Mourning and Non-Ordered Religious Behaviour in the Tombs of Philip the Bold, John the Fearless and Margaret of Bavaria

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Introduction

The main attraction at the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon is the tombs of the dukes of Burgundy, that for Philip the Bold (1342–1404, tomb complete in 1412) and the double tomb for John the Fearless and Margaret of Bavaria (1371–1419 and 1363–1424 respectively, tomb completed in 1470) (figs. 1 and 2). These tombs are highly regarded for the series of forty-one sculptures that were installed around each of their chests (figs. 3-10). These figures are carved in the round, are between thirty-seven and forty centimetres tall, and many, though not all, of those in Philip's tomb have a corresponding copy in John and Margaret's. Representing both clerical and lay figures ostensibly in a funerary ritual, the whole group are often referred to as mourners.

Starting from the southeast corner of each monument, the first ten figures on each tomb are clerical, including three choir boys, two deacons, a bishop, three choristers and two Carthusian monks. The remaining figures, occupying most of the north sides and the whole of the west and south sides of each tomb, are lay persons, including, it is supposed, the family, friends and subjects of the duke in a state of mourning, all wearing long mourning robes.

In their current condition, the mourners are detachable from the tombs in which they are placed. This has caused museum curators some concern. On the first of February 1994, Emmanuelle Héran, then the head of the sculpture department at the Restoration Service of the Museums of France, sent a letter to the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon. It reported an inspection of sculptures that had recently been cleaned and restored. When describing the condition of the ducal tombs, Héran momentarily breaks from her formal prose. In urgent 'shouty caps', and with some text in bold, she writes:
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IT SHOULD BE MENTIONED THAT MOST OF THE MOURNERS AND THE CHOIRBOYS ARE NOT FIXED TO THE BASE. IT IS POSSIBLE WITHOUT ANY DIFFICULTY TO SLIDE ONE FROM UNDER THE CANOPY AND CARRY IT AWAY. IT IS TRUE THAT A METAL BAR KEEPS THE VISITOR AT AN (INSUFFICIENT...) DISTANCE AND THE SECURITY OF THE ROOM IS RIGOUROUSLY ASSURED (AS EVIDENCED BY THE CONCERNED ARRIVAL OF A SECURITY AGENT DURING OUR ‘DEMONSTRATION’). BUT THEIR HEIGHTENED ATTENTION DURING THE TOURIST PERIOD DOES NOT ENSURE AGAINST THEFT. IF THE FUNDAMENTAL RESTORATION OF THESE TOMBS IS DECIDED, THERE SHOULD BE ENVISAGED A MODE OF FIXATION THAT PROTECTS THEM AGAINST THEFT.

The reasons for Héran’s expressed anxiety have a longer history. The mourners’ vulnerability was defined over two centuries earlier. Between May and June 1792, the tombs had been displaced from their original site, the Charterhouse of Champmol just outside Dijon, to the Abbey of Saint-Bénigne, after these institutions were requisitioned by the revolutionary government. For the transfer, the mourners had to be sawn from the tombs’ bases, and this made them susceptible to thieves. In January 1793, a local woman, Marie Rogers, was arrested for stealing one of them. If only she had waited a few months, for later that year the General Council of the commune of Dijon had the tombs destroyed for being symbols of feudalism. The current tombs in the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon are restorations from the fragments, mainly undertaken between 1816 and 1827. While most of the mourners were recovered, a few choirboys have been lost (two choirboys on Philip’s tomb, catalogued as nos. 2a and 2b; and one choirboy from John and Margaret’s tomb, no. 41), whereas five others are plaster casts taken from those that found themselves in other collections (on Philip’s tomb, nos. 17, 18, 35, 38; on John and Margaret’s tomb, no. 67).

Even when the mourners were secured onto the base of the tomb, a concern for their safety had existed. In 1410, four pillars for a metal barrier were purchased to surround Philip’s tomb in the church of the Charterhouse of Champmol, an institution he founded and in which he
was buried. This barrier had decorative elements, its pillars being adorned with three-legged stands (*trépiers*). But as well as add to the splendour of the tomb, the ducal accounts record that the barrier was there so that the images they guarded ‘were not damaged or broken’ (*gaste et despiece*). The barrier proved both necessary and insufficient. In 1650 the Carthusians at Champmol complained that, during a visit to the Charterhouse, Anne of Austria and her entourage damaged church ornaments and furniture and pilfered alabaster figures from the ducal tombs. Presumably these figures were some of the fifty-two angels installed in the tabernacle capitals of the arcades, all of which were lost by the time Jean-Philippe Gilquin produced drawings of the tombs in 1736, likely snatched by one-time visitors over a long period.

There were two reasons why the tombs were vulnerable to damage and theft. The first was their exposure to visitors. The tombs were installed within the monks’ choir of the church, a space that was, according to their customs, meant to be reserved for the Carthusians. But close to or within this area were several other monuments built by or dedicated to secular patrons. These included chapels at the eastern sanctuary built and furnished by Philip the Bold’s brother, John of Berry; as well as the chapel of Saint Peter, founded by Guy de la Trémoille (d. 1397), a favoured knight of Philip the Bold who had his tomb placed in the monks’ choir. In the choir there was a paved slab for Archambaut de Fois (d. 1419), a knight who died with John the Fearless when he was assassinated. Like Philip, John was also interred in the crypt, as was his son, Philip the Good, as well as the wives and children of these three dukes. These monuments attracted the family members, allies and descendants of those they commemorated. The liturgical participation of such visitors in the monks’ choir is perhaps indicated by the 72 seats in choir stalls to the north and south of the ducal tombs, three times as many as there were Carthusians. Furthermore, visitors to the choir might not always be noble. A brief description of the charterhouse and the ducal tombs survive from 1486 in the travel diary of Georges Lengherand, who was once the mayor of Mons in Hainault. Such visitors could have been
hosted at the charterhouse’s guesthouse, and the 21 lead rings at the gatehouse anticipate large groups.\textsuperscript{23}

The second reason why railings were needed to hold off visitors is that the mourners invite close looking through an aesthetics of concealment, obscuration, and withdrawal. They are fully rounded with multiple viewpoints that cannot all be seen from one position. Those viewpoints are often obscured by the pillars of the arcades framing the mourners. The mourners further invite a closer inspection of their faces and hands by partially or fully concealing them with robes. Two eighteenth-century images by Jean-Baptiste Allemand showing the ducal tombs \textit{in situ} in the church of the Champmol depict visitors kneeling on the ground to get a closer look at the mourners (figs. 11 and 12).\textsuperscript{24} Allemand might have represented visual habits that would not have been shared with fifteenth-century viewers, for instance, in treating the tomb as an object for an Enlightened display of historical knowledge and erudition. There are also multiple eighteenth and nineteenth-century artworks showing visitors standing.\textsuperscript{25} But the mourners regularly bring some of its visitors into an uncomfortable physical position of crouching for a closer inspection because they encourage the viewer to look for what is obscured from a greater distance or a single viewpoint. Anyone who watches current visitors to the tombs from the balcony above the Salle des Gardes will regularly see some visitors kneel before it. Similar to the barrier originally installed around the tomb, the Musée has installed its own to keep these visitors at a suitable distance and has done since 1826 when the tombs were finally restored on this site.\textsuperscript{26}

The argument of this article is that the two factors that have led to the recurring installation of a barrier around the mourners – their exposure to a combined monastic and lay viewing public and their appearance of being obscured, concealed and withdrawn – are related to one another. The ducal tombs occupied and defined a space whose organisation and use were negotiated between clerical and lay groups, a point that has been particularly emphasised by Sherry Lindquist.\textsuperscript{27} By comparing the mourners of the ducal tombs with earlier and later
examples of this iconography, I will show how their gestures of withdrawal address this mixed lay and clerical context, combining the lay emotions of grief for relatives with the clerical values of prayer, hope and remembrance. While such a function of the mourners’ appearance of being withdrawn has been proposed before and reiterated recently by Robert Marcoux, it has been couched within a longer history of the ‘clericisation’ or a ‘monasticisation’ of death. These terms refer to how gestures of mourning were, from the thirteenth century, increasing muted in Western Europe through the wearing mourning robes and, in doing, made compatible with a belief and hope for salvation. While this longer historical development is indisputable, the concepts of clericisation and monasticisation do not suit a closer analysis of the ducal tombs within the context of the church of the Charterhouse of Champmol because they do not account for how religious values and ideals emerge at a site of encounter between the laity and clergy, rather than simply be an expression of the ideals of one appropriated by or imposed on the other.

To conceptualise how the mourners combine lay and clerical values, I describe them as representing and encouraging modes of ‘non-ordered’ religious ritual. R. N. Swanson used this term to describe patterns of behaviour and religious organisation in which the protocols of dress, gesture and collective ritual have been negotiated between various lay and clerical groups, maintaining the authority of the clergy while allowing for the religious agency of the laity in shaping their religious lives. Such a concept is useful for understanding the mourners’ ritual behaviour. A reconstruction from pre-revolutionary images of how the mourners were oriented on their axis shows that, whereas clerical figures on the tomb were represented as moving in a single processional direction, conducting a ritual that has a clear ending, the lay mourners around the tomb do not follow the same singular movement. While the lay mourners seem to come behind the clergy, accepting their spiritual leadership, they can also be read as engaging in an everlasting process of praying for the souls of the deceased. The monastic figures, placed between the clerical and lay figures, are represented with the characteristics of
both type of ritual: they are part of the ordered church presiding over a funeral, but also, in the handling of their books, they indicate a longer process of memory and prayer.

This argument relies on a close reading of the visual evidence of the mourners themselves, which I interpret in relation to anthropological concepts for thinking about ritual, notably that of liminality, as well as late medieval ideas for death and the afterlife. This method of moving between the visual evidence of the mourners on the one hand and more general fifteenth-century ideas and behaviours towards death on the other is necessitated by the fact that the mourners do not clearly represent or symbolise a particular set of rituals, either a procession or a burial (this point, well established in the literature, will be discussed below). Rather than illustrate specific theological texts or rituals protocols, these images instead encouraged the viewer into and guiding their ritual behaviour. My method is therefore similar to one Craig Harbison has used in his analysis of Jan van Eyck’s images of the Virgin and Child, images which, for Harbison, acted as visual agents within a ritual (by providing direct sight of the literal body of Christ) rather than represented a ritual (symbolise the Eucharist). Similarly, the mourners have to be taken as our primary evidence with their visual qualities closely read in terms of how they actively guide their viewers into ritual activity. They do so neither by simply representing a procession on the one hand or rituals of remembrance and prayer on the other, as others have argued, but rather by conflating these two activities. Through this conflation, they reassure the viewer of the clerical stewardship over the duke’s soul and over the community of people who pray for him, as well as encourage the viewer to participate in that community of remembrance. This conflation of two forms of ritual – a procession guided by the clergy and the everlasting rituals of prayer and memory of the living – is the result of non-ordered forms of religious behaviour, one in which the laity have some agency in assisting the deceased, while accepting the leadership and reassurance of the church’s faith and institutions.

The Orientation of the Mourners and their Ritual Behaviour
The history of the mourner’s displacements and reinstallation has left small but significant alterations in how these figures are oriented. While most of the mourners have been restored to their original space in the arcades surrounding the ducal tombs, for reasons of conservation, some of the figures are oriented slightly differently than they would have been originally so that they are not too close to the pillars of the arcades. Pre-revolutionary images of Philip’s tomb show the last chorister (no. 8) turned approximately forty degrees clockwise from its current position, so that it shared a book with the preceding chorister (fig. 13). The corresponding chorister on John and Margaret’s tomb (no. 48) is in the correct position, although the one before it (no. 47) was not turning backwards to share a book (fig. 14). Similarly, the first Carthusian (no. 9) on Philip’s tomb should also be orientated around forty degrees further clockwise to be in a more outward-facing position (fig. 15), just as one finds on John’s tomb.

While these changes are slight, they have changed how the ecclesiastical figures interact with the secular ones. Whereas the clergy generally seem to face in the same direction towards the front of the procession (coinciding with the south-east corner) the lay mourners do not. The original position brings the misaligned clerical figures into the more forward-facing position taken by the rest of the clergy. That the last two choristers of each group share a book also explains why the first of them breaks rank with the rest of the clergy to turn behind himself. However, it has often been noted that the mourners are unlike the clergy in that they do not seem to consistently face in the same direction. The break in the direction of movement is immediate with the first lay mourner after the clergy on each tomb (nos. 11 and 51) who turns backward towards the one behind him. Thereafter some mourners turn towards one another and one consoles his neighbour with a hand to his shoulder (nos. 24 and 25). Others look downward (nos. 30, 34, 55, 61, 66, 69, 71, 73), stare at the sky (nos. 27, 36, 40, 65, 67, 80), or into space (nos. 14, 18, 29, 36, 58, 59, 62). Two look through their praying hands (nos. 39 and 79). Generally, the mourners do not move in a unified processionial direction. This is most evident in the lay mourners that do seem to move on their feet, nos. 26, 39 and 79. Rather than walk clockwise around the tomb towards the clergy they turn in the other direction. Nos. 39 and
79 are facing anticlockwise and clearly leaning forward on his front foot towards nos. 40 and 80 and are thereby moving against the direction of the clergy. The movement of no. 26 is more subtle. He seems to be turning to put his weight on his back leg (or otherwise he is walking forward toe-heel, which is unlikely). This means he is turning to his left, also in an anticlockwise direction.

In representing a difference in movement and attention between the clerical and lay mourners, the mourners of the ducal tombs contrast with representations of mourning processions in manuscript illuminations. In fourteenth and fifteenth-century illuminations of funeral rituals, usually appearing in the Office of the Dead of Books of Hours, the mourners are represented as facing in the same direction, either towards the same object of interest, or towards the front of a procession. An illumination from a manuscript belonging to the duke of Berry, the Très-Belles-Heures de Notre Dame, made around the beginning of the fifteenth century, shows both these ways in which mourners conduct themselves (fig. 16). In the main central miniature the mourners stand behind the monks who sit around the coffin praying. Whilst the monks face in multiple directions, the mourners have their heads bowed and are all facing towards the coffin. Below this scene, and walking across the bas-de-page, is a procession. The clergy come first, followed by torchbearers, the coffin and coffin-bearers. They are then followed by a group of mourners. The mourners all face in the same direction towards the coffin and in the direction of travel. Because mourners are so consistently represented as facing in the same direction or towards the same object in this and other manuscript illuminations, one should ask why the mourners of the tombs of Philip, John and Margaret are not represented in the same manner.

The comportment of the ducal mourners also does not correspond to the two main methods of representing mourning that precede this tomb. First, there are those tombs in which mourners turn in profile to the viewer, as if in procession. A few examples are the tombs of Louis de France (d. 1260) in Saint-Denis (fig. 17), Gonzalo de Hinojosa (d. 1327) in Burgos
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Cathedral, Hugues de Châtillon (d. 1352) in the Chapelle Notre-Dame of Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges, and Riccardo Annibaldi in San Giovanni in Laterano, Rome. Second, from the fourteenth century onwards, there are tombs in which the mourners face outwards towards the viewer, feet and shoulders parallel to the arcades. A few examples are the tomb of Cardinal Pierre de la Jugie (c. 1376) in Narbonne Cathedral (fig. 18), the tomb of Aymon de Mollain (c. 1382) of which a fragment survives in the Musée de Luxeuil, and the tomb of Jehan de Derval (c. 1482), originally in the Cistercian abbey of Vieuville, Brittany. The mourners of the tombs of Philip, John and Margaret conform to neither of these two strategies. If the mourners are not facing the viewer, nor engaged in the procession, then what is their attention directed towards?

There has been no explanation of the change in the comportment between the clergy and laity among Philip's mourners. Different scholars either emphasise the seemingly stationary appearance of the lay figures or the seemingly processional arrangement of the mourners as a whole. These two sets of interpretations imply alternative account of the functions of the mourning figures: to represent a procession on the one hand, or to engage with rituals that occurred in the Charterhouse on the other. For Ernest Andrieu, the mourners represented Philip's actual funerary ceremony and so commemorated this event. While his attempts to identify individual mourners has long been discredited, for Sherry Lindquist it remains plausible that the mourners suggested a ducal funeral procession. On the other hand, Renate Prochno claims that the mourners' primary role is to act as figures that provoked an empathetic response from their audience and so engage with the beholder to say prayers for Philip. For Michael Grandmontagne, the mourners are not in a procession, but form a continuous loop around the tomb to guide the movement of the viewer around it and, in doing so, communicate the unceasing prayers said and rituals performed for the duke.

The clear break in the comportment between the clerical and lay figures of the mourners suggests that these readings of the mourners are not exclusive: that two sets of rituals – the actual funeral procession that was held for Philip and the longer process of prayer in the
Charterhouse – were important reference points for these figures. Xavier Dectot has recently underlined that when mourners re-emerged in European tomb sculpture from the early thirteenth century they not only represented the funerals presided over by the clergy, but also the longer process of prayer and remembrance by the family, friends and descendants of the deceased to ease the latter's purgatorial suffering. It is therefore worth considering whether the mourners conflate two different forms of ritual: on the one hand, the transitional rituals of mourning that occur after the death of a loved one, and on the other, the indefinite rituals of continual prayer and memory for the deceased.

**Everlasting Ritual and Indefinite Liminality**

My definition of everlasting and transitional ritual and their difference depends on the concept of liminality, a concept that defines such ‘in-between’ states. This concept is a cornerstone of modern anthropology first introduced into the subject in 1909 by Arnold van Gennep's work *Les Rites de Passage*. For Van Gennep, a ritual had three moments. They start with rites of separation which remove the persons from their established social position, and end with rites of reintegration during which those persons are re-established into a new stable condition. In between these two moments come liminal rites, which produce a space and time in which the person or persons are neither what they were before, nor what they will be. The rite of passage is a transformative process that, during the liminal period, momentarily destabilises the relation of the persons involved to the normal state of themselves and to their community. While Van Gennep's work is now over a century old, this basic tripartite structure of rites, one used to conceptualise them as marking transitions, remains a point of consensus and a theoretical reference for contemporary anthropologists.

Van Gennep noted that the duration of the liminal period could be variable. For funerals, he notes that the duration of the period of mourning often correlated to the period in which the dead were believed to travel through the afterlife. Later anthropologists, notably Victor Turner and, more recently, Árpád Szakolczai, considered the consequences of such
durations becoming permanent, leading to 'the institutionalisation of liminality', in Turner's terms. The idea of purgatory, that the dead underwent a painful process of purification after death for sins for which they had not done penance, posits such an everlasting liminal period, a period of indefinite duration for the deceased in which they are separated from the community they have left (that of the living), but have not yet achieved a settled status in a new community (that of the blessed).

A tomb that most clearly represents mourners in a state of purgatorial liminality is that for Philibert of Monthoux (c. 1453). This a mural tomb in the church of Saint Maurice in Annecy (fig. 19). The mural represents a series of mourners around Philibert's transi. In his study on Philibert's monument, Pierre Quarré notes that the scroll the transi holds seems pessimistic. In other images of dying and dead bodies, such as the transi of the tomb of Jean de la Grange in Avignon (c. 1402) or the dying man in the Rohan Hours (who is very transi-like, fig. 20), the last words come out of the mouth. A contrast between the words of Philibert's transi and those of the body in the Rohan Hours further demonstrates Philibert's indefinite liminality. The dying man in the Rohan Hours says 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit. You, my Lord, the Lord of Truth, have redeemed me'. These words are from Psalms 30:6. However, the present tense form of 'I commend' is taken from the gospel of Luke, who records the first of these sentences as emitted by the last breath of the crucified Christ. These last spoken words of the dying man in the Rohan Hours mark the transitory movement of a last breath, and thus a clear transition of the body's soul from one place to another. This is further indicated by the soul represented above the body. An angel fights a demon to recover this soul from its possession.

Just as the spoken words travelling on the breath of the dying man in the Rohan Hours mirror the soul of the deceased escaping the body, the dead and solid written text in Philibert's hand has a synecdochal relation to the withered husk that is Philibert's body and his indefinite condition between death and resurrection. The words here read 'locus est terribilis iste' (how awe-inspiring/terrible is this place). These words are taken from Genesis 28, where Jacob, one
of the Patriarchs of the Israelites, has a dream in which he sees a ladder connecting heaven and earth. Upon awaking he says, trembling, 'How awe-inspiring is this place? This is no other than the House of God and the Gate of Heaven.' Being a reference to an established House of God, one connecting heaven and earth, the words in the hand of Philibert's transi were incorporated into Roman liturgies for the ritual of consecration, and are occasionally found in the entrances of churches. In both patristic and twelfth-century commentary, these words were also usually considered to be a prophecy of the Last Judgement. The place where Jacob slept was 'terrible' because it would undergo a transformation in the coming of God's Kingdom. By being represented as a transi, Philibert not only awaits the future moment of resurrection, but also demonstrates his fears and humility while in his liminal state. Jean Gerson (1363-1429), a theologian that was highly influential theologian within both the French and Burgundian courts during his career, quoted Genesis 28:17 in his sermons to affirm that the clergy should maintain a fearful and penitential attitude within the church. The transi communicates Philibert's apprehensiveness not just with the words 'terribilis est locus iste', but through the decay of his body, and through other banderoles on the mural. A scroll unrolling from the praying hands of the first mourner to the left once read, before suffering damage: 'the learned die just like the unlearned'. Another scroll from the mourner furthest to the right claims 'for when a man dies he will inherit serpents and worms'. These macabre messages show that Philibert is meek: he has died like any other man, and takes no possessions into the next world.

Pierre Quarré notes the similarity between Philibert's mourners and the lay mourners of the ducal tombs in the thickness and shape of their drapery. The painted inscription above the mural describes Philibert as a counsellor (co(n)sillier) to the dukes of Burgundy, which makes it plausible that Philibert and the artist(s) he hired knew of Philip the Bold's tomb (John and Margaret's tomb was completed after Philibert's). Therefore, while Philibert's mourners exhibit differences to the ducal ones, notably in how they stand in the presence of the transi, i.e., the object of their mourning, they nevertheless exhibit similarities to the ducal mourners that seem to result from a shared concern for purgatorial suffering. Like the ducal mourners,
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Philibert’s are not in a procession moving from one place to another, but stand around Philibert, performing their prayers for the deceased until the end of time, similar to how the ducal mourners surround the dukes and duchess, depicted lying above them on the tombs’ chests. The fifth mourner of Philibert’s tomb seems to stare upwards in the same manner as many ducal mourners (nos. 27, 36, 40, 67, 80). Also the third mourner, like many ducal ones, has his head completely concealed. The fourth of Philibert’s mourners seems fixated on his praying hands, as nos. 39 and 79 in the ducal tombs. The last two pairs seem to turn towards one another, as do several pairs of the Burgundian mourners (for instance, 11 and 12, 17 and 18, 31 and 32, 37 and 38). Like Philibert’s mourners, the diverse points of focus of the mourners of Philip, John and Margaret show they are likewise concerned with the unseen state of the souls of the deceased.

**Transitional Rituals and Clerical Authority**

The lay mourners’ concern for the souls of the deceased was a role the laity were obliged to fulfil to aid the souls of Philip, John and Margaret in the years after their deaths. The clergy had a different, even if overlapping, set of responsibilities. They gave comfort to the living by presiding over funeral ceremonies. This is why the clergy on each tomb are represented together as if in a procession. The procession starts with a carrier of holy water (no. 1 on Philip’s tomb; no. 41 on John and Margaret’s), then two candle-bearing children (nos. 2a and 2b, 2b now lost; 42a and 42b), a crucifer (nos. 3; 43), a deacon (nos. 4; 44), a bishop (nos. 5; 45), and then three choristers (nos. 6-8; 46-48). Turning the corner to the north side there follows the Carthusian monks (nos. 9 and 10; 49 and 50).

Although the clergy seem to be in a procession, they do not represent the actual funerals of Philip, John and Margaret. It is not completely clear what liturgy the clergy on Philip’s tomb are performing. The water-bearer at the front of the cortège may indicate the rite of absolution at the end of the funeral during which the body or coffin was sprinkled with holy water and incense.74 But unlike other tombs and manuscript processions in which absolution rites are depicted there is no bier or body represented with the bearers of holy water.75 It seems that the
specification of the type of ritual performed in the ducal tombs was less critical than the general assertion that the ceremony was authorised and administered by high clerical authority. Although Augustine of Hippo saw no value in funerals for the soul of the deceased, he tolerated them because of the benefit they had for the wellbeing of the living. Such a view was repeated by Jacques de Vitry in the thirteenth century. The importance of the assurance that funerals offered is perhaps indicated by the presence of the bishop (no. 5). This bishop seeks to comfort the viewer by holding his book open and outward. This manner of holding a book was common in images of saints in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Often no words are represented on the pages, it is simply the fact of divine revelation through scripture that is signified. The representation of a bishop as the bearer of that knowledge, and the general relevance of the Christian revelation concerning resurrection and salvation, may have been reassuring to the families of Philip, John and Margaret and others who saw this figure. Only nobles would have their funeral led by such important churchmen. The presence of the clergy on the tombs was therefore not to record the actual event and its participants, but rather to reassure the viewer that the bodies and souls of the deceased received the best available care after their death.

There are two Carthusians represented on each tomb (nos. 9, 10; 49, 50) and these may have communicated the long-term duties of prayer and memory these monks had towards Philip, John and Margaret. This duty is indicated by the books they carry. These are unlikely to be Books of Hours or breviaries; they are much thicker than the books carried by either the bishop or the singers that precede them (nos. 5-8). Furthermore, neither of them appears to sing, unlike the singers whose mouths are open so their teeth and tongues are visible (nos. 7 and 8). Carthusians were often represented as praying by reading as their life required silence. Were these books supposed to be recognised as the necrologies the Carthusians used to record their calendar of prayers? Although the dimensions of these books are not dissimilar to surviving fourteenth-century necrologies, they have no details that can establish recognisability. But it is worth noting that the Carthusians’ interactions with the books involve acts of memory. No. 9’s thumb has been carefully sculpted as inserted into the book, marking a
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page around three quarters in. No. 10 holds onto one page halfway through the book whilst reading a page much further along. A clasp saves another page. These are ways of relating to books that involve referencing and remembering. Through them the sculptures may be communicating the Carthusians’ duty to remember the anniversaries and other prayers for their ducal patrons, a duty that necrologies codified and maintained. This duty of remembrance may be why the Carthusians are placed between the lay mourners, with whom they share a similar duty, and the clergy, with whom they share the status of belonging to the first estate.

**Mourning as non-ordered religious behaviour**

In his survey of Western attitudes to death, Philippe Ariès claimed that the late Middle Ages witnessed a ‘clericisation’ of death, one where the laity adopted the ideals of the clergy by adopting mourning robes to tone down their outward expressions of grief and pain. More recently, Robert Marcoux has developed this argument by shifting the emphasis from the priesthood to the monastic orders: mourning is a state of liminality, and monks provide a model of those living in a state of permanent liminality. While both arguments may account for longer changes in mourning practices and their representation in the late Middle Ages, particularly in the widespread adoption of mourning robes, they are not well-suited to the more historically local analysis I have undertaken of the ducal mourners. The clerical and lay groups among the ducal mourners each emphasise alternative side of the medieval response to death due to differences in their responsibility towards the deceased: the former officiating the immediate, transitional response to death, the latter shifting the emphasis to the longer process of memory and prayer. Therefore, while there is a clear division between the clerical, monastic and lay groups on the tombs in their responsibilities and ritual behaviour, there is no firm distinction in their ideals and values. They each simply emphasise a different aspect of general late medieval ideals and practices concerning death: death itself and memory. The ideas of a ‘monasticisation’, ‘clericisation’ or even, for Michael Vovelle, a ‘secularisation’ of death, do not capture this overlap and interpenetration of lay and clerical beliefs and behaviour.
A concept that does account for this overlap is R. N. Swanson's notion of non-ordered religious behaviour: religious practices that are adopted and adapted by the laity, even if they are negotiated with the orthodoxy demanded by the church. This term allows for the leadership of the clergy (an idea emphasised by the concepts of a 'monasticisation' or 'clericisation' of mourning) while allowing for the agency of the laity in shaping and adapting rituals and relationships that suit their combined social and spiritual needs. This point is demonstrated by the robes of the ducal mourners, and particularly how they conceal their heads. Robert Marcoux has argued these robes place the mourner in a liminal position, suspending their normal social functions, and that monks acted as model for such states of social withdrawal. While this argument describes the robes' spiritual significance of withdrawal and contemplation, one should also account for how the robes express grief and pain, those seemingly secular emotions particular to mourning. As well as indicate a state of liminality, of withdrawal from the world for contemplation, these robes emphasised the secular loyalties between the living and dead – friendship, family or fealty – that have just been severed. Such pain is notably expressed in the robes 'weeping drapery', performing a type of weeping through the extensions of their falling and heavy robes, a gesture Renate Prochno has compared to one sometimes found on images of John the Evangelist at the foot of the Cross. In particular, observe the repeated cascading folds on the robes falling from the right hand of no. 21 down to his feet (fig. 21). Because this hand is raised to his bowed face these long folds seem to suggest the movement of falling tears. While this reading of these robes as 'weeping drapery' is speculative, it is worth noting how the closest relatives of the deceased were expected to wear the grand deuil, the longest mourning robes that extend even beyond the feet. 

Mourner no. 21 demonstrates not only that mourning robes had a dual signification – inner, contemplative thought and outwardly expressed pain – but that the sculptors of these figures used sculptural form to present these two connotations as co-extensive: the tears, extended by robes, falling from the concealed face also lead back up to it. This use of folds to shift attention between the outer expression and inner, obscured body can be seen in other...
gestures. Note the clenched fist represented covered over by clothing on no. 15 (fig. 22). One can see the tensed, raised knuckles of the left hand clearly showing through the robes pulled tightly around it. The mourning robes covering this fist emphasise the tension of its grip rather than diminish it, as this tension is extended into the folds themselves which are drawn and turn towards its clench. There are multiple other mourners that produce folds by drawing their robes into and around their hands and arms (nos. 14, 23, 37). The external form of the robes extend and highlight the clutch of the limbs that hold them, giving outer form to the tense feelings of the figure they otherwise conceal.

There are multiple examples of mourners from the early-fourteenth century with completely concealed bodies and faces, including on the tomb of Lucie de Vierville, dame de Hermanville, (d. 1315), the tomb of Joan of Montaigu, (d. 1316), and a representation of the entombment of Christ by Jean Pucelle made between 1324-28. Such examples cast doubt on the thesis that the sculptors of the ducal tombs were inspired by the story of the ancient painter Timanthes who represented Agamemnon veiled to express this figure’s grief. There is no record of any text in Philip the Bold’s library that describes Timanthes’s painting, whether such a description be from Pliny the Elder, Cicero or Valerius Maximus. However, the extent to which the robes of the ducal mourners described and extended the movements of the imagined physical structure and limbs beneath them was unprecedented. This attention to the relationship between the folds of the mourners’ robes on the one hand and the tension and structure of the bodies they conceal on the other show that these robes were not simply a representation of contemporary funeral attire, but also attracted their sculptors’ interest as a site of expressive sculptural form.

Attention to how the mourners interacted with the arcades around them further demonstrates that the interplay between the outer movements and imagined inner tensions of the mourners’ bodies was a special point of consideration for their sculptors. Susie Nash has compared how the mourners are framed by their arcades with the framing of the prophets on
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the Well of Moses, another monument at the Charterhouse of Champmol designed by the same sculptors who produced Philip the Bold’s tomb (fig. 23). The prophets project from the outer-side of the arcades of the Well, interacting across the points of the structure’s hexagonal shape so that they do not seem enclosed by the arcaded spaces defined by its sides. The mourners also interact across angles defined by the arcades around them, often turning towards one another, one even putting his hand on another’s shoulder (nos. 24 and 25). But, as Nash notes, unlike the prophets on the Well of Moses, the mourners seem recessed into those arcades rather than project from them; the mourners interact through the inner sides of the angles defined by the pillars rather than across the outer angle. The micro-architecture around the mourners and the shadows they cast therefore seem designed to emphasise the mourners’ separation from the viewer and their partial concealment. Particularly notable are the 12 triangular single-vaulted niches on each tomb whose foremost pillar bisect the front-on view of the mourners behind them. In sum, just as the robes are used to extend motions and movements of the concealed figure beneath them, so are the arcades evidence of how the sculptors carefully considered how three-dimensional structures, in this case the arcades, create impressions of tense, unresolved movement and emotional withdrawal by overlapping with or partially concealing a figure enclosed beneath them.

The mourners’ robes do not only indicate a contemplative attitude, but also draw attention to the tense muscles and weeping of the figure beneath them. They represent the mourners as withdrawn from normal social functions, but not only because they imitate contemplative attitude of the clergy and monastic orders. The mourners’ turn towards contemplation is caused by the grief of losing a beloved friend or relative, and so is not contrary to or distinct from, their secular social ties, those defined by the family, household or court. Both their spiritual and their secular values – their expressions of concern for the afterlife and of pain over the death of a loved one – are evident in the mourning robes, but without clear distinction. As well as part of a longer ‘monasticisation’ or ‘clericisation’ of death in the late Middle Ages, the
mourners are expressions of and a prompt for non-ordered modes of religious behaviour in which lay and clerical values become indistinct.

**Conclusion**

The mourners of the tombs of Philip, John and Margaret encourage their beholder to participate in prayer and remembrance for these Burgundian rulers. They do not do so simply by mirroring their beholders’ anticipated behaviour of prayer, but rather by conflating this ritual with that of a procession, one led by clergy. By being ambiguously situated between the everlasting ritual of prayer and the concluded, transitional ritual of a burial, the mourners encourage a consideration for the suffering of the souls of the deceased while also reassuring their viewers that the deceased dukes and duchess have already received the best possible care from the church and continue to receive it from the Carthusians (who are also represented with the clergy). The mourners therefore present a dual and ambiguous attitude to death: that the dead are in a liminal awaiting salvation, but also that their bodies and souls were well-served during the funeral and remain under the prestigious custodianship of the Carthusian order. While the mourners may encourage an emotional response to the fact of death in order to stimulate prayer and remembrance, they also underline the faith, hope and order among the living church that assure salvation.

The dual attitude to death, that it concerns both the immediate and painful separation of the deceased from the living as well as the prospect for resurrection and the process of prayer and remembrance for the salvation of souls, is evident in the mourners’ gestures. By concealing their bodies, and especially their heads, the lay mourners’ robes represent them in a contemplative state, that is, one concerned with the hidden reality of the afterlife. At the same time, the folds and seeming weight of these robes emphasise the agitation of the bodies below them, their tears, bowed heads and tense limbs. These two significances of the mourning robes show that the mourners can be read as engaged in both transitional and everlasting rituals: as experiencing grief for deceased friends and relatives, but also hopeful for salvation. Rather than
be distinct interpretations of the same iconography, the form of these robes brings these two readings into contact with one another: the expression of pain through the mourning robes intensifies, rather than detracts from, the seeming withdrawal of the figure, and vice versa, this dialectic being most notable in the falling drapery that leads to and from the hidden face of mourner no. 21.

The fact that mourning robes were increasingly adopted by the laity from the thirteenth century to tone down potentially despairing performances of grief represents a ‘clericisation’ (Ariès) or ‘monasticisation’ (Marcoux) of death. Nevertheless, this is a mode of religious behaviour that intersects with and was intensified by secular concerns: unlike monks the mourners are in a contemplative, liminal state because, and not despite, their embeddedness within social, familial and political networks, ones which have been disrupted by death. The religious and secular merge here without a clear point of division, representing a form of non-ordered religious behaviour. The iconography of this tomb, as well the wider furnishings of the church of the Charterhouse of Champmol resulted from the interests and requirements of multiple groups: the Carthusian order, their Burgundian dynasty, a broader group of noble patrons, and a wider, indeterminate set of visitors the Carthusians had the means to host. The railings placed around the tomb of Philip suggest that the behaviour of the Carthusians anticipated disrespectful as well as respectful guests. However, the tomb would not have been installed in the charterhouse if there were not considerable mutual respect and even ideological and behavioural continuity between the laity and clergy.

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1 For the history of the production of Philip’s tomb, see Nash 2019. For John and Margaret’s, Prochno 2002, 106-107; and Baron, Jugie and Lafay 2009, 33-36.

I use the term ‘mourner’ rather than pleurant because this is sufficient for a text written in English. The word pleurant is used to describe the mourners of Philip the Bold’s tomb in a contract for their production, Bibliothèque nationale de France (hereafter BnF), Collection de Bourgogne, vol. 58, fol. 51r (Prochno 2002, 373). The English term ‘weepers’ only seems to have arrived later in a contract for the tomb of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, d. 1439. See Morganstern 2000, 134.


4 Baron, Jugie and Lafay 2009, 41-44.

5 Baron, Jugie and Lafay 2009, 44.

6 Baron, Jugie and Lafay 2009, 44-48.

7 Baron, Jugie and Lafay 2009, 53-70.

8 See Jugie 2010 and Morand 1991, 350-369. The mourners are traditionally numbered 1-80, 1-40 being from the tomb of Philip the Bold, and 41-80 being from the tomb of his son and daughter-in-law, John the Fearless and Margaret of Bavaria. There are 41 figures for each tomb, but the two choirboys who lead each procession are counted as one, as they take up only one cloister space,
being numbered 2a and 2b and 41a and 41b respectively. This numeration originates from Andrieu 1914.


10 ‘III maistres pilliers de fer garnis de trepiers’, ADCO B 11675 fol. 201r-201v (Prochno 2002, 347).

11 ADCO B 11675 fol. 201r-201v (Prochno 2002, 347).


13 Gilquin 1736, notes their loss on fol. 17v. Angels reconstructed in the nineteenth-century remain on the tomb of John the Fearless and Margaret of Bavaria, though have been removed from Philip’s tomb. See Baron, Jugie and Lafay 2009, 107, 142-144.

14 Prochno 2002, 11-14, 46, 77-78, 192-194; ; Lindquist 2008, 190-200; Guigo I, 10.1.


19 For a list of burials, see ADCO ms. 1F-16 (earlier ms.138), 184-189 (Prochno 2002, 353).


22 Chipps Smith 1985.

Both items are catalogued in Baron, Jugie and Lafay 2009, 128-129, nos. 21 and 22.

Multiple examples are in Baron, Jugie and Lafay 2009, 128-129. For instance, Hubert Clerget, *Visite de Sa Majesté l’Empereur aux tombeaux des Ducs de Bourgogne à Dijon*, 1861, Aquarelle, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon, inv. 1982-4-D. See Baron, Jugie and Lafay 2009, 129, no. 25.

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Lindquist 2011, pp. 16-17. See also Lindquist 2008, 190-193; and Prochno 2002, 11-14, 77-78, 192-194.

On clericisation, see Ariès 1981, 161, 166. See also Gaál 1990, 10; and Alexandre-Bidon 1998, 120. On monasticisation, see Marcoux 2007 sections ‘la spiritualisation du deuil’ and ‘la monachisation du deuillant’; see also Marcoux 2011 and Núñez Rodriguez 1987. On secularisation, see Vovelle 1983, 163-168 as well as similar ideas in Binski 1996, 99, and Gittings 1984, 23-24, 33-34. Both arguments have a longer history. The idea of ‘monasticisation’ originates in Harnack 1908-1917, vol. 3, 404, where the term *Monachiserung* is used to define periodisations of Western piety: ‘the time of 1046-1200 is the period of the monasticisation of the priests, that from 1200-1500 brings the monasticisation of the laity’. Claims for a secularisation of mourning in the late medieval and early modern period can be found in Mâle 1986 [1913], 368 and Panofsky 1964, 62.

Swanson 1997, 108.

Harbison 2012, 94-95.

Lola Fondbertasse, Conservatrice du patrimoine, responsable des collections médiévales, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon (private correspondence).

There are four such images that provide a view of the pre-revolutionary appearance of the north side of Philip's tomb. See Plancher 1792, vol. 3, 204; BnF, ms. nouv. acq. fr. 5916, fols. 15v-16r; Lesage Muet, ‘Tombeau de Philippe le Hardi, face II’, Musée de Beaux-Art de Dijon, inv. D148.1; Joannès Lesage, ‘Tombeau de Philippe le Hardi, face II’, Musée de Beaux-Art de Dijon, Dijon, inv. 3703 (catalogued in Baron, Jugie and Lafay 2009, 126-128). On the condition of these mourners, see Morand 1991, 354.
Morand’s description of no.36 as having eyes that ‘gaze blindly’ can be attributed to these other figures, Morand 1991, 359.


*Très-Belles-Heures de Notre Dame*, BnF, ms. nouv. acq. lat. 3093, fol. 104r. See Quarré (ed) 1971, no. 143 and pl. 47.

The same iconography of the mourners standing behind the clergy can be found in Martial de Paris, *Vigiles de Charles VII*, fol. 248v. See Quarré (ed.) 1971, plate 56.

Discussed by Gaál 1990, 10.

Reproduced in Anne McGee Morganstern 1992, 191, Fig. 12.


Catalogued in Quarré (ed.) 1971, no. 21, pl. 12. Originally from the abbatial church of Luxeuil.

Guillotel 1971, 121-128.

Andrieu 1935, 221-230.


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Prochno 2002, 99-100. The idea that the mourners invoke empathetic responses has been mooted by other scholars Lindquist 2008, 154; Moffitt 2005, 81.
Grandmontagne 2005, 260-261. Grandmontagne further speculates that this composition may have responded to annual rituals in which tombs were walked around by the survivors of the deceased, 206, note 562.

Dectot 2021, 63. On this dual temporality of remembrance, see also Schmitt 1998, 5-6.

A similar idea was mooted for the iconography of mourners in Marcoux 2003, 156.

Van Gennep, 1969. For a history of the concept, see Thomassen 2009.

Van Gennep 1969, 14.

Thomassen 2009, 6-7; Thomassen 2014, 3.

Van Gennep 1969, 211-212.

Van Gennep 1969, 211.


On the history of the concept of purgatory, see Le Goff 1984 and Walls 2012, 9-34.


'In manus tuas domine commendo spiritum meum. Redemisti me domine deus veritatis'.


Genesis 28:10-19.

'pavensque quam terribilis inquit est locus iste non est hic aliud nisi domus Dei et porta caeli.' Genesis 28:17.

Rankin 2010, 293-294; Remensnyder, 1995, 35.

Carty 1999, 85-88. An example is the grotto of Saint Michael at Monte Gargano.

Carruthers 2014, 24.

Carruthers 2014, 24.


71 ‘Cum enim homo morietur hereditabit spences et vermes’. Quarré 1965, 204. Quarré misses out the word *homo*.

72 Quarré 1965, 208.

73 Quarré 1965, 208. The painter that Quarré suggests made Philibert’s tomb is Guillaume Spicre. Clément Gardet points out that Philibert had personally encountered another potential candidate, Jean Bapteur, though this evidence is not conclusive, Gardet 1969, 175-179.

74 On the depiction of this ritual on tombs, see Johnson 2000, 104-106; and Morganstern 2001, 66.

75 See Johnson 2000, 105-106. On manuscripts illuminations see note 36 above.

76 Le Goff 1984, 276; Paxton 1990, 26-27.

77 Marcoux 2007, paragraph 4; Lauwers 1997, 447-450.

78 Relevant examples would be images of Saint Anthony produced in the region of Burgundy and Savoy. See Baiocco and Morand (eds.) 2013, 102-117.

79 Prochno 2002, 125.

80 This contrast is noted by Lindquist 2008, 159, 167.


82 Necrologies from the Charterhouse of Champmol do not survive. The information we have from them comes from an eighteenth-century transcription in ADCO ms. 1F-16 (earlier ms. 138), pp. 184-189 (Prochno 2002, 17, 353-355). The necrology of the Carthusian Order, the *Villeneuve* Necrology, is a seventeenth-century manuscript, see Clark (ed.) 1997. A surviving fourteenth-century necrology with comparable dimensions is the Necrology of the Chapter of Saint Peter, The Utrecht Archive, 220, no. 74. See *Medieval Memoria Online*, memo text carrier ID 439 <http://memo.hum.uu.nl> [accessed 28 July 2021].

83 Ariès 1981, 161, 166.

84 Marcoux 2007; Marcoux 2011.

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86 Swanson 1997, 108.

87 Marcoux 2007 sections ‘la spiritualisation du deuil’ and ‘la monachisation du deuilant’

88 See Prochno 2002, 94. Prochno gives the example of a statue of John from the Museum Mayer van den Bergh, Antwerp, Inv. No. 2110. See Prochno, pl. 59. For Romanesque examples of this iconography, see Bleeke, 2012, 21-24.

89 Beaulieu 1955, 261.

90 Roggen also sees this feature as noteworthy for its expressive power, Roggen 1936, 32.

91 In addition to the following examples, also see an illustration of a grieving mother from the Holkham Bible (c. 1330) British Library, ms. add. 47682, fol. 23v; an image of a weeping Absolom from a twelfth-century Cistercian Bible. Bibliothèque municipale de Dijon, ms. 14, fol. 13r (Marcoux 2011, fig. 4); and the tomb of Adèle of Vermandois, (†975, tomb c. 1275-1350(?), BnF Collection Gaignières B2755, see Morganstern 2001, 76, note 33.

92 BnF Collection Gaignières, B2317 (Guibert (ed.) 1912, pl. 122).

93 BnF Collection Gaignières, B.4903 (Guibert (ed.) 1912, pl. 131).


96 See the table of secular texts in Philip the Bold’s library in De Winter 1985, 41-46.

97 Nash 2019, 55-59.

98 Nash 2019, 55.

99 On Philip’s tomb, nos. 3, 6, 10, 13, 16, 19, 23, 26, 30, 33, 36, 39; on John and Margaret’s: nos, 43, 46, 50, 53, 56, 59, 63, 70, 76, 79.