of Death were

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18 Dubruck, “Another Look at Macabre,” 539.


If the term Macabre meant something close to death and had an Arabic root, we would expect to find a source in Spain, where so many Arabic words entered the vernacular, and where the Dance of Death appeared in the fifteenth century. Since there was a considerable delay in the appearance of an Arabic term related in any way to Macabre, this argument does not hold up to scrutiny. Yet the notion of a link between the Macabre and the East has persisted.

The definitive source for the term Macabre has never been conclusively identified, but what these early etymological studies shared was a concern with establishing the recension through which a term descended, showing the influence of methods of textual criticism. While this painstaking work has been instructive in pointing to some possible roots for the word Macabre, it is worth noting that the studies all seem to assume an Eastern source. Scholars writing in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries exoticized the Macabre as they associated it with an eastern individual or locale, something other than their own Western cultural landscape. As has been pointed out, the term Macabre was also connected to such ulterior activities as grave-digging or wild dancing, suggesting that Macabre was associated with something suspect, something to be shunned.

The Three Living and the Three Dead, one of the classic examples in the tradition of the art of death in the late Middle Ages, has itself long been associated with the East. Huizinga’s writing was clearly informed by his training in Sanskrit drama in

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22 Dubruck, “Another Look at Macabre,” 540.
23 Ibid.
seeing parallels between ideas that emerged in the East and West. Some art historians, among them Karl Künstle and Pavel Chihaia, argued that it was the story of Barlaam and Josaphat which served as the foundation for the Three Living and the Three Dead and that it entered Europe from the Arabic East during the High Middle Ages. The historian Jean Delumeau also holds the view of an Eastern foundation for the story of the Three Living and the Three Dead. This Christianized version of the story of Buddha, as Binski has described it, tells of the youth Barlaam, the son of a pagan king, who was forbidden by his father to become a Christian. Barlaam encountered the hermit Josaphat, however, and the teachings of the hermit persuaded the young man to convert to Christianity. Through a number of parables, Josaphat taught Barlaam about the perils of the world.

Chihaia claimed that the two surviving Latin versions of the Three Living and the Three Dead revealed that they were influenced by the story of Barlaam and Josaphat. Binski too claimed that this tale could be the root of the story of the Three Living and the Three Dead. The meeting of Barlaam and Josaphat could be likened to the encounter that occurs between the hermit and one of the living who observes the

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24 “The fear of life: the denial of beauty and joy because suffering and pain are bound up with them (sic). There is an astonishing similarity between the ancient Indian, that is the Buddhist, and the medieval Christian expressions of this sentiment.” See Huizinga, Autumn, 159.
25 Künstle, Die Legende, 29; Chihaia, Immortalité et décomposition, 58; Binski, Medieval Death, 135.
26 Delumeau, Sin and Fear, 68.
27 Binski, Medieval Death, 135.
28 The story of Barlaam and Josaphat was well known in Europe by the fourteenth century and survives in a variety of versions. One variation is recorded in the Legenda Aurea. See Jacobus de Voragine, The Golden Legend, 2: 355–367.
29 Chihaia, Immortalité et décomposition, 60.
30 Binski, Medieval Death, 135.
corpse in the open coffin, as conveyed in the Latin text of the Three Living and the Three Dead preserved in a manuscript now in Ferrara. But beyond this specific detail and the general moralizing tone, few exclusive parallels may be discerned between the two stories. The contention that the Three Living and the Three Dead emerged out of the tradition of Barlaam and Josaphat seems again to be a reflection of the notion that stories associated with the Macabre must necessarily have Eastern roots, and even relatively thin evidence has been used to support this claim.

The issue of whether or not the Three Living and the Three Dead was influenced by a Near Eastern source is linked to the debate about the site of the original emergence of the tale. Künstle, Chihaia and others have suggested that the story first emerged in the south of Italy, influenced by the cultural production of the East, and from there subsequently moved north throughout Europe. Evidence used to support this argument includes the wall painting in the Grotto of Santa Marguerita at Melfi, Basilicata, which, although now dated to the late thirteenth century, was earlier thought by some to be the earliest instance of the Three Living and the Three Dead (fig. 5). The story also appeared in illuminated manuscripts produced in France in the late

31 The wall painting of the Three Living and the Three Dead at Melfi has been variously dated. Some early scholars dated the painting to the period of Hohenstaufen rule in the South, in the mid-thirteenth century. See Ciarallo and Capaldo, “L’Incontro con Federico II e la sua famiglia,” 515–523. Others have suggested that the fresco dates to the late thirteenth century during the Angevin period in Southern Italy, and this is a more persuasive argument, since it is more in line with the other surviving evidence. See Bologna, I pittori alla corte angioina, 43; Valentino Pace, “Dalla morte assente alla morte presente: Zur bildlichen Vergegenwärtigung des Todes im Mittelalter,” in Tod im Mittelalter, ed. Arno Borst et al. (Konstanz: Universitätsverlag, 1993), 366; Wille, “Quod sumus hoc eritis.” For a further discussion of the issues around the dating of the painting of the Three Living and the Three Dead at Melfi, and its implications for establishing the early chronology of the dissemination of the story, see the Introduction to this dissertation.
thirteenth century. The earliest surviving textual evidence is French, and illustrated versions of late thirteenth-century French versions of the story are contained in contemporary manuscripts, an example of which is Bibl. de l’Arsenal MS Fr. 3142 (fig. 1). Willy Rotzler has argued that the story first emerged in the context of the French court in the mid-thirteenth century, in part through the influence of mendicant teachings as a critique of the knightly and aristocratic classes.32

Having weighed the available evidence, it seems most likely that the story initially emerged in France and then, through Angevin connections in the south of Italy, emerged there within a short period of time. This would explain why the earliest surviving examples, which are almost exactly contemporary, survive in French courtly manuscripts (for example, Arsenal 3142) and on the walls of a few architectural sites that fell within the boundaries of Angevin rule in the south of Italy (Atri and Melfi, for example). Still, it is instructive to observe, however, that stories, at that time as well as in our own, could cross borders fairly quickly and could be passed on by word of mouth. The themes of belief in the life after death, the desire to prepare for that event, and the fear of the decomposing body emerged in different times and different places without the necessity of having directly influenced each other, at least at first. The fact that Chihaia and others have insisted that the root of the story must have emerged in the East again highlights the tendency for writers to perpetuate the notion even though the existing evidence points to the West.

Early scholarly investigations into the Three Living and the Three Dead and of the Macabre in general were conducted in a context and climate fascinated with, but

32 Rotzler, Die Begegnung, 269.
also suspicious of, the exoticized East, and this may explain the motivation behind efforts to locate a source for the story, and even the Macabre in general, in the monolithic East. At a time when colonial enterprises were underway and had been for some time, artists and writers betrayed a fascination with the inhabitants and cultures of these regions, in particular North Africa and the Arabian peninsula, among others. Gerôme, when painting these regions, often evoked a world that seemed to be timeless, pristine and innocent while simultaneously exotic and dangerous. This attitude underlay some historical writing of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as well. This mix of appreciation, fascination and anxiety also clearly had an impact on the thinking about the Macabre and its emergence.

Edward Said argued in his seminal *Orientalism* that Western scholars had tended to privilege a Eurocentric vision of the world by perpetuating stereotypes of the East as primitive. This perspective of Eurocentrism was pervasive in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and informed the argument that the Macabre had its origins in the East. But as Suzanne Akbari has recently pointed out, while an articulation of the binary opposition between East and West is ubiquitous in modern scholarship, it is rarely framed in those terms in medieval texts; instead, the world was organized and understood with reference to the continents, or with respect to the situation of certain areas vis-à-vis Jerusalem, among other strategies. Late medieval texts did not oppose the East to the monolithic West as writers tend to do today. Islam

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has in many ways been essentially conflated with the geographical region we would call the Near and Middle East in modern conceptions of the world; in medieval writings, however, religious and geographical difference were considered two distinct, although still interrelated, concepts. Clearly, those who produced the stories and images of the Three Living and the Three Dead and other related tales in the late Middle Ages perceived the world very differently than did historians writing about that tradition in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Chihaia and others who undertook examinations of the origins of the Three Living and the Three Dead and the Dance of Death brought contemporary assumptions about the notion of the East to their projects, and they were not concerned, at least not in the way in which we are now, about trying to establish accurately the context in which those late medieval texts and images were produced. An application of post-colonial theory allows us to recognize that an insistence by earlier scholars that the Three Living and the Three Dead and other macabre constructions must have originated in Near Eastern regions was closely tied to a world view that was suspicious of the monolithic East. According to this view, a body of texts and images that focused on the decomposing and abject body would have to have originated there. It is important to recognize, though, that the idea of a tale such as the Three Living and the Three Dead would not have been halted at a border. When examining the transmission of a story, it is important to distinguish between the attitudes of the time in which it emerged as well as the prejudices and assumptions that informed later writings about those earlier works.

35 Ibid.
As has been shown above, the term Macabre has accrued layers of associations over time, including those of the dangerous, the exotic, the foreign. But how has this term been used in the scholarship on the art of the late Middle Ages, and how has its use contributed to our perspective on the genre today? A survey of a variety of texts ranging from the late nineteenth century to our own day reveals that it has been applied haphazardly at times, even carelessly at others. In all cases, scholars focused on the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries when they wrote about the body of work that they called Macabre, and viewed the concept as generally sinister. As early as 1889, the folklorist Gaston Paris viewed the concept as negative, describing the Macabre as a place where the funereal and the grotesque meet.\textsuperscript{36} Kurtz, in his study on the Dance of Death first published in 1934, defined the term as a certain type of artistic or literary composition characterized by a grim and ghastly humour with an insistence on the details and the trappings of death.\textsuperscript{37} And for Philippe Ariès, the Macabre referred to “realistic representations of the human body in the process of decomposition.”\textsuperscript{38}

First translated into English in 1924 with the title of \textit{The Waning of the Middle Ages}, Johan Huizinga’s \textit{Herfsttij der Middeleeuwen} has most recently been translated into English under the title \textit{The Autumn of the Middle Ages}, which is a closer approximation to the original Dutch. In the chapter “A Vision of Death”, so-called in both English translations of the work, Huizinga claimed that “the call of \textit{memento mori}

\textsuperscript{37} Kurtz, \textit{Dance of Death}, 1.
\textsuperscript{38} Ariès, \textit{Hour of our Death}, 110.
echoes through the whole of life.”\textsuperscript{39} He organized the surviving textual and pictorial record of this genre into three main categories. These included the elegiac texts of the \textit{Ubi Sunt} tradition, asking to what place all the great men of the past have gone, such as those by the fifteenth-century French poet François Villon; the graphic images of putrefaction and decay found for example in the transi tomb; and finally the corpses coming to life in the texts and images of the Danse Macabre.\textsuperscript{40} Huizinga claimed that “(Macabre) has acquired for us a crisp and particular nuance of meaning (with which) we can label the entire late medieval vision of death”.\textsuperscript{41}

In Huizinga’s estimation, regret and fear were the main responses to death as expressed in late medieval art and literature, and there was no place for the “living emotion” of pity and resignation.\textsuperscript{42} This was in keeping with the overarching argument of \textit{Herfsttij} as a whole, the concept being that in the late Middle Ages responses to events in people’s lives revealed extremes and contradictions.\textsuperscript{43}

While the church moralized the emphasis on decay by linking it to the \textit{memento mori}, the imagery itself was thought to inspire fear in its lay viewers. Such insistent emphasis on the decaying body was anything but pious, Huizinga argued, and must be understood as a reaction against an “excessive sensuality”.\textsuperscript{44} While the English translations of Huizinga differ in some cases in wording and style, they both

\textsuperscript{39} Huizinga, \textit{Autumn}, 156.
\textsuperscript{40} In his introduction to the chapter “A Vision of Death”, Huizinga used the \textit{Danse Macabre} as a rubric under which to include other related forms such as the Three Living and the Three Dead. He privileged the \textit{Danse} and subsumed the Three Living and the Three Dead within it, as though suggesting that the Three Living and the Three Dead was subsidiary to it. See Huizinga, \textit{Waning}, 134.
\textsuperscript{41} Huizinga, \textit{Autumn}, 164.
\textsuperscript{42} Huizinga, \textit{Waning}, 146.
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{44} Huizinga, \textit{Waning}, 136; Huizinga, \textit{Autumn}, 159.
demonstrate Huizinga’s belief that the cultural expression of the Macabre itself was a phenomenon that was worldly, as it was concerned with the fate of physical things, and self-concerned, even selfish, in a reflection specifically of a fear of the decay of one’s own body.\textsuperscript{45}

I contest Huizinga’s argument that the Macabre expressed a profane obsession with the physical world and suggest instead that a preoccupation with the physical body’s potential for corruption reminded the viewer that the body was worthless precisely because it would decay; it was the soul that should be the goal and focus of life while on earth. Huizinga curiously claimed that “renunciation based on disgust does not spring from Christian wisdom,”\textsuperscript{46} despite the fact that the writings of Early Medieval theologians are replete with complaints about the filthiness of the body and the necessity of rejecting it in order to achieve salvation.\textsuperscript{47} I would argue rather that the decaying body successfully embodied the idea of the relative worthlessness of the body vis-à-vis the soul. While an alternate argument could be made that the image of the decaying physical body could be interpreted as visualizing the state of the soul, this too would have encouraged the viewer to focus on the importance of protecting and praying for the immortal soul as much as possible. It was precisely through the manifestation of corruption in the flesh that the importance of focusing one’s attentions on the soul could be emphasized that much more strongly in persuasive visual terms. This would

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\textsuperscript{45} Huizinga, \textit{Waning}, 136; Huizinga, \textit{Autumn}, 159.

\textsuperscript{46} Huizinga, \textit{Waning}, 136. The translation of the same passage in \textit{Autumn} runs as follows: “Is it truly pious thinking that entangles itself in this loathing of the purely earthly side of death?” See 159.

have linked the Macabre more closely to the elegiac tradition of the *Ubi Sunt*, which was also focused on the spirit of the deceased, and was another aspect of “A Vision of Death” that Huizinga explored in the chapter.

Huizinga argued that the preoccupation with death and decay was a reflection of a concern about the fate of the physical body after death, and he limited his discussion to large-scale public art works, primarily from the public site of the cemetery of the Innocents in Paris (fig. 25). This was a location where people of different walks of life regularly came together and had the opportunity to witness such works as the bronze statue of Death Personified, now in the Louvre (fig. 26), as well as the relief of the Three Living and the Three Dead in the tympanum of the main portal of the church of Les Innocents (now lost). While the mural of the Dance of Death that he discussed is also no longer extant, Huizinga was able to discuss it through the lens of Guyot Marchant’s 1485 cycle of prints of the Dance of Death, based on the texts and images of the mural at the Sts. Innocents. This cycle was printed in a number of subsequent editions, one of which appeared in 1486. One of the printed pages features oppositions between death and a cardinal and death and a king (fig. 27).

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48 While the works were in a public space and were intended to appeal to a broad audience, this did not interfere with the possibility of a personal and intimate experience of viewing the work, of course. This observation, had Huizinga chosen to make it, could have enhanced his argument, but audience reception was not a methodological concern for scholars of Huizinga’s day, and thus was not addressed.

49 The painting of the site, dated to ca. 1570, approximates the appearance of the area in the fifteenth century. For the cemetery of the Innocents, see Vanessa Harding, *The Dead and the Living in Paris and London, 1500–1670* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 101.

50 Guyot Marchant, *Danse Macabre*, edition of 1486. Paris, BnF, Rés. Ye 189. This volume also contains the Three Living and the Three Dead, the Danse Macabre of Women, a debate poem between the body and the soul, among other texts.

51 Paris, BnF, Rés. Ye 189, fol. a3v.
composition of the mural had to be adapted to fit the format of a book, and sets of pairs of figures were represented together on a series of leaves. The use of arcades enframes each pair but also likely evokes the architectural features of the walkway that once covered the mural at the cemetery.\textsuperscript{52} Huizinga also briefly invoked the mural of ca. 1460 showing the Dance of Death in the choir of the Benedictine Abbey of La Chaise-Dieu in the Haute-Loire (\textbf{fig. 28}), as well as the frescoes of the Triumph of Death and the Three Living and the Three Dead at the Campo Santo in Pisa (see \textbf{fig. 24}).\textsuperscript{53} All of these monuments save the La Chaise-Dieu mural were intended for public display in a funerary context.\textsuperscript{54}

The Three Living and the Three Dead is briefly mentioned in the chapter “A Vision of Death,” following an account of the Dance of Death, but a discussion of the story is granted only a few short sentences:

Around the \textit{danse macabre} are grouped some related images, which, along with death, are very well suited to frighten and to warn. The depiction of the three dead men and the three living precedes the image of the \textit{danse macabre}. It had already appeared in French literature in the thirteenth century. Three young noblemen suddenly meet three ghastly dead men who point to their own former earthly glory and to the imminent end that awaits the living. The touching figures in the Campo Santo in Pisa are the earliest representation of this theme in formal art; the sculptures on the portal of the Church of the Innocents in Paris where the Duke of Berry had the topic depicted in 1408 are lost. But miniatures and woodcuts make this subject a common possession during the fifteenth century and it is also widespread as wall paintings. The depiction of the three dead men and the three living provides the connection between the repugnant

\textsuperscript{52} Huizinga, \textit{Autumn}, 165. For the prints by Marchant, see Pierre Vaillant, “\textit{La Danse Macabre de 1485 et les fresques du charnier des innocents},” in \textit{La mort au Moyen Âge: Actes du colloque de l’Association des Historiens médiévistes français réunis à Strasbourg en juin 1975 au palais universitaire} (Strasbourg: Librairie Istra, 1977), 81–86.

\textsuperscript{53} Huizinga, \textit{Autumn}, 164–165.

\textsuperscript{54} The murals at La Chaise-Dieu would have been seen almost exclusively by a Benedictine audience, since they were located on the north wall of the choir.
image of decay and the thought, made into an image in the *danse macabre*, that all are equal in death.\footnote{Huizinga, *Autumn*, 164–165.}

Huizinga mentioned the Encounter in passing, seemingly only as another example of the Macabre rather than a theme of interest in its own right. The sole examples of the tale of the Three Living and the Three Dead to which Huizinga referred were the carved tympanum of the church of the Saints Innocents, which was lost during the French Revolution and is known only from a description, and the famous mid-fourteenth century Campo Santo fresco from Pisa. It is odd that Huizinga would have invoked the Pisa fresco as one of his two examples, when his larger project was focused on the cultural production of France and the Burgundian lands; French frescoes of the Three Living and the Three Dead had been published by the time that Huizinga was writing, so assuming that Huizinga was familiar with those studies, they would have been more relevant choices for discussion.\footnote{For scholarship available before Huizinga wrote *Herfsttij*, see Künstle, *Die Legende*; Willy Storck, *Die Legende von den drei Lebenden und von den drei Toten* (Tübingen: H. Laupp, 1910); Glixelli, *Les cinq poèmes*.

In “A Vision of Death”, he does acknowledge that the story was known in miniatures and woodcuts, but it is obvious that he was much more interested in the monumental arts examples, most of which also happen to be from funerary contexts. Half of the monumental works that Huizinga included in his study were no longer even extant at the time in which he was writing, and since there are many surviving monumental images of the Dance of Death and the Three Living and the Three Dead, it is clear that Huizinga was very deliberate about his selection of works. He selected monuments displayed in a funerary context that were
large in scale and that were intended, in his estimation, to promote fear in the minds of the viewers.

Huizinga’s decision to focus on works intended for communal display and consumption did little to support his argument that the preoccupation with the decaying body was ultimately self-centred. His conclusions would clearly have been different had he focused some of his attention on works intended for private consumption. Images that accompanied the prayers for the dead in Books of Hours or texts in devotional manuals employed iconographic motifs comparable to those on which Huizinga focused, but their context and function were very different. These were intended for individuals to use during focused contemplation on the preparation of the soul for death and with the hope of salvation in mind. This mindset would have been very different from that produced by observing wall paintings of corpses hauling the living off to the grave without recourse or hope for a second chance. Huizinga’s argument, which contended that the images of the Macabre reflected a world that was obsessed with the flesh, that was not pious, and that was deeply pessimistic, was fuelled by the kinds of evidence that he employed. My dissertation recasts the discussion of Macabre art by looking at other types of evidence, specifically private devotional images in manuscript, and contextualizing their use. This allows me to make an argument for the images as tools in meditative and devotional practice, in the preparation of the soul for the life after death.

Huizinga’s experience with the destruction of World War I inevitably influenced his approach to the Macabre in late medieval art, and, to a certain extent, his final interpretation of the images as fear inspiring. Huizinga was in the Netherlands,
first at Groningen and then at Leiden, during the war, and although that country did remain politically neutral, news of the battles in Belgium and elsewhere was broadcast and scenes of the destruction and loss of life were published in the newspapers. It is unimaginable that the images of dead and dismembered bodies of the fallen in the trenches, and perhaps the loss of friends as well, would not have affected the manner in which Huizinga wrote about the Macabre. It probably contributed to his interpretation of the *Ubi Sunt* tradition as a reflection of a feeling of loss and the Macabre as an expression of uncertainty and fear of the decay of the body as well as of the judgment of the soul.

Karl Weintraub suggested that Huizinga’s description of life in the Late Middle Ages was for the most part escapist, but that at times reality broke through the illusion, for instance in the manifestation of the Macabre, which was a stark reminder of the inevitability of death.\(^\text{57}\) Weintraub’s assessment seems to discount the fact that the Macabre was itself a construction, however. It was just as allegorical and symbolic as was the chivalric tradition. What did set the Macabre apart was its emergence in the late Middle Ages. While the literature of the early Middle Ages had also engaged with the concept of death, the physical aspect of decay had never been so explicitly described before, either verbally or visually. The depiction of the corpse was new in the late-thirteenth century, but the animated and violent corpse emerged in the fifteenth. The Macabre, as with chivalry and other cultural expressions of the late medieval period, was a way of coping with life, death and the unknown.

Almost a century after its initial publication, Herfsttij is arguably the most admired and influential overview of Northern Europe in the late Middle Ages, the rejection of some of its major claims notwithstanding. Yet, this was not the case at its inception. The book received mixed reviews upon its initial release in the Netherlands, and in other parts of Europe as well. Huizinga was ahead of its time in many ways, and we can only really account for his method and style by looking at his background, his training and the context in which he was writing. An analysis of the reception of Huizinga’s ideas both upon publication and also in later scholarship is necessary in order to understand his influence and legacy.

Huizinga is now best known for his work on the art and culture of France, the Netherlands and the court of Burgundy at the end of the Middle Ages, but he embarked upon his academic career in a completely different field. He became fascinated early on with Indian culture and literature, and after studying comparative linguistics at the University of Leipzig, he undertook a doctorate in Sanskrit, which he completed in 1897 at the University of Groningen. An exhibition of the works of the Early Netherlandish Primitives which took place in Bruges just a few short years later in 1902 was so inspiring to him that he was compelled to turn his attention to the period that he would come to refer to as the end of the Middle Ages.\(^5^8\)

At its core, Herfsttij concerns itself with the intersection between the material reality of life and the cultural imagination of the people of the age. It elucidates how people in the medieval period coped with the harsh realities of life through the imagery

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\(^5^8\) The exhibition was entitled *Exposition des primitifs flamands et d’art ancien*, held at the Hotel Gruuthuuse in Bruges, June 15 to September 15, 1902. See Edward Peters and Walter Simons, “The New Huizinga and the Old Middle Ages,” *Speculum* 74 (1999): 599, n. 36.
of their stories, traditions and rituals. Some of these traditions and rituals had become very elaborate by the end of the Middle Ages, and the momentum of their history ensured their continuation, even as they lost any practical purpose or function. Huizinga points out that the performance of certain rituals became mechanical, without the meaning that they had once had, which made them appear empty. The perpetuation of such traditions that were no longer necessary led Huizinga to perceive a waning of society in this period.\(^{59}\)

Huizinga’s characterization of the period as one of decline was difficult for his contemporaries to accept since they viewed the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as the beginning of the Renaissance. Huizinga’s propensity to see the period as an “ostentatious decline” apparently was a result, at least in part, of parallels that he drew between the period he studied and the time in which he was writing. He was deeply critical of the tradition of Chivalry, which for him had completely outlived its usefulness for preparing soldiers for battle by the fifteenth century and lived on simply as empty spectacle at the courts.\(^{60}\) Of course, as long as a tradition maintained at least a residue of its former power and authority through an association with past glory, it could never become completely impotent. But for Huizinga, when ceremonies or what

\(^{59}\) Huizinga’s views on the tension between the two elements, of real life and the ideal of life, were further explored in a study that appeared after Herfsttij which dealt with the role of play in society. Homo Ludens, first published in 1938, examined topics from various regions and periods, but in the section on the late Middle Ages expanded on ideas first explored in Herfsttij, including the notion of chivalric performance as play or as dream in the late medieval period. Johan Huizinga, Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture (Boston: Beacon Press, 1950).

he called “cultural forms” had apparently become entirely superficial, they were rendered empty in his eyes. Perhaps Huizinga’s manifest impatience with the codes of late medieval chivalry was influenced by his distaste for the court ceremonials of the royal and imperial houses of Europe of his own time. An obsession with the protection of individual and family honour dragged the imperial and royal houses of Europe into World War I, which was well underway as Huizinga was composing *Herfsttij*. Huizinga was concerned that modern culture had outlived itself, as had the court culture of Northern Europe during the late Middle Ages.

Huizinga’s perspective on the late Middle Ages through the lens of the intersection between reality and the illusory was also influenced by his ideas about his own time and his own work on the Modern world, especially of the United States. He observed that culture was reflected in how the reality and the spirit, or imagination, of a time and place balanced each other out. While his view of the late Middle Ages was ultimately critical, he was intrigued by how ideals or dreams registered more strongly than the real world in the cultural output of the period. In short, many people, especially of the aristocracy, were so preoccupied with symbol, ritual and ideal that they became disconnected from reality. But this was preferable to what he saw in the modern age, in which the spiritual element of life was neglected in favour of a focus on technological

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61 Malcolm Vale and Maurice Keen have in recent decades contested Huizinga’s thesis and have argued that the tournament and related activities did indeed prepare knights for battle and that the nostalgia around these performances helped to protect and preserve the institution. See Malcolm Vale, *War and Chivalry* (London: Duckworth, 1981) and Maurice Keen, “Huizinga, Kilgour and the Decline of Chivalry,” in *Medievalia et Humanistica* 8 (1977), 1–20. Be that as it may, we are here concerned with Huizinga’s argument and the motivations behind it rather than its accuracy.

and scientific progress and the pursuit of material wealth. His observations about modern life no doubt threw his ideas about the late Middle Ages into relief.

The late Middle Ages and the early twentieth century shared another common element in Huizinga’s eyes besides the imbalance between the real and the spiritual in their cultures. He observed that, early in the century, images were beginning to be more widely disseminated, and that they started to attract the attention that had previously been reserved for texts. While he was interested in the use of images and their impact, he was also concerned that a wider availability of images would lead to a decline in society. The increasing availability and visibility of images and a popularization of visual media was something that Huizinga was experiencing around him in the early twentieth century, in the form of media such as image-rich magazines, reproductions of paintings for popular consumption, and the motion picture, and he likely projected his distaste for his own image-saturated time onto the past. The reproduction of images and their dissemination to audiences who had not previously had such intimate access to high art and who could now examine them in their own homes seemed to make the educated classes uncomfortable, as though they were losing their claims on what was previously their own cultural heritage. This experience in Huizinga’s environment likely made him aware of a similar situation in the late Middle Ages, when the increased availability of images for the middle classes, especially with the advent of block books, woodcuts and prints, was for him akin to the availability of images in newspapers, magazines and motion pictures in the Modern era. He viewed the increase of imagery, and more specifically the imagery of death and the dead in the late Middle

Ages, as a popularization and thus decline in culture. He also expressed concern about what he perceived to be superstitious behaviour around Christian images in the late Middle Ages.\textsuperscript{64} His apparent disdain for this emphasis on the visual is revealed in a passage from the chapter “Image and Word” in \textit{Hertstij}:

\begin{quote}
The basic characteristic of the late medieval mind is its predominantly visual nature. This characteristic is closely related to the atrophy of the mind. Thought takes place exclusively through visual conceptions. Everything that is expressed is couched in visual terms. The absolute lack of intellectual content in the allegorical recitations and poems was bearable because satisfaction was attained through the visual realization alone.\textsuperscript{65}
\end{quote}

Huizinga’s fascination with the images and cultural production of late Middle Ages was apparently juxtaposed with a sort of disdain or suspicion, which contributed to his perspective on the period as one of decline.

The way in which we have come to view Huizinga and \textit{Hertstij} has been conditioned not only by what is known about him, his training and his interests, but also by the initial responses to the book and its reception by historians and art historians in subsequent decades. When \textit{Hertstij} was first published, the initial reception to the book by Huizinga’s colleagues was quite cool.\textsuperscript{66} In Utrecht, a centre of historical scholarship in the Netherlands, there had generally been more scholarly interest in the?


\textsuperscript{65} Huizinga, \textit{Autumn}, 341. The same idea is expressed in the earlier Hopman translation in the chapter “Verbal and Plastic Expression Compared,” \textit{Waning}, 271, in which it is framed as follows: “One of the fundamental traits of the mind of the declining Middle Ages is the predominance of the sense of sight, a predominance which is closely connected with the atrophy of thought.”

Golden Age of Dutch culture of the seventeenth century than in the period of the late Middle Ages. In addition, Huizinga was perceived to be practicing history in a manner that was amateurish and not making use of the methods expected of historians of the time. Medieval History was a relatively new discipline in the early twentieth century in the Netherlands and the universities at Utrecht and Nijmegen held the only Professorships in Medieval History; Huizinga’s appointment at the University of Leiden was in General History. At Utrecht and Nijmegen, the emphasis was upon the analysis of official documents and charters, by means of palaeography, codicology and diplomatics. Since Huizinga had started out as a specialist in Buddhist and Indian literature, he had not been trained in the methods that had been adopted and were being practiced by his colleagues in History. Huizinga’s book explicitly rejected a reliance upon official documentation, and the work initially took an uneasy place in the study of the Middle Ages. The works to which Huizinga referred were not commonly used as evidence by historians of his period, but he made it clear from the start that he felt that an over-emphasis on the official documents of a period did little to allow for the evocation of a sense of what people’s lives were really like. To get a real sense of what inspired and impassioned people, he felt that it was important to pay attention to the works of art and literature of the time.

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67 Ibid., 95.
68 Ibid.
69 Ibid.
70 Huizinga believed that overemphasis on economic factors at the expense of cultural forms interfered with historical and political understanding. See Donald Kelley, *Fortunes of History: Historical Inquiry from Herder to Huizinga* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 323.
71 Weintraub, *Visions of Culture*, 234.
While Huizinga found his harshest critics in his homeland, scholars in England were also critical. But reviews were more positive in Germany, where the book was described as modern and ground-breaking, although “vague.”

In France, Marc Bloch called the book “original” and “suggestive,” while P. Rox complained that a “Protestant spirit” lurked behind Huizinga’s criticism of Catholic practices surrounding the veneration of the Virgin and saints. In the United States response to The Waning of the Middle Ages was quite animated and positive.

As Hugenholz posited, it is likely that since American scholars had less convenient access to documentary sources that were housed in European libraries, they were more inclined to welcome Huizinga’s approach, which focused on the study of chronicles and works of art. Influential responses to the book continued to be published in later years, following the appearance of other important works by Huizinga, and these must have shaped subsequent scholarly response to The Waning of the Middle Ages.

Huizinga’s legacy for the study of the late Middle Ages is not to be underestimated. Panofsky’s theory of disguised symbolism was developed under Huizinga’s influence, since despite the naturalism of the works of Early Flemish painters, he argued that their use of symbolism kept them deeply rooted in the tradition

75 Hugenholz, “Fame of a Masterwork,” 100.
76 Ibid., 99.
of the Middle Ages. Haskell recognized that Huizinga was the first to embark on a major historical study with an emphasis on images, and Huizinga became a core figure in Haskell’s own historiographical study of the use of images in historical scholarship.

More specifically, Huizinga’s conception of the Macabre continues to be influential. Paul Binski’s *Medieval Death* includes a whole chapter entitled “The Macabre”, which deals with iconographic themes in which living and dead are set in opposition, such as the Three Living and the Three Dead, the Dance of Death and the transi tomb. Binski uses the term as a label for certain iconographic motifs, and while he employs it in a neutral way, he does not critique its use. Elina Gertsman, in her work on the Dance of Death, points out that Huizinga’s interpretation of the Macabre is problematic, but doesn’t declare exactly how or why. She suggests that Macabre forms emerged as a reflection of late medieval anxieties about death and the fate of the body and soul after death, but she applies the term Macabre in a general way. Clearly, certain assumptions have been made about the meaning of the word Macabre, and it continues to be used as a term of convenience, but often without a critical eye to its implications.

While Huizinga is correct to point out that the emphasis on the corpse was not found in art or literature intended for the laity before the late Middle Ages, his claim that this is necessarily a symptom of decadence of the age does not follow. It is

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78 Haskell, “Art and History,” 3–18.
79 Gertsman, *Dance of Death*, 44.
reasonable to assume that Huizinga’s own impressions of an age were inflected by the experiences of his own time. But there are other ways of understanding the increase in the production and visibility of images in the Late Middle Ages for lay people. The increased production and availability of images in the late Middle Ages was the result of the demand by laypeople for the images that they could use in prayer practice, which was inspired by the behaviour of mystics and the cloistered spiritual elite.\footnote{Jeffrey Hamburger, “The Visual and the Visionary: The Image in Late Medieval Monastic Devotions,” \textit{Viator} 20 (1989): 161–182.} Instead of being viewed as a sign of decadence and decline, the appearance of images of death and decay might better be explained as a positive development, a phenomenon that encouraged people to focus more on the preparation of their souls for death, due in part to their being confronted by such striking images of what awaited them after death.

It was precisely through the emphasis on the decaying dead body that images could provoke the desire in people to focus on the preparation of their souls. In the Three Living and the Three Dead, the dead appear before the living as a mirror to literally reflect what the living will one day become. Indeed, the second living figure in Baudouin de Condé’s poem astutely observes that the dead have been sent to them as a mirror to show them how they have lived thus far and what the future has in store for them.\footnote{Lines 39-41 of Baudouin’s poem read: “Diex, ki le nous a mis en voie, ce moreoir le nous envoie pour mirer; si nous I mirons.” See Chihaia, \textit{Immortalité et décomposition}, 285.} In Chihaia’s estimation, the corruption of the corpse reflected the state of the soul and the degree of sin weighing upon it.\footnote{Ibid., 266.} The living, confronted with the putrefying bodies of their future selves, in both texts and images, are stirred to action to perform good works and to prepare themselves for death. From this perspective, the

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\footnote{Lines 39-41 of Baudouin’s poem read: “Diex, ki le nous a mis en voie, ce moreoir le nous envoie pour mirer; si nous I mirons.” See Chihaia, \textit{Immortalité et décomposition}, 285.}

\footnote{Ibid., 266.}
appearance of the decaying bodies of the dead presents the living with an opportunity to change for the better before it is too late.

The reader/viewer could benefit from this advantage conferred upon the living in the story of the Three Living and the Three Dead by learning the same lesson. This contrasts with the function, in both mural paintings and woodcuts, of the Dance of Death. The viewer has a distinct advantage over the living participants in the images, who are hauled off by the dead without warning. But the viewer is given due notice and learns the necessary lesson from the image and its accompanying text.

The scholarship of the last century has cast a primarily negative light on the art of death of the late Middle Ages, in focusing on the association between the imagery and fear, excess and decay. The works of Huizinga, Delumeau, Mormando and others have paid attention to sources which reflect the fear of death and dying unprepared. But fourteenth- and fifteenth-century sources, including the influential writings of the German Dominican and mystic Henry Suso, and of the Netherlandish monk Thomas à Kempis, reveal a recognition that the way to mitigate that fear was to devote one’s attention to preparation for death, so as not to die in a state of mortal sin. À Kempis writes that “Had you a good conscience, death would hold no terrors for you.” He also insists that “Blessed is the man who keeps the hour of his death always in his mind, and daily prepares himself to die.” Suso’s devotional manual entitled “The Little Book of

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85 Ibid., 58.
Eternal Wisdom” records a conversation between the Servant and the Man dying unprepared, and the latter declares that

“The constant thought of death, the loyal support of your poor soul that calls to you in such misery, will quickly bring you to the point of not only not fearing death, but even of welcoming it with the full desire of your heart.”

While the works of Suso were likely read only by the cloistered, à Kempis’ work was disseminated across Europe and became extremely popular with a much wider audience. The texts of both Suso and à Kempis demonstrate that modern interpretations of the late Middle Ages as a time entirely fearful of death are incomplete, as they omit evidence of tools that provided ways of addressing, even obviating, that fear. Such tools included images that form the foundation of my dissertation, including devotional images of the Three Living and the Three Dead.

The pessimistic view of the fifteenth century revealed in Huizinga’s work was undoubtedly tinted by his criticisms of the period in which he lived, an age that shared, in his eyes, certain tendencies with the late Middle Ages. His critique of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was perhaps most strongly communicated through his discussion of the imagery of death. Yet, by stepping back and reflecting not only on the forms of the imagery but also on their function, we can recognize that the imagery of death served a very positive function indeed—the mitigation of the fear of death and the preparation of the soul for life after death. The discussion of the texts and images of the Three Living and the Three Dead in the following chapters will demonstrate that they were less a reflection of fearful obsession than a popular moralizing tool that was

prized. The tale was exquisitely illuminated in manuscripts produced for queens, duchesses and other aristocrats, and it was presented in a variety of ways for inclusion in different kinds of manuscripts. In Chapter 2, I will discuss examples that survive from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries that were intended for individuals of high standing.
Chapter 2

Images, Texts, Contexts: Situating the Three Living and the Three Dead in Thirteenth- and Fourteenth-Century Manuscripts in Northern Europe

The story of the Three Living and the Three Dead emerged in the secular context of the court in late thirteenth-century France, and in the following decades was developed and recorded in a variety of versions in different languages. Many of these early versions, which are found in such manuscripts as Psalters and compendia of courtly tales, appear with illustrations. In later decades, pictorial renditions of the story occasionally accompanied texts other than the tale itself in Psalters, Books of Hours, and even legal manuals. When images of the Three Living and the Three Dead accompanied texts with which they shared no obvious connection in content, such as a decretal (canon law) text, the significance of the imagery was transformed. In its new environment, the meaning of an image of the Three Living and the Three Dead was established as much through the function that the image served in its new context as through its pictorial narrativity. A consideration of the significance of the function of the image vis-à-vis the text for the production of meaning will shape this chapter of my dissertation.

As discussed in the Introduction, textual analysis and localization were the main goals of early studies of the literary record of the story, while investigations of the pictorial tradition were generally limited to stylistic analysis, iconography, typology and provenance. While studies by Glixelli, Rotzler and others laid an important foundation, much more remains to be said, in particular about how the shifting relationship between text and image affected how the story was depicted and how it...
communicated with its audience. The present chapter examines the wide-ranging tradition of the Three Living and the Three Dead as it appeared in northern European manuscripts in a few key examples, and suggests that an image of the story can neither be understood without an examination of the particular text that it accompanies, nor without a consultation of the contents of the larger manuscript in which that text and image appear. It is especially crucial, however, to consider its intended audience and function. I observe that images of the Encounter that appeared alongside texts of the same story usually had a relatively benign aspect in which living and dead engage in conversation, while illuminations that introduced the Office of the Dead in Books of Hours produced in the fifteenth century, discussed in chapter three, tended to evoke a more violent air, even though no physical aggression is articulated in any of the texts under review. Possible reasons for this shift will be proposed in chapter three.

This chapter considers illuminations accompanying poetic texts in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century courtly manuals, as well as some representations attending the devotional texts of the Office of the Dead in early Books of Hours, and finally one example of the use of the tale to illustrate part of book five in an illuminated manuscript of the Decretals of Gregory IX. This will serve as a foundation for the subsequent chapters that delve into a few specific examples of the fifteenth century, investigating how the images were constructed, how they corresponded to their accompanying texts and the ways they conveyed meaning to their specific audiences. It will become clear that the approach undertaken by Rotzler and Mâle, among others, of organizing examples of the Three Living and the Three Dead into types according to their geographic origins is unsatisfactory, for it ignores other important aspects of the
images, such as their contexts of use and their intended audiences. A rejection of a
typology based on geography and the adoption instead of an organizational system that
privileges the function of the image and its relationship to the text will be more fruitful
for establishing the significance and meaning of the manuscript illuminations. The
times at which the illustrations were produced and the artistry of the individual
illuminators who created them will also be taken into account.

The earliest surviving textual renditions of the Three Living and the Three Dead
are French. In his early study of the French textual tradition of the story, Stefan Glixelli
traced a line of descent for the story. He suggested that the Baudouin de Condé and
Anon IV texts were likely the earliest, but that it was a delicate matter to assert
precedence for one or the other, as they were quite different in approach, one being a
dialogue and the other a third-person narrative.\(^1\) The only texts attributed to known
poets were those by Baudouin and Nicole de Margival; the rest were labeled
Anonymous III, IV and V. Attention to the question of authorship and the search for an
elusive exemplar drove his study.

Studies of the Three Living and the Three Dead conducted in the early to mid-
twentieth century tended to separate discussions of these French texts from their
attendant images. Glixelli observed that the majority of the French textual copies were
illustrated, yet he did not discuss the illuminations in conjunction with their texts.
Indeed, he divided these discussions into different chapters. Other early scholars of the
Three Living and the Three Dead, including Künstle, Cosacchi and Rotzler, also

\(^1\) Glixelli, *Les cinq poèmes*, 2.
separated their discussions of texts and images into different parts of their books, and the value of the illuminations was seen to derive primarily from their relationship to the texts that they accompanied.\(^2\) This was true not only of the French textual and pictorial tradition that they investigated, but also of the record from other parts of Europe as well.

A disinterest in integrating discussions of text and image in scholarship conducted on manuscripts in the early to mid-twentieth century was attended by a perspective that deemed that any discrepancies that existed between textual content and iconographic features in accompanying images could be explained as artistic errors, attributed to misreadings or misunderstandings of the texts on the part of illuminators. This stemmed from the notion that there was a correct version of a text, and even a canonical type of image, to which each illumination should correspond. This perspective was surely derived from the method of literary criticism which was concerned with identifying rescensions of texts. More recently, however, Beat Brenk and others have argued that this rigid concept of the relationship between exemplars and copies does not take into account the essential facts of the individual circumstances of commissions, the working relationships between designers, compilers, scribes and illuminators, or the intended audience of the work.\(^3\) I contend that pictorial content that departs from, or does not correspond precisely to, the attendant text is not a detriment

\(^2\) In part IV of his book Die Legende der Drei Lebenden und der Drei Toten und der Totentanz, Künstle discussed the texts and images of the Encounter in separate sections under the rubrics “Die vollständige Legende...” and “Die Darstellung der Legende...” See Künstle, Die Legende, Inhaltsübersicht. Rotzler divided discussions of the texts and the images into chapters 2 “Die literarischen Darstellungen” and 3 “Die bildlichen Darstellungen”. See Rotzler, Die Begegnung, III.

\(^3\) Brenk, “Texte et l’image”; Hindman, “Roles of Author and Artist”.
but is rather an elaboration of, or an expansion on, the content of the story. Images have often been assessed by the standards applied to texts, but the visual medium conveys meaning and performs in ways in which texts cannot. While the manuscript illumination is always best understood through a study of its relationship to the attendant text, the image should not be viewed as subservient to the text. The representation is rather a cultural agent whose intrinsic value is equal to, but different from, that of a text. The specific pictorial form taken by an illumination of the Three Living and the Three Dead was inextricably linked to the text that it accompanied and the function that it was intended to serve within the manuscript.

Several late thirteenth-century French manuscripts, including Paris, BnF MS Fr. 378 and BnF MS Fr. 25566, contain amongst their leaves illustrated poetic versions of the story of the Three Living and the Three Dead. Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal MS 3142, a richly illuminated miscellany, was commissioned in ca. 1285 by Marie de Brabant (1260-1322), Queen of France through her marriage to Philippe III (d. 1285). The

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4 For Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Fr. 378, fol. 1r and 7v, see BnF, Catalogue des manuscrits français, vol. 1 (Paris: BnF, 1868), 32. For BnF, MS Fr. 25566, fols. 217r, 218r, 223v, see BnF, Catalogue des manuscrits français, vol. 13 (Paris: BnF, 1868), 647–650.
volume contains a number of historic and didactic poems by several popular authors at the time, including a series by Baudouin de Condé. Baudouin’s rendition of the Three Living and the Three Dead appears in this manuscript on fol. 311v-312r and is accompanied by an elegant illustration showing living and the dead in dialogue at the top of fol. 311v (fig. 1). The image of the Three Living and the Three Dead, one of only six large illuminations in the entire volume and the only tale by Baudouin to be granted a large miniature, was clearly privileged, and suggests that it was of particular interest to the patron.

The text in Arsenal 3142 describes “troi noble home de grant aroi” and indeed the three living are very elegantly dressed and may be identified as aristocrats in general. They are represented in a way that makes them look almost identical in physical appearance and of the same age, with the different colours of their cloaks


Arsenal 3142 brings together works of courtly literature composed in France in the thirteenth century, and includes works by Adenet le Roi, such as Cléomadès and Enfance Ogier; works by Jean Bodel, such as Conge and Chanson des Saisnes; the Fables of Marie de France; as well as dits and contes by Baudouin de Condé. Baudouin had served as court poet to Countess Marguerite “the Black” of Flanders and Hainault (d. 1280), and the popularity of his work is exemplified in the circulation of his work amongst the courts of Europe in the late thirteenth century. Fifteen of his poems were included in the compilation commissioned by Queen Marie and they run between fol. 300v and fol. 320r. Beyond the moralizing dit of the Three Living and the Three Dead, his work also included poems on chivalric themes (Conte dou bacheler, fol. 302r; Conte dou dragon, fol. 307v) and on romantic ones (Dis d’amous, fol. 313r; Dis de la Rose, fol. 314v), to name just a few. For a list of all of the poems attributed to Baudouin contained in Arsenal 3142, see H. Martin, Catalogue des manuscrits, vol. 3, 262–263.

For an edition of the Three Living and the Three Dead by Baudouin, see Auguste Scheler, ed., Dits et contes de Baudouin de Condé et de son fils Jean (Brussels: Devaux, 1866-1867), vol. 1, 197–203. See also Stefan Glixelli, Les cinq poèmes, esp. 53–63; Rotzler, Die Begegnung, 22–26.
being the only features to distinguish them from one another. The dead are represented also in very similar states of advanced decay; distinctions between the dead figures are conveyed through the artful arrangement of the draperies. The dead figures become more scantily clad as the viewer’s eye moves from left to right. From one point of view, death is being revealed for the young men as they look on. The illumination seems to emphasize the fate of the physical body after death.

The Three Living and the Three Dead was distinguished in several ways within this manuscript. The tale is accompanied by one of the largest illuminations in the volume. Most illustrations are only as wide as a single column or take the form of historiated initials, while the illumination of the Three Living and the Three Dead is two columns wide. At first glance, this would seem to have been a practical decision, as it allowed more room for the presentation of two groups of three individuals in conversation, but other approaches were employed in manuscripts of this period. In MS Fr. 25566, for instance, all six protagonists are squeezed into a historiated initial introducing the story (see fig. 29). It seems, therefore, that in Queen Marie’s miscellany, the tale was singled out and privileged by granting it more space at the top of the page, which required the rest of the poem to run on the subsequent folio 312r. This decision might reflect a particular interest in the tale on the part of the patron Queen Marie. In addition, while other framed miniatures in the manuscript are set against a, gold, or diapered or other decorative foil, the living and dead are set against bare vellum. The delicacy of the painting of the living and dead almost demands the simplicity of a plain background, although it is possible that the miniature remained unfinished.
The text of Baudouin’s rendition of the tale begins with the three living speaking first followed by the three dead. The accompanying illumination clearly evokes a verbal exchange as described in the text. The inclusion of specific details in the pictorial rendition not mentioned in the accompanying text, such as the bird of prey held by the first living, or the third living wringing his hands, suggests that the illuminator made independent contributions, or that specific references were being made to details recorded in other textual renditions. There are specific references to these two details in the Anonymous IV version, which was circulating around the same time. Elements known from other popular textual renditions might have been introduced into this image, or this may be an expression of interpictoriality at work. It would be wise not to read too much into the significance of this inclusion, however, since the hawk represented the hunt, a common pastime of the aristocracy. It would therefore have made visual sense in an image accompanying the poem whether or not it was explicitly mentioned in the text, and the illuminator might have added this detail without any prompting.

A French courtly manuscript, perhaps slightly later than Arsenal MS Fr. 3142 and carrying the shelfmark BnF MS Fr. 25566, contains collections of poetic works by Adam de la Halle and Jehan Bodel, as well as three different versions of the Three Living and the Three Dead. Each of the three discrete versions of the text, attributed to Baudouin, Nicolas and Anonymous III respectively, is introduced by a historiated

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8 Rotzler, Die Begegnung, 77.
initial (fig. 29 a, b, c).\textsuperscript{10} Interestingly, although the textual contents of the three versions vary and the enlarged initials introducing the texts are all different, the pictorial compositions found within them are almost identical. The only discernible difference between the three is in the position of the first living figure’s left arm on which he supports a hawk. Birds of prey appear in each of the historiated initials. The consistency of the approach to illustrating the tale seemed to be paramount within this manuscript, perhaps as a way of linking the three versions of the same story together. All three versions recount a conversation between living and dead.

Unlike the Baudouin text discussed above, the Anonymous III poem includes a long narrative prologue and conclusion and is known only from the single recorded version included in BnF, MS Fr. 25566. This version tells the reader that the young princes, handsome and proud, were out for a ride, lost their way and came upon a cemetery where they saw the three dead standing in their coffins. The text reads as an exchange between the living and the dead, with the living and dead taking turns to speak. Over the course of the text, the three dead reveal that in life they held the positions of pope, cardinal and notary. All the dead claim that they are now in hell and warn the living to conduct their lives in such a way so that they can avoid the same fate. The details of this text differ significantly from those by Baudouin, Nicolas and Anonymous IV, and yet the image inhabiting the initial introducing the Anonymous III

\textsuperscript{10} One of the challenges presented by Rotzler’s organizational strategy was thrown into relief by my examination of Paris, BnF MS Fr. 25566. Rotzler had elected to organize the texts of the Three Living and the Three Dead that he studied by author or according to the Anonymous number assigned by Glixelli, but this prevented him from being able to efficiently discuss manuscripts in which more than one version of the text was introduced, as was the case with BnF MS Fr. 25566. Yet another division in his book—that between texts and images—presented a further challenge for my investigation.
text is almost identical to those accompanying other French texts of the encounter. The representation of three living opposite three dead might be read as an abbreviation that encapsulated the essential nature of the tale as an encounter between two groups from different worlds, in which the young men received wisdom and advice from the dead, even if from poetic version to poetic version the exact message and precise contents differed.

This verbal encounter between living and dead, in which the dead urge the living to change their ways and to live better lives, illustrated by a representation of living and dead in dialogue, is known from French examples dated to the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, as Rotzler and others have pointed out. But this form was hardly restricted to France, as it was also employed in England, the German speaking areas and Italy as well. The earliest known English rendition is found in the early fourteenth-century Psalter of Robert de Lisle, now Arundel MS 83 II in the British Library (fig 30). An abridged version of the Anonymous IV text of the story appears on fol. 127r and is accompanied by an illustration at the top of the folio showing living and dead, arranged in two groups of three, engaged in conversation.

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11 The manuscript was certainly owned by Robert de Lisle. An inscription in Robert’s hand on the calendar page for November in the manuscript indicates that he gave his Psalter to his daughter, Audere, in 1339. See Lucy Freeman Sandler, The Psalter of Robert de Lisle (London: Harvey Miller, 1983, repr. 1999), 11–12. It is likely that he commissioned the manuscript for himself ca. 1310, because the contents and luxury of the manuscript would be suitable for a parliamentarian and baron at the court of Edward II. The Franciscan content of the manuscript was consistent with Robert’s interests. His commitment to the Franciscans was evident throughout his life; he was a great supporter of the London Greyfriars and entered that Franciscan institution and was ordained in 1341. He died there in 1344. See Sandler, Robert de Lisle, 12.

12 The foliation of the manuscript is modern. When the De Lisle Psalter was disbound at some later time, the manuscript was mutilated, as the psalter text was removed, the bifolios were cut up and rearranged. This might have occurred in the late sixteenth or
The illustration, which is very similar to the image in Arsenal 3142, is labeled with passages in Middle English, while the text of the story is written in Anglo-Norman and the headings for each verse are recorded in Latin. The trilingual aspect of the manuscript has been observed elsewhere. Richard Emmerson has recently suggested that the use of a variety of languages in the manuscript was intended to serve an array of functions. While the text of the poem itself was recorded in Anglo-Norman, the language of the aristocracy and associated with the written word, the textual passages written in Middle English were intended to convey speech and oral performance, enhancing the immediacy of the poem for Robert. The inscription of the Middle English passages at the top of the folio almost begs the beholder to read the passages aloud as a way of participating in the story as one of the living, startled by the encounter with the dead. The Middle English passages seem to vocalize the emotional response of the living: “Ich am afert. Lo whet ich se. Me þinke þ hit be þ develes þre,” while the dead admonish the living with: “Ich wes wel fair. Such scheltou be. For godes loue be wer by me.”

Another striking aspect of this illumination is that it was used as one of a series of accessory texts in a prayerbook, making the Psalter of Robert de Lisle one of the earliest examples of the tale being put to use in a devotional context. The Three Living

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15 Transcription from Emmerson, “Visualizing the Vernacular,” 188. Translation: “I am afraid. Lo, what I see. Methinks these be devils three. I was well fair. Such shall you be. For God’s love beware by me!” Translation from Binski, Medieval Death, 135.
and the Three Dead was presented with the *Speculum Theologiae*, a group of devotional and moralizing texts and images compiled in the late thirteenth century by the Franciscan John of Metz for use in contemplation by the devout Christian.\(^\text{16}\) This compilation included the Wheel of the Ten Ages of Man (fol. 126v), Tables of the Commandments (fol. 127v) and the Articles of Faith (fol. 128r), Trees of the Virtues and Vices (the *Arbor Virtutum* on fol. 128v and the *Arbor Vitiorum* on fol. 129r), the *Lignum Vitae* (or the Tree of Life) of St. Bonaventure (fol. 125v), and the *Turris Sapientiae* (or the Tower of Wisdom) on fol. 135r, among others. The complexity of the texts and images in this group almost demanded a confessor, and Robert was most likely assisted when praying from this manuscript.\(^\text{17}\)

The abbreviated Anonymous IV version of the Three Living and the Three Dead launches right into the verbal exchange between the protagonists, without the introduction included in some other versions of the text. In the image above the text, the three young men respond to what they observe before them. The first living figure grasps the hand of his companion, while the figure behind him seems to draw back in apprehension. The young man furthest to the left wrings his hands. While the living are distinguished according to their different styles of fashionable dress, the dead are differentiated according to the degree to which their bodies are covered. Two corpses are shown wearing shrouds, but only the one on the left is shown inhabited by worms.


\(^\text{17}\) All of these tables and diagrams would be found grouped together again in other manuscripts. See Sandler, *Robert de Lisle*, 108–115 for a list of manuscripts which contain the *Speculum Theologiae*. One of these manuscripts, which also includes the Three Living and the Three Dead, is Rome, Bibl. Casanatense MS 1404, to be discussed in Chapter 5 of this dissertation. The manuscript was likely produced in a university context, at Erfurt or possibly Leipzig, and intended for an educated and sophisticated individual committed to theological study.
The dead figure furthest to the right, however, wears nothing at all. The variation in the appearance of the dead could have been conveyed in this way simply to add visual interest. The arrangement and postures of the dead are not dissimilar to those of the living, perhaps as a means of suggesting that the dead have appeared to serve as a speculum for the living, a sentiment articulated in some versions of the tale.

A thin frame-like border surrounds the entire composition but also separates the groups from one other. The use of different backgrounds as foils behind the two groups suggests a visual separation between them and that they are understood to exist in different realms even as they communicate. While the abbreviated Anonymous IV text says nothing about the physical setting in which the interaction takes place, the illuminator conveys the notion of encounter by having the figures turn towards each other, yet places a barrier in the form of a frame between them, mimicking the frame of a diptych, to keep them physically separate. The tail of the hawk held by the first living does cross that barrier, however, suggesting the possibility of a breach between worlds, as was certainly the subject of popular belief.\(^\text{18}\) While a frame also surrounds the representation of the Three Living and the Three Dead accompanying the Baudouin text in Arsenal 3142, the frame in that case contains living and dead in one field and there is no use of contrasting backgrounds to suggest different worlds. The arrangement of the figures into two sets of three in Robert’s Psalter is consistent with the examples

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discussed earlier, and yet this example is distinguished by the deliberate segregation of the groups. This produces a distinctly different visual effect and reflects the appearance of a diptych.\textsuperscript{19}

The Three Living and the Three Dead in the De Lisle Hours, commissioned for Margaret de Beauchamp by her husband Robert de Lisle, was also put to a devotional use.\textsuperscript{20} A prefatory series of illuminations introduces the manuscript and is composed of devotional images of Saints Christopher and Nicholas, and a representation of the Three Living on fol. 6v (\textbf{fig. 31}). The representation of the pendant Three Dead is now lost, but the depiction on fol. 6v reveals the responses of the living to the spectre of the dead.\textsuperscript{21} The young living men are richly dressed in an individualized fashion, much like

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\item \textsuperscript{19} Count Amadeus V of Savoy is known to have purchased a painted diptych of the Three Living and the Three Dead in 1302 in London for the price of 40s 6d. Although that diptych is lost, the reference to the purchase of the set of panels is significant because it demonstrates that the Encounter was rendered in a form usually reserved for devotional paintings and suggests that it might have even been used as such. Binski, \textit{Medieval Death}, 135. A diptych displaying the Three Living and the Three Dead does survive and now resides in the Galleria dell’Accademia in Florence. See Gianni Cioli, “L’incontro dei tre vivi e dei tre morti nel dittico dell’Accademia delle Belle Arti di Firenze spunti per una lettura teologica,” \textit{Vivens Homo} 4, no. 2 (2003): 249–273. A prefatory cycle of devotional images in the De Lisle Hours, produced for Robert de Lisle’s wife Margaret de Beauchamp, included the Three Living and the Three Dead presented on opposing folios across an opening. The use of the gutter of the manuscript as a clever strategy for dividing living and dead has been discussed by Fein, “Life and Death”.
\item \textsuperscript{20} New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS G. 50, fol. 6v. The historiated initial opening Matins for the Virgin on fol. 19r in the manuscript depicts Margaret in prayer below the Virgin and Child, but above the initial appears the coat of arms of her husband Robert, suggesting that the manuscript was commissioned by him. See Kathryn A. Smith, \textit{Art, Identity and Devotion in Fourteenth-Century England: Three Women and their Books of Hours} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 12. Still, as Smith argues through examination of unconventional inclusions that would have been meaningful for the owner, Margaret must have been involved in selecting the texts and images to be included in her prayerbook.
\item \textsuperscript{21} For a discussion of the composition of the Three Living in the De Lisle Hours, see Smith, \textit{Art, Identity and Devotion}, 152–154.
\end{itemize}
that of the youths in both the De Lisle Psalter and Marie de Brabant’s miscellany, and their postures are comparable to those in the depiction in Robert’s Psalter. The image in Margaret’s prayerbook is damaged, but it is still possible to discern a look of apprehension on the face of the young man furthest to the left and fortitude in the manner of the two at the right, who clasp hands as though to reassure each other. The figures are set against a diapered foil, surrounded by an embellished frame punctuated at the four corners by bosses within which are found the coats of arms of England, Castile, and King of the Romans.²²

Unlike the treatment of the Three Living and the Three Dead in Robert’s manuscript, the image in the De Lisle Hours is not accompanied by any text. It is quite likely that Margaret would have viewed this pictorial opposition with the illumination from the De Lisle Psalter in mind, however. Margaret might have selected the image for her prayerbook in emulation of her husband who had requested inclusion of the same story in his Psalter. Despite the selection of the same imagery for inclusion in manuscripts made for husband and wife, the style of the images and their relationship to the text is quite different. The illumination in Robert’s Psalter was associated with a shortened Anonymous IV version of the poem, and although the original foliation of the manuscript has been disrupted and the Psalter text is now lost, the group of accessory texts and images making up the Speculum Theologiae likely appeared at the end of the manuscript following the Psalter text, in the manner of other known examples of accessory texts being appended to Psalters. In Margaret’s Hours, however,

²² Smith, Art, Identity and Devotion, 301. Each of the images in this prefatory series of images present these royal shields in the corners of the frame; curiously, the arms of De Lisle and Beauchamp do not appear. They might have been painted over by a later owner.
the image of the Three Living (and once also the Three Dead) appears as part of a prefatory series of hagiographic images and likely served as an image, independent of immediate text, that Margaret could have contemplated at her devotions. Not only is the situation of the image and the relationship to the text different in each manuscript; the illuminations were also clearly executed by different illuminators. The production of the two manuscripts seems to have been separated by ten to fifteen years, so it is perhaps not surprising that illuminations created for husband and wife were not executed by the same hand or group of hands. Despite these stylistic dissimilarities, the formal elements of the story of the Three Living and the Three Dead as it appears in the De Lisle Hours is extremely similar to that included in the De Lisle Psalter. It is likely that the illuminator, or group of illuminators, had occasion to see the contents of Robert’s Psalter when commissioned to paint a book for his wife.

The image of the tale of the encounter between living and dead appears in the De Lisle Hours without any textual accompaniment on the page, but there is no doubt that Margaret knew the story. By the early fourteenth century, more representations of the Three Living and the Three Dead in dialogue were appearing independent of any text. The paintings that appeared on the walls of parish churches in France and England during the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries made use of what might be called the conversational type, the same mode of illustration employed in the De Lisle Psalter and Hours.\(^\text{23}\) Clearly, the tale was well enough known to be able to function independently

of text in this way. In Margaret’s case, since her husband’s magnificent Psalter included a lavish representation of the tale, she had even more reason to be familiar with it.

Framing devices used to deliberately separate living from dead on the page, as seen in both the De Lisle Psalter and the De Lisle Hours, were also employed in the representation of the story in the Psalter of Bonne of Luxembourg of ca. 1349 (fig. 9). Bonne de Luxembourg’s ownership of the manuscript is declared through the inclusion of her coat of arms (shields with the split insignia of the houses of Valois and Luxembourg) which are shown supported by hybrid creatures in the bas-de-page throughout the manuscript. Bonne was of royal blood, because she was the daughter of King John of Bohemia and sister to the future Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV. She married John “le Bon” Valois, who was Duke of Normandy in 1332, and was mother to ten children including the future Charles V and Jean de Berry. The luxurious quality of her prayerbook reflects her wealth and stature.

The textual rendition of the Three Living and the Three Dead in Bonne’s Psalter combines the introduction from Baudouin’s poem and the exchanges between living and dead as recounted in the Anonymous IV version. The pictorial composition that

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accompanies the text shows the three living on the verso and the three dead on the recto, enclosed within their own frames. The two halves of the composition are each set against different-coloured foils, a brilliant red for the living and deep blue for the dead. The figures, painted in grisaille, as are figures painted elsewhere in the volume, appear highlit when set against the exquisitely painted enamel-like backgrounds, in which subtle representations of animals and other motifs are discernible. The living gesture towards the dead to acknowledge their presence, but apprehension seems lacking. The living seem to be more curious than afraid; the horses don’t even look up and continue to graze.

The strategic use of contrasting foils, different settings as well as the gutter of the manuscript enhance the visual and physical separation of living and dead. The use of a join to separate living and dead was also known from wall paintings. At the cathedral in the Italian town of Atri, for example, the composition was painted across the join of two walls (fig. 10). This created a tension in the connection of and yet separation between the groups.

In the illumination in Bonne’s Psalter, the living are depicted on horseback, which was quite an unusual iconographic feature in northern representations of the story at the time. Rotzler and others have described this feature as Italianate, claiming that it was characteristic of many representations of the story that appeared in Italian contexts. The “Italian type” is a misnomer, however; the label suggests that there is an identifiable type that is found exclusively in Italy, but many Italian representations show the living and dead in conversation rather than with the living mounted and the dead in their coffins. At the Italian cathedral of Atri, for example, the living, who have
just dismounted, stand opposite the animated dead. The late thirteenth-century fresco in the church of Santa Margherita in Melfi in Basilicata also depicts living and dead upright and in conversation (fig. 5). Rather than localizing a motif to a certain geographical region, I suggest instead that representing the living on horseback was a logical conclusion for representing the tale, for the young men were understood to be returning from the hunt and riding was a necessary part of that pastime. Horses also represented wealth and status, relevant to the tale of young aristocrats confronted by the dead. The choices open to painters were not limited by their geography; they could select the aspects of the story they wished to emphasize.

Rotzler discussed the representation from the Psalter of Bonne de Luxembourg in his study of mixed forms of the French and Italian types.²⁵ He used these examples because the young men were displayed on horseback, which corresponded to what Rotzler had considered a feature of the Italian type, but the dead were rendered standing upright in keeping with the French tradition. A depiction corresponding fully to the Italian type would have seen the young men on horseback and the dead in coffins, accompanied by a hermit, as could be seen in the Campo Santo fresco in Pisa, for example. Rotzler pointed out that the illumination was painted by Jean Pucelle’s student, Jean le Noir, and was included in a manuscript for a Bohemian princess who was the wife of the future King of France. He granted that it was an exquisite representation of the story, and yet he relegated it to the “Mischformen” chapter of his book, since it did not fit neatly into either the Arsenal or Italian types which constituted the main categories of images for his study.

The moralizing tale of the Three Living and the Three Dead was one of several accessory texts appended to the end of Bonne’s Psalter. It was not uncommon in the fourteenth century for the contents of manuscripts to be adapted and customized at the request of the patron or intended owner. The devotional series included contemplative texts on the Passion of Christ, a dialogue between the Virgin and St. Bernard on the Passion, and a devotion to the wounds of Christ, among others. These would have been recited by Bonne of Luxembourg as part of her devotions, and she would have simultaneously admired the luxurious images in the manuscript.

An identical series of devotional texts as that included in Bonne’s prayerbook is included in the Book of Hours known as The Petites Heures, commissioned by Bonne’s son Charles ca. 1372 and completed under his brother Jean de Berry in the late 1380s. The text of the Three Living and the Three Dead in the Petites Heures is, like that in the Bonne Psalter, composed of the introductory text from Baudouin’s poem and the


interchange from the Anonymous IV version. The inclusion of this version may reflect the significance of familial traditions in the patronage of devotional manuscripts in the late Middle Ages, as Margaret Manion has suggested. That this specific text, a hybrid of passages from both the Baudouin and the Anonymous IV versions, is only known in only two copies, and that these appear in the manuscripts made for Bonne de Luxembourg and her son Jean de Berry, is noteworthy. It is also striking, however, that the accompanying illuminations to the tale in the two manuscripts are so different from one another, and this is clearly a reflection not only of the stamp of the artist responsible for the illumination, but also of transformations that occurred over time in approaches to illustrating texts. Unlike the image produced by Jean le Noir which takes up almost two whole folios and presents living and dead on two different leaves, the image created by the Pseudo-Jaquemart in the Petites Heures is relatively small (fig. 32). No frame divides the living from the dead; rather, the two groups are presented within one composition and they confront each other as though existing in the very same space. The only object which might be construed as a divider is the monumental

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28 Paris, BnF MS Lat. 18014, fol. 282r. The Petites Heures was commissioned by King Charles V but remained incomplete upon his death in 1380. It thereafter passed to his brother Jean de Berry, who commissioned a second campaign for the completion of the manuscript. The Three Living and the Three Dead was executed as part of that second campaign of illumination by the Pseudo-Jaquemart in the late 1380s. The artist is so-called for the similarity of his style to that of Jaquemart de Hesdin. See François Avril, “Beschreibung der Miniaturen,” in François Avril et al., Les Petites Heures du Duc de Berry: Kommentar zu MS lat. 18014 der Bibliothèque nationale, Paris (Luzern: Faksimile Verlag, 1989), 225–387, esp. 381–83.

29 The similarities in textual and pictorial inclusions that exist between the Petites Heures and Bonne’s Psalter must have had at least in part to do with familial tradition, allowing devotional practices to be passed from one generation to the next. See Margaret Manion, “Art and Devotion: the Prayerbooks of Jean Duc de Berry,” in Medieval Texts and Images: Studies of Manuscripts from the Middle Ages, ed. Margaret Manion and Bernard Muir (Sydney: Harwood, 1991), 177–200.
cross, which sets the scene in a cemetery. The artist has depicted the encounter from an unusual perspective, with the backs of the living turned and the dead in the background looking out towards the viewer. The beholder could view the dead from the same vantage point as the living, allowing the viewer to engage in the action in a more potent way.

Illustrations of the story appeared in the fourteenth century not only in illustrated accessory texts in such manuscripts as the De Lisle Psalter, the Psalter of Bonne of Luxembourg and the Petites Heures, or as an independent devotional image in the De Lisle Hours, but also in marginal imagery. The Taymouth Hours, possibly produced for the Plantagenet princess Eleanor of Woodstock, is remarkable for the rich assortment of scenes painted in the bas-de-page of every single page, all of which deal with moralizing themes, one of which is the Three Living and the Three Dead.

The living and dead appear on facing folios within the Office of the Dead, in the bas-de-page of fol. 179v-180r (figs. 33, 34). On fol. 179v begins the eighth lesson (Job

30 Book of Hours, Use of Sarum. BL, Yates Thompson MS 13, ca. 1340. Kathryn A. Smith has recently proposed that this richly illuminated manuscript was commissioned by Philippa of Hainault as a gift for Eleanor, daughter of Edward II and Isabella of France, on the occasion of Eleanor’s betrothal to Reinald II of Guelders. See Smith, Taymouth Hours, 14. For the Three Living and the Three Dead in the Taymouth Hours, see Smith, Taymouth Hours, 254–260. See also Frances Wormald, “The Yates Thompson Manuscripts,” British Museum Quarterly 16 (1952), 5; Lucy Freeman Sandler, Gothic Manuscripts, 1285–1385, A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles 5, vol. 1 (London: Harvey Miller, 1986), 107–109; Kathryn A. Smith, “Chivalric Narratives and Devotional Experience in the Taymouth Hours,” in Negotiating Secular and Sacred in Medieval Art: Christian, Islamic and Buddhist, ed. Alicia Walker and Amanda Luyster (London: Ashgate, 2009), 17–54.

31 While many of the bas-de-page illuminations illustrate scenes from sacred history such as those from the life of Christ and the saints, there are also secular scenes such as chivalric tales (fols. 7r–17r), the Wild Man (fols. 60v–63r) and Ladies shooting (fols. 68r–83v). These secular stories were still moralizing and were suitable for inclusion in a devotional manual. For a discussion of these secular intrusions into the margins of the prayerbook and their function, see Smith, “Chivalric Narratives,” 17–54.
19:20-27) of the third nocturne of Matins of the Dead. This portion of the text expresses a plea for mercy and the forgiveness of sins, as well as a creed and expression of desire for the beatific vision. The passage that throws into relief the appropriateness of the Three Living and the Three Dead for inclusion on this particular opening of the Office of the Dead, however, is the text of Job 19:20: “The flesh being consumed, my bone hath cleaved to my skin, and nothing but lips are left about my teeth.” The Three Living and the Three Dead clearly made a suitable pictorial accompaniment to a text which referred to the consumption of flesh, leaving behind little more than a skeleton. Beyond this, however, the scene was well suited for the Office as a whole, since the prayers concerned a hope for salvation, and the imagery was certainly a potent reminder to Eleanor about the inevitability of death and the importance of being ever mindful of its eventuality. As was the case in the De Lisle Psalter, the pictorial opposition of living and dead in the Taymouth Hours is accompanied by passages in Middle English. The inclusion of these passages provide a link to the textual content of the story of the Three Living and the Three Dead, which was otherwise absent in this Book of Hours. While the story would no doubt have been recognizable to the owner

32 “Pelli meae consumptis carnibus adhesit os meum et derelicta sunt tantummodo labia circa dentes meos.” The English translation is taken from the Douay-Rheims Bible.

33 Preceding and following the Three Living and the Three Dead in the bas-de-page series for the Office of the Dead in the Taymouth Hours appear Miracles of the Virgin (fols. 150v–179r), scenes from the life of St. Francis (fols. 180v–182r), St. Dominic (fol. 182v), Hybrid creatures (fols. 183r–189r) and further scenes of the lives of saints. The story of the Three Living and the Three Dead is the most suitable of all subjects accompanying the Office of the Dead, but prayers to the Virgin and saints, as intercessory figures, were also pivotal for salvation.

34 For a transcription of these Middle English excerpts, which are very similar to those contained in the De Lisle Psalter, see Smith, *Taymouth Hours*, 257.

35 There are at least two other instances of the Three Living and the Three Dead being used to illustrate one of the nocturnes of Matins of the Dead. These include an early
of this manuscript even without those textual passages, the inclusion of those passages as though spoken by the figures represented on the page would have enhanced the impact of the story. This in turn would have promoted a performative engagement by the viewer.

The story was also depicted in the *bas-de-page* of a legal manuscript, the Smithfield Decretals, ca. 1340 (figs. 35, 36). In this canon law collection, the Three Living and the Three Dead appear in the *bas-de-page* at the beginning of the fifth book of decretals, the section devoted to legal decisions on crime and punishment. At the

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36 BL, Royal MS 10 E IV, ca. 1340. The text of the Smithfield Decretals was long thought to have been copied in Bologna, due primarily to the use of *Littera Bononiensis*. See George Warner and Julius Gilson, *Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Old Royal and King’s Collections*, vol. 1 (London, 1921), 334. Recently, however, Alixe Bovey has localized the production of the text and the miniatures at the main textual divisions to S. France (Toulouse?) ca. 1300. See Alixe Bovey, “Didactic Distractions Framing the Law: British Library Royal MS 10 E IV” (PhD Diss., University of London, Courtauld Institute, 2000), 62–63; Scot McKendrick et al., *Royal Manuscripts: The Genius of Illumination* (London: British Library, 2011), no. 108, 324–325. The conviction that the *bas-de-page* illuminations were executed later in England ca. 1340 still holds, however. For the Three Living and the Three Dead and several other subjects illustrated in the *bas-de-page* of the Smithfield Decretals, see Alixe Bovey, “Communion and Community: Eucharistic Narratives and their Audience in the Smithfield Decretals (BL, Royal MS 10 E IV),” in *The Social Life of Illumination: Manuscripts, Images and Communities in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. Kathryn A. Smith, Mark Cruse and Joyce Coleman (Turnhout: Brepols, forthcoming.)

My thanks to Alixe Bovey for sharing her article with me prior to publication.

37 By 1230, Gratian’s Decretum of 1140 had become somewhat outdated as a manual for consultation on legal decisions, but the huge number of more recent decisions, some of which were even contradictory, were complicating the practice of canon law. Pope Gregory IX assigned his Dominican confessor Raymond de Peñafort with the task of organizing and codifying all recent decisions into a definitive collection that could be used for consultation. This collection, known as the Decretals or the *Liber extra,*
The very beginning of book five, which begins on fol. 251r, an extended narrative cycle
telling the story of the Three Living and the Three Dead appears. The climax of the
story in the Encounter between living and dead occurs across the gutter of fol. 258v-
259r. The expanded pictorial narrative of the Three Living and the Three Dead, which
is unique according to surviving evidence, runs between fol. 251r and 268r in this
manuscript. 38

This decretals manuscript, copied in Southern France (Toulouse?) ca. 1300,
arrived in England mid-century at which time the bas-de-page cycle was added,
probably around 1340 according to stylistic evidence. The extensive battle imagery that
runs throughout the margins of the volume may be a play on the name of a canon at
Smithfield Priory, John Batayle, who has been proposed as the likely patron of the
campaign of bas-de-page illumination. 39 The manuscript was certainly at the

clarified matters in the short term, but of course was only a temporary solution. Within
a few years, it was necessary for another concordance to be ordered. The text of the
Peñafort concordance in the Smithfield Decretals was recorded ca. 1300; it was
subsequently illuminated in England. See Andrew Taylor, Textual Situations: Three
Medieval Manuscripts and their Readers (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania University Press,
2002), esp. 140–142.

38 Catalogue entries and discussions of this manuscript describe the story of the Three
Living and the Three Dead as running only between fol. 251r and 263r, and that
thereafter a new tale about the judgement of kings begins. See for instance Taylor,
Textual Situations, 189. After consultation of the range of subjects preceding and
following the Three Living and the Three Dead in the Smithfield manuscript, however,
I am convinced that the images showing the death and judgement of the souls of the
kings (fol. 265r-268r) constitutes the culmination of the pictorial cycle of the Three
Living and the Three Dead itself, and that it served to illustrate the judgment following
immediately after the deaths of the three kings. This divine judgment would have been
a complement to matters concerning territorial judgments potentially being meted out
by those consulting the manuscript.

39 See Alixe Bovey, “A Pictorial Ex-Libris in the Smithfield Decretals: John Batayle,
Canon of St. Bartholomew’s and his Illuminated Law Book,” in “Decoration and
Illustration in Medieval English Manuscripts,” ed. A. S. G. Edwards, English
Augustinian Priory of St. Bartholomew’s at Smithfield, near London, by the third quarter of the fourteenth century.

The pictorial series of the Three Living and the Three Dead begins with each of the three kings preparing to embark on a hunting trip (fol. 251r–252v). They subsequently meet and greet each other (fol. 253r), and then hunt a stag (fol. 253v–256v) (fig. 37). Following the hunt, they attend mass (fol. 258r) (fig. 38) and soon thereafter they encounter the dead (fol. 258v–259r) (figs. 35, 36). Following the encounter, the living envision their eventual fates (fig. 11, 12, 13), and are inspired to perform good works (fol. 261r–262v); in one episode, one of the kings clothes the naked and feeds the hungry (fig. 39). At the end of the series, each of the kings dies and immediately undergoes judgement. The first king is deemed worthy of heaven, and an angel claims his soul (fol. 265r). However, the other two kings are less fortunate. When the second king dies, a demon takes his soul, but the Virgin and an angel intercede and reclaim the soul (fol. 266r). The Virgin and an angel are present at the deathbed of the third king (fig. 40), and they are able to hold off the demon that desperately tries to take the soul for himself (fol. 266v–268r) (figs. 41, 42). This pictorial cycle is fascinating not only due to the extent to which aspects of the tale not articulated in any of the textual versions have been manifested on the page, but also because of the evidence this sequence provides for beliefs concerning individual judgment immediately following death and the strategies (prayer, attendance at mass, performance of good works) that the devout Christian could undertake to attempt to secure salvation. Even so, salvation was by no means assured, as was made amply clear by the scenes of the devil and the
angel fighting over the soul of a king despite his efforts to improve his ways following his encounter with the dead.\textsuperscript{40}

It is particularly curious that this extensive cycle of images would appear in the \textit{bas-de-page} of a legal text. As was the case in the Taymouth Hours, every single folio of the Smithfield Decretals is the site of extensive pictorial narrative. Cycles of the stories of Joseph (fol. 6v–28v) and Samson (fol. 29r–38r), animal fables, the Miracles of the Virgin, saints’s lives and exempla were represented at the bottom of pages with descriptions of and glosses on legal decisions. What these disparate tales had in common was a dimension that encouraged the reader/viewer to reflect on the importance of living a Christian life and being just, all while studying the legal decisions contained in the manuscript. There does not seem to be a clear link between the main text and the \textit{bas-de-page} illuminations in terms of their content; rather the images were all linked in their moralizing function for the viewer. The images of the Three Living and the Three Dead, for example, would have referred the viewer to the oral and textual tradition of the moralizing tale which served as a reminder to the viewer of the inevitability of death and thus the importance of living a good and Christian life. This extensive pictorial cycle is unlikely to have been developed exclusively for inclusion in the Smithfield Decretals; a number of the vignettes were probably drawn from patterns or models for other subjects, such as the hunt, or contest between the Virgin and a demon. This could have been mobilized for the expansion of the story of the Three Living and the Three Dead.

\textsuperscript{40} For the manuscript and its contents, see Sandler, \textit{Gothic Manuscripts, 1285–1385}, vol. 1, 111–112. For its proposed owner and readers, see Taylor, \textit{Textual Situations}, 137–196.
The parallels between the *bas-de-page* cycles of the Smithfield Decretals and the Taymouth Hours strongly suggest that both were manufactured by artists moving in the same circles in London. The area around St. Paul’s, an important centre for manuscript production in the fourteenth century, boasted workshops of a number of scribes and illuminators who were in a position to collaborate on a variety of projects, for clients which included canons and royalty.\(^4\) The figures in the Taymouth and Smithfield manuscripts were rendered by different hands, but the iconographic and formal similarities are so strong that they were likely produced in the same workshop.

It is surprising that cycles of imagery found in a legal manuscript for a canon at an Augustinian priory on the one hand, and a Book of Hours for a royal lady (Eleanor of Woodstock?) on the other, would be so similar. The cycles of *bas-de-page* imagery in the manuscripts are extremely close in style, selection of subjects, and iconography. The similarities observed between manuscripts intended for different contexts of use suggest that artistic and workshop practice, patterns and traditions were critical factors for their production. Patrons would have specifically sought out artists or workshops to customize books to standards expected of them according to works that they had previously produced. Both patrons, though, would have shared a desire for intriguing subjects to contemplate and peruse during their devotions.

Marginal illustrations in Gothic manuscripts have been interpreted in a variety of different ways over the decades in which they have been the subject of scholarly

\(^{41}\) Smith, *Taymouth Hours*, 27–34.
inquiry. In early investigations which concentrated on the relationship between main miniature and bas-de-page imagery or other marginal figures on the page, they were interpreted primarily as artistic flights of fancy, as reflections of oral culture for the most part lost to us, or alternatively as deliberate moralizing glosses or exempla. It is important to distinguish between hybrid monsters or grotesques on the one hand, and recognizable narrative tales represented in margins on the other, but the purpose of inclusion of these latter types of scenes has also proven resistant to interpretation at times. For example, it has been difficult to account for the significance of the inclusion of the Three Living and the Three Dead, the Wild Man and the Miracles of the Virgin in the bas-de-page of the Smithfield legal manuscript, except to suggest that they reflect an interest in vernacular literature of the time. An additional explanation, however, would be that these subjects were most likely included to serve a moralizing function, to encourage the reader to be mindful of responsibilities to the community and

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44 Lilian Randall, “Exempla as a Source of Gothic Marginal Illumination,” *Art Bulletin* 39 (1957): 97–107; eadem, *Images in the Margins of Gothic Manuscripts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966). This interpretation of the meaning of the marginal imagery seems most apt for representations of a recognizable story, such as that of the Three Living and the Three Dead. They clearly served a moralizing function when appearing in the bas-de-page of texts of the Office of the Dead, as is the case in the Taymouth Hours, or of legal documents, in the example of the Smithfield Decretals.

to life a good Christian life.\textsuperscript{46} It is likely that the subjects represented in the marginal imagery of the Smithfield Decretals would have allowed the reader to contemplate certain moralizing themes while utilizing the main text and imagery for consideration of legal issues; it was a collection of canon law decisions, after all. The contents of main miniature and \textit{bas-de-page} were not mutually exclusive but operated on what I would describe as different registers that still intersected. The representation of the Three Living and the Three Dead in the Taymouth Hours and the Smithfield Decretals still adhered to the conversational aspect typical of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries across northern Europe, because the thrust of the story was still associated with the transfer of knowledge and wisdom from the dead to the living on the page, but also to the living reader-beholder, to whom all figures were facing out and ultimately directing their thoughts and words.

The Three Living and the Three Dead was included in a variety of types of manuscripts in thirteenth and fourteenth-century France and England, including courtly miscellanies, Psalters, Books of Hours, and a legal manuscript. Some of the examples discussed here are illustrated poetic texts of the story, while in other cases the imagery was separated from its original textual context to accompany other types of documents, such as the hour of Matins for the Office of the Dead in Books of Hours, or decretal texts. Despite the variety of textual and manuscript contexts discussed here, and the disparate audiences for which these examples were intended, the iconography is very similar across the board. The “conversational” aspect of the encounter was engaged in

\textsuperscript{46} For the manuscript, its owner and its use, see Bovey, “A Pictorial \textit{Ex Libris},” 60–82.
each of one these examples. This iconographical type was selected from amongst several modes of illustration in circulation by the early fourteenth century, and it focused on the encounter as an admonition of the living by the dead. It thus served as a moralizing lesson, regardless of what type of book it embellished. This particular mode of representation had less to do with geography and more to do with the flexibility offered by the conversational type and the function the image was intended to serve in the manuscript. The conversational type presented a direct encounter between living and dead, mediated only by the beholder of the manuscript. The composition was designed in each case to confront the viewer head on. In most cases, the bodies of all six protagonists face forward, even if they don’t all look out directly to the world of the viewer. The conversational type was always composed as open, in contrast to the Italian type, which was closed in on the seven participants: the three living, who observed the three dead in their coffins while listening to the lesson taught by the hermit in attendance.

Despite the disparate types of manuscripts and different texts that the Three Living and the Three Dead accompanied, its moralizing function remained constant. As the dead admonished and scolded the living, it was also the living reader of the manuscript who received that lesson.

A century later, the Three Living and the Three Dead had begun to be used regularly not only to accompany, but actually to introduce, the Office of the Dead in Books of Hours. In this new situation, the imagery of the story served as the main pictorial accompaniment for prayers said by the devout lay person desirous of his or her own salvation and the deliverance of loved ones languishing in Purgatory. In this new
situation, these images began to function not only as moralizing lessons, but also as devotional images in their own right, which their viewers would contemplate as they said their prayers. This new function was inextricably linked to the iconographical developments which emerged in the late fifteenth century.
Chapter 3

The Three Living and the Three Dead
in Books of Hours for Women of the House of Hapsburg:
Berlin, KK-SMPK MS 78 B 12 and London, BL Add. MS 35313

The Three Living and the Three Dead was established as a popular tale in several parts of Europe by the early fourteenth century. As discussed in Chapter 2, the earliest evidence for the inclusion of the Three Living and the Three Dead in manuscript is French. Several courtly compendia and Psalters contained the story in Old French verse, and these were accompanied by illuminations that presented the young men and corpses in two groups as though in conversation. By the early fourteenth century, the tale was appearing in English manuscripts as well, in collections of accessory texts within Psalters, in the bas-de-page of the Office of the Dead in Books of Hours, as well as other texts, including a legal manual. Over the course of the following decades, the imagery of the Encounter, still most often accompanying a poetic version of the story, started to appear elsewhere across Europe, including Italy and Germany. By the mid-fifteenth century, the imagery was migrating into still other contexts, in some cases continuing to appear with the full text of the story, but more often being accompanied only by a few short passages of text. The greatest contextual

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1 Examples are found in late-thirteenth century French compendia of courtly texts such as Paris, BnF MS Fr. 378 (fol. 1r and 7v), MS Fr. 25566 (fol. 217r, 218r and 223v), and MS Arsenal 3142 (fol. 311v).
2 For example the Psalter of Robert de Lisle, ca. 1310 (BL, Arundel MS 83 II). A French example is the Psalter of Bonne de Luxembourg, before 1349 (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art—The Cloisters, 69.86.)
3 Examples of Books of Hours in which the Three Living and the Three Dead appear in the bas-de-page include the Taymouth Hours, ca. 1340 (London, BL Yates Thomson MS 13) and the Maastricht Hours, early fourteenth century (London, BL Stowe MS 17).
4 The Smithfield Decretals, ca. 1340 (London, BL Royal MS 10 E IV).
transformation was in the use of the Three Living and the Three Dead to illustrate Vespers as the main illustration for the Office of the Dead in Books of Hours. As it became a regular feature in this new context, the encounter between living and dead began to be presented as more immediate and threatening, with the animated dead occasionally even shown pursuing their living targets while wielding weapons. An example of this iconographic type may be seen in the Berlin Hours of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian I (fig. 43). The extent of the aggression shown on the part of the dead is striking, as will be discussed below.

The more violent and aggressive manner in which the dead approach the living does not occur anywhere in the textual record of the story and is unknown before the fifteenth century. There are several possible reasons for the transformation. The greater aggression on the part of the dead might have been informed by the Triumph of Death, or the Dance of Death, which describes the dead coming to take the living to their graves. The corpses of the Dance are usually shown just dancing or playing musical instruments, as in the mural at Reval of ca. 1463 (fig. 19), but in the Triumph, Death is shown with a scythe, ready to mow down the living. Theological shifts with respect to the fate of the soul after death, a heightened fear of damnation and a greater emphasis

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6 There is debate in the literature about whether the corpses in representations of the Dance of Death should be understood as the alter-egos of the living, or as Death Personified addressing each representative of different walks of life. Most recently, Elina Gertsman has proposed that the corpses should be understood as personifications of Death, multiplied to encounter individuals from different walks of life in the procession. See Gertsman, *Dance of Death*, 23.
on personal judgement immediately after death versus collective judgement at the end of time, also undoubtedly contributed to a greater sense of urgency about the need to prepare for unexpected death. This started to be reflected in the iconography of this story and other related ones. The heightened realism of fifteenth-century painting, and the creation of ever more eventful images by esteemed artists, such as Jean Colombe, The Master of James IV of Scotland (Gerard Horenbout?) and the group of artists now referred to as the Ghent Associates, expanded the pictorial repertory of the tale. As well, the heightened drama of the image may be rooted in the function that it served within a private devotional book as an accompaniment to prayers recited for the dead.

The inclusion of the ominous dead within the same pictorial space as a representation of the manuscript’s owner and user would have served as a potent reminder of the importance of being always prepared for death. This effect was further intensified in the Berlin Hours (SMPK-KK MS 78 B 12) by the illustration on the opposing recto of Death Personified looking out and implicating the viewer. That the composition of the Three Living and the Three Dead in the Berlin Hours of Mary and Maximilian was used at least once more, in a manuscript intended for another female

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7 For the shift in emphasis to the judgment immediately following death, see Ariès, *Western Attitudes*, 27–52; Bynum, “Death and Resurrection in the Middle Ages: Some Modern Implications,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 142, no. 4 (Dec 1998), 592. The notion that this focus on the individual death signals the emergence of the individual shows the influence of the nineteenth-century historian Jacob Burckhardt’s work on the Renaissance.

8 I have made a related argument elsewhere, which has been revised and expanded here. See Christine Kralik, “Death is not the End: ‘The Three Living and the Three Dead’ in the Berlin Hours of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian I,” in *The Ends of the Body: Community and Identity in Medieval Culture*, ed. Suzanne Conklin Akbari and Jill Ross (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 61–85.
family member, likely Margaret of Austria, marked the composition as significant and prestigious for the Hapsburg family.

In the fifteenth century, the imagery of the Three Living and the Three Dead began consistently to illustrate the hour of Vespers for the Office of the Dead. The Officium Defunctorum was a collection of Psalms and prayers from the Book of Job, among other texts, which had been established in the early Middle Ages to form part of the Divine Office, recited by the monks on a regular basis for the benefit of the souls of the departed. The Office of the Dead, made up of the three canonical hours of Vespers, Matins and Lauds, was structured so that the first hour, Vespers, could be recited over the bier of the deceased the night preceding the funeral, while Matins and Lauds would be recited the following morning, in advance of the performance of the Requiem Mass. The Office of the Dead became one of the primary texts of the Book of Hours, which developed out of the monastic breviary starting in the late thirteenth century. Such books for the laity were the result of a growing demand on the part of the laity for opportunities to participate in the prayer practices of the clergy. The Book of Hours became the primary devotional text for the laity in the late Middle Ages, eventually

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surpassing the Psalter as the prayerbook of choice for well-heeled aristocrats but also increasingly the middle classes. With the establishment of the doctrine of Purgatory at the Second Council of Lyons in 1274, the efficacy of the recitation of prayers for the dead was codified. But the urgency of the performance of this office by the laity was enhanced in the early fifteenth century, as the doctrine of Purgatory was reaffirmed at the Council of Florence in 1439. As a result of the belief that the prayers of the living could effect the release of souls from Purgatory, the recitation of these prayers began to play a more significant part in the spiritual life of the laity. The images illustrating those prayers reflected changing theological beliefs, and their design would have played a vital role in enhancing the devotion of the user of the manuscript.

Representations of subjects such as the Last Rites, the judgment of the soul at the time of death, souls in Purgatory, the Last Judgment, and other related scenes, as well as

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12 The notion of a “third space” had been in place since the time of the early patristics, but this idea was not codified until 1274. See Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, 237; Le Goff, “La Naissance du Purgatoire (XII-XIII s.),” in *La Mort au Moyen Âge: Actes du colloque de l’Association des historiens médiévistes français réunis à Strasbourg en juin 1975 au palais universitaire*, with a forward by Bernard Guillemain (Strasbourg: Librairie Istra, 1977), 7–10.


allegorical representations of death, accompanied these prayers for the dead. A particularly impressive example of a visualization of the important function that praying the Office of the Dead was believed to serve may be observed in an illumination dated to ca. 1465 and attributed to a follower of the Coëtivy Master (fig 44). As the priest says Mass, a man gives alms to the poor at the entrance to the church. Below, the crypt doubles as a representation of Purgatory, but thanks to the efforts of those who pray, a few fortunate souls are released from that fiery holding cell by an angel. The viewer would doubtless have recognized that his or her own devotions with the manuscript in hand would have contributed to the efforts of the priest and the almsgiver depicted on the page.

During the fifteenth century, allegorical images such as Death Personified or the Three Living and the Three Dead became popular as images accompanying the

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This was at least in part due to their power as an image that confronted the viewer directly with the inevitability of death and provided greater emotional impact during prayer. Some illustrations of the Three Living and the Three Dead in Books of Hours continued to employ a variation on the iconographic type involving dialogue between living and dead. An illumination accompanying the Office of the Dead in a French Book of Hours, now in the British Library, presents the three living as pope, emperor and king (fig. 45). The three dead are presented as the alter egos of the living, wearing exactly the same head gear and thus to be understood as having held the same positions in life as the three living do. The bodies of the dead are differentiated as they are shown in different states of decay, conveyed through the use of colour. The dead figure closest to the picture plane is grayish in colour but also relatively intact, while the figures further back are progressively darker and show greater signs of decay, perhaps corresponding to the different ages of the living figures as well. They are displayed to the viewer in a V formation, a compromise between showing the six facing the viewer and facing each other.

Some artists played with perspective so that viewers had the opportunity to witness the encounter from different points of view. A striking illumination produced to illustrate Vespers of the Dead is found in the so-called Hours of Anne de Beaujeu of ca. 1470, attributed to the Master of the Munich Boccaccio (fig. 46). The scene is set just

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18 The Master of Jacques de Besançon, London, BL Harley MS 2917, fol. 119r.
19 Paris, BnF, NAL 3187, fol. 139v, ca. 1470. Paul Durrieu first identified the owner of the manuscript as Anne de Beaujeu-Baudricourt, wife of Marshal Jean de Baudricourt (and not to be confused with Anne de Beaujeu, wife of Peter II of Bourbon and regent of the future King Charles VIII of France). Some scholars, including François Avril,
outside a city wall, with three aristocratic riders stopping abruptly before three corpses who approach them in a very unsettling manner. The corpses point and seem to mock the perturbed young riders. One of the young men has already turned his horse around, while another throws his hands into the air as his mount reels. All the while, the dead seem to move towards them. The materiality of the dead is asserted through the shadows that they cast and also through the way in which the hand of one of the dead cuts in front of the cross. The composition of the image to show one of the corpses stepping out in front of the viewer cleverly allows the viewer to share the perspective of the dead on the living, while allowing the viewer to begin to pray the office, as the incipit “Dilexi quoniam” is inscribed in the lower frame. A pictorial design that allowed the viewer to experience the scene from the perspective of the dead also enhanced the expectation that the viewer would one day join the dead, as the textual versions of the story emphasized.

In the third quarter of the fifteenth century, an amplified ominous air started to become evident in the images, with the dead shown as though pursuing the living. One example of this tendency is observed in the bas-de-page of fol. 86v, introducing the first nocturne of Matins for the Office of the Dead in the Très Riches Heures (figs. 47,
Although conventionally only one image would accompany the Office of the Dead in a Book of Hours and would appear at the hour of Vespers, the *Officium Defunctorum* of the Très Riches Heures is illustrated by five main illuminations at each of the textual divisions within the Office, in addition to a number of smaller illuminations that punctuate the texts, in keeping with the extensive degree of illustration found in the rest of the manuscript.

The main illumination on fol. 86v presents the story of Raymond Diocrès, a preacher and canon of Notre Dame de Paris who came back from the dead during his own funeral to declare that he had been damned due to insufficient preparation for death. The attendants at the mass reveal their surprise and shock as the pall has been pulled back from the coffin, and a pictured scroll emanating from Diocrès’ mouth indicates his speech. This utterance by Diocrès is clearly related to episodes in the poetic tradition of the Three Living and the Three Dead, in which one of the animated

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21 The manuscript, begun for Jean Duc de Berry ca. 1412, was left unfinished upon the deaths of the Duke and the Limbourg Brothers in 1416. In 1485, Charles of Savoy commissioned Jean Colombe to complete the illumination of the manuscript, and the Office of the Dead was part of that second campaign. For the campaigns of illumination and division of labour on the manuscript, see Raymond Cazelles et al., *Illuminations of Heaven and Earth: The Glories of the Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry* (New York: Abrams, 1988), 215–231. See 213–214 for the provenance of the manuscript.

22 Main miniatures at each of the major divisions in the Office of the Dead (fol. 82r–107r) depict Job on the Dungheap for Vespers (fol. 82r); Raymond Diocrès (fol. 86v), The Fourth Horseman (fol. 90v), and David’s Victory (fol. 95r) for each of the three nocturnes of Matins; and the penitent David (fol. 100v) for Lauds. For the illumination of the Office of the Dead in the Très Riches Heures, see Cazelles, *Illuminations of Heaven and Earth*, 116–129. For the illustration of the scene depicted on fol. 90v in the Très Riches Heures, see Klara H. Broekhuijsen, "The Legend of the Grateful Dead: A Misinterpreted Miniature in the Très Riches Heures of Jean de Berry," in *'Als Ich Can': Liber Amicorum in Memory of Professor Dr. Maurits Smeyers*, ed. Bert Cardon et al., vol. 1 (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 213–230. For the range of possible subjects for illustrating the Office of the Dead, see Wieck, *Time Sanctified*, 124–148; Wieck, “The Death Desired.”

dead declares to the living that he has been damned for indulging in life’s pleasures without sufficient mind to the next life. The story of Raymond Diocrès and the Three Living and the Three Dead therefore make a logical pair for representation in the Office of the Dead. However, the image in the bas-de-page of the Three Living and the Three Dead painted by Colombe does not show living and dead in conversation. Rather, the living are shown fleeing on horseback from the dead, who walk purposefully towards them (fig. 48). The continuation of the action beyond the confines of the picture plane creates a sense of depth in the picture and emphatically highlights the contrast between the depth implied in the main miniature and the flatness of the plane of the page. A tall cross divides the picture into two halves and separates living from dead, a feature which would become quite common to signify the location of the scene in a cemetery but also to physically divide the two groups from each other. While here living and dead are also separated by a great deal of space, over time that separation would begin to be undermined.

Jean Colombe’s painting of the story in the Hours for Louis of Laval also conveys the sense that the living are being pursued by the dead (fig. 49).24 Gravestones and crosses emphasize the location of the cemetery, enclosed by a wall, as the site of

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encounter; although most textual records of the story located the encounter in that location, it was not always emphasized in pictorial renditions. The monumental crosses of the frame echo the tall crosses in the miniature, and draw the eye on a diagonal deep into the composition to the town in the background. One of the crosses of the composition pictorially separates living and dead, and yet the appearance of the hand of the first dead against that same cross emphasizes the physicality and proximity of the dead to the living.  

Architectural features are used as framing elements elsewhere in the manuscript, but crosses are reserved for the frame of the illumination introducing the Office of the Dead. It is used to its best advantage by doubling as a foundation for the inscription of the incipit for Vespers.  

While the painting by the Master of the Munich Boccaccio in the Hours of Anne de Beaujeu and Jean Colombe’s illuminations in the Très Riches Heures and the Hours of Louis de Laval depict the dead only apparently stalking the living, other contemporary examples depicted the dead actually attacking the living. A violent

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25 This composition was employed again by Colombe to represent the Three Living and the Three Dead in manuscripts painted for courtiers in the service of King Louis XI, including the historian Philippe de Commynes and Jean Robertet, who was secretary to Louis XI. For the Hours of Philippe de Commynes (private collection?), see Georg Swarzenski and Leo Baer, “Philippe de Comynes and the Painter Jean Fouquet,” Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs 25, no. 133 (April 1914), 40–59; Rotzler, 214. For the Hours of Jean Robertet (New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS. M 834, fol. 129v, ca. 1470), see John Plummer, The Last Flowering: French Painting in Manuscripts from American Collections, 1420–1530 (New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1982), 30–31; Wieck, Painted Prayers, 44.


27 The incipit for Vespers of the Dead reads “Dilexi quoniam exaudiet Dominus vocem orationis meae” (“I loved the Lord, for he has heard my prayer,” from Psalm 114:1). This is the incipit for Vespers of the Office of the Dead in Latin, regardless of Use.
corpse makes an appearance in an illumination accompanying the Office of the Dead in the luxurious Spinola Hours, dated to ca. 1510-1520 and attributed to a group of illuminators including the Master of James IV of Scotland (fig. 50). The Officium begins with an ingeniously designed double-page opening. The illuminator confronted the problem of how to connect main miniature and border, a challenge that had troubled book illuminators for at least a century, by situating the action within an architectural context. On the verso, the illuminator used the walls of the open-front house to frame the main deathbed scene, while the front yard served as the venue for a corpse to attack three young men on horseback in a variation on the Three Living and the Three Dead.

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28 J. Plotzek and A. von Euw, Die Handschriften der Sammlung Ludwig, vol. 2 (Cologne: Schnütgen Museum, 1982), 256–285; Thomas Kren and Scot McKendrick, eds., Illuminating the Renaissance: The Triumph of Flemish Manuscript Painting in Europe (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2003), 414–417. The Master of James IV of Scotland may be the same as the illuminator Gerard Horenbout, who painted manuscripts for such individuals as Margaret Tudor, James IV and Margaret of Austria. The Master is named for the Hours that he produced for James IV (Vienna, ÖNB, Cod. 1897.)

29 The problems associated with representing depth on a two-dimensional book page, and also the resulting tension between the competing projects of main miniature and surrounding border, preoccupied fifteenth- and sixteenth-century illuminators. Art historians have studied the history of attempts to resolve the tension between main miniature and border. Panofsky lamented that manuscript painting was slowly committing suicide due to a “lack of originality” and “an overdose of perspective” in the late fifteenth century. See Erwin Panofsky, Early Netherlandish Painting: Its Origins and Character (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1953, repr. New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 28. Clearly, recent exhibitions, such as Illuminating the Renaissance, which showcased the creativity and originality of late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth century manuscript illumination, have definitively refuted Panofsky’s claim that fifteenth century illumination was a “derivative art.” Panofsky, Early Netherlandish Painting, 29. Otto Pächt too believed in general terms that book painting had lost its originality by the end of the fifteenth century, but did point to some exceptions. These included the works of the Master of Mary of Burgundy, whose “Window pages” resolved the tension between the different sections of the page. See Otto Pächt, The Master of Mary of Burgundy (London: Faber and Faber, 1966). For the manuscript, see the facsimile The Hours of Mary of Burgundy: Codex vindobonensis 1857, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, with a commentary by Erik Inglis (London: Harvey Miller, 1995.)
The recto showcases the performance of the Requiem Mass within a church. The *bas-de-page* here doubles as the church’s crypt. A similar scene appears in the bas-de-page of an illumination introducing the Office of the Dead in the Grimani Breviary, also attributed to the Master of James IV of Scotland (fig. 51).30

Another striking depiction channeling the violence of the dead may be found in a manuscript made for Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian I,31 attributed to the Ghent Associates and now in Berlin.32 The image found on fol. 220v presents three young

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30 The Grimani Breviary, Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, MS Lat. I 99, fol. 449v. The manner in which the confrontation between living and dead is presented between the scenes in the Spinola and Grimani examples is very similar, except that only one dead attacks the living in the Spinola Hours in contrast to the three in the Grimani manuscript. A tondo serves as the frame for the deathbed scene in the Grimani book, rather than the clever architectural setting for the scene in the Spinola Hours. The illuminations in both manuscripts have been attributed to the Master of James IV of Scotland. See The Grimani Breviary, intro. Mario Salmi (London: Thames and Hudson, 1972); Kren et al., Illuminating the Renaissance, 420–424.

31 See Pächt, Master of Mary of Burgundy, 49–50; Eberhard König et al., Das Berliner Stundenbuch der Maria von Burgund und Kaiser Maximilians: Handschrift 78 B 12 im Kupferstichkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz (Lachen am Zurichsee: Nikolai, 1998), 29–39; Kralik, “Death is not the End.”

32 The identity of the illuminator of this image has been much debated. In the early scholarship on this manuscript, the illuminator of the image of the Three Living and the Three Dead was believed to be the same as that of the famous window pages of the Hours of Mary of Burgundy (Vienna, ÖNB, MS 1857, fols. 14v, 43v). See Pächt, Master of Mary of Burgundy; Friedrich Winkler, Die Flämische Buchmalerei des XV. und XVI. Jahrhunderts: Künstler und Werke von den Brüdern van Eyck bis zu Simon Bening (Leipzig: Verlag E. A. Seemann, 1925), 103–105. However, Bodo Brinkmann questioned whether the Master of Mary of Burgundy was indeed responsible for the illuminations in both manuscripts; Brinkmann proposed that the manuscripts were the works of different masters, and identified them as the Vienna and Berlin Masters respectively. See Bodo Brinkmann, “Der Maler und sein Kreis,” in Das Berliner Stundenbuch der Maria von Burgund und Kaiser Maximilians. Handschrift 78 B 12 im Kupferstichkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin Preussischer Kulturbesitz, ed. Eberhard König et al. (Lachen am Zurichsee: Nikolai, 1998), 147–153. Anne van Buren has attributed the image of the Three Living and Three Dead to the Ghent Associates, which I maintain here. This label moves away from viewing the manuscript as the masterpiece of one individual and instead highlights the collaborative process of the production of such a volume. See Anne Van Buren, “The Master of
aristocratic riders, fleeing three blackened and decaying corpses who chase after the riders and target them with weapons (figs. 43, 52). The young people, who in early textual treatments of the story had been described as out hunting, have here themselves become the hunted. The scene is set in a naturalistically rendered landscape, marked as Netherlandish by the windmills depicted in the background. The presence of ravens and dark clouds overhead creates a foreboding atmosphere. The only woman in the group, riding her horse at the centre of the image, has been identified as the original owner of the manuscript, Mary of Burgundy, Duchess of Burgundy and wife of the future Hapsburg Emperor Maximilian I, who may be associated with the other rider dressed in gold.\(^{33}\) On the adjacent recto, a corpse looks out from the framed illumination and confronts the viewer of the image, while pointing a spear in the direction of the scene depicted on the facing verso. Although the figure is positioned to confront the scene depicted on the verso, the corpse has turned its head so that it directs its empty eye-socketed gaze out towards the viewer of the image. The contrast between the two compositions—the one on the verso representing interaction between living and dead on the page, while the one on the recto depicted Death gazing outwardly, seeking the returning gaze of the viewer—must have been designed specifically to create a dynamic tension in the experience of the book.


\(^{33}\) Margaret Scott, “The Role of Dress in the Image of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy,” in Flemish Manuscript Painting in Context: Recent Research, ed. Elizabeth Morrison and Thomas Kren (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2006), 56. Scott points out that representing two of the riders as wearing cloth of gold must have been intended to highlight their wealth and status. The figures are likely to be understood as Maximilian I, heir to the Hapsburg throne, and his wife Mary of Burgundy. The third figure has not been identified, but was likely a friend or associate of the pair.
A representation of a young woman at prayer, accompanied by an angel, appears in the same manuscript on fol. 355r as an accompaniment to the suffrage “Angele qui meus es custos” (fig. 53).\(^{34}\) The woman in this illumination is dressed in very similar fashion to that of the female rider on fol. 220v, strongly suggesting that the pious lady and the female rider must be understood as one and the same, and the original owner of the book. The repeated appearance of the initial M on the harness of the horse on fol. 220v suggests that the female rider should indeed be identified as Mary of Burgundy.

Of the three living protagonists represented in fol. 220v, the two male riders have turned away from the road and give the impression of trying to escape the menacing corpses. The rider dressed in gold who is to be identified as Mary’s husband, Maximilian, seems to encourage her to follow him.\(^{35}\) She takes no notice, however, as she has turned her head and seems to direct her gaze in the direction of the spear-wielding corpse chasing after her.

Otto Pächt, in his discussion of the image from the Berlin Hours, suggested that the picture of Mary of Burgundy chased down by a corpse is best understood as a commemorative image, most likely painted after her untimely death in 1482, following a riding accident.\(^{36}\) The image must have reflected that specific event, argued Pächt, because the subject depicted was rare in Flemish illumination and did not usually include women as participants. However, an examination of an image from another Flemish manuscript, also dated circa 1480, undermines Pächt’s assertion that the image

\(^{34}\) “Oh angel, who is my guardian.” For this image, see König et al., *Berliner Stundenbuch*, 108–109.

\(^{35}\) König et al., *Berliner Stundenbuch*, 36.

\(^{36}\) Pächt, *Mary of Burgundy*, 50.
of the encounter of the Three Living and the Three Dead can only be interpreted as a response to Mary’s death. This miniature, attributed to the Master of the Dresden Prayerbook, presents a group of riders, here four instead of the usual three, one of which is a woman, assaulted by three dead figures wielding weapons (fig. 54).37

Anne van Buren also suggested that the image of the Three Living and the Three Dead in the Berlin Hours was most likely executed after Mary’s death, due to evidence of a greater degree of personalization on the folio with the image of the Three Living and the Three Dead than elsewhere in the manuscript. The inclusion of the initials MM on the page suggested to van Buren that the page was completed after Mary’s death.38 However, insignia, mottos and heraldic imagery were often employed in devotional images including portraits of donors, even if this was more common in French than in Flemish illumination.39 For instance, heraldic insignia was regularly used in images including donor portraits, such as an illumination of Duchess Catherine kneeling before the Virgin from the Hours of Catherine of Cleves (fig. 55). The decision to include the Duchess’ initials, as well as a portrait, within the composition of the image likely resulted from a desire to personalize the image to heighten its effect for devotional purposes.

Another example of a personalized image accompanying the Office of the Dead, intended to be used as a devotional image, appears in a manuscript owned by René of

37 Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, SMPK, 78 B 14, fol. 277v. See Bodo Brinkmann, Die Flämische Buchmalerei am Ende des Burgunderreichs: Der Meister des Dresdener Gebetbuchs und die Miniaturisten seiner Zeit (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), 301–305, 383. The artist is named for a manuscript in the Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Dresden (MS A 311).
38 Van Buren, “The Master of Mary of Burgundy,” 308.
39 König et al., Berliner Stundenbuch, 31.
Anjou. The illumination accompanying the *Officium Mortuorum* in René’s book presents a desiccated corpse in an advanced state of decay, its abdomen having been visibly eaten away (fig. 56).\(^{40}\) The lower half of the figure is obscured not by a coffin, but by a banner that displays the upper half of the coat of arms of René, presenting him as Duke of Anjou, King of Sicily and King of Jerusalem. The cadaver is set against a lush green landscape, possibly displaying some of René’s worldly possessions in the form of his lands, which would have further personalized the image for its owner. At the centre of the composition is the corpse, wearing King René’s crown.\(^{41}\) The futility of worldly pleasures and power, and the urgency for René of focusing his attention on the cultivation of the soul is underscored not only by the image and the prayers on the adjoining pages, but also in the text in the scroll held in the corpse’s left hand, reading “Memento homo quod sinis (sic) es et in sinere reverteris.”\(^{42}\) The power of this image came from the acknowledgement that the rotting corpse reflected on the page

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\(^{40}\) King René of Anjou as a Corpse, in the ‘London Hours’ of René of Anjou, S.E. France, (Provence), ca. 1443, London, BL, Egerton MS 1070, fol. 53r. This illumination, among several others, has been attributed to Barthélemy d’Eyck. See Scot McKendrick et al., *Royal Manuscripts*, 404. The portrait of René as Death was added after the manuscript came into his hands in the early 1430s. The majority of the manuscript contents had been completed ca. 1410 for an unknown earlier owner. For the image of René in the guise of Death, see Avril and Reynaud, *Manuscrits à Peintures*, no. 122; Millard Meiss, *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry: The Limbourgs and their Contemporaries*, vol. 1 (New York: George Braziller, 1969), 328–329; Harthan, *Book of Hours*, 90–93; Rose-Marie Ferré, “Le roi mort: Une image édifiante de la mort de soi,” in *Splendeur de l’enluminure: Le roi René et les livres*, ed. François Avril et al. (Angers: Actes Sud, 2009), 191–197; McKendrick et al., *Royal Manuscripts*, 404–405, no. 144.

\(^{41}\) Otto Pächt, “René d’Anjou—Studien I,” *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* 69, n.s. 33 (1973), 89–90, 98, fig. 84.

\(^{42}\) ‘Remember that you are ash and to ash you will return.’ The Latin word for ash has been inscribed *sinis*, not *cinis*. 
prefigured René’s own future self and would have enhanced the devotional impact of the image.

Eberhard König suggested that the representation of the Three Living and the Three Dead in the Berlin Hours depicts Mary as fearless in the face of death and that her participation in the action strengthened the image’s status as both a *memento mori* and a devotional image. The duchess was an avid rider, and was depicted on horseback for hunting or hawking on a number of occasions during her lifetime. One example is an image found in a manuscript copy of the *Chronik van Vlanderen*, now in Bruges (fig. 57). I support König’s assertion that the inclusion of the portrait, intended for her own viewing, would have proclaimed the Duchess’ courage in the face of death. I further contend that the representation of Mary was integrated into the composition as one of the aristocratic riders in order to personalize her devotion and make the image a stronger *memento mori* for her own use. It also would have provided her with an *exempla* of behaviour, in which she herself figured. This was further emphasized, I posit, through opposition with the personification of death depicted on the recto.

The image of Death on fol. 221r (fig. 58) employed pictorial strategies similar to those found in other contemporary devotional images, devices that were intended to enhance the power of devotional images for their beholders. No intermediary figures

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are present in the image. It participates in the tradition of the iconic devotional image that was excerpted from its narrative context, in ascendance in manuscript as well as on panel in the late fifteenth century. The full or half-length Man of Sorrows (fig. 59) or the Veronica (fig. 60) were popular examples of this trend of images designed to evoke an intimate and direct encounter between viewer and image.

The iconographic type of the Man of Sorrows, purportedly based upon the mosaic of the *Imago Pietatis* housed in the church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome, was from the fourteenth century visually associated with the vision of Christ experienced by St. Gregory the Great as he celebrated Mass. While the pictorial tradition of the Mass of St. Gregory conveyed to the viewer an account of Gregory’s vision, the tradition of the Man of Sorrows extended to the viewer the opportunity to experience a personalized encounter with Christ in the form of a devotional image, often found on panel or within the pages of a Book of Hours.

Full or half-length images of animated corpses that confronted their viewers also participated effectively in this tradition of representation, but were intended for a

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specific context, that of prayers said in preparation for death. An image painted by Jean Colombe in the Hours of Anne of France presents a blackened corpse holding an arrow and emerging from a coffin while looking out with an expression that seems to mock (fig. 61). The coffin, rendered in veined pink marble that evokes bodily tissue, is set against the picture plane, while a beautiful northern landscape recedes into the distance. The edge of the coffin, upon which part of the shroud of the corpse rests, recalls the use of the window ledge in contemporary portrait painting. But the presentation of a corpse as a half-length figure may effectively be compared in compositional terms to the type used for the Man of Sorrows, such as Colombe’s composition in the Très Riches Heures (fig. 62). The coffins, in which each figure stands, have been oriented lengthwise and have been pushed up against the picture plane. The half-length format has been used in each for the depiction of the main figure, and each image features a lush landscape in the background. Each also directly

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49 One further type of devotional image of death found in late medieval devotional books is the mirror that displays a skull, understood to be a reflection of the future self of the viewer. James Marrow discussed how the meaning of such an image was determined by its function as a reminder of the viewer’s mortality and the importance of prayer to prepare oneself for death. See James Marrow, “‘In Desen Speigell’: A New Form of Memento Mori in Fifteenth-Century Netherlandish Art,” in Essays in Northern European Art presented to Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann on his Sixtieth Birthday, ed. A. Logan (Doomspijk: Davaco, 1983), 154–163; idem, Pictorial Invention in Netherlandish Manuscript Illumination of the Late Middle Ages: The Play of Illusion and Meaning (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), esp. 27–33.

50 Jean Colombe, Death with an Arrow and Rising from a Tomb, Bourges, France, ca. 1473. New York, Morgan Library, M. 677, fol. 245v. See Wieck, Time Sanctified, 148. The manuscript was commissioned by Queen Charlotte of Savoy for her daughter Anne, possibly as a wedding gift on occasion of her marriage to Peter II of Bourbon. Plummer, The Last Flowering, 53. Colombe continued to work for Queen Charlotte, and associates of the French royal family, including Louis de Laval, throughout the 1470s.

51 Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS. 65, fol. 75r. See Cazelles et al., Illuminations of Heaven and Earth, 112.
confronts the viewer and elicits the interaction and involvement of the beholder. But a striking contrast may also be found between the two, as the figures of Death and Christ appear as mirror images of one another. While Christ leans to the right, Death leans in the opposite direction. The corpse mimics the posture of the resurrected Christ, but the inherent contradiction of the corpse’s animation—that it seems alive but is dead—is highlighted here.

While the half-length representations of the animated corpse discussed here make use of a format traditionally reserved for portraiture and for devotional images of Christ and the Saints, enhanced by the depiction of lush contemporary landscapes in the background, the full-length figure of Death depicted on fol. 221r of the Berlin Hours of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian I is set against an orange foil, reminiscent of Purgatorial fires (fig. 58). The corpse here holds a coffin draped with a shroud in its left hand and an arrow in its right. While the body of the corpse is physically turned towards the scene depicted on the verso, the gaze of the corpse looks out in the direction of the viewer. A personal encounter with death has been evoked through a clever design of this image. I contend that this corpse would have functioned for Mary of Burgundy in a way similar to that in which the crowned corpse in the King René’s Hours would have functioned for him. Although the corpse on fol. 221r of the Berlin Hours does not appear to be characterized as an alter ego of the viewer as does the corpse in René’s book, the figure holding the coffin and dart addresses the viewer in a comparably direct and provocative way.

What distinguishes the program of the Hours of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian I is that the Three Living and the Three Dead worked together with a
representation of an animated corpse to introduce the prayers for the dead. The luxurious manuscript included paired miniatures for every major office, and so the opening for the Office of the Dead is consistent with the rest of the illumination in the manuscript.\textsuperscript{52} The representation of Mary of Burgundy in the image of the Three Living and the Three Dead on the verso depicts the Duchess experiencing an encounter with death, and contemplating her own mortality, while the corpse on the recto looks out from the confines of the picture plane to confront the viewer, originally Mary of Burgundy, in the flesh. As she said the prayers of the Office of the Dead and contemplated that very complex pictorial composition which occurred across an opening in the manuscript, her devotional experience would be intensified and she would be able to more effectively prepare herself for death.

The use of pairs of illuminations to mark major textual divisions was for the most part reserved for only the most luxurious books produced in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. These included manuscripts produced for other members of the Hapsburg family, one of which, now London, BL Add. MS 35313, includes a strikingly similar composition of the Three Living and the Three Dead to introduce the

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{52} A codicological analysis of the Berlin Hours has shown that fol. 220v is on a single leaf that has been tipped into the manuscript. See König et al., \textit{Berliner Stundenbuch}, 167–172, esp. 170. It is conceivable that the bi-folio on which the image of the Three Living and the Three Dead was painted was altered in some way before the page was sewn into the manuscript, but there is no reason to believe that the image was a later addition to the program. All major textual divisions of the manuscript were introduced with facing illuminations, and thus the pairing of the images on fol. 220v and 221r fits nicely with the program of the manuscript as a whole. König et al, \textit{Berliner Stundenbuch}, 31. It must be remarked, however, that sometimes singletons were produced separately and tipped in after the completion of the manuscript, as Brinkmann has observed in studies of manuscripts by Simon Marmion. See Bodo Brinkman, “The Contribution of Simon Marmion to Books of Hours from Ghent and Bruges,” in \textit{Margaret of York, Simon Marmion and The Visions of Tondal}, ed. Thomas Kren (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 1992), 192, n. 19.}
Office of the Dead (fig. 63, 64). Modifications have been made to the clothing and facial features of the figures, as well as the border design, for the Encounter as compared to the one included in the Hours in Berlin. It is a recognizably different composition, and yet the iconography of the two miniatures is so similar as to have constituted a deliberate and meaningful choice. Whether the changes to the composition personalized the image for the owner of the London Hours is not known in the absence of identifiable heraldic insignia or other personalizing features in the manuscript. It may be assumed, however, that the young lady on horseback would have been understood to represent the individual for whom the book was intended.

Around 1500, possibilities for border design began to greatly expand, and the architectural borders used in the London Hours are a departure from the scatter borders used in the Berlin Hours. Architectural or tabernacle borders were becoming more common around the year 1500, but still alternated with bejeweled and floral ones. Biblical passages inscribed in the structure serving as the frame for the miniature on fol.

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158v refer to the suddenness with which the end of time will come. Inscriptions on the column on the opposing recto beseech the living for prayer and express a hope for salvation. The architectonic border functions as both frame and as foundation on which text has been added, as had also occurred in Colombe’s works for Louis de Laval and for Charles of Savoy.

Thomas Kren and others have attributed the paintings in the London Hours to the Master of James IV of Scotland and his workshop. Robert Calkins has gone further to identify the Master of James IV of Scotland with Gerard Horenbout. This illuminator was certainly in the employ of Margaret of Austria by 1515, if not earlier, and is known to have illuminated manuscripts, including the Sforza Hours, and possibly even the Spinola Hours, for her. Horenbout had a workshop with assistants in Ghent.

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56 The passage on the left column reads “Vae, vae, diei, quia juxta est dies domini,” (“Woe to the day, for the day of the Lord is near”) (Exekiel 30:2–3), and along the bottom “Dies domini sicut fur veniet” (“The day of the lord will come as a thief (in the night)”) (I Thessalonians 5:2).

57 In the column of fol. 158r, “Miser(emini) mei saltem vos, amici mei” (“Have mercy on me, my friends…since the hand of the Lord has touched me) (Job 19:21). This passage appears again in the Third nocturne of Matins, Lesson 8 in the text of the Office of the Dead proper. Along the bottom appears another inscription “Post tenebras spero lucem” (“After darkness I hope for the light”) (Job 17:12). Their appropriateness for the introduction of the Office of the Dead is clear.

58 Thomas Kren, Renaissance Painting in Manuscripts, 63–68, no. 15; Kren et al., Illuminating the Renaissance, 369–371.


60 Georges Dogaer, Flemish Miniature Painting in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries (Amsterdam: B. M. Israel, 1987), 161.

as of 1497 and was already in demand at that time for the production of luxury manuscripts. The date of the London Hours (Add. MS 35313) fits with Horenbout’s chronology. It is very possible that Margaret of Austria commissioned the manuscript from him in Ghent in the years around 1500, and when she had the opportunity she appointed him her court painter at Mechelen in 1515, although he continued to reside in Ghent.

Since Margaret had inherited the Hours of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian from her mother, it would have been in her possession and available for consultation by the artist and his colleagues when the later London Hours was in production. There are other parallels between the contents of manuscripts owned by Margaret and works later produced by Gerard Horenbout to suggest that this consultation could have happened. The calendar pages of the Très Riches Heures of Jean de Berry, in the possession of Margaret of Austria after inheriting it from her husband Phillibert of Savoy, served as a source of inspiration for the calendar pages of the Grimani Breviary, attributed to the Master of James IV of Scotland (Gerard Horenbout?) and colleagues. It seems reasonable that Gerard Horenbout would have had the opportunity to consult manuscripts in Margaret of Austria’s library when he was commissioned to produce works for her.

1490 by Bona of Savoy, Duchess of Milan and widow of Galeazzo Maria Sforza, but upon Bona’s death the manuscript passed to her brother Phillibert of Savoy, and when he died too his widow Margaret of Austria inherited it. See Evans, *Sforza Hours*, 12.


The illuminator is unlikely to have worked directly from a manuscript such as the Berlin Hours in the production of a new one, however, because this could have subjected the luxury volume to the possibility of damage. Pattern drawings would likely have been used as guides for the artists. Patterns were foundational for the production of luxury Flemish manuscripts in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, and similarities of compositions between a variety of manuscripts produced in Ghent and Bruges have long been observed. Practical considerations of how patterns circulated are important for understanding workshop practices, but they do not address the obvious significance of this composition for the Hapsburg family. I suggest that a manuscript as important as a commission intended for a Hapsburg princess would have been carefully designed, likely involved close consultation between main illuminator and patroness, and included a visitation with the prized manuscripts in Margaret’s own library.

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67 I recognize that it was not unusual for similar compositions to appear in a variety of different Flemish manuscripts produced by artists working in Ghent and Bruges. In this case, however, in which only two copies of a particular composition are known and they both appear in manuscripts associated with the Hapsburg family, the use of this particular design seems pointed and significant.
Although no insignia or inscription has been identified in the London manuscript to settle the question of the identity of the manuscript’s intended owner, several scholars have proposed a Hapsburg woman as the owner or patron of the book. Janet Backhouse has argued that it was produced specifically for Margaret of Austria. It is also possible that Margaret made arrangements for the production of the book for Joanna of Castile, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, who married Margaret’s brother Philip the Fair in 1496. The inclusion of popular Spanish saints in the calendar strongly suggests an association with Spain, but since Margaret too had an association with the Spanish throne through her first marriage to Juan of Castile, this does not put the question of attribution to rest. There is sufficient evidence, however, to hold that this manuscript was produced for a young woman of the Hapsburg family.

The imagery of the London Hours, and the opening for the Office of the Dead in particular, clearly invokes paintings produced for members and associates of the Hapsburg family. The lower section of the illumination on fol. 159r shows a group of skulls, which is very similar to the arrangement of the border of the opening for the Office of the Dead in a Book of Hours painted by the Master of Mary of Burgundy in ca. 1480 and produced for Engelbert of Nassau, the Treasurer to Emperor Maximilian I (fig. 65). The use of this motif again in the London Hours shows that the Master of James IV knew the work and designs of the Master of Mary of Burgundy, which had been included in a book in the orbit of the Hapsburgs, and referred to it. The inclusion

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of a woman as one of the three living was also extremely rare and suggests that the intended recipient of the manuscript must have been female.

It is not possible to determine at this time whether Add. MS 35313 in the British Library was made for Margaret of Austria, for Joanna of Castile, or for someone else associated with the Hapsburg family. It may be stated, however, that the similarity in the rendition of the Three Living and the Three Dead included in the manuscript to the example contained in the Berlin Hours of Mary and Maximilian likely carried significant meaning. Margaret Manion has shown, through a close study of the manuscripts belonging to members of the Valois house, including Bonne de Luxembourg, Charles V and Jean de Berry, that choices for the inclusion of texts and images in manuscripts made for members of an illustrious family went beyond devotional or stylistic trends. Rather, they were designed very carefully to showcase textual and pictorial similarities for political and dynastic reasons. Manuscripts intended for younger members of an illustrious family were designed to assist them in their training to become upstanding members of that family who would emulate their elders and perform their duties flawlessly. While Manion’s argument was built around an examination of manuscripts intended for the use of men, it can be applied with success to the use of manuscripts by Hapsburg women. As recent work by Dagmar Eichberger and Anne Marie Legaré has shown, Margaret of Austria’s commissions reflected her importance as a diplomatic figure, in particular as regent to her nephew, the future Charles V, after the untimely death of his father Philip the Fair in 1506. As
such, Margaret was carrying out her responsibilities that were her duty to fulfill as daughter of Mary, Duchess of Burgundy, and Maximilian, Hapsburg Emperor.  

The composition representing the Three Living and the Three Dead in the Hours of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian I, attributed to one or more members of the Ghent Associates, was a groundbreaking example of the tradition of illustrating the story, and would have been perceived as such. A very similar composition was used in a manuscript, possibly painted by Gerard Horenbout for Margaret of Austria, daughter to Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian. The references to Spanish saints in the calendar of the manuscript suggest a Spanish connection, and perhaps the manuscript was produced for her in honour of her betrothal to Juan of Castile in 1496. This, however, was the year in which Margaret’s brother Philip was betrothed to Joanna of Castile, and so it is also possible that the volume was produced as a gift for the bride-to-be of the heir apparent to the Hapsburg throne. With a paucity of iron-clad evidence as to the intended owner of the manuscript, other than the fact that the owner must have been someone of great wealth and status, it is not yet possible to definitively identify the intended owner of the manuscript or the circumstances of the commission. What is clear, however, is that it was a lavish volume, obviously commissioned by someone of wealth either for herself or as a significant gift, which linked it to the family. The representation of the Three Living and the Three Dead in the manuscript would have served as something approximating a stamp of association with the Hapsburgs. In larger terms, it would have contributed to the establishment of family identity.  

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70 Anne-Marie Legaré, “‘La librairye de Madame’,” 207–221.
71 Literature that examines the role of women in the transmission of devotional practices and cultural traditions includes Susan Groag Bell, “Medieval Women Book
This chapter has examined a number of examples of the Three Living and the Three Dead contained in French and Flemish Books of Hours dating from the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. It is clear that there were a number of modes in which the images were constructed; some continued to be dialogic, but images showing the dead either as stalking or as attacking the living were in ascendance. The variety of ways in which the tale of the interaction between living and dead could be presented demonstrates that patron or illuminator, or both, could make choices about how to convey the Encounter. The dynamism of these illuminations was rooted in the heightened naturalism and realism of late fifteenth century painting in general. It was likely also linked to the function served by the image as an accompaniment to prayers said for souls languishing in Purgatory, as well as for the souls of the individuals for whom the illuminated books were made. Images created in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries by such artists as Jean Colombe, the Ghent Associates and the Master of James IV of Scotland (Gerard Horenbout?) demonstrate that artistic inventiveness had a major impact on the look and impact of the tale as it appeared when accompanying prayers for the dead. One particularly striking composition which shows the three living, one of whom is an aristocratic lady, being attacked by three dead is known in only two manuscripts: the Berlin Hours of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian I, and the London Hours (BL, Add. MS 35313), the latter of which was likely commissioned by Mary’s daughter Margaret. I have argued here that the employment of this unprecedented composition of the Three Living and the Three Dead

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would have been recognizable as prestigious and as a mark of dynastic association.
Chapter 4

The Three Living and the Three Dead in a Monastic Miscellany: Munich, BSB, cgm 3974

A richly illustrated manuscript miscellany, produced in southern Germany in the mid-fifteenth century and now in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich, contains an array of texts in Early New High German and Latin. The wide-ranging contents of this manuscript include theological texts, such as the *Moralitates* of Robert Holcot, and a treatise on the roots of pride (fol. 55v); devotional texts, such as the *Speculum Humanae Salvationis* (fol. 1r–51r); and the fables of Avianus and the Anonymous Neveleti. Throughout the manuscript, texts and images appear that remind the reader of the inevitability of death. Among the *memento mori* series of texts and images is included an intriguing but unconventional treatment of the Three Living and the Three Dead, which seems to presume a sophisticated audience (fig. 66). The present chapter will place the Three Living and the Three Dead within the context of

1 The vernacular language written and spoken in the fifteenth century in what is now Southern Germany is generally referred to as Early New High German. See John Waterman, *A History of the German Language* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976), 107–110. The specific dialect employed here may be more specifically described as Bavarian. See Norbert Ott et al., *Katalog der deutschsprachigen illustrierten Handschriften des Mittelalters*, vol. 1 (Munich: Beck, 1989), 287.

2 To my knowledge, the earliest use of the term *Memento Mori* appears in the eleventh-century moralizing poem *Memento morti*, a 142-line long poem in rhyming couplets by the Benedictine monk, abbot and poet Noker von Zwiefalten (ca.1065–1090). See Francis Gentry, “Noker’s *Memento mori*: Translation and Commentary,” *Allegorica* 5, no. 2 (1980): 7–18; Günther Schweikle, “Memento mori,” in *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon*, ed. Kurt Ruh, vol. 6 (Berlin: Walther de Gruyter, 1987), col. 381–386. Noker reminds the reader to contemplate death and to try to avoid ending up in Hell. The term *memento mori* has often been divorced from the context of Noker’s poem to describe a series of moralizing texts also having to do with concerns about death and confronting its inevitability. I will apply this term more generally to texts and images including the Three Living and the Three Dead, the *Visio Philiberti*, the Triumph of Death, and so on.
the larger series of texts and images on the theme of death, and in the rest of the
manuscript as well. Several scholars have proposed that cgm 3974 was intended for the
training of students in grammatical and moral matters at the monastic school of St.
Emmeram in Regensburg in the fifteenth century. However, the presence of difficult
theological texts and the expansive memento mori sections suggests additional uses. I
shall propose here that the manuscript, or at least sections of it, was employed in deep
contemplation of theological and devotional matters. The volume was not only intended
as a manual in moral and theological instruction, but also likely functioned as a volume
to guide contemplation and devotion for individuals at the monastery. The Three Living
and the Three Dead, I argue, played a key role in that larger project.

Palaeographical and codicological studies have localized the production of this
manuscript to the monastery of St. Emmeram in the mid-fifteenth century.³ The earliest
evidence for binding dates to the late fifteenth century, and it is not certain whether the
quires currently bound together were intended to be associated together from the outset
or if that decision was made several decades after the texts were completed.⁴ The

³ See Ott et al., Katalog der deutschsprachigen illustrierten Handschriften, vol. 1, 287–
289; Karin Schneider, Die deutschen Handschriften der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek
München: Die mittelalterlichen Handschriften aus Cgm 888-4000; Catalogus codicum
manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Monacensis vol. 6 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1991),
504. For the history of the St. Emmeram monastic library and its practices, see
Ladislaus Buzas, German Library History 800–1945, trans. William Boyd (London:
McFarland and Co., 1986), 33–35. Monastic libraries occasionally allowed for the
withdrawal of books to be read elsewhere, usually within the confines of the monastery
itself, but occasionally volumes were leant to other institutions. Abbot Albert of St.
Emmeram established regulations for use of the monastery library in 1357, including a
one-month lending period. See Buzas, German Library History, 35. The acquisition
and production of manuscripts increased after 1452, in the wake of the reforms of
Nicholas of Cusa.

⁴ For codicological analysis of the volume, see Schneider, Die deutschen
Handschriften, vol. 6, 504–507. It was not uncommon in monastic contexts for writings
manuscript entered the collection of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in 1811 at the time of the secularization of the monasteries.

The volume consists of 321 folios, and much of the text of the manuscript was recorded by one main scribe in a bastarda script (fols. 1r-91v, 114r-123v and 168r-321v). Two other hands have been identified in texts found on fols. 92r-113r and 124r-167v. These folios were brought together with the main text in the late fifteenth-century binding. The illustrated Speculum Humanae Salvationis, a moralized history of human salvation, begins the manuscript (fols. 1r-51r). It is followed by an array of moralized sermon exempla by the fourteenth-century Dominican scholar and theologian Robert Holcot. His exempla continue to appear at intervals through the rest of the volume. The memento mori series (fols. 54r-69v) includes several meditations on death. One of these is the Everyman story (fols. 54r-55r), based on a fifteenth-century morality play. At the time of death, “Everyman” must account for his life before God, at which time he discovers to his dismay that all he can take with him into the next life is his good deeds. The Everyman tale is followed by the allegorical presentations of the Triumph of Death on disparate topics to be bound together within the covers of one book. See Nichols and Wenzel, The Whole Book. The original shelfmark of cgm 3974 was lost in the rebinding of the manuscript in the seventeenth century, and it has not been possible to definitively link the manuscript to any entry in the catalogue of the collections of the St. Emmeram library, prepared in 1500 by the librarian Dionysius Menger (now Munich, BSB Clm 14675). See Klaus Grubmüller, “Elemente einer literarischen Gebrauchssituation: Zur Rezeption der aesopischen Fabel im 15. Jahrhundert,” in Würzburger Prosastudien II: Untersuchungen zur Literatur und Sprache des Mittelalters, ed. Peter Kesting (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1975), 140; Schneider, Die deutschen Handschriften, vol. 6, 504. Still, palaeographical and codicological analysis has established that St. Emmeram is the most likely location for its production.

5 For a catalogue description of the contents of the entire manuscript, see Schneider, Die deutschen Handschriften, vol. 6, 504–519. A précis of the manuscript contents may also be found in Grubmüller, “Elemente einer literarischen Gebrauchssituation,” 139–159, esp. 140–142.
(56r-57r), a dialogue between Vita and Mors (fol. 58r) and the Three Living and the Three Dead (fol. 59v). This in turn is followed by the Visio Philiberti, which relates a dream vision of a discussion between the deceased body and the soul, and the Ars Moriendi, a guide for preparation for a good death, by the Viennese theologist Nikolaus von Dinkelsbühl. The Visio Philiberti and the Ars Moriendi appear in paired columns of text between fols. 60ra and 65vb. A copy of the Contemptus Mundi picks up where the Visio Philiberti ends, continuing to accompany the Ars Moriendi for the folios that follow (fols. 66-69).

The memento mori group that exists within this miscellany is similar to clusters that are known from other manuscripts. A similar cluster of texts and images may be found in other manuscripts of comparable date, including Rome, Bibl. Casanatense MS. 1404, discussed in Chapter 5. The so-called Vergänglichkeitsbuch, created in the first half of the sixteenth century, now in Stuttgart, also contains a selection of texts and images on the theme of death and preparation for it, including the Three Living and the Three Dead.

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6 See Cosacchi, Makabertz, 491; Hansjürgen Kiepe, Der Nürnberger Priameldichtung: Untersuchungen zu Hans Rosenplüt und zum Schreib- und Druckwesen im 15. Jahrhundert (Munich: Artemis Verlag, 1984), 237–241. Several of the illustrations in the memento mori series have been ascribed to Martinus Opifex, who had his own workshop in Regensburg and later became illuminator to Emperor Frederick III in Vienna. These images were produced at the very beginning of Opifex’s career, before he had made a name for himself. Little is known about Opifex’s early life, but it is possible that he produced some work for the monastery before moving to Vienna. Florentine Mütterich, Regensburger Buchmalerei: Von frühkarolingischer Zeit bis zum Ausgang des Mittelalters (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 1987), 107–108; Charlotte Ziegler, Martinus Opifex: Ein Hofminiatur Fredrichs III (Vienna: Verlag Anton Schroll, 1988), 69. Both scholars suggest the artistic hand of Martinus Opifex or members of his workshop in several of the illustrations, in particular fols. 56r–57r with representations of the Triumph of Death, but don’t explain how the artist would have been involved with the illustration of a miscellany produced at the monastery of St. Emmeram. Different styles of illumination appear in specific sections, and it is possible that before the book was bound, at least one section was illuminated in a Regensburg workshop in which Martinus Opifex was working.
Three Dead. The Munich volume is distinguished, however, by the larger manuscript context in which the *memento mori* cycle appears. The Casanatense and Stuttgart volumes appear to have been intended for private use by a layperson, while the Munich Miscellany (cgm 3974) was created in and for a monastic context.

A number of other theological treatises appear in the quires that follow the *memento mori* sequence in cgm 3974, including an array of tracts on the virtues and vices, on the incarnation of Christ and in defense of the inviolate virginity of Mary. In the second half of the manuscript there is a richly illustrated *Edelstein*, which is a series of Middle High German fables dated to the mid-fourteenth century and written by the Swiss monk Ulrich Boner (fols. 124r-213ra); a debate between wise Solomon and witty Marcolf, recorded in both Latin and German, which emphasizes the importance of wisdom and learning (fols. 209vb-215vb); Latin translations of Aesop’s Fables by the Anonymus Neveleti (a fourteenth-century English schoolmaster) (fols. 216ra-234vb) and Avianus (a fifth-century Roman poet) (fols. 235ra-248vb); and the *Biblia Pauperum*, a popular moralized Bible (fols. 250ra-270vb), among other texts. The contents of the manuscript, then, cover a wide range of learned and popular topics in Latin and the vernacular. While miscellanies were once thought to be simply odds and

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ends brought together between two covers for ease of storage and handling, it is now recognized that these kinds of collections were not haphazardly produced. I suggest that the volume was not put in its entirety to one sole purpose but rather served a multiplicity of functions, and these included instruction, theological study, and private contemplation.

Several scholars have investigated facets of the manuscript. Karin Schneider’s exemplary codicological study precisely dates the various sections and identifies the hands responsible for the texts. Her work has allowed for a clearer understanding of the volume’s structure. Klaus Grubmüller studied the fables of Avianus as recorded in the manuscript and argued that they were intended to instruct students in Latin grammar as well as in moral precepts. The presentation of fables in both German and Latin suggests that they were used in language instruction; indeed, the fables of Avianus were typically featured in the curriculum of Latin training in the Late Middle Ages. Michael Curschmann studied the relationship between several vernacular texts and their accompanying images and was especially interested in iconographical transformation in

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11 Schneider, *Die deutschen Handschriften*, vol. 6, 504–507.
the transmission of the story of Solomon and Marcolf.\textsuperscript{14} He also argued that the contents found in cgm 3974 indicate usage within the context of a monastic school.\textsuperscript{15}

But while several eminent German scholars have studied aspects of the manuscript, the \textit{memento mori} group has received relatively little attention. Stephan Cosacchi’s publications on the Dance of Death (of 1944 and 1965) included discussions of the \textit{memento mori} images from the Munich Miscellany, and a short discussion of the illustration on fol. 59v and the role of the Three Living and the Three Dead in the genesis of the Dance of Death.\textsuperscript{16} The depiction of the Three Living and the Three Dead in cgm 3974 was briefly mentioned in broad studies of the theme, but these references were descriptive without sustained discussion.\textsuperscript{17} In this chapter, I wish to examine the functions that the image served in its codicological and monastic context.

The representation of the Three Living and the Three Dead on fol. 59v portrays the living and dead standing on individuated plots of land that appear like islands.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{14} Curschmann, “Marcolf or Aesop,” 1–45. For a transcription and translation of the story, see also Jan Ziolkowski, \textit{Solomon and Marcolf} (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008).
\textsuperscript{15} In cgm 3974, the story of Solomon and Marcolf is found on fol. 213v. For changes in the representations of Marcolf over time and the pictorial conflation of his likeness with that of Aesop by the fifteenth century, see Curschmann, “Marcolf or Aesop,” 1–45. For illustrations of the encounter that accompany German texts, see Curschmann, “Marcolfus Deutsch: Mit einem Faksimile des Prosa Drucks von M. Ayrer (1487),” in \textit{Kleinere Erzählformen des 15 und 16 Jahrhunderts}, Fortuna Vitrea 8, ed. Walter Haug und Burghart Wachinger (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1993), 151–255.
\textsuperscript{16} Stephan Cosacchi, \textit{Danse Macabre: Die Todesdidaktik der Vortotentanzzeit} (Budapest: Magyar Történeti Múzeum, 1944), appendix, p. VI–VII. For the \textit{memento mori} cycle in cgm 3974 as a whole, see Cosacchi, \textit{Makabertanz}, 475–492. For the issue of the relationship between the Three Living and the Three Dead and the Dance of Death, see 490–492.
\textsuperscript{17} Künstle, 45, pl. IIIb; Rotzler, \textit{Die Begegnung}, 208–209.
This is a departure from the more standard representation of the living and dead clustered together in two groups of three. Here they are arranged in two vertical columns, with the dead on the left and the living on the right. The living wear long tunics belted at the waist and carry crowns and hold scepters. They appear very similar to each other; even their facial hair is rendered the same way from one figure to the next. The dessicated dead also appear very similarly; they are in the same stage of decomposition and all carry crowns upon their heads and hold sceptres, conveying the positions of power that they held in life. Each of the dead holds taut the remains of a shroud that wraps around the one hip and runs between the legs, which inevitably draws attention to their pelvic regions. Banderoles, inscribed with passages of German text, flow in a convex shape before each of the six figures.\(^\text{19}\)

The uniformity in the postures of living and dead was surely a deliberate choice. A variety of traditions of illustration co-existed by the fifteenth century, and while in some cases the bodies of the dead were differentiated by being represented in different stages of decay, as for instance in the mid-fourteenth century Psalter of Bonne de Luxembourg (fig. 9) or in the fourteenth-century Hours of Bianca of Savoy (fig. 68), at other times the corpses were shown as though identical to one another, as is the case here. The textual passages inscribed in the composition provide no indication of the positions that the dead held in life, or what relationship they bore to the living; they are presented as generic types that can be decoded in a variety of ways. It is likely that the

\(^{19}\) The inclusion of banderoles inscribed with text as an extension to a pictorial narrative is a characteristic of late medieval German art, as a way for an otherwise silent image to convey speech. See Alison Flett, “The Significance of Text Scrolls: Towards a Descriptive Terminology,” in *Medieval Texts and Images: Studies of Manuscripts from the Middle Ages*, ed. Margaret Manion and Bernard Muir (Chur: Harwood, 1991), 43–53.
allegorical tales of Death and the Everyman (fols. 54r–55r) that immediately precede the Encounter, and the dialogue between *Vita* and *Mors* (fol. 58r) that follows it, were intended to be evoked here, as the similarities in their messages would allow them to be associated in the mind of the reader. This was not only because they were clustered closely together in the manuscript, but also because they all presented episodes of confrontations between living and dead.

The speech inscribed in the banderoles conveyed the elements essential to all known versions of the tale. The dead figure at the top of the column on the left exclaims “As we are today, so will you be tomorrow; I mean all three of you over there.”[^20] The second dead figure depicted immediately below declares “What you are, that is what we were; What we are, that will you be.”[^21] At the bottom of the same column, another animated corpse announces “So may you well wonder, how we came to be so miserable (looking).”[^22] The living king located at the top right asks “Oh God, through your manifold wonders, how do the three look so miserable?”[^23] The second, positioned below him, asks “Were they once like men? That I find quite amazing.”[^24] Finally, the third, located at the bottom right, states “If we all become like that, so will we by rights never be happy.”[^25]

In a break with pictorial convention, the closest textual connections seem to occur not between the figures arranged immediately across from each other, but rather

[^20]: “So wir ez hewt, so seyt ir es morgn/ Ich mayn euch all drey da voren.” The textual passages of the Three Living and the Three Dead in cgm 3974 are transcribed in the appendix to Chapter 4. See also Künstle, *Legende*, 45.
[^21]: “Dez ir seyd, das woren wir/ das wir seynd, das werdent ir.”
[^22]: “Auch mag euch wol wunder han/ Wye wir so iemerlich seyn getan.”
[^23]: “Ach got durch deyn wunder manigfalt/ Wy seynd dy drey so yemerlich gestalt.”
[^24]: “Wurden sy ye leuten geleih?/ Das dunket mich gar wunderlich.”
[^25]: “Wullen wir alle werden so/ So wurden wir nymer pillich fro.”
those that are located in opposite corners of the page. This is suggested by the repetition of particular words and also by the content of the passages in question. Although at first glance the composition appears to be a simple grid-like arrangement of six individual figures, a deeper investigation suggests that the ways in which the figures have been placed effectively lead the viewer to contemplate more deeply the ideas raised through that composition. For example, the living king depicted at the top right of the page asks “Ach got durch deyn wunder manigfalt, Wy seynd dy drey so yemerlich gestalt?” At the opposite corner of the page, at the bottom left, the animated corpse states that “Auch mag euch wol wunder han, Wye wir so iemerlich seyn getan”. The repetition of the words wunder and iemerlich links these two passages together, creating a chiastic pattern across the page. The repetition of vocabulary and related concepts creates a particularly pointed connection between certain passages of text and may have been intended to guide the reader’s eye.

All six figures are depicted speaking, as conveyed by the texts inscribed on the banderoles. The living address their comments to each other, but they do not address the dead directly. The dead, on the other hand, speak specifically to the living. The reader/viewer of the manuscript, however, is in a privileged position, to be able to understand the messages of both sides. It was almost as though the reader was designated as the filter through which living and dead communicated.

When reading the image from left to right, the viewer encounters the responses provided by the dead before the questions initially asked by the living. This contrasts with the conventional arrangement, since in almost all known pictorial examples of the

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26 The Early New High German word for miserable is spelled both iemerlich (on the bottom left) and once yemerlich (on the top right).
tale, it is the living who appear first on the left. Ending with the questions creates a sense of irresolution, but also leads the eye back to the left column of the page, creating a loop. This organization might have been intended to culminate in deeper consideration and meditation on the issues raised by the representation. The composition thus invites close study of the unexpected relationships that arise between words and images on the page.

Both living and dead kings are visually, if not textually, interchangeable, since they have been depicted in ways that make them appear almost identical. The textual contents of the banderoles held by the figures, however, as I have argued, suggest that there was one preferred, if not necessarily prescribed, manner of reading the composition. The question arises as to why the figures were arranged on the page in this way, and why the decision was made to depict the men as visually so similar.

A comparison with a contemporary woodcut may illuminate the significance of the layout of the Munich drawing. The woodcut, now known as Schreiber 1899 in the Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin, is dated to the mid-fifteenth century, and presents the encounter between living and dead in a landscape (fig. 69). The three living, richly clothed and wearing crowns, are on horseback, and their gestures reveal their responses to the presence of the three dead before them. Two of the living figures have turned to each other to discuss the event, as another looks up to the heavens holding his hand over his heart. The three dead have turned towards the living to deliver the messages that they bear. The dead, depicted as decaying corpses, are crawling with snakes and

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toads, which symbolize spiritual corruption and sin. Three inverted crowns lie at the feet of the dead, a comment on the transience of all worldly wealth and power. This is in complete contrast to the Munich illustration, in which the dead continue to wear their crowns and hold sceptres, suggesting that the memory of their achievements would persist after death. The two images convey very different messages about the implications of death for an individual of high station. This may have to do with their intended audiences. While the woodcut might have been able to provide the viewer with the satisfaction of seeing the wealthy and powerful brought low, the manuscript image maintained the crowns on the heads of the dead, as if to recognize their legacy, which continued after death.

The living figure at the centre of the Schreiber 1899 composition, depicted looking up to the heavens, exclaims “Oh God, through your manifold wonders, how is it that the three are made?”\(^\text{28}\) The corpse directly before him answers “It should not be amazing to you that we three were also made.”\(^\text{29}\) The living figure, second from the left, turns to one of his companions, asking “Were they once men? See—that amazes me.”\(^\text{30}\) His companion, at the far left responds “They were who they were; We should well defend ourselves against them.”\(^\text{31}\) The middle dead figure says “What you are, that were we; What we are, that shall you be!”\(^\text{32}\) Finally, the corpse at the right of the

\(\text{28} \) “Gott durch din wonder manigfalt/ Wie sint die drie also gestalt.”
\(\text{29} \) “Ez sal uch nit wonder han/ Das wir drie sint also gethan.”
\(\text{30} \) “Sint sie mensen gewesen glich/ Sich das wondirt mich.”
\(\text{31} \) “Sie weren wer Sie weren/ Wir magen uns ir vol weren.”
\(\text{32} \) “Das ir siet daz waren wir/ Das wir sint das werdent ir.”
woodcut declares “What we are today so will you be tomorrow; I mean all three of you over there!”

As is the case in the Munich drawing, the living express their astonishment at the appearance of the dead, both amongst themselves and to God, as well as to the beholder of the image, but they never directly address the dead in the text or look at them. On the other hand, the dead address the living directly with their responses and are depicted as turned and facing in their direction. This rift between living and dead might have been adopted to remark on the impossibility of direct communication between living and dead.

Despite the different dialects in which the textual passages of the Berlin woodcut and Munich drawing have been recorded, there is no denying the similarity of their contents. It has led some to conclude that the two textual documents most likely had a common source. It is unlikely that these two works, which were produced in different regions and in different dialects, would have had access to exactly the same source, but the circulation of a woodcut such as Schreiber 1899 in German speaking regions could well have disseminated the message and served as a model for another composition, although it would have been modified to suit the specific local audience. This can be better appreciated by looking beyond the textual content and by considering the ways the figures relate to each other on the page.

I contend that the Munich drawing represents a modification of the standard and more traditional horizontal arrangement of the protagonists in order to create a more abstract and symbolically charged arrangement for a particular context, function and

33 “Sin wir iss hude ir siet is morn/ Ich mejnen uch alle drie da vorn.”
34 Kristeller, Holzschnitte, 37; Rotzler, Begegnung, 197.
audience. It was also a practical move, since the figures could be more easily arranged on the page in columns than in rows. The artist or designer of the illustration took an unconventional and creative approach to illustrating the interaction between living and dead to provoke a contemplative rather than visceral response. Had the individuals in the Munich drawing been arranged horizontally, with the third dead king at the far left and the first living king at the far right, the living and dead would have communicated in a comparable series of brackets as do the protagonists in the Schreiber 1899 woodcut. In short, it is possible that the illustration was ultimately based on a more standard composition. Perhaps an illumination or drawing served as a foundation for a woodcut design, which subsequently became a source in its own right. In the Berlin woodcut the living are on the left, while in the Munich drawing they are found on the right of the composition, but this is also precisely the difference between a woodcut block and its impression. 35 A composition copied by the woodcut artist would have displayed the protagonists as oriented the way they appear in the Munich drawing.

These two examples, produced in regions with different dialects separated by great distances from each other, include similar messages but different pictorial compositions. While appearing within a variety of manuscript contexts, such as devotional miscellanies and Books of Hours in this period, the story had also begun to

be disseminated in print, meaning that it was reaching a broader audience. While the pictorial tradition of the story had been available to all walks of life on the walls of parish churches since at least the early fourteenth century in various parts of German-speaking Europe, and even earlier in France, England and Italy, it was not until the mid-fifteenth century that the illustrated tale was made available to a wider audience in the form of prints for private consumption. The imagery of the Schreiber 1899 woodcut is much more dynamic, presenting a more immediate and physical confrontation between living and dead. In the woodcut, the dead are depicted in hideous form, crawling with vermin, which would have provided visual impact and visceral appeal. The representation of the crowns lying discarded at the feet of the dead accentuates the notion of the futility of worldly pursuits, since death levels all in the end, a message that was particularly appealing for those without worldly power. In contrast to these details, the more restrained, even elegant, representation in the Munich drawing conveyed a very different impression. The manuscript was intended for instruction and private contemplation within the context of the monastery of St. Emmeram, home to monks, some of whom were drawn from aristocratic families. Thus, a sleeker, less gratuitous or provocative form for the dead would have been appropriate in this context. Representations of the dead found elsewhere in the manuscript share this restrained approach suitable for images intended for

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36 For a discussion of wall paintings of the Three Living and the Three Dead in France in the Late Middle Ages, see Groupe de Recherches sur les Peintures Murales, *Vifs nous sommes*. For Italy, see Frugoni, “Il ciclo di Buffalmacco,” 1557–1643; Pace, “Dalla morte assente alla morte presente,” 335–376. For short descriptions of German paintings, see Künstle, *Die Legende*; Rotzler, *Die Begegnung*; Tenenti, *Humana fragilitas*. A comprehensive, focused study on the Three Living and the Three Dead on wall paintings in Germany remains to be written.
contemplation. The illustration of the Three Living and the Three Dead, for instance, could have been examined closely by clerical figures as they contemplated their own mortality, or to prompt a preacher in the preparation of a sermon or a lesson on the preparation of the soul for death.\footnote{Grubmüller, “Elemente einer literarischen Gebrauchssituation,” 144; Miri Rubin, “The Space of the Altar,” in Sacred and Secular in Medieval and Early Modern Cultures: New Essays, ed. Lawrence Besserman (London: Palgrave, 2006), 167–176, esp. 173.}

Further support for the suggestion that fol. 59v was used for contemplation of matters of salvation is found at the top of the folio. In the hour-glass-shaped space between living and dead figures, a passage written in the same hand as those inscribed in the banderoles is contemporary with the rest of the page. The commentary discusses St. Gregory’s explication on John 8:46, “Quis arguet me de peccato,” or “Who will accuse/condemn me with respect to sin?” and goes on to explore the dimensions of sinfulness.\footnote{Although I have not been able to decipher the entire commentary on fol. 59v, the first line makes reference to Gregory’s commentary on John 8: “Super ... Johannis 8 ‘Quis arguet me de peccato’ dicit beatus Gregorius...” There are also repeated references in different forms to the words for sin and sinner (peccata, peccator, peccatorem, etc).} This analysis of Gregory’s exegesis incorporated into the page suggests that the Three Living and the Three Dead was used in contemplation and in efforts to purge the soul of sin.

The Three Living and the Three Dead was likely studied in concert with the \textit{memento mori} images and texts that surround it. The German poetic setting of “Everyman” begins on fol. 54r and runs until fol. 55r (\textit{figs. 70, 71}).\footnote{For the Everyman story as it appears in cgm 3974, see Cosacchi, \textit{Makabertanz}, 477–487. The passages spoken by the protagonists are transcribed over that span of pages. The script is difficult to decipher, and there are many orthographic irregularities. Consult Cosacchi, \textit{Makabertanz}, for the original Bavarian textual passages.} The passages spoken by each protagonist are accompanied by representations of those allegorical
figures understood to declare the passages. On fol. 54r, Christ, shown at the upper left, directs the Everyman, in the guise of a young man in fashionable dress, to promise to improve himself, and to give up the pursuit of worldly glory and goods (fig. 70). Christ is depicted pointing first to the figure of the devil, who reminds the young man of all of the pleasures that life has to offer, and secondly to the angel below, who warns the Everyman not to succumb to the temptations of the world. The admonitions to the Everyman are by extension directed to the reader of the volume. The young man rejects the advice of the angel, pointing out that he is young and happy, and will live life to the fullest. On fol. 54v (fig. 71), the dialogue continues, with the sun and the moon, representing the passage of time, who declare that the Everyman has a long time to live yet. A cleric subsequently warns the Everyman to be mindful of death, represented below as a corpse. In the end the youth, who has not paid heed to the instructions of the angel and the cleric, is about to be struck down by Death’s arrow. “O mors, quam amara est memoria tua!” (“Oh Death, how bitter is the memory of you!”) is inscribed in the box directly below the final living manifestation of Everyman, and we might understand him to utter this passage as his life comes to an end. Otherwise, it was intended as a moral for the viewer as the story came to a close. The cycle ends on fol. 55r with the Everyman lying in his grave. Clearly, this story was to point out that youth is no antidote to death; one must always be prepared for its arrival. Such an admonishing sentiment emerged in comparable moralizing texts of the time, intended for both monastic and lay audiences. While its message would have valuable for readers of all ages, it would have been especially apt for the relatively young, such as novices at the monastery of St. Emmeram.
Although the story of Everyman is about mankind in general, symbolized in one man accounting for his life, here on fol. 54r-54v a young man has been represented in six different ways. Cosacchi claimed that the illustrator acted in error by representing six times what was supposed to represent one figure. But it is also possible that the artist deliberately repeated the depiction of the young man not only in order to create symmetry with the figures on the left, but also to convey the notion that Everyman, while symbolized by only one, in fact represented many young men. He might have decided to vary the appearance of the Everyman in each manifestation to avoid repetition. In all manifestations, however, the Everyman is represented in aristocratic dress, to better emphasize all that he must leave behind when he dies. The use of the number three is significant in the memento mori section of the manuscript, as Death is represented in triplicate in the Triumph of Death (fol. 56v–57v) and of course three young men and three corpses are depicted in the Three Living and the Three Dead. It is also significant that the imagery on the pages allocated to Everyman and the Triumph of Death are laid out in a manner comparable to that of fol. 59v with the Three Living and the Three Dead in two columns. This was no doubt intended as a visual strategy to further link the pages together. Interestingly, this strategy also seems to distinguish and set off the memento mori series from other texts of the manuscript.

A corpse depicted lying in a coffin on fol. 55r represents the inevitable end of the Everyman. This representation is accompanied by a poem in German, introduced by rubrics in Latin (“Admonitio mortui ad viventem”) and German (“Der Tod spricht zu dem lebendigen”), which reminds the reader/viewer yet again of the importance of

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40 Cosacchi, Makabertanz, 477.
being ever ready for death.\footnote{The poem on fol. 55r is transcribed in Cosacchi, \textit{Makabertanz}, 485–486.} A German Triumph of Death begins on fol. 56r with representations of a personification of Death surrounded by the young and strong that he will conquer (\textit{fig. 72}). On each of these three pages, Death takes centre stage, holding the remains of a shroud strategically between his legs and hooked over one arm, the same pose struck by the dead in the Three Living and the Three Dead.\footnote{The execution of the personification of Death shown on fol. 56r reveals slight differences from the depictions of the dead in the Three Living and the Three Dead, attributed to a different hand. However, the posture of the figures is strikingly similar, and might go back ultimately to a single source. Although the skulls represented in images found between folios 56r and 59v are not uniform, the bodies are treated similarly, as desiccated but not crawling with vermin, unlike the representation of the dead in the Schreiber woodcut 1899.} On each of the three folios of this series, the personification announces “Ego sum finis illorum,” referring to the vignettes above and below representing the pleasures of the flesh, or the pursuit of worldly power. The dialogue between \textit{Vita} and \textit{Mors} follows on fol. 58r (\textit{fig. 67}), with the personification of Life, in the guise of a young man, facing Death, which holds a scythe. The figures are depicted standing on plots of land, the same in form as those used for the Three Living and the Three Dead. This opposition between Life and Death occurs above a text which begins “Quis es tu quem video,” and between and around the figures further text was added. This was likely intended as a meditation for the reader to contemplate when studying the manuscript alone, or to think about during the preparation of a sermon. On fol. 60r, which faces the Three Living and the Three Dead, begins the \textit{Visio Philiberti}, a tale about a young man who experiences a dream vision of his soul and his own dead body locked in an argument (\textit{fig. 73}).
The text and illustration of the Three Living and the Three Dead and the accompanying *memento mori* texts and images could have been examined closely by clerical and monastic figures as they contemplated their own mortality or used to prompt a preacher in the preparation of a sermon or a lesson on the preparation of the soul for death. This does not preclude the use that Grübmuller and Curschmann among others have suggested, that the manuscript was intended primarily for the purpose of instruction. It seems that sections of the volume could easily have accomplished both tasks.

The late medieval monastic school is a relatively understudied topic. Scholars are beginning to devote more attention to this area, but the early medieval monastic school continues to be far better understood and the subject of more consistent investigation. Because there were so many regional variations and there was no centralized curriculum *per se*, late medieval education is a challenging area, and inquiry into late medieval schooling tends to be focused on the cathedral school and university, not the monastic school. Recently, however, education in late medieval Regensburg has been the subject of investigation. 43 David Sheffler has published evidence to demonstrate that the monastic population at St. Emmeram had diminished in the early fifteenth century so that there were only half as many monks in the 1450s as there had been at the end of the previous century—twelve against the previous thirty. 44 Contrary to expectations under such circumstances, however, it seems that there was an increase in the number of manuscripts produced on site and acquired by the institution in the

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44 Ibid., 42.
early to mid-fifteenth century, according to Menger’s catalogue of 1500.\textsuperscript{45} While it has not been possible to link cgm 3974 with the manuscripts listed by Menger because of the later rebinding of the volume referred to above, cgm 3974 is dated to this period in the monastery’s history and was likely included in this group.

Perhaps because the community was so small in the mid-fifteenth century, rules around the separation of monks and novices from scholars, students and other visitors to the monastery had been allowed to lapse. Johann Schlitpacher, a reformer who visited the monastery in 1452 to enforce the Melk monastic reforms of Nicholas of Cusa, was distressed to discover lapses in the enforcement of the rule at St. Emmeram.\textsuperscript{46} He declared in a letter that no secular school should be permitted within the monastery proper.\textsuperscript{47} This document provides evidence that a school was running and instructing students who did not belong to the monastic community. Reference to \textit{iuvenibus extrahuius monasterii} proves that some of the students were youths. These young men would have been of an appropriate age to be instructed in grammar and

\textsuperscript{46} Reformers generally saw lapses wherever they went, so we should not take his criticism too seriously. What is significant for my purposes here, however, is his comment with respect to the mingling of monks with the laity, which indicates that manuscripts in the monastery library could well have been employed by non-monastic audiences as well. For visitations to St. Emmeram with respect to enforcement of Melk reforms, see Meta Niederkorn-Bruck, \textit{Die Melker Reform im Spiegel der Visitationen} (Vienna: Oldenbourg, 1994).
\textsuperscript{47} Schlipacher’s observation has been recorded in Georg Lurz, \textit{Mittelschulgeschichtliche Dokumente Altbayerns, einschließlich Regensburgs}, Monumenta Germaniae Paedagogica 41 (Berlin, 1907), 182. “Item quia observacione regulari non competit scolas secularium infra septa monasterii existere volumus ut deinceps scola pro secularibus iuvenibus extra huius monasterii septa deputetur nec fratres iuniores cum eisdem demorentur sed in alio loco apto per virum discretum et doctum diligenter informentur in scientiis primitivis habito pedagogo religioso qui eis presit quo ad disciplinam regularem.”
moral precepts by means of collections of fables. Novices are also mentioned in Schlipper’s comment, and they too might have access to the same lessons. Clm 14301, a collection of works in Latin including *The Consolation of Philosophy* by Boethius and the *Fables* of Aesop, was acquired by Hermann Pöttzlinger for the library of the monastery during his tenure as schoolmaster at St. Emmeram, and such a volume would certainly have been used in Latin and moral instruction there. Although it is catalogued as a Latin manuscript, it contains some parallel German-Latin translations as does the Munich Miscellany cgm 3974.

Even with these specific details surviving in the reformer’s letter, it is still not possible to establish exactly what the audience for the contents of cgm 3974 would have been. But the letter suggests that a variety of audiences would have had access to it, and that it would have served a number of functions, among them the instruction of young boys in Latin and moral precepts. It would have offered an opportunity for perusal and contemplation by more learned members of the monastic community of St. Emmeram.

The Three Living and the Three Dead in the Munich miscellany BSB cgm 3974 contains an array of contents including fable collections of Avianus, the Anonymous Neveleti and Ulrich Boner, and *memento mori* texts in German and Latin. Other contents of the manuscript include theological texts and treatises; sermons, such as the *Moralitates* of Holcot; and popular devotional texts such as the *Biblia Pauperum* and the *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*. What are we to make of a volume including such

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48 See Karl Halm et al., *Catalogus codicum latinorum Bibliothecae Regia Monacensis*, vol. 2.2, Codices 11001–15028 (Munich, 1876), 155–156.
wide-ranging contents? The presence of texts known to have been used in schoolbooks since the early Middle Ages, such as the fable collections by Avianus and the Anonymous Neveleti, indicate that these texts were almost certainly used in a school context. The miscellany has been localized to the monastery of St. Emmeram at Regensburg, and the manual must have been employed at the monastic school there. Yet, there are contained within the compendium advanced theological and devotional texts which are unlikely to have been employed in the instruction of young men in Latin and moral precepts. Its localization to a monastery with a small community of only a dozen monks in the mid-fifteenth century suggests that it would have made sense for the volume to be accessible to the range of abilities, interests and spiritual needs of the monks and novices at the monastery. Some of the more learned individuals within the institution would likely have consulted the memento mori section in their devotional exercises, although the striking images within that group of texts and images might also have been useful as didactic tools for the young men of the school as well as the novices of the monastery. The Moralitates, a collection of exempla by Robert Holcot, were included under the same cover, and these would likely have served as contemplative texts, but more likely would have served as tools for consultation in the production of new sermons or instructional texts. Although disappointingly little documentation survives for the late medieval monastic school in general, and for St. Emmeram at Regensburg in particular, it is possible to draw some conclusions about the use of the manuscript according to the textual and visual evidence within the manuscript and its similarity to contents of other, related manuscripts. I propose that the miscellany in Munich was put together as a volume for consultation by a variety of
members of the monastic community to serve the members of the community in a variety of different ways. The *memento mori* series was a significant inclusion in the volume according to the degree of illustration that it received, and it too was likely consulted by a variety of audiences: students in order to learn moral precepts; older, more learned monks for the consultation of devotional texts and images; and possibly also for the mining of the texts and images for kernels to use in theological writings or new sermons.

A volume produced by a very erudite compiler, now Rome, Bibl Casanatense MS 1404, also contains a *memento mori* series, including some of the very same contents as those included in cgm 3974, such as a Triumph of Death, a Three Living and Three Dead and a *Visio Philiberti*, as well as treatises on the virtues and vices, to name just a few. The other contents of that compendium, as well as the extremely high quality of execution of both script and illustration, however, suggest that it was used for the purpose of theological study, likely by someone associated with a university setting in some way, and therefore served a different function and audience. The Casanatense manuscript will be examined in the following chapter.
Chapter 5

The Three Living and the Three Dead in a Spiritual Miscellany: Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense MS 1404

In the German speaking areas of Europe, the story of the Three Living and the Three Dead appeared in compilations of devotional, didactic and secular texts in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The surviving Sammelhandschriften containing the story possess marks of ownership of members of different social strata, demonstrating that the tale was well known not only across geographical regions but also across different facets of society. The various poems of the tale that survive in Low German and Early High New German, most of which are unillustrated, differ quite markedly from one another, reflecting a vibrant tradition of story telling, as each text has been embellished by different narrative details. \(^1\) The pictorial examples also approach the representation of the story in different ways, although all ultimately distill the story into a composition showing three living interacting with three dead. Interestingly, the German images of the story are most often accompanied not by a poetic text of the tale, but rather only by short passages of text that contain the key nuggets of the story. These textual accompaniments are almost always in the vernacular, but in the manuscript to be discussed in this chapter are instead in Latin.

An intriguing pictorial rendition of the Three Living and the Three Dead, accompanied by short passages of Latin text recorded in banderoles, may be found on

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\(^1\) Some of these unillustrated examples include Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin-Preußischer Kulturbesitz, MS Germ. Fol. 1027 (early fifteenth century); Hamburg, Staats und Universitätsbibliothek, MS 102c in scrinio (das Hartebok) (early fifteenth century); Stuttgart, Württemburgische Landesbibliothek, cod. poet. et phil. 4o 83. See Rotzler, *Die Begegnung*, 48–61, for synopses of the different poems.
fol. 5v-6r of a lavishly illustrated collection of theological, didactic and moralizing texts dating to the mid-fifteenth century, now MS 1404 in the Biblioteca Casanatense, Rome (figs. 74, 75). The Three Living and the Three Dead is found within a group of *memento mori* images and texts in Latin that are found at the beginning of the manuscript and run between fol. 3r and 7v.

The grouping of texts and images in this manuscript suggests an extremely well educated and sophisticated reader. The question arises, however, as to the kind of audience for which this manuscript might have been intended. Unfortunately, no contemporary documentary evidence exists that helps to identify the location of origin, the use or the intended audience of this manuscript. Still, an examination of the contents and a comparison with other comparable miscellanies can lead to a purported use. This chapter proposes that the manuscript was produced for a well-educated and

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3 For a list of the texts found in the manuscript, including the *memento mori* group, see Saxl, “A Spiritual Encyclopedia,” 134–137. A list of the images found in the Casanatense volume may be found in Saxl, “Aller Tugenden und Laster Abbildung,” 104–121, esp. 116–121.
theologically astute individual, likely associated with a university environment, for consideration of a variety of theological and spiritual issues.

The representation of the Three Living and the Three Dead in MS 1404 is painted across a manuscript opening. The animated dead are presented at the bottom of fol. 5v (fig. 74), while the living on horseback are depicted on fol. 6r (fig. 75). The pen drawings of the figures were washed to produce the effect of grisaille, and some details were subsequently embellished through the addition of colour, primarily yellow and green but with some blue and red as well.

The dead, presented as corpses, all wear crowns, suggesting the wealth and position that they enjoyed during their lives, but also to remind the viewer of the futility of the pursuit of worldly pleasures, since they cannot be enjoyed in the next life. The manner in which each of the corpses is dressed, or not, seems to signal the effects of the passage of time as effectively as would manifestations of different states of bodily decay, a pictorial strategy seen elsewhere, such as in the Arsenal manuscript (see fig. 1). The figure furthest to the left wears a full shroud that he wraps around himself like a cloak, while the figure in the centre wears only underpants. The third figure furthest to the right wears nothing at all and is depicted from behind. The body might have been positioned in such a way to shield the viewer from witnessing the decay, or even disappearance, of certain parts of the anatomy. But the orientation of this dead figure’s body serves another function as well. His right index finger points to the activity on the other page, thus linking the two folios.  

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4 The question of how the gender of the personification of Death should be understood in art and literature has been explored in the literature. For the gender of Death in text and image, see Karl Guthke, The Gender of Death: A Cultural History in Art and
Across the opening, on fol. 6r, the three living are depicted on horseback. The riders are presented as wealthy men through their style of dress, but only the rider at the left actually wears a crown. It is possible that the three living figures represent different segments of nobility and royalty. That all three dead wear crowns but only one of the living does is unusual. Some of the surviving poetic texts of the story describe the dead as kings and the living as nobles, and therefore this image could reflect details contained in a version of the tale known where this manuscript was produced. Certainly several different versions of the story co-existed in late Medieval Germany, reflecting a vibrant tradition of storytelling.

The illustration of the tale of the living and dead in this manuscript is not supplemented by any lengthy poetic text telling the story. Rather, three of the six protagonists are accompanied by short passages of text that have been inscribed in Latin within scrolls arranged alongside their bodies. The dead figure depicted closest to the gutter of the manuscript, with his back to the viewer, declares “O you living, turn your minds to us. What we are, that will you be; we were that which you are!”

5 “O vos viventes ad nos convertite mentes, quod sumus hoc eritis, fuimus quandoque quod estis.”

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Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), esp. Chapter 2. I use the pronoun “he” for convenience, but do not claim that the representation of the corpse must always signify the male, although it probably does here, given the accompanying young men. In some cases, the gender granted to Death seems to reflect the linguistic situation. For instance, the word for Death in Italian and in French is feminine, and in a number of Italian frescoes Death is personified as an old hag with a scythe. Alternatively, in German “der Tod” is masculine, and Death is often given male characteristics. This is not an absolute, however, and personifications were transformed over time. Dagmar Eichberger, “Close Encounters with Death: Changing Representations of Women in Renaissance Art and Literature,” in Reading Texts and Images: Essays on Medieval and Renaissance Art and Patronage in Honour of Margaret M. Manion, ed. Bernard J. Muir (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2002), 273–296.
companion, the central figure who looks out directly at the viewer, announces

“Whoever you are, you who are terrified of me, stand, take note, mourn. I am what you will be, as you are what I was. I beseech you to pray for me.” The first living king, depicted on fol. 6r, who turns his head away from the dead, says to his companions

“What we are, he was, and we will be that which he is. Nor is there any hope of remaining (on earth).” In this passage, the living king points out that death is inevitable; no one can live on earth forever.

The dead direct their messages to the living on the adjoining page, but also necessarily to the reader holding the manuscript. The break in the composition represented by the gutter is also a point of access for the reader/viewer. As the central dead figure looks out at the viewer and points with his right index finger at the text scroll, he points to himself with his left hand as he instructs the viewer to mind him and what he says. Performative and interactive aspects are thus woven into the imagery, as the dead figure implicates the reader/viewer in the action. The dead figure closest to the gutter, who is turned away from the viewer, points upwards to indicate another image painted on the opposite folio of a figure of a richly dressed man standing in a tree that is about to be literally cut down by Death, even as a Hellmouth opens its jaws wide.

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6 “Quisquis ades qui me eterares, sta, respice, plora. Sum quod eris, quod es ipse fui. Pro me precor, ora.”

7 “Quod sumus ille fuit, erimus quoque quod fuit ille. Vitabimus quisque levis nec spes remanendi.” Thanks to Prof. Lawrin Armstrong and Jess Paehlke for assistance with transcription and translation of the text.

below. There also seems to be a play on the imperative “convertite”, as the dead figure has literally turned around. While it is possible that the Three Living and the Three Dead was simply inserted into the manuscript as a self contained composition, it is more likely that the postures of the figures were modified in order to better integrate the composition into the layout of the opening and to enhance the message of the attendant texts and images. Under these circumstances, the dead would be directing their gazes and that of the viewer toward the scene of the rich man being cut down by the personification of Death, participating in a wider relationship of images and texts found on the manuscript opening, with special attention paid to the fate of the wealthy and powerful who die unrepentant.

The only living figure accompanied by text is found closest to the gutter on fol. 6r. He reacts to the appearance of the dead by turning himself towards his companions and directing his words to them. He has brought his right hand to his face in a gesture of dread and disbelief, as has the third rider furthest to the left. The second living figure points towards the dead, again connecting one page with the other. The representations of the living and dead highlight the performative responses of the living to the messages of the dead, and this action is played out for the benefit of the reader/viewer.

It is unusual that only three of the participants are presented with textual accompaniment. Each of the three dead performs gestures associated with oratory, suggesting that all three should be speaking and yet the dead figure to the very left is not presented with any text whatsoever. It is also not clear why text accompanies only the living figure furthest to the left. Although the essential elements of the story have been expressed through these three short passages of text, this is the single known
image of the Three Living and the Three Dead in a German manuscript that does not show all of the protagonists speaking, accompanied by text. Saxl suggested that this image must have referred to an earlier model accompanied by text, and that some of the passages of text in the source manuscript or wall painting were left uncopied. Saxl’s argument assumes that the imagery in the Casanatense manuscript must have been copied from an earlier exemplar. An alternative perspective suggests that the artist responsible for this composition might have felt that the key elements of the story could be distilled and conveyed through the use of only three banderoles. All three passages are variations on the central message, that the living will one day be as the dead are now. They emphasize the importance of being mindful of life’s inevitable end.

The Encounter occurs on fol. 5v-6r amongst a series of other texts and images that are found across the opening. Above the representation of the three dead on fol. 5v is inscribed a lengthy text entitled “O vos omnes qui transitis” (O all of you who pass on). This text encourages the devoted Christian to reject worldly pleasures and prepare himself for death. The text “Ecce Mundus Moritur” (Behold, the world dies) was recorded to the left of the representation of the three dead on fol. 5v. This poem, in rhyming couplets, is a general lament for the world and describes a dead man who realizes that his body is gnawed by worms, and who recognizes that the wealth that he acquired during his lifetime no longer provides any benefit. The poem ends with a

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9 Saxl, “Spiritual Encyclopaedia,” 94.
realization that he is damned for all eternity because of his sins. The “Ecce Mundus Moritur” text is clearly related to a representation found at the top of folio 5v depicting a corpse, on which several serpents crawl, which stands within the gaping jaws of a Hellmouth. The ”Ecce Mundus Moritur” text is clearly related to a representation found at the top of folio 5v depicting a corpse, on which several serpents crawl, which stands within the gaping jaws of a Hellmouth. Two demons fan the flames to either side of the corpse, and, above him, a soul is depicted, held up by two demons. This representation suggests the terrible fate of an individual who dies in a state of mortal sin and raises the issue of the relationship between the deceased body and the soul in the damnation of an individual person.

These concerns are addressed not just by this text and by the popular story of the Three Living and the Three Dead, but also by the Visio Philiberti, which appears in the Casanatense manuscript (fol. 6v-7v). Fundamentally, these texts all address the importance of paying greater attention to the fate of the soul rather than to that of the body.

Other texts and images dealing with death and preparation for it occur around the representation of the three living found on fol. 6r. Above the three riders is a composition depicting a representation of a richly dressed man standing in a tree, his head flanked by the sun and the moon, suggesting the inevitable passage of time towards the moment of death that all must face. To the rich man’s right is an angel while to his left appears the Man of Sorrows. A corpse, which has a coffin strapped to his back, is busy chopping down the tree in which the figure stands. This figure is likely

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12 Interestingly, the text of “Ecce Mundus Moritur” makes reference to worms crawling on the body of the deceased, but here the body seems to be overrun with snakes due to their size. Serpents were associated with spiritual corruption and were occasionally seen in representations of the Three Living and the Three Dead, as well as depictions of Frau Welt and der Fürst der Welt, for which see Chapter 6. Perhaps this change was to shift attention from the fate of the body to that of the soul.

13 See H. Walther, Das Streitgedicht in der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters (Munich: Beck, 1920), 63.
to be understood as Death Personified even though it is depicted in identical form to the
corpses participating in the representation of the Three Living and the Three Dead on
the opposite folio. To the left of the tree on fol. 6r is a demon pointing into the Mouth
of Hell, which is clearly ready to receive the sinner’s soul when Death has taken him.
However, the angel and Christ above are there to encourage the man to repent and serve
as a reminder that penitence can prevent a soul from residing for all eternity in Hell.
This is an important aspect of the message of the story of the Three Living and the
Three Dead, part of which is depicted directly below.\footnote{14}

The preceding and following folios present a series of texts and images that are
clearly related to one another and form a larger \textit{memento mori} cycle that enhances even
further the message of the Three Living and the Three Dead.\footnote{15} A manifestation of the
\textit{Vado Mori} appears on fol. 5r, in which individuals representing different facets of
society surround a representation of a corpse. In the poetic tradition of the \textit{Vado Mori}, a
series of individuals declare that they are going to die, a realization reflected in the
composition showing the living encircling the inactive body of a corpse, which
represents inevitable death (fig. 76).\footnote{16} On folio 6v–7v is presented the \textit{Visio Philiberti},

\footnote{14} I have been unable to identify the specific texts accompanying the image of the
sinner in the tree or below the three living; they are not identified in publications by
Saxl, Seebohm and Palmer, and the script is very difficult to decipher. Still, the
passages would clearly have to do with sin, repentance and death.
\footnote{15} See Christian Kiening, “Contemptus Mundi in Vers und Bild am Ende des
409–457.
\footnote{16} Saxl described this scene as an early Dance of Death. See Saxl, “A Spiritual
Encyclopaedia,” 97. However, it seems more appropriate to describe it as a \textit{Vado Mori}.
The \textit{Vado Mori} is first known from the thirteenth century and survives in a number of
manuscript copies. See Storck, “Vado Mori,” 423. It is related in some ways to the
Dance of Death, as it refers to individuals from different walks of life. There are
differences, however, such as the fact that no mention is made of dancing, death does
a dream vision in which a debate occurs between the deceased body and the soul (fig. 77, fol. 6v). While Philibert sleeps, he dreams of a conversation taking place between his own dead body and his soul. While the soul berates the body for living such a worldly life, the body retorts that it is the job of the soul to manage the behaviour of the body. In the accompanying images, the soul declares “Oh fetid corpse, who has struck you down so?” This is followed by the response of the corpse, which retorts “Are you my spirit, you who were speaking to me? All those things you say are not really true.” As the body and soul continue their debate on fol. 7r, demons are described as dragging them away. At that moment, the sleeping man awakens, endeavours to improve his ways and commends his life to God. The illustrations accompanying the Visio Philiberti include representations of a sleeping man, followed by a depiction of the soul before the prone body, and finally an image of the body raising itself to interact with the soul. The interaction between body and soul is indicated through the use of gesture and the inclusion of textual passages inscribed within banderoles. This text, and its accompanying imagery, clearly bears certain affinities with the story of the Three Living and the Three Dead, since both offer a warning to the reader to change his ways before it is too late.

not appear or speak as a protagonist, and there is no reply to the utterances of the individuals who announce that they go to die. For the Vado Mori, see Willy Storck, “Das Vado Mori,” Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie 42 (1910): 422–428. On fol. 5r in MS 1404, a corpse appears, but it is inactive and serves to convey the end to which the protagonists refer.

17 “O Corpus fetidum, quis te sic prostravit?”
18 “Esne meus spiritus qui mihi loquebaris? Non vera sunt penitus omniaque faris.”
19 Spaces were left on fol. 7r to receive illustrations, but these were never executed.
Following the memento mori group may be found other groups of illustrated texts.\textsuperscript{20} These include a series of illustrated treatises on the virtues and vices, including the anonymous Etymachia (a fourteenth-century prose commentary on the virtues and vices); a number of exempla of the virtues and vices drawn from the early fourteenth-century Moralitates of the Dominican Robert Holcot, as well as the early fourteenth-century Fulgentius metaforalis of the Franciscan John Ridevall,\textsuperscript{21} which provided moralized Christian interpretations of mythological subjects. In addition, there appear a diagram of the virtues and vices inspired by Bonaventure’s Lignum Vitae and other tree diagrams addressing the opposition of the virtues and vices. Also included are allegorical images with respect to the virtues such as Christ in the mystic winepress (fol. 28r), Christ crucified by the virtues (fol. 28v) and the image of the crucified monk (35v), among others. These allegorical images, many of which have to do with the virtues and vices, are accompanied by only few short passages of text, and in these cases, the image becomes the primary means of communicating meaning.

The imagery found in MS 1404 of the Three Living and the Three Dead is related to that in another manuscript, now MS 49 in the Wellcome Institute in London.\textsuperscript{22} The two manuscripts, which have closely related, although not identical, contents, have been localized to the same region, perhaps even to the same workshop,

\textsuperscript{20} For a partial list of the texts and images in Casanatense MS 1404, see Saxl, “A Spiritual Encyclopedia,” 135–137; Seebohm, Texts and Images, 122–134. No comprehensive list of all of the contents of the Casanatense MS 1404 manuscript has yet been undertaken.
\textsuperscript{21} For the Etymachia, see Nigel Harris, The Latin and German ‘Etymachia’: Textual History, Edition, Commentary (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1994).
\textsuperscript{22} For Wellcome 49, see Saxl, “Spiritual Encyclopaedia,” 82–142; Seebohm, Texts and Images.
and are part of a larger group of manuscripts.\textsuperscript{23} The manuscripts contain many of the very same texts and images, although notably the Three Living and the Three Dead appears only in the Casanatense volume. Other texts and images that are found in Casanatense do not appear in Wellcome and vice versa, and those texts that are shared by both appear in a different order. For instance, the selection of texts and images that forms the \textit{memento mori} group in Casanatense appear at the beginning of the volume (fols. 3v–7v) (see \textbf{fig. 78} for fol. 3v and \textbf{fig. 79} for fol. 4r) and includes the Three Living and the Three Dead, while in Wellcome the cluster of \textit{memento mori} texts and images appears closer to the end of the manuscript and omits the Three Living and the Three Dead. It is possible that the texts and images in the Casanatense manuscript were arranged in a way that best suited the intended user. The similarities in the contents and appearance of the elements, and yet a customization of the order of the contents, suggests that either two individuals with similar needs were able to procure these miscellanies for themselves, or that both the Casanatense and Wellcome copies were intended for a library, where they could be consulted on a variety of theological and spiritual matters.

\textsuperscript{23} An Apocalypse manuscript which is New York, NYPL, MA 015, and two Herbal manuscripts, which are in Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. K II, and a manuscript in a private collection, respectively, have been linked to Casanatense MS 1404 and Wellcome MS 49 due to watermarks, script, linguistic features and style of illustrations. Although a precise location for the production of the manuscripts has long been under debate and cannot be settled until further evidence comes to light, the most recent literature at least clarifies a site of production for the group in East Central Germany. See Nigel Palmer and Klaus Speckenbach, \textit{Träume und Kräuter: Studien zur Petroneller “Circa instans” Handschrift und zu den deutschen Traumbüchern des Mittelalters} (Vienna: Böhlau, 1990), 4–40; J. J. G. Alexander, et al., \textit{The Splendor of the Word: Medieval and Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts at the New York Public Library} (New York: Harvey Miller, 2005), no. 19, 89–97.
The pictorial components of the book are as sophisticated as the texts, and all of
the contents of the manuscript assume an extremely well educated reader, or group of
readers, who would appreciate and be able to understand the allegorical imagery,
Latinity, and theological precepts contained in the volume. The manuscript contains a
balance of difficult texts and images, and they assume a familiarity with theological
literature and moralizing texts not recorded between the covers of this particular
manuscript. The images would have demanded close scrutiny and contemplation by the
viewer, but might also have had an interpictorial function, calling to mind other related
and relevant texts and images. The design of some of these images and diagrams, such
as the *lignum vitae*, related tree diagrams and tables of virtues and vices, likely served a
mnemonic function in study.  

The theological sophistication and the use of Latin for the text has led some to
argue that the manuscript must have been intended for a monastic readership. The
inclusion of images such as the monk crucified by the virtues (fol. 35v) suggests that
monks might have functioned as a primary audience for the manuscript, while the
inclusion of allegorical images of the good and bad preacher present the possibility that
the manuscript was used by a cleric for the preparation of sermons or other theological
instruction. The nature of the contents of this manuscript makes it likely that it would

24 For this phenomenon, although with primary reference to the Early Middle Ages, see
Mary Carruthers, *Craft of Thought*.
25 For this iconography, see Seebohm, “The Crucified Monk,” 61–102; Kathryn A.
44–72.
have been generated in a university context, or at least in consultation with trained theologians.

Both Saxl and Seebohm proposed a monastic audience for the manuscript, due to the representations of monks and that, because of the nature of the devotional texts and images in the manuscript, it might have been well suited for a cloistered readership. However, it also seems likely, as Palmer has suggested, that the book was intended for an educated and well-heeled lay person who was interested in theological issues. This individual, who would have been able to afford such a lavish production, could have used the book alone or, more likely, in consultation with a confessor. Collections of theological works including *memento mori* cycles and allegorical texts and images were to be found in the libraries of educated laymen by the early fifteenth century, and this became more common as the century wore on.\(^{27}\) The function of an image such as the Crucified Monk as an exemplum was not restricted to a monastic audience; indeed, one can imagine that a lay viewer could also have benefited from, and taken interest in, the moralizing message offered by the composition.\(^{28}\)

The Casanatense manuscript could have been in the library of a wealthy and well-educated layman, but the contents of the manuscript would have proved useful as

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a source for consultation by masters of theology in the context of a university.\textsuperscript{29} A manuscript such as MS 1404 was likely produced in a university context, but had it been intended for use in that context as well, it would have been useful for consideration of theological or spiritual matters. It could have been used in the classroom for the discussion and explanation of theological ideas, in particular on the virtues and vices. The inclusion of extensive sections devoted to the virtues and vices would have made the volume also useful in the preparation of sermons on that subject. Due to the limited information available about the use of this manuscript, and the limited examples with which to compare it, it is a challenge to definitively construct the use of the manuscript, but it seems likely that the manuscript was recorded by theologians, and then it might have circulated to individuals in the orbit of the university, but perhaps an individual interested in contemplating these matters on his own.

The script and orthography, as well as the style of the illustrations, leave no doubt that the compiler was German-speaking.\textsuperscript{30} But where precisely the manuscript was produced has not yet been resolved, despite extensive debate on the matter. While Seebohm was unwilling to narrow the field for the manuscript’s production to an area smaller than most of the German-speaking world,\textsuperscript{31} von Wilckens proposed a

\textsuperscript{29} Palmer and Speckenbach, \textit{Träume und Kraüter}, 39. Palmer sees the production and use of this manuscript as having occurred in the constellation of intellectuals surrounding the university, including mendicants and schoolteachers.
\textsuperscript{30} Palmer and Speckenback, \textit{Träume und Kräuter}, 27.
\textsuperscript{31} Seebohm cites Bohemia, Silesia, Austria or Southern Germany as all being possible locations of production for Casanatense MS 1404. See Seebohm, “The Crucified Monk,” 61.
Heidelberg provenance after a stylistic analysis of the imagery of the manuscript.\textsuperscript{32} Von Wilckens associated the manuscript’s production with the theological faculty of the University of Heidelberg. Nigel Palmer suggested, through a codicological and palaeographical analysis of the manuscript that the manuscript must have originated in Thuringia.\textsuperscript{33} He proposed that the book was likely produced within the context of a university, probably that of Erfurt.\textsuperscript{34}

But Leipzig, a city in close proximity to Erfurt, might also be cited as a potential site of production. Leipzig had an important theological faculty in which MS 1404 could have been produced. There was an important connection between the theological faculties of Leipzig and Prague. The University of Prague, at the centre of the Hussite controversy, held one of the most important theological faculties in Europe in the early fifteenth century, but this was shut down on charges of heresy in 1415, during the Council of Constance. This was in part due to the fact that Jan Hus had been declared rector of the University of Prague in 1409, in opposition to the wishes of the emperor and faculty members who rejected the teachings of Hus.\textsuperscript{35} The faculty members that disagreed with the appointment of Hus had relocated to other universities, especially Vienna, Erfurt and Leipzig, as a result. Indeed, Leipzig had already become a

\textsuperscript{33} See Palmer and Speckenbach, \textit{Träume und Kräuter}, 27. Palmer’s study uses linguistic, palaeographical and codicological evidence to place the manuscript in Thuringia. Leipzig fell within the borders of Thuringia in the fifteenth century.
\textsuperscript{34} Palmer and Speckenbach, \textit{Träume und Kräuter}, 9.
beacon for students and teachers from Prague, since the University of Leipzig had been founded only a few years prior in 1409 by the landgraves Frederick and William of Thuringia as a result of the edict of Kutna Hora of King Wenceslaus of Bohemia, by which German faculty members had been expelled from Prague. Since the manuscript was likely produced in the second quarter of the fifteenth century, and the initial migration of theologians from Prague had occurred a couple of decades earlier, it is likely unwise to attempt to tie the expression of such ideas to one location, when they would have had the time and opportunity to migrate to other university centres over the following decades. Due to their importance as centres for the study of theology, however, it seems reasonable to suggest that a manuscript with such complex theological contents would have been produced in a university centre such as that of Erfurt or Leipzig.

There are references to the Hussite controversy in a couple of images in the Casanatense manuscript (fol. 31v, 32r.) (figs. 80, 81). Inscriptions critique the Hussites and Emperor Sigismund, even referring to him as *Malignus* and *Anti-Christus.*

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36 A quarrel between Germans and Bohemians at the University of Prague, in part over the status of the teachings of Jan Hus, provoked a response from King Wenceslas of Bohemia in the form of the royal decree of Kutna Hora. In this decree, Wenceslas indicated support for the Bohemian faculty at the expense of the Germans, who subsequently left. See Schwinges, “The Medieval German University,” 3–11.

37 There is also disagreement as to the date of the production of the manuscript. While Saxl dated the manuscript to second quarter of the fifteenth century (Saxl, “Spiritual Encyclopaedia,” 83), Seebohm stated that the manuscript is of “unknown date and provenance.” See Seebohm, “The Crucified Monk,” 61. Palmer suggests the mid-fifteenth century as the date for the manuscript. See Palmer and Speckenbach, *Träume und Kräuter,* 27.

38 The *Dictum Sibille* in Casanatense on fol. 31v has an apocalyptic tone. A list of the emperors recorded at the top of the folio presents Wenceslaus followed by his successor, whose name has been replaced by the substantive *Malignus.* This can refer only to Sigismund, who had been elected emperor in 1410 following Wenceslaus. See
Sigismund himself condemned the Hussite position, as did the manuscript’s compiler, and yet Sigismund is attacked through the labels assigned him by the compiler. Saxl has suggested that the manuscript’s producer might have attacked Sigismund for not persecuting the Hussites forcefully enough. Theologians who had left Prague for Leipzig were of an orthodox position and condemned the teachings of Hus. Many were likely disappointed in the less aggressive position taken by Sigismund in the Hussite situation. The compiler seems to have revealed his disappointment in the decisions made at the Council of Basel (begun 1431). At the council, Sigismund’s authority was declared to supercede that of the pope, and the council defied Pope Eugenius IV by allowing former Hussites to rejoin the community of the church. No doubt the theologian who compiled MS 1404 was disappointed in the decisions made by Sigismund and the council, which led the compiler to label the emperor as Malignus.

The manuscript is very likely to have been created for someone of great erudition for the purpose of study, contemplation and spiritual enhancement. The image of the Three Living and the Three Dead in particular would have functioned within the memento mori series as a whole to remind the reader/viewer of the importance of preparing for unexpected death. Certainly, the interweaving of a number of texts and images would have reinforced this overall message. The exclusive use of Latin in this manuscript, in particular for the Three Living and the Three Dead, is unusual and striking. Perhaps the use of the Latin and the rejection of the vernacular in a collection of theological texts reflected the orthodox perspective of the compiler, who tried to

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Saxl, “A Spiritual Encyclopedia,” 88. 1410 provides a terminus post quem for the manuscript, but it must date rather later than that, given the orthographical and textual evidence identified by Palmer.

distance himself from the teachings of Hus which encouraged the translation of biblical texts into the vernacular.

There are similarities between the contents of Bibl. Casanatense MS 1404 and the Munich Miscellany discussed in Chapter 4. Both contain a *memento mori* series, containing a Triumph of Death, a Three Living and Three Dead and a *Visio Philiberti*; collections of exempla by Robert Holcot, and the *Etymachia*, a prose treatise on the virtues and vices dating to the fourteenth century. However, the Casanatense volume does not include collections of fables in Latin and German, which were almost exclusively associated with the schoolroom in the Middle Ages, and which formed a significant component of the Munich Miscellany. The Casanatense manuscript, on the other hand, contains collections of texts that were often used in the preparation of sermons but were also known to have been included in the prayerbooks of wealthy laymen who consulted them with the assistance of a confessor. MS 1404 contains an assortment of texts and images including the Trees of the Virtues and Vices, the Tower of Wisdom, and the Wheel of the Ages of Man. These didactic diagrams, among others, were part of the *Speculum Theologiae* that were included in the Psalter of Robert de Lisle, an early fourteenth century manuscript, produced for a wealthy layman, discussed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation. Laymen increasingly in subsequent centuries wished to have access to such erudite texts and images, to offer opportunities for spiritual growth. Their level of difficulty, however, usually necessitated the assistance of a confessor for their perusal or study.

A number of the contents in the Casanatense manuscript represent monks or preachers. For instance, the opposition between good and bad preachers (fol. 7v) and
the allegorical image of the crucified monk (fol. 35v) are contained in this manuscript. While these contents could lead to an interpretation that the manuscript was intended for the use of monks or preachers, this was not necessarily the case. In the late Middle Ages, the laity became increasingly interested in participating in the spiritual practices and activities of the clergy. This is most explicitly seen in the emergence of the Book of Hours out of the monastic breviary, which was a devotional development resulting from the demand from the laity for the opportunity to model themselves after cloistered spiritual elite. In addition, evidence dating as early as the thirteenth century demonstrates that manuscripts intended for use by laypeople occasionally contained images of monks. The inclusion of representations involving monks did not necessarily signify that the intended audience for the volume was monastic; a number of these texts that had in the earlier Middle Ages been restricted to a monastic milieu were being transmitted to lay audiences by the late Medieval period, partly due to a greater demand for access to such texts.  

The array of contents in the Casanatense manuscript, and the similarity of some of its contents to other collections known to have been produced for a lay viewer, such as the Psalter of Robert de Lisle, for example, bolsters the suggestion that the miscellany replete with hefty theological content could very well have been produced for a lay reader with conservative religious views. The sophisticated theological content of the manuscript suggests that it was produced in the context of a university, likely in Eastern Germany and probably at Erfurt or Leipzig. It is clear, however, that the individual or individuals who had access to this manuscript would

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40 Kathryn Smith discusses how the allegory of the crucified monk was reformulated for inclusion in manuscripts intended for lay audiences for the late Middle Ages. For example, it was incorporated into copies of Guillaume de Deguileville’s *Le Pèlerinage de la vie humaine*. See Smith, “The Monk who Crucified Himself,” 50, n. 10.
have used it in consideration of theological and spiritual matters, and would have used it as a tool for the pursuit of spiritual development. The Three Living and the Three Dead and the surrounding memento mori works, the majority of which featured a wealthy and worldly protagonist whose salvation was in a precarious position, and the extensive texts devoted to explication of the virtues and vices, would have been especially striking for a lay reader concerned with his spiritual development.
Chapter 6

The Three Living and the Three Dead in a Housebook for a Young Woman:
Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek MS Aug 16.17 4o

As I have demonstrated thus far, the representation of the Three Living and the Three Dead could take on a number of pictorial forms, and the iconographic fashioning of the tale was linked to the textual context in which it appeared and the audience for which it was intended. I have discussed as case studies Books of Hours, now in Berlin and London, for Hapsburg women; a theological compendium produced at the monastery of St. Emmeram in Regensburg which I argue was used for teaching as well as private contemplation and a theological manual which was produced within a university setting in Erfurt or Leipzig, but might have come into the possession of an erudite layman who wished to consult such a volume for his spiritual development. The present chapter will consider a volume intended for consultation by a young woman in the home on a number of domestic and local matters.

The early fifteenth-century manuscript, written in Oberrheinisch, has been localized to the region of Strasbourg in Alsace. It features amongst its contents devotional texts, religious tracts, Minnereden, and a collection of recipes as well as other contents to be discussed below. Notably, it also includes a version of the Three Living and the Three Dead, entitled “Dis ist der welte lon,” or “This is the reward of the world,” that presents the interaction between the living and dead as dialogue.¹

¹ The manuscript is now Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, MS Aug 16.17 4o. The language of the volume is a dialect spoken in the region of Alsace in the later Middle Ages. According to analysis of the watermarks of the paper and the dates of the contents, a terminus post quem of 1415 has been established. It is likely that the manuscript was compiled later than that, but restoration efforts over the years have
Significantly, the 112-line-long poem is the only illustrated text in the entire volume, and it runs over the course of fol. 85v-87r (figs. 82-85).²

Brief reference to this version of the Three Living and the Three Dead has been made in previous studies on the subject.³ Otherwise, however, this illustrated text has garnered rather limited scholarly attention. This must be due in part to the relatively unpolished appearance of the figures, which was thus deemed less deserving of art historical interest. Indeed, Rotzler described the example as “künstlerisch unbedeutend”.⁴ Yet despite such misgivings about the quality of the images, this example can tell us much about the appreciation for the story in Strasbourg and its relationship to a well-known ensemble of architectural sculpture in the city, which is significant for a study on the reception of the Three Living and the Three Dead.

The text of the tale begins without preface, as living and dead begin to speak. They alternate, so that a dead figure speaks first, followed by a living man. A launch immediately into the substance of the Encounter is known in other surviving texts such as the so-called Anonymous IV French poem, but unlike that poem which records the obscured evidence that would help to definitively answer this question. See Nicole Eichenberger, “Geistliches Erzählen: Erscheinungsformen und Überlieferungsgeschichte religiöser Kleinepik,” (PhD diss., Universität Göttingen, 2011), 502.

² For a transcription of the Wolfenbüttel poem “Dis ist der welte Ion”, see Künstle, Die Legende, 39–40; Chihiaia, Immortalité et décomposition, 299–301; Helmut Tervooren and Johannes Spicker, Die Begegnung der drei Lebenden und der drei Toten: Eine Edition nach der maasländischen und ripuarischen Textüberlieferung (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 2011), 118–121. One of the photographic reproductions in Tervooren and Spicker has been provided in error; fols. 84v–86r have been published in the place of fols. 85v–87r. For a short discussion of the text in the Wolfenbüttel manuscript, see Tervooren and Spicker, 31–32.

³ Künstle, Die Legende, 37–40; Rotzler, Die Begegnung, 49–52; Chihiaia, Immortalité et décomposition, 95; Tervooren and Spicker, Die Begegnung, 31–32.

⁴ Rotzler, Die Begegnung, 49.
three living speaking first followed by the three dead, the Wolfenbüttel Encounter presents three brief discrete interchanges. The Anonymous III French poem proceeds as does the Wolfenbüttel text, with living and dead speaking in alternation, but there is a prologue there that does not appear in the Wolfenbüttel version. The sequence of speakers in the Wolfenbüttel manuscript is singular, according to the surviving textual record.

Each section is introduced by a rubric in Latin. Mortuus dicit announces the contribution of the first dead, followed by Vivus dicit, and so on. The rubrics are not enumerated; living and dead simply appear in sequence. The use of the present tense in the Latin is evocative and makes the episode more immediate for the viewer/reader. The first dead begins by speaking the warning that exists in some form in every known version of the Three Living and the Three Dead, which here is worded as “We are dead, but you live; What you are, so we once were!” He goes on to state that he was once a powerful Lord but that he has now lost all. The first living reveals that he is unsettled by the apparition and then complains of how unjust the world is and how short life

5 For the Anonymous IV poem, which begins “Conpains, vois tu ce que je voi?” see Chihaia, *Immortalité et décomposition*, 293–296.
6 For Anonymous III, which begins “Diex pour trois peceours retraire”, see Glixelli, *Les cinq poèmes*, 75–82.
7 Cosacchi argued that the use of Latin rubrics in this German text was proof that it must have been derived from a Latin exemplar. See Cosacchi, *Anfänge der Darstellungen*, 327. Rotzler disagrees with this suggestion of a line of descent from a Latin source, and suggests instead that the rubrics introduced each speaker in the course of performance, as was the case in other plays performed in the German-speaking lands. See Rotzler, *Die Begegnung*, 51. I follow Rotzler in claiming that the headings reflect a performative angle.
8 “Wir sint dot, so lebent ir / Der ir sint, der worent wir.” (l. 3–4). Line numbers are taken from the edition of Tervooren und Spicker, *Die Begegnung*, 118–120.
9 “Ich waz ein her sicherlich.” (l. 5).
10 “Ich weis nüt wol, war vor uns stot.” (l. 7).
can be.\textsuperscript{11} The second dead points out that it does not matter to which social station one belongs; death will come for all, be they men or women.\textsuperscript{12} His living counterpart recognizes that the dead have come to them as a mirror, so that they might have an opportunity to improve their ways. Finally, the third dead speaks, describes his own appearance and asks the three living how the world can frankly still hold any appeal for them when all living things must rot in the end.\textsuperscript{13} The third living closes the poem by saying that he will never now be able to enjoy life for he knows the form that death takes and that it is unavoidable. The poem ends with the inscription “Hie hant die doten und die künige ein ende,” or “Here come the dead and the living to an end.” While there is no description of the implications for the lives of the living following this version of the Encounter, the reader senses that the living have been transformed by their meeting with the dead and will prepare their souls for death, since they have been given such a stark indication of what awaits them if they do not change.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{11} “Ach nieman weis, wie bo`se du bist/ Vnd wie Kurtz hie din leben ist.” (l. 29–30).
\textsuperscript{12} “Du endarffst nüt grosses swivels han/ Es enwart nie mo`nsche, fro`we oder man.” (Emphasis mine.) See l. 31–32. This specific reference to women is striking, and might have been inserted with the female owner of the book in mind. Specific references to women in texts of the Three Living and the Three Dead are extremely rare.
\textsuperscript{13} “Ich was noch schöner, wen du bist/ Nu bin ich ful alsam der mist.” (l. 77–78).
\textsuperscript{14} A small number of renditions of the story end with the living pledging to perform good works. The pictorial cycle in the \textit{bas-de-page} of the Smithfield Decretals (London, BL, MS Royal 10 E IV, fols. 251r–268r, discussed in Chapter 2), illustrates such a response to the Encounter. Another example ending with the living pledging to perform good works is the Middle English poem entitled ‘De Tribus Regibus Mortuis’, preserved in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce MS 302, fol. 34r–v and dated ca. 1426. This poem was long attributed to the poet John Audelay, and while this attribution has recently been called into question, the poem is still thought to be dated to the early fifteenth century. See Angus McIntosch, “Some Notes on the Text of the Middle English Poem ‘De Tribus Regibus Mortuis’,” \textit{The Review of English Studies}, n.s. 28, no. 112 (Nov., 1977), 25. The eleventh stanza of the poem attributed to Audelay describes the three living going off to found a church following their encounter with the dead, and states that the tale of the Three Living and the Three Dead itself was \textit{wrytyn}
The literary imagery of this poem bears some similarities to other known texts, as certain descriptive and evocative strategies were employed in more than one recorded version. There is often one young man, usually the first to speak, who sets up the encounter by expressing shock and surprise at the appearance of the dead, and another, usually the third, who bemoans their fate and asks how they can still enjoy their lives. While the texts and images take different forms, undercurrents connect them all within a larger matrix, which reflect larger concerns about the fate of body and soul after death.

To the right of the first stanza on fol. 85v, introduced by the rubric *Mortuus dicit,* appears a representation of an animated corpse, wearing a crown and standing upon what appears to be a speaker’s platform, altar or tomb carved with elaborate architectonic details, suggesting a position of means in life (fig. 82). He is crawling with snakes and toads, and one snake has even slithered in one eye socket and has emerged from the other in most dramatic fashion. All subsequent sections of the poem (written, or perhaps painted) on the church wall. For the relevant passages, see appendix C. This reference to the living going off to found a church after their meeting with the dead is uncommon and is only otherwise found in two very similar fifteenth-century German poems preserved in Stuttgart, Württemburgische Landesbibliothek, cod. poet. et phil. 4o 83 and Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, mgf 1027. At the closing of the Berlin text, the third living states that they reject their castles and cities and will use their gold to found a monastery. For the relevant passages and a modern German translation, see appendix C. While the only explicit textual references to the performance of good works survive from the fifteenth century, the pictorial references in the Smithfield Decretals cycle indicate that the notion was current a century earlier and likely appeared in other texts and images which have not survived. For a discussion of the text of Douce MS 302, see Willy Storck and Robert Jordan, “John Awdelays Gedicht ‘De Tribus Regibus Mortuis’: Eine Englische Fassung der Legende von den Drei Lebenden und den Drei Toten,” *Englische Studien* 43 (1910–1911): 177–188; Ella K. Whiting, *The Poems of John Audelay,* Early English Text Society, vol. 184 (London: Oxford University Press, 1931), 222–223; McIntosh, “Some Notes,” 385–392; Kinch, “Image, Ideology and Form,” 48–81. For the texts in Stuttgart and Berlin, see most recently Tervooren and Spicker, *Die Begegnung.*
are also accompanied by a representation of a figure understood to speak the text. At the bottom of fol. 85v, a middle aged man with thick wavy hair and beard, enveloped by a black cloak and holding a scepter, who must represent an older aristocratic man, stands on a thinly rendered ground line to the right of the set of passages spoken by a *Vivus*. On fol. 86r, a crowned corpse appears, again covered in more snakes and toads, and in this case only the upper half of the figure is visible; the lower half is hidden within a masonry structure, which again is likely a tomb (fig. 83). At the bottom of the same folio appears another living figure, this time younger, without a beard but with rosy cheeks. His crown, scepter and rich dress point to his position of power and wealth. The last dead figure appears much the same as the first, as he stands upon a platform that is probably a tomb, but he is clothed in a more substantial cloak or cape, across which the vermin crawl (fig. 84). The final living figure, still richly dressed and unbearded, sports a short embellished tunic, over which he wears a belt studded with little bells or tassles. His manner of dress suggests that he is the youngest of the three (fig. 85).

There exists a rich variety of approaches to illustrating the Three Living and the Three Dead, as I have argued in the preceding chapters. Within specific examples of representations of the story, variations occur most often in the treatment of the dead, but in the Wolfenbüttel manuscript, the living are the ones most clearly individuated, not only in their dress and demeanor, but also in their stages of life. The living were occasionally, although by no means regularly, depicted at three different stages of life in representations of the Three Living and the Three Dead. Some examples include an early fourteenth-century fresco at the Scala Santa at Sacro Speco, Subiaco (fig. 86) and
an early fourteenth-century illumination from a manuscript now in Arras (fig 87). The representation of the living at different stages of life might have been employed as an emphatic, to remind the viewer in yet another way that youth and beauty are fleeting, and that if one is fortunate to live a long life, old age is still a necessary prelude to death.

Such representations of the Three Living and the Three Dead that feature the living at three stages of life facing cadavers evoke late medieval allegorical representations of the Ages of Man as part of the Wheel of Life. One such depiction of the *Rota vitae alias rota fortunae* appears on fol. 4v in Bibl. Casanatense MS 1404 (fig. 88). In this image, *Fortuna* accompanies a wheel around which appear the seven stages of life, beginning with a child in a cradle at the lower left, inscribed *generatio*, and culminating in a corpse, labeled *corruptio*, representing Death in the lower right. The hub of the wheel bears the name of the theme, while all of the figures encircling the wheel are also labeled in Latin. Within the series of figures, the youth is shown with a falcon and the young man is presented richly dressed wearing a crown and seated on the rim of the wheel, dangling his legs over the side without a care. These two figures bear similarities to the living men in the Three Living and the Three Dead only one

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15 Arras, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 845, fol. 157r, ca. 1340. See Rotzler, *Die Begegnung*, 120–123.
folio later in the same manuscript (fol. 5v-6r, figs. 74, 75). The inscription on the rim of the wheel itself reminds the viewer that all must age and face death.18 A comparable representation may be found in a manuscript related to Casanatense 1404, which is Wellcome Institute MS 49, fol. 30v (fig. 89). In the Wellcome example, the same personifications of the ages are arranged around the wheel, but here youth and adulthood are portrayed without the attributes seen in Casanatense. Perhaps the attributes were deliberately omitted, for the contents of the Casanatense and Wellcome manuscripts otherwise share many similarities. On the same folio as the Wheel of Life in the Wellcome volume appears the Speculum Artis Bene Moriendi attributed to Nikolaus von Dinkelsbühl,19 and on subsequent folios there has been included a series of verses about death, as well as a Vado Mori, which clearly link the Wheel of Life with memento mori texts.20 Another Wheel of Life composition which merits mention here is a drawing in a late-fifteenth century miscellany (Munich, BSB, cgm 312, fol. 98r) (fig. 90) localized to St. Ulrich und Afra, Augsburg and dated to ca. 1450-1473.21 The

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18 I have not obtained a reproduction of sufficient resolution to be able to decipher the inscription. It is logical that the inscription would have to do with the inevitability of aging and death, however.
20 For a more in depth discussion of the relationship between the Casanatense and the Wellcome manuscripts, see Chapter 5 of this dissertation.
21 The manuscript is referred to as a Losbuch or a fortune-telling book. See Karin Schneider, Die deutschen Handschriften der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München: Cgm 201–350 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1970), 295–301.
Wheel of Life within these manuscripts would have served a moralizing function, closely related to that of the Three Living and the Three Dead.\(^{22}\)

The most striking feature with respect to the living in the Three Living and the Three Dead in the Wolfenbüttel manuscript is the fact that the first living figure represented on fol. 85v is the only individual in the whole cycle to be represented without a crown, and yet he still bears a scepter. It is possible that the omission of the crown was simply an oversight on the part of the illustrator or compiler, but he is also much more conservatively dressed than the others, and might not only represent one of the ages of man, but also a different station as well. In the pictorial history of the Three Living and the Three Dead, the three living protagonists were occasionally shown as belonging to different orders of society (see BL Harley MS 2917, fol. 119r, fig. 45).

The first living in the Wolfenbüttel rendition of the Three Living and the Three Dead was intended to represent an individual of high station, although precisely what role he stood for is unclear.

The dead all appear to be in the same state of decay and are similarly represented, although the second figure appears in half-length instead of full length, and

\(^{22}\) As was discussed in Chapter 5, there is unfortunately very limited surviving evidence for the use of these and many other similar miscellanies. Manuscripts containing comparable texts were made for monks and laymen alike; regardless of whether they were linked to monastic or lay contexts, many didactic miscellanies included theological texts, featured texts in both Latin and vernacular, and were extensively illustrated. While profusely illustrated miscellanies were known to have been produced for use in monastic contexts, as was Munich, BSB cgm 3974, discussed in Chapter 4, other such richly decorated books were intended for use by erudite men of means. For a discussion of problems associated with attribution and the identification of use of late medieval German miscellanies, see in particular Almuth Seebohm, *Apokalypse, Ars moriendi, Medizinische Traktate, Tugend-und Lasterlehren: Die erbaulich-didaktische Sammelhandschrift London, Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, MS 49* (Munich: Edition Helga Lengenfelder, 1995), esp. 24–28.
the third dead is the only one not subjected to the indignity of a snake crawling through his cranium. The presentation of the second corpse as half hidden by the tomb is reminiscent of several half-length representations of Death Personified in some late fifteenth-century Books of Hours, including the illuminations, both attributed to Jean Colombe, in Morgan M. 677 (fig. 61) and the Hours of Guyot de Peley, now in Troyes (fig. 91).²³ In both of these depictions, the re-animated corpse seems to rise from the tomb, ready to confront the viewer of the image. The representation in the Troyes manuscript is especially striking, as one senses the possibility that the corpse could crawl forward any moment into the space of the viewer. The instability of the placement of the figure as half in or out of the tomb amplifies the sense of animation of the dead.²⁴ It also draws a contrast between Christ as the Man of Sorrows, whose flesh is pristine and incorrupt (for example, fig. 62), and the unnatural, putrifying flesh of the resurrected corpse, as I have discussed in Chapter 3.

The manner in which the figures have been represented to interact with the text but also with each other is a further intriguing aspect of the series of illustrations for the Wolfenbüttel poem. Each figure is depicted standing and pointing in the direction of the text, but while the living all seem to point slightly upwards, the dead consistently point in the opposite direction. They could be directing the eye of the viewer to the text, even

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²⁴ The representation of Death in half-length emerged in the late fifteenth century, at about the same time that close-up representations of Christ, the Virgin and the Saints started to become popular. This development was linked to the function of images in devotion and the desire to have a more powerful encounter with the image. For a discussion of this issue, see also Chapter 3 of this dissertation.
specific passages of text within each stanza, but the illustrator might have also intended the pointing fingers to link the three pairs of figures. Living and dead are distinguished from each other also by the direction of their gazes. While the living look to their right or our left, and are depicted in three-quarter view, the dead look directly out at the living. This distinction must bear meaning. The directly frontal gaze of the dead is confrontational and asserts power in a way that the gaze of the living does not. The frontal gaze of the dead has the effect of forcing the reader/viewer to experience a face-to-face encounter with the dead and to participate in the story as one of the living. While the different directions in which dead and living face was a strategy to categorize them, it might also have been a sophisticated way to provide the viewer with entrance into the action, a strategy to enhance the performativity of the composition.

The presentation of the dead figures upon tombs that double as speakers platforms or even a stage set, the use of gesture in the form of the pointing finger, and organization of the exchange as a direct dialogue, all suggest that this treatment of the Three Living and the Three Dead was either based on, or intended to evoke, a performance.\textsuperscript{25} Although there is no surviving documentary evidence to show that a poem of the Three Living and the Three Dead was acted out, we know that the Dance of Death was performed several times in France in the fifteenth century. The Duke of Burgundy, Philip the Good, was witness to a performance of the \textit{Danse} at his court in Bruges in 1449.\textsuperscript{26} In addition, there is a record of a performance at the church of St.

\textsuperscript{25} Künstle was the first to observe the dramatic staging of the figures within the manuscripts. See Künstle, \textit{Die Legende}, 37.
\textsuperscript{26} Léon de Laborde, \textit{Les ducs de Bourgogne: Études sur les lettres, les arts et l'industrie pendant le XV\textsuperscript{e} siècle}, vol. 2, pt. 1 (Paris, 1849–1853), 393, as cited in Huizinga, \textit{Autumn}, 165.
John the Evangelist in Besançon following Mass on July 10, 1453. It is very probable that similar performances of the Three Living and the Three Dead also took place.

Versions of the poem of the Three Living and the Three Dead emerged in the court of thirteenth-century France, and early examples are attributed to the minstrels Baudouin de Condé and Nicolas de Margival, who undoubtedly recited their works at court before aristocratic audiences. It is not inconceivable to surmise that several friends or actors could have been gathered to expand such a presentation of the tale to provide more dramatic flair.

The illustrator’s approach to the story appears to be very simple and straightforward and did not require access to other pictorial renditions or performances in order to complete these images. But illustrations of speakers standing next to verses was a convention generally found in the records of dramatic texts. As Pamela Sheingorn and Robert Clark have shown, characters introduced for the first time in a text were often accompanied by small illustrations, sometimes inhabited initials introducing the relevant stanza, or in small miniatures preceding significant stanza. According to such evidence, it is possible that the treatment of the Wolfenbüttel text responded in some way to a dramatic performance of the tale, or to contemporary dramatic practice that was used as a model for the presentation of a story in a manuscript context. The use of coffins as speakers’ platforms could suggest a record of the performance of the tale, or at least simply evoke the dramatic dimension of the encounter.

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The impact of the representation is enhanced by the inclusion of the plethora of snakes and toads represented across the bodies of the dead. Although serpents and toads had long been associated with death and sin, especially that of Lust, only rarely do they appear in representations of the Three Living and the Three Dead. Indeed, if the bodies of the dead were not shown as either skeletons or dessicated corpses, the corpses were normally shown accompanied by worms. Highly moralizing and negative images of snakes and toads go back at least to the twelfth century, when they were shown as the means of torment for the personification of Luxuria, or Lust, as seen in the porch at St. Pierre de Moissac (fig. 92) and in a historiated capital in the nave at Ste. Madeleine at Vézelay (fig. 93). This personification of the vice of Lust was depicted being tormented through the parts of the body associated with the sin, and the punishment was viewed as humiliating as well as painful.

31 For representations of the vice of Luxuria as a naked woman tormented by toads and serpents, see Adolf Katzenellenbogen, Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Medieval Art (London: Warburg Institute, 1939, repr. Toronto, 1989), 58; Ellen Kosmer, “The ‘noyous humoure of lecherie’,” Art Bulletin 57, no. 1 (March 1975): 1–8; Michael Camille, “Gothic Signs and the Surplus: The Kiss on the Cathedral,” in “Contexts: Style and Values in Medieval Art and Literature,” ed. Daniel Poirion and Nancy Freeman Regalado, special issue, Yale French Studies, 1991, 151–170. Starting in the thirteenth century, Luxuria was depicted in other ways as well, one of which was to show a beautifully dressed young woman holding rings of iron, representing the means by which she would ensnare her prey. See Kosmer, “The ‘noyous humoure,’” 5. The image of Luxuria as naked and tormented by reptiles seems to have been reserved for sculptures and reliefs in public, ecclesiastical contexts, as a warning to the public; illuminations in several privately owned manuscripts of the vices tended to present the personification of Lust as a young, seductive woman.
The vices of pride, avarice and lust in particular were singled out for attack by clerics throughout the High and Later Middle Ages. The knightly class and aristocracy were especially the targets for criticism by the clergy in this period, due to what was perceived as their preoccupation with the pleasures of life. They were challenged to instead prefer a love of God and the Christian life. Tension between carnal and spiritual love was played out in theological and allegorical texts, but also in pictorial programs, including that of the sculpted cathedral portal. At Strasbourg Cathedral, for instance, a presentation of the apocalyptic story of the wise and foolish virgins is presented in stone. A group of sculptures in the round flank the south portal of the west facade, with Christ leading the wise virgins on the right side, and the figure of the Prince of the World, or the Fürst der Welt, distracting the foolish virgins on the left (fig. 94).

The Prince of the World, an allegorical figure which represents the pleasures of life but reminds the viewer of their inevitable dangers, emerged in several towns located along the Rhine in the late thirteenth century. The beautifully dressed youth was carved in several German church portal programs, the earliest of which is at Strasbourg, which dates to 1280. He is consistently shown in an elegant long tunic and wearing a crown, in the dress of a young aristocrat of his day. His attributes differ slightly at different locations; at Strasbourg he holds out an apple, as though about to offer it to the coy foolish virgin at his side (fig. 94). This may be partly a reference to the story of Le Mors de la Pomme, which tells of how Death was born at the moment of the Fall of

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Man (fig. 96). At Freiburg, the Prince holds out a flower to his sculpted companion, generally identified as Luxuria, portrayed as naked and tormented by the creatures typically representative of sin. At Basel, the Prince is shown paired with a foolish virgin to the right of the main portal, and while the flower he likely once held is now lost, he still holds gloves in his left hand, a sign of his vanity (fig. 97). These gifts or accoutrements contribute to the impression that he is in the prime of life and is out to seduce and impress. His outward beauty is a façade, however, as the viewer discovers upon seeking a glimpse of the back of the sculpture; his back is crawling with snakes and toads. At Strasbourg and Basel, the toads and serpents crawl in a straight line up the right side of his back, while at Nuremberg, they cover his entire back and legs (fig. 98). Interestingly, these Fürst sculptures were part of portal programs at cathedrals in towns along the Rhine which boasted bishop’s courts, and where there were extensive literary and larger cultural networks.

The sculpture of the Prince of the World exhibiting a back crawling with vermin is not based on any known textual source but is related to the subject of a poem by Konrad von Würzburg. In the 1250s and 1260s, while living in Strasbourg, Konrad was

34 See Jean Miélot, Mors de la pomme, ed. Pasquale Morabito (Messina: Peloritana, 1968.)
35 Although no longer in its original position, the Nuremberg Prince sculpture, which is dated ca. 1310, was originally placed near the north portal at the church of St. Sebaldus. For a discussion of this sculpture, see Gothic and Renaissance Art in Nuremberg, 1300–1550, ed. Rainer Kahsnitz and William D. Wixom (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986), 116–118.
36 These ecclesiastical centres also fostered a rich literary culture. Nobility mingled with clerics and together supported the work of poets, such as Konrad von Würzburg and Gottfried von Straßburg. See Ursula Peters, Literatur in der Stadt: Studien zu den sozialen Voraussetzungen und kulturellen Organisationsformen städtischer Literatur im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert, Studien und Texte zur Sozialgeschichte der Literatur 7 (Tübingen: de Gruyter, 1983), 163.
commissioned to write poetry by members of both the clerical and merchant classes. One of the works that he produced during this period is the 274-line-long Middle High German verse tale entitled ‘Der Welt Lohn’, dated to 1260. While it is unknown for whom this work was composed, it would have appealed to a variety of learned groups for a number of reasons. The poem tells of a noble knight, Wirnt von Grafenberg, who had long preoccupied himself with the pleasures of the world, and who had always yearned for worldly glory and the recognition of men. While in his apartments one day, a beautiful woman appeared to him and stated that he had been her servant and that she wished to reward him for his devotion. He declared that he had never seen her before, but he would gladly serve her anyway. She replied that he had indeed, for she is the World. When she turned to show her back, he discovered it was black as ash and crawling with snakes and toads. At that moment, the knight realized that his preoccupation with the world was misguided and decided to devote himself to God. He subsequently departed on Crusade, and so ends the tale. A sculpted rendition of Frau Welt, complete with a kneeling Graf, was produced in the early fourteenth century and survives on the south side of the cathedral at Worms. Although lovely from the front, the back of her body is covered with vermin (fig. 99).

The Prince of the World as represented in sculptural form at Strasbourg, Basel, Freiburg and Nuremberg could be interpreted as a fusion of the two protagonists of the Frau Welt story. Von Grafenberg was preoccupied with the world before he was made

38 The primary study of the allegorical figure of Frau Welt remains Wolfgang Stammler, Frau Welt: Eine Mittelalterliche Allegorie (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1959).
to see his error. Both Frau Welt and der Fürst der Welt are intended to convey to the
viewer that worldly pleasures are fleeting, and that what will be left in the end is only
dust and worms, or in this case frogs and snakes. Another, more likely possibility is that
the Prince emerged as part of a larger trend that explored the same concerns as the
figure of Frau Welt, but in the form of a young man. Perhaps, as Frau Welt represented
the risks to the soul faced by all but especially by the men who were lured to adore her
because of her beauty, the Fürst der Welt represented the same perils for women. The
power of the Fürst to lure female viewers was rendered in stone at Strasbourg; the
Prince is shown in the process of seducing one of the foolish virgins, who seems to be
falling hopelessly for his charms (fig. 94). Female viewers would have been able to
imagine themselves in the place of the Foolish Virgin, who paid too much attention to
worldly pleasures. Interestingly, and in a reversal of the roles of Adam and Eve, here
the dandy is the one to tempt the young woman with the apple. The sculpture serves as
a warning to resist such temptations and advances, represented by the apple, which
could threaten one’s salvation. The danger was clear, and regular exposure to such a
sculpture group upon passing by the cathedral would have been a reminder of the
importance of prayer and being mindful of death. There was also an awareness,
however, that beyond the portal lay the cathedral, in which the possibility of salvation
awaited those who prayed for their own souls and those of their loved ones.

Toads and snakes were not restricted to the bodies of figures of Luxuria, the
Fürst der Welt and Frau Welt, however. The tomb of François I in the chapel of St.
Anthony at La Sarraz in Switzerland, dated to 1360, depicts the prince in effigy, with
toads feasting on his face and at his groin and arranged in a very symmetrical and
orderly way (**fig. 100**). The effigy lies with his arms crossed over his chest, and with his head upon a luxurious pillow, embellished at the corners with cockleshells suggestive of pilgrimage and a desire for the absolution of sin. Attending him are two female figures, who must represent family members, and two knights, who pray before the tomb (**fig. 101**).

This elaborate tomb is an early example of the so-called *transi* tomb tradition, characterized in early examples by representations of the naked dead body in decomposition, and in later ones by the doubling of the figure in a two tiered structure, with the body as it appeared in life above and its double as a corpse after death below.\(^{39}\) The subject of this sculpture is not the fate of the physical body after death; rather, the viewer’s attention is directed to the spiritual dimension of the sinfulness of the soul, albeit by means of the torment of the body by creatures associated with deadly sin. The imagery of the tomb is intimately linked with the iconographic tradition of representing *Luxuria*, except that here the victim is a man.

It has been argued that der Fürst der Welt, among other related allegorical manifestations, was born out of clerical critique of the knightly class.\(^{40}\) Members of the clergy were concerned about the preoccupation of the knights with carnal love and an over-indulgence in worldly pleasures. The allegorical creations of the period were also linked to a larger concern with the fate of the soul after death, and the importance of

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\(^{40}\) Chihiaia, *Immortalité et decomposition*, 141–144.
rejecting the temptations of this world, concerns expressed in such works as the Three Living and the Three Dead as well as other allegorical formulations. It is clear that the Prince of the World and the Three Living and the Three Dead were related in general terms, but I would argue that at Strasbourg they were specifically linked through the appearance of toads and serpents apparent in both. The Encounter as illustrated in the Wolfenbüttel manuscript is one of a very small number to contain depictions of toads and serpents, symbolic of spiritual corruption. Usually, if the corpses representing the Three Dead were shown with any creatures creeping on their bodies, these were in the form of worms, symbols of bodily decay. Worms were rejected in the Wolfenbüttel manuscript, and I suggest that this occurred due to the illustrator’s familiarity with the figure of the Fürst in the cathedral portal and the wish to specifically invoke that motif. The omission of the apple in the renditions of the dead to allow their fingers to point to relevant passages of the poem does not weaken this argument. There is also the title of the poem to consider. “Dis ist der welt lon” has no simple passing similarity to “Der Welt Lohn”, the title of Konrad von Würzburg’s text, which continued to be popular well into the late Middle Ages. Clearly, the scribe or compiler of the manuscript, who also likely illustrated the manuscript, was mindful of the story by Konrad.

41 The Schreiber 1899 woodcut in the Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin also displays toads and snakes crawling over the bodies of the dead. For a discussion of this image, see Chapter 4 above. In another example, the bodies of the dead in the fresco at the Campo Santo in Pisa are also shown with snakes, although no toads are visible.

42 Jeffrey Hamburger has investigated the relatively humble works produced by nuns at German convents. Hamburger points out that aesthetically unpolished drawings by women who were untrained artists have long been deemed unworthy of serious scholarly attention, but that it is important to recognize that the purpose of their drawings was to elicit affective response, not to impress the viewer with artistic skill. Their meaning was in part fashioned by their function. See Jeffrey Hamburger, “‘To Make Women Weep’: Ugly Art as Feminine and the Rise of Modern Aesthetics,” in
It is difficult to determine what other representations of the Three Living and the Three Dead the illustrator of the Wolfenbüttel manuscript would have known. There are relatively few representations of the Three Living and the Three Dead in Germany in the form of wall paintings, manuscript illuminations, or prints. Losses occurred during the period of the Reformation, but even taking that under consideration, the story does not seem to have been as widespread in Germany as it was in France, for example. The German-speaking scribe and illustrator of the Wolfenbüttel manuscript might also have been aware of some of the widespread French examples in circulation, or indeed some of the church wall paintings in the vicinity. There is no need to identify specific examples that the illustrator could have seen, however; the nature of the illustration of the story in this compendium seems to be an illustration of a poem by means of depicting the speakers beside the inscribed passages in a form associated with dramatic performance. Its situation in Strasbourg is underscored through the references to local culture, specifically, the sculpture of the Fürst der Welt at the cathedral. The Fürst, established as a complement to Frau Welt, was represented in the cathedral portal to cavort and seduce foolish young women, and it is possible that the invocation of the Fürst in the Wolfenbüttel manuscript would have led the young woman, for whom the manuscript was intended, to reflect on her own relationship to the foolish virgins. Such

“The Abject,” special issue, RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics 31 (Spring, 1997): 9–33. See also other works by Hamburger in this vein, including Nuns as Artists and The Visual and the Visionary. Hamburger’s work concerns conventual products, but his findings are relevant for the manuscript under consideration in this chapter, intended for a laywoman. The images accompanying the Three Living and the Three Dead in the Wolfenbüttel manuscript were intended to heighten the impact of the moralizing story, and they are successful in this, despite their relatively humble appearance.
an association would have led to deeper introspection and greater awareness of the
dangers posed by indulgence in life’s pleasures.

The inclusion of the Three Living and the Three Dead in a small compendium
intended for a young lady living in Strasbourg is intriguing and unparalleled given
surviving evidence. No representations of women occur in the manuscript—indeed, the
only representations in the entire volume are of the six protagonists of the Three Living
and the Three Dead—yet inclusions in the book point to a female owner. The contents
of the manuscript suggest that it was a Hausbuch, a miscellany intended to be kept and
used in the home that was a useful manual for consultation on a variety of matters. This
is suggested in particular through the inclusion of recipes for baking and cooking, and a
treatise on the beauty of women.

Other contents of the manuscript include a history of Alsace and Strasbourg by
Jakob Twinger von Königshofen (fol. 1-44v), indicating that the manuscript was
compiled or intended for use in the region of Strasbourg. In addition are a prose
Creation history (fol. 45r-48r), a treatise on the beauty of the beloved (fol. 80v-81r),
an allegorical dialogue concerning love entitled ‘Die Sechs Farben’ (fol. 81r-83r),
and a prayer to St. Christopher, and a selection of recipes at the very end (fol. 99r-115v).
Several of these inclusions point specifically to a female owner; indeed, an inscription

44 For the text “Dis sint die vij varwen,” see Brandis, *Mittelhochdeutsche*, 142, no. 372.
on fol. 98r identifies Sabine Wekerlin of Strasbourg as an owner of the manuscript. It is uncertain whether the inscription was contemporary with the production of the volume or whether it was added at a later time. The manuscript might have been created for someone else and was subsequently inherited by Sabine. Still, the contents of the manuscript demonstrate that it was intended for the edification and consultation of a young woman. Whether it was produced by or commissioned by the young woman who owned it or by a man such as her father or her betrothed is unknown.

Comparable compilations survive whose origins and provenance are no more fleshed out but for which we can make similar claims. A Housebook now in the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin has been localized to Northern Alsace and has been dated to the mid-fifteenth century. It includes an array of Christian and didactic texts and love

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46 The full inscription found on fol. 98r reads “Dysz buch ist er Junckfrow Sabinenn Wekerlinn (Wetzlen?) … von Strozborg.” The inscription refers to Sabine as a Jungfrau. The translation of the Middle High German word is young woman, and thus she was likely a young laywoman, since there is no mention of a convent or beguinage in the inscription or elsewhere in the manuscript. It is most likely that the volume was used in a domestic context.

47 For a full list of the contents of the manuscript, see Otto von Heinemann, *Die Augusteischen Handschriften 4. Codex Guelferbytanus 77.4. aug. 2o bis 34 Augusteus 4o* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1966), 202–203, no. 3088.

48 Scholarship in patronage studies has recently begun to place more attention on the agency of women as patrons. See for example Therese Martin, ed., *Reassessing the Roles of Women as Makers of Medieval Art and Architecture* (Leiden: Brill, 2012). Still, there continues to be a tendency in scholarship to assume that all things being equal, a male patron must have been responsible for a work, but this is slowly changing. For a survey of the changing landscape in patronage studies, see Jill Caskey, “Whodunnit? Patronage, the Canon, and the Problematics of Agency in Romanesque and Gothic Art,” in *A Companion to Medieval Art: Romanesque and Gothic in Northern Europe* ed. Conrad Rudolph (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 193–212. In the case of the Wolfenbüttel manual, there is no clear evidence for patronage either way, but the recipient was clearly a young woman.

49 Berlin, SBB-PK, MS Germ. Fol. 742, mid-fifteenth century. See Peter Jörg Becker and Eef Overgaauw, eds., *Aderlass und Seelentrost: Die Überlieferung deutscher Texte*
poems and is copiously illustrated. Analysis of the contents suggests a wealthy, likely aristocratic laywoman as the owner of the manuscript. On the other hand, an Alsatian miscellany that includes strictly prayers and theological works has been connected with the Dominican convent of St. Nikolaus in Strasbourg. It has not been possible to definitively connect any of these manuscripts with specific owners. However, consultation of several examples and an examination of their contents allows us to draw conclusions about the likely audiences for different kinds of collections. Strictly theological and devotional contents of such miscellanies are more likely to have belonged to religious women, while collections of a range of texts including texts having to do with devotional and courtly topics tended to be owned and used by laywomen, likely of a burgher or aristocratic class who could afford such volumes and had an interest in perusing them. A manuscript miscellany, now in Hamburg, featuring prayers and secular texts including the Three Living and the Three Dead suggest use as a Hausbuch. This manuscript, the late-fifteenth century Hartebok, has been connected to a merchant family of the Hanseatic League.

In sum, the manuscript now in Wolfenbüttel represents an example of a manuscript with scant and unpolished imagery that was likely intended as a Housebook or courtesy book for a young woman who resided in Strasbourg. It is of interest for a project on the functions and audiences for the Three Living and the Three Dead

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50 Aderlass und Seelentrost, 227.
52 For the Hartebok, see Langbroek, “Ein Merkwürdiges Ende”; Langbroek, “Das Hartebok”. 
because of what the other manuscript contents tell us about the intended user and the context of use in fifteenth-century Strasbourg. In addition, the manner of representing the Three Living and the Three Dead reveals a reference or response to the figure of the Fürst der Welt on the cathedral in the same town. The inclusion of toads and serpents on the bodies of the dead represented the spiritual sin polluting the souls of the dead, reminding the living of their duty to not only pray for the dead, but also to pray for themselves. This may have been a response to the representation of the Fürst on the cathedral portal, or at least was informed by that figure. Its significance for a female viewer would have been as a reminder of the dangers posed by indulgence in sinful pleasures, and the importance of prayer, possible through devotional contemplation but also through attendance at mass, through the portal on which the Fürst der Welt was carved.
Conclusion

By the early sixteenth century, the story of the Three Living and the Three Dead was known not only in manuscript and wall painting, but also in drawing and print. An engraving of the subject by the Master of the Housebook, a copy of which is in the collection of the British Museum and dated to the late fifteenth century, depicts one of the dead grabbing the mantle worn by one of the living kings, as though about to pull him off his horse, while the other kings draw back in apprehension and the remaining dead figures look on (fig. 102). The corpses in this composition wear identical crowns to those worn by the living, as was the case in the Harley 2917 illumination, conveying the sense that the dead are understood to be the alter-egos of the living. The disturbance not only to the kings but also to their hunting dogs, which bark madly, also suggests that the dead appear as revenants rather than simply as a mirror or a vision. Present and future time is collapsed into one image, as it brings together the young men with their future selves to warn them of what may lie in store for them.

A drawing, dated to ca. 1500 now in the Albertina in Vienna, which has been attributed by some to Dürer or an artist in his circle, gives a very different impression (fig. 103). The scene, in its dynamism, is not unlike that set in the *bas-de-page* for the

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1 London, British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings, 1895, 0915.185, 120 mm x 185 mm, late fifteenth century. Copies of this composition survive in other copies as well, one of which is in the collection of the Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart.
2 Vienna, Albertina, Inv. No. 662, D 316, 30.5 mm x 440 mm. This drawing has been variously attributed to Dürer, the circle of Dürer, and Hans Baldung Grien. Friedrich Winkler, *Die Zeichnungen Albrecht Dürers*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Deutscher Verein für Kunstwissenschaft, 1936), no. 162, 108–110; Jean Wirth, *La jeune fille et la mort: Recherches sur les thèmes macabres dans l’art germanique de la Renaissance* (Geneva: Droz, 1979), 37–38; Gert von der Osten, *Hans Baldung Grien: Gemälde und Dokumente* (Berlin, 1983), 16–18. To my mind, the drama of the scene seems more in
Office of the Dead in the Grimani Breviary, or accompanying the same text in the Spinola Hours, both images of which are attributed to the Master of James IV of Scotland. In the drawing, the dead are shown attacking the living with weapons, even pulling them off their horses, while a personification of Death hovers above. A heightened sense of action and movement is conveyed in this dynamic image, and the composition is frightening; it seems that there is no possibility of reprieve from the attacks of the vicious dead. Death seems very final and unavoidable here, and is informed by details from the Dance of Death, in the sense of the living going to their graves without an opportunity to change their ways.

These works convey two of the modes still in use in the late fifteenth century, showing the dead either stalking the living or as attacking them, modes that were also often employed in representations to be found in Books of Hours. The engraving and the drawing demonstrate that the story of the Three Living and the Three Dead continued to be well known, but it was at the same time generally declining in popularity. The latest known examples in manuscript or painting date to the 1520s, and by the second quarter of the sixteenth century the story was appearing only rarely. This tune with Dürer’s oeuvre. The question of attribution of this drawing has not finally been settled, however.

I am aware of several Books of Hours produced in the second quarter of the fifteenth century which contain the Three Living and the Three Dead as an introduction for Vespers of the Dead, and show that it continued to be illustrated, albeit less frequently. These examples include a book for Dominican Use, printed in Paris in 1542, now in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin. See Caroline Zöhl, “A Phenomenon of Parallel Reading in the Office of the Dead,” in Mixed Metaphors: The Danse Macabre in Medieval and Early Modern Europe, ed. Sophie Oosterwijk and Stefanie Knöll (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 341. Another example (now Cambridge, University Library, Syn. 7 53 19) was printed in Rouen in 1536 and was designated for use in England. It was printed for a Catholic with the main text in English, and with
is a curious state of affairs, as macabre imagery more generally continued to be in demand. The Dance of Death, for example, which gained recognition throughout the fifteenth century, only grew in popularity and was now also being disseminated in print form in addition to being represented on church or cemetery walls. The famous series of woodcuts by Hans Holbein, for example, designed ca. 1526 and printed at Basel in 1538, broke up the traditional procession into a series of one-on-one encounters with Death, which were more conducive to the context of a book but also for a much smaller, more intimate audience than that intended for a large scale mural. The series of depictions, in painting and engraving, of Death and the Maiden, popularized by Hans Baldung Grien, as well as Dürer’s representations of Death and the Knight, were likely ultimately related to the iconography of the Dance of Death and the opposition of Death with representatives of different walks of life.

It is perhaps surprising that two related and yet recognizably different traditions of opposing living and dead co-existed through the fifteenth century, and yet by the early-sixteenth century one died away while the other continued to be popular and continues to be represented and even performed to this day. Although the reasons for the diminution of the Three Living and the Three Dead in the 1520s have not been


5 See *Totentanz Aktuell: Mitteilungsblatt der Europäischen Totentanz-Vereinigung* for references to contemporary performances and compositions of the Dance of Death. See also Christoph Mörgeli and Uli Wunderlich, *Berner Totentänze: Makabres aus Bern vom Mittelalter bis in die Gegenwart* (Bern: Bernisches Historisches Museum, 2006.)
definitely established, there are several possible explanations. The Three Living and the Three Dead told of three young, almost always male, aristocrats or royals and their encounter with the dead, and even in variations including a young woman, such as the representations in the manuscripts belonging to Mary of Burgundy (Berlin, SMPK-KK MS 78 B 12) and that of a relative, likely Margaret of Austria (London, BL Add. MS 35313), the protagonists in the representations of the tale continued to be of high station. The Dance of Death, on the other hand, presented the living of all walks of life going to the grave. This much more democratic arrangement allowed the viewer to see emperor as well as peasant, and queen as well as maiden, all processing together to their deaths. This more representative approach would have appealed to viewers from a wider range of backgrounds and social classes than would have the Three Living and the Three Dead.

Once the imagery of the Encounter had begun to accompany on a regular basis the hour of Vespers for the Office of the Dead in the mid-fifteenth century, it inevitably became associated with prayers said for souls of the deceased in Purgatory. With the onset of the Reformation, however, the existence of Purgatory itself was called into question. Reformers were critical of efforts, whether through the purchase of indulgences or the recitation of prayers for the dead, that sought to reduce the amount of time a loved one or family member would spend in Purgatory. In those areas of Europe in which Protestantism took hold, the popularity of Books of Hours was noticeably diminished. The manuscripts did not by any means disappear right away, as there were reactionary elements that continued to perpetuate their use, but their significance in the life of Christians was significantly lessened. The most prominent use
of the imagery of the Three Living and the Three Dead had been for some time in the illustration of Vespers of the Dead, as was discussed in Ch. 3, and therefore the decline of the use of the book, and in particular the recitation of the prayers of the Office of the Dead, in the early sixteenth century likely played a role in the eventual disappearance of the story.

The tale was in circulation for only two and a half centuries before it disappeared around the time of the onset of the Reformation, yet during that time span it took hold as a very popular and pervasive moralizing story. Its appearance was first recorded in French courtly manuscripts, especially illustrated Psalters and collections of poetry, produced for aristocratic and royal audiences. Representations of the tale when accompanying poetic texts of the tale often showed the living and dead in conversation, as though enacting the text recorded on the page. Not long afterwards, representations of the story also appeared on the walls of churches in parts of Italy under Angevin rule, for instance at Melfi in Basilicata and at Atri in the Abruzzo, showing that very early on, the story was introduced into a number of contexts, some of these independent of text. As the tale became known across Europe, it developed in a number of different directions in both text and image. Depictions in fourteenth-century Italian wall paintings at Pisa and Subiaco, and in manuscripts produced in Italy and Savoy, such as a Florentine laudario and a Book of Hours for Duchess Bianca of Savoy of Milan, represent the three dead in their coffins while the three young aristocrats look on, and a hermit instructs the living on the import of the scene. The inclusion of the hermit heralded the significance of the tale as an opportunity to teach the viewer about the importance of being mindful of death, and registered the influence of Mendicant
teachings. There were several ways of illustrating the story by the fourteenth century, but they mainly fell into two categories—with the living and dead arranged as though in conversation, or with the dead in their coffins and a hermit interpreting the scene for the living.

By the beginning of the fifteenth century, the story had arrived in Germany and was introduced into manuscripts independent of the full text of any poem, as the tale was clearly already well enough known to be identifiable on its own, but it was also put in the service of collections of other texts and images having to do with allegorical oppositions between living and dead. Examples of German theological and devotional compendia such as Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek cgm 3974, intended for use in a monastic school, and Rome, Bibl. Casanatense MS 1404, likely owned by a erudite theologian, show how the Three Living and the Three Dead could function within a memento mori series in different kinds of manuscripts. The rendition of the tale in the Munich manuscript, dated to the mid-fifteenth century, represents a departure from other known representations, and the more sophisticated and abstract composition was likely intended to stimulate the intellect of both students and teachers. Its association with other moralizing themes, such as the Triumph of Death and the Visio Philiberti, would have encouraged the monastic viewer to contemplate his own mortality. Other contents of the miscellany, including translations of Aesop’s fables by Avianus and the Anonymous Neveleti, indicate the use of the manuscript for teaching Latin and moral precepts. The manuscript no doubt served a variety of audiences within the monastery, and the Three Living and the Three Dead would have served both devotional and didactic functions.
The image of the Encounter in the Casanatense manuscript, on the other hand, which is dated to the second quarter of the fifteenth century, is more conventional in its design, but the way in which it was integrated into the series of other Latin *memento mori* texts and images added a new dimension to the composition and its reception. The living and dead were arranged across the opening of the manuscript, with dead on the verso and living on the recto, below a series of other allegorical and theological texts and images having to do with remembrance of death. The texts are exclusively in Latin, and the contents range across a variety of topics known to have been included in manuscripts produced for both lay and monastic audiences. Unfortunately, there is very little to help localize the manuscript or to identify the original owner. It does seem, however, that the manuscript was produced in east central Germany, in the wake of the Council of Constance, probably in a university context, for an erudite individual interested in theological problems.

Yet another mid-fifteenth century compendium, this time intended as a *Hausbuch* for a young woman of Strasbourg, included an illustrated German poem of the Three Living and the Three Dead. The depictions of the living and dead accompanying this poem seemed to emphasize the spiritual corruption of the dead through the inclusion of serpents and toads represented crawling on their bodies. Toads and snakes had been associated with Lust since at least the twelfth century, and the Strasbourg manuscript composition makes reference to iconographical elements shared by *Luxuria*, Frau Welt and the Fürst der Welt, or the Prince of the World. This reference would likely have reminded the female owner of the manuscript to make serious efforts to prepare for death through prayer, or potentially risk the punishments
for spiritual corruption suffered by those who were damned for their vices. The manuscript’s owner would no doubt have encountered on a regular basis the figure of the Prince of the World, seen tempting a Foolish Virgin, on the façade of the Cathedral of Strasbourg. The dangers of succumbing to worldly pleasures were crystallized there in the form of the story of the wise and foolish virgins, played out in the portal sculpture. The young female owner of the Wolfenbüttel manuscript would have linked in her mind the figures represented in her manuscript with the elegant youth on the cathedral façade, and have recognized that both instances were intended to provide a warning to the living. She might further have identified with the foolish virgin, whose fate was sealed when she succumbed to temptation and neglected her duties. This would have reminded her of the importance of prayer and preparation for death, which was possible through private devotion and through participating in the mass.

By the mid-fifteenth century, the Three Living and the Three Dead was also accompanying on a regular basis Vespers for the Office of the Dead in Books of Hours, especially in manuscripts produced in France and Flanders, but also the Netherlands and less frequently Italy as well. From the third quarter of the fifteenth century, this type of manuscript became the site in which the story appeared most frequently. It is not surprising that the imagery of this tale would accompany the prayers of the officium defunctorum, since the prayers were said to assist the souls of loved ones in Purgatory as well as to prepare for one’s own death. Yet, over the course of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the thrust of the images found in Books of Hours shifted away from dialogue and moralizing instruction to aggression, as was the case in the image in the Berlin Hours of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian I. The violence on the part of the
dead is known only in the pictorial record, as it is not articulated in any surviving texts of the tale. This iconographical development might have been prompted by the new function that the images were intended to serve in their new context. The dynamic nature of the image would necessarily intensify the viewer’s engagement with the texts of the office. By reminding the viewer that death can come at any time, the images would have engaged the attention of the viewer to a greater degree than other less dramatic images would have done.

Some compositions became significant not only in terms of their iconography, but also had resonance within the context of important family connections. For instance, the composition executed by Jean Colombe in the Hours of Louis de Laval was used in other manuscripts produced for other individuals in the service of the king of France, including Philippe de Commynes. The design for the Three Living and the Three Dead in the Hours of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian I was used in only one other book, as far as is known, and this is a manuscript, now in London, which was likely commissioned by Margaret of Austria, the daughter of Mary and Maximilian. The use of the same composition in manuscripts made by different artists for members of the Hapsburg family would have served as a marker of identity and even a model of behaviour. In both manuscripts, a young female protagonist is shown facing death fearlessly, as manuals of the *Ars Moriendi* and writings by such figures as Henry Suso and Thomas à Kempis urged faithful Christians to do. The striking representations of the Three Living and the Three Dead in these books would have engaged the attention of the reader and would have enhanced the devotional impact of reading and looking. The personalization of the images, through the inclusion of female figures that were
understood to represent the original intended owners as protagonists, would have further enhanced that impact.

This dissertation has promoted representations of the story previously overlooked in the scholarship on the art of death in the late medieval period. Investigations of thirteenth and fourteenth-century images related to the Macabre were often centred around French and Italian monumental paintings and sculptures, following the lead of Huizinga and Mâle. Early studies of late Medieval art that discussed the Three Living and the Three Dead usually relied on the Campo Santo painting as the primarily pictorial example of the theme, despite the existence of French examples in both wall painting and manuscript. Foundational studies of the tale of the Three Living and the Three Dead, such as those by Glixelli, Storck, Künstle and Rotzler, focused on the French and Italian manuscript examples, but were concerned with chronology and typology. Rotzler’s Arsenal and Italian types neatly grouped pictorial examples together according to whether they featured living and dead in conversation (Arsenal), or whether the living came upon the dead in their coffins, with a hermit in attendance (Italian), but while these categories imposed order on a large body of material, examples that did not fit into the organizational scheme were somewhat neglected. In chapter 2, I proposed a typology based on the use and function of the image vis-à-vis the text, rather than on geographical origin. I discussed a number of illustrated poems of the Three Living and the Three Dead, which appear in courtly compendia and as accessory texts in Psalters produced in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, primarily in France and England. These examples foregrounded the dialogic aspect of encounter, which was a complement to the conversational tone of
the poem; it was also a method of engaging and involving the reader-viewer in the story, to heighten its moralizing impact. This conversational mode was consistently used to accompany poetic texts of the tale, but the images were modified to reflect the tastes of the individual owners and to complement the style of the rest of the manuscript. The examples discussed in Chapter 2 are of high quality and are richly illuminated, a reflection of the origins of the tale and its initial dissemination primarily within courtly circles in northern Europe. The discussion in Chapter 2 was intended to establish the ways in which the story could be illustrated in its early history, which set the stage for the variations that occurred in later centuries.

Scholarly work on fifteenth-century images of the macabre has tended to focus on the representations of the Dance of Death in Germany and France, to the exclusion of the Three Living and the Three Dead. As I have shown above, however, there was no shortage of interest in the tale during those centuries, and it continued to be illustrated widely and in very inventive ways through the fifteenth and into the sixteenth century. Part of the reason for the relative neglect of the Three Living and the Three Dead likely has to do with its disproportionate mobilization in prayer books, which were relegated to the art historical category of the “minor arts” and were therefore considered of lesser interest to art historians until relatively recently. This attitude was amplified for manuscripts produced in the German-speaking regions, especially compendia which, intended for devotional use or theological scrutiny, were usually relatively modest in appearance and fell well below the threshold of high art (see Chapters 4 and 6.)

An emphasis on the relationship between text and image and the function of the story within its larger manuscript context has been informed by manuscript studies. I
have brought together richly illustrated Books of Hours, Psalters and courtly compendia, as well as monastic and theological miscellanies, to point out the disparate contexts in which the Three Living and the Three Dead appeared in manuscript, and to demonstrate the range of ways in which it could be illustrated and structured for use by its intended owners. The impressive flexibility and adaptability of the story have come to the fore through my study. This was not previously apparent in discussions of examples grouped together primarily according to similar iconographic features or according to their geographical origins.

My study has confronted several shortcomings of previous studies head on. I have expanded the scope of the discussion beyond the previously rather restricted emphasis on France and Italy, and to a lesser extent England, to look at understudied examples from the German speaking regions, which casts light on how much more widely the story was known than has previously been acknowledged. Furthermore, I have confronted Huizinga’s claim that the emphasis on death in late medieval art was the result of an obsessive fear of death and an embedded negativity. Late medieval writers, including à Kempis and Suso, advocated a confrontation with death as a means to reducing the fear associated with it. The use of the Three Living and the Three Dead as an accompaniment to the prayers of the officium defunctorum, but also as a part of a larger cluster of memento mori texts and images, allowed readers to do just that, thereby mitigating the anxiety of what was fearful and inevitable. A preoccupation with death was the means by which people could provide themselves with the tools and opportunities that they needed to prepare themselves. From this perspective, the Three Living and the Three Dead was a positive and productive force. It was also a significant
force in the cultural landscape of the late Middle Ages. The story, and its imagery in manuscript, deserves to hold once again the pride of place that it enjoyed in the late Medieval period, and I hope that my dissertation will assist in that endeavour.
Appendices

Appendix A: Manuscripts to which I refer in this dissertation

Arras, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 845
Berlin, SMPK Kupferstickkabinett MS 78 B 12
   (Berlin Hours of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian I)
Berlin, SMPK Kupferstickkabinett MS 78 B 14
Berlin, SMPK Kupferstickkabinett, Schreiber 1899
Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin-Preußischer Kulturbesitz, MS Germ. Fol. 742
Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin-Preußischer Kulturbesitz, MS Germ. Fol. 1027
Bruges, Openbare Bibliothek MS 437 (Chronik van Vladeren)
Chantilly, Musée Condé MS 65 (Très Riches Heures)
Ferrara, Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea MS Classe II, n. 211e
Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, cod. Laur. Plut. 90 inf. 13, c. 47 a
Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale, Magliabechiano Cod. II, 1.122
Hamburg, Staats und Universitätsbibliothek MS 102c in scrinio (Hartebok)
Heidelberg, Biblioteca Palatina, cod. pal. germ. 76 (Der Ackermann und der Tod)
London, British Library, Add. MS 34294 (Sforza Hours)
London, British Library, Add. MS 35313
London, British Library, Add. MS 37049 (Carthusian Miscellany)
London, British Library, Arundel MS 83 II (Psalter of Robert de Lisle)
London, British Library, Egerton MS 1070 (London Hours of René of Anjou)
London, British Library, Harley MS 2917
London, British Library, Royal MS E IV 10 (Smithfield Decretals)
London, British Library, Yates Thompson MS 13 (Taymouth Hours)
London, Wellcome Institute, MS 49
Los Angeles, Getty Museum, MS Ludwig IX 18 (Spinola Hours)
Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, cgm 312
Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, cgm 3974
New York, Morgan Library, MS M. 677 (Hours of Anne de France)
New York, Morgan Library, MS G. 50 (The De Lisle Hours)
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters, Inv. 69.86
   (The Psalter of Bonne de Luxembourg).
Paris, Bibliothèque de L’Arsenal, MS 3142
Paris, BnF, MS Fr. 1543 (containing Jean le Fèvre, Le Respit de la Mort)
Paris, BnF, MS Fr. 17001 (containing Jean Miélot, Mors de la Pomme, fol. 107v)
Paris, BnF, MS Lat. 18014 (Petites Heures of Jean Duc de Berry)
Paris, BnF, NAL 3187 (Hours of Anne de Beaujeu)
Stuttgart, Württemburgische Landesbibliothek, cod. poet. et phil. 4o 83.
Stuttgart, Württemburgische Landesbibliothek, cod. Donaueschingen A III 54
Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense MS 1404
Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana MS I.99 (Grimani Breviary)
Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. August. 16.17 quarto
Appendix B: Manuscripts which include the Three Living and the Three Dead.

N.B.: These manuscripts are grouped according to the extent of their illustration. The manuscripts within each group are arranged in alphabetic order by city, followed by library.

B1) Unillustrated poetic renditions of the Three Living and the Three Dead:

Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin-Preußischer Kulturbesitz, MS Germ. Fol. 1027, fifteenth century.
“Van drie doknyngen ende van drie levendigen konynghen,” fols. 154v–156r
Inc.: “In eynre suter somer tijt”

Ferrara, Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea, MS Classe II, n. 211e, fourteenth century.
“Cum apertam Sepulturam”, fols. 32r–36v.

“Cum apertam Sepulturam”

Hamburg, Staats und Universitätsbibliothek, MS 102c in scrinio, fifteenth century.
“Van dren konyngen”, fol. 76r.
Inc.: “In godes namen sin alle dingh”

Münster, Universitätsbibliothek, Ink. 133 (fragment)

“Do der lebnde Co rych”

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 302 (Works of John Audelay), ca. 1426.
“De Tribus Regibus Mortuis,” fol. 34v–r
Inc.: “In a byrchyn bonke ther bous arne bryst…”

Stuttgart, Württemburgische Landesbibliothek, cod. poet. et phil. 4o 83, fifteenth century, fol. 131r-136r.
“Dit is van den doden koningen jnd van den levenden koynngen,” fols. 129r–135r.
Inc.: “In eynre suysser somerzijt”

Inc.: “Lo primo re che nance giva, dice li compagnune…”, fol. 56v.
B2) Illustrated poetic renditions of the Three Living and the Three Dead:

London, British Library, MS Arundel 83 II (The Psalter of Robert de Lisle), ca. 1310
Abreviated Anon. IV text, fol. 127v

New York, MMA- The Cloisters, Inv. 69.86 (The Psalter of Bonne de Luxembourg), ca. 1349
Anon. IV text, inc. “Si comme la manere nous conte,” fols. 320r–326v
Illumination of the Three Living and the Three Dead on fols. 320v–321r.

Paris, Bibliothèque de L’Arsenal, MS 3142, ca. 1285
Commissioned by Queen Marie de Brabant, wife of Philippe III
Baudouin de Condé text, inc.: “Ensi con la matere conte,” fols. 311v–312r.
Illumination on fol. 311v.

Paris, BnF, MS Fr. 378, late thirteenth century.
Baudouin de Condé text, fol. 1r.
Anon IV text, inc. “Conpainz vois tu ce que je voi?,” fol. 7v.
Both texts are accompanied by illustrations.

Paris, BnF, MS Fr. 995, fifteenth century.
Illumination of the Three Living and the Three Dead on fols. 19v–20r.

Paris, BnF, MS Fr. 25566, late thirteenth century.
Baudouin de Condé text, fol. 209r
Nicolas de Margival text, fol. 210r
Anon. III, fol. 223v.
Each of the three texts is introduced by a historiated initial showing the Three Living and the Three Dead in conversation.

Paris, BnF, MS Lat. 18014 (Petites Heures of Jean Duc de Berry), ca. 1390.
Anon. IV text, inc. “Si comme la manere nous conte,” fols. 281v–286r.
The miniature appears on fol. 282r.

“Dis ist der welte lon”
Inc. “Wir sint dot, so lebent ir” (fol. 85v-87r)
B3) Representations of the Three Living and the Three Dead accompanied by short passages of text:

Berlin, SMPK–Kupferstichkabinett, Schreiber 1899, mid-fifteenth century woodcut.

Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, cgm 3974, ca. 1440–1460, fol. 59v.

Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense, MS 1404, ca. 1440, fol. 5v–6r.

Wiesbaden, Hauptstaatsarchiv, Abt. 3004, nr. B. 10, fol. 124r.
B4) Representations of the Three Living and the Three Dead accompanying texts other than that of the text of the poem:

Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 65 (Très Riches Heures), second campaign ca. 1485.
        Fol. 86v. Jean Colombe, The Three Living and the Three Dead, in the bas-de-page below a main miniature showing the burial of Raymond Diocrès, introducing the Third Nocturne for Matins for the Office of the Dead. The Three Living are depicted fleeing to the right away from the three dead who walk after them.

Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Banco Rari 18 (olim Magliabecchiana Cod. II, 1.122), mid-fourteenth century.
        The Three Living and the Three Dead, accompanying the lauda “Chi vuol lo mondo disprezzare,” fol. 134r.

London, BL, MS Stowe 17, Use of Maastricht, (Maastricht Hours), Liège, early fourteenth century, fols. 199v–200r.
        The Three Living and the Three Dead appears in the bas-de-page of the Office of the Dead.

London, BL Yates Thompson 13 (Taymouth Hours), ca. 1340, fols. 179v–180r.
        The Three Living and the Three Dead, in the bas-de-page of the seventh nocturne of Matins of the Office of the Dead.

London, BL Royal MS E IV 10 (Smithfield Decretals), ca. 1340
        The Three Living and the Three Dead, in the bas-de-page of book five of the Decretals of Gregory IX, fols. 258v–259r. (Extended narrative cycle: fols. 251v–268r)

New York, Morgan Library, MS G. 50 (The De Lisle Hours), ca. 1325, fol. 6v.
        The Three Living as part of a moralizing and hagiographical pictorial series at the beginning of the manuscript. The illumination showing the Three Dead is lost.
B5) Representations discussed in this dissertation with the Three Living and the Three Dead illuminating Vespers for the Office of the Dead

Berlin, SMPK Kupferstichkabinett MS 78 B 12 (The Berlin Hours of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian I), Ghent, ca. 1482.

Berlin, SMPK Kupferstichkabinett MS 78 B 14, Ghent, ca. 1480.

London, British Library, Add. MS 35313, Ghent, ca. 1500.
The Master of James IV of Scotland (Gerard Horenbout?) The Three Living and the Three Dead, fol. 158v.

The Master of Jacques de Besançon, The Three Living and the Three Dead, fol. 119r.

Los Angeles, Getty Museum, MS Ludwig IX 18 (Spinola Hours), Ghent, ca. 1510–1520.
The Master of James IV of Scotland (Gerard Horenbout?), The Three Living and the Three Dead, fol. 184v.

Paris, BnF, MS Lat. 920 (The Hours of Louis de Laval), Bourges, ca. 1475.
Jean Colombe, The Three Living and the Three Dead, fol. 190r.

Paris, BnF, NAL 3187 (The Hours of Anne de Beaujeu), Paris and Tours, ca. 1465-1475.
The Master of the Munich Boccaccio, The Three Living and the Three Dead, fol. 139v.

Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana MS I.99 (Grimani Breviary), Ghent, ca. 1515.
The Master of James IV of Scotland et al., The Three Living and the Three Dead, fol. 449v.
Appendix C

C1: Transcription and English Translation:
Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, cgm 3974, fol. 59v.

Transcription of text of the Three Living and the Three Dead by Künstle, p. 45.
Translation: Christine Kralik, with assistance from Prof. Markus Stock (University of Toronto)
(Transcribed in order from top to bottom, left column followed by right column)

Early New High German

1D: So wir ez hewt, so seyt ir es morgn;
    Ich mayn euch all drey da voren.  

2D: Daz ir seyd, das weren wir;
    das wir seynd, das werdent ir.

3D: Auch mag euch wol wunder han,
    Wye wir so iemerlich seyn getan.

1L: Ach got durch deyn wunder manigfalt,
    Wy seynd dy drey so yemerlich gestalt.

2L: Wurden sy ye leuten geleich?
    Das dunket mich gar wunderlich.

3L: Wullen wir alle werden so,
    So wurden wir nymer pillich fro.

English

1D: As we are today, so shall you be tomorrow
    I mean all three of you over there.

2D: What you are, that is what we were;
    what we are, that will you be.

3D: So may you well wonder,
    how we came to be so miserable looking!

1L: Oh God, through your manifold wonders,
    how do the three look so miserable?

2L: Were they once like men?
    That I find quite amazing.

3L: If we will all become like that,
    so will we by rights never be happy.
Appendix C2: Transcription and English Translation: Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett- SMPK, Schreiber 1899

Transcription: Rotzler, 196.
Translation: Christine Kralik, with assistance from Prof. Markus Stock (University of Toronto)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low German</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1L    Sie waren wer Sie waren.</td>
<td>1L  They were who they were;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wir magen uns ir vol weren</td>
<td>We should well defend ourselves against them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2L    Sint sie menschen gewesen glich</td>
<td>2L  Were they once men?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sich das wondirt mich</td>
<td>See—that amazes me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3L    Gott durch din wonder manigfalt,</td>
<td>3L  Oh God, through your manifold wonders, how is it that the three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wie sint die drie also gestalt</td>
<td>are made?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1D    Ez sal uch nit wonder han</td>
<td>1D  It should not be amazing to you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Das wir drie sint also gethan</td>
<td>that we three were also formed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2D    Das ir siet daz waren wir.</td>
<td>2D  What you are, that were we;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Das wir sint das werdent ir</td>
<td>What we are, that shall you be!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3D    Sin wir iss hude ir siet is morn</td>
<td>3D  What we are today so will you be tomorrow; I mean all three of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ich mejnen uch alle drie da vorn</td>
<td>you over there!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C3: Transcription and English Translation:
Rome, Bibl. Casanatense, MS 1404, fol. 5v-6r (The Three Living and the Three Dead).

Transcribed with the assistance of Prof. Lawrin Armstrong.
Translated by Christine Kralik, with the assistance of Jess Paehlke.

From left to right:

Fol. 5v:

Dead figure in the centre:
Quisquis ades qui me eterares sta, respice, plora. Sum quod eris, quod es ipse fui. Pro me, precor, ora.

Whoever you are, you who are terrified of me, stand, take note, mourn. I am what you will be, since you are what I was. I beseech you to pray for me.

Dead figure furthest to the right:
Quos viventes ad nos convertite mentes. Quod sumus hoc eritis, fuimus quandoque quod estis.

Oh you living, turn your minds to us. What we are, that will you be; we were that which you are!

Fol. 6r:

Living figure, closest to the gutter, left:
Quod sumus ille fuit, erimus quoque quod fuit ille. Vitabimus quacumque leres nee spes remanendi.
What we are he was, and we will be that which he is. Nor is there any hope of remaining (on earth).
Appendix C4: Transcription and Modern English Translation:
Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 302, fol. 34v, l. 138-141.


Modern English translation by Christine Kralik.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Middle English:</th>
<th>Modern English:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>And þroze the merce of God</td>
<td>And by the mercy of God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a mynster þai made,</td>
<td>a cathedral they had made,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a mynster þai made with masse</td>
<td>a cathedral they made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>140 fore metyng þe men on the masse</td>
<td>For holding mass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and on þe woze wrytyn þis was.</td>
<td>And on the walls written this was.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C5: Transcription and Modern English Translation: 

Excerpt of the transcribed German text from Tervooren und Spicker, *Die Begegnung*, 68, l. 228-232.

English translation by Christine Kralik, based on Tervooren and Spicker’s Modern German translation of the original, in *Die Begegnung*, 78.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rheinmassländisch</th>
<th>Modern German translation:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Die derde here rede: *Wy laten beid borch ende stede onsen rechten eruen.*</td>
<td>The third living says: *We will leave our castles and cities our lawful inheritance*.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>230 Mit onsen schat cloistere verweruen, Mit al onsen renten breit Wil wy gade sijn bereit…</td>
<td>230 with our treasure will we build monasteries. And with all our donations Will we stand ready before God…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D: List of Books of Hours, thus far identified, in which an illumination of the Three Living and the Three Dead accompanies Vespers for the Office of the Dead. List organized in alphabetical order by city and institution:


Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum MS 93. Use of Tours. France, ca. 1500, fol. 86r.

Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum MS 105. Use of Rouen. Rouen, ca. 1530, fol. 105r.

Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum MS 106. Use of Rouen. Rouen, ca. 1510, fol. 56v.

Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum MS 110. Use of Rome. France, ca. 1510, fol. 70r.

Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum MS 111. Use of Sens. France, ca. 1500, fol. 123r.


Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum MS 123. Use of Rome, ca. 1510, fols. 60v–61r.


Chantilly, Musée Condé MS 72, ca. 1503. Jean Pichore, fol. 50v.

The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 74 G 9. Use of Tournai. Tournai, 1535, fols. 61v–62r.

The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 78 J 44. Flanders, ca. 1500. Master of the Suffrages, fols. 109v–110r

The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 133 D 17. Rouen, ca. 1475, fol. 77r.

Leicester, John Rylands Library MS 38 (Hours of Galiot de Genouillac), early sixteenth century, fol. 94v–95r.

Leicester, John Rylands Library MS 52. Normandy, ca. 1501, fol. 201v.

London, British Library, Add. MS 11866. Use of Paris. Rouen, ca. 1500, fol. 120r.


Manchester, John Rylands University Library MS 38 (The Hours of Galiot de Genouillac). Use of Rome. French, ca. 1510, fols. 94v–95r.
Manchester, John Rylands University Library MS 52. Normandy, ca. 1500, fol. 201v.

Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria MS Felton 1 (Wharncliffe Hours). France, ca. 1475. Maître François, fol. 78r.


New York, Morgan Library MS M. 129. Use of Rouen. Rouen, ca. 1500. Follower of the Master of the Rouen Chevinage, fol. 64v.

New York, Morgan Library MS M. 156. Use of Rome. Brabant, ca. 1500, fols. 67v–68r.


New York, Morgan Library MS M. 196. Use of Besançon. Besançon, ca. 1470, fol. 113r.

New York, Morgan Library MS M. 220. Use of Rouen. Rouen, ca. 1500. Followers of the Master of the Rouen Echevinage, fol. 81r.


New York, Morgan Library MS M. 1083. Use of Rome. Florence, ca. 1500, fol. 87r.


New York, Morgan Library MS S. 7. Use of Rome. Flanders, ca. 1490, fol. 183r.


Paris, BnF MS Lat. 920 (The Hours of Louis de Laval). Bourges, 1470. Jean Colombe, fol. 190r.


Paris, BnF MS Lat. 13289. Use of Rome. France, late fifteenth century, fol. 117r.

Paris, BnF MS Lat. 13299. Use of Rome. France, late fifteenth century, fol. 153r.

Paris, BnF MS Lat. 18017. France, ca. 1500, fol. 104r.

Paris, BnF NAL 3187 (Hours of Anne de Beaujeu). Paris and Tours, ca. 1470. Master of the Munich Boccaccio, fol. 139v.

Paris, BnF MS Smith Lesouef 33. Use of Rome. Florence, 1480, fol. 100v.

Philadelphia, Free Library, Lewis E 86. Use of Bourges. Bourges, ca. 1500, fol. 113r.


Princeton, University Library, Garrett MS 56. Rouen, 1490, fol. 56r.

Princeton, University Library, Garrett MS 59. Brabant, ca. 1500, fol. 76v.


San Marino, CA, Huntington Library, HM 1165. Tours, early sixteenth century, fol. 105r.

Vatican City, BAV, MS Pal. Lat. 540 (Hours of Blanche of Ghent). Use of Rome. Avignon, ca. 1390, fol. 64v.

Vatican City, BAV, MS Ross. 197. Naples, late fifteenth century, fol. 232r.

Vatican City, BAV, MS Vat. Lat. 9490 (Carafa Hours). Rome, ca. 1480.

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