

AN INVESTIGATION INTO A FRENCH FIFTEENTH-CENTURY
BOOK OF HOURS

A Thesis

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ABSTRACT

A Books of Hours refers to a personal prayer book that was used by the laity, rather than the clergy. The laity's version of these texts is often accompanied by enchanting illuminations. Although the text and subject matter of the images within each codex remain similar, no two Books of Hours are alike. In the Middle Ages the popularity of Books of Hours was such that today they form the largest extant category of illuminated manuscripts.

This thesis concentrates on one particular manuscript: a yet uncatalogued Book of Hours that is currently within the collection of Louisiana State University's Hill Memorial Library. Although a large amount of scholarship exists in which Books of Hours are discussed in general, most of this work tends to focus on the more ornately illuminated manuscripts, and/or manuscripts which have since been attributed to named artists. However, many extant codices, including the Book of Hours owned by Louisiana State University, do not fall into these two categories. Examples of tests and methods that can be used to extrapolate information pertaining to Books of Hours can be found in various books and articles in the body of scholarly literature, though not all together in one source.

Since no in-depth discussion of the Louisiana State University's Book of Hours exists, the thesis is the first detailed investigation devoted to it. The context within which Books of Hours were made is discussed, followed by a description of each section of this particular codex. Investigations of the provenance combined with various tests and stylistic analysis led this writer to conclude that the manuscript is probably of Parisian origin dating from circa 1450 to 1475 and was made on speculation rather than

commissioned. As such, the LSU Hours is a wonderful example of a typical French fifteenth-century manuscript. It is hoped that the methodology presented here would be helpful to others investigation late medieval Books of Hours.

CHAPTER 1. OVERVIEW OF BOOKS OF HOURS

Louisiana State University proudly owns an authentic medieval manuscript called a Book of Hours. Celebrated as the university's two millionth volume, this exquisitely illuminated manuscript is thought to be the only Book of Hours in a public collection in Louisiana. Yet at the time of its production in the fifteenth century, Books of Hours were produced in prolific numbers. In fact they have been designated the medieval "best-seller," and indeed they remained the number one best-seller for two hundred and fifty years.¹

The manuscript is in the collection of Hill Memorial Library, and consists of 163 leaves of prime vellum. It is written in Latin and French, in a good Gothic book hand. The text is contained within one column, fifteen lines to the folio.² This Book of Hours contains twelve illuminated miniatures with floral, fruit, and acanthus leaf borders.³ Large initials below the miniatures are decorated with red and blue interlacing foliage. All of the other leaves of text, including the calendar, have a floral border. This particular Book of Hours contains the following, listed in order with miniatures, which are highlighted in bold:

Calendar (1r)

Sequence of the Gospels: ***Saint John on the Isle of Patmos*** (13r)

¹ Roger S. Wieck, *Time Sanctified. The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life* (New York: George Braziller, Inc., in association with The Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, 1988), 27. It should be noted that the word "best-seller" to describe medieval Books of Hours was first used by the scholar L. M. J. Delaissé, "The Importance of Books of Hours for the History of the Medieval Book," in *Gatherings in Honor of Dorothy E. Miner*, edited by Ursula E. McCracken, Lillian M. C. Randall, and Richard H. Randall, Jr. (Baltimore: The Walters Art Gallery, 1974), 203.

² The term "folio" is Latin for leaf. It is one half of a bifolium. Folio and folios (or folia) are often abbreviated as f. and ff. The front and back of a folio are referred to as recto and verso. Recto is the leaf on the right side of the manuscript and is often abbreviated to r, while verso is the leaf on the left side and is often abbreviated to v.

³ The term "miniature" does not refer to the size of the illustration, but rather is derived from the Latin *miniare*, which means "to color with red," since red or *minium* was used originally to decorate books.

“*Obsecro te*” (18v)
 “*O Intermerata*” (22r)
 Hours of the Virgin:
 Matins: *Annunciation* (27r)
 Lauds: *Visitation* 51r)
 Prime: *Nativity* (62r)
 Terce: *Annunciation to the Shepherds* (68r)
 Sext: *Adoration of the Magi* (73r)
 None: *Presentation in the Temple* (77v)
 Vespers: *Flight into Egypt* (82r)
 Compline: *Coronation of the Virgin* (89r)
 Hours of the Holy Spirit: *Pentecost* (95r)
 Seven Penitential Psalms and the Litany: *King David Praying* (98r)
 Office of the Dead: *Burial Service in a Cemetery* (116r)

Upon starting my investigation of this particular codex, the known provenance consisted of the following.⁴ The manuscript had been donated to Louisiana State University (LSU) by the late John McIlhenny in 1991. He had purchased it from Scribners Book Store in New York in 1953. Once in LSU’s possession, the manuscript was rebound by Gary Frost in 1992, as the then-current binding was not the original and was in poor condition. This previous nineteenth-century binding also resides at Hill Memorial library, and the inside front cover bears a bookplate, “EX-LIBRIS L. PASQUIER.” It had already been established that this Book of Hours had been produced in France and that it dated from the mid-fifteenth century. Also it was established that this “manuscript was apparently produced in the Autun Atelier, which was known to have produced a group of liturgical manuscripts illuminated for Jean Rolin, Cardinal of Autun.”⁵

⁴ Codex refers to a book composed of folded sheets (in this case parchment) as opposed to other forms of written word, such as a scroll or a tablet.

⁵ This information appears on a small leaflet that was produced to celebrate LSU’s two millionth volume; it was obtained from a previous appraisal that could not be located.

In this thesis, I intend to deal with some fundamental questions in chapter one: What is a Book of Hours? How and by whom were they made? Why were they so popular in the late Middle Ages and for whom were they made, and then how were they read and used? While discussing these matters in general for French fifteenth-century Books of Hours, I shall comment on the Book of Hours owned by LSU. In chapter two I shall describe the contents of the LSU Hours. In doing so, I shall concentrate on the miniatures and only briefly mention the text of each section. The third chapter will deal with issues concerning provenance, localization, and dating. The purpose of this thesis is then twofold. First, it is a detailed investigation into a particular manuscript, and second, my hope is that this thesis may be used by others as a starting point for investigating similar contemporary medieval Books of Hours.

* * * * *

In order to understand the context in which the LSU Hours was produced, a general overview of medieval Books of Hours will be given. The history of this genre is first examined, followed by a section concerning production, which includes many observations that pertain to the LSU's codex. The following sections that pertain to who would have owned a Book of Hours, and how they were used, are more generalized, since there is no documentation as to the first owner of this particular codex.

1.1 What Is a Book of Hours?

A Book of Hours is essentially a prayer book made for secular use, rather than for a priest, monk, or nun. The clergy were required to recite the prayers of the Divine Office daily, at various times during the day. There are in fact eight services. Matins and Lauds were said without a break, so that in effect, the prayers were recited seven times throughout the day. The number seven was also considered symbolic of the continuity of prayer. This continuity was further emphasized by the Biblical inscriptions to “Watch and pray always” (Luke 21:36), and to “Pray without ceasing” (I Thess. 5:17).⁶ These Canonical Hours were established by the Christian Church. Interestingly, a Biblical passage from the Old Testament seems to anticipate the use of the Canonical Hours long before Christ’s birth: “Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments” (Psalm 119:164).⁷

By the Middle Ages the Breviary consisted of the Divine Office (*Divinum Officium* or “godly work”) and prayers, hymns, and other texts sung by monks and nuns. The Divine Office took about one or two hours to read through each day, though if sung it would have taken much longer. In the tenth century the short service devoted to the Virgin Mary first appeared. This “Little Office of Our Lady” (*Officium parvum beate Marie Virginis*) became a popular attachment to Psalters, which were often owned by the laity. In the thirteenth century it became a completely separate prayerbook.⁸ It forms the core of any Book of Hours. Although the Little Office of Our Lady is essential, the

⁶ Ramond Cazelles and Johannes Rathofer, *Illuminations of Heaven and Earth: The Glories of the Très Riches Heures* (New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc., 1988), 204.

⁷ John P. Harthan, *The Book of Hours with a Historical Survey and Commentary by John Harthan* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1977), 11.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 12, 13.

contents of Books of Hours can vary. Typically a Book of Hours consists of eight parts, usually, though not necessarily, in this order: 1) the calendar; 2) the four Gospel lessons; 3) the Hours of the Virgin; 4) the Hours of the Cross and the Hours of the Holy Spirit; 5) two prayers to the Virgin known as “*Obsecro te*” and “*O intemerata*”; 6) the Penitential Psalms and the Litany; 7) the Office of the Dead; and 8) numerous Suffrages.⁹ The LSU Hours (as I shall refer to it from now on) contains just the very essential, most commonly found parts and excludes any suffrages to particular saints and the Hours of the Holy Cross.

The term “Book of Hours” comes from the Latin *Horae*, which translates as hours. *Horae* originally referred to only the Hours of the Virgin; later, however, the term became associated with the entire book.¹⁰ A Book of Hours is therefore a prayer book that contains a core group of the eight services that make up the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin. It should be noted that the term “hour” in this use is not a precise measurement of sixty minutes, as we might think of it today. Rather in the Middle Ages the “hours” were said at various times of the day. Matins and Lauds were recited at daybreak, Prime at 6 a.m., Terce at 9 a.m., Sext at noon, None at 3 p.m., Vespers at sunset, and Compline in the evening. The clergy read these prayers with strict observance. The laity, however, were perhaps not so strict. Although it seems very time consuming to sit down and read a passage eight times a day, a shorter Office could be hurried through in about three and a half minutes.¹¹

⁹ Wieck, *Time Sanctified*, 28.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹¹ Christopher De Hamel, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1986), 160.

The original purpose of reciting these prayers was to bring the reader closer to God through devotion. However, by the late Middle Ages, they were viewed as a means to salvation. The eight services of the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin were based upon the longer services of those recited by the clergy, that of the Divine Office. The Office hours of both share the same names: Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline. The shorter, simpler, and less variable Little Office found in Books of Hours for the secular, is divided by miniatures from the life of the Virgin.¹² Each miniature introduces a different Office. Traditionally, specific scenes of the Virgin Mary in her role as the Mother of God accompany each hour as follows:

Matins:	The Annunciation
Lauds:	The Visitation
Prime:	The Nativity
Terce:	The Annunciation to the Shepherds
Sext:	The Adoration of the Magi
None:	The Presentation in the Temple
Vespers:	The Flight into Egypt or The Massacre of the Innocents
Compline:	The Crowning of the Virgin or The Flight into Egypt or The Massacre of the Innocents.

The LSU Hours also follows this traditional pattern. Vespers is introduced by the more common depiction of the *Flight into Egypt*, and likewise Compline is prefaced by the *Coronation of the Virgin*.

1.2 How and by Whom Were Books of Hours Made?

Traditionally, in the Early Middle Ages, these manuscripts were produced by monks in monasteries. The word “manuscript” means “written by hand,” and these time-consuming codices were produced in Europe from the fifth to the fifteenth centuries, that

¹² Less frequently the Hours are accompanied by scenes of the Passion.

is, until the advent of printed books.¹³ However, the demand for manuscripts, be they texts for students or Books of Hours for the laity, exceeded the supply and hence secular ateliers set up business. From the early thirteenth century, professional stationers made manuscripts for the laity and monks alike. Indeed by 1300 it was rare for manuscripts to be made in the monastery. Instead most monks (the notable exception being the Carthusians) bought books from the bookshops along with the laity.¹⁴ Bookstores sprang up in university towns around the cathedral. During the fifteenth century in Flanders, France, and especially in the city of Paris, the production of Books of Hours proliferated.

In 1415 the English invaded France and were victorious at the Battle of Agincourt. Henry V and his English army entered Paris in 1420. The Parisian book market slumped, because only the wealthy purchased books, and the war and occupation left few with the money to purchase such a luxury item as a handmade Book of Hours. For the most part scribes and illuminators departed for the provinces, such as Amiens, Angers, Bourges, Rouen, Rheims, Nantes, Tours, Dijon, Besançon, and Troyes, and there established themselves. Simultaneously, the production and purchasing of Books of Hours spread throughout France in the mid-fifteenth century. Only one outstanding artist, the Bedford Master, stayed on in Paris at this time. His name is derived from the Duke of Bedford, the English regent of France at that time and brother of Henry V. The eponymous artist illuminated a Breviary and a Book of Hours for the Duke.¹⁵ The Bedford Master was influential upon other Parisian illuminators, such as the Master of

¹³ As a side note, manuscripts were produced for 1000 years, twice as long as printed books have been available. De Hamel, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts*, 7.

¹⁴ Christopher De Hamel, *Scribes and illuminators* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 5.

¹⁵ De Hamel, *A History*, 169.

Jean Rolin II (also identified as the Master of Jean Rolin), and the significance of both of these artists will be discussed later.¹⁶

The LSU Hours, like most, was probably purchased from a bookshop or stationer. We may speculate that the patron either bought it finished, almost finished, or perhaps he or she commissioned it to his or her liking. In the case of the latter, the patron would have been shown a second-hand copy first, but he or she would have to discuss with the bookseller numerous details of the commission, such as the size, the format, the number of illuminations, the price of the book, and the time it would take to complete it. The LSU Hours is not unusually small in size, but it consists of only the core texts usually compiled within a Book of Hours, and contains only twelve miniatures.¹⁷ The bookseller would then subcontract the work out to professional scribes and illuminators. Therefore, a number of craftsmen would have been responsible for LSU's codex. After examining the manuscript, it is evident that at least seven different "hands" contributed to the finished product. In general, the scribes often lived and/or worked in the bookshop, while illuminators usually lived in their own homes. Since commercial scribes and illuminators were paid by the job and had perfected their skills, a Book of Hours probably took about one week to write and two or three days to illuminate.¹⁸

¹⁶ It should be noted that the term "artist" was not used in the Middle Ages. Instead craftsmen were categorized as illuminators, painters, sculptors, etc. Leslie Ross, *Artists of the Middle Ages* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2003), 112.

¹⁷ The LSU Hours measures 7 ¾ inches tall by 5 ½ inches wide (19.9 cm x 14.2 cm), although this may not have been the original size, as often the pages were trimmed down.

¹⁸ De Hamel, *Scribes and Illuminators*, 7. De Hamel notes that the addition of colophons often announced how fast the manuscript was completed. For example Giovanni Marco Cinico, a scribe in Naples in the mid-fifteenth century, claimed that he was able to finish a full-length manuscript in fifty-two or fifty-three hours. No wonder he was nicknamed *Velox*, which translates as "speedy."

The scribe started with folios of parchment or vellum obtained from the parchment-makers. Although the two terms “parchment” and “vellum” are often used interchangeably, strictly speaking vellum refers to *veau* or veal and therefore is often used to refer to better-quality skin. The parchment could vary greatly, and the poorer skins tended to produce holes and marks where the animal had ticks or some kind of disease. The scribe of the LSU Hours chose a prime vellum; the vellum that makes up the 163 folios (326 pages) has relatively few flaws even today.

There were parchment-makers in business in many towns in the Middle Ages.¹⁹ The oblong parchment leaves, or folia, were gathered together into small groups and then folded vertically in the middle before being stitched. Each small gathering consists of bifolia (folded folia) and is called a quire or signature. These quires were then assembled to form a codex.²⁰ Usually the codex is made of quires of eight leaves, that is, four bifolia. However, the calendar quire often consists of twelve leaves to accommodate the twelve months. The LSU Hours conforms to this arrangement. The calendar quire consists of twelve folia, and the following quires, for the most part, consist of eight folia.

The next step taken by the scribe was to establish the layout and rule lines on the codex. Ruled guide lines were expected and preferred in medieval manuscripts. Even when printing became established, lines were often added to the text. Without the lines, the text must have looked odd and bare to the medieval reader.²¹ The scribe of the LSU Hours ruled fifteen lines in a single column for the text, which is in keeping with a

¹⁹ According to the Paris tax rolls, nineteen parchment makers existed in 1292 in the city. Ibid., 8.

²⁰ Incidentally, hardback books today are still produced in much the same way. Ibid., 18.

²¹ Ibid., 21.

fifteenth-century French Book of Hours. This particular scribe ruled the pages with red ink and a plummet.²² Inks of red, brown, green, and purple were used from the thirteenth century onward. Previously scribes had used drypoint or, in the twelfth century, a metallic lead or silver.²³

A common method for efficiently ruling pages was employed by scribes. Lines were drawn to the edge of the page of the first folio of a gathering. Then a pin was pricked at the edge through the whole stack. In this way uniform lines could be ruled throughout the codex.²⁴ Upon close inspection no pinpricks may be seen in the outer edges of the LSU Hours, revealing that the folia were trimmed sometime during the past 500 years, most likely at the time of the original binding. The folia were intended to be trimmed, in part to remove the pinpricks, but also to remove any written marginalia. This would often include instructions for the illuminator, such as colors to be used, sometimes written in the vernacular or with abbreviations.²⁵ Alternatively the instructions, such as “a” for *azure* or “o” for *or*, may have been written by the illuminator as *aides mémoire* to remind himself.²⁶ Marginalia, such as these instructions, and erased markings can sometimes be seen with the aid of ultraviolet light. A close inspection of the LSU Hours under ultraviolet light revealed no markings or unusual erasing.

²² A plummet is a piece of lead used for ruling lines onto parchment.

²³ De Hamel, *Scribes and Illuminators*, 123. De Hamel notes that codicologists have collected hundreds of variations of the types of line drawn. However, he also notes that few conclusions have been drawn from this type of data.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 23.

²⁵ Jonathan J. G. Alexander, *Medieval Illuminators and Their Methods of Work* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), 60-22. In addition Alexander notes that many marginalia survive, such as, “This miniature is badly done.”

²⁶ Richard H. Rouse and Mary A. Rouse, *Manuscripts and Their Makers: Commercial Book Producers in Medieval Paris, 1200-1500* (Turnhout, Belgium: Harvey Miller Publishers, 2000), 200.

The scribe would then begin the process of writing. The ink used was probably a metal-gall ink, which consisted of a solution of tannic acids with ferrous sulphate (copperas) and thickened with a gum made from oak apple (fig. 1). The oak apple looks like a ball-shaped tumor, and the very best were said to have grown in Aleppo in the Levant.²⁷



Fig. 1. Oak Apple

Scribes usually worked on a sloped surface, as can be seen in fig. 2.²⁸ The scribe worked from an exemplar, which is a book to be copied. If the book was not copied, but the original work of the scribe himself, then it would certainly be signed.²⁹ This is not the case with the LSU Hours. Although unsigned by the scribe, a charming detail in the LSU

²⁷ Up until the twelfth century, a carbon ink was used. De Hamel, *Scribes and Illuminators*, 32.

²⁸ As the ink took a few seconds to dry, often a concentration of ink accumulated toward the bottom part of the letters. However, I could not find evidence of this in the LSU Hours.

²⁹ Christopher De Hamel, *Glossed Books of the Bible and the Origins of the Paris Booktrade* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: D. S. Brewer, 1984), 55.

Hours can be found on folio 89 verso (fig. 3). This small “doodle” of a face occurs beneath a catchword and was probably executed by the scribe.³⁰ This is not an isolated case, and other such examples exist. Fig. 4 shows the “hand” of the “long-nose” scribe in BNF Fr. 10132 folios 155 and 295.³¹



Fig. 2. Scribe at Sloped Desk (Bibliothèque National, Paris MS lat 1107, fol. 400)

³⁰ As a side note, the Latin catchword is part of the word that translates as “eternally.”

³¹ Rouse and Rouse, *Manuscripts and Their Makers*, 178.

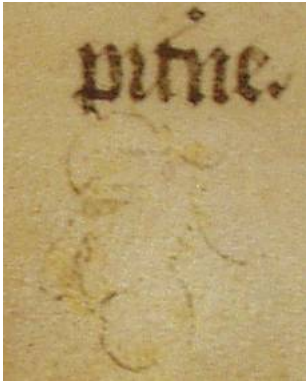


Fig. 3. “Doodled”
Face, LSU Hours
(fol. 89v))

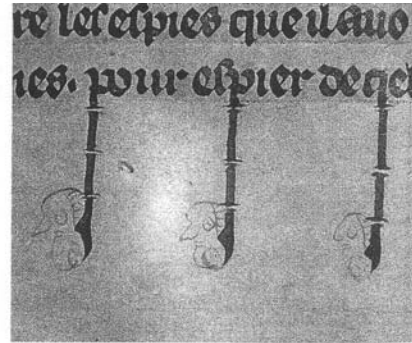


Fig. 4. “Doodled Face of the Long-Nose Scribe (BNF fr. 10132, fols. 155 and 295)

Medieval depictions of scribes sometimes show two inkhorns on the scribe’s desk. One pot was for black ink, the other most likely for red. Black ink was used for the majority of the text, while red was used for the rubrics. The term “rubric” is derived from the Latin “*rubrica*” which means red earth color. Rubric came to mean a title, chapter heading, or instruction, and red ink was used to distinguish these elements from the rest of the text. Rubrics were used in the LSU Hours, occasionally beneath the miniature to introduce the new Office. Fig. 2 shows the scribe at his sloping desk, copying from an exemplar, and also illustrates that the job of writing required two hands. One hand held a quill pen, while the other hand held a knife that could both sharpen the quill and scrape away mistakes. As a side note, on folio 158 recto of the LSU Hours a small black smudge of ink can be seen. Perhaps towards the end of the manuscript a fatigued scribe overlooked this small error and forgot to scrape away the mistake.

The LSU Hours was written in a Gothic script. I shall not concentrate on the type of script or the use of Latin in this paper except to make a few brief comments. Although this type of Gothic script was popular at the time, it is somewhat difficult to read because

it was employed for its decorative properties rather than its legibility. It should also be noted that writing styles are particularly difficult to attribute to a specific atelier because styles were so corrupted by other influences.³² Indeed some ateliers would advertise a variety of scripts from which the patron could choose.

Although the script may be difficult to attribute, the use of “catchwords” can often help to identify an individual scribe.³³ A catchword was used by scribes from the twelfth century on to ensure that the quires were gathered together in the proper order. The scribe repeated the first word of the new quire on the lower inner corner at the bottom of the previous quire. In this way each quire could be easily matched up when it came time to bind the codex. The catchwords of the LSU Hours are listed below. In each case, I have underlined letters which have been omitted in the manuscript due to the use of medieval abbreviations. I place the letters of the last word on the verso leaf in “()” followed by the catchword when it is a fragment. Thus the catchword, norum, which appears on 20 verso is in fact the last part of the word bonorum, bo being the last entry on 20 verso and norum, the first on 21 recto. I have respected the orthography of the original.

<u>Catchword</u>	<u>First Word of Next Page</u>	<u>Quire Pagination</u>
(bo) <u>norum</u> (20v)	<u>norum</u> (21r)	3 (21r)
		4 (27r)
Cecos (34v)	Cecos (35r)	5 (35r)
atria (42v)	atria (43r)	6 (43r)
		7 (51r)
Benedicta tu (58v)	Benedicta tu (59r)	8 (59r)

³² De Hamel, *Scribes and Illuminators*, 39.

³³ Ibid., 41.

(benedi)xit (66v)	xit (67r)	9 (67r)
(deglu)tissent (74v)	tissent (75r)	13 (75r)
tribus (82v)	tribus (83r)	10 (83r)
Et in(90v)	Et in(troito) (91r)	11 (91r)
(sem)piterne (97v)		12 (98r)
cauero (105v)	cauero (106r)	14 (106r)
<u>San</u> cta (113v)	Sancta genovefa (114r)	15 (114r)
domini (121v)	domini (122r)	16 (122r)
anime (129v)	anime (130r)	17 (130r)
(tem)pore (137v)	pore (138r)	18 (138r)
uiuum (145v)	uiuum (146r)	19 (146r)
Deus deus (153v)	Deus deus (154r)	20 (154r)
A <u>p</u> orta (161v)	A <u>p</u> ta (162r) ³⁴	21 (162r)

Fig. 5 shows one of the catchwords of the LSU Hours. It should be noted that the catchwords are, for the most part, at intervals of eight folia, which reinforces the fact that the majority of the quires were formed of eight folia each. Of note are the missing catchwords, which should be on folio 26 verso, and 50 verso. This is because the following folios display the *Annunciation* and the *Visitation* scenes respectively. That is, there is no text to continue at these points. There is another discrepancy pertaining to the catchword “piterne” on folio 97 verso. The following folio contains the miniature of *King David*, rather than a page of text. Upon close inspection one can see the remains of a

³⁴ Many thanks to Dr. Mary Sirridge for helping me to decipher the Medieval Latin and gothic script of the catchwords.

missing leaf between 97 verso and 98 recto. This means that at least one folio is missing, possibly with a subsequent missing quire or quires.



Fig. 5 Catchword of the LSU Hours (fol. 58v)

The pagination runs continuously from 1 to 163 and is to be found in light pencil markings on the bottom right-hand corner of the recto folios. This type of pagination was usually added in the nineteenth century. Another method of checking the quires of the LSU manuscript was possible because of additional numbers that can be seen on the bottom left corner of some of the recto folia. These are referred to above, alongside the correlating catchwords, and were probably the markings of one of the book binders. We know definitely that the codex has been rebound twice, but since its production it has probably been bound several times. The binder would have marked each quire, when he or she dismantled the codex, to ensure that it was reassembled in the correct order and to have a record of how it had been previously rebound. This binder did not mark the first two quires. I am assuming that it would have been obvious that the first quire began with the calendar and the second quire began with the *Saint John on Patmos* image. We can also tell from these numbers that even though there is no catchword on folio 50 verso, the

new quire does in fact begin on 51 recto. Perhaps more interestingly, these quire numbers do not run sequentially. The quire with number 13 is currently between quires 9 and 10. This means that at some time the manuscript was rebound incorrectly, and a later binder rectified the mistake. The LSU Hours is therefore currently in the order of its original binding.

Before binding, the illuminator decorated the codex. Scholars have established that the text was first written by the scribe before the illuminator decorated the manuscript. The scribe would have planned out the size of the miniature and borders and even sketched the foliated large initial. The illuminator therefore had very little scope for innovation, as the size, subject matter, and the number of illuminations were already decided upon before he or she even began the codex.³⁵ Before painting, the illuminator would prepare the surface of the parchment by rubbing it with pumice or a mixture of powdered glass apparently mixed with bread. The parchment would then have been dusted off with chalk to ensure a grease-free folio, ready to receive the composition sketched in metal point.³⁶

Medieval illuminators usually copied from other sources. Source books rarely survive, but a few, such as the *Göttingen Model Book* of c.1455, give us a marvelous exemplar that demonstrates step by step procedures for decoration with both written instructions and painted examples (fig.6). A folio of sketches of figures in various

³⁵ Women were also known to be illuminators as well as scribes. The majority, however, seem to have been men and for this reason I shall refer to these anonymous artisans in the masculine henceforth.

³⁶ De Hamel, *Scribes and Illuminators*, 49-50. According to the *Göttingen Model Book*, the metal point should be done with a thin ink and then polished with a tooth to ensure a surface receptive to having print on top. To view the facsimile, see H. Lehmann-Haupt, ed., *The Göttingen Model Book: A Facsimile Edition and Translation of a Fifteenth-Century Illuminators' Manual* (Columbia, Missouri: The University of Missouri Press, 1972)

positions could be used as a source from which to copy (fig.7). The Italian artist Cennino Cennini (c.1370-c.1440) wrote in his *Il Libro d'Arte*, “Take pains and pleasure in constantly copying the best things you can find done by the hand of great masters.”³⁷ This reflects the medieval attitude that copying was not merely expected, it was also admired.



Fig. 6. Göttingen Model Book



Fig. 7. Sketches of Figures (The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.)

³⁷ Alexander, *Medieval Illuminators*, 66.

The illuminator would apply the gold before painting any color. Gold tends to adhere to pigment; therefore color was added later so that the design would not be ruined. Technically, the term “illumination,” in the sense of manuscript decoration, means using gold or silver which reflects light. Prior to 1200 gold was rarely used, but, by the fifteenth century, part of the allure of Books of Hours was the way in which the page sparkled.³⁸

There were several different techniques used for applying gold, though three basic methods of application were commonly used. The scribe of the LSU Hours used all three. One method was to brush a wet glue onto a particular area and then add gold leaf. When the area was dry, the gold leaf was then burnished. I believe that this type of gold application was used for the halos, as seen in the miniature of *Annunciation* (see fig. 17). The second method involves applying a sticky gesso to the folio, so that when gold leaf is burnished on top, the gold actually protrudes from the page. The gold reflects the light from many angles, and this method was used for the Golden Numbers in the calendar (see fig. 11). The third method employed was the use of powdered gold (or “shell” gold), which is mixed with gum arabic to form as ink. This is then painted on, in fact over, the pigment. This shell gold was applied to decorate clothing, such as the hemline of the Virgin Mary’s cloak in the *Visitation* miniature (see fig. 18).

Finally, color was added to the manuscript. Apparently there was a large range of colors available for medieval illuminators.³⁹ Pigments were mixed in various ways to

³⁸ It is difficult to describe, but there is a considerable difference between a photo of a miniature and seeing the real thing. The different uses of gold on the LSU Hours make the codex glimmer in an extraordinarily appealing fashion.

³⁹ See both of the following for full descriptions of the pigment colors available: De Hamel, *Scribes and Illuminators*, 60, and Daniel V. Thompson, *The Materials and Techniques of Medieval Painting* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1956).

create paint. Two of the most common techniques were egg tempera (the combination of egg yolk with pigment) and egg glair (the combination of egg white with pigment). The miniatures of the LSU Hours contain predominantly the use of red, blue, green, and pink. Once the color had been painted, the shell gold was added for finishing touches.

The number of artists employed in the creation of one codex could vary. As the manuscript was initially unbound, various illuminators and decorators could work on the same manuscript at the same time. At least seven different “hands” can be identified in the LSU Hours, including at least one scribe, two miniature illuminators, and four border illuminators. It is possible that one illuminator could have painted both miniatures and borders, but by the fifteenth century borders were usually painted by assistants.⁴⁰ Of all the miniatures in the LSU Hours, it is noticeable that the miniature of the *Annunciation* (see fig. 17) was created by a different “hand.”⁴¹ (I shall discuss this matter further in the detailed description of the *Annunciation* miniature in chapter two.) I refer to the artist of the *Annunciation* scene as Artist B, and the artist of the other miniatures as Artist A. Four different styles of borders can be identified. Artist C painted the borders of the calendar, texts, and full leaf borders of the two prayers *Obsecro te* and *O intermerata*. He decorated these leaves with flowers, strawberries, and a predominant use of swirling black and gold ivy *rincaux*. This artist used a method called “backlighting” as an efficient, time-saving device. He traced the design from each previously drawn recto side onto the verso side. In order to do this, he may have held the leaf up to a light source to see the original design, and hence the term backlighting is used to describe this ingenious

⁴⁰ Alexander, *Medieval Illuminators*, 49.

⁴¹ I should like to thank Dr. Véronique Day for pointing this out to me.

artistic invention. Fig. 8 shows the recto and verso of the folia for the August calendar page, and it is quite obvious that the pattern has been copied.



Fig. 8. Recto and Verso of the August Folios, LSU Hours (fols. 8r and 8v)

A different illuminator, Artist D, painted borders with tufts of grass on dirt, from which flowers grow (see figs. 12, 18, 20, 23, and 25). This artist was responsible for the borders of the following miniatures: *Saint John on Patmos*, the *Visitation*, the *Annunciation to the Shepherds*, the *Adoration of the Magi*, and the *Presentation in the Temple*. Artist E painted a variation of the tufts of sod. Here they look like abstract disc shapes (see figs. 17, 29, and 31). This artist was responsible for the borders of the *Annunciation*, *King David Praying*, and the *Burial Service in a Cemetery*. Another border decorator, Artist F, painted the borders without any allusion to patches of earth (see figs. 19, 26, 27, and 28). He illuminated the *Nativity*, the *Flight into Egypt*, the *Coronation of the Virgin*, and *Pentecost*. By comparing all twelve images (from

photographs) simultaneously, a couple of observations become apparent. First, the bar baguettes usually terminate in curving points (see figs. 12, 18, 19, 20, 23, 25, 26, 27, and 28), that is, except for the baguettes that decorate the scenes of the *Annunciation*, *King David Praying*, and the *Burial Service* (see figs. 17, 29, and 31).⁴² These are the same leaves that were decorated by Artist E. Therefore we can deduce that the baguettes were also painted by the same artist as that of the borders. Second, when comparing all twelve images there are three styles of arched gold (outlined in black) frames illuminated. Most of the scenes have a lopsided, spiky design that leans to the right (see figs. 12, 18, 19, 20, 23, 25, 26, 27, and 28). Two scenes, *King David Praying* and the *Burial Scene*, have plain smooth frames (see figs. 29 and 31). Only one scene, the *Annunciation*, has a different type of serrated edge (see fig. 17). It looks rather like the edge of a postage stamp. This means that the artist of the miniature was also responsible for painting the arch-shaped frame around the image.⁴³ This makes sense as in some of the miniature the clothing of the figures slightly overlaps this frame.

The finished manuscript was a product of the combination of the patron's wishes or general marketability (as in the case of a Book of Hours made for stock) and the artist's ability. A few contracts still exist which highlight the patron's concerns, such as the materials to be used (i.e. the amount of gold and lapis lazuli), the time involved to execute the manuscript, the number of miniatures, and the quantity of various initials and line-endings. Initials were priced according to the size and type. For example, a

⁴² Baguettes are the decoration that frames the arch-shaped miniature and small box of text below. In the LSU Hours they decorate three sides, forming a large U shape.

⁴³ Although the arch is painted differently in the *King David Praying* and *The Burial Service* images, I could not detect a different "hand" in the execution of these miniatures.

historiated initial cost more than a foliated initial, and dentelle initials, such as those used for the Litany of the Saints in the LSU Hours, were priced by the hundred.⁴⁴ Fig. 9 shows an example of a foliated initial, a dentelle initial, and a line-ending from the LSU Hours.



Fig. 9. Example of a Foliated Initial, Dentelle Initial, and Line-ending, LSU Hours (fol. 82r)

It is interesting to note that although small decorative details were of importance, not one extant contract specifies how each miniature was to be rendered. Of course, with a Book of Hours specific scenes traditionally accompanied the specific texts, and as already mentioned the illuminator was encouraged to copy rather than be innovative. Nevertheless it is surprising that the patron was not particularly concerned about the miniatures, considering the value placed upon these images in the Middle Ages. The images were not merely didactic aids but also devotional aids used in prayer and meditation.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Sandra Hindman and James Douglas Farquhar, *Pen to Press: Illustrated Manuscripts and Printed Books in the First Century of Printing* ([College Park]: Art Department, University of Maryland, 1977), 72. Hindman and Farquhar also give useful descriptions of the various initials and line-endings as follows: Line-endings (or *versets*) are the decorative elements used to fill the empty space of any line. Dentelle initials are usually painted in blue, magenta, and gold with white filigree designs added. These initials are used throughout the LSU Hours. Foliated initials are similar, but more ornate vines and leaf patterns are found instead of the white filigree, and these initials are used beneath the miniatures of the LSU Hours to introduce the text. Historiated initials contain figures or scenes that may relate to the text. No historiated initials are included in the LSU Hours.

⁴⁵ Alexander, *Medieval Illuminators*, 54.

The final stage in the process of manufacturing a codex was binding. Most commonly, the quires were sewn together and attached to two wooden boards. The boards and spine would then be covered with a piece of leather or fabric. The latter was often used for commissioned devotional texts, such as Books of Hours.⁴⁶ However, leather binding was commonly used for mass-produced *Horae* in the second half of the fifteenth century. More luxurious *Horae* were bound in silk or velvet, and often gilt and jeweled clasps were attached. For safe keeping, the finished codex would have been protected by either a box or a *chemisette* (or chemise). The latter could be made of either silk or fine kid-leather, and could be used like a bag to carry the codex.⁴⁷ Nothing remains of the LSU Hours' original binding. Like most medieval manuscripts, the LSU Hours has been rebound a number of times. However, we may speculate that it was originally bound in leather.

1.3 Why Were Books of Hours So Popular in the Late Middle Ages and for Whom Were They Made?

There were various reasons for the popularity of these particular religious codices for the laity's use. One reason was that the laity in general wished to be able to imitate the clergy, who seemed to have a stronghold on the means to salvation. Ordinary men and women wanted their own books so that they too, via text and image, could have an intimate connection with the Virgin Mary.

Books themselves were an integral part of Christianity. The book was not merely an object to be read, it was a means to salvation. The written word carried a mystical

⁴⁶ Albert Derolez, *The Paleography of Gothic Manuscript Books from the Twelfth to the Early Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 44.

⁴⁷ Harthan, *The Book of Hours*, 37, 39. Hartman also comments on how these *chemisette* bindings can be seen in paintings, such as Jan Van Eyck's *Adoration of the Holy Lamb*. Here the Virgin's prayer book has a green *chemisette* with four brown tassels.

significance in the Middle Ages. The word “Bible” originally came from “biblion,” which in fact referred to a book made of papyrus roll. In the Middle Ages, however, the word “Bible” became synonymous with only one book, that of Holy Scripture. It has been suggested that the book was as potent a symbol as the cross.⁴⁸ If the text contained the means to salvation, the artistic embellishments aided the reader’s understanding of the importance of the scriptures.

Another reason for the popularity of these *Horae* was the rise of devotion to the Virgin Mary at this time. She was one of the most important figures in the life of a medieval person and was considered the principle intercessor who spoke to God on behalf of the individual. This devotion became called the Cult of the Virgin and is reflected in the large number of Gothic cathedrals devoted to Notre Dame (Our Lady) in the late Middle Ages.⁴⁹

Along with the rise of the middle class in the medieval period, there also rose a demand for literature for the laity. Books of Hours became the most popular manuscript of the Middle Ages, more popular than the Bible in fact. The literate (or almost literate in some cases) laity who could afford an illuminated manuscript purchased a Book of Hours. Many learned to read, aided by the illuminations, from these particular books, and in fact the word “primer” is derived from the Office of Prime.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Otto Pächt, *Book Illumination in the Middle Ages: An Introduction* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 10. Pächt emphasizes the importance of the book by giving the following example: “One need only think of those numerous crucifixions in which the beloved John is represented standing at the foot of the cross at the sacred hour of sacrifice in deepest grief, and in his hand, the Book.”

⁴⁹ Wieck, *Time Sanctified*, 27.

⁵⁰ De Hamel, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts*, 10. It should be noted that the term “Primer” is also sometimes used interchangeably with “Book of Hours” by the British.

Finally, these Books of Hours were bought not just for their pious use, but also for their beautiful decoration. They may have stimulated the mind and soul, but they also delighted the eye.⁵¹ The French poet Eustache Deschamps (1346-1406) described the vogue for ownership of ornate Books of Hours by middle-class wives:

Heures me fault de Nostre Dame...
Qui soient de subtil ouvrage,
D'or et d'azur, riches et cointes,
Bien ordonnées at bien pointes,
De fin drap d'or bien couvertes,
Et quant elles seront ouvertes,
Deux fermaulx d'or qui fermeront.

A Book of Hours, too, must be mine,
Where subtle workmanship will shine,
Of gold and azure, rich and smart,
Arranged and painted with great art,
Covered with fine brocade of gold;
And there must be, so as to hold
The pages closed, two golden clasps.⁵²

The poet emphasized the decorative nature of these religious books, and how popular they were as a kind of fashion accessory.

The majority of Books of Hours were commissioned for women. They were commonly given as gifts, especially by a groom to his bride. The role of women as patrons of Books of Hours should not be underestimated: without their patronage the genre would not have become so popular.⁵³ Towards the end of the Middle Ages numerous such prayer books were made for stock because of the high demand and therefore were not specifically made for a man or a woman. These codices could be

⁵¹ Wieck, *Time Sanctified*, 27.

⁵² Erwin Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting. Its Origin and Character* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1953), Vol. 1, 68.

⁵³ Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, 17.

bought new or used or even be inherited, as numerous wills attest. By the end of the fifteenth century, with the advent of the printing press, almost any person, no matter how meager their income, could afford their very own Book of Hours.⁵⁴

1.4 How Were Books of Hours Read and Used?

Since these prayer books were owned by the laity and used for private devotion, it is difficult to gauge how and how often the contents were read. The ideal was to read the Hours of the Little Office of Our Lady daily at the various stipulated times, although evidence suggests that they were only read in the morning or at Mass.⁵⁵ For example, the medieval accounts of the lives of Cicely, Duchess of York, and Lady Margaret Beuford state that these pious women read the Matins section of their Book of Hours every morning.⁵⁶ This implies that they only read this small section of their *Horae*. Some manuscripts are in such pristine condition that one can surmise that they were hardly read at all, although it must be remembered that more than one *Horae* could be owned by a household and that only one would show wear and tear from everyday use, while the others remained in perfect condition.

The great number of Books of Hours produced in the fifteenth century may in part have been due to new reading habits. In the Middle Ages there were two types of reading: oral and silent. By the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries silent reading habits had been passed on to some of the laity from scribes and scholars. Paul Saenger even claims that it was these new silent reading habits of the laity which caused the proliferation of *Horae*

⁵⁴ Ibid., 17.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 28.

⁵⁶ Laura D. Gelfand and Walter S. Gibson "Surrogate Selves: the Rolin Madonna and the Late Medieval Devotional Portrait," *Simiolus*, 29 (No. 3/4, 2002), 130.

manufacture in the late Middle Ages. The separation of words in the early Middle Ages made silent reading possible. Combined with the portability of Books of Hours, this allowed for silent reading in private. Silent prayer was thought to be a higher form than oral prayer. Jean Gerson (writing c. 1410) asserted this notion. According to him, silent or mental prayer took place in the soul, whereas oral prayer occurred in the body. Denis the Carthusian (writing in the mid-fifteenth-century) also emphasized silent prayer. To accompany this more prestigious form of praying, he suggested a static posture in which the hands should be kept clasped in order to enhance devotion.⁵⁷

Saenger points out that in the latter half of the fourteenth century and in the fifteenth century the Annunciation scene had two different iconographic traditions that pertain to the gestures of the Virgin Mary. In one the Virgin has one or both of her arms extended as she “listens” to the Angel Gabriel’s announcement. In the other tradition she has her hands either clasped together in prayer or her arms placed diagonally across her chest. The latter was apparently another gesture of silent prayer. (In the LSU Hours the Virgin Mary is depicted with her hands pressed together in the now-conventional gesture of prayer.) Saenger claims that the use of both of these scenarios reflects the transition from oral to silent reading.⁵⁸

Whether Books of Hours were read often or sporadically, orally or silently, the above descriptions are based on the assumption that the owner was literate. Although literacy was increasing in the Middle Ages, and some laity could read the Latin texts with

⁵⁷ Paul Saenger “Books of Hours and the Reading Habits of the Later Middle Ages” in *The Culture of Print. Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Alain Boureau and Roger Chartier (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989), 141-173, 142, 143.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 152-154.

full comprehension, the vast majority could not.⁵⁹ Those that were literate could be described as falling into three broad categories: the professional reader, such as a scholar who could read and write with full comprehension, the cultivated reader, who read for recreational use, and the pragmatic reader, who could read and write only the fundamentals for business transactions. The latter were probably members of the merchant class who understood at least the rudiments of Latin.⁶⁰

Many of the new bourgeois class who could afford a Book of Hours probably mumbled through the contents of their prayer book without fully understanding what they were saying.⁶¹ However, it appears that in order to receive the benefits of salvation for oneself and/or for the deceased, one only had to say the prayers with the correct intention. Recognizing the lack of literacy, Jean Gerson endorsed the contemplation of miniatures in manuscripts as a substitute for reading the Latin prayers. In this way, one could still participate in private devotional practice.⁶² This argument for the use of images in Christian devotion had been used since the sixth century, when Pope Gregory the Great asserted, “What scripture is to the educated, images are to the ignorant.”⁶³ In Books of

⁵⁹ Ibid., 148.

⁶⁰ M. B. Parkes, “The Literacy of the Laity,” *The Medieval World*, edited by David Daiches and Anthony Thorlby (London: Aldus Books, 1973) 555-577, 555, 559.

⁶¹ As a side note, one of the reasons for the increase in the laity’s possession of Books of Hours was to break the clergy’s stronghold on the means to salvation, a factor that also led to the Reformation. Ironically, though Martin Luther criticized Books of Hours because their owners often recited the prayers without really understanding what they were saying. Virginia Reinburg, “Hearing the Lay People’s Prayer,” in *Culture and Identity in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800): Essays in Honor of Natalie Zemon Davis*, edited by Barbara B. Dieford and Carla Hesse (Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1993), 19-39, 19.

⁶² Saenger, “Books of Hours and the Reading Habits of the Later Middle Ages,” 151.

⁶³ Sandra Hindman, “The Role of Author and Artist in the Procedure of Illustrating Late Medieval Texts,” *Text and Image*, edited by David W. Burchmore. Binghamton: State University of New York at Binghamton 1986, 27.

Hours, the miniatures introduce and separate the various texts. However, illuminations in *Horae* were deemed necessary to help female owners in their devotional meditations, that is, by their male clerical advisers at least. The images could assist the owner to become absorbed and meditate with empathy. Although monks also meditated, they were encouraged to visualize mental images rather than painted ones to aid their monastic contemplations.⁶⁴ Jean Gerson acknowledged the use of painted images to aid devotional meditation. He wrote, “And we ought thus to learn to transcend with our minds from these visible things to the invisible, from the corporeal to the spiritual for this is the purpose of the image.”⁶⁵ The images provided the stimulus for the observer to move to the imaginary devotional realm where he or she could focus on the emotions of the Virgin Mary and empathize with her.⁶⁶ Therefore, the miniatures in Books of Hours provided themes for contemplation and meditation, and as such they were “painted prayers.”⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Jeffrey F. Hamburger, *The Visual and the Visionary. Art and Female Spirituality in the Late Medieval Germany* (New York: Zone Books, 1998), 184.

⁶⁵ Sixten Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative: The Rise of the Dramatic Close-Up in Fifteenth-Century Devotional Painting* (Doornspijk, The Netherlands: Davaco, 1984), 165.

⁶⁶ Craig Harbinson, “Visions and Meditations in Early Flemish Painting,” *Simiolus*, 15 (No. 2, 1985), 87.

⁶⁷ Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, 22.

CHAPTER 2. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE LSU HOURS

Having discussed Books of Hours in general, I will now examine the LSU Hours in detail. Each section of the codex is discussed in the order in which it is found. The illuminations are the focus, rather than the Latin text. Since the text in Books of Hours tended not to vary, it will be mentioned only briefly. The text of the calendar and the two prayers, *Obsecro te* and *O Intermerata*, will be addressed in greater detail, since pertinent information can be extrapolated from these sections. The Biblical scenes that accompany the text in Books of Hours also tended to be fairly consistent, but elements such as composition, style, and detail could differ enormously. A discussion of the miniatures in the LSU Hours will, therefore, include both common and unusual elements.

2.1 The Calendar

The calendar is found at the beginning of a Book of Hours, before the liturgical and devotional texts. Each month occupies two folia: the recto and the verso of the same leaf. Calendars in medieval manuscripts were based on the Julian calendar, which was introduced by Julius Caesar in 45 B.C.E. and was used until 1583 C.E. It was replaced in the sixteenth century by the Gregorian calendar that is used to this day.

Like calendars today, it was consulted by the owner to find out which day it was. Days were denoted by Catholic feast days, which were usually the day of a saint's martyrdom, that is, their "birthday" into heaven.⁶⁸ In addition to saints' martyrdoms, other important dates associated with the saint could be used, such as the dates of translation (or transference of their relics). Rather than using a numerical system, such as

⁶⁸ Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, 26.

January 3, the day would have been referred to as Saint Geneviève's day. Even today we do the same for a few days of the year, for example Saint Patrick's Day is understood to be March 17.⁶⁹ As well as days commemorating the saints, other important events commemorating the life of Christ and the Virgin Mary would be noted, such as the Annunciation on March 25 and Christmas day on December 25.

Each month was divided by the Kalends, Nones, and Ides. Kalends always fell on the first day of the month, and this is actually where our current word "calendar" is derived from.⁷⁰ Nones fell on the fifth or the seventh day, and Ides on the thirteenth or fifteenth day. The date was reckoned by counting backwards from these three points. Therefore, according to this system, February 14 was "*xvi Kalends Martii*, or the sixteenth day before the Kalends of March."⁷¹

Many Books of Hours have an additional column alongside the feast days with abbreviations of N, Id, and Kl to clarify the date. However, the LSU Hours does not incorporate this column of abbreviations. This omission is typical of later illuminated Books of Hours. The only vestige of this system are the two illuminated dentelle initials "KL" at the top left corner of each new month of the calendar (fig.10).



Fig. 10. "KL" at the Top of a Calendar Page, LSU Hours (fol. 3r)

⁶⁹ Ibid., 26.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 28.

⁷¹ Ibid., 29.

The first vertical column in the LSU Hours contains Roman numerals, and the second column contains letters of the alphabet from *a* to *g*. These are the Golden Numbers and the Dominical Letters respectively. The purpose of the Dominical Letters was to enable the viewer to establish on which days Sundays would fall in any given year. To find the Dominical Letter one would have to make the following rather complicated calculation: “take the number of the year and add to it a quarter of itself (ignoring the remainder); divide the sum by seven; subtract the remainder from three or, if that produces zero or a negative number, from ten; the resulting number corresponds to the Dominical Letter (1= a, 2=b, etc.).”⁷²

The following is an example for calculating the Dominical Letter for the year 1460:

$$\begin{aligned} 1460 + (1460 \div 4) &= 1460 + 365 = 1825 \\ 1825 \div 7 &= 260, \text{ remainder } 5 \\ 10 - 5 &= 5 \\ 5 &= \text{Dominical Letter e.} \end{aligned}$$

By using this method, in the year 1460 all Sundays were designated by the letter e. Each year the letter moved back one. Therefore in 1461 Sundays would have been designated by the letter d. In leap years the calculations ensured that one letter was skipped (or “leaped” over) and the Dominical letter was now two days apart. Thus, if Sundays in the year 1460 fell on the letter e, in 1461 they fell on d, in 1462 on c, in 1463 on b, but in 1464 the Dominical Letter works out to be g. Therefore 1464 was a leap year.

The column of Golden Numbers runs vertically down each calendar page and includes seemingly sporadic and inconsistent roman numerals from *i* to *xix*. The purpose of these numbers was to calculate (in conjunction with the Dominical Letters) the date of

⁷² Ibid., 27.

Easter, the most important feast day in the church's calendar. Easter is a variable holiday, observed on the Sunday that follows the first full moon after the vernal equinox. Should a full moon fall exactly on the Sunday that has been calculated, Easter gets pushed to the following Sunday. The Golden Numbers are used to establish new moons throughout the year. Using this information, full moons can be calculated by counting fourteen days ahead.

To calculate the Golden Number for any year one should "take the year and add one; divide by nineteen; the remainder is the Golden number (if the remainder is zero, the Golden Number is nineteen)."⁷³

Therefore to find the Golden Number for the year 1460 the following calculation is used:

$$\begin{aligned} 1460 + 1 &= 1461 \\ 1461 \div 19 &= 76, \text{ remainder } 17 \text{ (or } xvii) \end{aligned}$$

The Golden Number for the year 1460 is *xvii*.

After the Golden Number and the Dominical Letter have been calculated, the date of Easter can be established. This is achieved by looking for the Golden Number between March 1 and April 22. This number may appear twice during this time frame, but only one number will result in a date between March 22 and April 25. The first *xvii* in the LSU Hours is March 27 (fig. 11). Counting fourteen days forward is the date of a full moon (April 10). The next Dominical Letter (Sunday in the year 1460) "e" is on April 13. Therefore in 1460 Easter Sunday fell on April 13.

⁷³ Ibid., 27.



Fig. 11. March Calendar Page (including March 27), LSU Hours (fol. 3r)

Some books of Hours (not the LSU Hours though) included charts to help their owners make these complex calculations. Some manuscripts even had tables listing the Golden Numbers, Dominical Letters, and the dates for Easter for several years.⁷⁴ The calculations ensured that the calendar was functional not just for one particular year (as we have today), but could be used perpetually and indefinitely, that is, at least until the introduction of the Gregorian calendar in 1583.

The text of the calendar is written in French, as opposed to the rest of the manuscript which utilizes Latin. The name of each month is inscribed at the top of each recto folio, alongside the dentelle initials of “KL,” which take up two lines. The first two vertical columns are for the Golden Numbers and Dominical Letters, as previously

⁷⁴ Wieck, *Time Sanctified*, 157.

discussed. The third column is used for the abbreviations of either the title “Saint” or for an article. The title of Saint has been abbreviated “S” or “Ste,” according to whether the saint was male or female, and “Le” or “La” is used to denote articles such as *Le Jour de Noel* (Christmas day), and *La Notre Dame* (March 25, the Annunciation). The last column contains either the various saints’ names or events from the lives of the Virgin Mary and Christ. All are written in French in a Gothic script. Each folio has an illuminated floral border. The border is on the right-hand side of the text on the recto pages and on the left-hand side of the verso pages. The illuminator included a *rincaux* of stylized gold and black ivy leaf within red and blue flowers with green foliage. In more expensive commissions, the illuminator introduced small scenes into the borders. Particularly popular were the Labors of the Month and the Signs of the Zodiac.

The Saints included in calendars of Books of Hours varied greatly, and it is this variance which can help to determine where and/or for whom the manuscript was intended. Customarily, the feast days of major saints were written in red; hence the phrase “red-letter day” actually comes from these medieval calendars. In many calendars only major feasts and important local saints were included, and therefore many lines were left empty. Since different towns and regions venerated different saints, a calendar is often useful for determining where the calendar was intended to be used. This in fact is what the term “Use” refers to. Sometimes, patron saints of the commissioner of the manuscript may also have been added and therefore give a clue as to the name of the original owner.

However, in the LSU Hours, gold was used to highlight the important feast days. Red and blue inks were used alternately for the other days. This type of calendar is called

a composite calendar, and as such is less valuable for determining localization.

Composite calendars were executed more for aesthetic reasons than liturgical function.⁷⁵

They were simply more pleasing to the eye.

Although the LSU Hours has a composite calendar, the saints included point to the Use of Paris. The Use of the calendar will be dealt with in greater detail in chapter three, but the two most notable saints included are the patron saints of Paris, Saint Geneviève, January 3, and Saint Denis, October 9.

Saint Geneviève was born in the outskirts of Paris. As a child she tended sheep and later she became a nun. Geneviève was best remembered for saving Paris from Attila the Hun by her prayers. After her death in the year 512 C.E., she became venerated as the patron saint of Paris and her relics are purported to be housed in the church of Saint-Etienne du Mont, Paris.⁷⁶ Saint Denis became the patron saint of France, and is always highlighted in a Parisian calendar. As bishop of Paris, he was martyred in the third century by being beheaded on a Parisian hill, which was renamed Montmartre after this grisly incident. According to legend, he picked up his severed head and walked northward for two miles until he finally died, and this exact location is where the church of Saint-Denis was built to house his relics.⁷⁷ The hill in Paris still bears the name

⁷⁵ Janet Backhouse, *Books of Hours* (London: The British Library, 1985), 11.

⁷⁶ S. Baring-Gould, *The Lives of Saints* (Edinburgh: J. Grant, 1914), 405. James Hall adds that “the Panthéon in Paris was originally intended to be dedicated to St. Geneviève. It stands on the former church dedicated to her and is decorated with scenes from her life by Puvis de Chavannes.” James Hall, *Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art* (New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, and London: Harper & Row, 1979), 136. In general, Saint Geneviève is represented in art as a shepherdess with a crook or distaff, or as a nun holding a candle. In the latter representation often a small demon is also represented with bellows trying to blow out her candle.

⁷⁷ Although this story seems far-fetched, one must remember that it was all downhill from Montmartre! (Author’s joke.)

Montmartre and the abbey church of Saint-Denis, though remodeled over the years, can be visited even today.

One last aspect pertaining to the place of production of the Calendars should be considered. The LSU calendar forms its own quire, which consists of twelve folia or six bifolia, which is the norm. Calendars could be made separately from the main body of a Book of Hours. John Harthan speculates that large ateliers may have owned a stock of calendars of various Uses, which could have supplemented commissions of Books of Hours.⁷⁸

2.2 The *Saint John on Patmos* Miniature and The Gospel Sequence

The Gospel sequence begins the text proper of many Books of Hours. It usually contains extracts from the writings of the four evangelists: John (1:1-140), Luke (1:26-38), Matthew (2:1-12), and Mark (16:14-20). Some Books of Hours have an individual miniature to introduce each of the four texts. Usually, however, only one miniature of Saint John the Evangelist introduces all four, and this is the case with the LSU Hours.

The texts are shortened versions of the missal used by the priest during mass, and as such they serve a number of functions. Since the average medieval household did not own a Bible, these passages from the New Testament would have been the only Biblical texts owned by lay folk. As such they were considered the true word of God that is sacred, and formed the legitimizing basis for the texts that followed, which start below the miniature.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Harthan, *The Book of Hours*, 15.

⁷⁹ Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, 40.

The reading of John begins, “*In principio erat verbum...*” This is of course the beginning of John 1: 1, “In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.” This passage emphasizes the awesome and sacred nature of the word and is therefore appropriately placed at the beginning of a sacred written prayer book. The passage chosen from the Gospel of John highlights God’s divine plan. The passage from the Gospel of Luke addresses the Annunciation. The passage chosen from the Gospel of Matthew incorporates Christ’s nativity, while the last passage, from the Gospel of Mark, refers to Christ’s message to the apostles to “spread the good news,” and ends with the Ascension. The Gospel passages were therefore not arranged according to the church’s liturgical order, but rather in the chronological order of Christ’s life.⁸⁰

The portrait of Saint John introduces the four gospel texts in the LSU Hours (fig. 12). As is typical, Saint John is represented as being on the island of Patmos. During the rule of the Roman Emperor Domitian (ruled 81-96 C.E.), John was exiled to Patmos, an Aegean island, and here he received his vision of the Apocalypse and wrote the Book of Revelation. John on Patmos was traditionally identified as being the same person as John the Evangelist, who wrote one of the Gospels. In Books of Hours, he is almost always depicted writing on the island of Patmos, even though the text that he introduces is from the Gospel, not from Revelations. John’s signifying attribute is a book or a scroll (here the latter has been chosen), and his symbol is the eagle. Above, a bearded God is represented holding a gold orb with his left hand and giving a gesture of blessing with his right hand. Gold rays descend to John, probably representing God’s divine inspiration. John on Patmos is shown immersed in writing. He has already written on the scroll “In

⁸⁰ Ibid., 40.

prin...,” the first words of John’s Gospel (“In the Beginning...”). Saint John was known as a writer, and every writer needs ink and an implement to write with. John holds a thin quill in his right hand, between his thumb and fingers, in the fashion of a medieval scribe.⁸¹ The quill is held vertically, and in this way medieval scribes could write with more fluidity. The quill would have been dipped into ink. A common motif, as can be seen here, is the eagle bringing John a portable inkpot attached by a cord to an oblong pen case.⁸²



Fig. 12. *Saint John on Patmos* Miniature, LSU Hours (fol. 13r)

⁸¹ De Hamel makes a point to describe how the quill was held in a different way than we today would hold a pen: “The medieval scribe, to judge from pictures, held his pen pointing downwards on the inside of the tips of the middle and forefingers while holding it steady by the very tip of the thumb.” De Hamel, *Scribes and Illuminators*, 29.

⁸² De Hamel also notes that such portable inkpots attached to a pen case are still used by Islamic scribes. *Ibid.*, 29.

Behind Saint John, a mischievous devil can be seen. According to legend, a devil tried to prevent Saint John from writing by attempting to steal his ink and pens. Here the black devil has two horns on his head, a tail, and a hook of sorts in his left hand. The devil was a common motif, and some miniatures depict him accomplishing his theft, as in fig. 13. In some Books of Hours the devil has been deliberately defaced, perhaps by a later, more superstitious owner.⁸³



Fig. 13. *Devil Stealing an Ink Pot*
(Sotheby's)

John is painted as a young beardless man, and his holy nature is emphasized by the black-outlined gold halo. The artist has delighted in the red drapery of the seated evangelist, and the soft folds are highlighted in gold. In order to achieve location, water is depicted in the foreground and middle ground, thus showing Saint John to be on an

⁸³ Wieck, *Time Sanctified*, 57.

island. Typical of this period in northern manuscript painting is the high horizon line. On the horizon small vertical blue streaks can be seen, perhaps to indicate a distant town. Also typical of this period is the use of aerial perspective, that is, the sky ranges in shades of blue rather than being painted with one solid, flat color. The Boucicaut Master (active c.1390-1430) was apparently the first artist to use such a device to demonstrate the effects of light.⁸⁴ However, the artist of the LSU Hours has added an aesthetic twist, and rather than paint only horizontal striations of color, he has painted circular brushstrokes around God in his circle of pink light. The effect is decorative, though unnatural. The artist of this miniature, whom I shall refer to as Artist A, chose an often-repeated composition.

2.3 *Obsecro Te* and *O Intermerata*

Obsecro Te and *O Intermerata* are both prayers that address the Virgin Mary. “*Obsecro Te*” (I beseech you) are the initial words of the first prayer, and likewise “*O Intermerata*” (O Immaculate Virgin) are the first words of the second prayer.⁸⁵ In the LSU Hours the initial leaf of each prayer has a fully decorated floral border (figs. 14 and 15). In other manuscripts a portrait of the patron may sometimes be found at the beginning of *Obsecro Te*. Both prayers are written in Latin in the first person singular.⁸⁶ For the medieval reader this meant that the prayers were a personal plea to the Virgin as intercessor. For the modern-day investigator this means that one can tell if the codex was commissioned specifically for a woman. Latin makes use of feminine and masculine

⁸⁴ Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, 57.

⁸⁵ Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, 86.

⁸⁶ For a full translation of both prayers, see Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, 163-164.

endings, which means that certain verbs written in the first person show gender. In fig. 16 the words that translate as “I about to speak” have been underlined. The verb “to speak” has been conjugated as *locuturus*. The *us* denotes a masculine ending. If the verb had ended in *a*, then it would have been written for a female reader.⁸⁷ Therefore the LSU Hours was not specifically commissioned for a woman. This does not mean that it was specifically commissioned for a man either, since the use of masculine endings could be for a male or a female. Manuscripts that were made for stock employed the masculine form.



Fig. 14. *Obsecro Te*, LSU Hours (fol. 18v)



Fig. 15. *O Intermerata*, LSU Hours (fol. 22r)

⁸⁷ I would like to thank Dr. Emily Batinski of the Latin Department, LSU, for her help in pointing this out to me.

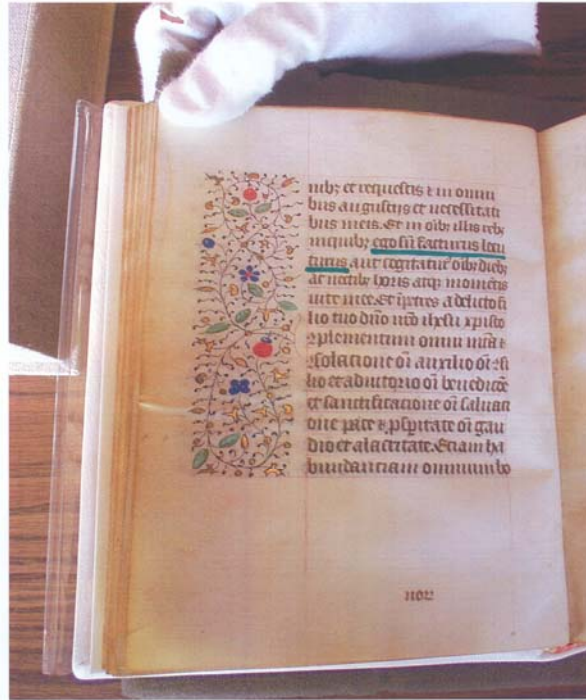


Fig. 16. Part of *Obsecro Te*, Showing Masculine Ending, LSU Hours (fol. 20v)

2.4 The Little Office of Our Lady

The main core of any Book of Hours is the Little Office of Our Lady. This consists of eight Hours, which comprise Psalms as well as some prayers, hymns, and readings. The cycle of the Hours of the Virgin begins with Matins, which is introduced by a miniature of the Annunciation. It should be noted that every Hour, including Matins, would have been preceded by saying a Hail Mary: “Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.”

This prayer was not written in the text, but it was assumed that the owner would have known the prayer by heart.⁸⁸

2.4.1 The *Annunciation* Miniature and the Hour of Matin

The latter part of the Hail Mary is a request to the Virgin Mary to act as intercessor. The first part incorporates the Angel Gabriel's words to the Virgin as found in Luke 1:28. The scene of the Annunciation is an interpretation of Luke 1:28-36, and therefore usually incorporated into this scene are the words of every Hail Mary: "Hail Mary, full of grace."

The Annunciation refers to the announcement made by the Angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that she will give birth to the son of God. Gabriel explains that she will conceive by the Holy Spirit. Mary replies, "I am the Lord's servant, may it be to me as you have said." (Luke 1:38). The essential elements in an Annunciation scene are therefore: the Virgin Mary, the Angel Gabriel, and the Holy Spirit (usually depicted as a dove). In the LSU Hours all three elements can be seen (fig. 17). The Angel Gabriel is kneeling on one knee, and he gestures upward towards God with the index finger of his right hand. This is a commonly illustrated gesture in French iconography.⁸⁹ From the same hand a banderole unfurls bearing the words "Ave gratia plen." The final *a* of the word *plena* cannot be seen, probably because the artist was unable to squeeze it conveniently into the remaining space on the curling banderole. "Ave gratia plena," or

⁸⁸ Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, 52. For an example of all eight Hours written in Latin, Use of Rome, see Ibid., 138.

⁸⁹ Don Denny, *The Annunciation from the Right: from Early Christian Times to the Sixteenth Century* (New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1977), 78.

“Hail, one full of Grace,” is part of the famous greeting spoken by Gabriel addressing the Virgin Mary.

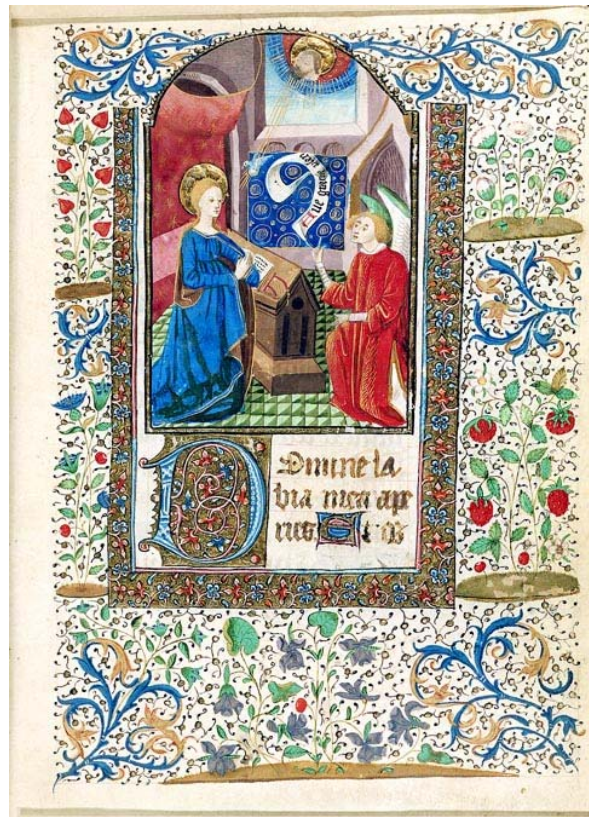


Fig. 17. *Annunciation* Miniature, LSU Hours (fol. 27r)

In the LSU Hours, Mary has been portrayed as kneeling with her hands clasped together in prayer. Beside her is a lectern (or *prie-dieu*) with an open book. This book has been painted with two tiny red straps with small gold clasps attached. The book is Mary’s most common attribute and is often to be found in Annunciation scenes. There are two different explanations for the inclusion of a book. According to Saint Bernard, she was reading the prophecy of Isaiah (7: 14): “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.” This would be an appropriate (if not extremely coincidental) reading for the Virgin Mary.

The other explanation refers to the book being a Book of Hours. Mary is kneeling in prayer in a private room, presumably a chapel. She is naturally the “model of piety,” and as such is portrayed as following contemporary devotional practices, such as reading from a personal *Horae*.⁹⁰ The Virgin with hands pressed together in prayer in this particular scene is not, however, the usual posture depicted.⁹¹ This gesture emphasizes her piety and perhaps her silent reading habits, as already discussed.

The Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, descends towards the Virgin’s head on divine golden rays. These gold lines pass through the window and ultimately emanate from God’s haloed head. The incorporation of God in this scene would have been somewhat archaic. His presence in the Annunciation was most popular in the late fourteenth century and the first third of the fifteenth century.⁹² The golden rays represent God’s divine light, and their penetration through a window was a metaphor for the Incarnation. This notion had been asserted by theologians since the ninth century, but it only begins to occur in visual arts in the late fourteenth century.⁹³ The mystic Bridget of Sweden (c. 1304-1373) popularized the metaphor with the following analogy: “As the sun penetrating a glass window does not damage it, the virginity of the virgin is not spoiled

⁹⁰ Wieck, *Time Sanctified*, 60.

⁹¹ Don Denny claims that this gesture is in fact a rarity in Books of Hours. He cites the Annunciation scene in the Chevalier Hours, executed by Jean Fouquet, as being one of the few. Denny, *The Annunciation from the Right*, 139. I, however, have found a number of examples and would therefore describe the gesture as unusual but not a rarity.

⁹² This visual motif was apparently first painted by Melchoir Broederlam. Denny, *The Annunciation from the Right*, 66.

⁹³ Millard Meiss, *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry: The Limbourgs, and Their Contemporaries* (New York: George Braziller and The Pierpont Morgan Library, 1974), 149.

by Christ's assumption of human form."⁹⁴ In addition, a medieval hymn also refers to this particular metaphor:

As the sunbeam through the glass
Passeth but not staineth
Thus the Virgin, as she was,
Virgin still remaineth.⁹⁵

This suggests that the notion was somewhat common in the Middle Ages and understood by laity as well as theologians.

In the LSU Hours the Annunciation takes place in an interior, which perhaps was inspired by apocryphal texts and travelers who told of the events occurring in a church setting.⁹⁶ The interior setting also implied the earthly world into which Jesus was conceived.⁹⁷ The artist of the LSU Hours attempts to convey perspective in the steeply receding green tiled floor, and the use of light and shadow on the window frame. This skewed perspective is typical of French illumination of the fifteenth century. The use of red and blue fabric decorated with gold stars and circles respectively can also be seen. First used by the Boucicaut Master in the early 1400s, the incorporation of fabrics served several purposes: it implied an interior space (tapestries and wall hangings would have adorned many of the wealthier medieval household's interior walls), it helped to define space, and it also served to bypass any perspective problems faced by the illuminator.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Ibid., 149.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 150.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 148. Denny also notes that while ecclesiastical settings were a popular choice for French images, in the Netherlands the scene was often portrayed as taking place in a domestic interior. Denny, *The Annunciation from the Right*, 83.

⁹⁷ Gertrud Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art* (London: Lund Humphries, 1971), vol. I, 46.

⁹⁸ James Douglas Farquhar, *Creation and Imitation, the Work of a Fifteenth-Century Manuscript Illuminator* (Fort Lauderdale: NOVA/ NYIT University Press, 1976), 55.

The *Annunciation* miniature of the LSU Hours employs common design elements for a French fifteenth-century Book of Hours, perhaps with the exception of the praying Virgin. However, there is another unusual aspect about the image: the Angel Gabriel is on the right side of the composition. In Annunciation scenes Gabriel usually (perhaps nine times out of ten) appears on Mary's right-hand side, that is, on the left side of the composition. According to Don Denny, since no theological doctrine dealt with the question of which side Gabriel appeared, there is no simple explanation for the conventional formula. In any case, the Annunciation from the right was rare until the fifteenth century, when it occurred in certain geographic areas only. It was probably introduced to France from Germany via the Netherlands. Its first appearance in France was in the later illustrations of the Boucicaut Master. Denny links the introduction of the more uncommon composition with other contemporary iconography reflecting the growing importance of Gabriel, and simultaneously, the growing subservient position of the Virgin Mary. However, he also notes that the Annunciation from the right may merely be the result of the reverse image from tracing.⁹⁹ In the Middle Ages copying was employed by the majority of illuminators, and therefore it can be assumed that the artist of the LSU Hours merely copied the composition from another Book of Hours or an exemplar of figures. This particular peculiarity of the LSU Hours, which may prove to be helpful for identifying the date and locale of production of the manuscript, will be discussed later.

The miniature of the Annunciation was probably the most important in any Book of Hours because it began the cycle of the Little Office of Our Lady, the core text. For the

⁹⁹ Denny, *The Annunciation from the Right*, 2, 57, 67, 134.

owner it was the most important devotional scene, for he or she wanted to share in the Virgin Mary's experience.¹⁰⁰ Consequently, it is within this miniature that donor portraits were most commonly added. (Obviously this is not the case in the LSU Hours.) Because this miniature was the most important from a devotional standpoint, it was often executed by the master of the atelier, while the rest were often illuminated by apprentices. In the case of manuscripts made for stock (which I suspect the LSU Hours may have been), the Annunciation scene may also have been painted by the master, since this is one of the first illuminations that the prospective buyer would have seen.¹⁰¹

The *Annunciation* in the LSU Hours does indeed appear to have been executed by a different hand than the other scenes. Artist B, as I shall refer to this illuminator, used a slightly different palette than that of artist A. Most notable is the use of dark red for Gabriel's clothing. Artist A used a lighter, more orange-tinged shade of red, and this can be seen by comparing the image of *Saint John on Patmos* to that of the *Annunciation* (see figs. 12 and 17 respectively). Artist B highlighted the red fabric with a few lines of gold, whereas Artist A used a great deal of gold highlights to emphasize the drapery. Artist B also used a very dark blue to create the shadows in the folds of the Virgin Mary's drapery, a technique not used in any of the other miniatures. The draperies in this scene are rendered with deep angular folds, while in other miniatures, such as the *Saint John on Patmos* image, the artist reveled in the soft, luxurious, and aesthetically pleasing folds. Another difference can be seen in the facial types and hands. The Angel Gabriel has a small head with a pointed chin, and skinny arms and hands. The Virgin Mary is also

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 136.

¹⁰¹ Harthan, *The Book of Hours*, 20.

portrayed with a small head and hands, and this is notably different from other representations of her in the miniatures that follow. Another minute detail which differentiates the hand of Artist B is the manner in which the pseudo-script in the Virgin's open book has been painted. He used tiny dots to represent script, whereas in other miniatures, such as the *Pentecost* and the *Burial Scene* (figs. 28 and 31), the pseudo-script was rendered in short squiggly lines. Finally, Artist B painted a simple head to portray God above. This head is noticeably different from the other two representations of God which in the *Saint John on Patmos* and the *King David* miniatures. In these two images Artist A includes a small gold orb, and God's left hand gives a gesture of blessing (see figs. 17, 12, and 29 to compare all three).

2.4.2 The Visitation Miniature and the Hour of Lauds

The scene of the Visitation is traditionally chosen as an introduction to the Hour of Lauds. Taken from Luke 1:39-45, these verses describe how Mary hurried to visit her cousin Elizabeth in the hill country of Judea. When Mary greeted her older cousin, who was also pregnant, the baby inside of Elizabeth's womb leapt in recognition of Christ's presence in Mary's womb. Elizabeth's baby was to become John the Baptist.

Images of the Visitation usually depict two women meeting in an outdoor setting. Here the artist has depicted the scene appropriately within a hillside landscape (fig. 18). On the other hand, this may not have been a deliberate choice by the artist, since all the miniatures with outdoor scenes look extremely similar, especially with the placement of the two brown hills. Small wisps of blue can be seen on the horizon, perhaps representing to the pinnacles of buildings in a distant town.



Fig. 18. *Visitation* Miniature, LSU Hours (fol. 51r)

The two haloed women are the focus of this image. Elizabeth kneels before Mary and extends her left hand towards Mary's womb. Elizabeth wears a wimple and a red cloak over a blue-gray dress. Elizabeth's cloak has been painted in red, with gold highlights on the soft drapery folds, and again the hand of Artist A can be identified. Black flecks can be seen on the white lining of Elizabeth's red cloak. These flecks denote ermine fur, which was usually reserved for kings. For example, King David was often portrayed with an ermine-lined cloak (as will be seen later). Therefore, it seems that the artist either copied this detail without questioning what it was supposed to represent (after all Elizabeth was not associated with royalty), or he merely assumed that all red cloaks should have a white lining with black flecks. Although Elizabeth was much older than Mary, the artist has made no attempt to convey this in the facial features or otherwise.

Mary stands and looks down at her cousin. Her blond hair flows freely over her right shoulder. The blue cloak she wears sports a gold hemline which accentuates the sinewy folds.

This particular composition is very common for French fifteenth-century manuscripts. Other contemporary images sometimes include one or two extra figures, but in the LSU Hours the scene of the Visitation contains only the two major figures, and the depiction does not include anything particularly unusual.

2.4.3 The *Nativity* and the Hour of Prime

Prime is accompanied by a depiction of the Nativity as described in Luke 2:1-7. Within these verses the Nativity is mentioned briefly: “the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room at the inn.” (Luke 2:6-7). The birth of Christ is one of the greatest events in history for Christians, but because the description of the holy birth is so brief, it became a favorite subject for artists and writers to embellish, especially in the Middle Ages.

The scene of Mary adoring the Christ Child is probably the most familiar to us today. Reproduced on Christmas cards, the Nativity often includes familiar motifs such as Joseph, the ox, the ass, the manger, and the stable. However, except for the manger, the Bible makes no mention of these additional elements, including Joseph. It is feasible to assume that Joseph was there. Yet the ox and the ass that are so frequently included were first mentioned in connection with the Nativity in the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew (c. eighth century).¹⁰² Another reference to the ox and ass is in the Old Testament: “The Ox

¹⁰² Hall, *Dictionary of Subject*, 231.

knows his master, the donkey his owner's manger, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand" (Isaiah 1:3). This was later thought to prophesize the Jews' rejection of Christ as the true Messiah.¹⁰³ However, from the thirteenth century onwards, the two beasts were understood to represent the unity of the church formed from heathens and Jews, and the "union with the Lord of the church"¹⁰⁴—in other words, the union of the Old and New Testament.

The composition of the LSU *Nativity* scene is based on the vision of Saint Bridget of Sweden. As already discussed, descriptions of her visions became extremely influential on fifteenth-century art. Bridget of Sweden made a pilgrimage to Bethlehem in the fourteenth century. While in the Holy Land she had visions, which she wrote down upon returning to Sweden. Soon after her canonization in 1391, images of the Nativity were rendered that depicted every detail that she had described.¹⁰⁵ Although certain aspects of the descriptions had already circulated, it was her visions that popularized the imagery. Pertaining to the Nativity her vision is described as follows:

When I was present by the manger of the Lord in Bethlehem...I beheld a virgin of extreme beauty...well wrapped in a white mantle and a delicate tunic, through which I clearly perceived her virgin body... With her was an old man of great honesty, and they brought with them an ox and an ass. These entered the cave, and the man, after having tied them to the manger, went outside and brought to the virgin a burning candle; having attached this to the wall he went outside, so that he might not be present at the birth. Then the virgin pulled off the shoes from her feet, drew off the white mantle that enveloped her, removed the veil from her head, laying it by her side, thus remaining in her tunic alone with her beautiful golden hair falling loosely down her shoulders. Then she produced two small linen clothes and two woollen ones, of exquisite purity and fineness, that she

¹⁰³ Ibid., 231.

¹⁰⁴ Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, vol. I, 75.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., vol. I, 78.

had brought, in which to wrap up the child who was to be born...And when all was thus prepared, the virgin knelt down with great veneration in an attitude of prayer, and her back was turned to the manger, but her face was lifted up to heaven, towards the east. Thus with her hands extended and her eyes fixed in the sky she was standing as in ecstasy, lost in contemplation, in a rapture of divine sweetness. And while she was standing thus in prayer, I saw the child in her womb move and suddenly in a moment she gave birth to her son, from whom radiated such an ineffable light and splendour, that the sun was not comparable to it, nor did the candle, that St Joseph had put there, give any light at all, the divine light totally annihilating the material light of the candle, and so sudden and instantaneous was this way of bringing forth, that I could neither discover nor discern how, or by means of which member, she gave birth. Verily though, all of a sudden, I saw the glorious infant lying on the ground naked and shining. His body was pure from any kind of soil and impurity. Then I heard also the singing of the angels, which was of miraculous sweetness and great beauty...When therefore the virgin felt that she had already born her child, she immediately worshipped him, her head bent down and her hands clasped, with great honour and reverence and said unto him, Be welcome my God, my Lord and my Son.

Certain aspects of Bridget's vision did not become universally incorporated into Nativity scenes. For example, the event was rarely portrayed as taking place in a cave. In fact, this aspect was only depicted in Italian art, where it had already been employed. Nevertheless, aspects of Saint Bridget's vision are utilized in the *Nativity* scene of the LSU Hours (fig. 19). The Virgin Mary's "golden hair [is] falling loosely down her shoulders," although it should be noted that her hair is portrayed in a similar fashion in a number of the miniatures. The baby Jesus lies naked on the ground with a supernatural light (indicated by the wavy gold lines) emanating from his body. The Virgin Mary has her head bent down and her hands are clasped together in prayer. Typical of the genre, Joseph is portrayed actually holding the candle, which has been snuffed out by the powerful divine light radiating from the infant Jesus. It is interesting to note that the artist of the LSU Hours did not add a wick to the candle; consequently, it looks more like a simple brown stick. The motif of the candle was as important one: it signified that the "earthly light was

outshone by the divine.”¹⁰⁶ This leads me to question whether the LSU Hours was completed in a hurry or whether the illuminator misunderstood the motif.



Fig. 19. *Nativity Miniature, LSU Hours (fol. 62r)*

The stable consists of a simple structure of wooden rafters, and the interior is draped by red cloth with a simple repetitive pattern of stylized flowers. The manger, in the center middle ground, consists of a simple pink box. Both Mary and Joseph kneel before the Christ child in adoration with expressions of devotion. Joseph is lower in height than Mary, perhaps to designate his lesser significance. He wears a blue garment underneath a red cloak lined in white. Again, the white lining has flecks of black representing ermine fur. Joseph's face is rather squarish in shape. He has a short beard with a balding head and only a tuft of hair on his forehead.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., vol. I, 79.

The Virgin Mary prays before her firstborn. By comparing this image of Mary to the image portrayed in the *Annunciation*, the different “hand” of each artist can be seen with clarity (see figs. 19 and 17). In both scenes the Virgin is kneeling with her hands together in prayer. Artist A of the Nativity scene depicts the Virgin Mary with an egg-shaped head, and softer, rounder facial features. In addition, her hands are much larger than the tiny hands portrayed in the *Annunciation* scene. The drapery has been rendered very differently as well. The Virgin in the *Annunciation* scene wears a blue dress that is gathered immediately below her very high bust. Her cloak is lined in brown and, as noted above, the drapery falls in deep angular folds. In the Nativity scene the artist used a softer shade of royal blue. The drapery is not gathered at the bust or waist; instead, a fine gold cord hangs around her waist, and the drapery forms soft, voluminous folds on the ground.

2.4.4 The *Annunciation to the Shepherds* Miniature and the Hour of Terce

This image, otherwise known as *The Herald Angel*, was most commonly used to introduce the Hour of Terce. The miniature of the *Annunciation to the Shepherds* is the only image of the Little Office of our Lady which does not include a representation of the Virgin Mary. The scene is a rendering of Luke 2:9: “An angel of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.” According to Luke, the shepherds had been tending to their flocks on a nearby hillside at night when the angel made his startling appearance. Although the shepherds were scared, the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a savior has been born to you, he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger” (Luke 2:10-12). Before the angel

leaves the shepherds, he is joined by the heavenly host who praise God by saying, “Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests” (Luke 2:14).

The scene depicted in the LSU Hours (fig. 20) includes two surprised shepherds, a woman, and four unfazed sheep that continue to graze unaware of the celestial angel above them. The event takes place in a bucolic setting that is very similar to every other outdoor setting in the LSU Hours. A tiny detail is the way the artist has curved the land in the foreground, noticeable in the bottom left corner. The small patch of brown that curves around the grass serves to set the scene as if it were a stage. This device had previously been used by the Boucicaut Master and was first introduced in the early fifteenth century.¹⁰⁷



Fig. 20. *Annunciation to the Shepherds*
Miniature, LSU Hours (fol. 68r)

¹⁰⁷ The Boucicaut Master paints this curving strip of land in a far more complex and convincing manner than the artist of the LSU Hours.

In the distance, small blue streaks signifying spires can be seen, perhaps referring to the town of Bethlehem. Also on the horizon are two white towers. The most prominent tower resembles a dovecote.¹⁰⁸ Alternatively, this tower may be a reference that dates back to Carolingian or Ottonian art. The tower found in Carolingian art referred to David's castle in Bethlehem and therefore to Jesus' descent from the House of David. In Ottonian manuscript illuminations the shepherds have a watchtower. The artist of the LSU Hours may not have been aware of the various significances of the tower, but he may have seen towers incorporated into other versions of the scene and therefore just copied them.

In general, the shepherds appear to wear contemporary medieval peasant dress. Here the shepherds each wear a tunic, cinched at the waist, and a tippet that wraps around the neck and shoulders.¹⁰⁹ While the shepherd on the left wears a red tunic with a blue tippet, the other shepherd wears a blue tunic with a red tippet. This alternation of color serves to balance the composition. They both wear knee-high white hose and black shoes. The shepherd on the left has a white pouch tied around his waist, a common accessory in fifteenth-century miniatures. This shepherd has dropped his staff and points upwards with both hands to the angel above. The shepherd on the right has fallen over in his surprised state and shades his eyes with his left hand. This gesture was apparently "an allusion to the 'glory of the Lord' which 'shone round about them.'"¹¹⁰ It was also a common motif in the late Middle Ages. The positions of the legs of this shepherd are awkward and

¹⁰⁸ It looks very similar to the tower depicted in the February scene of the *Très Riches Heures*. Cazelles and Rathofer identify this as a dovecote in *Illuminations of Heaven and Earth*, 18.

¹⁰⁹ The word "tippet" was used in the fifteenth century to refer to a garment that covered the shoulders or both neck and shoulders. It was usually made of wool or fur.

¹¹⁰ Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, vol. I, 86.

unconvincing. I point this out because the unusual position of this shepherd may prove to be a useful clue for localizing the manuscript.

The shepherds have just dropped their staffs, which are at a forty-five degree angle to each other, and as such they point upwards towards the Herald Angel. The angel appears to be swooping down, so only his head, upper chest, arms, and wings are seen. He holds a scroll on which is written “Gloria in excelsis” (“Glory to [God] in the Highest,” Luke 2: 14). The outer edges of the angel’s wings are painted red. In the sky surrounding the angel are small gold stars, which perhaps signify the heavenly presence, or the fact that the event took place at night. On the other hand, the stars may just be an additional decorative element, as they appear in the sky of other images, such as the Flight into Egypt, King David, and the Burial Scene.

Perhaps the most problematic element of the image is the inclusion of a woman in pink in the bottom right-hand corner of the scene. She wears a long-sleeved pink dress, of which the drapery overlaps the bottom of the frame. She is in a seated position, though on what cannot be seen. The high placement of her large breasts and emphasized stomach reflect the fashion for women in the later Middle Ages. Her long blond hair falls over her shoulders, and her face is pale in complexion.

The Bible makes no mention of a woman in the Gospel accounts of the Annunciation to the Shepherds. Who then is this woman supposed to represent? I found two possible explanations for this strange inclusion. First, in illuminations of the late fifteenth century, sometimes the angel’s tidings interrupt the shepherds while they are playing bagpipes and dancing with their wives or consorts (see figs. 21 and 22).¹¹¹ In

¹¹¹ Harthan, *The Book of Hours*, 20. Wieck describes them as shepherdesses, *Painted Prayers*, 68.

many of these images, though not in the LSU Hours, bagpipes are included. In the medieval iconography bagpipes were suggestive of sexuality, apparently being often associated with testicles.¹¹² Therefore the scenario conveyed by such images was that the angel disturbed the fun-loving, frolicking shepherds, whose cavorting behavior typifies their common, coarse station in life. This aspect of their nature was exaggerated in order to make a distinct contrast to the three Kings that would have been depicted in the next miniature which introduces the Hours of Sext. Because of the number of miniatures that include women in this scene, this explanation seems to be the most plausible.



Fig. 21. Woman with Shepherds in the *Annunciation to the Shepherds* (Walters Art Gallery W. 1093, fol. 57r)



Fig. 22. Woman with Shepherds in the *Annunciation to the Shepherds* (Walters Art Gallery W. 240, fol. 198v)

¹¹² Derek Pearsall, *Gothic Europe 1200-1450* (Harlow, Essex: Longman, 2001), 160. Pearsall, 131, asserts that: "Any bagpipe will be a reminder of the 'old dance' of sexuality set against the new law of Christ."

In the LSU Hours, however, the woman is not really involved in the actions of the shepherds. Rather, she is sitting in the foreground, and because her dress overlaps the frame, her placement is ambiguous: is she in our, the viewers,' space or in the narrative of the image? This suggests the possibility that she was added as a portrait of the patron, upon which she could meditate. Certainly many Books of Hours were commissioned to include patron portraits. However, although such portraits were quite simple and generic in the thirteenth century, by the fourteenth century they were often rendered in sufficient detail as to suggest an individual likeness.¹¹³ Here the woman is obviously of a generic type. In fact, her facial features are portrayed in much the same way as many of the Virgin Mary's features in the other miniatures, that is, in the other miniatures painted by Artist A. Moreover, patron portraits were usually incorporated in the Annunciation miniature or near the beginning of the *Obsecro te* prayer. In these places the portrait would be close to the owner's intercessor, the Virgin Mary. Although patron portraits are occasionally found in other places in a *Horae*, it is unlikely that one would be incorporated into the miniature of the Annunciation to the Shepherds, the only miniature in the Little Office which does not include an image of the Virgin.¹¹⁴ Finally, from the prayers *Obsecro te* and *O intermerata*, as already discussed, it is clear that this particular Book of Hours was not commissioned specifically for a woman, although it could have been possible to add her portrait later, since the manuscript was illuminated after the scribe had written the text.

¹¹³ Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, 14.

¹¹⁴ For further information pertaining to all the places in which a patron portrait may be included, see Lucy Freeman Sandler, "The Wilton Diptych and Images of Devotion in Illuminated Manuscripts," in *The Regal Image of Richard II and the Wilton Diptych*, edited by Dillian Gordon, Lisa Monnas, and Caroline M. Barron (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1977).

2.4.5 The Adoration of the Magi and the Hour of Sext

The scene of the Adoration of the Magi serves as a visual reference to Matthew 2:1-12. These verses refer to the Magi who came to Bethlehem from the east. Deducing the star in the east as a sign that the King of the Jews had been born, they traveled to Bethlehem in order to worship the new ruler. “On coming to the house, they saw the child and his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, and of incense, and of myrrh” (Matthew 2:11).

This scene is so commonly reproduced in Christian art that most viewers take for granted that the Virgin Mary and infant Jesus were visited by three Kings. Although the Magi or Wise Men were often associated with Kings, it was not until the tenth century that they were visually depicted as such. The representation of the Magi as Kings is thought to have come from Psalm 72:10, 11: “The Kings of Tarshish and of distant shores will bring tribute to him... All Kings will bow down to him and all nations will serve him.”¹¹⁵ Another common misconception is that the Bible specifies three Magi. In fact, the Bible does not specify a number at all. Because three gifts were given, it was assumed that an equal number of Magi brought them.¹¹⁶ Hence the visual representation of the trio of Kings, with their three gifts, was not universal, but it was commonly accepted by the Middle Ages. According to Bede (c. 673-735), the gifts of gold symbolized the

¹¹⁵ George Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art* (London, Oxford, and New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), 78.

¹¹⁶ Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, vol. I, 96.

recognition of Christ's kingship, frankincense his divinity, and myrrh foreshadowed his death, since myrrh was used to embalm.¹¹⁷

The *Adoration* scene illuminated in the LSU Hours is, in many ways, typical of a fifteenth-century composition (fig. 23). Mary is seated on a chair (not visible), which is draped in red cloth. She is sheltered by the simple stable, which now includes a piece of blue drapery with a small gold flower design. She holds the naked infant Jesus, who reaches towards the golden gift held by the kneeling King. This naturalistic, if somewhat irreverent, gesture of the infant Messiah is quite commonly depicted in contemporary Books of Hours (for example, fig. 24).



Fig. 23. *Adoration of the Magi*, LSU Hours, (fol. 73r)



Fig. 24. *The Adoration of the Magi* by the Master of the Munich Golden Legend (Walters Art Gallery MS 288, fol. 64)

¹¹⁷ Hall, *Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols*, 6.

The three Kings were typically portrayed as being of three different age groups.¹¹⁸ Indeed, the artist of the LSU Hours has purposefully portrayed the kneeling King as an elderly man with a beard, while the King to the right is beardless with a head of blond hair, suggesting his youth. The Kings bring their gifts in various gold containers, which are outlined in black. They are dressed in lavish attire, certainly more lavish than the shepherd's attire in the previous image. The King in the middle ground wears a blue-gray robe with a gold pattern under a pink cloak with a white tippet. The kneeling elderly King in the foreground wears a long red robe with a white tippet. His robe is cinched at the waist and a gold bag hangs from his black belt. This is a common motif, to be found in many contemporary images. The youngest King is dressed in a royal blue tunic with fashionably long sleeves. Beneath this, a pink garment is visible on his arms. His belt and collar are black, and he appears to be wearing black leggings or hose. Two of the Kings wear crowns. In many fifteenth-century depictions of the Adoration, the kneeling King has removed his crown as a sign of respect. Usually the crown is visible on the ground in front of the King. Here this item is absent. Perhaps it was a conscious choice on the part of the artist or an omission due to forgetfulness or time constraints.

Perhaps the most curious aspect of this scene in the LSU Hours is that two of the Kings look to the right, that is, in the opposite direction of the Holy infant to whom they are supposed to be paying homage. Other contemporary images show one King facing the opposite direction, but never, to my knowledge, two. Thus, this small detail could eventually help to localize the manuscript if another example of identifiable locale were

¹¹⁸ The visit made by the Magi is known as the Epiphany, which means "the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles." Therefore the three ages of the Magi signify the spread of Christianity to everyone of all ages. Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols*, 78.

discovered. Alternatively, it may simply be the result of the artist's misunderstanding of the iconography.

2.4.6 The *Presentation in the Temple* Miniature and the Hours of None.

The Hour of None is traditionally accompanied by a scene of either the Presentation in the Temple (as is the case in the LSU Hours) or the Circumcision. The Presentation in the Temple is described in Luke 2:22-38. Conforming to Jewish law, every first-born belonged to Yahweh and therefore must be presented in the temple. This was to be accompanied by a sacrifice of either a pair of doves or two young pigeons. Luke combines this ritual with another, the Purification of the Mother, which traditionally occurred forty days after the birth of a child.

According to the Bible, Mary and Joseph took Jesus to Jerusalem and there they met a holy man named Simeon. "It had been revealed to Simeon by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ" (Luke 2:26). Recognizing Jesus as the savior, Simeon took the infant in his arms and praised God. Simeon blessed both Mary and Joseph, and his final words to Mary were, "And a sword will pierce your own soul too" (Luke 2: 35). These words have been interpreted as foreshadowing the pain that Mary was to experience with the death of her son.

The miniature in the LSU Hours (fig. 25) is a typical rendering of the scene: Mary arrives from the left, while Simeon is on the right.¹¹⁹ In keeping with Jewish tradition, the men and women are kept separate, and here they are divided by the altar.¹²⁰ Simeon

¹¹⁹ Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, vol. I, 92.

¹²⁰ Meiss, *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry*, 158.

wears a pointed hat, signifying his position as a Jewish high priest.¹²¹ However, he also wears a blue and gold cope, which is a Christian ecclesiastical vestment. His holy status is denoted by his gold halo. The white wisps descending through the doorway were probably meant to represent the Holy Spirit that descended upon him. Above Simeon is a pink and blue canopy, which designates the importance of the altar below. Behind him stands a tonsured, and therefore Christian, monk.



Fig. 25. *Presentation in the Temple*
Miniature, LSU Hours (fol. 77r)

The Virgin presents her naked baby to the priest. The infant Jesus looks towards the priest, yet his body faces his mother and his arms reach out to her. By depicting the baby Jesus' fear, the artist has again included a naturalistic humanizing detail: the infant is afraid to leave his mother's arms.

¹²¹ Many contemporary medieval miniatures portray Simeon wearing a bishop's mitre instead.

Behind the Virgin is the handmaiden holding a basket. Traditionally the basket holds two doves or pigeons. This motif was extremely common and is to be found in most fifteenth-century images of the Presentation. What is unusual here is that the basket is empty! There are no doves to sacrifice, in accordance with Jewish law. Did the illuminator neglect to add them due to time constraints, did he merely forget them, or was he ignorant of the importance of the two birds to the entire Biblical passage?

The handmaiden is dressed in a pink dress and, typical of late medieval fashion of the fifteenth century, again has high-positioned breasts and an emphasized stomach. While her right hand holds the basket, her left hand is raised as if perhaps to hold something. This is mentioned because often in this particular scene the attendant figure holds a candle in reference to Candlemas (the feast of Mary's Purification). But perhaps the gesture of the handmaiden serves no such purpose, since no candle is depicted here.

The scene is depicted as taking place in an ecclesiastical setting of sorts. The wooden barrel vaulting is reminiscent of earlier Christian churches before the use of stone in the Romanesque period. Barrel vaulting such as this, with the knots of wood highlighted in gold, is associated with various ateliers. For example, the Master of Jean Rolin II and his Parisian atelier chose the wooden barrel vault as one of their preferred motifs.¹²² The inclusion of leaded glass casement windows is another motif typical of northern French and Flemish artists.¹²³ The artist of the LSU Hours has incorporated an architectural framing device known the diaphragm arch. Here the simple pink arch repeats the shape of the miniature's arched border, while providing a framing device

¹²²Peter Rolfe Monks, "The Master of Jean Rolin II as Illuminator of the Gages de Bataille in Paris, Bibl. Nat., MS., FR. 2258," *Scriptorium*, 46 (No. 1, 1992), 56.

¹²³ Monks, "The Master of Jean Rolin II," 57.

through which the viewer “enters” the picture space. The arch gives an illusion of depth, since two different planes of the arch have been represented by the use of shadow.

Therefore we, the viewers, are not looking directly at the scene. We view it from the right of the arch. The setting depicted behind the arch is also at an oblique angle, adding to the illusion of receding (albeit awkward) perspective. The diaphragm arch was introduced into illumination by the Boucicaut Master and was thereafter a common artistic device used by later illuminators.¹²⁴

2.4.7 The *Flight into Egypt* Miniature and the Hour of Vespers

The Flight into Egypt is the most commonly represented scene associated with the Hour of Vespers, although the latter is sometimes alternatively accompanied by the Massacre of the Innocents. The Flight into Egypt is described in Matthew 2:13-23. An angel advises Joseph to take Jesus and his mother to Egypt so that they may escape the wrath of Herod, who intended to kill the infant Christ. The Holy Family’s escape to Egypt fulfilled the prophecy “Out of Egypt I called my son.” The gospel writer Matthew refers to Hosea 11:1. The core elements of the scene are Mary and Jesus riding on an ass, while Joseph walks alongside them. Here in the LSU Hours, the scenery is the (by now all too familiar) setting with two rocky outcrops; the one in the background is on the left, while the outcrop on the right is in the middle ground (fig. 26). In the distance blue streaks of towers can be seen. The Virgin sits facing the viewer, and here her hair is covered by her blue cloak. The baby Jesus is wrapped in swaddling clothes. Joseph leads the ass, and the party moves from the left to the right of the picture plane. Joseph looks back at Mary and the child, and in accordance with traditional representation, he carries a

¹²⁴ Karl M. Birkmeyer, “The Arch Motif in Netherlandish Painting of the Fifteenth Century, Part One,” *Art Bulletin*, 45 (1961), 2.

staff over his shoulder. Sometimes Joseph is depicted as carrying their belongings in a bundle on this staff, but here it appears to carry only a piece of blue drapery. Joseph's right hand points upward and onward, perhaps as a gesture to their destination.

Interestingly, Joseph has a full head of hair in contrast to his representation in the *Nativity* scene where he was depicted as balding with only a tuft of hair on his forehead (compare figs. 26 and 19). He also wears a gray-blue tippet over a red robe, whereas in the *Nativity* scene he wore red over a blue robe.



Fig. 26. *Flight into Egypt*, LSU Hours (fol. 82r)

Representations of the ass are often indicators of particular artist's style. Although the ass is often shown in profile with a raised foreleg, elements such as the position of the head and the shape and girth of the neck can help to isolate the influence of a specific

artist, if not the hand of the artist himself. Overall, the composition of the *Flight into Egypt* is typical of others of the time.

2.4.8 The Coronation of the Virgin Miniature and the Hour of Compline

The last Hour of the Hours of the Virgin, Compline, may be introduced by any of three different scenes: the Coronation of the Virgin (as depicted here), the Flight into Egypt, or the Massacre of the Innocents. The Coronation of the Virgin has no basis in biblical scripture. Instead the Coronation and the Assumption of the Virgin were based upon apocryphal texts which were popularized in the sixth century by St. Gregory of Tours.¹²⁵ In general, the narrative of this scene involved the Virgin Mary on Christ's right-hand side. Conventionally, Christ crowns his mother in a heavenly setting. However, in the fifteenth century it became common for God the Father, rather than Jesus, to be crowning the Virgin.¹²⁶

In the LSU Hours, God is wearing a pope's white and gold triple tiara (fig. 27). This is a common element of contemporary images. The halo behind his head signifies his divine nature. He has a cleft beard and overall a squarish physiognomy. He sits in a throne with a canopy above, and both of these elements help to emphasize his importance. In his left hand he holds an orb signifying his power, while his right hand is held upwards in a gesture of blessing. Meanwhile Mary kneels before him, head bowed and hands in prayer. A small frontal angel places a golden crown on the Virgin's head. Only the angel's head, torso, and arms can be seen. This foreshortened depiction seems to

¹²⁵ Harthan, *The Book of Hours*, 153.

¹²⁶ Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, vol. I, 76.

indicate that the angel is flying or hovering over the Virgin. Another angel stands in the center of the composition behind the representation of God.



Fig. 27. *Coronation of the Virgin* Miniature, LSU Hours (fol. 89r)

All the figures are placed in a similar ecclesiastical setting as the *Presentation in the Temple*. A wooden barrel vault arches over a central open doorway. Lilac pink walls encompass casement leaded windows, one of which has been painted as if slightly open. The window frames and diaphragm arch show a simple perspective and depth by the use of light and shadow. A red tapestry with a gold swirl pattern hangs on the wall. Again the sharply inclined floor of green tiles has been portrayed. A tiny detail that could easily be overlooked is the cushion upon which God presumably rests his feet, though we cannot actually see them. This pink pillow is ornamented with a corner of pearls and a tassel, an esoteric detail also found in another French fifteenth-century Book of Hours, which will be referred to in chapter three.

2.5 The *Pentecost* Miniature and the Hours of the Holy Spirit

The Hours of the Holy Spirit are traditionally introduced by an image of Pentecost. This scene is derived from Acts 2:1-4. After witnessing the Ascension of Christ, the Apostles were gathered together when, “Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them” (Luke 2:2-4). The importance of these verses is that they signify the beginning of the Christian church. The scene of Pentecost was a popular image in the Middle Ages. Mary was usually rendered in the center of the apostles, although the Bible does not actually mention her presence at the time of the Pentecost. It is merely assumed that she, as well as other women, were there because of a previous verse, Acts 1:14, which proclaims that these women were “constantly in prayer together” with the apostles. Her central placement in this scene is more symbolic, though, for she is the personification of the church.¹²⁷ Within the image, a dove representing the Holy Spirit is an essential feature, and the “tongues of fire” are sometimes painted as beams of light, at other times as actual tongues.

Here in the LSU Hours (fig. 28), the Virgin is centrally placed between the twelve apostles. Only eight faces of the apostles can be seen, but additional halos can be identified.¹²⁸ All of the apostles have their hands clasped in prayer. Traditionally, St. Peter is placed on the left side of the image and St. John the Evangelist on the right, as

¹²⁷ Ibid., 101.

¹²⁸ Actually, if examined very closely, parts of thirteen halos can be identified.

they are here. All of the apostles (except John the Evangelist) are bearded and have dark salmon-toned complexions, as well as square-shaped, though modeled, faces. St. John the Evangelist, however, is beardless and has a pale complexion. He also has blond, rather than brown hair as all the other apostles have. This seemingly effeminate depiction of St. John is not unusual, but one cannot help but wonder if the artist really understood this figure to be the youthful St. John the Evangelist, or if he merely mistook the image from his exemplar for being a woman and thus embellished its feminine aspects. It should be noted, however, that depicting St. John in a pink robe would not have been a feminizing aspect, since pink was used for the clothing of many male figures' clothing in contemporary manuscripts illumination.



Fig. 28. *Pentecost* Miniature, LSU Hours (fol. 95r)

The central Virgin Mary is sitting with an open book in her lap. The book has gilded edges and is outlined in black, with pseudo-script formed by small black lines. Beneath her is a pink cushion with pearls and a gold tassel on the corner. It is similar to the cushion in the previous miniature of the *Coronation of the Virgin*.

The dove enters the open window above the Virgin's head. Red wavy lines spread out from beneath the bird, representing the "tongues of fire." The interior setting again has a green tiled floor, along with a red and gold wall hanging in the background. The familiar wooden barrel-vaulted ceiling is present, as are the casement windows framed this time by pink walls, while a diaphragm arch frames the entire image.

2.6 The *King David* Miniature and the Penitential Psalms

The Penitential Psalms of the fifteenth century are most often introduced by an image of King David in fervent prayer, as they are here in the LSU Hours (fig. 29). Thirteenth- and fourteenth-century French manuscripts often include an image of Christ as Judge.¹²⁹ Occasionally, in contemporary medieval codices, the Penitential Psalms are prefaced by scenes of David and Bathsheba, Christ Enthroned, or the Last Judgment. King David of the Old Testament was traditionally believed to be the composer of the Psalms. Today it is believed that he wrote at least half of them. The Seven Penitential Psalms (6, 31, 37, 50, 101, 129, and 142) were written by King David as penance for his sins. David was remembered as a great King, and yet also as a great sinner. He certainly committed his fair share of sins, which included adultery with Bathsheba and murder: he

¹²⁹ Wieck, *Time Sanctified*, 97.

ordered her husband Uriah to fight in the front line and thereby ensured his death. David thereafter repented.¹³⁰



Fig. 29. *King David Praying*
Miniature, LSU Hours (fol. 98r)

In the Middle Ages, Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) ordered these particular seven psalms to be recited during Lent. The Seven Psalms became associated with the Seven Deadly Sins, and therefore they were later incorporated into Books of Hours. The owner of a Book of Hours would read the Psalms for two reasons. First, their recitation helped the reader to avoid sin, and thereby reduce his or her time in Purgatory. Second, they were recited to reduce the time spent in Purgatory of the already deceased. Indeed, the image of prayer and the Penitential Psalms that follow embody the overall meaning of

¹³⁰ Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, 91.

owning a Book of Hours, that is, to pray for one's own salvation, as King David did, and to pray for the deceased in purgatory.¹³¹

The Latin text found beneath the image of King David in the LSU Hours is the beginning of Psalm 6: "*Domine, ne in furore tuo arguas me...*" ("O Lord, rebuke me not...").¹³² The image above portrays an elderly King David in prayer in a rural setting. King David's attributes are the crown and a stringed instrument, usually a harp, in keeping with I Chronicles 13:8: "David and all the Israelites were celebrating with all their might before God, with songs and with harps, lyres, tambourines, cymbals, and trumpets." The harp is also associated with the Book of Psalms, which were accompanied by music.

In the LSU Hours, the kneeling King David wears a golden crown and next to him is his harp. He looks up to God, who appears in a pinkish red circle in the sky. God is also crowned and holds an orb in one hand, while he gives a gesture of blessing with the other. King David has a long cleft beard, and he wears a blue robe with an ermine-lined red cloak. The long red drapery shows the voluminous folds, which have been highlighted in gold. This is obviously the work of Artist A. King David is shown alone in the countryside. The artist of this illumination emphasized King David's solitude by including the representation of a city in the background. Here are white crenellated towers with narrow blue steeples, and three tiny blue flags can be seen blowing in the wind. The overall composition is typical of many contemporary King David scenes and hence the chances of localizing the LSU Hours from this image alone are small.

¹³¹ Ibid., 91.

¹³² Ibid., 91.

The litany always follows the Penitential Psalms. This is a long list of saints that are invoked to “pray for us.” The list begins with Christ, God the Father, and the Holy Spirit, and is followed by the Virgin, archangels, angels, John the Baptist, apostles, male martyrs, confessors, female virgin martyrs, and widows. After each name “*Ora pro nobis*” (Pray for us) is usually written.¹³³ In the LSU Hours this has been abbreviated to “*Ora*” (it actually looks more like “*Oy*” in Gothic script; fig. 30).



Fig. 30. Litany of the Saints, LSU Hours (fol. 112r)

Rather like the calendar, sometimes this list may include saints of a particular region and/or personal patron saints. The inclusion of Saint Geneviève in the LSU Hours’ litany is the only indication of a particular place, and that would be Paris.

¹³³ Ibid., 92.

2.7 The *Burial Service in a Cemetery Miniature* and the Office of the Dead

In most *Horae* the text of the Office of the Dead is exactly the same as that found in a Breviary. This is in contrast to the previous texts in Books of Hours, which were shortened and simplified versions. Therefore, the laity had access to the same prayers that were said by ordained clergy at a funeral.¹³⁴

The Office of the Dead consists of three Hours: Vespers, Matins, and Lauds. Vespers was recited in church over the coffin, usually the evening before the burial. Matins and Lauds were then recited by monks at the burial site the following day. Matins consists of nine readings from the Book of Job, and these describe the trials of Job. Written in the first person, they became a direct plea to God on behalf of the reader. Matins begins, “*Dirige, Domine, Deus meus, in conspectu tuo viam meam*” (Direct, O Lord, my God, my steps in your sight).¹³⁵

These texts were to be said at funerals. However, they were also supposed to be recited daily by the laity, which accounts for their inclusion into all Books of Hours. In doing so, the reader hoped to reduce the time spent in Purgatory of those already deceased, since the dead were unable to pray for themselves.

The Office of the Dead is usually introduced by one miniature. However, the miniatures of this Office are the most varied iconographically and may be represented by a variety of scenes, such as Last Rites, Praying the Office of the Dead, Burial Service, Last Judgment, Job on the Dungheap, the Raising of Lazarus, Lazarus and Dives, Death

¹³⁴ Wieck, *Time Sanctified*, 124.

¹³⁵ The antiphon word “dirge” was used in the Middle Ages to refer to the whole Office of the Dead. Today the word dirge does not refer to Matins or the Office of the Dead, but rather to any mournful hymn sung at a funeral. Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, 117.

Personified, or the Three Living and the Three Dead. The most frequently depicted image is Praying the Office of the Dead.¹³⁶ Such images usually depict the coffin within a church setting, while monks and priests are presumably chanting Vespers. In the LSU Hours the image depicted is a Burial Scene (fig. 31). Here, this event takes place in a graveyard, which is denoted by the red marker (shaped like a cross with a gabled roof on top).¹³⁷ The graveyard is surrounded by a crenellated brick wall and an arched entranceway. A man (dressed in red) stands in the grave and places the shrouded corpse in its final resting place. The corpse is rather small; perhaps the artist intended this scene to represent the funeral of a child. The shroud bears a simple cross on the torso. Typically in the Middle Ages the deceased were not buried in coffins. Instead they would have been sewn into a shroud, and a coffin was used only to carry the body to the burial site. The priest (signified by his blue and gold cope) reads the last blessing over the corpse. In addition to the cope, the priest wears a long-sleeved white robe over a pink garment, of which only the bottom can be seen. He reads from a black-outlined book with gilded edges and a pseudo-script consisting of squiggly lines. Behind the priest is a tonsured monk in a white robe. Behind both of the clerics are several figures dressed in black hooded robes, which cover their faces. Two more of these mysterious figures are depicted on the left side of the image, behind the man in red. These faceless figures, dressed in black, represent the professional mourners who would have attended the funeral ritual and are commonly included in funeral scenes.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 23.

¹³⁷ This structure is sometimes referred to as a “grave-marker” or a “calvary.”



Fig. 31. *Burial Scene* Miniature, LSU Hours (fol. 116r)

CHAPTER 3. METHODS AND TESTS FOR PROVENANCE, LOCALIZING, AND DATING

The examination of the illuminations alone has often been the sole method used by art historians studying manuscripts. However, many other aspects concerning a codex's history may be investigated. The provenance may be traced by working backwards from current ownership through documented records. Alternatively, the manuscript itself may contain clues as to the first owner. Localization and dating may be narrowed down by recognizing certain artistic devices, styles, and designs. By comparing miniatures of the LSU Hours to those of other contemporary scenes, speculations can be made as to where the codex was actually produced and approximately when.

3.1 Provenance

Provenance refers to the history of ownership. Some Books of Hours can be traced to their original owners and therefore can be dated and localized with some accuracy. In general, the provenance of Books of Hours can be traced by checking documentation such as auction records, inventories, and even wills and obituaries. Auction records tend to have fairly detailed catalogue descriptions, with condition reports and known provenance. Therefore, if one knew that the manuscript had been sold, for example, in New York in 1970, then one could start checking the records of auction houses for that time.¹³⁸

If the name of one of the owners is known, then one could check the wills of the owner's ancestors. Books of Hours were obviously cherished items because they were

¹³⁸ "Artifact," an on-line database, is a compilation of auction house record sales for fine and decorative arts from the mid 1980s to present day. In addition, the Getty Museum in Los Angeles and the Frick Museum in New York both buy old auction catalogues and therefore provide another avenue for research.

frequently mentioned in wills. Of course, in such documents the descriptions tend to be brief. Inventories also often list manuscripts. In the case of a wealthy household that may have had several Books of Hours, there may be a short description to differentiate between them.

In the case of the LSU Hours, unfortunately, only a few details of its provenance can be ascertained. As previously mentioned, this *Horae* was donated to LSU in 1991 by John McIlhenny, heir to the Tabasco fortune (died 1997). He had apparently purchased the manuscript in 1953 from the Scribner book store, New York. Shane Bernard, the archivist of the McIlhenny Collection, checked the archives of the collection, but found no records pertaining to this codex.

However, another lead to the provenance of this Book of Hours is the nineteenth-century bookbinding (fig.32), to which is attached a bookplate that bears the inscription “EX-LIBRIS L. PASQUIER” (fig. 33). The bookplate could have been attached at a much later date than the nineteenth century binding, but the *Horae* obviously belonged to an L. Pasquier at some time between the nineteenth century and 1953.

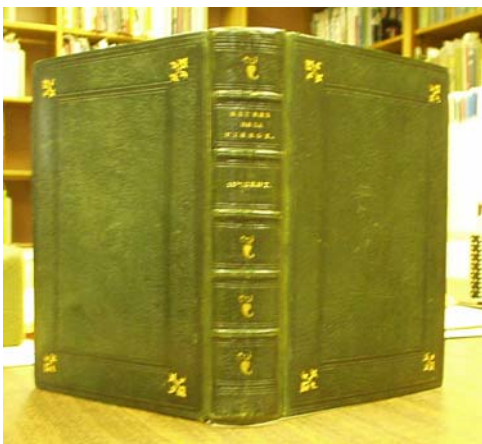


Fig. 32. Nineteenth-Century Binding, LSU Hours

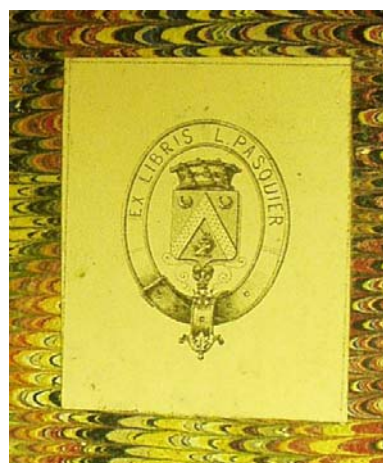


Fig. 33. Bookplate “EX-LIBRIS L. PASQUIER,” LSU Hours

By checking auction records on the database “Artifact,” I found that other books and manuscripts sold through Sotheby’s and Christie’s bear the plate of L. Pasquier.¹³⁹ Also, the Pierpont Morgan Library has four books in its collection that were at one time owned by an L. Pasquier.¹⁴⁰ Therefore it seems that L. Pasquier owned a collection of books that included various religious manuscripts. I was able to contact Roger S. Wieck (Curator of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts at the Pierpont Morgan Library). He verified that the bookplate of at least one book in the collection bears the same “ex libris.” He also informed me that in 1874 or 1875 (the records give two dates) the library of L. Pasquier was sold. The catalogues of the sales are now owned by the New York Public Library (volume one) and the Grolier Club, New York (volume two).¹⁴¹ Volume one does not contain a description of a Book of Hours. However, I contacted J. Fernando Peña, Curator of the Grolier Club, and volume two contains the description of the LSU manuscript. The catalogue is titled:

Catalogue des livres reliés en maroquin composant la bibliothèque de feu M. L. Pasquier, Chevalier de la Légion d’honneur, Président à la cour d’appel de Paris: second partie: dont la vente aura lieu le jeudi 11 février 1875, et les deux jours suivants ... Hôtel des Commissaires-Priseurs, rue Drouot ... par le Me. Delbergue-Cormont, commissaire-priseur ... et de Me. Peynaud, commissaire-priseur ... (Paris: Adolphe Labitte, Libraire de la Bibliothèque Nationale, 1875).

This describes how the leather-bound books of the library of the late M. L. Pasquier were sold on February 11, 1875 and on the following two days. Pasquier was apparently a member of the Legion of Honor and President of the Court of Appeals in Paris. The

¹³⁹ Initial inquiries to Christie’s and Sotheby’s have thus far proved unsuccessful.

¹⁴⁰ These can be verified by using *Corsair*, the online catalog of the Pierpont Morgan Library.

¹⁴¹ I wish to thank Roger S. Wieck for investigating this matter for me.

auction took place in the Drouot auction house, Paris, and the names of the auctioneers are given. The actual lot is described on page 5 as follows:

26. HEURES DE LA VIERGE. Pet. in-4, mar. v. fil. à froid, tr. dor. (Niedrée.) Manuscrit du quinzième siècle sur vélin, contenant 163 ff. Il est orné de 12 grandes miniatures et de bordures en or en couleurs. Il se termine par ces mots: S'enuyvent les XV joies, partie qui a été retranchée du manuscrit.

The description translates, more or less, as “Hours of the Virgin. Small, in a quarto format. (Niedrée.) The makings in the binding are made in gold in a “fil. à froid” process. It is a fifteenth-century manuscript on vellum, and contains 163 folia. It is ornamented with twelve miniatures with borders in gold and in color. It finishes with the words: here follow the fifteen joys, which are missing from the manuscript.”¹⁴² Unfortunately, no annotations accompany the lot, so there is no information as to whom it was sold, or the price that it brought.¹⁴³

Rather than checking the last owner and working backwards, another way to tackle the issue of provenance would be to check the manuscript for clues as to the first owner. This method often overlaps with localization and dating. The LSU Hours does not contain any of the following details; however, in general a Book of Hours should be scrutinized for these clues, which may pinpoint a particular owner.

The illuminators may have been commissioned to add personal details. The inclusion of the patron’s portrait would be an obvious indicator of whom the *Hora*e was first intended for, and, as previously mentioned, by the fourteenth century portraits had

¹⁴² Indeed these are the last words of the LSU Hours. They are written in red ink in Latin, but no text follows, as if the scribe deliberately stopped here, rather than there being missing folia.

¹⁴³ Many thanks to J. Fernando Peña for this information.

become recognizable. A very common identification motif would be the inclusion of the coat of arms of the patron. These were often painted within the border, immediately below the text of a miniature, though they may occur within the miniature or in other areas of the codex. Likewise, personal monograms, initials, or mottos may have been added.¹⁴⁴ Fig. 34 shows a personal portrait of the Duke of Bedford from the *Bedford Hours*. Below the depiction of the Duke, the illuminator has included his coat of arms, and his motto is repeated. Sometimes even personal emblems show a mark of ownership. For example, in the *Très Riches Heures* the swan and bear appear numerous times in the decoration of this manuscript, as these two animals were the personal emblems of its patron the Duc de Berry.



Fig. 34. Patron Portrait of the Duke of Bedford, including his Coat of Arms and Motto, *Bedford Hours* (British Library, London MS 18850 fol. 256b)

¹⁴⁴ An excellent source for further information to aid identification of mottoes, heraldic marks, bookplates, and so forth may be found in David Pearson's *Provenance Research in Book History* (London: The British Library & Oak Knoll Press, 1998). Pearson gives extensive bibliographies within each section for further research.

The scribe sometimes left a clue in his colophon. Colophons usually occur at the end of the manuscript and can include information about where, for whom, and occasionally when a manuscript was created.¹⁴⁵ The flyleaves at the beginning and end of a codex function primarily to protect the leaves in between, but sometimes they too have inscriptions (along with pen trials) that prove helpful in tracing the provenance.

Books of Hours sometimes contain one or a combination of these elements. Unfortunately the LSU Hours does not have any of them. It must be remembered that while the LSU Hours was (and is) a fine production, it was produced during a time when such manuscripts were made very quickly to meet the demand of the burgeoning urban middle class. If the LSU Hours was made for stock, then no such inclusions would be expected.

3.2 Localization and Dating

One way in which the LSU Hours can be tested for locale is to check the Use. The “Use” refers to variances that occur within the text according to local custom of an area which can range in size from a country to a small diocese. There are many local Uses depending on the verses and responses chosen, and the order in which they occur. The Use of a Book of Hours can be checked in three parts. First, the calendar can be described as having a Use. Second, the Hours of the Virgin can be checked for their Use, and lastly the Office of the Dead can likewise be checked.

The Use of the calendar may be determined by checking the important feast days, as previously discussed. Notable are the following saints’ names that have been

¹⁴⁵ Colophons can also contain a variety of other information, such as the scribe’s name, how long it took him to write the codex, a curse for future readers to be careful with the manuscript, or even what the scribe will do now that the codex is finished. The latter often appears to have been to drink some wine and find a pretty girl.

illuminated in gold in the LSU Hours: Saints Geneviève (January 3), Denis (October 9), Eloi (June 25), Loys [King Louis of France] (August 25), Leu & Gilles (September 1), Martin (November 11), Clement (November 23), and La Notre Dame [Conception of the Virgin] (December 8).¹⁴⁶ I checked the gold highlighted days of the LSU calendar with the example of a Parisian calendar in Perdrizet's book, *Le Calendrier parisien à la fin du moyen âge: d'après le Bréviaire et les Livres d'Heures*, 1933, which also has a saint for every day of the year. The highlighted days match, with few exceptions, strongly suggesting that the LSU Hours calendar, although composite, is Parisian. The notable exception in the LSU Hours is the inclusion of the feast of "Legypaenne" (*L'egiptienne* or Saint Mary the Egyptian), which appears in red on April 2, blue on April 3, and in gold on April 4 (fig. 35). The feast of the Egyptian was usually celebrated on April 2, and it was not highlighted in gold in a Parisian calendar. This unusual detail could eventually lead to isolation of the atelier in which the manuscript was made, since it was likely copied from another exemplar.



Fig. 35. April Calendar Page, LSU Hours (fol. 4r)

¹⁴⁶ I would like to thank Dr. Adelaide Bennett of the Index of Christian Art, Princeton, for first pointing out this information to me, and for recommending Paul Perdrizet's *Le Calendrier parisien à la fin du moyen âge d'après le Bréviaire et les Livres d'Heures* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1933), in which I could verify this information.

For these reasons, the calendar points to the Use of Paris. As a side note, it most certainly does not point to the Use of Autun. Two saints that were particularly important to this Burgundian town were Saint Lazarus, whose relics lie within the church bearing his name in Autun, and Saint Symphorium, who was martyred in Autun and always appears in Calendars for Autun Use.¹⁴⁷

The list of saints in the Litany may also include the name of a personal patron saints, or personal family dates. However, the LSU Hours appears to include no particularly obscure entries, unfamiliar saints, or anything else of an idiosyncratic nature.

The Use of a calendar indicates not necessarily where the codex was made, but rather the location for which it was intended. For example, the calendar of a Book of Hours may have been made in Paris but commissioned by an aristocrat from Lyon and therefore the feast days would point to Lyon. However, as Roger Wieck points out, “Paris calendars almost always mean ‘made in Paris,’ since with its productive workshops the French capital had no need to import manuscripts manufactured elsewhere.”¹⁴⁸ The composite nature of the calendar in the LSU Hours makes the Parisian Use more ambivalent; it could have been copied in any atelier other than one in Paris, although the calendar certainly does not point to Autun or any other non-Parisian workshop. On the other hand, the composite calendar, with the most important feast days written in gold

¹⁴⁷ For a full listing of saints that are highlighted in a calendar for the Use of Autun, see Abbé Leroquais, *Les Livres d’heures manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale* (Paris: Macon, protat Frères, impr, 1927, supplement 1943), 266. This book gives a number of examples of the various Uses. I also recommend Hermann Grotefend, *Taschenbuch der Zeitrechnung des deutschen Mittelalters und der Neuzeit* (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1960), which lists numerous saints in alphabetical order giving their various dates and towns with which they are associated.

¹⁴⁸ Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, 27. In addition to Wieck, De Hamel writes, “If your Book of Hours is of the Use of Paris and the Patron Saint of Paris, St Geneviève, is in red or gold on 3 January, then almost certainly the manuscript is Parisian.” De Hamel, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts*, 165.

and the others alternating in red and blue, was a typical construction of Paris, and later, Rouen as well.¹⁴⁹

To check the Use of the Hours of the Virgin, one need only look to the *antiphons* and *capitulums* in the Office of Prime and None. De Hamel gives full instructions and examples for checking the Use of Rome, Paris, Rouen, Sarum, Besançon, Poitiers, and Utrecht.¹⁵⁰ In addition, F. Madan gives examples for checking over eighty different Uses, including those for monastic liturgy.¹⁵¹ Using these tests, we can conclude that the LSU Hours is certainly Use of Paris. Included in Madan's article are the *capitulums* for Prime and None for the Use of Autun, which prove to be very different from those of Paris. It should be noted that the Use of Paris and that of Rome were two of the most commonly used Uses for the Hours of the Virgin. Thus it is possible that the codex was copied in a location other than Paris, although Paris does remain its likeliest point of origin.

The last method of checking Use pertains to the Office of the Dead. The Office of the Dead is found in Breviaries and Psalters as well as Books of Hours. It consists of Vespers, Matins, and Lauds. The responsories (responses) and versicles within the text of Matins change according to the Use of local churches and monasteries. It appears that these locational Uses, once established, did not change and therefore provide excellent means for localizing manuscripts.¹⁵² To check the Office of the Dead, Knud Ottosen's

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 160.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 165.

¹⁵¹ F. Madan, "Hours of the Virgin (Tests for Localization)," *The Bodleian Quarterly Record* 3 (1920-22) 40-44.

¹⁵² Knud Ottosen, *The Responsories and Versicles of the Latin Office of the Dead* (Aarhus, Denmark: Aarhus University Press, 1993), 3.

book, *The Responsories and Versicles of the Latin Office of the Dead*, 1993, can be used.¹⁵³ Ottosen has collected 1,809 examples (951 from France) of the Office of the Dead from the seventh to the seventeenth centuries. From these examples he has isolated 140 different Uses.¹⁵⁴ By checking the first response after the introduction of the nine readings from Job (within Matins), a pattern emerges. Ottosen lists the various responses (over one hundred of them) and gives each response a number. A pattern of nine numbers can then be established. All 1,809 manuscripts are listed with their origins and pattern of nine numbers. According to this system, the Use of Paris consists of the following responses: *Qui Lazarum*; *Credo, quod*; *Heu mihi*; *Ne recorderis*; *Domine, quando veneris*; *Peccante me*; *Domine, secundum actum*; *Memento mei, dues, quia ventus*; *Libera me, domine, de morte*. The numbers attributed to each response form the following pattern: 72 14 32 57 24 68 28 46 38. Ottosen notes that the vast majority of manuscripts listed that follow this pattern are from Paris. Even more surprising is the fact that the Parisian Use of the Office of the Dead did not especially spread.¹⁵⁵ The responses within the LSU Hours match completely, and therefore the Use of the Office of the Dead is Parisian.

As a side note, Ottosen gives a number of examples for the Use of Autun in the Office of the Dead. The Use of Autun is completely different from the Use of Paris, as are most of the other Uses in fact.

¹⁵³ Also the unpublished notebooks of V. Leroquais (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS nouv. Acq. Lat. 1. 3162-63) have tests to determine the Use of the Office of the Dead. This is only available in photocopies or on microfilm in a few research libraries. I was unable to consult a copy.

¹⁵⁴ Ottosen, *The Responsories*, 46.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 329, 330.

In addition to investigating the Use and the images of a Book of Hours, codicology is an important factor in attempting to localize or date a manuscript.¹⁵⁶ First, the number of parchment leaves in a quire can be significant. The LSU Hours has twelve folia for the calendar quire and eight folia for most of the following quires. This sequence was typical for a Book of Hours produced in the fifteenth century. Original binding can also help to pinpoint particular workshops. Unfortunately, the LSU Hours shows no remains of its original binding.¹⁵⁷ Details such as how the lines were ruled and page layout may show the same characteristics of a particular atelier when compared to similar manuscripts. The text of the LSU Hours is contained within one column of fifteen lines, each measuring 6.3 mm apart, within a box of 95×61 mm. The calendar consists of seventeen horizontal lines that are 5.9 mm apart, and six vertical lines that are 13, 9, 8, 1, and 30 mm apart. Separating the third column from the final column are two vertical plummet lines that are only narrowly separated. Obviously one line would have been sufficient. But details such as these may help to identify the locale of production when compared to other contemporaneous manuscripts.¹⁵⁸ The scholar Delaissé also points out that if one is using this method of comparing details to help identify a codex, one must

¹⁵⁶ Codicology is the study of the physical composition of a book.

¹⁵⁷ Hindman and Farquhar recommend the for the identification of patterns and designs of bindings: G. T. Tanselle, "The Bibliographical Descriptions of Patterns," in *Studies in Biography*, 22 (1970), 71-102; idem, "A system of Color Identification for Bibliographical Description," in *Studies in Bibliography*, 20 (1970), 203-234; and Graham Pollard, "Describing Medieval Bookbindings," in *Medieval Learning and Literature. Essays Presented to Richard William Hunt*, edited by J. J. G. Alexander and M. T. Gibson, Oxford, 1975, 50-65.

¹⁵⁸ Farquhar, *Creation and Imitation*, 76, uses these techniques to establish the origin of a manuscript. See also Farquhar's "Manuscript Production and Evidence for Localizing and Dating Fifteenth-Century Books of Hours: Walters Ms. 239," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 45 (1987), 44-88. However, while Farquhar's ideas are valid, he gives no collective data (as Ottosen does) by which one can compare one's own manuscript.

make sure that the manuscript is of about the same date and quality.¹⁵⁹ In other words, it would be useless to compare the LSU Hours to, say, the *Hours of Jeanne d'Evreux*, which dates to c. 1325-1328.

The scribe's writing may give further clues. The scribe used Latin for the text and French for the calendar in the LSU Hours, which was commonplace in contemporary manuscripts. However, until the fourteenth century, Books of Hours were entirely in Latin. The script used can also often help to date a manuscript. The LSU Hours has a traditional Gothic bookhand, categorized as *gothica textualis*, which was used throughout the Middle Ages.¹⁶⁰ But because any one atelier may offer a number of scripts, or a scribe may just try to copy a script from an exemplar, it is difficult to localize a manuscript on this basis.

Catchwords can prove to be an excellent indicator of possibly even the individual scribe. Since Books of Hours were produced in huge numbers, it is likely that the same scribe used approximately the same amount of space per page and therefore the same catchwords.¹⁶¹ The scribe of the LSU Hours also left his "signature" in the form of a doodled face, perhaps a sort of caricature of himself.

The work of the various illuminators of the LSU Hours can also help in its identification. The color of the gesso (mixed with bole) used beneath the gold leaf can help to determine origin. For example, in Italy a pink concoction was used, in Flanders

¹⁵⁹ L. M. J. Delaissé, "The Importance of Books of Hours for the History of the Medieval Book," in *Gatherings in Honor of Dorothy E. Miner*, edited by Ursula E. McCracken, Lillian M. C. Randall, and Richard H. Randall, Jr. (Baltimore: the Walters Art Gallery, 1974), 205.

¹⁶⁰ There are many books for determining different medieval script types. However, Hindman and Farquhar, *Pen to Press*, 55-60, is a quick and useful reference with examples of Gothic script.

¹⁶¹ De Hamel makes this point, which seems valid. Yet as far as I know, no list of catchwords exists at this time for comparison.

and Germany it was brown, while in Paris no color was used. The gesso can sometimes be seen in areas where the gold leaf has worn off.¹⁶² Unfortunately (or fortunately), the LSU Hours is in such good condition that the color of the gesso cannot be seen beneath the pigment. The palette used is another means of identifying a particular atelier. The miniatures in the LSU Hours employ a pleasing palette of reds, pink, greens, blues, and brown, with lilac and gray colors used less frequently. It is difficult, however, to compare the palette of different manuscripts without seeing them in person. The color in reproduced images may not be correct, and, more to the point, the images that are reproduced in color tend to be the more famous, ornate illuminations.¹⁶³

Every aspect of decoration should be considered in comparing manuscripts. These include the various initials, line-endings, and types of baguettes. In the LSU Hours, all of the baguettes surround three sides of the miniatures, and each one is decorated individually. I have already discussed the three different styles of the three border illuminators. The forms of borders, baguettes, initials, and line-endings, as found in the LSU Hours, tend to be prevalent in many Books of Hours. This style seems to have been popular in fifteenth-century Paris and in many other areas. The acanthus spray, for example, was reintroduced into French border illumination in the early fifteenth century. Likewise, the ivy leaf borders that form swirling *rinceaux* patterns were another characteristic of Books of Hours at this time.¹⁶⁴ The depictions of patches of

¹⁶² De Hamel, *Scribes and Illuminators*, 60.

¹⁶³ I was able to inspect some manuscripts attributed to the Master of Jean Rolin II that are currently housed in the British Library, London, and in the Bibliothèque National, Paris. Although the miniatures in these Books of Hours show similarities in compositional designs to those of the LSU Hours, the palette is very different. The Master of Jean Rolin II, for example, used a brilliant array of colors that included a luminescent chartreuse and a vibrant vermillion.

¹⁶⁴ Harthan, *The Book of Hours*, 13, 49.

earth and/or grass in the borders, however, are more unusual. Although I have seen other manuscripts that have elliptical pieces of sod from which flowers grow, I have not seen anything quite like the abstract discs in the LSU Hours that are obviously meant to represent pieces of earth. So, while the decoration of the borders in general is somewhat commonplace, these disc shapes could potentially help identify the hand of one of the artists.

Certain other elements can help to date a Book of Hours in a general way. The arch shapes that frame the miniature were not introduced until about 1420.¹⁶⁵ We know that miniatures of King David were popular in the fifteenth century,¹⁶⁶ and that the Annunciation from the right was first introduced into French images around 1415.¹⁶⁷ Also there are also some common artistic conventions that can help establish a general date. The Boucicaut Master introduced such devices as the diaphragm arch and the curved strip of land in the foreground. Artists tended to portray a steeply inclined receding floor (incidentally, often with green tiles) to show an illusion of depth. Aerial perspective was also introduced, and the depiction of high horizon lines remained common until the late 1400s. In the fifteenth century, illuminators often increasingly integrated aspects of their own contemporary world into Biblical scenes, such as interiors, fabrics, fashions, furniture, architecture, and so on.¹⁶⁸

All of these aspects place the LSU Hours firmly in the French fifteenth-century tradition. But a closer inspection of the individual miniatures may help to narrow down

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 13.

¹⁶⁶ Wieck, *Time Sanctified*, 97.

¹⁶⁷ Denny, *The Annunciation from the Right*, 52.

¹⁶⁸ Alexander, *Medieval Illuminators*, 143.

the date and place of production of the *Horae*. There are basically two ways to do this: through comparing designs, and comparing styles of other manuscripts.

The LSU miniatures have been painted in a simple style, and usually just the essential elements have been rendered. Women tend to have simple oval faces. Men have either round faces, as can be seen in the shepherds, monks, and the man standing in the open grave, or they are portrayed with beards and squarish physiognomies. The latter tend to have more skin tones and modeling involved. It has been suggested that the style of these figures and simple compositions are similar to those found in manuscripts produced in the towns of the Loire Valley in the second half of the fifteenth century.¹⁶⁹ An example now in the Pierpont Morgan Library (fig. 36) does indeed have much in common with the LSU Hours. Art historians have traditionally tended to localize manuscripts on the basis of such stylistic similarities. Now, however, this procedure is accepted as only a part of the analysis. After all, it is not likely that a given manuscript was ruled, written, illuminated, and bound in different places, especially not a “run-of-the-mill” manuscript such as the LSU codex.



Fig. 36. Example of Loire Valley Style (Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, M. 381, fol. 60)

¹⁶⁹ I wish to thank Dr. Véronique Day for first pointing this out to me.

Another way to localize a manuscript is by comparing design elements of specific, individual images. Since illuminators usually copied from an exemplar, or pattern source, similar designs can be indicators of the same original source and, hence, were probably made in close proximity to each other. Hindman and Farquhar give examples of three different versions of the Annunciation, whose compositions clearly stem from the same source, not withstanding stylistic variations that betray three different hands (figs. 37, 38, and 39, illustrating two miniatures and a woodcut).¹⁷⁰

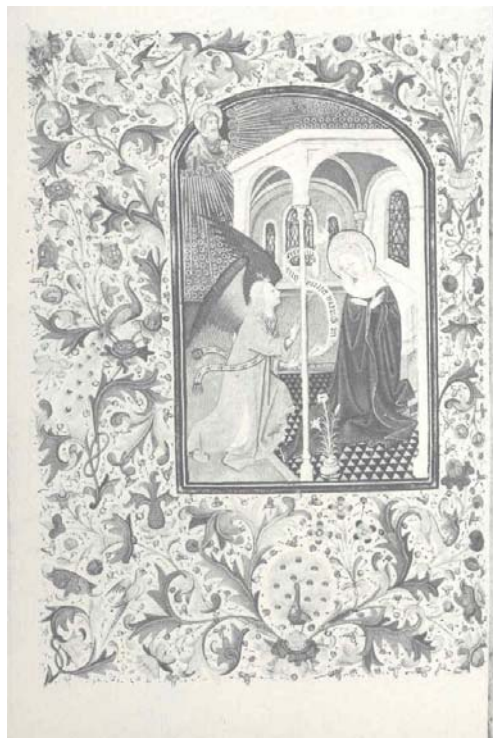


Fig. 37. *Annunciation* (Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, W. 220, fol. 42v)

¹⁷⁰ Hindman and Farquhar, *Pen to Press*.

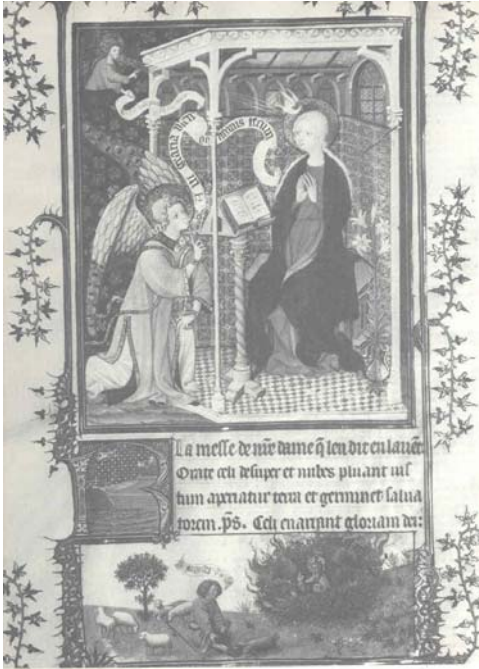


Fig. 38. *Annunciation* (Museo Civico, Turin, *Hours of Milan*, fol. IV)



Fig. 39. *Annunciation* (The National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection, Washington D. C., woodcut)

Again, these original sources, if not the actual Books of Hours, could easily travel and been copied in other areas of manuscript production. Presumably, too, the original exemplar generated other exemplars, so that compositions, patterns, formulas, and stylistic conventions circulated widely. In fact, certain compositions are so widespread in fifteenth-century manuscript painting, such as King David in Prayer, the Visitation, and the Nativity, that there is no need to cite specific examples. Other, less common, examples may however be noted. Fig. 40 shows the *Annunciation* miniature from W. 251 of the Walters Art Gallery, which has been attributed to the Master of Jean Rolin II, and may be compared to the same scene in the LSU Hours (fig. 17). Especially similar are the positions of the bodies and wings of the angels, their pointed chins, and the shapes of the banderoles, while the *prie-dieus* are essentially variants of the same object, shown in

the same perspective. Another comparable representation of the Angel Gabriel appears in another *Annunciation* miniature by the Maître François (fig. 41).



Fig. 40. *Annunciation* by the Master of Jean Rolin II (Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, W. 251, fol. 26r)



Fig. 41. *Annunciation* by Maître François (Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, W. 247, fol. 17)

The *Coronation of the Virgin* from W. 251 of the Walters Art Gallery (fig. 42) is comparable to the *Coronation of the Virgin* in the LSU Hours (fig. 27). Here similarities can be seen in the figures of the Virgin Mary, the crowning angel, and God, and they even extend to such details as the pillow with its corner decorated with pearls and a tassel.

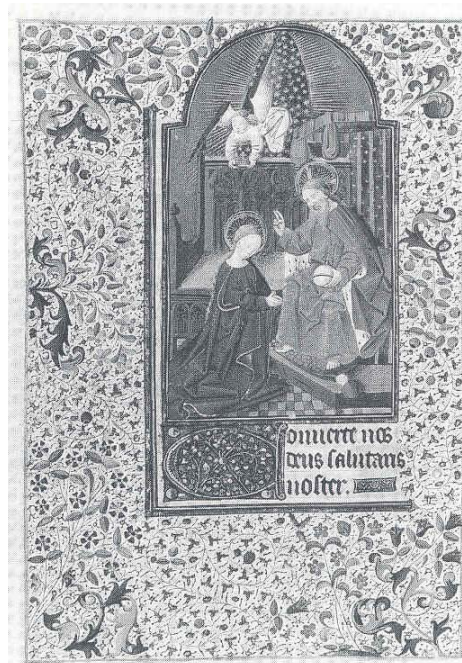


Fig. 42. *Coronation of the Virgin* (Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, W. 251, fol. 87v)

A striking feature of the *Annunciation to the Shepherds* in the LSU Hours is the awkward position of the falling shepherd (fig 20). This finds close parallel in the *Annunciation to the Shepherds* miniature within the *Bedford Hours* (fig. 43), which was illuminated by the Bedford Master.



Fig. 43. *Annunciation to the Shepherds*, the *Bedford Hours* (British Library, London, MS 18850 fol. 70v)

Three miniatures of the *Presentation in the Temple* show similar compositions to the LSU Hours scene. Fig. 44 is catalogued as *The Presentation*, Paris, second quarter of the fifteenth century, British Library. Fig. 45 has been attributed to a Besançon illuminator, Besançon, while fig. 46 has been attributed to the Master of the Munich Golden Legend. All three show similarities in the position of the figures and the altar. Obviously the overall composition of the Presentation scene was somewhat popular.



Fig. 44. *Presentation in the Temple*, Anonymous, Parisian *Horae* (British Library, London, Add. MS 31834, fol. 66)

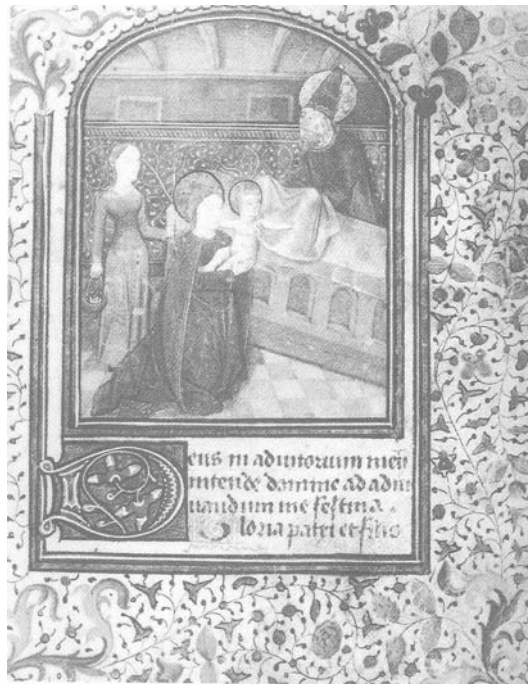


Fig. 45. *Presentation in the Temple*, Besançon *Horae*, (Besançon, Bibliothèque Municipale MS 125, fol. 40)

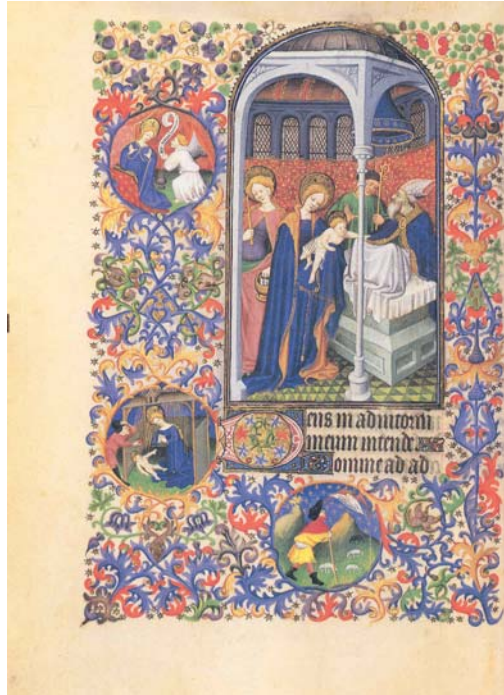


Fig. 46. *Presentation in the Temple, Horae*
by the Master of the Munich Golden Legend
(Walters Art Gallery W. 288, fol. 68v)

From personal investigation, the composition of Saint John, with his scroll, and the position of the eagle in the LSU Hours are very similar to the same scene in two manuscripts in the British Library, MS Add. 25695 and MS Add. 35216, which have both been attributed to the Master of Jean Rolin II (images unavailable). In the *Nativity* miniature of MS Add. 35216 Joseph has also been portrayed with a balding head with only a tuft of hair on his forehead.

These images shown in this thesis were found in the numerous books that I have consulted. (See Appendix A for books consulted for images only.) Of course it must be noted that the images that have been published tend to be the more famous ones and/or those already attributed to well-known artists, identifiable or not. Even so, with few exceptions, there seems to be a trend in the similar compositional designs that I have

included in this thesis. The Master of the Munich Golden Legend was active mainly in Paris between 1420 and 1460. The Bedford Master was working as an illuminator in Paris from 1415 to 1465, and he was influential on the Master of Jean Rolin II (active 1440-1465), who in turn later influenced the Maître François (active 1460-1480). I am not inferring that the LSU Hours was illuminated by any of these artists. Rather I am speculating that it was illuminated by a group of artists within the orbit of these Parisian ateliers.

CHAPTER 4. CONCLUSIONS

A number of conclusions may be drawn from the earlier chapters. In this final chapter, place and time of production will be discussed. The attribution to the so-called “Autun atelier” is examined, and recently discovered information relevant to this issue is included. Speculations concerning the “hand” of the artist are raised, along with speculations as to the class status of the first owner. Finally, the value of the LSU Hours as an exemplary model of French fifteenth-century *Horae* is addressed.

Like most Books of Hours, the LSU Hours cannot be firmly attributed to a place of production. There are numerous scenarios that could have been involved. The text could have been written in Paris and then the illuminations could have been executed in the Loire Valley. The illuminator could have originally come from the Loire Valley and worked in Paris. The entire manuscript may have been a copy of a Parisian one, but made elsewhere. The possibilities are endless. However, I believe that the manuscript was most likely produced in Paris.

The calendar and the litany point, in a very general sense, to Paris. Although the calendar (which forms its own quire) could have been added to any manuscript at a later date, this does not seem likely in the case of the LSU Hours, because the borders of the calendar and the text were painted by the same illuminator. In addition to the calendar, the Little Office of Our Lady and the Office of the Dead both employ the Use of Paris. If Knud Ottosen’s examples reflect manuscript production on the whole, it seems very likely that the LSU Hours was produced in Paris.

The appraiser's attribution to the Autun atelier remains a mystery. The calendar, litany, Office of Our Lady, and Office of the Dead definitely do not employ the Use of Autun. Among illuminations attributed to Burgundy that I have seen, not one contains stylistic or design elements that show similarities to the LSU Hours. This leaves me to speculate that the appraiser had perhaps been familiar with images such as those of MS 251 in the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, attributed to the artist called the Master of Jean Rolin II. This anonymous artist has been so named because he illuminated two missals for the Cardinal Jean Rolin II of Autun. Although the Rolin manuscripts were written with the Use of Autun, the eponymous master did not live in Autun, but was based in Paris.

After the completion of my research for this thesis, further information came to my attention that sheds light on the assumption that the LSU Hours was produced in Autun. Misplaced archival material pertaining to the manuscript was rediscovered, and includes the following: (1) correspondence between Kit Currie (appraiser at H. P. Kraus in New York) and Robert S. Martin (Assistant Dean of Libraries for Special Collections, LSU), dated 1992, for the appraisal of the LSU Hours; (2) a memo, dated 1992, from Gary Frost (book-binder) to Elaine Smyth (Rare Book Collection, LSU), that contains a summary of the condition of the binding and a proposal for the new binding; (3) a detailed appraisal made by Scribner Book Store in the early 1960s; and (4) a letter from Allie Bayne Webb (assistant librarian) to T. N. McMullen (director of the LSU Library), dated 1969, in reference to the aforementioned Scribners' appraisal. Copies of these documents are included in Appendix B, with an explanatory preface.

The reference to Autun is made within the Scribner report. This appraisal describes the style of the LSU miniatures and quotes from Eleanor Spencer's unpublished doctoral dissertation, "The Maître François and his Atelier" (Harvard College, 1931): "It is precisely in the elements which are original with the Bedford Master that we find the seeds of the style of Maître François." According to the appraisal, "Three or four different artists appear to have produced the manuscripts in this group....In the Emerson Hours (a manuscript from the Autun Atelier) the Virgin has bright eyes and a pointed chin, similar to our Miniature No. 2." Although I was unable to consult Spencer's dissertation, these statements (and the conclusions drawn from them in the report) are extremely useful. According to current scholarship, the Maître François and the Bedford Master both worked in Paris. Earlier scholarship had assumed that Maître François was the son of Jean Fouquet and therefore had connections to Tours in the Loire Valley. Now, however, we can assume that the artists of "this group" not only included the Bedford Master and Maître François, but also the Master of Jean Rolin II, whose "hand" was only identified in 1963 by Eleanor Spencer.¹⁷¹ Unfortunately, I have been unable to locate the Emerson Hours, and therefore I cannot comment on the similarities described in the Scribner appraisal.

The archival material does not add any significant information relevant to the dating of the LSU Hours. The H. P. Kraus appraisal merely states that it dates to c. 1450. From my own investigations, I conclude that the LSU Hours was produced in the middle third of the fifteenth century, most likely after 1450. It could not have been produced much earlier than this time span because it follows artistic conventions that were only

¹⁷¹ François Avril and Nicole Reynaud, *Les Manuscrits à peintures en France 1440-1520* (Paris: Flammarion: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1993), 38.

introduced in the first quarter of the century, such as the arch-shaped frames of the miniatures. Many of the miniatures that show design similarities to those of the LSU Hours were executed by illuminators working in Paris from the 1450s to the 1470s. It is also tempting to surmise that the LSU Hours, a fine but typical example of mass production, stems from the same period, which has aptly been termed the heyday of the Book of Hours.¹⁷²

By the same token, the LSU Hours is unlikely to have been produced after the mid-1470s because, by 1475, after the introduction of the printing press, Paris had about twenty printers.¹⁷³ This meant that printed Books of Hours became a much more reasonable purchase. Illuminators still worked in Paris after the printing press was introduced, but the number of those involved in manuscript production dwindled rapidly.

Stylistically and qualitatively, the LSU Hours is not comparable to the highest levels of Parisian craftsmanship. The illuminators of the LSU Hours were certainly not great artists. The miniatures consist of simple compositions that lack detail, and occasionally they betray a misunderstanding of biblical iconography. Yet it must be remembered that manuscripts, such as the LSU Hours were produced in workshops where many artists were involved. As well as the master, there were probably “actual apprentices, past apprentices, journeymen, children and relatives,” all contributing to the output of the shop.¹⁷⁴ Perhaps then, the LSU Hours was illuminated by some of the lesser members of a Parisian atelier. Moreover, the Paris book trade valued speed and quantity

¹⁷² Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative*, 31.

¹⁷³ Rouse and Rouse, *Manuscripts and Their Maker*, 323.

¹⁷⁴ Alexander, *Medieval Illuminators*, 127.

of production rather than quality.¹⁷⁵ It certainly appears that the miniatures of the LSU Hours were executed quickly, as suggested by the omission of minor but significant details, such as the two turtle doves in the *Presentation in the Temple* miniature. In any event, even without any of the evidence cited above, chances are that the LSU Hours was produced in Paris, since this is where most French manuscripts were made.

I also believe that the LSU Hours was a “ready-made” manuscript, produced on speculation rather than on commission. It lacks any personal details that a commissioned manuscript might contain, such as personal patron saints, coats of arms, and so forth. The prayers *Obsecro te* and *O intermerata* are written in the masculine form, and this was also the norm for *Horae* made on speculation. In addition, at the time of the LSU Hours’ production, ready-mades were produced in large numbers.

Although no evidence points to the identity of the first owner, a few generalizations can be made. The LSU Hours is certainly not a top-of-the-line production: it was not decorated by a major illuminator and does not include vignettes in the borders, nor is it a lengthy manuscript. However, it would still have been considered a deluxe model. There are illuminated borders on every leaf of the codex, with numerous dentelle initials and line-endings. The vellum is of a good quality and gold is used throughout. Gold and Vellum were the two most expensive materials used in manuscript production.¹⁷⁶ By the fifteenth century, paper was also used to produce manuscripts for those who wished to pay less for a Book of Hours. For these reasons, I believe that the

¹⁷⁵ Rouse and Rouse, *Manuscripts and Their Makers*, 231.

¹⁷⁶ De Hamel, *Scribes and Illuminators*, 13.

LSU Hours was purchased by someone of middle-class status, perhaps a member of the merchant class.

Finally, the LSU Hours is in many ways typical of the genre of French fifteenth-century Books of Hours. It contains the most commonly depicted scenes of the Virgin Mary's role as the mother of God, and they are rendered in a charming yet simple fashion. However, reproductions in current books on manuscript painting, on medieval art in general, or even on fifteenth-century painting do not show many examples of similar codices. Instead, the authors tend to concentrate on particularly ornate works, and those attributed to known artists. Of course, art history in general tends to focus on the innovative individuals, the "ruptures and new breakthroughs," but in the medieval era, consistency and repetition were valued.¹⁷⁷ The LSU Hours shows no particular innovations, and I have assumed that the scenes were based on figural and compositional exemplars. It also probably stemmed from the "milieu of the professional illuminators," rather than from that of the court illuminators.¹⁷⁸ In other words, the LSU Hours was probably produced among many other Books of Hours of a very similar nature. As such, it provides a wonderful example of a typical French Book of Hours of the mid-fifteenth century.

Books of Hours were admired for their illuminations. These small portable codices were meant to be held in the hand and admired by laity, rather than used by monks or students for their texts.¹⁷⁹ Even a simply decorated example, such as the LSU

¹⁷⁷ Michael Camille, *Master of Death. The Lifeless Art of Pierre Remiet* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), 3.

¹⁷⁸ Hindman, "The Role of Author and Artist," 34.

¹⁷⁹ De Hamel, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts*, 159.

Hours, has a tremendous appeal because of its decoration, especially the way in which the gold glimmers in the light.

Explicit
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APPENDIX B. ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

Here I have included all of the documentation that was rediscovered as this thesis was nearing completion. The most significant document is the Scribner Book Store's description, which I have already discussed in the Conclusion. In this appendix, therefore, I merely wish to return to it briefly and to add a few brief remarks about the rest of the correspondence. The letter to Kit Currie at the Rare Book Department of H. P. Kraus is from Robert S. Martin, who was the Assistant Dean of Libraries for Special Collections. It explains that the manuscript was sent to H. P. Kraus in 1992 to be appraised. The letter also affirms that the Book of Hours was bought from the Scribner Book Store in 1953. Currie's reply includes a brief description of the manuscript, which confirms that the book label belonged to the "Pasquier family of Paris," and values the manuscript at \$125,000.

The next pair of documents pertain to the rebinding which was carried out by Gary Frost in 1992. Frost provides a detailed account of the condition of the previous binding and gives his recommendations for a new binding. Of note is the recognition that the nineteenth-century binding was made by "Niedree, 1846, Paris." The term "Niedree" had been mentioned in the catalogue description of the Pasquier book sale.

The Scribner report consists of four pages and was probably written on the early 1960s.¹⁸⁰ I have already discussed the relevance of the two specified artists discussed in the report. I would question, however, the assumption that Joseph is portrayed as an old

¹⁸⁰ The references included date from 1931 to 1960. The type written document and lack of a zip code in the Scribner address point to a date in the early sixties. Perhaps it is not important, but this leads me to question whether McIlhenny bought the manuscript in 1953 and had the Scribner report made later, or if he actually bought the manuscript in 1963 and this description accompanied the sale.

man, “bald or without a forelock;” in the Nativity scene of the LSU Hours, however, Joseph does indeed have a forelock.

The final document, dated 1969, is a piece of “campus correspondence” between Allie Bayne Webb (assistant librarian) and T. N. McMullen (director of LSU’s Library). Webb had obviously been asked to do further research on the Scribner’s description. The information in her letter is somewhat confusing. She refers to a “Commune of Autun (on the Loire River in Northern France) during the middle-to-late fifteenth century,” and to “schools of French and Flemish painters...centered at Tours and Bourges.”

After researching the two references that Webb gives, it became clear where her misunderstanding lay.¹⁸¹ In these two books there is no reference to a “Commune of Autun” as such. In fact, it appears that she confused Autun with the Loire Valley. As far as medieval manuscript production is concerned, the Loire Valley (which includes the towns Tours and Bourges) is considered a separate area from Burgundy, where Autun is located, although, in fact, Bourges and Autun are less than one hundred miles apart. The books used by Webb mention the connection between Paris and the Loire Valley region, and assert that the Maître François was the son of Jean Fouquet, a prominent illuminator in Tours. Scholarship now agrees that Maître François was active in Paris, and that he was not the son of Fouquet. In the 1960s, however, this had not been discovered, and hence the confusion. In other words, Webb probably believed that Maître François (mentioned in the Scribner report) worked in Tours in the Loire Valley.

¹⁸¹ Jean Porcher, *French miniatures from Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: Collins, 1960), and Henry Martin, André Blum, and others, *Le Livre François des origines à la fin du second empire* (Paris and Brussels: G van Oest et cie, 1924).

COPY

March 17, 1992

Kit Currie
Rare Book Department
H.P. Kraus
16 East 46th Street
New York, NY 10017

Dear Ms. Currie:

This letter accompanies a fifteenth century manuscript book of hours that, as per our telephone conversation of this date, we are sending to you for appraisal.

The book has been donated to the LSU Libraries, and we are now seeking an appraisal of its fair market value to furnish to our donor for his income tax purposes. The donor has owned the book since approximately 1953. He purchased it from the Scribner Book Store in New York. I am enclosing a detailed description prepared by Scribner's, as well as my own more abbreviated description of the book.

You mentioned on the telephone today that your fee for appraising this book would be upwards from \$300, and that you would call me with more detailed information after you had had an opportunity to examine the volume. You indicated that it would take approximately ten days to two weeks for you to prepare the appraisal.

I look forward to hearing from you soon. Please feel free to call if I can provide any additional information. If I am not available, please feel free to discuss this matter with my colleague, Elaine Smyth, Head of the Rare Book Collections.

Sincerely,

Robert S. Martin
Assistant Dean of Libraries
for Special Collections

RSM/pwh

H. P. Kraus *Rare Books and Manuscripts*

16 EAST 46TH STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017

TELEPHONE: 687-4808

FAX:

(212) 983-4789

Louisiana State University
Special Collections, LSU Libraries
Attention: Robert S. Martin
Hill Memorial Library
Baton Rouge, LA 70803-3300

April 6, 1992



Dear Mr. Martin:

On April 1, 1992, I examined the Book of Hours which has been donated to Louisiana State University.

HORAE, Use of Paris. Manuscript on vellum, in a gothic bookhand. 8vo (196 x 140 mm.). 163 (of 164 ff., lacking f. 98). With 12 large miniatures each within a full border, in colors and burnished gold; 2 text pages (Obsecro te and O Intemerata) also within full borders, all other leaves with outer borders. Calendar written in red, blue, and gold. Numerous illuminated initials in blue, pink, white, and gold, and numerous line-fillers in the same colors. Full 19th-century dark green morocco, edges gilt, in green cloth chemise and matching morocco-backed clipcase. From the library of the Pasquier family of Paris, with its armorial book-label. Northern France, c. 1450.

This is a handsome manuscript, very fully illuminated, and while the quality of the illumination is not in the top class, it is very well executed. Manuscripts of this area and date are not particularly rare, but this one is in exceptionally fine condition, in an excellent state of preservation. The pigments and gold are very fresh and brilliant, the vellum unspotted.

Several manuscripts of this type have been through our hands and based on our experience and knowledge of the market I would say that the present Horae would have a value of \$125,000 (One Hundred and Twenty-five Thousand Dollars).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Kit Currie".

(Mrs.) Kit Currie

BookLab, Inc. Library Conservation • Edition Binding • Custom Boxmaking

BookLab Fax Memo

Date: 9.18.92
From: Gary Frost
To: Elaine Smyth, Rare Book Collectiond, LSU
Number of pages to be transmitted including this page: 1

The book of hours binding is well along and we are preparing to cover it. We are inclined to use a supple, tawed goat which would be cream colored. This would be a more stable material than a tanned leather.

We also suggest that the binding go without any label, but that the label be applied to the drop spine box. Please advise us of the label copy.

Also advise us of any deadline Before mid October. We can finish by October 1 if necessary.

Best wishes,



8403 Cross Park Drive, Suite 2E Austin, Texas 78754 (512) 837-0479 FAX (512) 837-9794

Proposal for the treatment of LSU Heures de la Vierge

Condition of binding

The present binding by Niedree, 1846, Paris was repaired and rebaked in the 20th century. The Niedree binding is sewn all-along on heavy linen thread onto five cords. Observation, as is possible, indicates that this sewing is in excellent condition. The inner fold and quire-to-quire openings indicate no saw kerf damage or any excess glue staining and only moderate gutter distortions.

Light weight "made" endpapers of marble paper and a single folio of thin banknote paper were added to the vellum text and moderate rounding and backing was used. It is evident that the Niedree backing was not particularly damaging and the shoulder angle is now about fortyfive degrees. The text edges were gilt in the rough and there is no particular reason to blame Niedree for diminished margins in this manuscript.

Unfortunately, the hinges of the Niedree binding failed at some point and the book was rebaked. The rebacker produced new head and tail caps and added stuck-on endbands. This rebaking work was not well done and observation under the tail cap indicates that a heavily glued cartridge paper was applied to the text back. The extreme rigidity of the spine of this binding is probably due to the glueing and lining of this repair work.

Suggested treatment

The objective will be to produce full pliancy in the text back to enable nondamaging viewing and exhibition openings.

Detach and preserve the repaired Niedree binding and clean the text folds of glue and linings using low moisture methods associated with vellum. Flatten the round and diminish backing creases. Evaluate and salvage the existing sewing, extending cord slips with new threads. Detach marbled endpapers and supply new endpapers of vellum with cloth internal hinges.

Lace new slips through shoulder seated laminated pasteboard produced from museum mat board. Apply sewn endbands with cord core slips worked onto linen liners and adhered in the historical maner. Cover the book in full leather with tab corners and tied up bands and endbands producing the 15th century appearance.

Provide a protective drop spine folding book box with foredge compression flap to restrain the text in storage.

This treatment proposal is based on the salvage of the existing sewing. Other options must be considered if the sewing cords and/or threads are unsound or if serious damage to the vellum folds is revealed. In this case a temporary remounting of the Niedree cover can be provided to assure use of the book during the up-coming events.

9.4.92/glf



CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

THE SCRIBNER BOOK STORE

597 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK 17, NEW YORK • ELDORADO 5-0650

BOOK OF HOURS. [Use of Paris]. With Calendar. Manuscript on vellum. 163 leaves. Written in Latin in a good gothic book-hand, 15 lines to the page. 12 large miniatures within floral and acanthus leaf borders, two text leaves within similar full borders, all other leaves with bar borders of ivy leaves, fruits and flowers. Numerous initials and line endings in red, blue and gold. 8vo, (7-3/4 x 5-1/2 inches). Full 19th century green morocco, rebacked. Northern France, c. 1450.

This handsome manuscript is apparently the work of the "Autun Atelier" which is known to have produced a group of liturgical manuscripts illuminated for Jean Rolin, Cardinal of Autun, and some half-dozen Books of Hours connected by calendars and Use with Paris, but otherwise undocumented. The manuscripts from this studio are important as a link between the style of the Bedford Master and the documented illuminations of Maître François in 1473.

Our manuscript shows, for example: "The loose drawing and rough unblended brushstrokes with which the Bedford Master models flesh and drapery. The energy of the figures, their almost dramatic absorption in themselves and the effort to individualize the faces at the expense of charm or beauty point toward no small degree of ambition and initiative. It is precisely in the elements which are original with the Bedford Master that we find the seeds of the style of Maître François."

Three or four different artists appear to have produced the manuscripts in this group. Some characteristics more or less common to all of them are as follows:

"The Virgin is no longer the gracious lady of the Bedford manuscripts but a simple peasant girl kneeling or sitting with her head slightly forward and to one side. Her head is unusually ovoid with a high wide forehead and very small chin; the ears are notable in this group, merely very clumsy loops attached high on the head, well to the back, and generally not concealed by the long fair hair; the eyes are small and very round and bright, adding vivacity to the almost expressionless face."

In the Emerson Hours (a manuscript from the Autun Atelier) the Virgin has bright eyes and a pointed chin, similar to our Miniature No. 2.

"The masculine type: Joseph the old man, bald or without a forelock, his forehead heavily lined, straight dark eye-brows, a long nose and wide clumsy mouth".

This type appears in our Miniature No. 4, where Joseph is holding a candle, an unusual feature found in other manuscripts of this group.

"The costumes worn by these personages are simplified and highly conventional and we shall see later, in contrast to the wealth of brocade and embroidery

used in the Bedford books. Gold borders indicated by a single line and gold hatchings applied to the somewhat arbitrary folds as high lights help to harmonize the unfortunate combinations of intense and neutral tones. The large halos, inherited from the Bedford Master, are of burnished gold rounded by a black line.

Windows are round arched with diagonally leaded panes supported by iron cross-bars. The tiles of the floor are differentiated by a wash or stipple, which in this case is generally a pale blue or green. - In landscape settings the grass is hatched with vertical or angular strokes. The blue skies are pale at the horizon and frequently studded with the Bedford Master's six-pointed star. Towers are generally round with heavy cornices and abrupt needle-pointed roofs and spires.

There are certain technical matters characteristic also of the Autun group. The flesh tones are pale, modelled always in a blonde ochre which is laid on in fine stippling or used to outline contours. As an outline it is often supplemented, especially in the hands and the hair, by a fine black pen line. The perfunctory broken folds of the drapery are modelled in lines and strokes of a darker value; when rose or brown, fine gold highlights are added which help to round out the convex surfaces."

All of the above quotations are from Dr. Eleanor Spencer's exhaustive monograph, to which we are deeply indebted.

References

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 Blum, A. & Ph. Lauer. La Miniature Française au XV^e et XVI^e Siècles. Paris, 1930.
 Reau, Louis. Iconographie de l'Art Chrétien, Paris, 1955-59.
 Bibliothèque Nationale. Manuscrits et Peintures du XIII^e au XVI^e Siècle, 1955.

C O N T E N T S

folios 1 - 12	Calendar containing a saint for every day of the year. In letters of gold: (Jan. 3) St. Genviève; (July 28) St. Anne; (Aug. 25) St. Louis; (Oct. 9) St. Denis, indicating the Use of Paris.
13 _r	Miniature No. 1. St. John on the Isle of Patmos. Large miniature within a full floral border.
13 - 18 _r	Selections from the Gospels of Sts. John, Luke, Matthew, and Mark.
18 _v - 21	Obsecro te. The first page within a full floral border.
22 - 26 _r	O Intermerata. The first page within a full floral border.
27 _r	Miniature No. 2. The Annunciation. Large miniature within a full floral border.
27 _r - 50 _v	Hours of the Virgin. Matins.
51 _r	Miniature No. 3. The Visitation. Large miniature within a full floral border.
51 _r - 61 _v	Hours of the Virgin. Laudes.
62 _r	Miniature No. 4. The Nativity. Large miniature within a full floral border.
62 _v - 67 _r	Hours of the Virgin. Prime.
68 _r	Miniature No. 5. The Annunciation to the Shepards. Large miniature within a full floral border.
68 _r - 72 _v	Hours of the Virgin. Tierce.
63 _r	Miniature No. 6. The Adoration of the Magi. Large miniature within a full floral border.
63 _r - 77 _r	Hours of the Virgin. Sext.
77 _v	Miniature No. 7. The Presentation in the Temple. Large miniature within a full floral border.
77 _v - 81 _v	Hours of the Virgin. None.
82 _r	Miniature No. 8. The Flight into Egypt. Large miniature within a full floral border.
82 _r - 88 _v	Hours of the Virgin. Vespers.
89 _r	Miniature No. 9. The Crowning of the Virgin. Large miniature within a full floral border.

- folios 89_r - 94_v Hours of the Virgin. Compline.
- 95_r Miniature No. 10. The Pentacost. Large miniature within a full floral border.
- 95_r - 97_v Hours of the Holy Spirit. (Lacks final leaf of text.
- 98_r Miniature No. 11. King David Praying. Large miniature within a full floral border.
- 98_r - 115_v The Seven Penitential Psalms and the Litany.
- 116_r Miniature No. 12. Burial Service in a Cemetery. Large miniature within a full floral border.
- 116_r - 163 The Vigils of the Dead.

Campus Correspondence

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

from: Allie Bayne Webb

March 25, 1969

to: Mr. T. N. McMullan

RE: Mr. McIlhenny's Book of Hours (Northern France, c.1450)

I have been unable to verify this book from the description given by Charles Scribner's Sons. The approach taken by above firm is identification by comparison with accounts of script, colours, costumes, facial expression, and decorative borders with those known to have been used by the French miniaturists and colourists of the Commune of Autun (on the Loire River in Northern France) during the middle-to-late fifteenth century. Several sources state that, at the above stated time, artistic talent moved from Paris to the Loire Valley, and schools of French and Flemish painters were centered at Tours and Bourges. These sources state that the fifteenth century was the "golden age" for production of books of hours, some being excellent and some mediocre, but all so beautifully illustrated as to achieve equality today. (Sources: Andre Blum's Le Livre Francais des Origines..., pages 14-16, and Jean Porcher's French Miniatures from Illuminated Manuscripts, pages 69-76.)

I have found reference to the "Autun" group of painters who prepared some half-dozen books of hours for use of Paris, and to members of the Rolin family of northern France, other than the Cardinal Jean Rolin mentioned in Scribner's description and for whom this Book of Hours was presumably prepared.

I have been unable to find this Book of Hours in the manuscript catalogues of British Museum and Bibliotheque Nationale and several cathedral and private libraries. I have requested Interlibrary Loan to try to borrow from Harvard the unpublished dissertation which was cited in Scribner's description.

AB Webb

VITA

Mary Katherine Dawes was born in Essex, England. She was raised in England, where she earned a Higher National Diploma in Hotel, Catering, and Institutional Management from Brighton Polytechnic in 1990. She emigrated to the United States of America in her early twenties and eventually settled in New Orleans, Louisiana. There, she returned to university studies and earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in history from the University of New Orleans. She began the graduate program in art history at Louisiana State University in the fall of 2003, with an emphasis on the study of medieval art. She is currently a candidate for the degree of Master of Arts in art history, which will be awarded in August of 2005.