

# FLANDERS IN A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

MANUSCRIPT ILLUMINATION AROUND 1400  
IN FLANDERS AND ABROAD

Proceedings of the International Colloquium  
Leuven, 7 - 10 September 1993

Edited by  
Maurits SMEYERS  
and  
Bert CARDON

OFFPRINT



UITGEVERIJ PEETERS

LEUVEN

1995

## THE CYCLICAL ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE LITTLE HOURS OF THE VIRGIN IN PRE-EYCKIAN MANUSCRIPTS

Dominique Vanwijnsberghe

We know the importance of Books of Hours in determining local schools of miniaturists. Actually, these manuscripts contain numerous clues which quite often enable us to determine relatively precisely, if not the place of production of the book, at least its destination. It may concern a region, a town, a diocese or more precisely a parish or an established religious institution. I just have to mention the calendar, litanies, suffrages, liturgical use of the Little Hours of the Virgin and the Office of the Dead, which are classical means of localisation.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, there are other particularities which deserve to be studied because they can betray habits that are peculiar to certain regions or to certain workshops. Thus, certain authors have drawn attention to the order in which the different parts of the book of hours follow on from each other and have used them as argument of provenance.<sup>2</sup> My present purpose is to examine another feature: the illustration cycles decorating the Little Hours of the Virgin.

To my knowledge, it is Prof. Büttner who has truly opened up this domain by proposing a typology of illustration cycles decorating the Little Hours of the Virgin.<sup>3</sup> I shall devote myself here to the study of the cyclical illustration of pre-Eyckian manuscripts assembled in the corpus presently being studied by the Centre for the Study of Flemish Illuminators (K.U. Leuven).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See L.M.J. DELAISSÉ, *The Importance of Books of Hours for the History of the Medieval Book, in Gatherings in Honour of Dorothy Miner*, Baltimore, 1974, p. 203-225. In this inspiring article, Delaissé suggests other means of ascertainment, some of which still have to be examined systematically: the language or dialect used, the spelling, the quire structure, codicological peculiarities such as prickings, lay out, ruling, etc.

<sup>2</sup> L.M.J. DELAISSÉ, J. MARROW and J. DE WIT, *The James A. de Rothschild Collection at Waddeston Manor. Illuminated Manuscripts*, Fribourg, 1977, p. 83; J. PLOTZEK, *Andachtsbücher des Mittelalters aus Privatbesitz* (exhib. cat.), Cologne, 1987, p. 175.

<sup>3</sup> F.O. BÜTTNER, *Komposite Programme der Stundenbuchikonographie in den südlichen Niederlanden bis gegen 1480*, in *Miscellanea Neerlandica. Opstellen voor Dr. Jan Deschamps ter gelegenheid van zijn zeventigste verjaardag*, Leuven, 1987, p. 311-341. For a general discussion: V. LEROQUAIS, *Les livres d'heures manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale*, 1, Paris, 1927, p. XLIV-XLVI, and R. WIECK, *Time Sanctified. The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life (with essays by L.R. POOS, V. REINBURG, J. PLUMMER)*, New York-Baltimore, 1988, p. 60-72. For divergent cycles: G. DOGAER, *Kanttekeningen bij de iconografie van de kindheidscyclus in het Officium parvum Mariae Virginis*, in *Miscellanea Neerlandica...*, o.c., p. 343-354. L. RANDALL, *Originality and Flair in an Early 15th Century Book of Hours: Walters 219*, in *Gesta*, 20, 1, 1981, p. 233-242.

<sup>4</sup> The corpus is composed of the following manuscripts: Arras, Bibliothèque municipale, ms. 822 (a.c. 513); Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, Ms. W. 170 and W. 211; Bassano del Grappa, Bibl. del Museo Civico, Ms. n. 1564; Blackburn, Stonyhurst College, Ms. LXX; Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, Ms. 49; Cambridge, University Library, Ms. li. 6. 2.; Durham, Ushaw College, Ms. 10; London, British Library, Add. Ms. 18213, Harl. Ms. 2966 and 2982, Loan Ms. 85/7; London, Sotheby's, 19 June 78, lot 982, 1 Dec. 1987, lot 52, 19 June 1989, lot 3016; Nuremberg, Stadtbibliothek, Hert. Ms. 3; New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, Ms. M. 46, M. 259, M. 1073; New York, private collection (see

It owes its name ‘French solution’ to the fact that it was nearly unanimously adopted in France right from the end of the 14th century. This solution is represented in our corpus although it largely remains in the minority (4 out of the 18 Infancy cycles reviewed).<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, let us note that two of these manuscripts probably originate from the present North of France.<sup>9</sup> Two examples, then, whose geographical origin could explain the choice of a French cycle. Indeed, if it is present in Flanders at the turn of the 14th and 15th century, the French influence largely remains in the minority with regard to the second important variant: the so-called ‘Flemish’ solution.<sup>10</sup> This is characterised by the presence at Vespers of the Massacre of the Innocents and of the Flight into Egypt at Compline.

<b>Table 2</b>	<b>‘Flemish’ solution</b>
Matins	Annunciation
Lauds	Visitation
Prime	Nativity
Terce	Annunciation to the Shepherds
Sext	Epiphany
None	Presentation in the temple
Vespers	<i>Massacre of the Innocents</i>
Compline	<i>Flight into Egypt</i>

Beyond the fact that this sequence enables a certain chronological and thematic coherence to be preserved, the choice of the Flight into Egypt at Compline fits the idea of death well, the memory of which is at the centre of the prayers recited at this canonical hour.<sup>11</sup> As Prof. Büttner judiciously brought to notice,<sup>12</sup> a close relation seems to unite this theme to that of the Entombment. In certain Books of Hours the two themes are even placed in parallel, in the framework of the composite iconography of the New Testament,<sup>13</sup> to which we shall return and which, in the fashion of typological symbolism, associates scenes from the Infancy and Passion, the former being a sort of prefiguration of the tragical outcome of the second (Fig. 1-2). The common denominator of the Flight into Egypt and the Entombment is the idea of a provisional sojourn, whether in a foreign country — Egypt — or in the tomb, awaiting resurrection. The theme of the Flight into Egypt is therefore found to be associated with the idea of death.

<sup>8</sup> Arras, Bibliothèque municipale, ms. 822 (a.c. 513); The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, ms. 135 E 36; New York, private collection; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, ms. nouv. acq. lat. 3055.

<sup>9</sup> The codices from Arras and The Hague (see n. 8).

<sup>10</sup> According to F.O. BÜTTNER, *art. cit.*, p. 319, this solution originates in the Northern Netherlands. As I did not manage to find any Dutch precedents – which does not imply they do not exist! – I chose to use the term ‘Flemish’ solution, due to the success of this cycle in pre-Eyckian manuscripts as early as the end of the 14th century.

<sup>11</sup> A. von EUW and J. PLOTZEK, *Die Handschriften der Sammlung Ludwig*, 2, Cologne, 1982, p. 14.

<sup>12</sup> F.O. BÜTTNER, *art. cit.*, p. 320.

<sup>13</sup> See for example: Oxford, Bodl. Libr., Ms. Jesus College 32 discussed p. 292-293.

English examples are known.<sup>18</sup> On the Flemish side, three examples are represented in the corpus of pre-Eyckian manuscripts, one of which is a Book of Hours for the use of Sarum.<sup>19</sup> It must have been a Flemish manuscript produced for export to England or at least for an English patron,<sup>20</sup> perhaps at his demand and according to an iconographical program predetermined by the person who placed the order.<sup>21</sup> A second manuscript coming from a workshop stylistically very close to the preceding one,<sup>22</sup> is for the use of Rome and was no doubt — if one believes the calendar — destined for the Bruges market. The formula was for a long time effective in Flanders where one comes across more examples throughout the second half of the 15th century.<sup>23</sup>

I have thus sketched the main variants of the Infancy cycle in the pre-Eyckian Books of Hours. Let us proceed now to the second cycle which was used for the decoration and structuring of the Little hours of the Virgin: the *Passion Cycle*.

The possibilities of variation are much more restrained here owing to the existence of quite a restrictive theological tradition. The continuity and order of the scenes constituting the cycle are partly determined by the temporal indications given by the Gospels.<sup>24</sup> Anyhow, these indications remain quite vague and permit a certain latitude. The religious writers of the Middle Ages will establish sequences in which small variations appear.<sup>25</sup>

One of the main difficulties encountered with the illustration of the Little hours of the Virgin by a Passion cycle is the fact that the Marian office is composed of eight

<sup>18</sup> For example: London, British Library, Add. Ms. 16968, c. 1380-90 Cf. L.F. SANDLER, *o.c.*, p. 167-168, no. 145. It should be noted that this cycle is partly made up of pairs belonging to the so-called 'composite iconography of the New Testament'. See p. 292.

<sup>19</sup> Cambridge, Univ. Libr, Ms. li. 6. 2; London, Sotheby's, 1 Dec. 1987, lot 52; Rouen, Bibliothèque municipale, ms. 3024.

<sup>20</sup> Obituary notices dated 1426 and 1432 in the calendar suggest that the manuscript might have been in England at an early date. See *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts Preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge*, 3, reprint of the 1858 edition, Munich, 1980, p. 498. N. ROGERS, *Books of Hours Produced in the Low Countries for the English Market in the Fifteenth Century* (Ph. D. Diss., Univ. of Cambridge), 2, 1982, p. 341.

<sup>21</sup> As far as I know, no contract specifying the type of cycle to be used has been traced yet. The same holds true for the liturgical use or the sequence of offices. Most of the time, the contracts contain very generic specifications such as *figura apta*. These mentions seem to refer to a tacit norm, variable from region to region. When the contract is more explicit, it may also mention a model to be followed. See M. SMEYERS, *La miniature (Typologie des sources du Moyen Age occidental, 8)*, Louvain, 1974, p. 54-55. Several examples of contract in J.J.G. ALEXANDER, *Medieval Illuminators and their Methods of Work*, 1992, p. 179-183. For an example of model: J.D.S., *Om een getijdenboek te schrijven vijfhonderd jaar geleden*, in *Biekorf*, 1938, p. 107-110.

<sup>22</sup> London, Sotheby's, 1 Dec. 1987, lot 52. Both manuscripts have recently been attributed to the so-called 'Group with the pink canopies' in *Vlaamse miniaturen*, p. 4-7 (more especially p. 7).

<sup>23</sup> Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, ms. 10769-10770, Southern Netherlands, mid 15th century; *loc. cit.*, ms. 10533-10536, Southern Netherlands, c. 1480.

<sup>24</sup> For instance: Mark 15, 1; 15, 25; 15, 33; 15, 34; Matthew 27, 45; 27, 46; Luke 23, 44.

<sup>25</sup> For example: Bonaventura, *Officium de passione Domini*; Pseudo-Bonaventura, *Meditationes Vitae Christi*; Jacobus de Voragine, *Legenda aurea*, cited in F. GORISSEN, *Das Stundenbuch der Katharina von Kleve. Analyse und Kommentar*, 1, Berlin, 1973, p. 302-303. Dirc van Delf also devotes a chapter of his *Tafel van den Kersten Ghelove* to the *Seven ghetiden* which are each related to an episode of the Passion, see Dirc VAN DELF, *Tafel van den Kersten Ghelove*, ed. Dr. L.M.Fr. DANIELS, 3, Antwerp-Nijmegen-Utrecht, 1938, p. 396-407.

<b>Table 5</b>	<b>'English' solution</b>
Matins	<i>Annunciation</i>
Lauds	Betrayal of Judas
Prime	Christ before Pilate
Terce	Flagellation
Sext	Christ carrying the Cross
None	Crucifixion
Vespers	Deposition
Compline	Entombment

This solution enables to highlight the Marian character of the Little hours of the Virgin, at the expense of the chronological and thematic coherence of the cycle. The origin of this solution is not certain. It seems to appear sporadically in England at the beginning of the 14th century.<sup>31</sup> It is true that one can observe in England, during the 14th century, a tendency to mix the Infancy and Passion cycles. However, it must be noted that this 'habit' is not at all systematic, even if from the second half of the 14th century one frequently encounters Passion cycles starting with the Annunciation at Matins and the Visitation at Lauds.<sup>32</sup> In our opinion this fusion of the two cycles derives from the fact that in the Sarum use, the office to Mary is inserted and alternates with the office of the Cross at the different hours of prayer. We shall talk more about this characteristic, but one can suppose straight away that this alternating pattern has repercussions on the illustration cycle which structures the two offices, to the detriment of all thematic coherence.<sup>33</sup> I shall therefore propose the title 'English solution' for the Passion cycle starting with the Annunciation and this is for another reason: out of the eleven Books of Hours from the corpus of pre-Eyckian manuscripts which follow this sequence, nine are export products destined for England, of which the little office to the Virgin follows the Sarum use.<sup>34</sup> The 'English' solution is no other than a version, both simplified and systematised, of Passion cycles that one encounters in the 14th century in the English Books of Hours. The use of stereotypical solutions can be explained against the background of a rationalisation of production which comes to light in Flanders from the very end of the 14th century, no doubt to satisfy a growing internal demand as well as the needs of foreign clientele.<sup>35</sup> Let's note that five of the manuscripts

<sup>31</sup> Hypothesis first formulated by N.J. ROGERS, *o.c.*, 1, p. 69, n. 39. N. Rogers kindly communicated me the reference to an early English example: Cambridge, University Library, Add. Ms. 4086, a Sarum Book of Hours produced in London in the early 1390's. It should be noted that this cycle slightly diverges from the standard 'English' solution produced in Flanders. I was not able to find any other convincing example.

<sup>32</sup> For instance: Dublin, Trinity College, Ms. 94 (F.5.21), c. 1340-50. See L.F. SANDLER, *o.c.*, p. 131-132, no. 118. Other example: Oxford, Keble College, Ms. 47, c. 1380-90, see L.F. SANDLER, *o.c.*, p. 169, no. 146.

<sup>33</sup> For example in London, British Library, Add. Ms. 16968 (see n. 18).

<sup>34</sup> Bassano del Grappa and Oxford, Canon Liturg. 276 follow the Rome use.

<sup>35</sup> On the rationalisation of production in Flemish workshops, see F. LEWIS, *From Image to Illustration: The Place of Devotional Images in the Books of Hours*, in *Iconographie médiévale. Image, texte, contexte*, ed. by G. DUCHET-SOCHAUX, p. 40-43, 47. More recently: M. SMEYERS, *Pre-Eyckian*

<b>Table 6</b>	<b>Full-page miniature</b>	<b>Initial</b>
Matins	Agony in the Garden	Annunciation
Lauds	Betrayal of Judas	Visitation
Prime	Christ before Pilate	Nativity
Terce	Flagellation	Annunciation to the Shepherds
Sext	Christ carrying the Cross	Epiphany
None	Crucifixion	Presentation in the temple
Vespers	Deposition	Massacre of the Innocents
Compline	Entombment	Flight into Egypt

Let us note the predominant place of the Passion cycle in full page over that of the Infancy which centres on the initials. The origin of this type of composite iconography is not certain.<sup>42</sup> It appears sporadically in France in the 14th century,<sup>43</sup> apparently disappearing in the 15th century. Similarly, it can be found in England toward the end of the 14th century.<sup>44</sup> The manuscript of Oxford is a codex probably destined for England. It follows the Sarum use and the explanation is perhaps there. We know indeed that the Sarum use makes the Office of the Virgin alternate with that of the Cross for each hour of prayer, instead of making two distinct offices as is the case in France or Flanders. From then, it is possible that the illuminator wanted to reflect in the program of illustration this superimposition of the two offices. Note that the miniaturist has chosen to this end two solutions which already started to dominate at the beginning of the 15th century. He thus develops a standardised formula combining two cycles which each have their own existence. These standard composite cycles were to enjoy a certain success in Flanders, especially after the middle of the 15th century.<sup>45</sup> The choice of stereotyped formulae can be explained, of course, in the context of a rationalisation of production methods, which I mentioned earlier. In other, more luxurious books, on the other hand, one sought, by resetting the cycle, to create iconographical pairs that were more elaborate and meaningful.<sup>46</sup>

The beginning of the 15th century thus witnessed the elaboration of standardised formulae which were to dominate all ulterior Flemish production. For the Infancy cycle, it was clearly the 'Flemish' solution which prevailed. As I emphasized, it was

<sup>42</sup> LEROQUAIS (*o.c.*, p. XLV) explains this superimposition of two cycles as the expression of a hesitation between two formulae in the 14th century. From the end of the 14th century, the French illuminators definitely choose the Infancy cycle. In our opinion, this explanation might be correct for the French illumination. The situation in England on the other hand might require another – structural – explanation which is suggested in the following lines.

<sup>43</sup> For example in the Book of Hours of Jeanne d'Evreux (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Acc. 51.1.2., Paris, between 1325 and 1328), the Book of Hours of Isabeau de Bavière (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, ms. lat. 1403, Metz, second half of the 14th century). Also in the Book of Hours of Yolande de Flandre (London, British Library, Yates Thompson Ms. 27) and in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Douce 39. Voir F.O. BÜTTNER, *art. cit.*, p. 319, n. 10.

<sup>44</sup> For example, in the Psalter-Book of Hours London, British Library, Add. Ms. 16968. See n. 18.

<sup>45</sup> Some examples are given by F.O. BÜTTNER, *o.c.*, p. 318 ff.

<sup>46</sup> Some associations seem to be intentional and might have caused a resetting of the constituting cycles to the detriment of the chronological consistency. Cf. F.O. BÜTTNER, *ibidem*.



Fig. 1. - *Entombment*, miniature from Book of Hours, Bruges, Ushawgroup, 1400-15. - Oxford, Jesus College, Ms. 32, fol. 45v. (Copyright: Oxford, Jesus College).

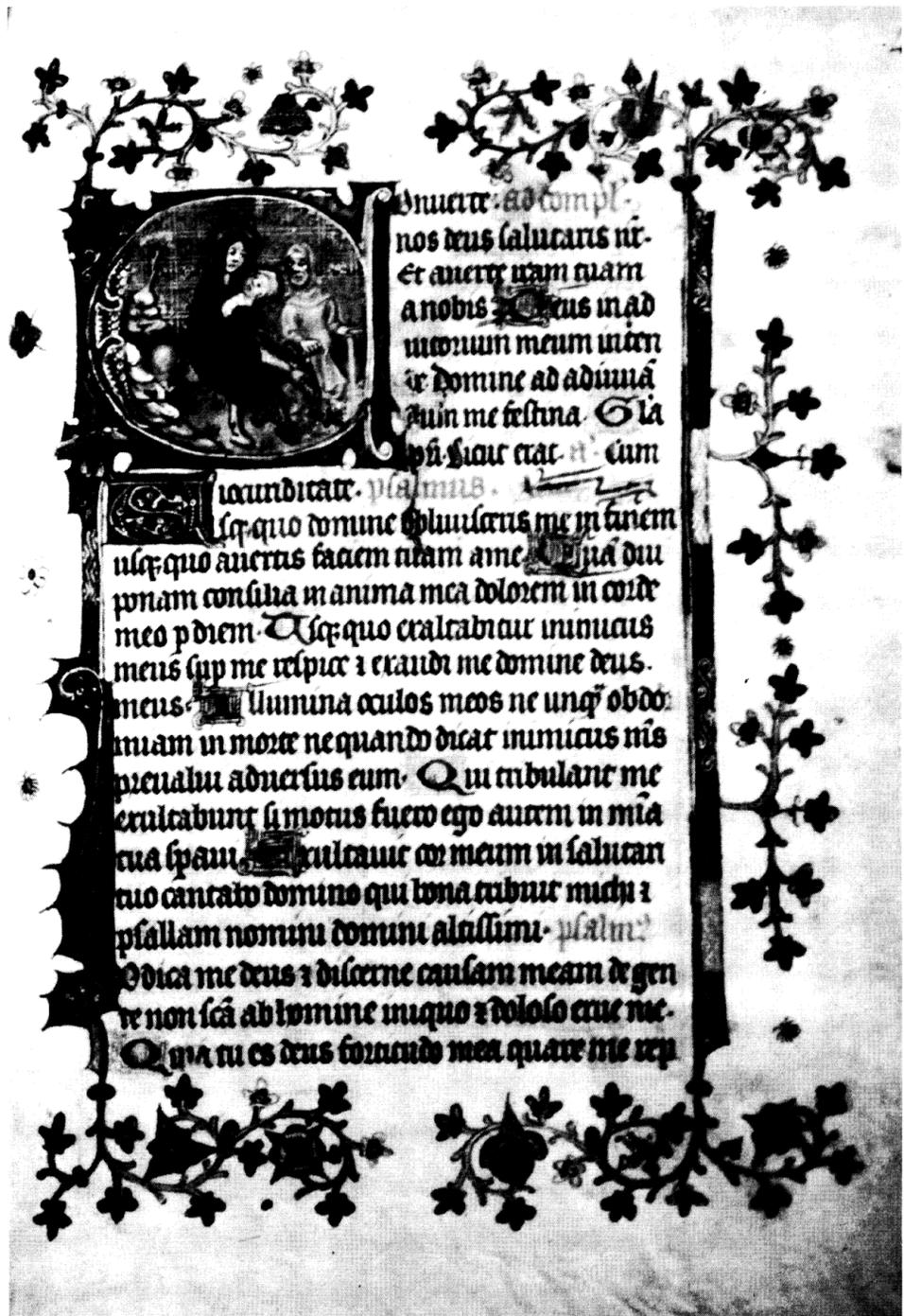


Fig. 2. - *Flight into Egypt*, miniature from Book of Hours, Bruges, Ushawgroup, 1400-15. - Oxford, Jesus College, Ms. 32, fol. 46. (Copyright: Oxford, Jesus College).

not definitely fixed yet, but the most frequent variant was already that which was to dominate a few years later in the Southern Netherlands. The French cycle remained in the minority, more frequent in regions geographically close to the French centres. As for the Passion cycle, it remained quite rare and seems especially to have been used in books destined for England. Finally we have shown in evidence an early example of composite iconography of the New Testament, a formula which was to enjoy a certain success after 1450.

The study of illustration cycles has also enabled to highlight the role of England in the elaboration of original formulae, taken up and codified by Flemish workshops. These influences bear witness to intense relations between the two regions, relations both political and commercial, as an important part of manuscript productions was no doubt destined for the English clientele present on the continent at the time of the 100 Years' War.

To conclude, it seems interesting to examine briefly a methodological question relating to the relevance of the 'cycle argument' in locating and dating Books of Hours. For want of an analysis based on a systematic corpus of manuscripts hailing both from the Southern and the Northern Netherlands, from France and England or Germany, we can only discern provisional tendencies for the moment. In the majority of cases, the analysis of the illustration cycle can only be used then as a subsidiary argument in order to lend weight to some argumentation. As we have seen, the exceptions are legion, the formulae taking their place progressively, sometimes being taken up elsewhere or transformed. Moreover, the cycle argument only applies to very large entities: it will permit a French production to be distinguished from a Flemish production, but not for example to differentiate a Bruges manuscript from a Ghent one.

As for the dating of the manuscripts, it is sometimes possible, thanks to the cycle, to determine a *terminus post quem* (in the event I think of the use of typological symbolism after 1440). But in the corpus of pre-Eyckian manuscripts the variants are too general for the chronology of the works to be made any more precise. In this period of research and innovation at the beginning of the 15th century, the exception constitutes in fact the rule. It was interesting to see how, in this critical period, certain exceptions established the rule.

belonging to the corpus have been attributed to the workshop of the so-called Ushaw group.<sup>36</sup> This narrow correlation between the 'English' solution, the Ushaw group and the Sarum use could be explained by the existence of a workshop specialised amongst other things in the production of Books of Hours destined for England. The stereotyped and recurrent contents of the manuscripts in question reinforces this working hypothesis,<sup>37</sup> as well as certain codicological details, like for example the use of painted miniatures on separated folios inserted afterwards into the manuscript.

An important observation must close this brief study of the Passion cycle: as an illustration of the Little office of the Virgin, this cycle remains a marginal phenomenon in the Southern Netherlands and this is during the whole 15th century. Out of the 14 examples present in the corpus of pre-Eyckian manuscripts, only three are for the use of Rome.<sup>38</sup> The eleven others follow the Sarum use and therefore were destined for export. In the French fashion it is in all evidence the Infancy cycle which is predominant in Flanders according to an idiom belonging to the Southern Netherlands.<sup>39</sup>

In the course of the 15th century, the cyclical illustration of the Little office of the Virgin proceeds in the direction of a continually increasing complexification of its program.<sup>40</sup> The illuminator uses to this end the formal possibilities offered by the margins and initials. The process culminates in the second half of the 15th century with the elaboration of extremely complex programs combining the composite iconography of the New Testament — the tragic opposition between the Nativity and the Passion — with typological symbolism. I shall finish this exposé by presenting a particularly early example of a composite cycle of the New Testament, which shows that the pre-Eyckian miniature is open to innovative influences and to research.

The manuscript Oxford, Jesus College, Ms. 32 which can be dated from the very beginning of the 15th century,<sup>41</sup> combines a Passion cycle in full page with some initials representing the Infancy of Christ. The two cycles follow the 'Flemish' solution (Fig. 1-2).

*Manuscripts. Mass Production and Workshop Practices I*, in *Le dessin sous-jacent dans la peinture. Colloque IX. Dessin sous-jacent et pratiques d'atelier, Louvain-la-Neuve, 12-14 September 1991*, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1993, p. 59-74; S. VERTONGEN and K. SMEYERS, *Manuscrits pré-Eyckiens. Production en masse et pratiques d'atelier II*, *loc. cit.*, p. 75-89.

<sup>36</sup> Durham, Ushaw Coll., Ms. 10; London, British Library, Harl. Ms. 2966 and Loan Ms. 85/7; London, Sotheby's, 19 June 78, lot 982; Oxford, Bodl. Libr., Ms. Laud. Lat. 15. On the Ushaw group, see *Vlaamse miniaturen*, p. 12 ff.

<sup>37</sup> See *Vlaamse miniaturen*, p. 20.

<sup>38</sup> The two manuscripts mentioned in n. 34 and Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, ms. lat. 1357.

<sup>39</sup> This situation remains unchanged in the course of the 15th century. For the whole 15th century, we estimate that 75% of the cycles in illuminated *horaria* contained Infancy cycles. The half of these cycles follow the Flemish solution *stricto sensu*, 12% the French solution. The other 38% are made up of variants and exceptions. See D. VANWIJNSBERGHE, *o.c.*, *passim*.

<sup>40</sup> F.O. BÜTTNER, *art. cit.*, *passim*.

<sup>41</sup> N.J. ROGERS, *o.c.*, 2, p. 344.

hours of prayers whereas the traditional sequences which I have just stated (and the Office of the Cross) only include seven (since the hour of Lauds is missing). A solution commonly adopted in France at the end of the 15th century is to double the scene of Christ before Pilate.<sup>26</sup> It is sufficient to add to this a Presentation to Caiaphas or to Anne in order to fill in the hour of Lauds. The solution adopted in Flanders is to double the episode of the Mount of Olives: the Matins are then associated with the Agony in the Garden and the hour of Lauds with the Betrayal of Judas. In the religious literature the association of Matins with the Agony of Christ is traditional (it can be found for example with Pseudo Bonaventura), but it is far from being universal.<sup>27</sup> I propose to call this sequence the 'Flemish solution' owing to its popularity in the former Southern Netherlands, where, moreover, it seems to emerge gradually.<sup>28</sup>

<b>Table 4</b>	<b>'Flemish' solution</b>
Matins	<i>Agony in the Garden</i>
Lauds	Betrayal of Judas
Prime	Christ before Pilate
Terce	Flagellation
Sext	Christ carrying the Cross
None	Crucifixion
Vespers	Deposition
Compline	Entombment

The Flemish solution remains in the minority in the corpus of pre-Eyckian manuscripts: three examples, two of which for the use of Sarum and one for the use of Rome.<sup>29</sup> It was to become really dominant in Flanders after 1450, the date at which it largely supplants another cycle which we will now dwell on.

There actually exists a second sequence which resolves the problem of the supplementary hour of prayer by associating Matins with the Annunciation and the hour of Lauds with the Betrayal of Judas.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>26</sup> In the *Très Belles Heures de Notre-Dame* (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, ms. nouv. acq. lat. 3093) for instance.

<sup>27</sup> Bonaventura or Dirc van Delf, for example, choose to illustrate Matins with the Betrayal of Judas.

<sup>28</sup> North-Netherlandish examples could be traced, but they are nevertheless late ones, associated with historiated initials. For example: The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, ms. 133 M 131, Netherlands, c. 1425. See P. VERMEERSCH, *A Utrecht Book of Hours in the Royal Library at The Hague (press-mark 133 M 131)*, in *Scriptorium*, 12, 1958, p. 97-102. The cycle in the Book of Hours of Catherine of Cleves (New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, Ms. M. 917 and M. 945) is a still later example. In most of the cases the Agony in the Garden is subordinated to the Betrayal of Judas. The Agony in the Garden sometimes appears on its own but I have not managed yet to trace, outside the Southern Netherlands, instances where the episode of the Mount of Olives is doubled and spread over Matins and Lauds.

<sup>29</sup> London, British Library, Harl. Ms. 2982; New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, Ms. M. 259; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, ms. lat. 1357 (Rome use).

<sup>30</sup> Eleven items are found in the corpus: Bassano del Grappa, Bibl. del Museo Civico, Ms. n. 1564; Cambridge, Fitz. Museum, Ms. 49; Durham, Ushaw Coll., Ms. 10; London, British Library, Harl. Ms. 2966 and Loan Ms. 85/7; London, Sotheby's, 19 June 1978, lot 982 and 19 June 1989, lot 3016; New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, Ms. M. 46; Oxford, Bodl. Libr., Ms. Canon Liturg. 276 and Ms. Laud. Lat. 15; The Hague, Rijksmuseum Meermanno-Westreenianum, ms. 10 F 11.

The Flemish solution is largely represented in the corpus of pre-Eyckian manuscripts (14 out of the 18 cases reviewed).<sup>14</sup> It must be noticed nevertheless that only four manuscripts exactly follow the sequence which has just been described and which came to be dominant in the Southern Netherlands in the 15th century.<sup>15</sup> No doubt this variety must be interpreted as the expression of a tentative phase of research at the beginning of the 15th century, which could later crystallise around a number of variants.

One of these variants deserves to be highlighted: it illustrates Compline with the Presentation in the temple, a theme which one normally finds at the beginning of the hour of None. I have called this variant the 'fifth Flemish variant'.<sup>16</sup>

<b>Table 3</b>	<b>'Flemish' solution</b>	<b>Fifth variant</b>
Matins	Annunciation	Annunciation
Lauds	Visitation	Visitation
Prime	Nativity	Nativity
Terce	Annunciation to the Shepherds	Annunciation to the Shepherds
Sext	Epiphany	Epiphany
None	Presentation in the temple	<i>Massacre of the Innocents</i>
Vespers	Massacre of the Innocents	<i>Flight into Egypt</i>
Compline	Flight into Egypt	<i>Presentation in the temple</i>

The presence of the Presentation at Compline provokes a reshaping of the cycle and a sliding of the Massacre of the Innocents to the hour of None and of the Flight into Egypt to Vespers. This peculiarity could be explained by the presence in the text of Compline of *Nunc Dimittis*, the canticle of Simeon at the Presentation. It would be here an example of textual illustration, which would explain the chronological inconsistencies of the cycle. One could equally invoke the theme of death, the memory of which must be evoked at the hour of Compline, in order to justify the choice of the Presentation at this hour of prayer: not only the death of Christ is foretold by Simeon, but the neighbouring theme of the Circumcision prefigures the Crucifixion as the first 'spilling of Jesus' blood'. If I linger on this variant, this is because it has some antecedents and since it was to continue to enjoy a certain success during the 15th century. We meet it right at the start of the 14th century in England.<sup>17</sup> Toward the end of the century it seems to have spread on both sides of the Channel. Some

<sup>14</sup> Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, Ms. W. 170 and 211; Blackburn, Stonyhurst College, Ms. LXX; Cambridge, Univ. Libr, Ms. ii. 6. 2.; London, British Library, Add. Ms. 18213; London, Sotheby's, 1 Dec. 1987, lot 52; New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, Ms. M. 1073; Nuremberg, Stadtbibl., Hert. Ms. 3; Oxford, Bodl. Libr., Ms. University College 5; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, ms. lat. 1394; Rotthalmünster, Antiquariat Tenschert, cat. 21, no. 33; Rouen, Bibliothèque municipale, ms. 3024; The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, ms. 133 D 14; Washington, Library of Congress, Ms. 45.

<sup>15</sup> The manuscripts from Blackburn, The Hague, Paris, and Rotthalmünster (see n. 14).

<sup>16</sup> I distinguish four other variants in my study (see n. 5). The fifth variant can be found in the manuscripts of Rouen, Cambridge and in the Sotheby's Book of Hours (see n. 14).

<sup>17</sup> For example: New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, Ms. M. 700; c. 1325-1330. Cf. L.F. SANDLER, *Gothic Manuscripts 1285-1385 (A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles, V)*, 2, Oxford, 1986, p. 96, no. 88.

By thus taking my position at the very source of the age which was to witness Flemish miniature art reach its apogee, I shall try to show how certain cyclical formulae pierce through progressively and end up imposing themselves. Likewise, how certain workshops elaborate original solutions to satisfy a specific demand. We shall see, then, that certain programs of illustration are full of promise for the future.

This short exposé gives a brief account of a global study covering the whole of Flemish production in the 15th century (based on a corpus of some 150 manuscripts),<sup>5</sup> which has enabled the elaboration of a typology of cycles and an extraction of numerous variants.<sup>6</sup>

The miniature cycles used in decorating and structuring the Little office to Mary draw their themes from two sources: the scenes from the Infancy and Passion of Christ. While the former were used very early in France, becoming the norm in the 15th century, the Passion cycle was propagated especially in the Northern Netherlands<sup>7</sup> and in England without however being the exclusive solution there.

The *Infancy Cycle* certainly owes its popularity to the fact that it refers not only to one of the two poles of the liturgical year — Christ's Nativity — but equally to a Marian theme, which is particularly suitable to illustrate an office devoted to the Virgin. In all evidence it is the cycle which dominates the corpus of pre-Eyckian manuscripts envisaged here.

This cycle can be divided into two solutions, well known to the specialists: the 'French' and 'Flemish' solutions. The first — the so-called 'French' solution — is characterised by the choice of the Flight into Egypt at Vespers and a purely Marian theme at Compline: the Coronation of the Virgin.

<b>Table 1</b>	<b>'French' solution</b>
Matins	Annunciation
Lauds	Visitation
Prime	Nativity
Terce	Annunciation to the Shepherds
Sext	Epiphany
None	Presentation in the temple
Vespers	<i>Flight into Egypt</i>
Compline	<i>Coronation of the Virgin</i>

M. MEISS, *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry. The Boucicaut Master*, London, 1968, p. 104-105); Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Canon Liturg. 276, Ms. Jesus College 32, Ms. Laud. Lat. 15, Ms. University College 5; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, ms. lat. 1357 and 1394, ms. nouv. acq. lat. 3055; Rothalmünster, Antiquariat Tenschert, cat. 21, no. 33; Rouen, Bibliothèque municipale, ms. 3024; The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, ms. 133 D 14, Ms. 135 E 36; The Hague, Rijksmuseum Meermann-Westreenianum, ms. 10 F 11; Washington, Library of Congress, Ms. 45.

<sup>5</sup> D. VANWIJNSBERGHE, *De cyclische illustratie van het kleine Maria-officie in de Vlaamse getijdenboeken van de vijftiende eeuw* (unpublished lic. thesis, Leuven, 1990).

<sup>6</sup> In this article I follow Büttner's terminology: the generic variants are called 'solutions' (*Lösung*).

<sup>7</sup> For early Netherlandish Infancy cycles, see J. MARROW, *Dutch Manuscript Illumination before the Master of Catherine of Cleves. The Master of the Morgan Infancy Cycle*, in *Nederlands kunsthistorisch jaarboek*, 19, 1968, p. 51-113.