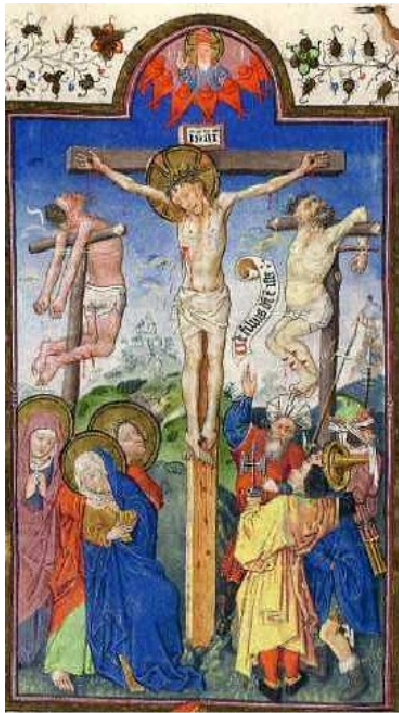


The influence of the early Works of Jan van Eyck on Utrecht miniatures.

(Lecture by Henri L.M. Defoer in Nijmegen, December, 10, 2009)

1



New York



New York



Münster

The first two of this three miniatures are by the master of Catharine of Cleves, a Crucifixion and a Descent of the Cross. Both miniatures are in the Hours of Catharine of Cleves in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York.

The third is a miniature in the Hours of Katharina van Lochorst, now in Münster. Till recently it was also attributed to the Master of Catharine of Cleves, but in her essay to the catalogue of the exhibition in Nijmegen in 2009, Ann Korteweg thinks it is by his assistant.

All three compositions show details, that are derived from works by Robert Campin.

2



This master painted a triptych with the Descent of the Cross, that has been lost, but known through copies. Such as this one in Liverpool, Walkers Art Gallery. On the left wing it shows the bad thief with the donor, on the right wing the good thief with bystanders and on the middle panel the Descent of the Cross itself.

On the top of the ladder on the middle panel we see the bareheaded Nicodemus. With one hand he grips the ladder, with the other he lowers the body of Christ. On the left side stands Joseph of Arimathea. A third man is climbing the ladder to assist Nicodemus.

The figure on the foreground is Mary Magdalen. She has the intention to climb the ladder and has here right foot already on the second rung of the ladder.

3



2

The original painting is lost, however a fragment of the right wing has been preserved.
It is the well known panel in the Städelsches Institut in Frankfurt.
It is supposed that the triptych was made for one of the churches in Bruges. There it must have been accessible for the public and so it was possible to make copies of it.

4



We have not only a painted copie, there are also drawings after details of the composition.
This one, representing the bad thief, is in the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge Massachusetts.

5



3

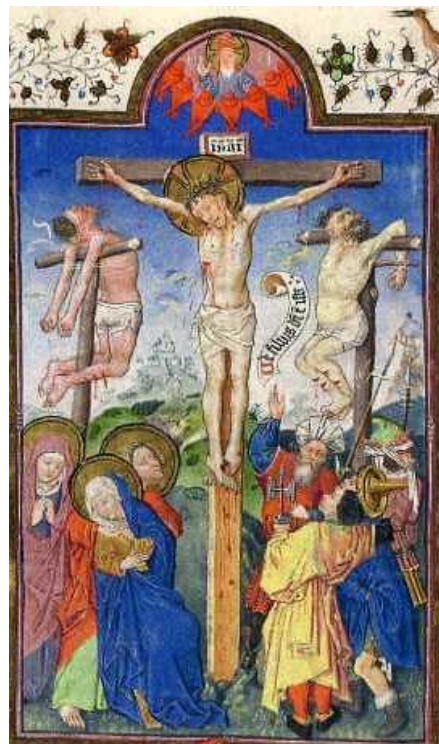
Another drawing is in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge in England. It shows the figures of the middle panel, but without the angels and the cross. The ladder is incomplete and misses some of the rungs.

6



Drawings like this must have been available in the workshop of the Master of Catharine of Cleves.

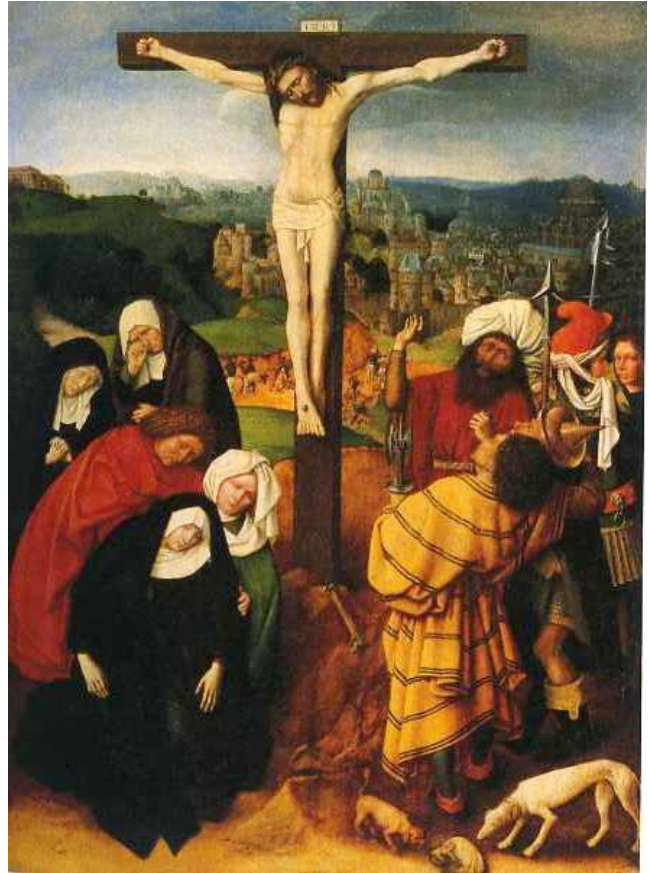
7



4

In this miniature in the Hours of Catharine of Cleves, both the bad thief and the good thief are derived from the triptych by Robert Campin.

8



The rest of the composition is derived from another panel by Robert Campin, also lost, but known to us through a copy by Gerard David, in the Museum Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid.

9



Hours of Catherine of Cleves Hours of Katharina van Lochorst

5

The composition of the Descent of the Cross was used by the Master of Catharine of Cleves in the Hours of Catharine of Cleves, but also by his assistant in the Hours of Katharina van Lochorst.

10



It is possible that this very drawing, now in the Fitzwilliam Museum, was used in the workshop of the Master of Catharine of Cleves. Otherwise it must have been a similar kind of drawing on which were drawn the figures only and on which the ladder had almost no rungs.

On such a drawing one couldn't see, that Mary Magdalene was starting to climb the ladder. This was perhaps the reason, that on the two miniatures with the Descent of the Cross, one by the Master of Catharine of Cleves and the other by his assistant, Mary Magdalene is not starting to climb the ladder. She has her right leg in a illogical position, as if she is dancing. The miniaturist didn't understand the drawing well, perhaps because the ladder on it had almost no rungs.

11



There are differences between the two miniatures.

The Master of Catharine of Cleves did change the position of Nicodemus. He holds Christ with both hands. On the miniature by the assistant in the Hours of Katharina van Lochorst. Nicodemus grips with his right hand the ladder, just as on the original composition.

12



7

The Master of Catharine of Cleves was not only influenced by Robert Campin. He did also derive details from a composition with the Carrying of the Cross by Jan van Eyck. The original painting is lost, but it is known through a sixteenth century copy in Budapest. The master of Catharine of Cleves derived from it the soldier in front of Christ and the figure of Simon of Cyrene.

13



Here you see the details of the two men. There is however a difference. On the composition by Jan van Eyck, Christ is carrying the cross with the longest beam backwards. On the miniature the longest beam is in front of Christ.

14



North Italy, ca 420



Byzantium, 1180

These two ways of carrying the cross belong to two different traditions.

In the oldest tradition, Christ carries his cross with the longest beam always in front of him. We see this already on this ivory from the beginning of the fifth century and it became the usual way to represent the Carrying of the Cross in Byzantine art and in Italian art as well.

15



Florence ca. 1420



Pietro Lorenzetti

16



Simone Martini



Limbourg Brothers

You can see it also on this painting by Simone Martini. It was the model for the miniature by the Limbourg Brothers in the Très Riches Heures.

17



Spitz Hours, Paris ca. 1420 (detail).

You find it on other French miniatures as well, for instance in the Spitz Hours in the Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles, made in Paris around 1420.

18



Christ is carrying his cross in this way also in the Egmont Breviary by the Master of Zweder van Culemborg (new York, Pierpont Morgan Library) and, as we have already seen, in the Hours of Catharine of Cleves.

10

19



Goslar ca. 1230



Salzburg ca. 1410



Baden ca. 1450

In Germany there was another tradition. From the thirteenth century onwards, we find there the composition with Christ carrying his cross with the longest beam backwards, what is more natural. Almost all the representations in Germany are since then in this way.

20



See for instance the Carrying of the Cross by Hans Multscher in his altarpiece from 1437 in Berlin.

11



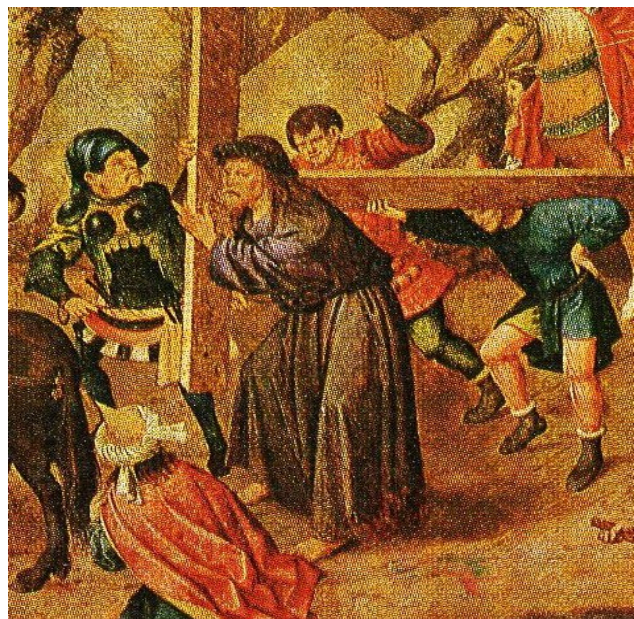
Untill around 1450, on most Netherlandish paintings and miniatures, Christ was carrying the cross in the traditional way with the longest beam in front of him. But, from the middle of the fifteenth century onwards the German tradition of carrying the cross, with the longest beam backwards, became also here the rule. See for instance this panel by Jan Joest on his altarpiece in Kalkar, 1505-1508 .

22



In the Netherlands, it was Jan van Eyck, who in his *Carrying of the Cross* for the first time did use the new German tradition. The painting was made, when he was in service of John of Bavaria.

23



13

The master of Catharine of Cleves derived the figures of the soldier and Simon of Cyrene from this composition. However he retained the tradition of Chris carrying his cross with the longest beam pointing forward.

This didn't fit very well, for Simon is not supporting the longest beam but the short one.

He does this with one hand only, keeping his other hand in his side, which has here no meaning. In the composition of Jan van Eyck however his position makes sense, for Simon is not only using his right hand but also his left shoulder, which is supported by holding his left hand in his side.

The Master of Catharine of Cleves didn't understand the composition of Jan van Eyck. It is probable that he didn't have a copy of Jan van Eyck's painting as a whole, but that he had only drawings after some figures and groups without coherence.

This kind of drawings were available in the Northern Netherlands.

24



We still have one (Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum). It shows the cavalcade on the right of the Carrying of the Cross by Jan van Eyck.

14

25



This drawing, or another with the same detail, was in a early stage available in workshops in Utrecht. It was copied by the Master of Otto van Moerdrecht in a canon illustration dating from about 1435, now in Cleveland, Cleveland Museum of Art.

26

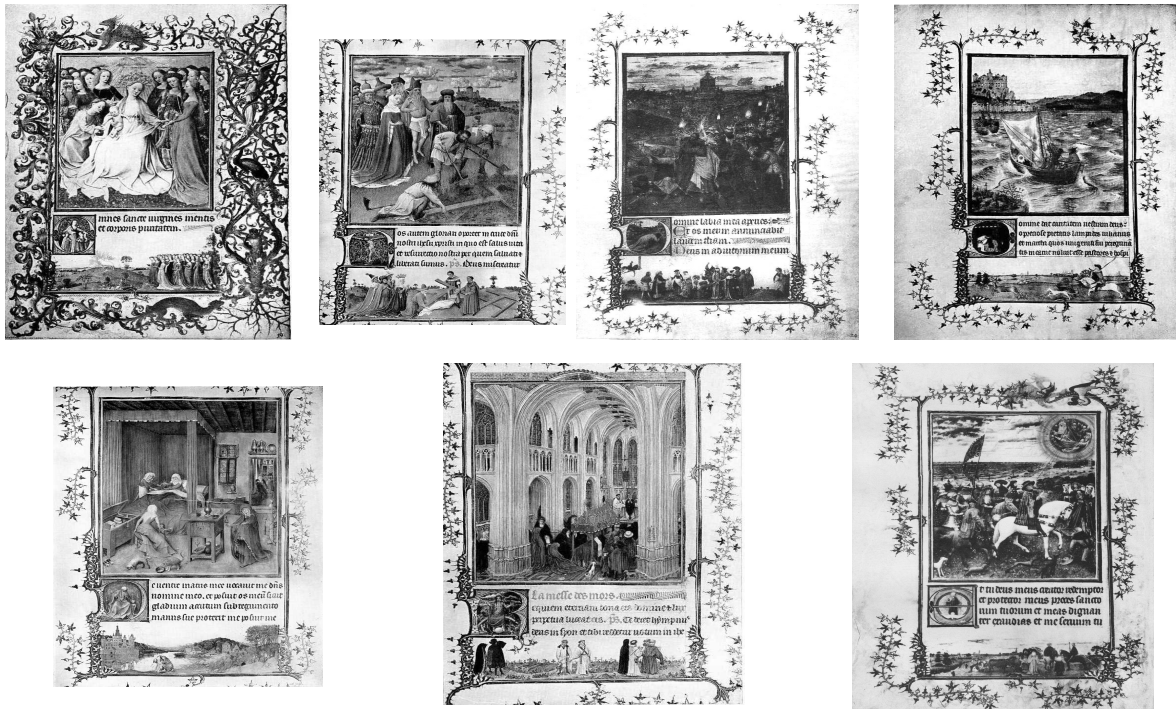


15

Let us return to John of Bavaria. Here we see him on horseback on a miniature in the so called Turin Hours.

This manuscript has been the subject of many studies and scholarly publications. One of the latest is the very profound essay of Ann van Buren in the Facsimile edition of the Turin-Milan Hours of 1994-1996.

27



Originally the Turin hours were part of a manuscript, which was probably commissioned by the Duc Jean de Berry. Between 1380 and 1405 it was decorated in three campaigns by French masters, among others the Limbourg Brothers. In 1405 or 1406 the manuscript was divided. The unfinished part was acquired by John of Bavaria, then the elect of Liège. The other, finished part came in 1412 in the possession of Robinet d'Estampes, the Dukes Treasurer. In 1417, when William IV, count of Holland had died without a male successor, John of Bavaria was pushed forward by emperor Sigismund as the new count. This did result in a war with Jacqueline of Bavaria, the daughter of William IV. John emerged victorious and in 1420 he became count of Holland, Bavaria and Hainault. He abdicated as elect of Liège, married Elisabeth of Gorlitz and settled his court at The Hague. When in the possession of John of Bavaria, new miniatures were added to the Turin-Milan Hours. At his death in January 1425 it was however unfinished. In the forties of the fifteenth century the manuscript was owned by an unknown nobleman in the Southern Netherlands. There the decoration was finished in two other campaigns.



Turin Hours



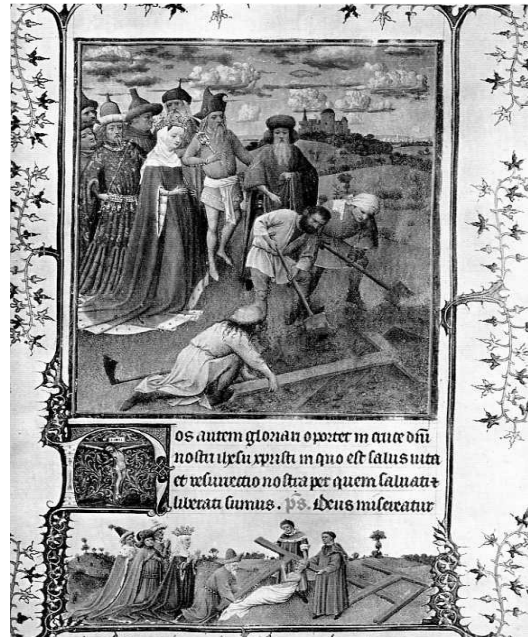
Turin-Milan Hours

Later it was divided once more. One part, known as the Turin Hours, came in the National Library of Turin, where it was destroyed by fire in 1904. Luckily, just two years before it had been published and photographed by Paul Durrieu.

The other part was in the beginning of the nineteenth century acquired by Prince Gian Giacomo in Milan and in 1935 presented to the Museo Civico in Turin. It is now known as the Turin-Milan Hours.

In 1911 in his study of the two manuscripts Georges Hulin de Loo did distinguish several miniaturists. He named them Hand "A" to Hand "K". Seven miniatures he ascribed to Hand "G". This hand is now mostly identified as being Jan van Eyck.

Jan van Eyck was in the service of John of Bavaria as Varlet de Chambre. He was paid several times between 1422 and 1425 for works he executed for his lord.



Ann van Buren believes, that the decoration of the manuscript, when it was owned by John of Bavaria, was executed in two campaigns. One between 1415 and 1417, when John was still elect of Liège, and a second between 1422 and 1425, when he was living at the Hague as count of Holland. This two miniatures, showing the Virgo inter Virgines (Turin Hours) and the Finding of the Cross (Turin-Milan Hours), Ann van Buren ascribes not to Jan van Eyck but to his older brother Hubert van Eyck.



She also thinks, that the miniature with the taking of Christ (Turin Hours) was done at Liège, however not by Hubert but by the young Jan van Eyck.

The van Eyck brothers originated from Maaseyck and had probably their training in Maastricht, the second largest town of the Bishopric of Liège. So it is understandable that John of Bavaria did engage them for the decoration of his newly acquired but unfinished manuscript.

31



Also the two miniatures, one with the Voyage of Saint Julian and the other with Sovereign's Prayer at the Shore (both Turin Hours) were painted by Jan van Eyck, but not during the first but during the second campaign of 1422-1425, when Jan van Eyck was in the service of John of Bavaria.



He also executed the miniatures with the Birth of John the Baptist and the Requiem Mass and their bas-de-pages in the Turin-Milan Hours



Jan van Eyck
Master of Zweder van Culemborg
Master of Catharine of Cleves
Master of Evert Zoudenbalch

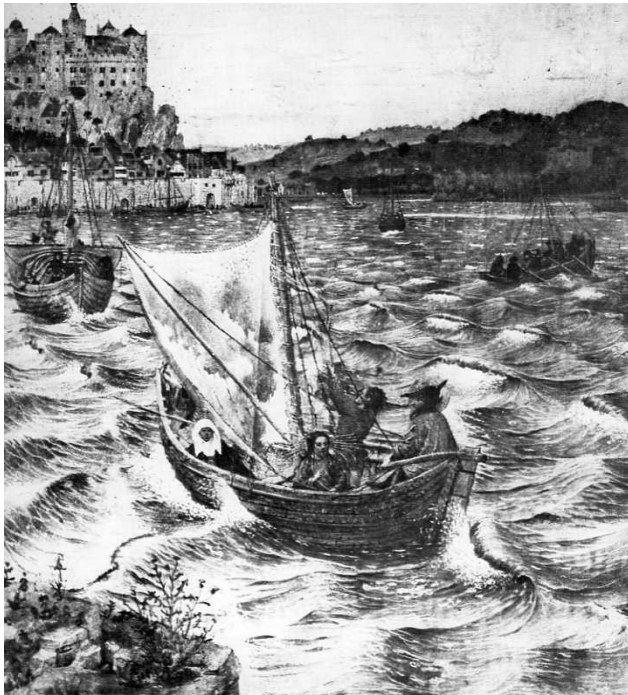


As James Marrow did show already in his lecture on the Masters and Miniatures Symposium in Utrecht in 1989, the miniatures of the Van Eyck Brothers had a considerable impact on Dutch miniature painting after 1425.

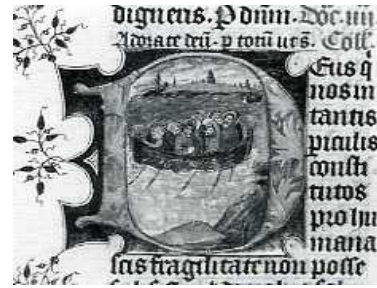
See for instance the miniature with the Birth of John the Baptist in the Turin-Milan Hours and the miniature by the Master of Zweder van Culemborg in a book of Hours in a private collection in Paris (around 1425). The small table with utensils and the lady next to it are clearly derived from the Van Eyck miniature. Or see the Birth of Mozes by the Master of Catharine of Cleves in the History Bible in London (around 1450).

Or look at the Bedchambre of King David by the Master of Evert Zoudenbalch in the Vienna Bible (around 1460-1470).

We don't see such an influence in Southern Netherlandish miniatures and paintings



Jan van Eyck, Turin Hours



Master of Zweder van Culemborg, Greiffeklau Missal and Egmont Breviary

Clear is also the influence of the Journey of Saint Julian on the seascapes of the Master of Zweder van Culemborg in The Greiffenklau Missal and the Egmont Breviary (Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery and New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, about 1430-1440)



Jan van Eyck, Turin-Milan Hours,



Master of Zweder van Culemborg, Greiffenklau Missal, Egmont Breviary

The composition of the Finding of the Cross in the Turin-Milan Hours was copied by the Master van Zweder van Culemborg in the Greiffenklau Missal and has influenced some of his miniatures in the Egmont Breviary

37



The kneeling figure on the foreground of the miniature in the Turin-Milan Hours was used by the Master of Catharine of Cleves in his gathering of the Manna in the Breviary of Catharine of Cleves.

38



The digging figures of the miniature in the Turin-Milan Hours influenced his miniature with the exhumation of the Bones of Joseph in de London History Bible.

23



Master of the Feathery Clouds

The clouds on the miniatures by the Master of the Feathery Clouds in the Vienna Bible and in other miniatures by his hand are clearly inspired by the clouds on the Finding of the Cross in the Turin-Milan Hours.



Greiffenklau Missal



Book of Hours,
Paris, private collection

Master of Zweder van Culemborg,

The Taking of Christ in the Turin-Hours was several times copied by the Master of Zweder van Culemborg. Only the position of Peter standing with his legs on either side of Malchus was not adopted.

41



Also the Master of Catharine of Cleves goes in his miniature with the Taking of Christ back on Jan van Eycks composition.

42



The figure of Malchus however was derived from the kneeling man on the Finding of the Cross in the Turin-Milan Hours.

43



Master of Catharine of Cleves

The Mary Magdalene in the Hours of Catharine of Cleves is taken as mirror image from the lady on the Birth of John the Baptist in the Turin-Milan Hours

44



Master of Zweder van Culemborg

26

It is believed that, except for the illumination of the Turin-Milan Hours, Jan van Eyck did not illuminate another manuscript, now lost. A drawing in the Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin with the Adoration of the Magi, is regarded as being copied by the Master of Zweder van Culemborg after one of the miniatures in that lost manuscript.

The composition has clearly influenced his miniature in a book of hours formerly in the Alfred Bum Collection in Kobuss.

45



Master of Catherine of Cleves

It was almost exactly copied by the master of Catharine of Cleves in a book of hours in the Museum Meermanno at The Hague.



Clearly evident is the influence of the early work of Jan van Eyck on the Master of Evert Zoudenbalch and the Master of Gijssbrecht van Brederode. Utrecht illuminators active between 1460 and 1470. In these three miniatures in the Hours of Jan van Amerongen, an early work of the Master of Evert Zoudenbalch, now in the Royal Library in Brussels, the rocky landscape and the town of Jeruzalem are derived from the Carrying of the Cross by Jan van Eyck.



The same is evident in the miniature with Christ on the Cross in the same manuscript.
 The man with the donkey left is a copy of the man with a donkey on the carrying of the Cross by Jan van Eyck.

48



The Taking of Christ in the Hours of Jan van Amerongen is copied after the miniature of Jan van Eyck in the Turin-Hours.

49



29

The taking of Christ by the Master of Gijsbrecht van Brederode in the Hours of Gijsbrecht van Brederode (Liège, University Library) is even a more faithful copy. Like in the Turin Hours Petrus is standing with his legs on either side of Malchus.

50



The Master of Gijsbrecht van Brederode also copied this composition in an historiated initial in an small book of hours in the Catharijneconvent in Utrecht (ABM 12b).

51



30

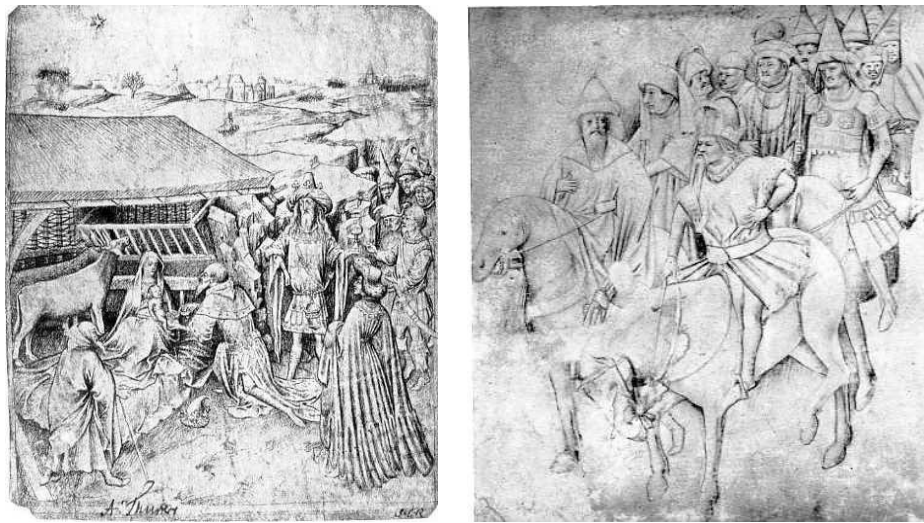
The Carrying of the Cross in another historiated initial in this manuscript is copied after the central group of the Van Eyck painting with the same subject.

52

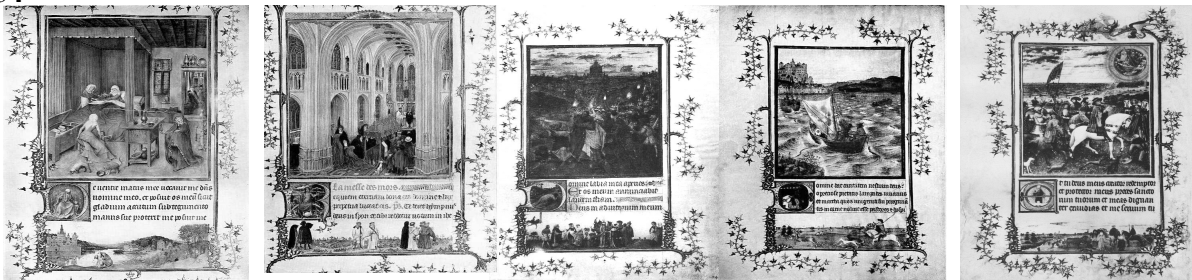


Which conclusions can we draw from all this influence of the early work of Jan van Eyck on Utrecht manuscript painting?

It is clear: Only Utrecht illuminators active between 1425 and 1470 had knowledge of the early compositions of Jan van Eyck, especially of his miniatures. I don't think however, that Utrecht illuminators, who were middle class people, could have had access to his illuminated manuscripts itself, as they were owned by noblemen and ladies of high rank.



Probably they had in their workshops drawings after miniatures by Jan van Eyck's and after his painting with the Carrying of the Cross.



Miniatures executed before 1425



Miniatures executed after 1425

When John of Bavaria died in January 1425, his widow Elisabeth von Gorlitz inherited all his physical goods and valuables. She left The Hague and moved to the court of Philip the Good of Burgundy in Dijon. Probably she took the unfinished manuscript of the Turin and the Turin-Milan Hours with her. Later it was owned by one of Philip's courtiers. Around 1440-1450 this nobleman had send it to Bruges to have it finished by painters of the workshop of Jan van Eyck. This miniatures didn't had such a profound influence on Utrecht illuminators.

Ann van Buren and some other scholars have another theory. They believe, that the unfinished manuscript was part of the so called “joyaulx”, the jewellery and valuables, that were left by Elisabeth in The Hague under the care of Frank van Borsele. There do exist documents from 1438, 1439 and 1440 concerning the restitution of the “joyaulx” to Elisabeth. In 1442 Frank van Borsele admitted, that Elisabeth had not yet received back her “joyaulx”.

It is possible, that the Turin-Milan Hours were part of these “joyaulx” and were still in the possession of Frank van Borsele around 1442, and that he had send it to Bruges for completion. Ann van Buren supposes, that in the period between 1425 and 1440, the illuminators of Utrecht could have had the possibility to study the gatherings of the manuscript, which was left behind in the former workshop of Jan van Eyck.

It is however not at all certain, that the manuscript was part of the “joyaulx”.

But even when the manuscript remained in The Hague after the death of John of Bavaria, it must have been kept safely by Frank van Borsele with the other valuables in a place, where it was not accessible for everyone except for Frank van Borsele and his inner circle.

So it must have been only possible for Utrecht illuminators to get knowledge of the early work of Jan van Eyck through preliminary drawings or drawings after his compositions.

Drawings, that were left behind in his workshop after his departure to the south.

The question is now, where was the workshop of Jan van Eyck located?

55



Master of Margareth of Cleves



Master of Dirc van Delft

Untill now, everybody has assumed, that this workshop stood in The Hague in or in the neighbourhood of the Binnenhof. The court of Holland at The Hague was a flourishing centre of culture during the reign of Albrecht of Bavaria, 1358-1404. Especially his second wife since 1394, Margareth of Cleves, the aunt of Catharine, was active in promoting literary life. She commissioned the production and illumination of several books. There are no indications, that they were produced in workshops inside the Binnenhof. It is more probable, that they were made in Utrecht, in those days a centre of book production.

It is mostly assumed, that the Master who did illuminate the Hours of Margareth of Cleves, now in the Gulbenkian Collection in Lisbon, was living in Utrecht.

The Master of Margareth of Cleves had a considerable impact on the manuscript illuminators of that town at the end of the fourteenth century, for instance on the Master of Dirc van Delft. This master illuminated the “Tafel van den Kersten Ghelove” commissioned by Albrecht himself.

In his introduction to the facsimile of the Hours of Margareth of Cleves, James Marrow has the hypothesis, that the Master of Margareth of Cleves has to be identified with Jacob van Munniken, who was paid several times between 1388 and 1403 for the decoration of cloth hangings, lances and coat-of-arms. It was not unusual that professional panel painters, as for instance Jean Malouel, did this kind of more humble paintwork.

When “van Munniken” means “from Munich”, as James Marrow thinks, it will explain the Southern German influence in the miniatures of the Master of Dirc van Delft.

That Jacob van Munniken was paid by Albrecht of Bavaria, who was living at The Hague, will not say, that Jacob was there living as well. It is quite possible, that Jacob had his workshop in Utrecht. Utrecht was in those days also a centre of the production of military equipment. This was concentrated in the Zadelstraat (Street of the saddlers). In this street one could find workshops for the production of swords, helmets, harnesses, knives, saddles next to workshops of goldsmiths, embroiderers and painters. All this craftsmen were member of the same guild, the “Sadelaarsgilde” (guild of the saddlers).



Hours of Mary of Guelders



Egmont Breviary



Hours of Catherine of Cleves

Looking at manuscripts commissioned by other ladies of high rank we see, that Mary of Guelders had in 1415 her book of hours written in a monastery near Arnhem and probably illuminated in the same town. The Egmont Breviary and the Book of Hours of his wife, Catharine of Cleves, were illuminated in Utrecht.

It is acceptable that most of the North Netherlandish manuscript illumination was done in towns and not in palaces or castles. It was in towns, that illuminators could find good materials, pigments, and vellum. There they had contact with colleagues and had access to compositions of other artists.

As to Jan van Eyck, the fact, that he was Varlet de Chambre of John of Bavaria, does not mean, that he had to live in the residence of the count at The Hague. For, when Jan van Eyck in 1425 became Varlet de Chambre of Philip the Good of Bourgondy, he did settle first in Lille and then in Bruges. There he was living in a house of his own.

So, when Jan van Eyck was Varlet de Chambre of John of Bavaria he could have worked and lived outside the Hague in any Dutch town, most probably in Utrecht.



It is on the illuminators in Utrecht, that the early compositions of Jan van Eyck had such a considerable influence. I suppose, that Jan van Eyck, when he moved to Flanders, must have left behind preliminary drawings and drawings after his compositions, They must have been available for them in the years after 1425. For that reason, Utrecht is in my opinion best qualified of being the town, where the workshop of Jan van Eyck was located.

(Henri L.M. Defoer, revised August 2010)

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