

**The Matter of Nobility:
Materially Constituting the Arenberg Family Body in the
Habsburg Netherlands 1520-1620**

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Abstract

This thesis will explore the material construction of the noble form in the sixteenth and early seventeenth-century Habsburg Netherlands. Understandings of substance and social structures of privilege were in potent and synchronized flux during this era and Flemish noble families, such as the Arenberg clan, were required to consistently reformulate and assert their authority. The Arenberg family were powerful and socially prominent figures in the Low Countries at this time. They were staunch Catholics and active members of the Brussels court but also engaged regularly with the commercial elites of the Northern Provinces.

Structured around five case studies, the investigation will focus on the nature of different media and how the particularities of each substance were deliberately co-opted into the production of social authority. It will examine how corporal encounter with textiles, glass, paper, and pigment formulated noble honour, negotiated change, produced relationships between diverse groups, and situated the family within an ever-shifting social environment. Each chapter examines a material artefact commissioned by the dynasty at a site of contest or transformation, a situation in which the privileged nature of the Arenberg clan required consolidation or reassertion. This thesis will contribute towards a growing field of study on the Early Modern Habsburg Netherlands. It will prioritise material processes in an attempt to highlight the value of substance as a methodological tool useful for research into the fields of Catholic Europe court history currently dominated by archival approaches.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis entitled 'The Matter of Nobility: Materially Constituting the Arenberg Family Body in the Habsburg Netherlands 1520-1620' and the work presented in it are my own and have been produced by me as the sole author. The material presented within this thesis has not been published or previously submitted for another degree. All sources are acknowledged as References.

Introduction: A Material Nobility

People follow materials- weaving their own lines of becoming into the texture.¹

Semblable deckynge oughte to be in the house of a noble man or man of honour. I meane concernynge ornamentes of halle and chambres, in Arise, painted tables, and images containyng histories, wherin is represented some monument of vertue, moste cunnyngly wroughte, with the circumstance of the mater briefly declared; wherby other men in beholdynge may be instructed, or at the lest wayes, to vertue persuaded. In like wise his plate and vessaile wolde be ingraved with histories, fables, or quicke and wise sentences, comprehending. Good doctrine or counsailes; wherby one of these commodities may happen, either that they which do eate or drinke, havynge those wisdomes ever in sighte, shall happen with the meate to receive some of them, or by purposinge them at the table, may sussitate some disputation or reasonynge; wherby some parte of tyme shall be saved, whiche els by superfluous eatyng and drinkyng wolde be idely consumed.²

Approaching Pourbus the Younger's (1569-1622) group portrait of the Arenberg family, the observer is immediately led to the dark eyes, strong features, and smooth pale face of Anne de Croy, Duchess d'Aarschot and Princess-Countess d'Arenberg (1564-1635) (Figure 1). A dark gem set into a gold brooch adorns her hair whilst a single bulbous pearl hangs from her earlobe. Her face marks the dead centre of the image, a quality emphasised by the ruff that encircles her neck. It frames the head, each pleat radiating outwards into fronds of complex

¹ Tim Ingold, "The Textility of Making," *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 32 (2010): 96.

² Thomas Elyot, *The Book of the Governor* (London: T. Berthelet, 1531), Book 2.3: 'Of appaile belongynge to a gouvernour or great counsaylour,' 113.

lace work. At the furthest extension of this perimeter, the eye is met with the illusion of a dense and complex material environment. The right side of Anne's body is painted as a surge of patterned textile. Hands, arms, and lace-framed heads descend from her shoulder to the crimson chair in the far right of the foreground. Bright red coral beads cross the torso of the youngest child whilst a bearing cloth trimmed with a thick band of intricate lace filigree composes the lower body of the infant.³ The other children handle beads, flowers, rattles, and a miniature crossbow. The figures are surrounded by plush velvet, thick carpet, embroidered curtains, and glass punctuated with coloured panels. An ornate vase of hothouse flowers, tall wax candles, a solitary green parrot, a carved bedpost, and a classical figure inset into the base of the windowsill are also catalogued across the surface of the canvas.

The thick assemblage of objects on display visualises the material environment described by Thomas Elyot in his didactic treatise for the elite classes *The Book of the Governor*, published in London in 1531. Both text and image describe the material saturation of the noble body, allowing the reader an impression of sixteenth and early seventeenth-century patronage habits, trade networks, and self-imaging practices. Both text and image are also self-reflexive entities, playing a part in creating the environment they describe. Elyot's treatise delineated the creation of the noble body. Dedicated to Henry VIII and directed to the elite protagonist, the text effectively narrated self-formation, a process

³ Valerie Cumming, C. W. Cunnington and P. E. Cunnington, *The Dictionary of Fashion History* (Oxford: Berg, 2010), 17 and Amy F. Ogata, "Designing Childhood," in *The Routledge Companion to Design Studies*, ed. Penny Sparkle and Fiona Fisher (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 209.

that tied reading the instructions it presented with the actualisation of the idealised ruler.⁴ The large scale and virtuoso rendering of the pigment in Pourbus' painting was similarly self-reflexive. It announced the luxury status of the canvas, an opulent material article *for* display that described and contributed towards the production of an opulent material space *of* display.

Crucially, the text and image also both describe materials in process as defined by Tim Ingold in the opening line of this thesis. Elyot's text reports how substance-specific encounters with tapestry ('Arise'), furniture, 'plate' and 'vessaile,' contributed towards the gestation of the noble self. Every tangible surface shaped this privileged figure. It was moulded by the textiles and altered by the tableware from which both nutrients and virtue were ingested. Pourbus' canvas at once narrated and participated within this process as a "cunnyngly wroughte"⁵ image presenting idealised bodies for emulation. The canvas evidenced the nobility of the patron and sitter, externally validating their status in line with Jean Bacquet's treatise *Quatriesme traicté des droits du domaine de la Couronne de France, concernant les Francs fiefs, nouveaux acquests, anoblissemens et amortissemens*, published in Paris in 1582.

To verify if a man is noble, witnesses must testify that they knew his grandfather and father, and he who claims nobility, that they have lived nobly: carrying arms, going to war, even had command of military

⁴ Greg Walker, *Writing under Tyranny: English Literature and the Henrician Reformation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 143.

⁵ Elyot, *The Book of the Governor*, 113.

companies, [...] that they followed Gentlemen, dressed like Gentlemen and their wives like Ladies, and performed other noble acts.⁶

However, the Arenberg canvas not only displayed exemplary bodies for the accreditation of nobility. The image self-referentially described how its own painterly materiality, and the acts of production associated with it, choreographed the construction of the elite form. Indeed, the composition draws attention to painting as a medium. It knits together different pictorial genres across a single representational plane.⁷ The area devoted to the description of Charles d'Arenberg (1550-1616), for example, is separated from that of his family by the bedpost, bedframe, and curtain. Enclosed by the knotted textile and resting on the arm of an adjacent velvet chair, the arrangement of the body emulates the rich format of a court portrait. The observer is transported from the domestic interior and inserted into a dynastic picture gallery and the semi public image making traditions of Holbein, Titian, and Anthonis Mor.⁸

⁶ Jehen Bacquet, *Quatriesme traicté des droits du domaine de la Couronne de France, concernant les Francs fiefs, nouveaux acquests, anoblissemens et amortissemens* (Paris, 1582), f. 72r-v, translated in Elie Haddad, "The Question of the Imprescriptibility of Nobility in Early Modern France," in *Contested Spaces of Nobility in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Matthew P. Romaniello and Charles Lipp (Farnham: Routledge, 2011), 155.

⁷ Although pre dating Velázquez's *Las Meninas* by several decades, this interpretation draws on Michel Foucault's analysis of the Spanish painting. Both compositions conjure an illusory space, choreographing complex self-referential qualities concerning representation across a huge canvas surface area, breaking the assumption of direct correspondence between subject and representation. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Routledge Classics, 2002), 3-18.

⁸ Joanna Woodall, *Portraiture: Facing the Subject* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 2.

Simultaneously, the composition presents a floral still life in the middle ground of the scene. A display of hothouse and imported blooms is rendered with meticulous clarity. In their painterly construction, the plants disintegrate time and space, positioning spring blooms with those that flower in autumn, and Northern European specimens with those originating from eastern Asia and the foothills of the Himalayas.⁹ They behave like the detailed and fictitious arrangements of Jan Brueghel the Elder and Juan van der Lamén, artists whose work hung on the walls of the Arenberg and Croÿ residences.¹⁰ Adding to the composite of painterly models, the far right of the Arenberg image appears in the tradition of a Dutch genre scene. The figure of a household servant grasps the end of a broom and bends into his manual work sweeping the tiled floors. The man does not pose for his portrait; he does not share in the deliberate gaze of the sitters who appear self consciously painted in the act of representation.¹¹ Instead, his form belongs to the material world of the silks and velvets, the tiles and carpets, and the green parrot. He is an objectified component of the conjured domestic interior.¹² His presence creates an illusion of everyday normality, a

⁹ The bouquet is surmounted by a Crown Imperial lily and flanked by fat blue iris blooms. Daffodils, jonquilles, the curling petals and splayed stamen of Matragan lillies, rosa x centifolia, tiny white jasmine, and numerous varieties of peony and anemone are also depicted. Felix Scheffler and Luis Ramón-Laca identify the specific blooms in "The Gardens of Jean de Croÿ, Count of Solre, in Madrid and the 'Offering to Flora' by Juan van der Hamen," *Garden History* 33, no. 2 (Summer 2005): 139.

¹⁰ Scheffler and Ramón-Laca, "The Gardens of Jean de Croÿ," 138.

¹¹ Harry Berger, "Fictions of the Pose: Facing the Gaze of Early Modern Portraiture," *Representations*, no. 46. (Spring 1994): 94.

¹² Wayne E. Frantis, *Dutch Seventeenth-century Genre Painting: Its Stylistic and Thematic Evolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 1-2.

clever fiction that, woven with stunning verisimilitude, professes to be a mirror of a world that does not actually exist.¹³

Strong lines dissect the canvas, partitioning each genre into its own clearly demarcated space. The vertical thrust of the bedpost, the horizontal plane of the red tablecloth, and the curved arch of the oratory ceiling each serve to slice up the composition. As the juxtaposition between the types of visual display is revealed, the frictions and liminal spaces they create invite interpretation. The small child positioned on the left of Anne de Croy serves as a particular point of interest in this manner. He is painted close to his mother and yet is removed from the fluid, domestic and maternal grouping on the right of the scene by the line of his arm and crossbow. His body is instead angled towards Charles d'Arenberg and he points a small arrow directly at the golden Order of the Golden Fleece hanging prominently on the Duke's stomach.

Still, the child is not fully part of this courtly world, remaining decidedly on the outside of the curtained space. His liminal portrait, potently situated directly under a large heraldic shield, invites readings of transition and continuance associated with the education of a noble or princely son.¹⁴ As the eye moves between pictorial zones it also shifts from female to male environments, household to court, domestic to ceremonial, private to public. The frictions between the two modes of representation describes gender difference, perpetual

¹³ Frantis, *Dutch Seventeenth-century Genre Painting*, 2.

¹⁴ Grace E. Coolidge, "Introduction," in *The Formation of the Child in Early Modern Spain*, ed. Grace E. Coolidge (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 10.

fecundity, and the social ascendancy of the Arenberg bloodline. The exegesis of the painted forms is imbued in the processes of looking at them rather than in the prototypes they suggest.¹⁵ By recognising the different modes of representation and the significance in their juxtaposition the observer affirms their own place in the noble community. Indeed, a gentlemanly education is encoded into the image, an understanding of the liberal arts, and a familiarity with the elite environment of display. In the same manner as a behavioural treatise, the observer is ennobled by the pigment and invited into the privileged status described across the canvas. The Arenberg family portrait is, like Elyot's text, deeply concerned with materials in process. The image demonstrates how substances were productive and how pigment invoked nobility in the subject portrayed and the encountering observer.

The canvas provides an ideal starting point for this study and its exploration into the construction of the noble form in the sixteenth and early seventeenth-century Habsburg Netherlands. The core thesis focuses around how the specific material composition of artworks produced nobility and privilege in an unstable social and political environment. Material objects were strategically produced and positioned at sites of noble liminality. Bodily encounter with these artefacts formulated ego ideals and shared dynastic identities, it produced complex relationships between diverse groups, and hierarchically situated the elite within

¹⁵ This notion draws on Svetlana Alpers' assertion that Dutch art was not narrative and symbolic in the same manner as Italian art but instead participated in a visual culture in which paintings offered a way of knowing the world through processes of looking. Svetlana Alpers, *Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), xxv.

a shifting social order. Such substance specific processes imaged the noble body in a manner that invested it with a material fertility and longevity that far surpassed the limitations of the finite corporeal form.

The thesis will explore how, like the Arenberg family portrait, nobly constructive processes were infused throughout the means of production, the illusory narratives on display, and in the relationship between the tangible object and observer. Arranged around five case studies, the investigation will examine how corporal encounter with textiles, glass, parchment, and pigment processes produced nobility at sites in which the privileged nature of the Arenberg body required consolidation and reassertion. The wealth of surviving archival material associated with the Arenberg family and other noble clans has ensured that a great deal of the previous scholarship associated with the Flemish nobility has been rooted in administrative documents, landholdings, deeds, biographies, and personal correspondence. Objects have been used to illustrate and support such research, but they do not form the core source of analysis. This thesis will draw on the plentiful resources of the Arenberg archive, the Regionaal Archief West Brabant, and the Arenberg and Croy library catalogues in the Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique; however, it will be primarily led by the substance of the materials under examination.

As will be explored below, the role of the object or commodity in the production of sixteenth-century European society has formed the basis of a wide range of scholarly research. The Northern Provinces or Dutch Republic have received much attention in this regard. However, the material composition of the

Southern Netherlands, the region that remained under the authority of the Spanish Habsburgs and Catholic Church, has only in the last few decades been brought to the fore through examination of court etiquette and ritual. The work and methodological approaches of process anthropologists such as Tim Ingold and art historians such as Erin Campbell (explored in greater detail later in this Introduction) have heavily influenced the scholarly framework for this thesis. This study will attempt to open new avenues of investigation into a growing interdisciplinary academic field at a particularly potent moment for research concerning the Arenberg family.

The Arenberg family provide a fertile case study for an exploration of the material constitution of nobility in the sixteenth-century Netherlands. Whilst the particular ambitions and situation of each noble family may not allow any to be described as a 'typical' example of nobility at the time, it will be shown that the plentiful resources of the family archive and the growing body of scholarship surrounding the clan provides a solid foundation on which to base research into the materials of the house. In addition to this, the Arenberg family greatly expanded their material patrimony over the course of the sixteenth century whilst carefully negotiating the shifting political and social climate. During this period understandings of substance and social structures were in potent and synchronized flux. As the Dutch Revolt reworked centralised models of authority, the Protestant Reformation worked to sever the body from the object it encountered. Indeed, throughout the era the power of the material was of heightened significance. Artworks were at the very forefront of cultural change and objects functioned openly as social players, instigating and receiving

violence, attracting pilgrims, and reworking institutions that both bound communities together and articulated difference.¹⁶

The Complex Social Makeup of the Arenberg Family

The recorded genealogy of the Arenberg family stretches back to the eleventh century. The clan originated from the Duchy of Arenberg on the Eifel mountain range between Germany and Belgium. The old Duchy of Arenberg lasted until 1801 when it was disbanded by France at the Peace of Lunéville and the annexation of the west bank of the Rhine. By this time the family had increased their feudal possessions in the Low Countries, owning seigneuries, baronies, counties, principalities and duchies that collectively dwarfed their patrimony in the Eifel mountains.¹⁷ As Figure 2 demonstrates, the family greatly expanded northwards, adding to their properties in the Low Countries over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The red markers on the map show patrimony brought to the clan through acquisition, inheritance, and marriage during this period.

¹⁶ David de Boer, "Picking up the Pieces: Catholic Material Culture and Iconoclasm in the Low Countries," *Low Countries Historical Review* 131, no. 1 (2016): 60.

¹⁷ "The Old Duchy of Arenberg," *Arenberg Foundation*, accessed Feb 5, 2019, <https://www.arenbergfoundation.eu/index.php/en/arenberg-1918>.

In the thirteenth century, the clan survived through marriage with the Marck dynasty from the Westphalia region.¹⁸ The connection between Arenberg and Marck dynasties continued to be advantageous well into the sixteenth century when Cardinal Érarde de la Marck (1472-1538), of the Marck-Sedan line, bequeathed an extensive amount of land in the Low Countries to the Arenberg branch of the family. Countess Margaret de la Marck (1527-1599) cultivated this patrimony and ensured the continuance of the Arenberg line by arranging a marriage between her son Charles d'Arenberg and Anne de Croy (featured in Pourbus' family portrait), bringing the family into confluence with a wealthy and high-ranking line of the Croy dynasty that had a long history of royal favour.¹⁹ The marriage was particularly advantageous after the death of Anne's brother Charles de Croy (1560-1612) who died without issue and, somewhat begrudgingly, passed a great deal of his Netherlandish land and titles into her line of descent. Together, Anne and Charles established a new familial seat for their combined Arenberg-Croy bloodline in the tapestry-weaving town of

¹⁸ Daniel Clarke, "The Duchy of Arenberg and the Dukes and Princes Who Fought during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, 1789-1815: A History of Arenberg," *The Napoleon Series*, Dec 2017-Feb 2018, accessed June 6, 2018, https://www.napoleon-series.org/research/biographies/Arenberg/c_ArenbergBiographies.html); Hugh Chisholm, "Arenberg," in *Encyclopaedia Britannica Eleventh Edition*, Vol. II, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911), 452.

¹⁹ Originally from the Picardy region of France, the Croy family had served the House of Burgundy since the fourteenth century. Charles V rewarded their loyal service by raising the Aarschot branch of the family, to which Anne belonged, to the rank of Duchy and also recognised their claim of decent from ancient Hungarian royalty. Mirella Marini, "Female Authority in the 'Pietas Nobilita:' Habsburg Allegiance during the Dutch Revolt," *Dutch Crossing* 34, no. 1 (March 2010): 6-7.

Enghien in Belgium, marked in yellow on the map. It formed an ideal centre point for the dynasty to administer their extensive properties in the Low Countries.

The boundaries of this study enclose the Arenberg family in the hundred years between 1520 and 1620. As the map demonstrates, this was a period of dynastic expansion and a time in which the group enjoyed a powerful place in the highest echelons of European court society. However, it was also a period in which the dynasty was required to negotiate complex and tumultuous social and political transformation. Understandings of nobility and privilege were under constant scrutiny. As Violet Soen describes, nobility was a “slippery fish to catch, especially for the Renaissance and Reformation era, the two centuries between 1450 and 1650.”²⁰ The royal courts of Europe debated the true locus or essence of nobility by distinguishing between *noblesse de race* or *d’épée* and *noblesse de robe*, those who acquired status through lineage or military service and those awarded rank via high office.²¹ Florentin de Thierriat’s treatise *Trois Traictez. Sçavoir, 1. De la noblesse de Race, 2. De la noblesse Civile, 3. Des Immunittez des Ignobles* (published in Paris 1606), described nobles with blood ties as ‘natural’ whilst those with civic rank possessed a quality “given by the sovereign prince, one that is not natural but has its customs and usages.”²² According to Thierriat

²⁰ Violet Soen, “Nobility,” *Oxford Bibliographies*, Jan 2015, accessed Oct 18, 2017, <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195399301/obo-9780195399301-0281.xml>.

²¹ Michael Bush, *Rich Noble, Poor Noble* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 51.

²² Florentin de Thierriat, *Trois Traictez. Sçavoir, 1. De la noblesse de Race, 2. De la noblesse Civile, 3. Des Immunittez des Ignobles* (Paris, 1606) 4-5, translated in Haddad, “The Question of the Imprescriptibility,” 154.

such *noblesse de robe* were the lesser to the *noblesse de race* as “their nobility is not ancient, or at least as illustrious.”²³ On the other hand, Guillaume de La-Perriere’s *Le Miroir Politique* (Paris, 1567) argued that “there is no true *Noblesse* but that which proceeds from virtue and good conduct. *Noblesse de race* remains empty and stupid words if not joined to virtue.”²⁴ For others, nobility was an innate quality that produced the ability to command.²⁵ Ellery Schalk cites an anonymous writer of Orléans in 1567 who defined nobility as:

To fight to maintain the honour of God and a peaceful kingdom, to spread more widely the King’s authority against his enemies, and on such occasions not to be afraid of cold nor heat, but to offer one’s life courageously, those are the proper qualities of virtue. And that is how Nobility originated and why it is worthy of its privileges.²⁶

The role that creative genius played in the formulation of nobility was also recognised in sixteenth-century treaties concerning the governing classes of Europe. Humanist Hadrianus Junius, in his 1588 *Batvia*, distinguished three types of nobility, or “*Nobilitus triplex*.”²⁷ Firstly, he described nobility from Nature, those of privileged lineage who deserved honour because “God himself

²³ Thierriat, *Trois Traictez*, 4-5, translated in Haddad, “The Question of the Imprescriptibility,” 154.

²⁴ Guillaume de La-Perriere, *Le Miroir Politique* (Paris, 1567), 111, translated in Ellery Schalk, *From Valour to Pedigree: Ideas of Nobility in France in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 57.

²⁵ Schalk, *From Valour to Pedigree*, ix-xi and Haddad, “The Question of the Imprescriptibility,” 150-151.

²⁶ ‘Lettre missive d’un gentilhomme a un sien compaignon contenant les causes du mescontentement de la noblesse de France’ (Orleans, 1567), translated in Schalk, *From Valour to Pedigree*, 30.

²⁷ Hadrianus Junius, *Batvia* (Antwerp: Plantin, 1588), 320.

has placed the helm of the community in their hands.”²⁸ Secondly, nobility from Virtue was praised as the reward for those of humble birth who had served the state and deserved the titles of privilege for posterity. Thirdly, nobility from Art was awarded to scholars and artists who served the general interest.²⁹ This third distinction was also described by Baldassare Castiglione in his widely disseminated text *The Book of the Courtier* which, published in Venice in 1528, dealt with procedures of etiquette and morality within the context of the royal court. Castiglione recommended painting as an exemplary and ennobling pastime, drawing on Greek and Roman exemplars as well as praising the transferable skills that it offered to military undertakings.³⁰ Ultimately, Castiglione argued, the act of painting positioned one in privileged imitation of God.³¹

The Arenberg family were deeply embroiled within the fluctuating social environment of the sixteenth-century Low Countries. The relationship between

²⁸ Junius, *Batvia*, 320, translated in H. F. K. Nierop, *The Nobility of Holland: From Knights to Regents, 1500-1650*, trans. Maarten Ultee (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 30.

²⁹ Junius, *Batvia*, 320, translated in Nierop, *The Nobility of Holland*, 30.

³⁰ “For I recall having read that in the ancient world, and in Greece especially, children of gentle birth were required to learn painting at school, as a worthy and necessary accomplishment, and it was ranked among the foremost of the liberal arts [...] In fact, from painting, which is in itself a most worthy and noble art, many useful skills can be derived, and not least for military purposes: thus a knowledge of the art gives one the facility to sketch towns, rivers, bridges, citadels, fortresses and similar things, which otherwise cannot be shown to others, even if, with a great deal of effort, the details are memorialized.” Baldassarre Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. O. E. Opdyke (New York: Scribner’s, 1903), 64-65.

³¹ Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, 64-65.

the absent King Philip II and the Netherlandish nobility stretched to breaking point during the lead up to the Dutch Revolt. The high nobility resisted the Habsburg's policy of centralisation, the introduction of a new ecclesiastical hierarchy, and the severe ordinances against Calvinists. The long, complex and violent rebellion led to the establishment of the United Provinces or Dutch Republic, made up of the seven northern and predominantly Protestant provinces that rejected sovereign rule in 1581. Henk van Nierop has argued that each dynasty was forced to choose between Church and King on one side and Protestantism and privilege on the other.³² However, Violet Soen argues that "the Revolt caused noble families not so much to plump for this side or that as to carefully balance pros and cons."³³ The Arenberg family clearly demonstrated such an approach. They were staunchly Catholic and remained loyal to the Spanish monarchy and yet Jean de Ligne (1525-1568), husband of Margaret de la Marck, protested against the King's harsh treatment of fellow noblemen and Knights of the Order of the Golden Fleece.³⁴

Later, Soen argues, whilst many of the Arenbergs' contemporaries such as the Nassau, Egmond and Lalaing families assiduously sought social advancement, the

³² Henk van Nierop, *Het verraad van het Noorderkwartier. Oorlog, terreur en recht in de Nederlandse opstand* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1999), argument summarised in Violet Soen, "From the Battle of Heiligerlee to the Act of Cession: Arenberg During the Dutch Revolt," in *Arenberg: Portrait of a Family, Story of a Collection*, ed. Mark Derez, Soetkin Vanhauwaut and Anne Verbrugge (Turnhout: Brepolis, 2018), 89.

³³ Soen, "From the Battle of Heiligerlee to the Act of Cession," 89.

³⁴ He added his name to petition against the arrest of Counts Egmond and Horne. Soen, "From the Battle of Heiligerlee to the Act of Cession," 90.

Arenbergs worked to safeguard their position on various fronts. Indeed Margaret de la Marck and her son Charles d'Arenberg spent much of the Revolt moving between properties, negotiating contracts and compensation for their damaged or sequestered land.³⁵ This constant travel meant that neither Margaret nor Charles played a major role in state affairs; however, both undertook diplomatic missions, moving between the French and Austrian courts and were rewarded in 1571 with the confirmation of their sovereign rights by Emperor Maximilian II (1527-1576).³⁶ By the end of the century, Charles d'Arenberg served the Habsburgs abroad in both military and diplomatic capacities. He was envoy to the Catholic French court in 1573 on behalf of Philip II and later visited England and the Protestant court of James I (1566-1625), presenting the king and his wife, Anne of Denmark (1589-1619), with botanical specimens and falcons for hunting.³⁷

In addition to their careful negotiation of the unstable Netherlandish nobility and court environment, the Arenbergs positioned themselves in relationship with the trading elites and the urban patricians who dominated political life in the United Provinces of the north. The shifting status of nobility in the Dutch Republic has been explored by J. L. Price who investigates how some nobles lost influence in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries whilst many “were able to

³⁵ Soen, “From the Battle of Heiligerlee to the Act of Cession,” 89-91.

³⁶ Mirella Marini, “Dynastic Relations on an International Stage: Margaret de la Marck (1527-1599) and Arenberg family strategy during the Dutch Revolt,” in *Women, Diplomacy, and International Politics since 1500*, ed. Glenda Sluga and Carolyn James (New York: Routledge, 2016), 52.

³⁷ Marini, “Dynastic Relations on an International Stage,” 53.

maintain their political and social importance despite the rapid social and economic change which might have been expected to undermine their position.”³⁸ Price examines how the social makeup of the Northern Provinces did not shift uniformly. Inland regions experienced a slower rate of change which ensured that the nobility retained their traditional feudal models of political and social dominance. In areas such as Utrecht, for example, the ownership of a substantial amount of landed property, castles, or number of country houses remained a prerequisite for a seat on the noble delegation to the provincial estates whilst in Gelderland, a small group of nobles held influence over the judicial and tax systems.³⁹ Elsewhere however, in regions where the majority of land was owned by non-noble families, noble dynasties retained less political and economic sway. As time went on, more and more land and country estates found their way into the hands of the urban elite, threatening to blur the distinction between the wealthy and powerful patrician classes and the nobility.⁴⁰

In northern maritime provinces transformation occurred at a faster rate. This may explain the significant number of properties acquired by the Arenberg family along the coast during the sixteenth century, shown in Figure 2, signalling an environment of opportunity linked to changes in the economy. The dominance of the market in the region produced a different social makeup and

³⁸ J. L. Price, *The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Macmillan Education, 1998), 124-125.

³⁹ Price, *The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century*, 125.

⁴⁰ Price, *The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century*, 126.

complex hierarchy to other areas. The farming sector divided between capitalist farmers and hired labour. The urban manufacturing boom resulted in an increase of small artisan producers, shopkeepers, and traders along with larger scale merchants and manufacturers. Below these professions were sailors, fishermen, dockers, carters and workers.⁴¹ Within such environments the primary structures of social distinction were not based on birth-right but socio-economic status.

The Arenberg family patronised burgher salesmen and participated in the trade of grain, timber, livestock, and salt amongst many other commodities.⁴² They relied on transport and trade links with the Northern Provinces for the successful maintenance of their patrimonial lands. They were responsible for the welfare of Protestant and Catholic communities, settling legal disputes, repairing buildings, and staffing educational and ecclesiastical institutions in regions undergoing constant conflict and transformation.⁴³ In the process of maintaining their social authority across the Netherlands, the Arenberg family were required to be at once feudal lords and enterprising tradesmen, landowners, charitable

⁴¹ Price, *The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century*, 127.

⁴² Mirella Marini, "Anna van Croy (1564-1635): Ein Spilfiguur in de Arenberggeschiedenis," in *Arenberger Frauen: Fürstinnen, Herzoginnen, Ratgeberinnen, Mütter. Frauenochicksale im Hause Arenberg in Sieben Jahrhunderten*, ed. Peter Neu (Koblenz: Verlag der Landesarchivverwaltung Rheinland-Pfalz, 2006), 97.

⁴³ The Marck familial residence in Zevenbergen, for example, faced multiple sieges and occupation by Dutch and Spanish troops throughout the second half of the sixteenth century. Willem dam Ham, "Dutch Revolt: Geografie: Zevenbergen," *Universiteit Leiden*, accessed Aug 18, 2018, <https://dutchrevolt.leiden.edu/dutch/geografie/Z/Pages/zevenbergen.aspx>.

benefactors, and customers. They positioned and repositioned themselves in relation to a huge variety of people in an unstable social climate.

Pourbus' group portrait of the Arenberg family provides an initial insight into how the complex social makeup of the clan reverberated into and through the materials that surrounded and formulated them. Clutching a pair of gleaming compasses to the shoulder of his patron, the figure located immediately behind Charles d'Arenberg can be understood as a self-portrait of the artist, Frans Pourbus.⁴⁴ His face is slightly lower than that of the nobleman and yet his short pointed beard and strong countenance nonetheless resemble the Duke's. The neck is similarly tightly encircled by sets of tubular folds, starched and goffered into the frill of a ruff.⁴⁵ His countenance is also framed by the curve of a curtain and so resides decidedly within the zone of courtly representation. Painted into the canvas, the artist shares in the prestige of the Arenberg family and constructs a permanent place in the noble household. His presence in the group portrait proclaims his rightful place amongst those 'worthy' of representation.⁴⁶ Pourbus' portrait can be understood as both the means and evidence of his alignment with

⁴⁴ Michael Gaudio discusses the presence of compasses in sixteenth-century European portraiture as part of a dialogue concerning the craft and genius of the artist in "Savage Marks: Engraving and Empire in Thomas Harriot's *Briefe and True Report*," in *Art and the British Empire*, ed. Tim Barringer, Geoff Quilly and Douglas Fordham (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 281-286.

⁴⁵ Cumming, Cunningham and Cunningham, *The Dictionary of Fashion History*, 176.

⁴⁶ Francisco de Holanda's mid sixteenth-century court treatise described only a few as deserving of depiction. The privileged group included kings, emperors, princes, queens, and renowned artists and scholars, those who possessed innate illustriousness, wisdom, fame and virtue. Joanna Woodall, "Sovereign bodies: The realities of status in seventeenth century Dutch portraiture," in Woodall, *Portraiture*, 76-78.

the ruling classes. His painted face, combined with the skilful management of the composition, endlessly confirmed his elevation to gentlemanly status.⁴⁷

The multifaceted composition of the group portrait draws together types of image making associated with both burgher classes and ancient royalty. Still life, genre scenes, and domestic family portraits were popular formulae with the commercial middle classes of the Dutch Republic. Often produced on speculation, such pictures comprised a diverse art market that included specimens cheap enough to adorn the walls of a workshop or costly enough to ensure the lifestyle of the artist mimicked that of the patron.⁴⁸ In addition, although group portraits of families were produced in the southern Netherlands in the sixteenth century, they did not root the sitters so absolutely into their material environment as Pourbus' image.⁴⁹ The Arenberg portrait anticipates the group compositions that gained popularity in seventeenth-century Northern Provinces in which the family was lauded as a model and source of the state. Children, as future citizens,

⁴⁷ Pourbus began his career as a painter to the patrician and merchant classes in Antwerp and Bruges. By the first decades of the seventeenth century however, he had risen to the position of court painter to the royal and ducal families of Europe, the Spanish and Austrian Habsburgs, the Italian Gonzagas and Medicis, and the French Bourbons. Dated to around 1593-97, the Arenberg portrait straddles a period of social transition for the artist as he began to move in noble circles. Mark Weiss, *From Merchants to Monarchs: Frans Pourbus the Younger by the Weiss Gallery* (London: WeissGallery, 2015), 5.

⁴⁸ Frantis, *Dutch Seventeenth-century Genre Painting*, 2.

⁴⁹ For example, the artists' father Frans Pourbus the Elder painted Catholic nobleman George Seton and his family in 1572 whilst the Lord was acting as ambassador to Mary Queen of Scots in the Southern Netherlands. The figures are positioned close to the pictorial plane and fill the canvas space. No suggestion of context or environment is included. "Frans Pourbus," *National Gallery Scotland*, accessed June 18, 2018, <https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/5289/george-5th-lord-seton-about-1531-1585-and-his-family>.

were synonymous with the health of the community and, inset into a well-furnished harmonious domestic interior, they celebrated the current and future achievements of society.⁵⁰ The Arenberg painting enmeshed the visual conventions of the urban elite with ancient sovereign traditions by imaging the young family and household across an enormous canvas, conjuring the figures and the objects in life size scale. The dimensions of the painting, measuring at 223 cm by 227cm, implies the enormous cost of the raw materials, the grandeur of the residence required to accommodate it, and the labour intensive making process.

The painting can be understood to produce nobility that was, at once, deeply involved in the commercial environment whilst also imbued with an ancient authority unavailable to the merchant classes. It constructs a multifaceted, permanent form that bound genealogical and commercial value systems together whilst also expressing the clan's dominance across both structures of social hierarchy. The image has attracted very little previous scholarship to date. It features in a number of publications on the Arenberg family but only as an illustration synonymous with biographical content or as part of wider discussion

⁵⁰ Kerry L. Gavaghan, "The Family Picture: A Study of Identity Construction in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Portraits," (PhD Thesis, Department of the History of Art, University of Oxford, 2013), 14-15; Mariet Westermann, "'Costly and Curious, Full off pleasure and home contentment:' Making Home in the Dutch Republic," in *Art and Home: Dutch Interiors in the Age of Rembrandt*, ed. Mariet Westermann (Zwolle: Waanders Publishing, 2000), 54; Ann Jensen Adams, "The Seventeenth-century Dutch Portait Comes of Age," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Dutch Art of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Wayne Franits (London: Routledge, 2016), 23.

concerning Arenberg patronage.⁵¹ However, whilst it is difficult to ascertain exactly where the painting was displayed in the Arenberg home, the multifaceted composition of the canvas implies it was accessed by a diverse collection of people, simultaneously addressing members of the family, household, and wider commercial community. The painting was therefore likely displayed in a semi-public space, working in a liminal zone in which many ideals and beliefs crossed paths, a place in which the family was required to assert their identity and privileged status in the face of differentiation and potential contest.

Five Sites of Noble Contestation and Production

In their recent publication on aristocratic identity in the Early Modern Low Countries, Liesbeth Geevers and Mirella Marini assert that dynastic identity was forged in the arena of the princely court and was produced through “ongoing negotiations between different generations of the family; the rivalries between different branches [...] marital strategies and demographic influences; the resulting framing and re-framing of the family’s history and [their] honour and

⁵¹ The painting features as illustration in Marini, “Anna van Croy (1564-1635),” 90, and Scheffler and Ramón-Laca, “The Gardens of Jean de Croÿ,” 30. It is discussed briefly in terms of art collections and patronage in Anne Verbrugge, “De Kunstverzameling,” in *Arenberg in de Lage Landen: Een hoogadellijk huis in Vlaanderen en Nederland*, ed. Jan Rogiers, Mark Derez, Marc Nelissen, Jean-Pierre Tytgat, and Anne Verbrugge (Leuven: University of Leuven Press, 2002), 344 and in Mirella Marini, “Anna van Croy (1564-1635), Hertogin van Aarschot en Prinses-Gravin van Arenberg: Vermogen en onvermogen van een hoogadellijke name in het begin van de zeventiende eeuw” (Masters dissertation, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 2006), 166-170.

loyalty to the ruling house.”⁵² Consequentially, the scholars argue, nobility must be analysed as a series of individual units composed of separate dynasties or clusters of families. Such an approach disintegrates any idea of homogeneity across the ruling classes and allows the specificities of each bloodline to be considered as formational agents rather than anomalous quirks. Indeed, by narrowing this thesis to the consideration of one dynastic line of Arenberg descent, it is possible to examine how material processes formulated nobility over generations. Some substances passed between bodies and residences as part of movable patrimony whilst others were inset into the architecture of the clan, allowing bodies to repeatedly pass through them.

Despite the advantages of dynasty-specific analysis advocated by Geevers and Marini, their framework does not take into account how such noble bodies positioned themselves within the diverse and variable social milieu of the sixteenth-century Netherlands. Noble families were not contained entities that self-formulated from the inside. As Matthew Romaniello and Charles Lipp argue, the social privileges of nobility in Early Modern Europe resulted from,

A complicated web of contestation, accommodation, and negotiation—nobles could rely not only on traditional mechanisms of authority but also new institutions, arguments, ideas, and privileges in order to claim a dominant space within a changing society. In short, it was the ‘contest’ that allowed the nobles to claim continued legitimacy as social leaders and to pursue greater authority. [...] noble history [was] a series of

⁵² Liesbeth Geevers and Mirella Marini, “Aristocracy, Dynasty and Identity in Early Modern Europe 1520-1700,” in *Dynastic Identity in Early Modern Europe: Rulers, Aristocrats and the Formation of Identities*, ed. Liesbeth Geevers and Mirella Marini (Farnham: Routledge, 2015), 2.

‘contested spaces,’ including those personal, physical, social, and political amongst others.⁵³

The dramatic upheavals of the era “created opportunities for nobles to advance their standing [...] each movement simultaneously created a new set of terms and ideas that could be used by nobles to renegotiate and defend the traditions they valued, including their families and their privileges.”⁵⁴ Thus, moments of threat were also moments of creativity and production. They were instances in which the noble form was forced to renew and reposition itself, shoring up ancient authority with new modes of power and influence.⁵⁵

This thesis is structured around five case studies, each of which examines the material processes of artefacts that formulate and assert nobility at sites of social contest or transition for the Arenberg family. The objects negotiate the hierarchical disruptions initiated by marriage and the bodily crisis of death. They mediate in the juncture between the high nobility, Spanish royalty, and Northern trading communities. They rewrite ancient paradigms of authority across huge expanses of land whilst fashioning the innermost nature of the privileged noble form inside in the context of richly furnished interiors. The scale, materiality, and

⁵³ Matthew P. Romaniello and Charles Lipp, “The Spaces of Nobility,” in *Contested Spaces of Nobility in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Matthew P. Romaniello and Charles Lipp (Farnham: Routledge, 2011), 3-4.

⁵⁴ Romaniello and Lipp, “The Spaces of Nobility,” 6.

⁵⁵ This idea is utilized in Elizabeth Currie’s analysis of clothing and masculinity in the Florentine Renaissance court. She argues that changes in noble families’ access to power or the promotion of new families in court “offered more opportunities to contest honour and increased need to define and demonstrate it more clearly.” Elizabeth Currie, *Fashion and Masculinity in Renaissance Florence* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 11.

location of the objects differ. Each works in relation to the spatial context and/or the bodies that encounter it. Indeed, the objects have been selected, not just because they produce nobility in particularly potent spaces of crisis, but also because they have remained in situ (or within the Arenberg collection) for centuries after commission.

The first case study will examine the woven materiality of the *Honour* tapestry, an enormous textile produced in around 1530. The tapestry passed down multiple generations of the Arenberg family. It was encountered by a succession of dynastic figureheads, including Cardinal Érard de la Marck, Margaret de la Marck, Charles d'Arenberg, and Anne de Croy. Indeed, all subsequent case-study objects fall into the path of the tapestry in some way, be it through a shared audience, location, or as part of the wider movable Arenberg patrimony. It can therefore be thought of as a perpetual presence in the Arenberg household, a semi-private space that was, itself, a site of contest and differentiation. Guillaume La-Perriere's 1567 *Le Miroir Politique* treatise argued that "nobles are richer, of more honest morals and ways of living, and of greater civility and politeness than the lower classes [...] because from childhood, [...] they are brought up in and taught the greatest of civility, and among honourable people."⁵⁶ The chapter will explore how the woven medium folded the princely body into being, weaving narratives of exempla and warning in a corporally enveloping manner. The textile generated a sensually encompassing environment that offered self-reflection and internal transformation. It constructed a socially extended noble

⁵⁶ Guillaume La-Perriere, *Le Miroir Politique* (Paris, 1567), 21-22 translated in Schalk, *From Valour to Pedigree*, 59.

body and yet also served as a tool to differentiate the noble form and assert social hierarchy.

Following the path of the tapestry into the Marck-Arenberg line of descent, the second chapter will focus on a monumental stained glass window in St John's Church Gouda, commissioned by the Countess Margaret de la Marck. Completed in 1571, the window includes an interpretation of the Apocryphal Judith and Holofernes narrative along with a donor register in which Margaret and her husband Jean de Ligne appear beside their respective patron saints. The chapter will examine how the stained glass worked in a self-reflexive manner, generating what it displayed by producing broad social connections between diverse peoples. The window design celebrated materiality, harnessing a profusion of glazed objects in its narration of the biblical scene. In doing so it utilized the centuries-old regional language of trade and produce, formulating, confirming, and sacralising the Northern commercial network into which the Arenberg family were enmeshed. Simultaneously, the *Judith* window positioned the family in a service-based relationship with the Habsburg monarchy and the ruling authorities in the Southern Netherlands.

The third chapter focuses on the Arenberg portrait album, a volume of eighteen watercolours each depicting a member of the Arenberg or Croy dynasty. The portraits are of a similar composition and all include an inscription that identifies the sitter in respect to Anne de Croy, the likeness at the narrative centre point of the album. Produced on the occasion of Anne's marriage to Charles d'Arenberg and the subsequent merger of two prominent dynastic

streams, the album can be understood to negotiate the confluence of the families and the establishment of a new bloodline. The materiality and composition of the portraits invite an open textured understanding of the object and allow multiple narratives to play out simultaneously across the pages. Indeed different models of femininity are contrasted and conflated in the description of generational change, fertility, and dynastic continuation.

Analogous to the notion that nobility was formulated in sites of contest, this chapter will draw on the ideas of gender as active, shifting, and under constant negotiation and adaption. Marianna Muravyeva and Raisa Maria Toivo argue for a multifaceted approach to gender in studies of Early Modern Europe, considering gender models as subjective, dynamic processes of becoming, not “an essentialist and stable dichotomy [but] a process during which a person’s social status and position were negotiated and renegotiated.”⁵⁷ Within such an approach, hierarchies and binary ideals exist and pose limitations on men and women but are also porous and can be seen to facilitate the crossing or bending of boundaries.⁵⁸ Seeped in notions of commercialisation, this chapter will

⁵⁷ Marianna Muravyeva and Raisa Maria Toivo, “Introduction: Why and how gender matters,” in *Gender in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Marianna Muravyeva and Raisa Maria Toivo (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 5.

⁵⁸ The multiform nature of masculinity in the Early Modern era is explored by Elizabeth Currie who draws on the work of Frank Mort to posit masculinity as process. Currie argues that men negotiated contrasting models of manhood as different prototypes were reinforced at specific moments, when to fight and when to dance, when to appear graceful and risk effeminacy, or when to emphasise the enclosed and definite virile body. Ruth Marzo Karras has explored how such negotiations were often competitive, as young men learnt ways to be unlike women in relation to their male peers and elders. Currie, *Fashion and Masculinity in Renaissance Florence*, Introduction; Ruth Marzo Karras, *From Boys*

examine how the album narrated material transition and exchange across a highly regulated and valuable surface.

The fourth case study in this thesis considers a different selection of watercolour images, a collection of bound landscape paintings of the regions of Lille, Douai and Orchies. These paintings were part of a much larger collection of landscape images that presented the extent of the Croy patrimony under the rulership of Charles de Croy, brother to Anne de Croy. The images reformulated the body of the landlord in the face of great upheaval to the practices of land measurement and management spreading across Europe. This chapter will examine how the process of making the painted landscapes was inherently tied to the production of the body and environment that they described. The homogenous formulaic quality, repeated at every turn of the page, echoes the processes of land surveying that redrew traditional models of authority concerning the landscape and landlord. The ornate frames painted around each landscape drew attention to their self-reflexive nature and directed the eye towards Charles de Croy as subject. The materials simulated a noble experience of the countryside, rich in health-giving diversion and self-examination. They blended noble authority over the terrain with notions of Christian duty and personal salvation, ultimately affirming the Duke's privileged state within the shifting capitalist environment.

to Men: Formations of Masculinity in Late Medieval Europe (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 151; Muravyeva and Toivo, "Introduction: Why and how gender matters," 5.

The fifth and final case study returns to the medium of oil paint and group portraiture in an altarpiece positioned above the family tomb in the Capuchin chapel at Enghien. The chapel complex was constructed in the second decade of the seventeenth century as a spiritual core for the dynasty at the heart of the new familial seat built by Anne de Croy and Charles d'Arenberg for their newly combined line of descent. The *Adoration of the Magi* altarpiece actively worked within the chapel space to confirm the perpetual solidarity and impending redemption of the clan in the face of death. The composition hinged around the theological triad of Eucharist, Adoration, and Resurrection of Bodies, drawing together the canvas, altar table, and family mausoleum that made up the chapel building complex. It performed as a mediatory device, dealing with the crisis of the liminal state of the noble corpse between burial and resurrection. Alongside the community of Capuchin friars who resided in the structure and tended to the family tombs, the painting negotiated the transformation of the body involved in an on going process of change, shifting from one state of being to the next. Still in situ above the altar of the Enghien chapel, the painting continues to mark the final material juncture between the finite and infinite privilege of the Arenberg family.

The duality of noble contestation and noble production is imbued into the very substance of each case study artefact.⁵⁹ It is in the *weaving*, the *glazing*, the

⁵⁹ This notion draws on Helen Hills' interrogation of matter in baroque Naples and the silver reliquaries of the treasury chapel of San Gennaro, in which she posits materials as sites of potentiality and as part of the process of exploration. Helen Hills, "Through a Glass Darkly: Material Holiness and the Treasury Chapel in San Gennaro in Naples," in *New Approaches to Naples c.1500-c.1800*, ed. Melissa Calaresu and Helen Hills (London: Routledge, 2013), 38.

painting, the *surveying* and the *resurrecting*. The tapestry, as a soft and transient article, contested the permanence of its architectural setting by reformulating rules of physical space. The stained glass window was positioned within a site of transformation, emulating and anticipating the friction between materiality and immateriality at the core of the Eucharistic ritual and Catholic mass. The bound watercolour paintings worked through irregularities in the media and composition. They utilised patterns and contrasts, suggesting change through repetition and habit. The illusory tangibility of the oil paint of the altarpiece both invited and denied the body of the observer in its portrayal of the intermediary state of transient matter between death and eternal life.

The case studies are arranged chronologically and yet they do not attempt to devise a cohesive sequence of conflict and adaption leading to a linear narrative of dynastic development. Each study is directed by the specific material processes at hand and, as a result, each chapter works autonomously to those either side of it. The chronological arrangement serves to emphasise the forward momentum and future ambition imbued in each object. Beginning with a woven device that formulated the sensory body over generations, the thesis ends with an object that projected the family onto eternity. It is therefore framed by manifestations of material fertility, flanked by productive artefacts that far surpassed the gestational capabilities of the finite flesh and blood.

Materiality, Ecology, and the Expanded Body

By following the specificities of the material and the processes imbued in it, this investigation draws on the work of anthropologist Tim Ingold who asserts that artefacts evolve within a field of forces. It is impossible, he argues, to distinguish completely between form, as an abstract, preconceived idea in the mind of the maker, and the substance in and with which the artist works.⁶⁰ Ingold argues that the hylomorphic model of making, in which form (morphe) and matter (hyle) are brought together, has dominated the history of Western thought in an imbalanced manner. Form has been associated with an agent of design who inscribes it onto inert and passive matter in order to produce artwork.⁶¹ Renaissance sensibilities, following the classical separation of matter and ideas, ascribed little significance to materiality in discerning the meaning of art.⁶² The mind of the artist was the true locus of meaning and the material only a passive receptor of genius.⁶³ In this model of thought, the artist was emancipated from the status of craftsman and the material procedures hidden from critical analysis.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Tim Ingold, *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill* (London: Routledge, 2000), 345.

⁶¹ Ingold, "The Textility of Making," 92.

⁶² Ann-Sophie Lehmann, "How Materials Make Meaning," in *Meaning in Materials 1400-1800*, ed. Ann-Sophie Lehmann, Frits Scholten and H. Perry Chapman (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 10.

⁶³ Gerald L. Pocius, "Art," in *Eight Words for the Study of Expressive Culture*, ed. Burt Feintrade (Illinois: Illinois University Press, 2003), 45.

⁶⁴ Lehmann, "How Materials Make Meaning," 10.

Ingold attempts to redress this imbalance between form and matter, replacing it with an “ontology that assigns primacy to the processes of formation as against their final products, and to the flow and transformations of materials as against states of matter.”⁶⁵ The maker may set the parameters of the process but they do not prefigure the result. Rather the grain of the wood, the resistance of the fibres, and the muscular rhythms of the body interweave in the determining of form. The artist joins with and follows “the flow of material that bring the form of work into being. The work invites the viewer to join the artist as a fellow traveller, to look *with* it as it unfolds in the world, rather than behind it to an originating intention of which it is the final product.”⁶⁶

Ingold’s thesis has informed the work of Erin Campbell and her proposed ‘ecological’ approach to decorative arts.⁶⁷ Campbell asserts that the interrelatedness of objects, people and spaces must come to the fore of consideration in the field of History of Art. Her ecological approach utilises experiential and environmental lenses, recognising the intertwining of the human and non-human, the material, the spatial, and the social.⁶⁸ The framework for this thesis has been heavily influenced by Campbell’s model and the scholars

⁶⁵ Ingold, “The Textility of Making,” 92.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 97.

⁶⁷ Erin Campbell, “Listening to Objects: An Ecological Approach to the Decorative Arts,” *Journal of Art Historiography*, no. 11 (December, 2014): 1-23.

⁶⁸ Campbell, “Listening to Objects,” 4.

she brings together to form the basis of such an approach.⁶⁹ The work builds on Bruno Latour's concept of the social as an "ongoing, mobile, chaotic, and contingent process of binding together what constitutes society."⁷⁰ In *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor Network Theory*, Latour argues for a definition of social structure "not as a special domain, a specific realm, or a particular sort of thing, but only as a very peculiar movement of re-association and reassembling."⁷¹ Such an understanding undermines the notion of distinct social and material cultures.⁷² Objects are not simply connected to each other so as to form a homogenous layer, just as people are not linked by social ties alone.⁷³ Campbell develops this idea in line with Tim Ingold's concept of meshwork. Whilst Latour describes networks of objects and people as interconnected yet discrete from each other, Ingold "asks observers of an environment to perceive the seeming bounded containment of objects as an illusion."⁷⁴ The human and non-human "do not exist on the 'other side' of materiality, but swim in an ocean of materials."⁷⁵ Within a meshwork there is no

⁶⁹ In particular Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor Network Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Tim Ingold, *Being Alive: Essays on Movement, Knowledge and Description* (Oxon: Routledge, 2011); Timothy Morton, *Ecological Thought* (London: Harvard University Press, 2010).

⁷⁰ Campbell, "Listening to Objects," 9.

⁷¹ Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, 7.

⁷² Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, 84-85 and Campbell, "Listening to Objects," 10.

⁷³ Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, 84-85.

⁷⁴ Campbell, "Listening to Objects," 10.

⁷⁵ Ingold, *Being Alive*, 24, and Campbell, "Listening to Objects," 10-11.

foreground or background, no centre or edge. It is not a network of connected points but an entanglement of lines of life, growth and movement.⁷⁶

In addition to Ingold and Campbell, this study draws on the work of political theorists, sociologists, and anthropologists concerned with the socially productive forces of materials enmeshed with the corporal body. The work of Jane Bennett, for example, calls for a more ecologically sound political system sensitive to the web of forces that affect situations and events. "All forces and flows [...] are or can become lively, affective, and signalling. And so an affective signalling human body is not radically different from the affective, signalling non humans with which it coexists, hosts, enjoys, serves, consumes, produces, and completes."⁷⁷ In addition, Bill Brown's 'Thing Theory' draws on the earlier work of Arjun Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, to place the material and its shifting relationship with people at the heart of cultural understanding.⁷⁸ "Even though from a theoretical point of view human actors encode things with significance, from a methodological point of view it is the things-in-motion that illuminate their human and social context."⁷⁹ Jean Baudrillard theorises objects as social agents by exploring the possibility that consumption has become the chief basis of social order and its internal

⁷⁶ Ingold, *Being Alive*, 63, and Campbell, "Listening to Objects," 13-14.

⁷⁷ Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), 117.

⁷⁸ Bill Brown, "Thing Theory," *Critical Inquiry* 28, no. 1 (2001): 1-22; Arjun Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

⁷⁹ Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things*, 5.

classifications.⁸⁰ According to Baudrillard, products organise their consumers, allowing people to actualise themselves through possessions, taking responsibility for morality, and inducing categories of social distinction.⁸¹

Informed by this scholarship, the following study aims towards theorising the noble body in the sixteenth-century Netherlands as an expanded entity, a form constituted by objects and relationships as much as flesh and blood. It will follow the lead set down by research on early modern 'ecologies' or flows of media related to religious practice, clothing, architectural spaces, and book binding amongst much else. The work of Caroline Walker Bynum, for example, argues for an understanding of religious practice in which material and bodily processes were crucial to the spiritual.⁸² Relics, bread, wine, lactation and gestation formulated and characterized such spirituality. The notion of an expanded body is considered in relation to the productive forces of clothing and represented dress as examined by Ulinka Rublack. Rublack argues that humans wove a sense of being through creative exchanges with the material world and that, as a result,

⁸⁰ Mark Poster, *Jean Baudrillard: Selected Writings* (Cambridge: Stanford University Press, 2001), 2.

⁸¹ Jean Baudrillard, *The System of Objects* (London: Verso Books, 2005), 12-17.

⁸² Caroline Walker Bynum, *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe* (New York: Zone Books, 2011), 134; Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987); Caroline Walker Bynum, "The Female Body and Religious Practise in the Later Middle Ages," in *Fragments of a History of the Human Body*, ed. M. F. R. Naddaff (New York: Zone, 1989).

dress was deeply embedded in how people related to themselves and to others.⁸³ Similarly, Anne Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass describe how clothes formulate subjects physically and socially. Clothes can be “‘deeply put on,’” they “‘permeate the wearer, fashioning him or her within.”⁸⁴ In her exploration of Early Modern book production, Helen Smith describes how the reader and book were mutually constituted as products of their material environment, the makers and suppliers of paper, type and cord, as well as the bodily movements of authors, print shop labourers and book-sellers.⁸⁵ The totality of the book

ties together, rags, wainscoting, spectacles, and paper with moments of creative desire and commission, acts of writing and production, and moments of consumption and use that are themselves productive [...] the work of production is distributed across networks of human actors, material goods, institutions, and environments in ways which complicate the division between subjects and objects, those who act and that which is acted upon.⁸⁶

This open textured understanding of the body correlates with contemporary Galenic models of medicine, widespread in the sixteenth century. The body was semi-porous, required careful balancing, and was impacted by its environment. The preservation of health depended upon the maintenance of six areas, that of

⁸³ Ulinka Rublack, *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 3 and Ulinka Rublack, “The First Book of Fashion,” in *The First Book of Fashion: The Clothes of Matthäus and Veit Konrad Schwarz of Augsburg*, ed. Ulinka Rublack and Maria Hayward (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 2.

⁸⁴ Anne Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 2.

⁸⁵ Helen Smith, *Grossly Material Things: Women and Book Production in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 2.

⁸⁶ Smith, *Grossly Material Things*, 216.

air quality, food and drink, sleeping and waking, movement and rest, retentions and evacuations, and the state of emotions.⁸⁷ The internal balance of the humours could be altered by a foul odour, a sudden surprise, or a specific desire.⁸⁸ In such an understanding, the environment was not separate from the body but played a crucial role in its formation and maintenance. As examined earlier, discussion on the nature of nobility in the sixteenth century debated, not only the importance of bloodlines, but also behaviour, environment and material display. The following thesis will therefore approach notions of the noble body in a similar manner, theorising it as an extended entity with permeable edges.

Scholars examining Early Modern Europe have studied how the flow of material goods through developing commercial systems of production and consumption produced difference and hierarchies between such bodies. Michelle O'Malley and Evelyn Welch's collection *The Material Renaissance* focuses on the production and acquisition of goods and the new role of the consumer at different levels of society.⁸⁹ In addition, Lisa Jardine examines the driving "entrepreneurial spirit"⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Andrew Wear, *Knowledge and Practise in English Medicine, 1550-1680* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 156.

⁸⁸ Hermen W. Roodenburg, "The Maternal Imagination. The Fears of Pregnant Women in Seventeenth Century Holland," *Journal of Social History* 21, no. 4, (Summer 1988): 701 and L. Hill Curth, "Lessons from the past: preventive medicine in early modern England," *Medical Humanities* 29 (2003): 16-20.

⁸⁹ Michelle O'Malley and Evelyn Welch, *The Material Renaissance* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 7 and Evelyn Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance: Consumer Cultures in Italy 1400-1600* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), Part Four: Renaissance Consumers.

⁹⁰ Lisa Jardine, *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 34.

that formulated trade relationships, determined new professions, social hierarchies, and technological developments. Jardine deeply embeds the painted medium within this flow. Paintings were not simply distinct reflections of the commercial environment but commodities themselves, devices that inscribed value and identity at multiple levels of society.⁹¹

The intermingling of body, art object, commodity, morality, and social status has inspired numerous scholars with a particular focus on the Dutch Republic. Anne Gerristan, for example, has examined the constitution of the domestic in the Dutch Republic through the localisation of imported goods whilst Simon Schama's *Embarrassment of Riches* explored "anxieties of superabundance,"⁹² the infusion of objects in the moral processes of the Dutch community.⁹³ Recent studies concerning the Southern Netherlands during the sixteenth century are less quick to focus on the material constitution of society, focusing on ritual, ceremony, and court etiquette. Indeed, the most recent publications concerning the Arenberg family are rooted within the context of the Brussels court. The role of Arenberg and Croy figures within this framework is considered in Nadine

⁹¹ Jardine, *Worldly Goods*, 16.

⁹² Anne Gerristan, "Domesticating Goods from Overseas: Global Material Culture in the Early Modern Netherlands," *Journal of Design History* 29, no. 3, (September 2016): 228-244; Simon Schama, *Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York: University of California Press, 1988), xi.

⁹³ Other studies concerning the socially productive qualities of Dutch art include Michael North, *Art and Commerce in the Dutch Golden Age* (Yale: Yale University Press, 1997); Svetlana Alpers, *Art of Describing* and Svetlana Alpers, "The Mapping Impulse in Dutch Art," in *Art and Cartography: Six Historical Essays*, ed. D. Woodward (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987) explore the production of power and modes of perception in image making practices.

Akkerman and Birgit Houben's *The Politics of Female Households: Ladies in Waiting Across Early Modern Europe* and Dries Raemakers' *One Foot in the Palace*.⁹⁴ However, as this thesis will examine, the production of the noble form was also deeply connected to veins of commerce and processes of commodification. As the case studies will demonstrate, the commercialised noble form worked to maintain the ancient authority of the Arenbergs, facilitated their Christian salvation, but also problematized their claims to timelessness and holiness.

In this manner the thesis aims to contribute to scholarship concerning both commercial and courtly culture. It will feed into the body of work surrounding the Southern Netherlands that has been growing in the wake of the 1998-1999 exhibition *Albert and Isabella* at the Royal Museum of Art in Brussels.⁹⁵ The work of scholars such as Luc Duerloo and Werner Thomas examines the nature of Flanders under Spanish rule and the networks of interchange between European hubs.⁹⁶ Netherlandish court etiquette, festivities and ceremonial have also

⁹⁴ Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben, *The Politics of Female Households: Ladies in Waiting Across Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Dries Raemakers, *One Foot in the Palace* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2013).

⁹⁵ Werner Thomas and Luc Duerloo, *Albert and Isabella 1598-1621* (Leuven: Brepolis Publishers, 1998). Exhibition Catalogue.

⁹⁶ Luc Duerloo, *Dynasty and Piety: Archduke Albert (1598-1621) and Habsburg Political Culture in an Age of Religious Wars* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012); René Vermeir, Dries Raeymaekers, Jose Eloy Hortal Muñoz, ed., *A Constellation of Courts: The Courts and Households of Habsburg Europe, 1555-1665* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2014).

proved fertile ground for study for Krista de Jonge and Margit Thøfner.⁹⁷ Violet Soen has explored the Flemish-Spanish nobility, exploring the relationship between elite families and monarchy during Dutch Revolt.⁹⁸ In addition, Cordula van Wyhe has examined religious and political imagery of the Brussels court and the materiality of royal patronage.⁹⁹

Recent contributors to the more specified field of Arenberg family history include Mirella Marini, who has investigated a number of Arenberg women through their testaments, death rituals and biographies. She argues for a form of spirituality that was particular to the noble family and her extensive work in the Arenberg archives has been an invaluable resource to this thesis.¹⁰⁰ The Arenberg archives themselves have also helped produce a number of texts

⁹⁷ Krista de Jonge and Koen Ottenheim, *Unity and Discontinuity: Architectural Relations Between the Southern and Northern Low Countries 1530-1700* (Turnhout: Brepolis, 2007); Margit Thøfner, *A Common Art: Urban Ceremonial in Antwerp and Brussels during and after the Dutch Revolt* (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2007).

⁹⁸ Violet Soen, *Vredehandel: Adellijke en Habsburgse verzoeningspogingen tijdens de Nederlandse Opstand (1564-1581)* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012).

⁹⁹ Cordula van Wyhe, "The Fabrics of Female Rule in Leone Leoni's Statue of Mary of Hungary, c. 1556," in *Cambridge and the Study of Netherlandish Art: The Low Countries and the Fens*, ed. Meredith Hale (Turnhout: Brepolis, 2016); Cordula van Wyhe, "Court, City and Countryside: Jan Brueghel's Peasant Weddings As Images of Social Unity Under Archducal Sovereignty," in Thomas and Duerloo, *Albert and Isabella 1598-1621*, 151-160.

¹⁰⁰ Marini, "Dynastic Relations on an International Stage"; Mirella Marini, "Pendants in life and death: Frugality, identity and authority in the testamentary bequests of Anna van Croy, Duchess of Aarschot and Princess-Duchess of Arenberg (1564-1635)," in *Graven Spreken: perspectieven op grafcultuur in de middeleeuwse en vroegmoderne Nederlanden*, ed. P. Bitter, V. Bonenkampová and K. Goudriaan (Hilversum: Verloren, 2013); Marini, "Pietas Nobilita"; Marini, "Anna van Croy (1564-1635)."

concerning the family's regional impact in locations such as Eifel, Westphalia, and Emsland as well as the Netherlands and Luxembourg.¹⁰¹ In addition, the institution has printed a highly illustrated collection of female biographies.¹⁰² A large volume of research appears in *Arenberg in de Lage Landen: een hoogadellijk huis in Vlaanderen & Nederland*, edited by Jan Roegiers, Mark Derez, Marc Nelissen, Jean-Pierre Tytgat, and Anne Verbrugge and published in 2002.

The support of the Arenberg Archives in the publication of recent research on the patrimony of the family in the sixteenth century has produced a rich body of work based on correspondence, genealogy, and biography.¹⁰³ Whilst taking advantage of this scholarship, this thesis will acknowledge that the Arenberg archive can also be considered as a site of noble contest and formulation.

Geevers and Marini argue that “dynasties adapted their family histories to suit their present needs or support their claims.”¹⁰⁴ The genealogy of the Arenberg

¹⁰¹ F. J. Heyen, *Die Arenberger: Geschichte einer europäischen Dynastie: In der Eifel*. Vol. 1 (Koblenz: Landesarchivverwaltung Rheinland-Pfalz, 1987); F. J. Heyen, *Die Arenberger: Geschichte einer europäischen Dynastie: In Westfalen und im Emsland*. Vol. 2 (Koblenz: Landesarchivverwaltung Rheinland-Pfalz, 1990); Jean Marie Duvosquel and Denis Morsa, *La Maison d'Arenberg en Wallonie, à Bruxelles et au Grand-Duché de Luxembourg depuis le XIVème siècle. Contribution à l'histoire d'une famille princière* (Enghien: Foundation d'Arenberg, 2011).

¹⁰² Peter Neu, *Arenberger Frauen: Fürstinnen, Herzoginnen, Ratgeberinnen, Mütter. Frauenchicksale im Hause Arenberg in Sieben Jahrhunderten* (Koblenz: Verlag der Landesarchivverwaltung Rheinland-Pfalz, 2006).

¹⁰³ The Arenberg archive, based in Enghien, Belgium, claims to over a thousand linear metres of deeds, letters, maps, engravings and registers that extend back over a thousand years of history. “Arenberg Archives in Edingen-Enghien,” *The Arenberg Foundation*, accessed Oct 10, 2015, <http://www.arenbergfoundation.eu/en/foundation/archives/index.html>.

¹⁰⁴ Geevers and Marini, “Aristocracy, Dynasty and Identity in Early Modern Europe 1520-1700,” 12.

clan was 're written' by the family archivist and historian Charles of Brussels in the 1660s to undo changes initiated by the previous generation.¹⁰⁵ By following materials it is possible to explore the fictions, ambitions, and processes of negotiation that were woven through and into each object at each point of conflict, complimenting and complicating the narrative of the Arenberg family curated by early archivists.

This substance-led exploration into the constitution of the Arenberg clan comes at an interesting juncture for study into the noble family. Between October 2018 and January 2019 the M-Museum Leuven is hosting an exhibition of the Arenbergs' "princely collection."¹⁰⁶ The exhibition is intended to "tell the story of the family"¹⁰⁷ through their patronage of 'great' artists such as Rubens, Veronese, Dürer, and Jordaens, and the composer Vivaldi. The website of the institution declares that, "nobility appeals to the imagination. Especially the higher nobility, which moves in royal circles. They are surrounded by an aura of glitter and glamour, like today's jet set, but also by a profound sense of history and culture."¹⁰⁸ The text suggests that the event will present an understanding of the family deeply embedded into the material processes of the Early Modern era. It is exciting to anticipate substances coming to the fore in new ways within the

¹⁰⁵ Marini, "From Arenberg to Aarschot and Back Again," 104.

¹⁰⁶ "The Arenbergs: European Nobility, Princely Collection," *MLeuven*, accessed June 19, 2018, <https://www.mleuven.be/en/arenbergs>.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

field of court studies and Arenberg familial research as well as in wider public knowledge. However, by positioning the historical narrative around famous figures, it is possible that the productive capabilities of the materials and their specific sensory processes will not be described as crucial to the survival of the clan.

A suggestion of this can be found in the advertising material for the exhibition, which includes a digital reinterpretation of two family canvases, Pourbus' group image and a later equestrian portrait of Albert de Ligne (1600-1674) (Figure 3 a and b). The first image is a photograph in which sitters emulate the positions of Arenbergs, mimicking the postures of Anne de Croy and Charles d'Arenberg along with others from later seventeenth and eighteenth-century portraits.¹⁰⁹ The figures are situated in a white paper cut out landscape that implies the shape of a balustrade, surrounding foliage, peacock, and the façade of a grand house. Located in this colourless context, the bodies are cut off from the layers of material that so powerfully formulated them in oil paint within the original composition. The digital image is all about the individuals, the finite bodies that passed the family name from one generation to the next. They suggest the Burckhardtian self, separate to and sovereign over the material world through which they move.¹¹⁰ The second promotional image, loosely reinterpreting a

¹⁰⁹ The seated man on the right of the image resembles an eighteenth-century portrait of Louis Engelbert Sixth Duke of Arenberg whilst the standing figure with long hair is suggestive of a seventeenth-century portrait of Charles Eugène d'Arenberg. The central male figure is the current Duke Leopold d'Arenberg.

¹¹⁰ Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (New York: Dover Publications, 2012), 81; William Caffero, *Contesting the Renaissance* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), Chapter One.

seventeenth-century equestrian portrait of Albert de Ligne, displays the rider of the rearing horse in the same paper-cut environment complete with long velvet cloak and virtual reality headset. The digital image provides a witty nod to the cutting-edge technology utilised by the exhibition curators without acknowledging the deep irony of virtual reality experience. It advertises a heightened experiential environment yet sacrifices all sensory engagement in the promotion of the visual. As this thesis will show, the objects and artefacts that have survived to be included in the exhibition worked through numerous bodily senses. Indeed, it was in the multimedia blending of corporeal and material that the perpetual fertility of the Arenberg clan was produced and transmitted across the centuries.

Chapter One.

The *Honour* Tapestry.

The Quiet Weaver

Towards the end of the sixteenth-century tapestry design manuscript entitled “Recueil de dessins ou cartons, avec devises, destinés à servir de modèles pour tapisseries ou pour peintures sur verre,” there is a quiet drawing (Figure 4);¹¹¹ a small metal-point illustration situated in the bottom left corner of a page, isolated except for the adjacent red stamp of the BNF library, the institution in which the manuscript is now preserved. The drawing displays the back of a man, seated at a loom, facing away from the viewer. One foot and one arm are raised in the activity of weaving, the invisible treadles move the warp threads just enough for the weft to be passed back and forth on a hand held shuttle. The weaver’s identity is unknown, described in the library catalogue only briefly in relation to his trade. His long sleeves are tucked carefully out of the way into the waistband of his tunic. His body is entirely directed towards the work at hand.

¹¹¹ “Recueil de dessins ou cartons, avec devises, destinés à servir de modèles pour tapisseries ou pour peintures sur verre.” Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Département des Manuscrits, Français 24461. The author of the manuscript is thought to be François Robertet, Secretary to Anne de Beaujeu, Duchess of Bourbon. His known works include a translation of Petrarch’s *Triumphs*, reduced to six eight-line verses ideal for tapestry borders. C. A. Mayer and D. Bentley-Cranch, “François Robertet: French Sixteenth-century Civil Servant, Poet, and Artist,” *Renaissance Studies* 11, no. 3 (1997): 209-210.

The simplicity of the drawing is emphasised by the highly detailed, often intensely coloured, inked series of designs that precede it. The volume is filled with elaborate scenes featuring mythological and historical figures involved in symbolic journeys, triumphs, proverbs, and architectural arrangements (Figure 5). Men, women, animals, and plants populate the book, some featuring multiple descriptive Latin texts in banderoles or cartouches. The manuscript almost overflows with this diverse multitude, but here, at the end of the book, the eye finds respite from the crowds.

The observer experiences a distinct reversal of perspective on encountering this small drawing. Having examined detailed figures and narratives, the eye is suddenly faced with the unknown. Which design is under construction here? How many threads have been put to the loom? What is hidden from view? Although frustrating, the drawing introduces notions of the body and social hierarchy in relation to the medium of tapestry. Even the weaver, whose back interrupts the viewer's access to the material, cannot see the woven figures or foliage directly. He too is denied the privilege of witnessing the front of the textile surface until the weft side is complete, permanently cut from the low-warp loom and the finished work unrolled.¹¹²

The richness and exclusivity of the medium of tapestry throughout European history has been explored at length, notably in sumptuously illustrated volumes

¹¹² Low-warp weaving technique was the dominant mode of production throughout the Medieval and into the Renaissance period. Thomas P. Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance: Art and Magnificence* (Metropolitan Museum of Art: New York, 2002), 5-6.

such as Adolfo Salvatore Cavallo's *Medieval Tapestries in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Guy Delmarcel's *Flemish Tapestries from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Century* and Thomas Campbell's *Tapestry in the Renaissance: Art and Magnificence*.¹¹³ Campbell emphasises that tapestry, the most widely commissioned figurative art form in the courts of the period, was also one of the most expensive.¹¹⁴ Costly threads were imported from across the world and handled by teams of weavers who worked for months to produce the largest and most splendid of wall hangings.¹¹⁵ The resources required for these commissions limited the customer base to the moneyed elite and, as a result, the tapestry medium became "one of the most important ingredients of princely magnificence [...] an index of a magnate's wealth and power."¹¹⁶ Whilst Campbell speaks metaphorically of tapestry as 'ingredient,' this chapter will explore how the textile medium worked not only as a signifier of resource but also as a formational agent, literally constituting the patron through encounter.

The investigation will focus on a Flemish tapestry entitled *Honour*, produced in around 1530 for Cardinal Érard de la Marck (1474-1538). It will examine how the tapestry medium and narrative created a sensory experiential environment that was overtly available to the body of the privileged observer. Through this

¹¹³ Adolfo Salvatore Cavallo, *Medieval Tapestries in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (Metropolitan Museum of Art: New York, 1993); Guy Delmarcel, *Flemish Tapestries from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Abrams: Tiel, 1999); Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance*.

¹¹⁴ Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance*, 4.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 14.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 4.

material immersion the noble form was shaped and composed. It was woven into the prescribed model of leadership described in the tapestry through vehicles of allegory, text, exemplar, and antiheroes. This chapter will also explore how the tapestry produced an extended body, a communal family form that enmeshed diverse strata of society, including the humanist commentators who defined honour in texts and behavioural treatises, the Habsburg leaders who maintained a mutually beneficial relationship with the Marck/ Arenberg dynasty, and the weavers who manifested the designs on the loom.

Anxieties concerning social difference and the vulnerabilities of the textile body are similarly suggested within the media. The tapestry generates notions of internal and external, privilege and hierarchy. However the risk of unravelling, both physically and socially, is an ever-present danger imbued into the fabric. Ultimately, it will be shown that the tapestry generated a material fertility, a means of creating and maintaining nobility within the Arenberg family from one generation to the next. The material remained in process long after the threads had taken shape and the weaver unrolled the finished textile for his first look.

The Material and Narrative Construction of the *Honour* Tapestry

The *Honour* tapestry (Figure 6) is currently on display in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. It takes up an entire gallery wall stretching over eight metres across and rising to four and a half metres high. Unsurprisingly, the tapestry holds the title of largest within the museum, however it is not simply the scale but the intensity and splendour of the woven piece that command the

attention of the viewer.¹¹⁷ *Honour* is invested with a gravitational pull. It offers itself up to the viewer as a tool of engagement and moral transformation.

The *Honour* tapestry originally belonged to Cardinal Érard de la Marck, prince-bishop of Liège between 1506 and 1538, and an important ally to the Habsburg rulers throughout the first decades of the sixteenth century. The Cardinal amassed a huge collection of tapestries over his lifetime, a body of possessions that formed the core of an ever-growing textile patrimony described as one of the most important in the Netherlands.¹¹⁸ Although now displayed independently, the *Honour* tapestry was originally part of a seven-piece set, five of which are still extant today and divided between New York, Chicago and Glasgow. In addition to *Honour*, the collection included *Fortuna*, *Prudentia*, *Virtus*, *Fides*, *Fama*, and *Justitia*.¹¹⁹ As a whole, the series conveyed an allegorical guide describing the qualities key to successful rulership. Each focused on a particular quality with a personification of the appropriate Virtue situated centrally in a grand polychrome architectural structure. The huge number of bodies that filled each scene served to narrate success and failure in relation to each respective quality.

¹¹⁷ Elizabeth Cleland, "Met Collects: Honor from the series 'The Honors' by Bernard van Orley," *Metropolitan Museum*, 2016, accessed July 12, 2016, <http://www.metmuseum.org/art/online-features/metcollects/honor-from-the-series-gloria-immortalis>.

¹¹⁸ J. K. Steppe and G. Delmarcel, "Les Tapisseries du Cardinal Érard de la Marck prince-évêque de Liège," *Revue de l'art* 25 (1974): 35.

¹¹⁹ *Fama* and *Fortuna* are now lost, although a possible fragment of the latter survives in the Musée de la Cathédrale, Narbonne. *Prudentia* and *Justitia* are preserved in The Art Institute, Chicago whilst *Virtus* and *Fides* are housed in the Burrell Collection, Glasgow.

Within an inventory of Érard de la Marck's tapestries dated "28 Novembre 1522 et 5 Juillet 1524" the series is described under the collective name *La Gloire Immortelle*.¹²⁰ It can be traced throughout the Arenberg descent under this name, appearing in the later testaments of both Érard de la Marck and Margaret de la Marck.¹²¹ The design for the *La Gloire Immortelle* series makes reference to a larger nine piece set, known by its Spanish name *Los Honores*, purchased by Charles V around the time of his coronation.¹²² Whilst there is little evidence to suggest where the first impetus for the *Los Honores* tapestry series came from, traces of the nine-piece set exist that describe its purpose and movements before it entered into royal possession.¹²³ The tapestries were at the heart of a financial dispute in the 1520s between the tapestry weaver and dealer Pieter Van Aelst and the Fuggers' Augsburg banking firm. Seven of the set were taken by the bankers as collateral on a large loan that Van Aelst repeatedly struggled to pay off. In 1525 when the weaver was once again unable to refund his creditors, an agreement was reached in which the Fuggers recouped their losses by selling off

¹²⁰ AAE "Érard de la Marck, cardinal. 1518-1522. L'Inventaire' du mobilier des châteaux de Huy, Stockem, Curange, Franchimont, Dinant et Liège," transcribed in J. K. Steppe and G. Delmarcel, "Les Tapisseries du Cardinal Érard de la Marck prince-évêque de Liège," *Revue de l'art* 25 (1974): 35, Appendix: Document 1.

¹²¹ AAE "Testament of Margaret de la Marck:" T.2.10. 1594.

¹²² Charles V's *Los Honores* series survives in tact, housed in the Patrimonio Nacional, Palacio Real de la Granja de San Ildefonso.

¹²³ Iain Buchanan postulates that the initiative may have come from Charles' aunt Margaret of Austria, although there is no firm evidence to support this theory. Buchanan, *Habsburg Tapestries* (Turnout: Brepolis, 2015), 111.

the set along with two more pieces that Van Aelst had promised.¹²⁴ A document dated 9th February 1525 describes how the weaver requested that when the Fuggers decided to sell the tapestries, the Emperor Charles V would be given first refusal:

Except however, that he, Haller, should first and foremost offer them to his imperial majesty for whom the tapestries– as he, Pieter, declared, were made, will have to inform him and graciously request whether he would be interested in buying and would wish to receive them and pay for them or not.¹²⁵

Van Aelst sent a single piece of the tapestry ahead for inspection and approval by the monarch who, it can be assumed, was impressed enough to purchase the set and add it to his already extensive collection. It appeared later in an inventory taken of the royal tapestries in 1544, described as “Item nine pieces of honour, worked in gold and silver thread and silk, each one seven ells high, bought in ‘cilule.’”¹²⁶

Marthe Crick-Kuntziger has accredited the composition of the royal tapestry set to the Flemish artist Bernard Van Orley primarily on the strength of stylistic

¹²⁴ Guy Delmarcel, *Los Honores: Flemish Tapestries for the Emperor Charles V* (Mechelen: Petraco-Pandora NV, 2000), 9.

¹²⁵ “saluo nochtans da thy Haller voir ende ierse die sullen moyghen vercoopen der keyserlycker maiesteyt, dair voiren die tapisseryen- alzoe hy Pieter vercleerde- gemaict zyn, sal moeten aduerteren ende gracelyck suecken oft se dairtoe gayinge ende behagen hadde om die tontfangene ende te betalene oft nyet.” Transcribed in Delmarcel, *Los Honores*, Appendix, Document 2: Antwerpen, Rijksarchief, Notariat, Register 5229 fol. 16 r and v.

¹²⁶ “Item neuf pieches d’honneur, ouvree de fil dor dargent et de soye, ayent chacune sept aulnes de parfondeur, achatee en ciuile.” Brussels, Algemeen Rijksarchief, Raad Van Staat en Audientie, bundle 1238, fol. 12-27. Translated in Delmarcel, *Los Honores*, 9.

similarities between the woven scenes and portraits and architectural models present in his work of the 1510s.¹²⁷ However, other scholars have questioned this premise. Delmarcel calls to attention the similarity between Jan Gossaert's portraits and the figures in the *Honour* tapestry belonging to Charles V.¹²⁸ Alternatively, Campbell surmises that, given the scale of the project, the multiplicity of individual figures, and the enormity of the task of preparing preliminary designs and full-scale cartoons, it is more likely that a large number of artists were involved over a long period of time.¹²⁹ The tapestries were woven from wool and silk with six to seven warp threads per centimetre. Wool was imported from England or Spain, silk from Italy and silver-and-gilt-metal-wrapped silk thread from Venice or Cyprus.¹³⁰ The high warp of the tapestry allowed for definition of form. It indicated the labour and funds invested in the production of the piece. Indeed, a tapestry of this scale, woven in wool alone, with a lower warp count of approximately five per centimetre would have taken five weavers eight months to complete.¹³¹

The organic pigments used to dye the threads of *Honour* have faded, sensitive to overexposure to light. The yellows have turned to white, greens to blue, and the

¹²⁷ Marthe Crick-Kuntziger, "Bernard van Orley et le décor mural en tapisserie," in *Société Royale d'Archeologie de Bruxelles. Bernard van Orley 1488-1541*, ed. Charles Dessart (Brussels: Société Royale d'Archeologie de Bruxelles, 1943), 77-80.

¹²⁸ Delmarcel, *Los Honores*, 31.

¹²⁹ Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance*, 184-185.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, 184-185.

¹³¹ *Ibid*, 6.

cochineal reds have gradually lightened from dark crimson to an orangey tone.¹³² Although diminished, the *Honour* tapestry is still richly coloured in a palette dominated by blue, red, and gold. In particular, the use of blue, spread evenly around the design, provides a balance for the eye.¹³³ It jumps out from the composition and when highlighted with a paler tone, suggests an impressive plasticity of form. Every inch of the textile surface is saturated with line and detail. A frieze of flowers, fruit and vegetation frames the piece. Swollen bunches of purple grapes, flat ivy leaves and tall grass stalks compete for space, overlapping and spilling out over the red border. They are punctuated by three inscriptions set within cartouches at the very top of the frame. Reading from left to right, they state: “QUISQUIS UT AD CLARUM STUDIO SUS SCANDAT HONOREM / NATURA ASSIDUIS PROVOCAT ALMA TUBIS” (“Generous Nature with insistent trumpets provides encouragement that any keenly aspiring person should make the ascent to illustrious Honour”); “CANDIDA QUOS MISIT VIRTUS HONOR ARCE RECEPTANS / LAUREAT AMBITIO QUOS TULIT INDE FUGAT” (“On receiving them in his citadel Honour crowns with laurel those whom shining-white virtue has sent: those whom ambition has brought he drives away”); “SEDULO DOCTA

¹³² The red dye was made from the crushed bodies of the female *Dactylopius coccus* beetle. Brazil wood and rose madder are other potential sources for the red dye stuffs. “Color in Tapestry,” *The Art Institute of Chicago*, 2013, accessed Aug 8, 2016, <http://www.artic.edu/aic/collections/exhibitions/divineart/colortap>.

¹³³ The natural blue dyes used to colour the silk and wool threads were produced from the woad and indigo plant, sourced from Europe and Asia respectively. Indigo was one of the fastest natural dyes and as such has retained its vibrancy over centuries of exposure. John Edmonds, *The History of Woad and the Medieval Woad Vat* (Published online at Lulu.com, 2006), accessed July 17, 2007, https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/The_History_of_Woad_and_the_Medieval_Woa.html?id=CFgBaArLvWsC&redir_esc=y.30.

IUBET MODULIS SCRIPTURA DISERTIS / NE QUIS HONORIPAROS TARDET
INIRE LARES” (“Learned Scriptura ordains in eloquent strains that no one should
hesitate to enter the household that gives birth to honour”).¹³⁴

The texts offer clarity to the tumultuously crowded scene over which they
preside. They narrate a journey, describing the process as individual figures
enter into a moral tribunal and are judged triumphant or unworthy. The
composition can be divided into an upper and lower register. In the upper half, a
male personification of Honour is crowned and enthroned at the centre of a
grand architectural pavilion. He presides over the tribunal, allowing those
deemed worthy to share his elevated space. Rows of honourable individuals sit
beneath his throne, deep in conversation. They are identifiable from the names
woven alongside their bodies and include eight male rulers, named as
GODEEREDUS BUHONIUS (Godfrey of Bouillon); S. LODOVICUS (Louis IX of
France); CAROL MAGN (Charlemagne); CONSTANTINUS (Emperor Constantine);
DAVID (King David); OCTAVIUS (Emperor Augustus); ABRAM (Abraham) and
ALEXANDER MAGN (Alexander the Great). Then appear ten famous women
including, FLORE[N]TIA ROMITIA (Florence of Rome); PENELOPE (Penelope);
SOMRAMIS (Semiramis); HELENA (Empress Helena); HESTER (Esther); DEBORA
(the prophet Deborah); IVDICH (Judith- text partially hidden); SABA (Queen of
Sheba); ASIA (the continent Asia) and personifications of Victory, Majesty, and
Respect. Climbing into the pavilion via a stone staircase on the left of the scene
are SERTORIUS (General Sertorius) and MARCELLA (Consul Marcellus), crowned

¹³⁴ Translations by Janet Fairweather. janetannefairweather@gmail.com.

by DIGNITE (Dignity) and TRIU[M]PH (Triumph); whilst on the right, PHOCAS (Phocias) and PHUS (unidentifiable) welcome two additional unnamed protagonists.¹³⁵

Beneath the stage on which these admirable figures are positioned is an unruly mass of tangled bodies. The hoard fills the lower register of the tapestry, the flailing limbs, fallen horses, and twisted corpses providing a stark contrast to the ordered group above. The woven bodies press close to the edge of composition. Their chaos appears to be in danger of spilling out of the frame at any second. Here reside the unworthy: Those who, according to the central text, sought honour through ambition and as a result must 'flee' from the tribunal. Amongst the wretched are IORAM (Joram), IULIANUS APOSTATA (Julian the Apostate), JEROBOAM (Jereboam), HELENA (Helen of Troy) and PARIS (Paris), TARQUIN (Sextus Tarquinius), MELISA (a reweaving of MEDUSA), IEZEBEL (Jezebel), NERO (Emperor Nero), MARCUS ANTONI (Mark Anthony), HOLOFERNES (Holofernes) and SARDANAPALUS (King Sardanapalus). Some, including Sisera (who is not named but identifiable by the tent peg through his temple) work as an antithesis to their noble counterparts, in this instance Deborah, who is positioned above.¹³⁶ The ignoble crowds trample the foliage beneath their feet. They reach up in desperation, some climbing over collapsed bodies and others falling from broken ladders.

¹³⁵ "Honour': Met Museum Record," *Metropolitan Museum*, accessed Sept 11. 2017, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/670103?sortBy=Relevance&what=Textiles&ft=honor&offset=0&rpp=20&pos=1>.

¹³⁶ Delmarcel, *Los Honores*, 98.

Standing in front of the textile, the eye of the observer is drawn into the scene. Despite the large number of figures in the dishonourable mass, only one looks directly out of the tapestry, fixing his eyes on the observer positioned before it. Paris, standing in the left of the chaotic foreground glances out with concern (Figure 7). His arm gestures up, following the strong diagonals of the staircases, limbs, ladders, drapery, and the twisted bodies of horses. All point towards the position of the Scribe (Figure 8). His mouth is slightly open, suggesting that he is about to speak, to declare the judgment of another soul. The imminence of his voice, coupled with the urgent gaze of Paris, implicates the observer within the action. Is it their name on the cusp of announcement? In addition to Paris, one other face looks out of the woven scene: the embodiment of Honour, enthroned at the top centre of the platform, gazes into a distant space above the observer. He is a somewhat diminutive figure, pushed back into the recesses of the composition despite his narrative importance, yet he holds a 'globus crucier' and sceptre suggestive of Christian, worldly authority.¹³⁷ Two winged figures, one Victus (Defeat) the other Victoria (Victory), raise a laurel wreath above his crowned head. The moment is held in tension. The observer finds themselves in a moment of crisis and self-examination, assessing their qualities and deficiencies. Will the crown be lowered? Can they count themselves among the honourable or

¹³⁷ The male embodiment of Honour may well have been influenced by the grammatical gender of the Latin word 'Honos,' a pendant to the female word 'Virtus.' However, the classical Roman God Honos was usually depicted with a lance and cornucopia. Anthony Corbeill, *Sexing the World: Grammatical gender and Biological Sex in Ancient Rome* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 74 and 116; Manfred Lurker, *A Dictionary of God and Goddesses, Devils and Demons* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 2015), 156.

do vices, follies and temptations stand, as pictured, in the way?

The pregnant pause is released by the third Latin couplet and its urgent plea “that no one should hesitate to enter the household that gives birth to honour.” Indeed, whilst the first two couplets describe the events taking place below, the third seems to offer an invitation. The language labels the environment as one of growth, a creative womb-like space capable of production. The immediacy that floods the scene is one of conception. The figure of Honour, laurel wreath suspended overhead, is shown on the threshold of actualisation, about to be born. Narratively, the tapestry generates a moral crisis and the realisation of a honourable state. It engages the mind, but also demands the physical engagement of the body. Indeed, when first produced, the textile worked in conjunction with the other tapestries in the series, directing the observer around a space whilst ever pulling it back inwards.

The Production of Space and Material Immersion in the *La Gloire*

Immortelle

Since antiquity, honour had been considered the highest reward an individual could receive in earthly life.¹³⁸ It was the idealised state-of-being achieved through personal moral practice and preserved after death through fame. The process of reaching this goal was closely connected to the cultivation of virtue, and thus fundamentally tied to nobility. Indeed, Aristotle claimed that “honour is

¹³⁸ Delmarcel, *Los Honores*, 91.

the prize of virtue.”¹³⁹ Thomas Aquinas developed this idea in line with Christian theology, teaching that as a reward honour was not external in the manner of praise or glory but “inward, something of the soul.”¹⁴⁰ Honour and virtue were often described as gendered concepts. Aristotle, for example argued that,

The temperance of a man and of a woman are not, as Socrates maintained, the same; the courage of a man is shown in commanding, in a woman in obeying. And this holds of all other virtues [...] All classes must be deemed to have their special attributes; as the poet says of women ‘Silence is the women’s glory’ but this is not equally the attribute of man.¹⁴¹

A man would be thought to be a coward if he had no more courage than a courageous woman, and a woman would be thought loquacious if she imposed no more restraint on her conversations than the good man.¹⁴²

Ian McClean has examined how Renaissance scholars debated classical dichotomies of virtue and honour, however, the model extolled by the *Honour* tapestry seems to vary little from Aristotle’s description.¹⁴³ The male exemplars are figures of Biblical, mythological and historical leadership or military command. The female exemplars, on the other hand, Penelope, Esther and Judith, extoll fidelity, chastity and piety as either wife or widow. The inclusion of exempla for both types of honour suggests that the tapestry engaged with male

¹³⁹ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* IV. III, trans. W. D. Ross, accessed Sept 30, 2017, <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.html>.

¹⁴⁰ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae: Volume 41, Virtues of Justice in the Human Community*, ed. T. C. O’Brian (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 101. 3.

¹⁴¹ Aristotle, *Politics* 1.13 [1260a20] cited in Ian McClean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman: A Study in the fortunes of scholasticism and medical science in European intellectual life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 54.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ McClean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman*, 47-58.

and female observers and that, despite the male personification of Honour, women were not excluded from the influence of the narrative and material.

The sequential relationship between virtue and honour was given a tangible form within French literary circles in Jean Froissart's *Le Temple d'Onnour* (1385), Jean Molinet's *Le Trosne d'Honneur* (1467), and Jean Lemaire de Belges' *Le Temple d'Honneur et de Vertus* (1503). The shared emblem of these texts drew from a classical tale involving twin temples constructed by a Roman consul named Marcellus. According to legend, the positioning of these buildings required the worshipper to pass through the temple of virtue before reaching that of honour, a physical movement that echoed and anticipated the spiritual progress of the individual.¹⁴⁴ The narrative of the *Honour* tapestry cannot be attributed to one single literary source.¹⁴⁵ Indeed, the figures were clearly drawn from a multiplicity of places, blending the classical, biblical, historical and mythological into a complex and multifaceted work.¹⁴⁶ Yet the idea of

¹⁴⁴ Delmarcel, *Los Honores*, 91.

¹⁴⁵ In her article, "Reversing the Tapestry: 'Prison of Love' in Text, Image, and Textile," *Renaissance Quarterly* 64, no. 4 (Winter 2011), Emily Francomano notes a similar issue when examining potential textual source material for the *L'Histoire de Lérian et Lauréolle* tapestry chamber bought by King Francois I in 1528. Francomano argues that the lack of known commissioner, designer, and artist produces a complex relationship between source material and textile. She cites the Introduction of Grazia, Quilligan, and Stallybrass, *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture*, which highlights the problem (in reference to a printed anthology) that "there is no single author from whose subjectivity the texts proceed; there is no title that can summon a single perspective from which to view the diverse contents." Grazia, Quilligan and Stallybrass, *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture*, 7.

¹⁴⁶ The Seven Virtues and the battle between Virtue and Vice, for example, received their impulse from the Late Antique poet Prudentius' fifth-century *Psychomachia*. Here the author narrated the battle for a man's soul, developing

establishing a physical sequence articulated in architectural and figural allegories clearly influenced the production of the tapestry design. Indeed, the *La Gloire Immortelle* set to which *Honour* belonged displays a succession of structures, walkways, and staircases through which figures are shown to move.

Fortuna, first in the set, is now lost. However, the earlier weaving belonging to Charles V gives an indication of the probable key components and their narrative significance (Figure 9). A female personification of Fortuna sits astride a horse on top of her palace roof. She is crowned and blindfolded, spreading roses before her whilst throwing stones behind, a sign indicative of the arbitrary favour and ill favour of fortune.¹⁴⁷ Below is positioned the 'Wheel of Fortune,' held firmly in place by a young woman. To the left and right a seascape, on one side stormy and on the other calm, divides between the victims of fortune and those treated well.

Next in the series comes *Prudentia* (Figure 10), the personification of which sits enthroned in the centre of the piece, clasping a snake that bites its own tail to become a symbol of time. Seven female Virtues are seated below the throne whilst, in the foreground, the seven Liberal Arts appear hard at work

the Pauline thought that the faithful Christian must arm himself with spiritual weapons in order to successfully face the forces of evil. In addition to this, narratives of honour based around allegorical figures can be traced to Alain de Lille's twelfth-century didactic verse *Anticlaudianus* and Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae* (c.524 AD). Adolf Katzenellenbogen, *Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Mediaeval Art* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1964), 1; Buchanan, *Habsburg Tapestries*, 114.

¹⁴⁷ Buchanan, *Habsburg Tapestries*, 116.

constructing a chariot for Prudentia.¹⁴⁸ The story references Alain de Lille's widely read Twelfth-century poetic treatise *Anticlaudianus* which, using morals as allegory, described the creation of a new man for a Golden Age on earth.¹⁴⁹ Prudentia is sent through the cosmos on her chariot to petition God for a soul for this man, one capable of overcoming vice.¹⁵⁰ Narratively and visually, the tapestry runs into the next scene, that of *Virtus* (Figure 11). Indeed, Prudentia in her chariot can be discerned in the upper left hand corner of this piece, riding over the architectural gallery crowded with Virtues. The classically dressed male personification, positioned under the central arch of the gallery, whips the satyr crouched beneath him, thus indicating the battle between virtue and vice.¹⁵¹

The fourth tapestry, *Fides*, (Figure 12) features a female personification of Faith, enthroned, holding a church, and flanked by the embodiments of Hope, Charity, Temperance and Justice. Each woman stands on the body of a male figure,

¹⁴⁸ This is explained in the inscription in the upper border which reads: "QUID DEUS, HORCUS, HOMO SAGA SPECULANTE PHRONESI FABRICAT AONIUS PLAUSTRA SUPERBA CHORUS." (While Phronesis, the wise woman, speculates on what is God. What Hell, what man, the Aonian choir construct superb chariots). Buchanan, *Habsburg Tapestries*, 117.

¹⁴⁹ The *Anticlaudianus* was read throughout medieval Europe as part of the advanced rhetoric teaching in schools and universities. It was translated into German and survives in over 150 manuscript forms. James Simpson, *Sciences and the Self in Medieval Poetry: Alan of Lille's Anticlaudianus and John Gower's Confessio Amantis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2005), 22 and Jeanne E. Krochalis, "Alain de Lille," *Routledge Revivals: Key Figures in Medieval Europe: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Richard K. Emmerson (New York: Routledge, 2006), 12.

¹⁵⁰ W. Wetherbee, "Philosophy, Cosmology, and the Twelfth-Century Renaissance," in *The History of Twelfth-Century Western Philosophy*, ed. P. Dronke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 51.

¹⁵¹ Buchanan, *Habsburg Tapestries*, 119.

between them subjugating Mohammed, Judas, Herod, Tarquinas, and Nero. On the right of the scene a staircase leads the eye across into the following tapestry of *Honour*. From here, the crowded tribunal stage steps descend into the realm of *Fama* (Figure 13), the sixth tapestry in the series. Whilst *Fama* is missing from Érarard de la Marck's set, the Habsburg weaving also includes the *Honour* staircase and is filled with famous writers from the past including Ovid, Petrarch and Homer. In the foreground a great many exempla rise from the earth, leaving their graves. The subject of Fame victorious over death recalls the well-established trope based round Petrarch's fourth-century Italian *Trionfi* poem.¹⁵² The uppermost inscription narrates the scene. It reads "FAMA VEL EFFRACTIS REVOCAT QUOSCUMQUE SEPULCHRIS HINC LAUDES ILLINC PROBRA CAUNTE TUBA" ("Fame, by breaking open the graves, calls back anyone with a blare of trumpets, now sounding praise, then blame.")¹⁵³ It may also recall the general resurrection of the dead, believed within Christian thought to occur at the end of days.¹⁵⁴ *Justitia* is the seventh and last in the Marck set (Figure 14). The figure of Justice holds sword and scales, presiding over a ceremony in which just rulers are rewarded with golden chains. Above her crowned head, a panel declares her purpose. "JUSTIS REMUNEROR, PROTEGO BONOS, CASTIGO NOCENTES" ("I reward the Just, I protect the good, I chastise those who do evil.")¹⁵⁵

¹⁵² Philip Hardie, *Rumour and Renown: Representations of Fama in Western Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 444.

¹⁵³ Translation cited in Buchanan, *Habsburg Tapestries*, 120.

¹⁵⁴ 1 Corinthians 15: 50-53 (KJV).

¹⁵⁵ Translation cited in Buchanan, *Habsburg Tapestries*, 121.

In addition to *Honour*, *Fortuna*, *Prudentia*, *Virtus*, *Fides*, *Fama*, and *Justitia*, the royal set, *Los Honores*, belonging to Charles V, included two further pieces entitled *Nobilitas* and *Infamia*. The designs of these two extra tapestries related specifically to the Habsburg genealogy and the position of a young prince and, as such, it is likely that they were deemed inappropriate for a context outside of the royal family.¹⁵⁶ Thematically, the royal set was distributed into a tripartite arrangement, but *La Gloire Immortelle* works differently.¹⁵⁷ The repeated emblem of the chariot suggests a bond between *Prudentia* and *Virtus* whilst *Fortuna* and *Justitia* appear compositionally autonomous, framing the other tapestries from their position at the start and end of the series. There is also a strong visual relationship binding *Fides*, *Honour*, and *Fama*. The outer tapestries of the trio connect to *Honour* at the centre via the tribunal staircases and bodies that move inwards on either side. The arrangement visually establishes *Honour* as the true focal point of the overall set and the most crucial to the narrative.

No detailed description of *La Gloire Immortelle* in situ within the residence of Érard de la Marck has been uncovered. However, examining the nature of the tapestry media itself along with comparable examples offers some insight into how the series would have worked as a whole to influence the body. The tapestry surface, as a tactile media, laid claim to the space that surrounded it. This was particularly potent in weavings conceived as sets and displayed as ‘chambers,’

¹⁵⁶ Delmarcel, *Los Honores*, 38.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, 46-58.

hanging floor to ceiling to cover the entire surface area of the walls.¹⁵⁸ Entering a tapestry chamber, one first felt the warmth provided by the textile surface. Insulation and comfort may have been one of the primary benefits of early medieval tapestry production, serving to humanise the draughty interiors of stone castles, but it was a feature that never lost its appeal.¹⁵⁹ Next, the quality of light noticeably changed. The gilt wrapped threads glinted from within the matte surface as the grey of the walls disappeared behind the densely coloured, light absorbing, textile. Voices and music muted within the chamber whilst the entire room was invested with a dynamic quality, animated as the fabric swayed slightly, hung about a foot away from the stonework.¹⁶⁰ Finally, years of wood smoke, feasts, and incense scenting the chambers assured that every bodily sense was engaged in the environment.

Tapestries repositioned corners, covered doors, and blended with furniture to form synthetic “textile environments.”¹⁶¹ The architectural dimensions of an interior could be completely rewritten as tapestries imposed their own depths,

¹⁵⁸ There is a rich body of scholastic work on tapestry chambers. Thomas Campbell, *Henry VIII and the Art of Majesty: Tapestries at the Tudor Court* (London: Yale University Press, 2007) examines a wide variety of chambers, their appearance, and uses at the Tudor court. In particular, Chapter 8 “Field of Cloth” describes the tapestry ‘palace’ erected in Guines, Calais for the meeting of French and English rulers. See also Cavallo, *Medieval Tapestries in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, 27-33. For the specificity of tapestry chambers and their immersive and didactic uses, see Francomano, “Reversing the Tapestry,” 1059-1105.

¹⁵⁹ Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance*, 37.

¹⁶⁰ Rebecca Olson, *Arras Hanging: The Textile that Determined Early Modern Literature and Drama* (Newark: University of Delaware, 2013), 6.

¹⁶¹ Delmarcel, *Flemish Tapestries*, 18.

drawing the edges of a room closer together with a surface of densely patterned mille fleur, filling it with a woven population, or expanding the space into imaginary rooms, or across a conjured landscape to a distant horizon. The space designated by the tapestry medium was three-dimensional, all encompassing, kinaesthetic, a place of corporal immersion.¹⁶² Laura Weigert has examined how inventories, wills, and account records dating from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries described tapestries in spatialised terms. The textiles were not understood as autonomous images but as architectural entities differentiated by theme or the types of environment that they constituted. Tapestries were described as ‘chambres,’ ‘salles,’ or ‘chapelles,’ and produced environments for relaxation, ceremony, and prayer.¹⁶³ Recorded thematically the textiles created spaces specifically associated with the production or contemplation of love, fortune, or honour.¹⁶⁴

An idea of the spatial impact that the medium and narrative in conjunction could create is articulated in a series of engravings published in 1611 to commemorate the funeral of Charles III, Duke of Lorraine (1543-1608).¹⁶⁵ A deathbed scene

¹⁶² Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation* (New York: Routledge, 2006), xvi and Francomano, “Reversing the Tapestry,” 1095.

¹⁶³ Laura Weigert, “Chambres d’amour: Tapestries of Love and the Texturing of Space,” *Oxford Art Journal* 31, no. 3 (2008): 325.

¹⁶⁴ Weigart, “Chambres d’amour,” 326.

¹⁶⁵ Claude de Ruelle, Jean de la Hière, Freidrich Brentel, Mattäus Merian and Léonard Périn, “Pourtraict du Lict du trespas de feuë Son A Itesse de Lorraine Monseigneur le Duc Chalres. 3. De ce Nom,” in *Dix grandes Tables contenant les pourtraictz des ceremonies, honneurs et pompe funèbres, faitz au Corps de feu Serenissime Prince Charles 3 du Nom 1611*. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris.

(Figure 15) depicts the Duke in his final moments, laid in an ornate bed with his hands pressed together in prayer. The room is large and yet the tapestry covered walls blur the edges of the space by suggesting further corridors, archways and windows. The floral border further confuses the distinction between textile and bedroom as it seamlessly blends into the carpet-covered floor. In the upper left of the scene, a tapestry is drawn back to admit a figure through a hidden door, however it is not immediately clear which plane of representation he belongs to. Indeed, the room is lined with a series of figures, some seated and others standing. At first glance all seem to be focused on the dying Duke, but after closer examination, it becomes apparent that the figures on the right hand side are in fact life size characters woven into the tapestry. Although now lost, the tapestry chamber is most likely to be one entitled *L'Estat de Noblesse*, a series that displayed motifs of worldly power.¹⁶⁶ The scene on the right features a pope, emperor and king enthroned on a raised platform whilst bishops and theologians gather beneath.¹⁶⁷ The figures are almost in line with the prostrate body of the dying Duke, poised in an intermediary position, sharing in the mourning duties by straddling the boundary between the flesh and blood and the woven.

The following engraving in the commemorative series displays the same room after the death of the Duke (Figure 16). The accompanying text describes, in both Latin and French, the embalmed body encased in a lead coffin and wooden

¹⁶⁶ Delmarcel, *Los Honores*, 27.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, 27.

casket. Three layers of fabric cover the coffin, white toile, black velvet, and a gold patterned textile trimmed with flecked ermine.¹⁶⁸ Passing from life to death is illustrated here in the complete diffusion of the body into the textile. Even the mourners that line the scene have covered their heads. The tapestries have also been changed. The worldly authority of the *L'Estat de Noblesse* has been replaced by the biblical scene of Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus, as described in the Book of Acts 9: 3.¹⁶⁹ "And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven." Rays pierce through rolling cloud whilst soldiers and horses scatter in panic beneath them. The textile depicts a moment of divine encounter and transformation in which the division between heaven and earth is breached. It echoes and enhances the shift of the Duke as he transcends mundane life. The body slips into the textile as it slips out of finite existence.

La Gloire Immortelle choreographed the body by establishing an almost ceremonial pattern of engagement with the fabric that surrounded it. The sumptuous colour, riotous detail, theatrical stages, and finely dressed crowds simulated a procession in which the observer could be fully immersed. The

¹⁶⁸ Claude de Ruelle, Jean de la Hière, Freidrich Brentel, Mattäus Merian and Léonard Périn, *Dix grandes Tables contenant les pourtraictz des ceremonies, honneurs et pompe funèbres, faitz au Corps de feu Serenissime Prince Charles 3 du Nom 1611*, 10. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris.

¹⁶⁹ The conversion tapestry was one of a set of seven that appeared in an inventory of the Duke's possessions taken between May 1575 and January 1606. The four surviving pieces, which do not include the conversion scene, are preserved in the Kunstthoriches Museum, Vienna. Elizabeth Cleland, *Grand Design: Pieter Coecke van Aelst and Renaissance Tapestry* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2014), 154.

textile bodies echoed and anticipated flesh and blood counterparts. Positioned close to the surface, the life sized figures appeared on the verge of spilling out, further implicating the observer in the chaotic action and emphasising their role as one of the crowd, engaged in the ritual of judgment. *La Gloire Immortelle* can be understood as both the title of the textile set and also a description of the type of environment it constituted. It was a space that illustrated honour, provoked contemplation of virtue, and, as will be seen, formulated such qualities within the bodies that inhabited the area.

‘Act like an Image:’ Constituting the Noble Body

Exploring the media specific nature of the tapestry encounter and the vital sensory immersion that *La Gloire Immortelle* and more specifically *Honour* provoked offers an alternative interpretation of the material. Guy Delmarcel, for example, focuses on compositional models and is quick to link the arrangement of the *Los Honores* and *La Gloire Immortelle* tapestry sets to the façades constructed for sixteenth-century Joyous Entries.¹⁷⁰ Such events involved a princely procession passing by a number of stages or constructions on which *tableaux vivants*, sculptures, paintings, and live actors were arranged into mythological, biblical and classical motifs.¹⁷¹ As they moved through the streets, the sovereign was confronted with ideal virtues, warned of moral dangers, and

¹⁷⁰ Delmarcel, *Los Honores*, 18.

¹⁷¹ Peter Arnade, “The Emperor and the City: The Cultural Politics of the Joyous Entry in Early Sixteenth Century Ghent and Flanders,” *Handelingen der Maatschappij voor Geschiedenis en Oudheidkunde te Gent*, no. 54 (2000): 72.

told of ensuing rewards.¹⁷² The Joyous Entry of Charles V into Bruges in 1515 was recorded by the historian Remy du Puys as an illustrated forty-page account entitled *La tryumphante et solemnelle entree faicte sur le nouuel et ioyeux aduenement de treshault trespuissant et tresexcellent prince monsieur Charles prince des Hespaignes archiduc daustrice duc de Bourgongne conte de Flandres. [etc] En sa ville de Bruges* (Paris, 1515). The city rhetoricians, along with a diverse community of foreign merchants, prepared a show of twenty-seven pageants. The account illustrations reveal a series of impressive scenes, highly decorated and densely populated.¹⁷³ One particular woodcut depicts a stage in the form of a gallery (Figure 17). The figure of Solomon sits enthroned in the centre of the tableaux surrounded by councillors, musicians and women, possibly playing the roles of the four Graces.¹⁷⁴

Compositionally, the arrangement of the Honour tapestry does resemble the ornate architectural structure and patterned panels of the illustrated stage set. Indeed, Delmarcel has even postulated that the initial royal set may have been produced to commemorate the event and “therefore functioned to a large extent as a “woven Joyful Entry.”¹⁷⁵ However, when the materiality of the tapestry is brought into consideration, the relationship between the different media is

¹⁷² Delmarcel, *Los Honores*, 20.

¹⁷³ Peter J. Arnade, *Beggars, Iconoclasts and Civic Patriots: The Political Culture of the Dutch Revolt* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2008), 37.

¹⁷⁴ De Puys, *La tryumphante et solemnelle entrée...*, 55.

¹⁷⁵ This would line up with Van Aelst’s request that Charles V be given first refusal on the set. Delmarcel, *Los Honores*, 20.

complicated. Peter Arnade has argued that the Entries stage sets “made townspeople more equal players in a two-way ceremony of contractual exchange.”¹⁷⁶ There was a degree of conversation between the civic and royal bodies, a meeting in which distinction between the two was asserted. The town authorities expressed their own identity and expectations as much as they professed loyalty, a factor that occasionally sparked tensions, power struggles, and bodily violence.¹⁷⁷ The medium of tapestry engaged the noble body at a different site of social contest. It also enmeshed the observer into the material. It demanded the engagement of every bodily sense, confusing the limits of the space it inhabited, blurring material and corporal boundaries as opposed to drawing them up.

Understanding the *Honour* tapestry as a medium deeply involved with the corporal form also disassociates it from the idea that tapestries were the “frescoes of the North.”¹⁷⁸ Delmarcel and Forti Grazzini have argued that “just as frescoes or movable paintings decorated the walls of churches and palaces in southern Europe [...] so the great figurative tapestries served as monumental

¹⁷⁶ Arnade, *Beggars, Iconoclasts and Civic Patriots*, 33.

¹⁷⁷ Charles V's entry into Ghent in 1515 stirred up political unrest and sparked a rally from the wool weavers of the region. The prince swiftly arrested and executed a number of the rebellious group. Arnade, “The Emperor and the City,” 76.

¹⁷⁸ Nello Forti Grazzini, “Flemish Tapestry Weavers in Italy in the Sixteenth Century,” in *Flemish Tapestry Weavers Abroad: Emigration and the Founding of Manufactories in Europe*, ed. Guy Delmarcel (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2002), 131.

wall decorations.”¹⁷⁹ Compositionally and narratively, the *Honour* tapestry is similar to Lorenzetti’s *Allegory of Good and Bad Government* (Figure 18), the series of three frescoes in the Sala dei Nove painted c. 1338, which include numerous personifications of virtues, Justice, Concord, Wisdom, Faith, Hope and Charity. The frescos are divided horizontally into three planes, advertising and encouraging those who entered the room to follow its example of idealized rule. Materially, however, the two works are distinct, engaging the body in very different ways. One generates a static encounter with a specific place, responding to the architecture and remaining separate from the bodies that pass by. The other generates sensory immersion and can accompany the observer between buildings or residences. Tapestries could be rolled up, transported in carts and rehung in a different location arriving ahead of the patron.¹⁸⁰ The observer could enter and engage with the same chamber in numerous places without the need to be distinct at any point. The dialogue between textile and body need never be interrupted.

The close, formulating relationship between the observer and textile is specifically articulated within the *Infamia* tapestry, the final piece of the royal *Los Honores* series. Located on the extreme right of the woven composition, an ornate polychrome column and raised tiled floor establishes a distinct interior space (Figure 19 and 20). The room is filled with objects. Books can be seen splayed and fabric inches between the pages, perhaps subtly illustrating the

¹⁷⁹ Delmarcel, *Flemish Tapestries*, 16.

¹⁸⁰ Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance*, 13.

conflation of sources involved in the tapestry design. On an adjacent table a candle has just been blown out and smoke rises from the wick in thick curls, made heavy by the textile medium. The room is inhabited by a solitary figure, identified in text only as 'Author.' He appears a narrative intermediary, orchestrating the elaborate scenes that have passed before the royal viewer and yet he remains still part of the woven dimension, hemmed in by the floral border. The moment displayed here signals the culmination of the royal series; the eyes are lifted from the page, the pen is held aloft. The Author performs as a selvedge point, confirming the end of the textile series by reiterating its message. A cartouche in Latin above the Author's head reads:

So, if you are given strength, may perpetual Honour,
Fame and renowned Nobility shine brightly,
And neither Fortuna tear you with her wheel,
Nor infamous Depravity with her marks:
Act like an image which teaches by honourable order
Act so that reason commands the five senses,
And prudently reflect on Death, Man, and God,
How fierce, fragile and severe they are
Now crushing evil with the pressure of your heels
May you drive out all wickedness far away.
Soon the virgin Astraea, more brilliant than the evening star
And Virtue amidst her other sisters,
Will come thus to bestow honour on your heart
To make you worthy of all kinds of praise
And you will partake of your desire. Farewell.¹⁸¹

The Author figure is absent from the *La Gloire Immortelle* series, ensuring that there is no sudden conclusion or final point to the encounter. The observer is encouraged to remain close to the textile without ever stopping abruptly or being bid farewell. Nevertheless, the text remains an important factor for

¹⁸¹ Translation cited in Delmarcel, *Los Honores*, 155-156.

consideration in regards to *Honour*. It emphasises the relationship between body and tapestry by urging the reader to “act like an image which teaches by honourable order.” Such explicit instruction subverts any distinct subject/object arrangement. Indeed, it can be considered in line with the assertions of Grazia, Quilligan and Stallybrass that the ‘ob-ject’ can be that which is *thrown before*.¹⁸² “It is the material object that impressed its texture and contour upon the noumenal subject. And this reversal is curiously upheld by the ambiguity of the word ‘sub-ject,’ that which is *thrown under*, in this case in order to receive an imprint.”¹⁸³ The tapestry has a dynamic relationship with the body; it impacts the observer.

In this way the tapestry works much like the literary genre known as ‘Mirror For Princes’ or ‘Fürstenspiegel.’ Such ‘Mirror’ advisory literature was ostensibly pragmatic, combining passages on health, education and discipline. The texts were compendia of war literature, household management treatise, bodily care instructions, child rearing manuals, wisdom tracts and legal guides that laid claim to a whole horizon of practicality.¹⁸⁴ Matthew Giancarlo has examined how princely formation was at the core of this genre of literature. The texts presented themselves as “ethical ‘recipes to rule’ or instruction manuals of how to ‘make’ a

¹⁸² Grazia, Quilligan and Stallybrass, *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture*, 5.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Matthew Giancarlo, “Mirror, Mirror: Princely Hermeneutics, Practical Constitutionalism, and the Genres of the English Fürstenspiegel,” *Exemplaria: Medieval, Early Modern, Theory* 27, no. 1-2 (2015): 36.

virtuous prince.”¹⁸⁵ In 1516 Erasmus published his widely read *Education of a Christian Prince*, dedicated to Charles V. His text promoted an idealised vision of leadership whilst encouraging an understanding of the royal body as a malleable form capable of achieving such perfection.¹⁸⁶ Erasmus argued that:

When the prince is born to office [...] the main hope of getting a good prince hangs on his proper education. [...] Accordingly, the mind of the future prince will have to be filled straight away, from the very cradle (as they say), with healthy thoughts while it is still open and undeveloped.¹⁸⁷

Niccolo Machiavelli in *The Prince* (published posthumously in 1532) emphasised models for behaviour as part of this formation, “above all, he must read history so that he can do what eminent men have done before him: taken as their model some historical figure who has been praised and honoured; and always kept his deeds and actions before them.”¹⁸⁸ Alternatively, Castiglione, in *The Book of the Courtier* (Venice, 1528), focused on the impression that a good loyal companion could leave on a monarch, winning favour so that “when he sees his prince’s mind inclined to do something wrong, he may be quick to oppose [...] and lead his prince into the path of virtue.”¹⁸⁹ Often dedicated to a specific ruler, these ‘Mirror’ guides spoke directly towards the protagonist, instructing in self-

¹⁸⁵ Giancarlo, “Mirror, Mirror,” 37.

¹⁸⁶ Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Political Modern Thought: Volume 1: The Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 118.

¹⁸⁷ Desiderius Erasmus, *The Education of a Christian Prince*, ed. Lisa Jardine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 5.

¹⁸⁸ Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 49.

¹⁸⁹ Niccolo Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. O. E. Opdyke (New York: Scribner’s, 1903), Book IV: 247.

formation. The texts framed “the fundamentally paradoxical notion that the source of sovereign authority can be created and informed by the embodied praxis of its own self-reflected power: that is, that in some sense the cake can be given the text of its own recipe and then be asked to bake it successfully.”¹⁹⁰ It is “the constitution of the sovereign, by the sovereign.”¹⁹¹ The words of the text are not distinct from the body and the recipe not separate from the rule, instead they are self reflexive facets of the same entity.

An early reference to how tapestries and their narratives worked in this self reflexive, formational manner can be found in the thirteenth-century French Romance, translated into English in 1490 and reprinted into the sixteenth century under the title *The most pleasaunt historye of Blancherdine, sonne to the King of Friz*. Within this text a young prince is inspired by his tutor who, using the medium of tapestry, tells a story of chivalric heroism.¹⁹²

How Blanchardine walking in his Fathers Pallace accompaned with his Tutor, he perused in the hangings of Tapestry and Arras, the sack and distruction of the famous Cittie of Troy.

Blanchardine [...] stedfastle perusing the abstracts & deuises in the hangings, demaunded of him what warlike seidge and slaughter of men, that might be which he saw figured in the same: and hearing his Master so to blazon ye warres of the Greekes in this ten yeeres seidge gainst Troy gave more diligent attendance.¹⁹³

¹⁹⁰ Giancarlo, “Mirror, Mirror,” 37.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Francomano, “Reversing the Tapestry,” 1093.

¹⁹³ W. Caxton, *The moste pleasaunt historye of Blanchardine, sonne to the King of Friz; & the faire lady Eglantine Queene of Tormaday, (surnamed) the proud ladye in loue* (London: William Blackwell, 1595).

The young prince is drawn in by the heroic deeds of history and becomes more engaged in the teaching process, a lesson by which he, as an embryonic ruler, is constituted. The idea that such tapestries produced the impressionable young 'self' influenced the location of, and events for which, the textiles were hung. Indeed, in 1489 the tapestries selected for hanging in Westminster Palace for the birth of Princess Margaret Tudor and lying-in of Elizabeth of York were strictly devoid of figures and narratives not deemed 'convenient' for pregnant women.¹⁹⁴ Later within the English court an inventory taken at the time of Henry VIII's death in 1547 reveals a six piece series narrating Christine de Pizan's *Cité des Dames* (1405) hung in the garderobe of Elizabeth I. The young Princess was fourteen years old at the time the record was taken and the location of the series strongly suggests that the tapestry was recognised for its formational abilities in relation with the young royal body.¹⁹⁵

The royal tapestry set, *Los Honores*, was used in the preparation for and celebrations of the birth and baptism of Charles V's heir, Philip II, in 1527. Several sets of specially selected tapestries were readied for the birth, covering the Valladolid household in a profusion of colour, figures and narrative.¹⁹⁶ Included alongside the *Los Honores* set was yet another chamber of *Cité des*

¹⁹⁴ "The Manner of the Queen's taking to chamber," in BL MS Julius B XII fol. 56 in Olsen, *Arras Hanging*, 7 n 11.

¹⁹⁵ Susan Groag Bell, *The Lost Tapestries of the City of Ladies: Christine de Pizan's Renaissance Legacy* (London: University of California Press, 2004), 2.

¹⁹⁶ Delmarcel, *Los Honores*, 11.

Dames.¹⁹⁷ Although both *Los Honores* and the *Cité des Dames* sets were among a large selection hung in Valladolid at the time, these two may be thought of as particularly notable pendants. They were displayed as exemplary narratives poised to begin the creation process, the bodily formation, whilst the child was “still open and undeveloped”¹⁹⁸ in the cradle. Erasmus argued that time was of the essence for the correct shaping of rulers. The reflective mingling between body and textile must begin early and the process of prince-making be as convenient as possible. The dedicatory epistle to Prince William the Younger, Duke of Cleves, in his *Apopthegmata* (Basel, 1531) stated:

It is of course good to know what the philosophers have written about how to conduct oneself, how to govern, and how to wage war. But few men, even those without public responsibilities, have sufficient time to unravel the labyrinthine twists and turns of Socrates’ methods of argument, his manner of feigning ignorance, his ways of leading into the subject, as depicted for us by Plato. [...] A man born to exercise authority needs to put virtue into immediate practice, not debate it at leisure. [...]

Wrestlers have in their repertoire specific sequences of moves which enable them to grip their opponent or escape his grip in turn. Likewise, those wrestling with the problems of peace and war need to have to hand specific thoughts which will help them decide what is the appropriate course of action in the circumstances and what is not. [...]

It takes a great deal of time to hunt for gold in ore-bearing veins or search for gemstones on the beach or in the sea. A man does great service to a busy ruler when he presents him with the gold ready refined and shaped, who offers him gems already selected, cleaned and mounted in gold or set in goblets.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷ Delmarcel, *Los Honores*, Appendix, Document 3: Archivo General de Simancas, Casa y Sitios Reales, legajo 379, folio 125.

¹⁹⁸ Erasmus, *The Education of a Christian Prince*, 5.

¹⁹⁹ Erasmus, “Apopthegmata,” in *Collected Works of Erasmus*, ed. B. Knott-Sharpe, trans. E. Fantham (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), dedicatory epistle.

The *Honour* tapestry worked as such a “sequence of moves.”²⁰⁰ It kept “wisedomes ever in sighte” so that the observer might receive it and be “to vertue persuaded.”²⁰¹ Like the advisory literature, it worked in a self-reflexive manner, a ‘mirror’ device for reflection and formation. To borrow the words of Grazia, Quilligan and Stallybrass once again, they are inextricable. “The subject passes into the object, the object slides into the subject, in the activity by which each becomes itself,”²⁰² a composite, an aggregate, an ecology of nobility.

The Tapestry as a Communal Form

Whilst the *Honour* tapestry displays the composite nature of the noble form, flesh and blood, text and textile, it also draws attention to the wider social makeup of the noble body. As already examined, the tapestry design made reference to a vast array of literary sources and worked in the manner of a princely ‘mirror’ treatise. In addition to this, scholarly figures woven into the crowded composition explicitly celebrated the authors of such texts as integral components of nobility. Within the *Infamia* textile, the Author figure, surrounded by handwritten books, quills, and other writing implements brings to mind the depiction of humanist scholars such as Hans Holbein’s portrait of Erasmus of Rotterdam (Figure 21). Here, the subject is positioned in an intimate interior, partially screened by a green curtain drawn between an ornate column and a

²⁰⁰ Erasmus, “Apopthegmata,” dedicatory epistle.

²⁰¹ Thomas Elyot, *The Book of the Governor*, 113.

²⁰² Grazia, Quilligan and Stallybrass, *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture*, 2.

wall-mounted shelf laden with a carafe and selection of books. The scholar is behind a table and rests a hand on a leather bound volume. His body is enveloped in rich textiles, fur and black velvet, rendered by the artist in exquisite detail despite the lack of ornament or jewellery. The woven interior of the *Infamia* Author also resembles Holbein's contemporary portrait of the merchant Georg Gisze (Figure 22). Here the painter celebrates the illusionistic capabilities of paint and the materiality of the burgher. A profusion of objects, glass, paper, naturalia, wax, quills, and keys drive a narrative heavy with tangible "symbols of power and science,"²⁰³ positioning the sitter at the very top of the commercial system. The woven Author's vase of flowers, letters strapped to the walls, scissors, and hanging devices celebrate his crucial role as synthesiser of sources, formulator of concepts, and producer of the narrative and the noble form that it shaped.

Within the *Honour* tapestry the figure of the scribe manifests the humanist production of nobility. His figure is compositionally and narratively central. His open mouth proclaims the honourable from the very heart of their midst whilst the seething hoards below direct their bodies and gazes towards him. Despite this importance, he is differentiated from the other bodies. He wears a laurel wreath but is not named and does not sport armour, a crown, or studded chest piece like the other male figures. His body occupies a separate space, seated behind a table on a small platform, his head is lower than those around him, and he does not grasp a palm leaf. The scribe is visually connected yet distinct from

²⁰³ Oskar Bätschumann and Pascal Griener, *Hans Holbein: Revised and Expanded Second Edition* (London: Reaktion Books, 2014), 256.

the honourable community. He, like the Author figure, is a crucial component in the composition of the tapestry, manifesting the lesser social groups, the activities of commercial burghers and scholarly humanists, which fed into the composition of nobility.

Seated behind a table for their productive role, the Scribe and Author may also be thought to echo and subtly acknowledge the industry of the weaver and the material constitution of the noble body. Far more pronounced, however, the forms described and celebrated the relationship between the observer as patron and Habsburg rulers. The connection between *La Gloire Immortelle* and *Los Honores* has, up to this point, been almost universally interpreted in a hierarchical arrangement of original and copy, royal and noble. The Marck/Arenberg set has been considered merely a “grossly simplified” re edition of the imperial “editio princeps.”²⁰⁴ Yet, examining the numerous complexities in the relationship between the two ruling families in political, financial and material terms, it is possible to expand on this understanding of the tapestries.

Born in 1472, Érard was the third son of Robert de la Marck, founder of the Marck-Sedan branch of the family. The Cardinal profited hugely from an exorbitant income constituted not only of dynastic patrimony but also the revenue of two bishoprics and three further ecclesiastical stipends. In addition, it would seem that his wealth was maintained by an insatiable thirst for more, a trait so extreme that Mary of Hungary wrote to Charles V describing how Marck

²⁰⁴ Delmarecl, *Los Honores*, 38.

had made a god of his money and was no longer the master.²⁰⁵ Érard's occupancy of the episcopal seat of Liège can be divided into two periods of political friendship. Between 1505 and 1517 Marck visited the French court on multiple occasions, obtaining the Bishopric of Chartres and accompanying Louis XII to Venice in 1509. Following the death of the French monarch and a lukewarm relationship with his successor Francois I, Marck shifted his loyalties towards Charles V. He remained faithful to the Spanish Habsburgs until his death in 1538, serving as councillor to Mary of Hungary during her regency of the Netherlands.²⁰⁶ The Cardinal was a valuable ally to Charles V. He garnered crucial support for the monarch from Germanic electors in the election that followed the death of Emperor Maximilian I in 1519. He subsequently personally received Charles V in Liège in October 1520, attended his coronation, and was present at the Diet of Worms in 1521.²⁰⁷ Charles rewarded Érard's help by supporting his case with the Pope for the grant of a Cardinal's hat.

The Bishopric of Liège occupied a key strategic position along the rivers Meuse and Ourthe and bordered both France and the Spanish Netherlands (Figure 23). Whilst historically the location of the region had ensured that it was often forced into defensive action, during the occupancy of Érard de la Marck, the area experienced an unusual period of peace. A treatise brokered with the Habsburg

²⁰⁵ Paul Harsin, "Etude critique sur l'histoire de la principauté de Liège II: Le Règne d'Erard de la Marck 1505-1538," *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 34, no. 3 (1956), 240.

²⁰⁶ Steppe and Delmarcel, "Les Tapisseries du Cardinal Érard de la Marck," 36-37.

²⁰⁷ Delmarcel, *Los Honores*, 37-39.

family offered protection. The region became known as the 'Spanish Road,' working as a military corridor connecting Spain to its territories in the Netherlands. Troops were allowed to pass through the territory under strict rules that they stay no longer than a specified period in one place.²⁰⁸ The area was also rich in mineral deposits and became a centre of arms manufacture and coal mining.²⁰⁹

Érard's continuing loyalty to the Spanish crown was vital to Charles and his administration of the Habsburg Empire. At the same time, maintaining a relationship with the ruling dynasty allowed the Marck family privileged access to the royal body and protection of their assets. The tapestry can be understood as a consolidation of these bonds and a means of manifesting royal favour as part of the dynastic communal noble body. Indeed, whilst commercial tapestry sets could be freely bought by anyone with the necessary funds, the rights and cartoons to specially commissioned series, such as *Los Honores*, were retained by the patron.²¹⁰ The drawings for splendid sets were often jealously guarded by complex contracts and specific conditions. Such rules applied even within royal families. In 1567, Margaret of Parma was required to seek permission from her half brother Philip II to have his *Noah* tapestries rewoven by the Pannemaker

²⁰⁸ Geoffrey Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 61; Myron Gutmann, *War and Rural Life in the Early Modern Low Countries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 22.

²⁰⁹ Colum Hourihane, *The Grove Encyclopedia of Medieval Art and Architecture*, Vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 63.

²¹⁰ Grazia, Quilligan and Stallybrass, *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture*, 2.

workshop.²¹¹ In addition, the weaver Van Aelst was obliged to protect the cartoons for Pope Leo X's *Acts of the Apostles* series until his own death in 1533. The restriction was then apparently lifted as, within a year of Van Aelst's demise, another workshop began a duplicate set for François I, King of France.²¹² Since the weaving of *La Gloire Immortelle* is dated to between 1525 and 1532, it is likely that the contract protecting the *Los Honores* cartoons was not linked to the lifespan of the weaver but to the prerogative of the royal customer and his relationship with the Marck dynasty.

In light of this, the woven series can be considered as part of a transverse landscape of friendship and cooperation, as images that were created in succession, that were likely on display simultaneously, and that may well have shared a courtly audience. The tapestries referenced each other. To follow Panofsky's line of argument in 'Original and Facsimile Reproduction,' each instantiated its own moment of authentic experience and thereby continuously renegotiated originality.²¹³ Maria Loh applies Panofsky's fluid model of originals and facsimiles to an Early Modern context, arguing that later 'copies' of Titian's paintings altered the perception of the 'original' in that the two became codetermined, each bestowing an 'aura' on the other.²¹⁴ Similarly, the royal and

²¹¹ Delmarcel, *Los Honores*, 37.

²¹² Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance*, 201.

²¹³ Erwin Panofsky and Timothy Grundy, "Original and Facsimile Reproduction," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 57/58 (2010): 330-38.

²¹⁴ Loh deliberately uses the term 'aura' to subvert the concerns of Walter Benjamin's 1935 work *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2016) in which he argued

ecclesiastical tapestries became social devices, working in community, each elevating the perception of the other.

Amy Beingessner has studied ideas of reproduction and authenticity in her examination of the *Hunt for the Unicorn* tapestries, commissioned for Sterling Castle in 2002, after the Sixteenth-century textiles hung in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.²¹⁵ As part of her study she asserts that “in many ways tapestry is a perfect simulacrum.”²¹⁶ The notion of a ‘simulacrum’ finds traces in Plato’s dialogues, appearing as the word now translatable as ‘semblance’ or ‘phantasm.’²¹⁷ This phantom was the work of artists, the imitations of the copies of the true forms which were the forms of God. Plato banished the artist from his Republic, mistrusting the creator of useless images and deceitful perversions, three steps removed from the truth.²¹⁸ Michael Camille describes how in ancient and medieval discourse the term simulacrum was used negatively to describe things that were false.²¹⁹ However, Gilles Deleuze wrested the simulacrum from

that reproductions produced through modern technologies may become commodified substitutes capable of supplanting authentic experiences. Maria Loh, *Titian Remade: Repetition and the Transformation of Early Modern Italian Art* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2007), 8 and 9.

²¹⁵ Amy Beingessner, “The Hunt of the Unicorn: Tapestry Copies Made for Stirling Castle, Scotland,” (Masters thesis, The University of Guelph, Ontario, 2015).

²¹⁶ Beingessner, “The Hunt of the Unicorn,” 6.

²¹⁷ Michael Camille, “Simulacrum,” in *Critical Terms for Art History*, ed. Robert Nelson and Richard Shiff (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 36.

²¹⁸ Plato, *The Republic* Book X, trans. Benjamin Jowett, (2008) accessed Sept 20, 2017, <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/republic.11.x.html> 597e.

²¹⁹ Camille, “Simulacrum,” 35.

the derisive judgment of Plato. He critiqued the definition of the simulacrum as a copy of a copy, arguing that no matter how many times removed, an imitation would always be defined in terms of its essential resemblance to a model. The simulacrum, Deleuze argued, is a phenomenon unto itself.²²⁰ It is an image that stands in relation to other images, none of which affirm close proximity to a supreme original.²²¹

The *Honour* tapestry was a simulacrum that connected diverse social strata, weavers, humanists, and kings. It made reference to other woven temples, allegories, historical and mythological figures, each pointing not only to other versions of bodies and architectural structures, but also their associated narratives and belief systems. The very process of tapestry making enmeshed the object in an expansive series of reference points; the literary works of commentators, fed by histories and biblical narratives, were transformed and interpreted by artists into drawings and paintings. From there full-scale cartoons, produced by draftsmen, negotiated the shifts in medium between painting, drawing, and textile. Although intermediary in the textile making process, these enormous images, created on paper or linen, were bought as objects of value in themselves.²²² Thus, the finalised tapestry was neither copy

²²⁰ Gilles Deleuze and Rosalind Krauss, "Plato and the Simulacrum," *October* 27 (1983): 48-49 and 52-53; Brian Massumi, "Realer Than Real: The Simulacrum According to Deleuze and Guattari," *Copyright* no. 1 (1987): 91-92.

²²¹ Hassan Melehy, *The Poetics of Literary Transfer in Early Modern France and England* (Oxon: Routledge, 2015), 13.

²²² Famous examples include Raphael's cartoons for the *Act of the Apostles* tapestry series made for Pope Leo X in 1515. The cartoons were bought by Charles I in 1623 and entered into the English Royal Collection. Philip the Good is

nor model. It was a manifestation that incorporated an extended series or meshwork of images, objects, and peoples.²²³

The living flesh and blood of the privileged observer who encountered the woven media, moved through the spaces it generated, and internalised the honour it extolled, became a further component in this extended entity. The *Honour* tapestry and body intertwined in the formation of the honourable self and dissolved the notion of a subject/object divide. It undermined the supposed predominance of the original over the copy, subverting the “cherished dichotomy”²²⁴ of image and likeness, and disturbing “the order of priority: that the image must be secondary to, or come after, its model.”²²⁵ The corporal form was fashioned into the noble simulacrum. It was the likeness of a likeness, a tapestry, a cartoon, a moral treatise, a didactic surface.

Fabricating Social Difference

Whilst generating this amalgamated noble body, the tapestry media also articulated ideas of hierarchy. Indeed the textile, as outlined at the start of this chapter, was deeply entrenched with notions of difference and exclusivity,

also known to have bought the cartoons for his own *Gideon* tapestry for two hundred golden crowns. Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance*, 43 and 193; Groag Bell, *The Lost Tapestries of the City of Ladies*, 65.

²²³ Beingessner, “The Hunt for the Unicorn,” 6.

²²⁴ Camille, “Simulacrum,” 35.

²²⁵ Ibid.

internality and externality. Whilst bonding diverse social strata into a unified form, the scale and dimensions of the *Honour* tapestry inserted it into the centuries-old visual repertoire of royalty. The enormous and transportable qualities of the medium were certainly less easily incorporated into the material makeup of burgher and civic authorities than paint, board and canvas.²²⁶ Collections of these costly items were amassed over generations as manifestations of genealogical descent. In addition, an engraving within *Le Sacre de Louis XV, Roy de France & de Navarre, dans l'Eglise de Reims, Le Dimanche 25 Octobre, 1722* published in Paris, 1731 (Figure 24) illustrates the use of tapestry as a device for literal social segregation. The plate displays the route to the coronation of the juvenile French King Louis XV (1710-1774) and depicts a tapestry corridor constructed through the town streets. The image overtly demonstrates the fabric separation of the populace into those allowed visual and physical access to the monarch and those prevented.

Related to the socially dividing qualities of the tapestry are concerns about the potential unravelling or unfolding of the noble body. In 1527 Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, visited the exiled Pope Clement VII. The Bishop reported back to London describing how “before reaching his privy chamber we passed three chambers all naked and unchanged.”²²⁷ The Pope’s bare walls were

²²⁶ Cavallo, *Medieval Tapestries in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, 27.

²²⁷ John Sherrin Brewer, Robert Henry Brodie and James Gairdner, *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, Preserved in the Public Record Office, the British Museum, and Elsewhere*, 21 Vols. (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1862-1932), Vol 5, no. 4090 and Campbell, *Tapestry in the Renaissance*, 4.

indicative of the dire situation in which he was living, stripped of his wealth and ceremonial grandeur. However the language that Gardiner utilised to describe the interior aligned the very body of Clement with that of his residence, “as undressed of authority as his chambers were of tapestries.”²²⁸ The Pope had been cast out from the elite, a process which symbiotically and devastatingly unravelled his material environment, his fabric exoskeleton. As Laura Weigert has highlighted, such a parallel anticipates Gotfried Semper’s nineteenth-century discussion on the history of architecture in which he stressed the role of textiles to enclose and divide space.²²⁹ Semper’s architectural ‘Bekleidungstheorie’ (theory of dressing) drew on the shared etymology of ‘Gewand’ (clothing), ‘Wand’ (wall) and ‘Winden’ (envelop). Textile covers, Semper argued, were inseparable from the structure on which they hung, they formed a whole, and neither could be altered without affecting the other.²³⁰

In 1526 Cardinal Érard de la Marck began building a new palace with the intention of filling it with Italian painting, antique sculpture, and splendid tapestry. Although this new residence was partially habitable by 1533, the Cardinal died before it could be completed and the vast majority of his huge collection passed to his godson and nephew Robert III de la Marck.²³¹ Thus, the

²²⁸ Mary Barnard, “Gifts for the Vicereine of Naples: The Weavings of Garcilaso’s Thried Eclogue,” in *Objects of Culture in the Literature of Imperial Spain*, ed. Mary Barnard and Frederick Armas (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 6.

²²⁹ Weigart, “Chambres d’amour,” 326.

²³⁰ Ibid; Harry Francis Mallgrave, *Gotfried Semper: Architect of the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 293-294.

²³¹ Steppe and Delmarcel, “Les Tapisseries du Cardinal Érard de la Marck,” 37.

tapestry collection shifted from the Marck-Sedan to Marck-Arenberg branch of the family, and began a line of descent that would continue uninterrupted until the mid twentieth century.²³² Three generations after Érard de la Marck, Charles d'Arenberg made a concerted effort to protect the integrity of the family's growing textile collection. He included an obligation to maintain the cohesion of the patrimony within his own will.²³³ Such efforts reveal the continuing importance of the tapestry media to the family almost a century after its weaving along with an active anxiety concerning the implications of its removal. Indeed Charles' son Philippe Charles d'Arenberg (1587-1640) shipped a great many works of art to Spain following his confinement to house arrest in 1634. Whilst

²³² *Honour* Tapestry line of descent: Cardinal Érard de la Marck, Prince-Bishop of Liège (by 1532; to his godson, Robert III de la Marck ; by descent, Robert III de la Marck, Count of Arenberg (to his sister, Countess Marguerite de la Marck) ; by descent, Countess Marguerite de la Marck, Princess of Arenberg (to her son, Robert de Ligne) ; by descent, Robert de Ligne, Prince of Arenberg and Barbançon (sold to his brother, Charles de Ligne) ; Charles de Ligne, Prince of Arenberg, Duke of Aarschot (in 1602; to his son, Philippe Charles) ; by descent to Philippe Charles d'Arenberg, duc d'Aarschot (to his son, Philippe François) ; by descent to Philippe François d' Arenberg, duc d'Aarschot (to his brother Charles-Eugène) ; probably by descent to Charles-Eugène d' Arenberg, duc d'Aarschot ; probably by descent to Philippe-Charles-François d' Arenberg, duc d'Aarschot (to his son, Leopold-Philippe) ; by descent to Leopold-Philippe, Prince and Duke of Arenberg, Duke of Aarschot and Croy ; and his wife, Marie-Françoise Pignatelli, Princess of Bisaccia, Countess of Egmont ; probably by descent through the Duc d'Arenberg, Brussels ; probably by descent to Engelbert-Auguste, Duke of Arenberg, Aarschot and Meppem, Prince of Recklinghausen (to his son, Engelbert-Marie) ; by descent to Engelbert-Marie, Duke of Arenberg, Aarschot and Meppem, Prince of Recklinghausen (until 1946; sold to Wildenstein and Co.), [Wildenstein and Co., Inc. , New York, 1946–2015; sold to MMA]. “Honour”: Met Museum Record.”

²³³ AEE. “Testament of Charles d'Arenberg of the 13th June 1610, codicil of 13th January 1616,” cited in Guy Delmarcel, “Wandtapijten,” in *Arenberg in de Lage Landen: Een hoogadelijk huis in Vlaanderen en Nederland*, ed. Jan Rogiers, Mark Derez, Marc Nelissen, Jean-Pierre Tytgat, and Anne Verbrugge (Leuven: University of Leuven Press, 2002), 346.

his wife and son resided at a separate address in Madrid, Philippe Charles ensured the maintenance of his noble environment, professing his innocence and honour whilst investing in the painting and furnishings that surrounded him.²³⁴ The *La Gloire Immortelle* series may well have been a part of this effort. Indeed, the tapestry series was inherited by Charles Philippe's son Philippe Francois d'Arenberg (1625-1674) who remained in Madrid after the death of his father to pursue a military career at the Spanish court.²³⁵

Although over time a number of the *La Gloire Immortelle* series were lost or destroyed, *Honour* remained treasured within the family until after the Second World War.²³⁶ So well preserved, the piece never required extensive reconstruction or reweaving.²³⁷ The careful maintenance of *Honour* may be linked to its particular gravitational pull on the body of the observer and the crucial formational power it held within the dynastic family. It may well also have been valued in the long term as a tool of social distinction, a medium that maintained and articulated the privileged nobility of the family. Indeed, even in the early twentieth century, the tapestry occupied a potent position over the

²³⁴ Charles Philippe d'Arenberg was accused of involvement in the rebellion of Flemish nobles in 1532 and of negotiating with Dutch rebels to secure the independence of Flanders from Spain. He was acquitted of treason although not before his death in 1540. Marcus Burke and Peter Cherry, *Collections of Painting in Madrid 1601-1755* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 1997), 347.

²³⁵ Burke and Cherry, *Collections of Painting in Madrid 1601-1755*, 345.

²³⁶ One piece was absent by 1616 and the other lost between 1649 and 1711. Delmarcel, *Los Honores*, 38-39.

²³⁷ Ibid, 38.

grand staircase in the Arenberg household in Brussels, now Egmont Palace.²³⁸

The location was liminal, just visible through the archways that lead to the staircase but not completely distinguishable from the polychrome marble walls until encountered up close. The tapestry negotiated the semi-public space, folding the Arenberg family into the interior of the building whilst distancing those outside.

Selvedge: The Weaving Virgin

Enclosing this chapter within two small and quiet depictions of weaving, Figure 25 depicts a tiny painting of the Virgin Mary ensconced within the illuminated initial D of 'Domine.' Her body begins the prayer, "Domine labia mea aperis" (Thou O Lord wilt open my lips) and heralds the start of the Hours of the Virgin within the fifteenth-century 'Hours of René of Anjou.'²³⁹ The figure is seated on a cushion behind a rudimentary loom, clasping a shuttle in her right hand and a ball of thread in her left. The iconological trope of the weaving Virgin appeared consistently from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, particularly in devotional literature.²⁴⁰ It originated from a story found in the *Protevangelium of James*, an

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ "Hours of René of Anjou," MS. Egerton 1070, f. 16r, British Library.

²⁴⁰ The weaving Virgin appears in at least two more prayer books housed in the British Library: *The Bedford Hours* BL Add. MS 18850 f. 32. r. and BL Harley MS 2915 f. 14v. In addition, the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York hold another five examples including PML MS. 197 Fol. 018r. Made in Paris c1500 this manuscript includes Mary weaving as part of an Annunciation scene. She also appeared in the medium of stained glass, wall painting, and ecclesiastical sculpture. Examples include the 'Maria als Tempeljungfrau' glass panel now in the Museum of Applied Arts in Vienna, Inv-Nr F.539; a fresco dated to 1504 in

Apocryphal Gospel that presented the narrative of Mary's birth and upbringing. Chapter ten of the *Protevangelium* describes how Mary, as a young Jewish woman, was tasked with weaving the veil for the temple. When hung inside, this veil separated and protected the inner sanctuary, the Holy of Holies, where the presence of God was understood to dwell.²⁴¹ According to Jewish traditions the veil was made of wool and linen woven from blue, purple and crimson threads.²⁴² It was 200m² and replaced twice a year, meaning that the eighty-two women needed to weave such a textile were required to be constantly industrious.²⁴³

The veil represented all that separated heaven and earth, it was, as Barker describes in her study of Jewish Temple symbolism, "the boundary between the visible world and the invisible, between time and eternity."²⁴⁴ The few priests permitted to pass through the fabric worked as mediators, "bringing the prayers and penitence of the people to God and the blessing and presence of God to his

the Church of St Primus and Felicianus, Slovenia; and a devotional statue of Mary in the Sacro Monte di Varello, in Piedmont.

²⁴¹ As an extension of this story the figure of Mary was also sometimes depicted spinning the thread for the veil. Gail McMurray Gibson, "The Thread of Life in the Hand of the Virgin," in *Equality in God's Image: Women in the Middle Ages*, ed. Julia Bolton Holloway, Jean Bechtold, and Constance S. Wright (Peter Lang: New York, 1990), 49.

²⁴² A reference to this can be found in Exodus 26: 31-33 (KJV).

²⁴³ Denis. R. McNamara, *Catholic Church Architecture and the Spirit of Liturgy* (Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, 2009), 52.

²⁴⁴ Margaret Barker, *The Gate of Heaven: The History and Symbolism of the Temple in Jerusalem* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008), 105.

people.”²⁴⁵ There was also an intensely bodily aspect to the Temple veil. Ancient Rabbinical Jewish records describe a legend in which a Roman General desecrated the Temple, slashing the veil with his sword only to be shocked when “miraculously blood spurted out.”²⁴⁶ For the weaving Virgin, who often appeared in the context of the Annunciation, the veil can be understood as a visible manifestation of the Christ Child growing inside her. Both are hinges between God and man formed by her body which, when complete, reveal and conceal the presence of the divine.²⁴⁷ The allusion between the Corpus Christi and temple veil is perhaps most potently expressed in Hebrews 10: 20 which describes “By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.” Here it is not the weaving but the unravelling that is brought to the fore, referencing the crucifixion and simultaneous tearing of the temple veil. Matthew 27: 51-52 reads “And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent.” The flesh and thread are revealed to be synchronised entities that, in their rupture, alter the relationship of privileged access to the divine.

The womb-like space illuminated in the capital of ‘Domine’ is an appropriate location for the Virgin and her dual weaving, her body making. In many ways the preceding investigation of body formation mirrors the processes of the Virgin Mary. The medium of tapestry was gestational in the production of bodies. It

²⁴⁵ Barker, *The Gate of Heaven*, 105.

²⁴⁶ Talmund-Mas Gittin 56b, ed. Rabbi Dr I. Epstein, trans. Maurice Simon, accessed Dec 14, 2017, http://www.come-and-hear.com/gittin/gittin_0.html.

²⁴⁷ McNamara, *Catholic Church Architecture*, 52.

wove together a highly charged environment of education and transformation, creating a noble form and enmeshing different strata of society into the unified fabric of a family body. The tapestry presented social hierarchies by folding around the privileged body that encountered it. It did so over generations, maintaining its material fertility as it continued the productive weaving process centuries after being cut from the loom.

Chapter Two.

The Judith and Holofernes Window.

Permeable Light and Self-reflexive Glass.

The north side of the ambulatory glazing of St John's Church in Gouda includes a much-restored *Annunciation* window (Figure 26).²⁴⁸ The stained glass is dominated by the biblical scene and centres around the appearance of the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary. The winged figure is depicted emerging from a billowing cloud whilst the seated Virgin, interrupted in the activity of reading, is situated under a leafy bower and beside a richly canopied bedchamber. Within the scene the word of God is pictured as light, a bold slice of yellow glass, cutting dramatically across the landscape to impregnate the body of the young woman. Here, as the narrative of the Annunciation signifies, the divine and mundane conflate and become manifest in the body of the unborn Christ child.²⁴⁹

Narratively, the visualisation of God as a beam of light emphasises the virginal conception of Christ, free from bodily sin. However, it also invites comparison

²⁴⁸ The window, although originally installed in the mid-sixteenth century, suffered storm damage and was replaced in 1655 with a second version of the original design. Henny Van Dolder-de Wit, "Through Storm and Shine: The Conservation History of the Seventh Window," in *The Seventh Window: The King's Window Donated by Philip II and Mary Tudor to Sint Janskerk in Gouda (1557)*, ed. Wim De Groot (Hilversum: Verloren Publishers, 2005), 252.

²⁴⁹ Luke 1: 26 (KJV).

between the Virgin Mary and the glass media in which she is portrayed. Light is demonstrated passing through both entities. A similar parallel was noted by the twelfth-century theologian, Bernard of Clairvaux, who describing the conception of Christ, stated:

Just as the brilliance of the sun fills and penetrates a glass window without damaging it, and pierces its solid form with imperceptible subtlety, neither hurting it when entering nor destroying it when emerging; thus the word of God, the splendour of the Father, entered the virgin chamber and then came forth from the closed womb.²⁵⁰

The affiliation of the Virgin with windows and light retained currency into the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, appearing in painted form within the Mérode altarpiece and Jan van Eyck's *Annunciation* panel (Figure 27). Here, the word of God is made visible as light in the form of seven thin rays of gold. These pass through a glass window, made up of a combination of clear and coloured panels, and into the interior of the church-like building, inside which the Virgin kneels. The central beam transmits the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove. It reaches the top of the Virgin's perfectly aligned head and disappears into her receptive body. There is a repetition within the panel composition; light passes through glass into the sacred space of the church and then again through the flesh of the Virgin and into the sacred space of her womb. There is a similar repetition in the *Annunciation* window in Gouda. Indeed, the meeting of the divine and mundane through light is simultaneously illustrated and enacted. Literal light streams in

²⁵⁰ "Sicut splendor solis vitrum absque laesione perfundit et penetrat eiusque soliditatem insensibili subtilitate pertraicit nec cum ingreditur, violat nec, cum egreditur, dissipat: sic Dei verbum, splendor Patris, virginum habitaculum adiit et inde clauso utero prodiit." Translation cited in Millard Meiss, "Light as Form and Symbol in Some Fifteenth-Century Paintings," *The Art Bulletin* 27, no. 3 (Sept. 1945): 176 and n 4.

and encompasses the body by passing through material, figural light. As the observer stands before the window, contemplating the permeability of the Virgin's body, they echo the narrative on display by encountering God within their own. Indeed, shaped by the concepts of penetration and impregnation, the experience can be understood as distinctly gendered. The window is imbued with the power to feminise as, through internal transformation, the body of the faithful observer carries Christ within and enters into a contemplative and lifelong spiritual gestation.

The process is described by the Thirteenth-century French canonist William Durandus in his treatise on Gothic church architecture *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum* written in Italy before 1286.²⁵¹

The glass windows in a church are Holy Scriptures, which expel the wind and the rain, that is all things hurtful, but transmit the light of the true Sun, that is, God, into the hearts of the faithful. These are wider within than without, because the mystical sense is the more ample, precedes the literal meaning. Also, by the windows the senses of the body are signified: which ought to be shut to the vanities of this world, and open to receive with all freedom spiritual gifts.²⁵²

²⁵¹ Although first published hundreds of years before the glazing project in Gouda under examination here, the treatise retained influence and remained in publication well into the sixteenth century. The continuing influence of Durandus' text is attested by the Italian Cardinal Charles Borromeo who produced a treatise applying the decrees of the Council of Trent to elements of church design. Matthew Gallegos convincingly argues that Borromeo, who was known to have owned an edition of Durandus' text, incorporated ideas from the *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum* into his own work. Matthew Gallegos, "Charles Borromeo and Catholic Tradition," *Sacred Architecture* 9 (2004), accessed Jan 16, 2018, http://www.sacredarchitecture.org/articles/charles_borromeo_and_catholic_tradition.

²⁵² William Durandus, *The Symbolism of churches and church ornaments : a translation of the first book of the Rationale divinorum officiorum written by*

Durandus' wider text interpreted the Gothic cathedral anthropomorphically, understanding many elements of the church interior in relation to Christ's body, a form allegorised as a temple in the Gospel of John.²⁵³ He aligned the chancel or altar of a church with the head of Christ and the transept with the hands or arms.²⁵⁴ In his discussion of windows Durandus drew more prominently on the tangible body of the worshipper in relationship with the glass. Indeed, he first aligned the architectural purpose of the glazing, the physical shelter it provided for the human body, with the spiritual protection offered by the Holy Scriptures. Next he described the spatial characteristics of glazing in relation to the body. Stained glass, activated by the light passing through its surface, is an indiscriminate medium. Light transcends the material boundaries set by the stone cill, jambs, and tracery. Colour pools onto the floor, creeps across walls and rests on any entity interrupting its path. The edges of the window stretch to include all manner of objects and bodies. Indeed, within this arrangement the body is overtly susceptible to the light passing through stained glass, this

William Durandus, trans. J. Mason Neale and B. Webb (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1893), 23.

²⁵³ "Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said to the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake about the temple of his body." John 2: 19-21 (KJV). Other Biblical references to the body or people of Christ as temple or architectural structure include 1Peter 2: 4; 1Corinthians 3: 9 and 16-17 and Ephesians 2: 20-21.

²⁵⁴ Peter Fingesten, "Topographical and Anatomical Aspects of the Gothic Cathedral," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 20, no. 1 (Autumn 1961): 13-14.

“cunning form of kinetic art.”²⁵⁵ It conflates and confuses literal and figurative bodies. It questions the material integrity of stone and flesh, proving neither capable of confining or obstructing the reaches and influence of the window when activated by light.

The narrative of the *Annunciation* window draws attention to the fundamentally corporal nature of the media, available to and dependent on bodily engagement for its full performance. It also reveals the self-reflexive abilities of stained glass, a medium capable of bringing into being the forms and processes it displays. As will be explored here, however, these capabilities were not restricted to the *Annunciation* narrative. Within the same building, St John’s Church in Gouda, the *Judith and Holofernes* (Figure 28) stained glass window worked similarly, displaying in the glass what it created in conjunction with human actors.

The *Judith* window was commissioned by the Countess Margaret de la Marck, head of the Arenberg family. It was executed by Dirck Crabeth and finally installed into the church in 1571. Despite the publication of several large volumes exploring the glazing scheme at Gouda, detailed analysis of the *Judith and Holofernes* window has been more limited. Within the catalogue of the windows produced by Xander van Eck, Chrinstine E. Coebergh-Surie and Andrea C. Gasten, the formal qualities of the *Judith* window are studied closely as part of

²⁵⁵ Lawrence Lee, George Seddon and Francis Stevens, *Stained Glass* (Crown Publishers: New York, 1976), 6.

the overall stained glass scheme of St John's Church.²⁵⁶ In addition, Xander van Eck has explored the window in relation to its neighbours and the personal situation of its donor, Margaret de la Marck (1527-1599).²⁵⁷ Both texts encounter interpretive problems. The narrative scene does not fit neatly into the themes of expectation and arrival detected elsewhere within the church. It is deemed "puzzling" as "it cannot be connected with [the] series in any way."²⁵⁸ Van Eck, in his independent study, focuses primarily on "how apt the choice of this scene was in the context of Margaretha's life and the role she felt she had to play in the society of her day."²⁵⁹ This approach offers an explanation for some of the more problematic elements of the glass, including expressions of violence and female authority. However, it does not consider the observer's relationship with the window and the narrative. It argues that the glass functions as a two-dimensional inert reflection to be read as opposed to a three-dimensional transmission and process to be experienced as argued here.

A more open-textured approach to the window reveals how, on numerous levels, it produced the social relationships it displayed. The window foregrounded materiality. It used objects as narrative tools, using the language of material and

²⁵⁶ Xander Van Eck, Christine E. Coebergh-Surie, and Andrea Gasten, *The Stained-glass windows in the Sint Janskerk at Gouda* (Amsterdam University Press: Amsterdam, 2002).

²⁵⁷ Xander Van Eck, "Siding with Philip II: Margaretha van der Marck's Donation of Dirk Crabeth's 'Judith and Holofernes' to Sint Janskerk in Gouda," *Simiolus* 34, no. 9 (2009): 66-84.

²⁵⁸ Eck, Coebergh-Surie, and Gasten, *The Stained-glass windows in the Sint Janskerk at Gouda*, 45.

²⁵⁹ Van Eck, "Siding with Philip II," 3.

commerce to socially position the Arenberg patron and the congregation, advertising, consolidating, and sacralising their shared trade bonds. Simultaneously, the window declared and confirmed the Arenbergs' place within the upper echelons of society, adjacent to the ruling authorities, kings and queens. All was done to a cadence of material service and personal sacrifice. The overall glazing program presented two competing models of authority, describing pre and post Reformation structures of power. The *Judith and Holofernes* window offered a median between the two, tempering the dichotomy of Catholic and Protestant design by displaying the complex social and material makeup of the commercially engaged noble family.

The Biblical Construction of the *Judith and Holofernes* Window

The stained glass window depicting the story of Judith slaying Holofernes in St John's church is divided horizontally into two distinct iconographic regions. The lower region of the window occupies about a third of the overall glazed space and depicts the donors of the work. On the left the kneeling figure of Margaret de la Marck is shown with her patron saint, St Catherine, who stands closely behind. On the right of the window Jean de Ligne (1525-1568), Margaret's husband is depicted kneeling with the figure of his patron saint, St John. Two large coats of arms are positioned above each of the kneeling figures and the outermost panels of the lower region, on both sides, are filled with a double band of heraldry.²⁶⁰

²⁶⁰ As described by Christoffel Pierson in his late eighteenth-century guide to the windows of Gouda, the arms accompanying the Judith window are as follows: Baden, Bergen, Halewyn, Zevenbergen, Barbacon, St Simon, Gistelle (?), Vianen, Abbeville, Brabant, Latrimouille, Croy, Rely, Sabrugge, Crequi, Emskerk, Mark,

The upper two thirds of the windows are devoted to the narration of the Apocryphal story of Judith which describes the downfall of the Assyrian General Holofernes who, under the rule of King Nebuchadnezzar, laid siege to the Israelite lands. The text describes how the General moved against the mountain town of Bethulia, capturing their water supply “so shall thirst kill them, and they shall give up their city.”²⁶¹ Judith, a wealthy widow from Bethulia came to the aid of the population by developing a cunning plan. The text reads:

[Judith] pulled off the sackcloth which she had on, and put off the garments of her widowhood, and washed her body all over with water, and anointed herself with precious ointment, and braided the hair of her head, and put on a tire upon it, and put on her garments of gladness, wherewith she was clad during the life of Manasses her husband. And she took sandals upon her feet, and put about her bracelets, and her chains, and her rings, and her earrings, and all her ornaments, and decked herself bravely, to allure the eyes of all men that should see her.²⁶²

After a period of prayer Judith left the city gates and was captured by the Assyrian army. She feigned defection, claiming to have information for Holofernes that would aid his destruction of the town. Once presented to the General, Judith spent several days in his company, charming him with her beauty and wisdom. She was then invited to a splendid banquet after which she found

Egmont, Monfort, Bergen, Bochauk (?), Kaleuburgh, Naaldwyk, Sevenbergen, Vernenburg, Meurs, Rotfelaar, St Simon, Flanders, Ville, Raphorst, Vianen. Christoffel Pierson, *Explanation of the famous and renowned glas-work, or painted windows, in the fine and eminent church at Gouda. For the use and commodity of both Inhabitans, and Foreigners that come to see this artificial Work* (Gouda: John Van der Klos, 1790), 12.

²⁶¹ Judith 7: 13 King James Version with Apocrypha.

²⁶² Judith 10: 3-6 (KJVA).

herself alone with the unconscious Holofernes who had passed out from drinking.²⁶³

So all went forth and none was left in the bedchamber, neither little nor great. Then Judith, standing by his bed, said in her heart, O Lord God of all power, look at this present upon the works of mine hands for the exaltation of Jerusalem. For now is the time to help thine inheritance, and to execute thine enterprizes to the destruction of the enemies which are risen against us.

Then she came to the pillar of the bed, which was at Holofernes' head, and took down his fauchion from thence, And approached to his bed, and took hold of the hair of his head, and said, Strengthen me, O Lord God of Israel, this day. And she smote twice upon his neck with all her might, and she took away his head from him. And tumbled his body down from the bed, and pulled down the canopy from the pillars; and anon after she went forth, and gave Holofernes his head to her maid.²⁶⁴

Judith and her maidservant then crept back into Bethulia where the head was displayed on the town walls at dawn.²⁶⁵ The enemy troops, seeing their leader hung dead above them, fled in confusion.²⁶⁶

The craftsman and artist responsible for translating the Judith narrative into glazed form was the church warden and glass painter Dirck Crabeth (1501-1574), a notable public figure within Gouda and the wider northern Netherlands. Along with his brother, Wouter Crabeth, Dirck followed the lead of his father into the family trade and enjoyed a successful thirty-year career producing

²⁶³ Judith 11: 12 (KJVA).

²⁶⁴ Judith 13: 4-9 (KJVA).

²⁶⁵ Judith 14: 1 (KJVA).

²⁶⁶ Judith 15: 1-2 (KJVA).

monumental and domestic glass in the area.²⁶⁷ His importance is evidenced by his significant involvement in the restoration of St John's Church following a huge fire sparked by lightning striking the steeple at nine o'clock on the 12th January 1552. According to the Dutch painter and Gouda inhabitant Christoffel Pierson, the ignition appeared "to the sight just like the twinkling of a star."²⁶⁸ The damage to the Church was extensive and only portions of the building, including part of the basilica choir, remained intact. Despite the enormity of the project, the churchwardens immediately began an energetic restoration and fund raising campaign and the townspeople helped to remove rubble with their bare hands, rallied by the sounds of pipes and drums.²⁶⁹ Regular church funds were bolstered by additional collections and appeals to the Governors of the town Guilds for donations of money, silver and jewels. In addition, the wardens mortgaged property, organised lotteries, and benefited from the introduction of legalisation that sentenced persons convicted of crimes to contribute a certain number of bricks to the project.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁷ Zsuzsanna Van Ruyvan-Zeyman, Arjan R. de Koomen, Antonie L. Hage and Jan Piet Filedt Kok, *The Cartoons of the Sint-Janskerk in Gouda* (Delft: Eburon Publishers, 2011), 19 and 20.

²⁶⁸ Pierson, *Explanation of the famous and renowned glas-work*, A2.

²⁶⁹ Bianca van der Berg, "Turbulent Times for Sint Janskerk in Gouda. The Story of the Building Campaign and the Reconstruction After the Great Fire of 1552," in *The Seventh Window: The King's Window Donated by Philip II and Mary Tudor to Sint Janskerk in Gouda (1557)*, ed. Wim De Groot (Hilversum: Verloren Publishers, 2005), 86.

²⁷⁰ Koen Goudriaan, "City and Sovereign: The Pragmatic Relations Between Gouda and its Monarchs Charles V and Philip II, 1549-1559," in *The Seventh Window: The King's Window Donated by Philip II and Mary Tudor to Sint Janskerk in Gouda (1557)*, ed. Wim De Groot (Hilversum: Verloren Publishers, 2005), 61.

Dirck Crabeth travelled extensively to recruit donors for new stained glass windows for the church, all of which had become 'vacant' at once. In 1553 he journeyed as part of a weighty Gouda delegation to Utrecht to enlist donors from amongst the higher clergy.²⁷¹ The churchwardens acted as agents, approaching potential patrons, contracting artists, and dispatching them to draw portraits and coats of arms. Nine windows were donated by clergy, two from the regent families of the area, the houses of Hensbeeck and Heye, and two smaller lights were sponsored by the Gouda guilds.²⁷² In customary fashion, the heads of state were also approached as potential benefactors and, subsequently, King Philip II and his representative in the Netherlands, Margaret of Parma (1522-1586), funded the two largest and most prestigious windows in the scheme. The remaining donors were sourced from the high nobility and included the Abbess Elburga van Boetzelaar, Duke Philippe de Ligne, and, of course, the Count Jean de Ligne and his wife Margaret de la Marck.

The Gouda windows represented the culmination of Dirck Crabeth's life work and the *Judith* design was to be the last he produced before his death in 1574. Whilst in some large glazing workshops the process of creating a window was divided between several craftsmen, in Gouda, the Crabeth brothers appear to have been involved at every level of production. Dirck was responsible for the

²⁷¹ Eck, Coebergh-Surie, and Gasten, *The Stained-glass windows in the Sint Janskerk at Gouda*, 21.

²⁷² Gouda citizens and civic authorities also contributed towards the glass. A. A. J. Rijkssen, *Glorious Glass of St John's Gouda* (Gouda: Fonds Gouds Glazen, 1900), 4-17 and Eck, Coebergh-Surie, and Gasten, *The Stained-glass windows in the Sint Janskerk at Gouda*, 22.

preliminary designs, working drawings and execution of the window whilst his assistants helped primarily with the technical aspects of cutting, firing and installing the glass.²⁷³ When producing the design for the window, it is likely that Crabeth drew on contemporary prints and pattern sheets. The ornate bedposts carved into winged busts depicted in the glass bear the traces of Vredeman de Vries furniture models (Figure 29) whilst the theatrical armour on display may well have been lifted from a different 'Panoplia' series by the same artist. In addition, the *Judith and Holofernes* series of 1564 by Maarten Van Heemskerck is one source that, according to Xander van Eck, Crabeth "evidently knew well."²⁷⁴ The sixth scene in the series depicts Judith frozen in the act of beheading Holofernes in a tent remarkably similar to that portrayed by Crabeth in the foreground of his window design (Figure 30). The open door of the bell-shaped canopy similarly sweeps down to divide the composition whilst the tiger heads that trim the perimeter of the tent can also be seen echoed in the window. Other similarities include the layout of the tent, positioning of chests in the foreground and general close attention paid to the many details of the chaotic space. Unlike the contemporary print series, however, Crabeth did not use a succession of sequential scenes to narrate the story. Instead it is the profusion of material objects that control the plot. Clothing, weapons, furniture and crockery generate and deconstruct spaces of interpretation, make visual associations across the glass, and even trigger emotional responses from the observer.

²⁷³ The standard and intellectual quality of Dirck's designs suggests that he had been highly educated, receiving instruction in Latin that enabled him to produce the text for banderols present in many of the Gouda windows. Eck, Coebergh-Surie, and Gasten, *The Stained-glass windows in the Sint Janskerk at Gouda*, 54.

²⁷⁴ Eck, "Siding with Philip II," 3.

Material Narration

As the only substantial figures to populate the composition, the eye is first drawn to Judith and her maidservant in the right side of the window (Figure 31). Judith is shown with a raised sword, indicative of the violent act she has just committed. The blade frames her face, distinguishing it from the surroundings and forming a mirror image to the body of her maidservant whose posture is turned inwards and face similarly framed by the diagonal edge of a nearby tent. Both women look down and, subsequently, the observer follows their sight line to the decapitated head of Holofernes as it is placed into a waiting food bag. The blind eyes of the head stare across the composition towards the corpse from which it has been cleaved.

The broken body of Holofernes is shown next to an overturned flagon, discarded on the rocky ground (Figure 32). Lid hinged back, contents drained well away, the hollow mouth of the vessel gapes towards the observer. Immediately beside the pitcher the severed neck of Holofernes' corpse confronts the eye in a similarly direct manner. Indeed, viewing this panel from the church floor, the observer looks up, directly 'into' the void necks of the pitcher and throat. The exposed oesophagus and spinal cord are visually shocking in their brutality but equally in their vacuity. This violent upheaval to the body on display allows an unnatural visual access to sealed, internal spaces, a notion made ever more apparent by the adjacent containers and trunk that retain their ordered solidity. There is no sign of crimson blood, only the yellowed morbid pallor of the

inanimate flesh. The body and flagon are conflated into a terrible signifier of death and defeat, hollow vessels redundant and abandoned in the dust.

The clear vertical thrust of Holofernes' spear directs the eye from his unnaturally piled limbs, up the composition, and into the tent (Figure 33). Here a table is laden with the remnants of a feast, half empty cups, plates still bearing food, and discarded utensils. Golden candleholders and wax candles, still lit, suggest activity only recently abandoned. To the left, the crumpled sheets and blankets spread across the bed trace the intoxicated body of the General, his seduction, and eventual descent into drunken unconscious. The grisaille creases and folds visually echo the treatment of Holofernes' dead flesh below, rippled with twisted and defunct muscles.

These disordered forms contrast sharply with the ceremonial armour, complete with moulded breastplate and feathered helmet, shown to the left of the bed. The design of the attire follows contemporary illustrations of classical military dress, including the Roman captain found within Lucas de Heere's Flemish costume manual, *'Théâtre de tous les peuples et nations de la terre avec leurs habits, et ornements diuers,'* produced between 1564 and 1584 (Figure 34). Such armour aligned the wearer with the great imperial heroes of the past. It monumentalised the body, grafting on a prosthesis of highly defined muscle. Indeed, Holofernes' armour is greatly suggestive of rank and authority. It posits the General as a powerful leader, soldier and triumphant war hero. Yet, as Carolyn Springer argues, "armour is simultaneously an affirmation of power and an admission of

vulnerability.”²⁷⁵ As an item of clothing it houses concepts of both physical strength and anxieties concerning bodily integrity. Holofernes’ armour describes this conflict with clarity. The breastplate is intact but empty, a false, hollow façade rendered useless and inert. The artifice is further revealed in juxtaposition with the crumpled corpse below, resounding Holofernes’ defeat around the space.

Tracing a correlation between beheading and castration became, Kevin R Brine argues, “the most popular reading of Judith iconography in the twentieth century.”²⁷⁶ It followed the example set by Freud in his 1918 essay *The Taboo of Virginity* in which he describes Holofernes’ decapitation as an act of sexual rejection as opposed to Jewish patriotism.²⁷⁷ The concept has undergone much scholarly critique in relation to literary and artistic manifestations of the narrative.²⁷⁸ Within the *Judith and Holofernes* window however, it can be argued that the loss of masculine potency is not primarily communicated through the act of decapitation/castration. Instead, a form of sartorial iconoclasm takes place.

²⁷⁵ Carolyn Springer, *Armour and Masculinity in the Italian Renaissance* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), Introduction.

²⁷⁶ Kevin Brine, “The Judith Project,” in *The Sword of Judith: Judith Studies Across the Disciplines*, ed. Kevin Brine, Elena Ciletti and Henrike Lähnemann (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2010), 8.

²⁷⁷ Sigmund Freud, *The Psychology of Love* (New York: Penguin Modern Classics, 2006), 275 analysed in Ann Pellegrini, *Performance Anxieties: Staging Psychoanalysis, Staging Race* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 33.

²⁷⁸ G. J. Taylor, “Judith and the Infant Hercules: Its Iconography,” *American Imago* 41, no. 2 (1984): 101-15; Laurie Schneider, “Donatello and Caravaggio: The Iconography of Decapitation,” *American Imago* 33, no.1 (1976): 76-91; and Mary Jacobus, *Reading Women* (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 1986).

This is achieved not only through the visual alignment of the hollow armour with the broken body but also with the living, powerful torso of Judith. The widow's quasi-classical robes and Holofernes' vacant armour are both rendered in bluish purple tones and crossed with ornate gold metalwork, studded with pearls and decorative heads. Both are warriors. But as the eye passes back and forth between them it becomes overtly apparent that they have not been rendered as equals.

Judith is shown wearing an elaborate headdress and layers of golden jewellery similar in form to that portrayed in the portraits of the same character, painted by Lucas Cranach the Elder in the 1530s. Cranach produced several *Judith* paintings in this era, modelling his figures and their attire on the high fashion worn by aristocratic women of the Saxon court. The ostentatious collars and chains worn by the version of *Judith* now preserved in the Metropolitan Museum in New York (Figure 35) were particular to the Germanic nobility. The bound up hair, fixed inside a 'calotte' of gold and silver, studded with pearls, was also typical of the style worn by married women.²⁷⁹ The glazed Judith sports a comparably elaborate style. However her clothing does not follow the expected attire for German married women of the era and instead hints at a more classical and overtly sexual style of dress. Indeed, Judith's skirts cling to her lower body,

²⁷⁹ Maryan Wynn Ainsworth, "Lucas Cranach the Elder," in *German Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1350-1600*, ed. Maryan Wynn Ainsworth, Joshua Waterman, and Timothy H. Johnson (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art Press, 2013), 63.

articulating the swell of the belly, further framed by the protruding hem of her green undershirt. Below this, the fabric catches in between Judith's legs, creasing to form a distinct shadow. This serves to emphasise her groin and draw clear attention to the presence of the female body barely disguised beneath the fabric. Unlike the façade of masculinity moulded into Holofernes' armour, this body is whole, active and potent. Crabeth skilfully contrasts the apparent transparency of textiles with the solidity of armour, playing with the illusion of space and layers of fabric. He subverts the concept of the vulnerable interior and protective exterior. Judith's body is victorious in its discernable corporality, the translucence of her sartorial costume indicative of bodily integrity and vitality over the husk-like remains left by Holofernes.

As the eye moves further up the window, material juxtapositions continue to narrate the story. Judith and her maidservant are depicted returning to the city. Their bodies are too small to be clearly intelligible to the viewer below. However their success is alluded to in the contrast between the roof of the General's fabric tent and the solid stone towers and brickwork walls of Bethulia. One is transitory, the other steadfast. One is surmounted by a flag, the other brandishes the decapitated head of the Assyrian General.

The profusion of objects that make up the *Judith and Holofernes* narrative use and celebrate materiality in a way not seen in any of the other windows within the same church. Positioned on the left side of the *Judith* scene is another window produced by the Crabeth family. It was donated by Elburga van den Boetzelaer, Abbess of the Benedictine abbey for noble women at Rijnsburg and

clearly illustrated in an engraving made by Pieter Tangé (Figure 36). The Abbess is presented kneeling in devotional prayer whilst, above her, a grand biblical scene is illustrated in the glass. The tableau on display is taken from the book of 1 Kings 10:1-10 and shows the Queen of Sheba arriving at the court of King Solomon to test his wisdom. Despite the luxury and wealth implied by the meeting of these two powerful monarchs and their entourages, very little in the way of material regalia is included in the design. Indeed, the foreground of the scene in which the protagonists meet includes a sizeable area of empty tiled floor. The story is instead primarily communicated through the gesture and interaction of many figures within a grand classical architectural context. To the right hand side of the *Judith* window, the *King's Window* commissioned by Philip II stretches twenty metres into the heights of the transept (Figure 37). This window features two biblical scenes, an Old Testament depiction of Solomon and a New Testament Last Supper. Baskets, vessels, and animals appear within the composition. However, unlike in the *Judith* window, their narrative importance is superseded by the textural banderoles that unfurl above the figures.

Further evidence that material was deliberately foregrounded in the narrative composition of the *Judith and Holofernes* glass is found in the window vidimus (Figure 38). This final proof copy of the design would have been shown to the donor for approval before the glazing work began. Although there is no evidence to confirm Margaret de la Marck's hand in the design, there are a number of differences between this image and the scene portrayed by the cartoon and window that suggest she, or at least her representative, altered the flavour of the final piece. The changes mainly concern the activities of the soldiers who, in the

vidimus, all appear to be involved in military action, mostly tending to cannons directed towards the walled city. In the cartoon and final glazed design, however, the men are shown cooking on an open fire, baking bread, playing dice and drinking inside their tents (Figure 39 and 40).

The distinction between the two designs is particularly important to note given the tendency of previous scholarship to directly align the military activities of the *Judith* narrative with Margaret's own situation in the context of the Dutch Revolt. Van Eck argues that "the Judith window in Gouda can be seen [...] above all as one of the first truly Counter-Reformation, monumental works of art in a Northern Netherlandish church."²⁸⁰ The scene is "as violent as the age in which it was made."²⁸¹ Indeed, Van Eck continues, "the important role accorded to the siege of Bethulia in the Judith window reflected the reality of war in the Netherlands at the time, with towns being besieged every day."²⁸² It is certainly true that Margaret exercised martial force around the time the window was installed in 1571, three years after the death of her husband Jean de Ligne. The Count was killed whilst in command at the Battle of Heiligerlee, fighting against invading Protestant Dutch rebels.²⁸³ Soon into her widowhood, Margaret was again forced to endure the destructive powers of the Dutch forces as her ancestral home in Arenberg came under threat of siege. In 1568 Lodewijk of

²⁸⁰ Eck, "Siding with Philip II," 8.

²⁸¹ Ibid, 3.

²⁸² Ibid, 9.

²⁸³ Eck, Coebergh-Surie, and Gasten, *The Stained-glass windows in the Sint Janskerk at Gouda*, 124.

Nassau marched to Arenberg seeking revenge for the death of his brother, Adolf of Nassau, who had also died at Heiligerlee at the hands of Jean de Ligne's army. Margaret's small garrison was no contest for the aggressive Nassau troops and she was forced to enter into negotiations. When Lodewijk demanded 10,000 guilders as ransom, the Countess immediately appealed to Emperor Maximilian II who responded favourably, rescinding the fine. Two years later this ruling was confirmed, although not before Margaret had taken the opportunity to reinforce her castle walls and increase the number of her troops.²⁸⁴ In addition to her Arenberg family seat, numerous assets came under threat of pillage including, for example, the provinces of Terschelling, Honselersdijck and Oosthuizen. Many more of Margaret's lands were confiscated by Dutch rebels, rendering them inaccessible to her for long periods of time.²⁸⁵

Van Eck acknowledges the differences between the vidimus and finished design, but he dismisses them simply as "novel features in the visual tradition which brought home the daily reality of a siege."²⁸⁶ However, it can be alternatively argued that it was unlikely that Margaret would have approved of a design that rooted the family in a period of fracture, vulnerability, and uncertainty. It seems odd to consider that she wished to celebrate the everyday activities of the

²⁸⁴ Eck, "Siding with Philip II," 9 and C. Maes-De Smet, "Margaretha van der Marck- Arenberg (1527-1599)," in *Arenberger Frauen: Fürstinnen, Herzoginnen, Ratgeberinnen, Mütter. Frauenochicksale im Hause Arenberg in Sieben Jahrhunderten*, ed. Peter Neu (Koblenz: Verlag der Landesarchivverwaltung Rheinland-Pfalz, 2006), 38-41.

²⁸⁵ Maes-De Smet, "Margaretha van der Marck- Arenberg (1527-1599)," 50.

²⁸⁶ Eck, "Siding with Philip II," 10.

soldiers who besieged her property. Stained glass windows, although fragile, were built as part of structures that lasted centuries within the social and geographical landscape. Their forms required similar perspective. In the (literal) light of this, the *Judith and Holofernes* window should be understood in relation to much more long-term ambitions. It used a dialect developed over hundreds of years of production and trade, celebrating commerce in a way that transmitted it above the mundane interactions of daily life.

Sacralising Trade Bonds

Gouda was one of the great exporters of the sixteenth century, occupying a crucial trading position on the river Gouwe, twenty miles east of Delft and southwest of Utrecht. The city maintained centuries-old business in brewing and rope making.²⁸⁷ Indeed by 1500, Gouda was exporting ninety per cent of its beer and, by mid century, was responsible (along with Delft and Haarlem) for the lion's share of the 1.3 million barrels produced in Holland.²⁸⁸ The rope making activities drew on local resources of hemp and ensured the area a significant role

²⁸⁷ Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure, and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 275 and Clé Lesger, *The Rise of the Amsterdam Market and Information Exchange: Merchants, Commercial Expansion and Change in the Spatial Economy of the Low Countries, c. 1550-1630* (Aldershot: Routledge, 2006), 25.

²⁸⁸ Richard W. Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 82.

in the fishing industries of Holland and Zeeland.²⁸⁹ Town revenues were further supplemented by tolls on Gouda's much-used waterways.²⁹⁰

The Arenberg family traded extensively from within this Netherlandish commercial network. The family made local agreements concerning the duties on certain regional wine and beer, which, it was decided, should contribute to the finances of Zevenbergen, one of their own ancestral holdings.²⁹¹ Records also include notes of cloth, fish and other foodstuffs purchased in Naaldwijk and Honselersdijk, textiles imported from Polsbroek, paintings traded in Amsterdam, and tapestries and jewellery sourced from Antwerp.²⁹² Surviving documents list numerous trade interactions in which produce, described as "wonderful,"²⁹³ was bought and sold by Margaret de la Marck, through her steward Gerard Pels. In addition, there is a large volume of paperwork, letters, acts, and ordinances that attest to Margaret's role as material benefactor within the area. As landowner she oversaw the repair of roofs, maintained agricultural buildings, funded schools, and staffed ecclesiastical institutions. She consistently provided finances and goods and tried to maintain peace in the region, noteworthy given that her

²⁸⁹ Lesger, *The Rise of the Amsterdam Market*, 25.

²⁹⁰ Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 275.

²⁹¹ RAWB 0600 'Stadsbestuur Zevenbergen, 1485-1810' Inventaris: 1.3.3 'Tot de heer' 830.

²⁹² Peter Neu, *Margaretha von der Marck: Landesmutter, Geschäftsfrau, Katholikin* (Enghien: Arenberg-Stiftung, Essen and the Arenberg Archives and Cultural Centre, 2013), 50 and 103.

²⁹³ RAWB 0600 'Stadsbestuur Zevenbergen, 1485-1810' Inventaris: 9.2 Bijlage REGESTENLIJST 189. Letter dated 1587 Maart 30 (op casteel van Zevenbergen).

staunch Catholicism was not shared by many of her tenants in areas gradually turning towards Protestantism.²⁹⁴ This is most clearly evidenced in documents stored in the Regionaal Archief of West Brabant (RAWB). These show the concerted effort of the Countess to safeguard the neutrality of certain Northern areas, including Zevenbergen, long into the future. The documents date from the second half of the sixteenth century to well into seventeenth and carry the names of Alexander Farnese Duke of Parma (1545-1592), Charles von Mansfeld (1543-1595), Archduke Albert (1559-1621), Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia (1566-1633), Marquis Ambrogio Spinola (1569-1530) and finally Count Henrik van den Bergh (1573-1638).²⁹⁵ The influence of this succession of sovereign and military figures was supposed to guarantee the welfare of Arenberg land and inhabitants during and long after Margaret's lifetime.

The *Judith and Holofernes* window similarly worked to maintain, over generations, the social position of the Arenberg family within the northern Netherlandish market. By foregrounding materiality the window spoke in the enduring commercial language of the region. The scene monumentalised everyday foodstuffs, linen, beer, metalwork and carpentry. It raised mundane and transitory objects into the realm of biblical history and narrative, not only inserting them into the visual scene but also giving them a voice with which to tell the story. The enduring medium suggested and confirmed the stability of the

²⁹⁴ RAWB 0661 'Beschrijving van het archief: Hervormde gemeente Zevenbergen, 1610-1945.'

²⁹⁵ RAWB 0600 'Stadsbestuur Zevenbergen, 1485-1810' Inventaris: 2.1 Residentie, poorter-en burgerschap. No. 851.

economy and material welfare of the populace. It consolidated, in practically permanent form, the bonds between landowner and tenant, between producer and consumer, agent and customer. Positioned towards the front of the north side of the nave, the window occupied a place directly visible to the congregation, in line with the laity as opposed to the clergy. Landowners, tradesmen, craftsmen, workers, all had access to the scene. The social ties and trade bonds that structured the community resounded back and forth from the gathered people to the glass.

Notably, in the celebration and elevation of the material, the window directly opposed the iconography of William of Orange's commission, located across the nave and transept of the church. Whilst no effort appears to have ever been made to link the two designs, their respective treatment of material goods in a market town context is important. Donated in 1561, a decade before Margaret's commission, William's design was based on the story of the Purification of the Temple (Figure 41). The narrative, recorded in a number of Gospels, appears in John 2: 13-16:

And the Jews' Passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, "Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise."

The window displays Jesus within a diverse crowd of figures. His arm is raised in the act of whipping whilst overturned tables litter the ground at his feet. Caged animals, livestock, chests, and ornate furniture, similar in form to those within

the *Judith* window, are shown in the foreground. The shocked crowd is made up of men and women of different races, some dressed in furs and others in gold studded cloth. Perhaps commissioned as a signifier of change, of old and corrupt practices giving way to new paradigms, the window may have, nevertheless, appeared problematic to a commercially orientated congregation. Trade and wealth is shown to jar with Christian teaching. The *Judith* design, in its complete reversal of this attitude, might be understood as a subtle yet potent means by the Catholic patrons of casting the Dutch rebel as an inappropriate leader for the Gouda townspeople.²⁹⁶ Indeed, through the *Judith* window the commercial population of the town were built into the architecture of the Church. They were not only crucial to the physical structure that provided shelter from the elements but also spiritually protected from “all things hurtful,”²⁹⁷ as described by Durandus.

The inherent value in the *Judith* window also surpassed that of Orange. The complexity of the design comprised thousands of individual pieces of glass, painstakingly painted to emulate a rich variety of material substances. The profusion of forms implied a great many preparatory drawings, panels, and design arrangements involved in the making process. Even centuries later, the

²⁹⁶ The donor’s register for William of Orange’s window was never completed as by the time the biblical scene was in place, he had risen against Philip II and been forced into exile. The heraldry of the Gouda town council, responsible for commissions elsewhere within the church, filled the register in his absence. Wim de Groot, “Habsburg Patronage and the Particular Situation of the Emperor’s and King’s Windows During the Dutch Revolt,” in *The Seventh Window: The King’s Window Donated by Philip II and Mary Tudor to Sint Janskerk in Gouda (1557)*, ed. Wim De Groot (Hilversum: Verloren Publishers, 2005), 150-151 n 23.

²⁹⁷ Durandus, *The Symbolism of churches and church ornaments*, 23.

labour and time invested into the piece is self-evident and available for comparison with other windows. Thus, the rich form and content elide. The window worked as a valuable material in itself, sacralising the makers, the making process and all the objects it portrayed. Indeed, as light pooled through the glass, the objects were made at once visible and holy. They transmitted “the light of the true Sun, that is, God,”²⁹⁸ into the church interior and “into the hearts of the faithful.”²⁹⁹ Textiles, crockery, metalwork, and clothing became mediators of divine encounter. The glazing responded to the endless cycle of day and night, rising and receding light. It echoed and anticipated the population as they entered and left the church, engaging in the rhythmic spirituality of Catholic mass, daily prayer, weekly services, and seasonal festivals.

The glazing also worked as part of the Eucharistic experience. It pre-empted and continued the transformation of the material to immaterial, the shift from mundane to holy, taking place at the altar. The glazed donors, knelt in perpetual veneration, looked in the direction of the site of transubstantiation. They were united with the congregation through this dual act of divine encounter, communion through both the glass and the ingestion of the sacred host. Furthermore the glazed portraits, when activated by divine light, become vessels of holiness in themselves, through which the observer could access God. The medium established the Arenbergs as conduits to Christian salvation, enhancing their role within the community as material providers with that of spiritual benefactors.

²⁹⁸ Durandus, *The Symbolism of churches and church ornaments*, 23.

²⁹⁹ Ibid, 23.

Service, Sacrifice, and Social Positioning within the Glazing Program

Whilst binding the Arenberg family in perpetual relationship with the trading community that made up St John's congregation, the *Judith and Holofernes* window simultaneously situated the noble clan amongst the upper echelons of Netherlandish society. The pre-Reformation glazing program as a whole constructed a community of nuns, knights, clergy, countesses, civic authorities, regents, kings and queens. Within the church these figures knelt together in a line of endless veneration, hindered neither by distance nor death. In addition, a secondary narrative of social connections was articulated through the donors' respective relationships with the biblical scenes presented above their heads.

As clearly shown in the engraving by Pieter Tangé, the body of the Abbess Elburga van den Boetzelaer (1506-1568) kneels directly below the Queen of Sheba in her stained glass window. The staff, held in Elburga's right hand, directs the eye up from her lowly position towards the standing figure of the Queen. Their bodies are the only two large figures within the entire section of the glass light. Thus visually the two women are united and, as a result, the Abbess participates in the biblical narrative by proxy. Philip II's window, positioned on the other side of the *Judith and Holofernes* design, makes a parallel allusion between the Spanish monarch and King Solomon. The equation between the Old Testament father and son, the Kings David and Solomon, with Charles V and

Philip II is made explicit in the textural banderoles included within the design.³⁰⁰ The symbolic elision of Kings was a well-established and multifaceted trope in Habsburg culture long before the glazing project at Gouda was begun and continued long after.³⁰¹ In 1559 Lucas de Heere, for example, produced a painting of the Queen of Sheba for St Bavó's Cathedral in Ghent. Surrounding the image, an accompanying text read, "in the same manner, another Solomon, Philip, pious jewel among kings, gave here and elsewhere amazing examples of his wisdom."³⁰² Thus, through her window, the Abbess participated in a thinly disguised act of veneration directed towards Philip II as head of the Spanish Habsburgs and the dominant authority.

Similarly within the *Judith* window the donors' register and the biblical narrative are visually linked through the alignment of the female protagonists, Judith and Margaret de la Marck. Indeed, the panels depicting the head of Judith (Figure 42) and that of Margaret (Figure 43) are remarkably similar in composition. Both are framed by the curved edge of an object raised above the body. For Judith, it is the

³⁰⁰ Banderoles in the upper register include the text "ecce salomo heic" (behold Solomon is here) and in the middle register "Philippe qui videt mi videt et Patrem" (Philip, he that hath seen me hath seen the Father). Groot, *The Seventh Window*, 115 and 145.

³⁰¹ Juan Raffael Cuadra Blanco, "King Philip of Spain as Solomon the Second: The Origins of Solomonism of the Escorial in the Netherlands," in *The Seventh Window: The King's Window Donated by Philip II and Mary Tudor to Sint Janskerk in Gouda (1557)*, ed. Wim De Groot (Hilversum: Verloren Publishers, 2005), 169-180.

³⁰² Colle siona soli veniens nicaulo sabaei, spem super et famam grandia miror ait, alter item salomon, pia regum gemma philippus, ut foris hic sophiae mira theatra dedit. Translation cited in Cuadra Blanco, "King Philip of Spain as Solomon the Second," n 30.

blade of the sword she wields whilst Margaret is enclosed by a fragment of wheel, held by her patron saint St Catherine protectively over the family crest. This repeated arrangement creates a distinct pattern. However the relationship generated here is more complex than that manufactured between the adjacent Abbess Elburga van den Boetzelaer, Queen of Sheba, Solomon, and Philip II. Judith is a more problematic character who, in the sixteenth century, was interpreted in numerous and contradictory ways. As Ciletti and Lähnemann have argued, the “inherent moral ambivalence of the figure of Judith, [...] could be and was shaped into whatever persona was required.”³⁰³ There was a malleability to her body, a flexibility that allowed each cultural interpretation room to affix its own agenda.

For some, Judith was used as a model of intelligence and cunning. Agrippa’s *Declamation on the Nobility and Pre eminence of the Female Sex*, first published in Latin in Antwerp 1529, praised her for the shrewd utilisation of feminine charm:

Once Holofernes was lulled to sleep [...] she struck him in neck and cut off his head. What more wicked council I implore you, what more cruel trap, what more deceiving treachery could be imagined? And it is for this that the Scripture blesses, praises, and exalts her and that the iniquity of a woman was judged infinitely superior to the good actions of a man.³⁰⁴

³⁰³ Elena Ciletti and Henrike Lähnemann, “Judith in the Christian Tradition,” in *The Sword of Judith: Judith Studies Across the Disciplines*, ed. Kevin Brine, Elena Ciletti and Henrike Lähnemann (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2010), 58.

³⁰⁴ Henricus Cornelius Agrippa, *Declamation on the Nobility and Pre eminence of the Female Sex*, trans. Albert Rabil (Chacago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 68.

Simultaneously, there was a “patristic tradition of celebrating Judith for her temperance, fasting, prudence, prayer, and, above all, chastity.”³⁰⁵ In this vein of interpretation, “it was her return to a reclusive life of ascetic piety and her spurning of suitors that were held up for approbation.”³⁰⁶ Erasmus’ treatise *De Vidua Christiana* of 1529, dedicated to Mary of Hungary, explicitly praised Judith as a model for Catholic women:

But what Judith did to Holofernes, let all widows do unto Satan, who never ceases to mount the direst of perils against the holy city, which is the church, and against the people of God, who are all those who wish to ‘live piously in Christ Jesus...’³⁰⁷

The advice of Erasmus positioned Judith not simply as a behavioural exemplar but also as a figure for daily spiritual contemplation. “First of all, let us contemplate Judith, that glorious ornament to all widows, and not only a source of glory, but a fine example as well.”³⁰⁸ He recommended that “widows [...] keep Judith’s picture before them, on the walls of their rooms, certainly, but also fixed firmly in their minds.”³⁰⁹ Her image should be ever close to the body, decorating the domestic environment through which it moved.

³⁰⁵ Ciletti and Lähnemann, “Judith in the Christian Tradition,” 58.

³⁰⁶ Ciletti and Lähnemann, “Judith in the Christian Tradition,” 58.

³⁰⁷ Desiderius Erasmus, “On the Christian Widow/ De Vidua Christiana,” in *Collected Work of Erasmus*, ed. J. W. O’Malley (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 219.

³⁰⁸ Erasmus, “On the Christian Widow,” 207.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 219.

Van Eck reasons that “the most obvious reason” linking the protagonists of the Gouda window was “that Judith, like Margaretha, was a widow.”³¹⁰ The alignment of the two women was logical and beneficial for the Countess as she refashioned her public image in the aftermath of her husband’s death. Van Eck further argues that the decision to affiliate Margaret with the wise and virtuous Judith was perhaps because she “was the least controversial of all the Old Testament heroines.”³¹¹ Such a conclusion is debatable as even within the same article the scholar identifies the potent cultural currency imbued within the character of Judith in the mid-sixteenth century. During the period of restoration at St John’s Church both Catholics and Protestants appropriated Judith for their own ends. Prints were circulated in the Northern Provinces aligning Judith with the celebrated Haarlem widow Kenau Simons Hasselaer, who reportedly fought ferociously in the 1573 siege of the city.³¹²

In addition to this, many images of Judith foregrounded the erotic and violent, highlighting the competitive seduction around which the climax of the narrative moved. “Now when Judith came in and sat down, Holofernes his heart was ravished with her, and his mind was moved, and he desired greatly her company; for he waited a time to deceive her, from the day that he had seen her.”³¹³ Whilst the biblical text does not confirm that Judith and Holofernes actually engage in

³¹⁰ Eck, “Siding with Philip II,” 7.

³¹¹ Ibid, 8.

³¹² Ibid, 10.

³¹³ Judith 12: 16-19 (KJVA).

sexual activity, artists took advantage of the potential for threat in the sensuality of Judith's body. Philip Galle's Flemish 'Power of the Women' or 'Weibermacht' series, for example, grouped Judith with women such as Jael (who killed Sisera by hammering a tent peg into his head), Eve (responsible for the fall of man), Lot's daughters, and the seductress Delilah. Such comparisons recast the role of Holofernes from villain to victim and aligned the hazardous body of Judith with the sword she wielded. Alternatively, paintings by Hans Baldung Grien and Jan Sanders van Hemessen depicted Judith naked (Figure 44), sublimating her heroism into her sexuality, her virtue distorted into "erotic titillation."³¹⁴

The glazed Judith is luxurious, violent and sexual. She is dressed in opulent polychrome costume and is surrounded by suggestions of sex, feasting, and death. Below her, Margaret de la Marck appears as a perpetually married woman, positioned beside her husband and without any indication of mourning dress. For this reason the relationship generated in the glass between Margaret de la Marck and Judith cannot be understood as a straightforward affiliation of chaste and withdrawn widowhood, of an exemplar and a disciple. A more fruitful line of investigation is opened up if the window is instead considered in relation to notions of material sacrifice. The final verses of the biblical text describe how, in the wake of the enemy's death,

And the people spoiled the camp the space of thirty days: and they gave unto Judith Holofernes his tent, and all his plate, and beds, and vessels,

³¹⁴ Penny Howell Jolly, "Pubics and Privates: Body Hair in Late Medieval Art," in *The Meanings of Nudity in Medieval Art*, ed. Sherry Lindquist (Farnham: Routledge, 2012), 196.

and all his stuff: and she took it and laid it on her mule; and made ready her carts, and laid them thereon.³¹⁵

The widow's triumph is consolidated in the appropriation of the material.

However soon after, "Judith also dedicated all the stuff of Holofernes, which the people had given her, and gave the canopy, which she had taken out of his bedchamber, for a gift unto the Lord."³¹⁶ The material is thus transformed into a potent tool of devotion. The text draws attention to the contrast between Judith's sackcloth mourning dress and the fragrant perfume, jewels and linen gown she used to beguile Holofernes. Here, the richly dressed body does not indicate excess but profound service to her God and people, putting "off the garment of her widowhood for the exaltation of those that were oppressed in Israel."³¹⁷

Erasmus highlighted this in his concluding praise of the widow, similarly contrasting opulence with humility. He stated, "she who piles up wealth and seeks for earthly glories is not a true Judith."³¹⁸ The heady splendour and sumptuous bodies of the Gouda window signify a heightened moment of sacrifice, the relinquishment of prized humility in the service of others.

This arrangement provokes instabilities in the design. It is rich yet sacrificial, seductive yet chaste, tangible yet all a temporary façade that glitters before the eye but will shortly be transformed into smoke. The disguised body of Judith

³¹⁵ Judith 15: 11 (KJVA).

³¹⁶ Judith 16: 19 (KJVA).

³¹⁷ Judith 16: 8 (KJVA).

³¹⁸ Erasmus, "On the Christian Widow," 208.

presented a subversion of the early modern notion that the clothed body behaved as an “osmotic membrane”³¹⁹ through which the internal quality of the soul could be discerned. Erasmus, for example, described clothing as “the external manifestation of an individual.”³²⁰ Within the window the translucent and seductive drapery does not elide with the virtue of the protagonist. It thus severs the connection between outside and inside, instead objectifying the surface alone as a tool for greater ends.

The sacrificial flavour of the narrative inserts the Arenberg family into wider themes of divine service found within the church glazing program. Indeed, sacrifice flavours the windows commissioned by the sovereign Philip II and his representative in the Netherlands, Margaret of Parma (Figure 45). The royal windows are the largest within the church, both stretching to twenty metres above either end of the transept floor. The designs are pendants, mirroring each other in dimensions, narrative, and tripartite composition. In both windows, the donors are positioned next to a scene from the Last Supper and, rising further above this, an Old Testament story of sacrifice. Philip II’s window displays Solomon’s dedication of the temple whilst Margaret of Parma’s window depicts Elijah’s sacrifice on Mount Carmel. Previous scholarship has, once again, been quick to link the relationships forged in the glazing program to the political context in which the windows were made. Van Eck interprets Margaret of

³¹⁹ Cordula van Wyhe, “The Fabrics of Female Rule in Leone Leoni’s Statue of Mary of Hungary, c. 1556,” in *Cambridge and the Study of Netherlandish Art: The Low Countries and the Fens*, ed. Meredith Hale (Turnhout: Brepolis, 2016), 150.

³²⁰ Erasmus, “On the Christian Widow,” 199.

Parma's window in the light of her recent appointment as regent in the Netherlands. He argues that the design worked as a declaration of loyalty to Philip II and initiated a public persona that constantly referred back to the absent monarch.³²¹ The *Judith* window extends the reach of this assertion to include the Arenberg family. The glazing creates a community of deference and sacrifice, a group that shares metaphors of service to God and each other. Indeed, such a model resonates with that proposed by Maria-Zoe Petropoulou in relation to cultural expressions of religious sacrifice. She argues that the function of such acts always orientates around two axes, a vertical line linking the mundane to the divine, and a horizontal line binding community.³²²

Evidence that the Arenberg family was keen to exploit patterns within the overall glazing program can be discerned in a drawing held in the archives of the Beaux-arts de Paris, l'École Nationale Supérieure (Figure 46). The drawing, executed by Wouter Crabeth (1510-1590), displays a window design dating from around the same time the Arenbergs were approached as donors. The first impetus for an Arenberg window can be traced back to 1562, almost ten years before the final installation of the glass. Wouter Crabeth travelled from his workshop in Gouda to The Hague with the intention of drawing Margaret de la Marck and Jean de Ligne. A record of payment in the St John's Church archive attests to this trip:

³²¹ Xander Van Eck, "Margaret of Parma's Gift of a Window to St John's in Gouda and the Art of the Early Counter-Reformation in the Low Countries," in *Simiolus* 36, no. 1 (2012): 69.

³²² Maria-Zoe Petropoulou, *Animal Sacrifice in Ancient Greek Religion, Judaism, and Christianity, 100 BC to AD 200* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 285.

Paid on 21 January Wouter Pietersz, glazier for travelling to the Hague to My Lord of Assouwen and My Lord of Aerdenburgh and My Lord of Assendelft and for portraying them as they desire to be included in the windows, they have donated to this church and he has been absent, having to await an opportunity to draw their portraits, for seven days, at ten stivers a day, and having spent on travel three guilders ten stivers, in all seven guilders.³²³

The drawing includes two noble donors, shown kneeling within their own register as in the *Judith* window. The female figure is depicted wearing an ermine cloak whilst the male donor clearly displays the Order of the Golden Fleece around his neck. Both resemble the noble couple in the *Judith* window and, although the identity of the figures cannot be confirmed, Marck and Ligne have been linked to the drawing.³²⁴ The biblical narrative above the figures describes The Supper at Bethany, an occasion recorded in the Gospels in which a woman kneels before Christ to wash his feet with her tears and dry them with her hair.³²⁵ The drawing shows the event occurring within a grand architectural setting but is compositionally focused on the table, positioned close to the pictorial plane, at which Christ and his followers are seated. The design strongly resembles that of the two Last Supper scenes found in the central registers of Philip II and Margaret of Parma's windows, both of which would have been completed by the time Crabeth met the noble patrons.

³²³ SAHM (Streekarchief Hollands Midden), KASJ (Kerkarchief Sint Jan) I(8), 1562, 97, English translation in Eck, Coebergh-Surie, and Gasten, *The Stained-glass windows in the Sint Janskerk at Gouda*, 154-155 n 616.

³²⁴ Zsuzsanna Van Ruyvan-Zeyman makes this connection in her article exploring Crabeth's drawing. Van Ruyvan-Zeyman, "Some Drawings Attributed to Wouter Crabeth, the Glass Painter from Gouda," *Master Drawings* 23/24, no. 4 (1985/1986): 547.

³²⁵ Luke 7: 37 (KJV).

The decision to emphasise grand sacrifice through the Apocryphal scene, as opposed to the humble service suggested by the early drawing, may have related to the need to establish a more tangible presence within the commercial community. Indeed, the rich object-based characteristic of the *Judith* window worked in a manner that the royal commissions could not. The Arenberg dynasty was positioned amongst the Gouda townsfolk whilst the Habsburgs, as defenders of the Catholic faith and centralised state, maintained sovereign distance and authority in their glass. Nevertheless, the nature of the drawing implies that, even from the start, the Arenbergs were aware of the potential for social positioning offered through the glazing program of St John's Church.

The Arenberg clan regularly affixed themselves to the monarchy by finding opportunities for tangible material and public gestures of support. Jean de Ligne had been a close ally of Charles V, serving him in battle whilst Margaret de la Marck was reportedly characterised by the Vice General of Mechelen, Maximilaan van Morillon, as a woman who understood the art of binding people to herself and family.³²⁶ The Arenberg territories stretched over Dutch, French, and German speaking lands. The family was multi-lingual, well travelled throughout Europe, and had cultivated an identity that crossed national and cultural borders.³²⁷ By ensuring these skills and assets were readily available to the Habsburgs, the family became an indispensable resource to the Imperial

³²⁶ Maes-de Smet, "Margaretha van der Marck- Arenberg," 38.

³²⁷ Ibid, 39.

courts in both Brussels and Vienna. Indeed, Margaret accompanied Mary of Hungary on her tour of the Netherlands and befriended the Duchess Christina of Lorraine (1565-1637). Through these connections Margaret was invited to Cercamp in 1558 to participate in peace negotiations between France and Spain and was present for the Peace of Cateua-Cambrésis Treaty, signed the following year.³²⁸

Letters between Margaret de la Marck and Margaret of Parma, preserved within the family archive, further suggest a bond strengthened through mutual acts of material help. On the 28th June 1580, Margaret of Parma wrote from Luxemburg praising the Countess' "devotion and service"³²⁹ to the King. In return she was assured that,

In addition to what is due to you as a lady of the greatest virtue and value [...] you will be praised and commended by everyone, and acknowledged by His Majesty. Whenever the occasion arises I will not fail to remind him of Your Ladyship and to put in a good word for you and all your affairs, which I care about as if they were mine.³³⁰

Correspondence between the Emperors Maximilian II and Philip II records how the Countess was enlisted as an escort for Maximilian's daughter Elizabeth I (1554-1592), travelling with her in 1570 from Vienna to Mézières where her future husband, Charles IX of France (1550-1574), waited to marry.³³¹ As the

³²⁸ Ibid, 39.

³²⁹ AAE Corr. MM13 Marguerite de Parma. Letter dated 1580. Translations by Paola Bolognesi. paola.bolognesi@york.ac.uk.

³³⁰ Ibid.

³³¹ Marini, "Dynastic Relations on an International Stage," 54 and 59.

letter demonstrates, Margaret was further tasked with the dowager Queen's safe return from the French court after the death of Charles in 1574.

Maximilian (etc.) to the most Serene (etc.) As, following completion of the business which had to be transacted with the most Serene and Christian King of France concerning the security of the dowry of our most beloved daughter, the Most Serene and Christian Queen, a widow, Her Royal Serenity is to return to us forthwith and the aforesaid most Christian King is to summon some illustrious matrons, in addition to the rest of her entourage, to attend her as far as the border-lands of France; as, moreover, the personal status and dignity of our most beloved daughter demands that, when these turn back, some other distinguished mature woman should take their place, so as to serve Her Serenity on the journey and keep her company continually for honour's sake, we sent a letter some weeks ago to a noblewoman approved by us, Margaret, Countess of Arenberg (etc.), widow, kindly making enquiries as to whether, just as she earlier gladly undertook this task at the time when Her Serenity was escorted to France, so now she would similarly be willing to perform the same task in escorting Her Serenity back. As she immediately offered to do so (providing this does not displease you), we exhort Your Serenity, please, not to be aggrieved if it happens perhaps that the said Countess is absent for rather a long time on account of this task of escorting her home[...]. In this Your Serenity will be doing something particularly pleasing to us, something demanding to be repaid at every opportunity by the efforts of mutual benevolence and fraternal love. It remains to say that we wish from the heart that Your Serenity should enjoy the best of health and the happy success of all enterprises.

Issued at Vienna on the 14th day of November, 1575.

To the King of the Spains.³³²

Maximilian II rewarded the Arenbergs for their service by confirming the family in their sovereign rights. These included judicial authority over religious and secular subjects, the right to everything found on or in their land, and the right to mint coinage.³³³ These honours were later followed by an even greater privilege,

³³² AAE Corr. MM11 Maximilian II. Letter dated 14th November 1575. Translated by Janet Fairweather. janetannefairweather@gmail.com.

³³³ Maes-de Smet, "Margaretha van der Marck- Arenberg," 39.

the elevation of Arenberg to 'Reichsfürstenwurde,' a principality of the Holy Roman Empire. The family were awarded a seat in the Reichstag and participated in the administration of Imperial affairs.³³⁴ In addition Margaret de la Marck and her descendants were permitted to use the titles of prince and princess of the Empire.³³⁵ Soon after Margaret of Parma wrote her congratulations,

Of the magnanimity you write about and which has been bestowed upon you by His Imperial Majesty in having elevated the county of Arimbergh to a Principate, I share in your happiness for the abundance of benefits that it will bring, as Your Ladyship deserves not only this but every great honour and greatness.³³⁶

The effectiveness and longevity of the Arenbergs' much cultivated materially service-centred identity was demonstrated in 1644 when the Principality of Arenberg was raised still further to a Duchy. The charter instigating this promotion included praise from Emperor Ferdinand II (1578-1637), specifically citing Margaret de la Marck's journeys to and from the French court, undertaken decades before.³³⁷

Notions of material and bodily sacrifice were a crucial component in the construction of the ruling body. Erasmus emphasised the need for a form of

³³⁴ AAE Corr. MM 11 Maximilian II. Document dated 19th April 1567. Also Marini, "Dynastic Relations on an International Stage," 54 and 62 and Maes-de Smet, "Margaretha van der Marck- Arenberg," 43.

³³⁵ Maes-de Smet, "Margaretha van der Marck- Arenberg," 43.

³³⁶ AAE Corr. MM13 Marguerite de Parma. Letter dated 1576. Janet Fairweather. janetannefairweather@gmail.com.

³³⁷ Maes-de Smet, "Margaretha van der Marck- Arenberg," 43.

personal martyrdom. Within his *Education of a Christian Prince*, the scholar professed a brand of sovereignty in which the prince was bound to and shared between all his subjects. It was a form of noble sacrifice aligned with Christ's broken Eucharistic body. Indeed, the ruler should be ready to 'cruciare' himself on the behalf of his subjects just as Christ had done.³³⁸ The ideal prince "wants so much to do well by his people of his own free will that if necessary he would not hesitate to attend to their wellbeing at great risk to himself."³³⁹ Difficulties in realising this level of communal sacrifice were described by Mary of Hungary (1505-1558) who, unable to do battle on behalf of her subjects, felt that she could not make such a bodily dedication. She complained bitterly of such a problem in her letter of resignation to Charles V in 1555. She stated that, amongst other key acts, "one cannot ask more of a man than that he place his life in danger, at the service of his prince and for the good of his country."³⁴⁰ She continued, such are "vital requirements without which it is impossible to govern: which role a woman cannot fulfil."³⁴¹ The *Judith* window offers the Arenberg family a means to surpass such constraints. The glazing simultaneously

³³⁸ Aysha Pollnitz, *Princely Education in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 110.

³³⁹ Erasmus, *The Education of a Christian Prince*, 26.

³⁴⁰ Translated after the transcription in *Papiers d'état du cardinal de Granvelle: d'après les manuscrits de la bibliothèque de Besançon*, Ch. Weiss (Paris: Imprimerie royale, 1843), Vol. iv, 222-227. Translated by Elspeth Nicholson in Cordula Van Wyhe, "The Fabric of Female Rule in Leone Leoni's Statue of Mary of Hungary, c. 1549-1556," in *Cambridge and the Study of Netherlandish Art*, ed. Meredith Hale (Turnhout: Brepols, 2016).

³⁴¹ Translated after the transcription in *Papiers d'état du cardinal de Granvelle: d'après les manuscrits de la bibliothèque de Besançon*, Ch. Weiss (Paris: Imprimerie royale, 1843), Vol. iv, 222-227. Translated by Elspeth Nicholson in Van Wyhe, "The Fabric of Female Rule."

formulates the Arenberg family within the community whilst 'breaking' it on behalf of all.

Touber has argued that, "the essence of martyrdom was a metaphysical relationship between physical disintegration and spiritual fulfilment."³⁴² The bodies of saints exemplified this process and were celebrated for their synchronised fragmentation and elevation. This includes the patron saints displayed within the donor register of the Judith window, St Catherine and St John (Figure 47). The compositional treatment of the male saint is particularly noticeable, given that he is the only patron saint of all those pictured within the entire church glazing program to face directly out towards the congregation. The church is his namesake and, as a result, the *Agnus Dei* and crucifix cradled in his arms harmonise with the ritual performed in the surrounding space.

Alternatively, the figure of St Catherine stands protectively over the body of Margaret de la Marck and faces to the right. Dressed in a purple and green toga, the Saint grasps a long straight sword in one hand and a fragment of wheel in the other. Her posture is less conspicuous than her male counterpart. However, the choice of attributes calls attention to her torture and broken body.

The legend of St Catherine, according to tradition, described the Fourth-century virgin put to death by the Emperor Maxientus. The saint repeated the pattern set by many female martyrs extolled as exemplary figures in the fifteenth and

³⁴² Jetze Touber, "Articulating Pain: Martyrology, Torture and Execution in the Works of Antonio Gallonio (1556-1605)," in *The Sense of Suffering: Constructions of Pain in Early Modern Culture*, eds. Jan Frans van Dijkhuizen and Karl A. E. Enkel (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 60.

sixteenth-century Lives of Saints texts “the young girl, always a virgin, is outspoken and unwilling to compromise. She usually resists marriage, and as a result, is subjugated to torture and put to death.”³⁴³ Catherine was the daughter of a governor in Alexandrian Egypt. She was devoted to study and, following a vision of the Virgin Mary, converted to Christianity. She derided the Emperor for his persecution of Christians and converted the men he sent to debate with her. Refusing an offer of marriage from Maxientius, Catherine was then sentenced to torture on a wheel but at her touch the device miraculously broke into pieces and she was instead beheaded.³⁴⁴

Margaret’s affiliation with St Catherine remained strong throughout her life. It is unclear exactly why she chose this patron saint as opposed to her namesake, St Margaret, although some scholars have argued that the Countess’ attachment to local establishments of the same name may have been a contributing factor.³⁴⁵

³⁴³ Lisa Kaborycha, “Transvestites, Saints, Wives, and Martyrs: The Lives of Female Saints as read by Fifteenth-century Florentine Women,” *Chronica* 65 (Spring 2006): 15.

³⁴⁴ Cynthia Stollhans, *St Catherine of Alexandria in Renaissance Roman Art: Case Studies in Patronage* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2014), 18.

³⁴⁵ St Catherine’s hospital was positioned next door to the church in Gouda and Margaret was a likely benefactress of the institution. The Countess was certainly a patron of similar establishments in the area, including an unspecified school. A more tangible link can be drawn between Margaret and the parish church of St Catherine in Zevenbergen. The countess played an active role in the church administration and determinedly ensured its Catholic status long after the region had converted to Protestantism and the building been deserted. Her fervent involvement can be linked to the the tomb of her husband Jean de Ligne, housed in the church. RAWB 0600 “Stadsbestuur Zevenbergen, 1485-1810” Inventaris: 9.3 no. 354; RAWB 0661 “Beschrijving van het archief: Hervormde gemeente Zevenbergen, 1610-1945;” Van Eck, Coebergh-Surie, and Gasten, *The Stained-glass windows in the Sint Janskerk at Gouda*, 124.

Margaret continued to be portrayed with St Catherine into old age. This is evidenced in a damaged portrait rendered on panel, dating to the final years of the century and stored in a corner of the Arenberg family archives in Enghien, Belgium (Figure 48). Here Margaret is shown wearing a dark ermine trimmed cloak and kneeling before a prie dieu. Behind her, the standing figure of St Catherine appears wrapped in a heavy gown of muted pink and holding a long white feather or quill. St Catherine was the patron saint of numerous vocations, including female teachers, Christian philosophers, orators, millers, wheelers, rope-makers, drapers, and archers.³⁴⁶ The quill symbolised female accomplishment and learned devotion, highlighting the saint's attributes of wisdom and education.³⁴⁷ The sharp contrast between the two depictions of St Catherine indicates how the figure was utilised differently by Margaret de la Marck throughout her life. It draws attention to the potency of the glazed saint and how, with sword and splintered wheel, she is strongly indicative of fragmentation, death and martyrdom. Framed inside the spokes of the shattered wheel, Margaret de la Marck and the communal body she generated through the glass, share in this sacrifice. Indeed, the saint looks directly towards the Arenberg shield. The significance of the forms is heightened by the medium. The glazed bodies are fragmented and invigorated by light. Intersecting lead lines hold together the figures within the window and yet, as they are transmitted into the church interior, they dissolve into shards, blend together, and pool. The

³⁴⁶ Stollhans, *St Catherine of Alexandria*, 1-2.

³⁴⁷ Lara Perry, *History's Beauties: Women in the National Portrait Gallery, 1856-1900* (Aldershot: Routledge, 2006), 71.

dynastic body is at once whole and broken, elevated yet available for and experienced by all.

The Glazed Body

The glazing program of St John's Gouda can be understood as a manifestation of the family in the local community and wider population, presenting the complex and shifting hierarchies and arrangement of social groups in the Netherlandish region alongside a smaller, dynasty focused model. The variable ideals of sixteenth-century social hierarchy are remarkably presented within the church glazing as it features pre and post Reformation glass side by side. The program manifests both the Burgundian Habsburg policy of centralised government and hierarchical social relations, and the politically, culturally, and religiously reoriented provincial sovereignty of the States General.³⁴⁸ The large and dominating glass donated by Philip II and Margaret of Parma celebrates the monarchy in the worldly image of monotheistic religion. The subsidiary glass donated by knights and nobles bolsters this model with synchronised statements of loyalty and service. Simultaneously, the decentralised power arrangement of the States General is suggested through glass donated by civic authorities, including Haarlem and Dordrecht. These windows memorialise local identity, regional history, myths and legend.³⁴⁹

³⁴⁸ Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies, *Dutch Culture in a European Perspective: Hard-won Unity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 139.

³⁴⁹ The window donated by Haarlem city authorities commemorated their legendary involvement in the Crusade of 1219. It displays a Haarlem ship cutting the harbor chain that protected the Egyptian port of Damietta as part of the siege

Despite St John's shift from Roman Catholic to Dutch Reformed faith in 1573, the glazing program avoided assault from reforming iconoclasts. Scholars have credited the survival of the pre Reformation glass within such a context as evidence that the edicts of the States General that banned Catholic worship were poorly enforced in the Gouda region.³⁵⁰ An additional interpretation, however, is that the contrast between the two glazed hierarchies was tempered by the smaller models of authority, like that of the Arenberg dynasty, which celebrated common elements. The *Judith and Holofernes* window produced the family within the context of community, positioning the landowners and customers, rulers and subjects, in relation to each other. It celebrated the localised civic identity of Gouda and its figures of commerce and industry whilst also paying homage to the Spanish monarchy. Shared between these diverse groups, the glazed Arenberg family manifested the complex and contrasting social makeup of the noble body. It was a shared form inherently available to all who encountered or was connected to the glazing.

Writing over four hundred years before installation of the *Judith and Holofernes* window in St John's Church, Abbot Suger of St Denis commented on the powerful

of the city. The town shield features two bells in reference to those captured from the city and given to Haarlem. Willem Frihoff, "How Plural were the Religious Worlds in Early Modern Europe? Critical Reflections from the Netherlandic Experience," in *Living with Religious Diversity in Early-Modern Europe*, ed. C. Scott Dixon, Dagmar Freist, and Mark Greengrass (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 36.

³⁵⁰ John Michael Montias, *Vermeer and His Milieu: A Web of Social History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 108.

relationship between the materiality of the church building and wider community. He argued that Christ was a “cornerstone which joins one wall to the other; in Whom all the building-whether spiritual or material-groweth unto one holy temple in the Lord. In Whom we, too, are taught to be builded together.”³⁵¹ He further marvelled at the powerful materiality of stained glass, stating,

Thus, when -out of my delight in the beauty of the house of God- the loveliness of the many coloured gems has called me away from external cares, and worthy meditation has induced me to reflect, transferring *that which is material to that which is immaterial*, [...] then it seems to me that I see myself dwelling, as it were, in some strange region of the universe which neither exists entirely in the slime of the earth nor entirely in the purity of Heaven; and that, by the grace of God, I can be transported from this inferior to that higher world.³⁵²

Centuries later, the medium retained its ability to join community as well as raise and transform the mundane from the everyday to a state of holiness. The *Judith and Holofernes* window demonstrates that such capabilities were recognised and put to use, harnessing the power of objects in the ongoing construction and maintenance of the noble clan.

³⁵¹ Abbot Suger of St Denis, “The Book of Suger, Abbot of St Denis. On what was done under his administration,” in *Abbot Suger on the Abbey church of St.-Denis and its Art Treasures*, ed. Erwin Panofsky and Gerda Panofsky-Soergel (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 105.

³⁵² Abbot Suger of St Denis, “The Other Little Book on the Consecration of the Church of St-Denis,” in *Abbot Suger on the Abbey church of St.-Denis and its Art Treasures*, ed. Erwin Panofsky and Gerda Panofsky-Soergel (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 63-64. Emphasis my own.

Chapter Three.

The Arenberg Portrait Album.

Pearls and Pigment

The oyster [...] yawning, as it were, it opens its shell, and so receives a kind of dew, by means of which it becomes impregnated; and that at length it gives birth, after many struggles, to the burden of its shell, in the shape of pearls, which vary according to the quality of the dew. If this has been in a perfectly pure state when it flowed into the shell, then the pearl produced is white and brilliant, but if it was turbid, then the pearl is of a clouded colour also.³⁵³

A necklace of large pearls, containing 176 in number and the same in small pearls in between.³⁵⁴

The woman's character is the jewel of her family; the mother's purity has always been a part of the dowry she passes on to her daughters.³⁵⁵

The long pilgrimage of the pearl, from the pregnant belly of its oyster to the pale neck of the aristocratic woman, was a much-repeated journey. All 250 beads belonging to Anne de Croy, Duchess d'Aarschot and Princess-Countess d'Arenberg (1564-1635) had travelled the route from the seabed across the palms of slaves, farmers, tradesmen, and jewellers. The pale beads were most likely imported from colonial Spanish fisheries off the coast of the West Indian

³⁵³ Pliny the Elder, *The Natural History of Pliny AD77*, Vol. 2, ed. John Bostock and Henry T. Riley (London, 1855), Book IX Ch 54.

³⁵⁴ Extract from the "Will and Testament of Anne de Croy, Duchess d'Aarschot and Princess-Countess d'Arenberg," ACA (32/27) Testament 1. fol. 294v, cited in Mirella Marini, *Anna van Croy (1564-1635)*, 176.

³⁵⁵ Leon Battista Alberti, *The Family in Renaissance Florence: Book Three. I Libri Della Famiglia*, trans. R. N. Watkins (Longshore: Waveland Press, 1994), 83.

Islands where trafficked West African slaves, or ‘cormorants’ as contemporary sources described them, dived to collect oyster shells.³⁵⁶ Enclosed in caskets, the pearls were introduced into Europe through Seville, a specialist centre of the pearl trade and home of many Flemish merchants.³⁵⁷ They were then pierced and threaded into ropes of fine jewellery, bought by the agents of the Arenberg family, and entered into the possession and patrimony of the dynastic clan.

An elaborate figuration of pearls is conjured within the watercolour portrait of Anne de Croy, painted on the occasion of her marriage to the Duke Charles d’Arenberg (1550-1616) in the closing years of the sixteenth century (Figure 49). The birth of these pearls came also from a shell, the chosen vessel for the pigment that the artist’s brush carried to the parchment.³⁵⁸ Within the portrait the pearls are rendered as a stream of grey watercolour highlighted with accents of white. The marks sit on a field of colour, built up in thin layers from the parchment base. Fabricated by the brush, the beads appear to hang thickly over the shoulders of the painted woman, falling together down the length of the torso. The necklace follows the shape of the bodice, plunging with its long tongue into an acute curve over layers of dark velvet and intricately embroidered skirts. Indeed, across the surface of the parchment the beads move as one with the

³⁵⁶ Portugese Chronicler Gomes Eanes de Zurara cited in Imtiaz Habib, *Black Lives in the English Archives 1500-1677: Imprints of the Invisible* (Aldershot: Routledge, 2008), 52.

³⁵⁷ R. A. Donkin, *Beyond Price: Pearls and Pearl-fishing: Origins to the Age of Discoveries* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1998), 327.

³⁵⁸ Janice Neri, *The Insect and the Image: Visualizing Nature in Early Modern Europe* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 82.

dress. They are painted in conjunction with the textile, rising and falling from one side of the body to the next, anticipating the tiny pale dots contained within the interlacing pattern of couched gold embroidery. They organise the body, creating a precious interior space of overlapping fabric and embellishment right in the centre of the portrait.

Pearls were the currency of kings and emperors in sixteenth-century Europe.³⁵⁹ They were imbued with a rich and ancient catalogue of associations and symbolisms, networks of resemblances that pointed from their earthly form to higher meaning and morality. The fourth-century Christian writer of the *Physiologus*, an early predecessor of the medieval bestiary and moral text widely disseminated throughout Europe, drew parallels between the fertilising power of heavenly dew, emanating from celestial lights to impregnate shells, and the immaculate conception of Christ. The natural process was described as analogous with the divine light that entered the womb of the Virgin Mary at the Annunciation.³⁶⁰ Indeed, just as human flesh was thought to be symptomatic of the state of the soul, so too, the epidermis of the pearl revealed its inner most

³⁵⁹ Charles V and Philip II, for example, received huge payments from luxury trade in the Indies as well as large consignments of the finest gem specimens to keep for themselves. In addition, Queen Elizabeth I made the pearl her 'signature jewel,' drawing on its virtuous associations in her careful self-fashioning as the Virgin Queen. Donkin, *Beyond Price: Pearls and Pearl-fishing*, 327; Karen Raber, "Chains of Pearls: Gender, Property, Identity," in *Ornamentalism: The Art of Renaissance Accessories*, ed. Bella Mirabella (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011), 160.

³⁶⁰ *Physiologus: A Medieval Book of Nature Lore*, trans. M. J. Curley (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), "On the Oyster Stone and the Pearl" XXIV; Hope B. Werness, *Continuum Encyclopaedia of Animal Symbolism in World Art* (New York: Continuum International Publishing, 2006), 321 and 102.

substance.³⁶¹ The smooth and milky surface indicated the perfect union of elements melded in its conception. Worn on the body, the pearls fused notions of inner virtue with social identity and status, positioning the wearer in relation to those around them through sartorial codes and restrictions.³⁶²

In her article “Women in Frames: The Gaze, the Eye, the Profile in Renaissance Portraiture,” Patricia Simons investigates Florentine profile portraits of women produced on the occasion of their betrothal or marriage. Such paintings, she argues, came into being within a culture of display and exchange where visual language was a crucial mode of discourse as “the outward display of honour, magnificence and wealth was vital to one’s social prestige and definition.”³⁶³ Within such a material system a woman was an object of depersonalised trade, “an adorned Other who was defined into existence”³⁶⁴ through the commercial transaction of marriage. For the first time in her life, the young woman became a publicly legible surface. She was a platform across which material costume and artefact inscribed and communicated the honour and reputation of her family

³⁶¹ Kimberly Poitevin, “Inventing Whiteness: Cosmetics, Race, and Women in Early Modern England,” *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 11, no. 1 (2011): 68.

³⁶² Pearls were subject to sumptuary laws across Europe. The Diet of Worms of 1495 prevented citizens not of noble birth and nobles who were not knights from wearing gold and pearls. In Venice 1609, a law was passed that restricted women to only wearing pearls during the first ten years of their first marriage. George Frederick Kunz and Charles Hugh Stevenson, *The Book of the Pearl: Its History, Art, Science, and Industry* (Toronto: Dover Publications, 2013), 26-27.

³⁶³ Patricia Simons, “Women in Frames: The Gaze, the Eye, the Profile in Renaissance Portraiture,” *History Workshop* no. 25 (Spring 1988): 8.

³⁶⁴ Simons, “Women in Frames,” 9.

and spouse. The women depicted within Simons' Florentine portraits were shown in profile with an averted eye and face available for scrutiny. Such a composition suited the "representation of an ordered, chaste and decorous piece of property."³⁶⁵ The female sitter became at once visible and objectified, presenting a "framed 'mirror'"³⁶⁶ for the male observer.

This chapter will draw on Simon's arguments and examine Anne de Croy's marriage portrait as an object seeped in notions of material value. It will examine how the image conflated female virtue and fertility with material richness, constructing a multifaceted image that was, in its own substance, materially valuable. The portrait adheres to different prescriptions of femininity, presenting a dynamic narrative of visual exchange centred on the married female body. Indeed, the album potently demonstrates the subjectivity of gender models as numerous ideals compete and conflate within one form.³⁶⁷ The image is one of a series contained within a leather bound volume, treasured in the Arenberg family archives in Enghien, Belgium.³⁶⁸ The album binds eighteen exquisitely detailed watercolour portraits, each depicting members of the Croy and Arenberg families. They are uniform in scale and composition, each measuring

³⁶⁵ Ibid, 7.

³⁶⁶ Ibid, 13.

³⁶⁷ As such it will adhere to the notion of gender as process discussed by Muravyeva and Toivo and outlined in the Introduction of this thesis. Muravyeva and Toivo, "Introduction: Why and how gender matters," 5.

³⁶⁸ Family Album: ACA. Iconographie ref. honour 49. H49. "Portretalbum. Handgeschilderde portretten von de families van Karel van Arenbergen Anne van Croy."

19 by 26.7cm, and display a sitter in three quarter length with an adjacent curtain, chair or table, and family crest. The book does not include an introductory text, but the Arenberg Archive's dating of the object and the alignment of the two families suggest the volume was almost certainly produced in the wake of the marriage of Anne and Charles, marking the subsequent dynastic merger of the Croy and Arenberg ancestral bloodlines.

The album portraits have received little scholarly analysis despite being featured independently in a number of publications. Within these sources the paintings function primarily as illustrations, neutralised counterparts to a biography or history of the Arenberg family.³⁶⁹ This lack of attention may be a result of the scant archival resources or attendant documentation available for scholarly analysis. Indeed, the painter and patron of the Arenberg album remain unknown.³⁷⁰ Coinciding with the dynastic marriage, it can be surmised that the book was commissioned or gifted as one of the many objects exchanged as part

³⁶⁹ The image features, for example, as an illustration in Mirella Marini, "Anna van Croy (1564-1635)," 88; Jan-Engelbert van Arenberg, "De heren, graven, prins-graven en hertogen van Arenberg," in *Arenberg in de Lage Landen: een hoogadellijk huis in Vlaanderen en Nederland*, ed. Jan Rogiers, Mark Derez, Marc Nelissen, Jean-Pierre Tytgat, and Anne Verbrugge (Leuven: University of Leuven Press, 2002), 31; Yves Delannoy, "Anne de Croy, duchesse d'Arschot, princesse-comtesse d'Arenberg, et la ville d'Enghien," in *Annales du Cercle archéologique d'Enghien* (Enghien: Cercle Royal Archéologique d'Enghien, 1952), 1; Yves Delannoy, "L'Ameublement du Château d'Enghien au Commencement du XVII^e siècle," in *Annales du Cercle archéologique d'Enghien*, Vol. 16 (Enghien: Cercle Royal Archéologique d'Enghien, 1983), 335 and Yves Delannoy, "Le Château et le Parc d'Enghien sous bannière des Arenberg 1607-1918," in *Annales du Cercle archéologique d'Enghien*, Vol. 33 (Enghien: Cercle Royal Archéologique d'Enghien, 1999), 37.

³⁷⁰ I thank Isabella Vanden Hove of the Arenberg Archives in Enghien for her help in this regard.

of the wedding ritual. It may well have been a component in the profusion of jewellery, clothing, and carriages that worked alongside, and as surrogate to, the female body, choreographing and transporting it from one household to the next.³⁷¹ As Nicola Belmont has argued, such objects had a function beyond their economic role, “representing and symbolising the young woman, even if they were sometimes intended for her.”³⁷² They manifested the inner virtue of the female form, visualising and conflating her dowry, honour and material worth.

The book may also have been created as the visual nucleus for a larger and unrealised project, dealing with the confluence of two familial streams. Both the Arenberg and Croy families commissioned dynastic volumes in the early decades of the seventeenth century. The Croy family book entitled *Livre contenant la genealogie et descente de ceux de la Maison de Croy tant de la ligne principale estant chef dv nom et armes d'Icelle qve des branches et ligne collaterale de ladicte maison* was originally produced in Antwerp, 1612. It contained a series of engraved portraits of Croy family members, produced by the Flemish printmaker Jacob de Bie. The volume also included an engraved family tree that, over several pages, traced the Croy lineage as an organic entity back to its roots in the ultimate parentage of Adam and Eve (Figure 50). The pages narrate a dynastic history exhaustively packed with text and image. They present a comprehensive

³⁷¹ Claudia Bischoff, “Presents for Princesses: Gender in Royal Receiving and Giving,” *Studies in the Decorative Arts* 15, no. 1 (Fall-Winter 2007-2008): 19-45.

³⁷² Nicole Belmont, “The Symbolic Function of the Wedding Procession in the Popular Rituals of Marriage,” in *Ritual, Religion, and the Sacred, Selections from Annales Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, Vol. 7, ed. Robert Foster (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1982), 2.

record demonstrating a genre of dynastic literature in which extensive legacy was central. Over centuries court historians fabricated genealogical myths of descent to maintain the social legitimacy of their patrons.³⁷³ Such fantasies functioned as a means of obtaining and retaining political power, sexual validity, and divinely ordained authority.³⁷⁴

Although focused on the past, imbued in such genealogical volumes were anxieties concerning the future. The documents, by naturalising the authority of the clan, offered defence against unknown challenges to social position and material wealth. The Arenberg album was created at a time of heightened change in the makeup of the Flemish dynasty. The titles, claims, and material responsibilities of Arenberg and Croy bloodlines were brought into confluence with the marriage of the heir and heiress. Both pedigrees sought continuation in the next generation and security at the top end of the Netherlandish elite. Complex marriage contracts and inter familial legal battles ensued.³⁷⁵ Produced in this context, the volume may be understood to narrate a fiction of noble cohesion, stability, and fertility in the face of an uncertain future. The body of Anne de Croy, defined in contemporary literature as an entity undergoing

³⁷³ Raphael Falco, *Cultural Geography: An Essay on Early Modern Myth* (Oxon: Taylor and Francis, 2016), Introduction.

³⁷⁴ Falco, *Cultural Geography*, Introduction.

³⁷⁵ Mirella Marini, "From Arenberg to Aarschot and Back Again: Female Inheritance and the Disputed 'Merger' of Two Aristocratic Identities," in *Dynastic Identity in Early Modern Europe: Rulers, Aristocrats and the Formation of Identities*, ed. Liesbeth Geevers and Mirella Marini (Farnham: Routledge, 2015).

profound ontological change as a result of the marriage, presented an ideal vehicle or framework for such an enterprise.

The chapter will begin by assessing the frictions between the materiality and pictorial composition of the portraits in the volume. The format of the images imitates that of semi-public illusory quality of courtly oil portraiture and yet the scale and media suggests the volume was directed towards a single individual whose actions controlled the visibility and privacy of the images in a domestic context. The inherent friction within the album produces a multifaceted, open texture to the image, allowing for competing values and ideals to be presented simultaneously. Indeed, as will be shown, the portrait displayed a familial collective, enacting the consolidation of the disparate female form into a communal patriarchal body. It also worked as half of a marital pendant that enacted the sacramental nature of marriage and can further be understood as part of a generational sequence of female forms.

Costume provides the primary language for the construction of similarity and difference within the album. Clothes are consistently rendered with intricate detail and dominate the compositional space. Accordingly, the second half of the chapter will focus on sartorial dialogues. As representation, the painted clothes engaged concurrently with numerous identities, unrestricted by time, place, or social context. Mary Harlow argues,

Dress as written, dress as illustrated, and surviving textile remains, cannot transmit similar messages; art, literature and material culture do not speak the same language. Each type of evidence is governed by rules

which are specific to particular media, and to particular types of genre within such media.³⁷⁶

The particular power of illustrated costume is concentrated in the bodies at the centre of the book. Here, clothing choreographs a potent visual exchange between the bodies of Margaret de la Marck and Anne de Croy, whose sequential and contrasting portraits worked as both a manifestation of idealised widowhood and generational transition. The arrangement bears little correlation to lived experience but instead presents a perfected narrative of marriage as a series of highly controlled shifts. Examining the clothing of Anne de Croy more closely, the multifaceted costume presents the ideal courtier, burgher housewife, chaste woman and fertile wife all at once. It manifests a truly composite form, a body that enmeshes the clan into multiple hierarchies and identities. Finally, the depiction of intricate lacework, gold stitching, and fine silks and velvets as objects of artifice draws attention to the inherent value of the album itself. It underscores the role of Anne de Croy's marital body as a narrative device, a framework for displaying a choreographed and regulated process of dynastic change.

The Fractious Materiality of the Arenberg Album

The album portraits are organised into pairs forming nine married couples which alternate between men on the left side of the spine and women on the right. The order ensures that when the volume is opened at any point, the

³⁷⁶ Harlow, "Dress in the *Historia Augusta*," 143 and Van Wyhe, "The Fabrics of Female Rule," 144.

spouses face each other, their bodies angled in towards the centre of the book, presenting the viewer with a pendant arrangement (Figure 51). The four pairs that represent the Croy family are depicted at the front of the volume whilst the Arenberg couples take up the rear. Each portrait follows the same compositional pattern, resembling the format of much larger courtly oil portraiture that developed in mid Sixteenth-century Europe. The mode was apparent in the work of the Netherlandish artist Anthonis Mor who worked in the Brussels court, painting his sitters within a simple interior, bringing them close to the pictorial plane, and emphasising their face and hands.³⁷⁷ The repeated appearance of props, console tables, richly upholstered chairs, helmets, batons, gloves and fans served to characterise, indicate status and rank, and place the sitters firmly within their opulent material world.³⁷⁸ Mor's portrait of *Philip II in Black and White* (Figure 52), for example, demonstrates the typical three quarter length and the three quarter angle format. Lit from the top left of the composition, the monarch is situated in a non descript interior furnished only with a red covered table. His face, hands, and intricately detailed attire are rendered with a mimetic quality and produce the illusion of tangible presence.³⁷⁹ As Joanna Woodall describes,

Magnificently attired, set high within the picture space and subjected to subtle manipulations of viewpoint, those who are portrayed physically

³⁷⁷ Joanna Woodall, *Anthonis Mor: Art and Authority* (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2007), 174-175.

³⁷⁸ Woodall, *Portraiture: Facing the Subject*, 2 and Woodall, *Anthonis Mor: Art and Authority*, 159.

³⁷⁹ Joanna Woodall, "An Exemplary Consort': Antonis Mor's Portrait of Mary of Tudor," *Art History* 14, no. 2 (June 1991), 194.

dominate their environment. They are psychologically imposing too: looking towards and yet beyond the viewer and assuming an immobile, elegant pose, as if quite aware of being portrayed.³⁸⁰

In the context of a princely portrait gallery, the repeated use of this format generated a pattern that could serve to manifest bonds between the individuals presented. Woodall has shown that Anthonis Mor's portraits of the female members of the Portuguese Habsburg court described familial unity, affection, and solidity through visual resemblance.³⁸¹

The courtly composition of each album portrait contrasts with the materiality of the volume and the sole archival reference to its place within the Arenberg household. An inventory listing, taken from Anne de Croy's home in Enghien in the aftermath of her death in 1635, describes a book kept in a case in one of the more private rooms of the castle. The volume is said to include portraits of the late Monseigneur and Madame along with their family. Stored beside it were bracelets, lace, leather gloves, and a few other precious hand-written books.³⁸² The document suggests that the album was an intimate device, treasured in a case containing small and costly objects, items that could be read, worn, revealed, and concealed. Elizabeth Honig, in *Jan Brueghel and the Senses of Scale*, has explored how small images offered a range of intimacies that were "kinetic

³⁸⁰ Woodall, "An Exemplary Consort," 194.

³⁸¹ Woodall, *Anthonis Mor*, 216-218.

³⁸² The inventory has been interrogated by Yves Delannoy and reproduced in local historical journal. 'Relève des livres se trouvant au Châteua d'Enghien en 1635' AAE. Succession..f. 152-153. Transcribed in Yves Delannoy, "Le Château et le Parc d'Enghien sous bannière des Arenberg 1607-1918," Annex I.

and complete, bodily and visual [...] A gesture uncovers what is hidden; a close visual encounter is allied with this act of revelation.”³⁸³ She argues that “small objects cleave closer to their owners than do large ones.”³⁸⁴ When worn, a miniature image becomes part of the owner’s corporal edges, and when stored away visual access remains dependant on their permission. Privacy and denial is inbuilt into such personal objects. In 1606, for example, Gillis Claessens painted a miniature of the Archduchess Isabella Clara Eugenia. The court goldsmith then mounted it, hung it from a gold chain laced with diamonds, but also provided it with a jewelled and enamelled box in which the image could reside unseen.³⁸⁵

The physical mechanics of the Arenberg album act as a vehicle for this kind of intimate interaction. The bindings, parchment, and watercolour encourage tactility, close visual contact, and personal meditation. As Maura Nolan argues, “the material book is a technology that orchestrates habit.”³⁸⁶ The volume cultivates the familiar through repeated processes of lifting, opening, and turning. In addition, the watercolours evoke image-making traditions with long histories of corporeal interaction. The practise of poring over small paintings, for example, was well established through patterns of encounter with manuscript illumination. Books of Hours were populated with vibrant images bound to

³⁸³ Elizabeth Honig, *Jan Brueghel and the Senses of Scale* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2016), 67.

³⁸⁴ Honig, *Jan Brueghel and the Senses of Scale*, 67.

³⁸⁵ Ibid, 66.

³⁸⁶ Maura Nolan, “Medieval Habit, Modern Sensation: Reading Manuscripts in the Digital Age,” in *The Chaucer Review* 47, no. 4 (2013), 467.

personal routines of devotion and rhythms of daily and seasonal prayer. As the Getty Centre exhibition ‘Touching the Past: The Hand and the Medieval Book’ explored, such devotional images were often kissed, rubbed or stroked, wearing away the pigment and leaving traces of the body on the page.³⁸⁷

The composition of the album portraits is grand, public and courtly and yet their scale ensures that they can be revealed or hidden by a simple movement. Their consistent pattern imitates the princely portrait gallery, and yet they respond to the physical procedures of a single user. The watercolour takes the compositional model associated with the illusory power of oil paint, and yet the flat, bright pigment does little to disguise the two-dimensionality of the parchment page. Indeed, watercolour as a medium was less prestigious than oil paint and, instead of suggesting a public arena, held associations with the domestic sphere and the leisure time of nobility. Henry Peacham’s *A Gentleman’s Exercise, or, An Exquisite Practice* first published in London in 1612 addressed such an issue, arguing,

Painting in oyle is done I confesse with greater judgement, and is generally more esteeme than working in watercolours, but then it is more mechanic, and will rob you of overmuch time from your more excellent studies, it being sometime a fortnight or a month ere you can finish an

³⁸⁷ “Touching the Past: The Hand in the Medieval Book,” *The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles*, 2015, accessed Jan 15, 2017, http://www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/the_hand. Jennifer Borland also explores this subject matter in “Unruly Reading: The Consuming Role of Touch in the Experience of a Medieval Manuscript,” in *Scraped, Stroked, and Bound: Materially Engaged Readings of Medieval Manuscripts*, ed. Jonathan Wilcox (Turnhout: Brepolis, 2013).

ordinary piece [...] beside oyle [colours] [...] if they drop upon apparel, will not out; when watercolours will with the least washing.³⁸⁸

When completing a watercolour painting, Peacham continues, the nobleman is “never so wedded unto it, as to hold it any part of [his] profession, but rather allotted [...] the place [...] of an accomplishment required in a Scholar or Gentleman.”³⁸⁹ The media could be stored away in a moment, remaining decidedly within the home to delight the eye and enliven the mind.

Numerous sixteenth and seventeenth-century limning and watercolour treatises were directed towards an elite audience. Such texts combined the technical instructions for mixing pigment and organising compositions with poetic homilies concerning the elevated quality of the practise. Peacham’s *A Gentleman’s Exercise* repeatedly described the link between nobility and painting. His treatise declared that “many yong Gentlemen in this Kingdome [...] want fit directions to the attaining of this commendable skill” that was “favoured in times past of the greatest Monarches, and of late daies practised even by Princes, and the greatest parsonages themselves.”³⁹⁰ Even the King of France was “reported to have been excellent with the pencil.”³⁹¹ Watercolour and limning

³⁸⁸ Henry Peacham, *The Art of Drawing with the Pen, and Limning in Water Colours etc.* (London, 1606) cited in Katherine Coombs, “‘A Kind of Gentle Painting:’ Limning in Sixteenth Century England,” in *European Visions: American Voices*, ed. Kim Sloan (London: British Museum Press, 2009), 81.

³⁸⁹ Peacham, *The Art of Drawing with the Pen*, cited in Coombs. “‘A Kind of Gentle Painting,” 80.

³⁹⁰ Peacham, *The gentlemans exercise*, A2.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

was “a gentle kind of painting,”³⁹² and “gentlemen be the meetest for this gentle calling.”³⁹³ Those who practised such painting evidenced their noble quality and confirmed their place amongst the humanist elite.

The Album watercolour images were built up from multiple layers of expensive pigment. Vivid powders were ground from minerals and semi precious stones, blues from azurite and lapis lazuli, green from malachite, red from cinnabar. Others, such as ochre or lead, were chemically refined from organic earth whilst crushed plants and insects produced cochineals and indigos.³⁹⁴ These powdered pigments were stored in ivory boxes, ground with a stone of crystal, serpentine or jasper, and applied from a mother-of-pearl surface with squirrel hair paintbrushes.³⁹⁵ The pigments demanded specific bodily behaviour, prescribing the environment and clothing of the artist. Nicholas Hilliard’s treatise, *The Art of Limning* written circa 1600, instructed,

Then the first and chieftest precept I give is cleanliness, and therefore fittest for gentlemen; that the practicer of limning be precisely pure and cleanly in all his doings: as in grinding his colours in place where there is neither dust nor smoke; the water well chosen, or distilled most pure [...] Let your apparel be silk, such as sheddeth least dust or hairs...³⁹⁶

³⁹² Hilliard, *The Art of Limning*, 43.

³⁹³ Ibid, 45.

³⁹⁴ Timea Tallian, “John White’s Materials and Techniques,” in *European Visions: American Voices*, ed. Kim Sloan (London: British Museum Press, 2009), 72.

³⁹⁵ Tallian, “John White’s Materials and Techniques,” 73.

³⁹⁶ Nicolas Hilliard, *The Art of Limning*, ed. T. G. S. Cain and R. K. R. Thornton (Manchester: The Mid Northumberland Arts Group, 1992), 53.

In addition to this, the artist was required to occupy a large space, well lit from the north and “somewhat towards the east [...] without impeachments or reflections of walls and trees [...] in a place where neither dust, smoke, noise nor stench may offend.”³⁹⁷ The painter must also adhere to proper practices of speech and diet.³⁹⁸

Hilliard argued that limning “excelleth all other painting whatsoever, [...] in giving the true lustre to pearl and precious stone, and worketh the metals gold or silver with themselves which so enricheth and innobleth the work.”³⁹⁹ Whilst the quality of ‘lustre’ is discussed here in relation to gold, precious stones, and pearls, the concept is not tied to a reflective characteristic. Indeed, Hilliard also describes illusory black fabric and skin as lustrous, implying that the quality must signify more than simply a glossy surface.⁴⁰⁰ Lustre can be understood as an attribute tied to the inherent value of an image as a precious item in itself. The author describes particles of gold and silver worked into the page in the conjuring of fine costume. He instructs on the rendering of precious stones that must have in themselves “substance and beauty, transparent and pure, not of a

³⁹⁷ Hilliard, *The Art of Limning*, 73-74.

³⁹⁸ This specifically concerns a certain fruit stone which may be burnt to obtain a particularly fine carbon black. Tallian, “John White’s Materials and Techniques,” 75.

³⁹⁹ Hilliard, *The Art of Limning*, 42.

⁴⁰⁰ The author rations the use of gum arabic as a binder for pigment, warning that too much produces an unwanted shiny quality. Hilliard, *The Art of Limning*, 42; Dulac, “The Colour of Lustre,” 13.

thick or troubled water, but clear.”⁴⁰¹ Painted skin could also be a valuable surface, built up from layers of pigment into a lustrous form through the repeated working of the artist’s hand.⁴⁰² Lustre became apparent in the production of preciousness across the page. Unlike oil paint, watercolour remained omnipresent in the eye of the observer. It drew attention to the inherent material worth of the object as opposed to the forms it signified. It shattered any illusion that the forms presented a mirror of real life, instead allowing for a multiplicity of overlapping and contrasting narratives to be present simultaneously.

Each portrait in the Arenberg album features an identifying inscription that appears as though imposed over the top of the image, decorated to varying extents with curling strap work. The inscriptions include the name and titles of the sitter but also their specific familial relationship to Anne de Croy, be it father, sister, mother-in-law, or even half uncle. The texts include, for example, “Messire Philippe de Croy, Ducq’ Arshot. Pere a Madame;” “Dame Marguerite de Croy Contesse de Boussu. Soeur a Madame;” and “Messire Jean de Ligne Prinse Comte d’Arenberghe. Beau pere a Madame.”⁴⁰³ The formulation of the volume around the figure of Anne de Croy has a profound impact on the way the book is encountered. By addressing the Duchess, the inscriptions all point towards her

⁴⁰¹ Hilliard, *The Art of Limning*, 83.

⁴⁰² Dulac, “The Colour of Lustre,” 24.

⁴⁰³ Family Album: ACA. Iconograpahie ref. honour 49. H49. “Portretalbum. Handgeschilderde portretten von de families van Karel van Arenbergen Anne van Croy.”

painted body at the centre of the album. As a result, the normative, linear process of encountering a book is subverted. The viewer is perpetually directed towards the middle. The pages face inward and produce a pendulum-like experience of viewing in which the reader is endlessly drawn back in from either edge. Every portrait is defined in relation to that of the Duchess and, in turn, the painted Anne de Croy is composed by every other image. The nature of each individual body feeds into the collective whole, a system which, as will be argued below, correlated with contemporary understandings of marriage.

Matter Desiring Form: Anne as Collective and Pendant

Numerous sixteenth-century scholars and social commentators discussed the changes to the nature of a woman initiated by marriage. In *The Education of a Christian Woman* (1523), Juan Luis Vives stated,

This is the meaning and lesson of matrimony: that a woman should think that her husband is everything to her- father, mother, brothers, sisters. This is what Adam was to Eve, what the virtuous Andromache said Hector was to her in the passage in Homer:

Father and mother are you to me,
Brother and well-beloved spouse.⁴⁰⁴

Elsewhere marriage was described in terms of body building. It was a practice that not only drew together community, combined responsibilities, and material wealth but also joined physical and spiritual bodies. Erasmus' *Institutio christiani*

⁴⁰⁴ Juan Luis Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman: A Sixteenth-Century Manual*, ed. and trans. C. Fantazzi (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2000), Book III: III.

matrimonii, published in Basel in 1526 and dedicated to Catherine of Aragon, described this unification,

But among all relationships [...] there is none closer or more holy than marriage, because it involves the complete and perpetual intermingling of two destinies and connects, unites and joins body to body, spirit to spirit, in such a way that it seems to make two people one. Pythagoras described friendship as “sharing a soul,” but marriage goes even further and also means “sharing one body.”⁴⁰⁵

This idea was expressed in emblem form within Mathias Holzward’s *Emblematum Tyrocinia* published in Strassbourg, 1581 (Figure 53). Here, a couple depicted under the title ‘Amor conjugalis’ are shown entwined, torsos fused in marital embrace. They mimic the vine and elm tree positioned in the left of the composition, an organic and natural synthesis. Yet, as the behaviour of the plants suggests, one a strong and stable trunk and the other a thin creeping vine, the amalgamation into one form was not a balanced process. Indeed Erasmus, elaborating on the unified marital body, designated that “the man represents the principles of form and action, the woman, of matter desiring form.”⁴⁰⁶ The idea aligns with designations of the female body as “naturally grotesque,”⁴⁰⁷ a fluid and transgressive entity, outgrowing itself and its own limits, ever at risk of merging with the rest of the world. It stood in diametric opposition to the

⁴⁰⁵ Desiderius Erasmus, “Institutio Christiani Matrimonii. Spiritualia 3,” in *The Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 69, ed. J. W. O’Malley and L. A. Parraud (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 218-9.

⁴⁰⁶ Erasmus, “Institutio Christiani Matrimonii,” 226.

⁴⁰⁷ Peter Stallybrass, “Patriarchal Territories: The Body Enclosed,” in *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J. Vickers (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 126.

perfected classical male body, the closed and complete unit, distinctive, sealed, constant and whole.⁴⁰⁸

Supplementing the notion that women became culturally visible in the male gaze on the event of marriage, this model suggests that they also became culturally whole in conjunction with the male form. They were tangible when touched by men, solid when constituted as a collective. The Arenberg album enacted the creation of the new, contained communal body required by Anne de Croy, amalgamating her family members and husband within a single leather skin. It manifested her form, anchoring her disparate matter in a scaffolding of other bodies. The bindings opened and shut, utilising both internal and external surfaces as modes of communication. When the album was closed, the family portraits were pressed against each other, conjoined and solid, a community, a unified entity. The arrangement of the images within the volume further detailed the nature of this collective form. The portraits of Charles' parents, Margaret de la Marck and Jean de Ligne, immediately preceding the newly married couple, designated Anne as belonging firmly within her husband's Arenberg clan. In addition, the Duchess is positioned on the *sinister*, lesser, side of her husband whilst the Duke occupies the greater, *dexter*, side in accordance with the heraldic tradition. Turning the parchment, his portrait would always precede that of hers and, when the volume was closed, his painted body rested on top of hers.

⁴⁰⁸ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabalias and His World*, trans. Hélène Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 26 and 312.

In addition to processes of amalgamation and containment, the Arenberg album enacts an idealised model of marriage described by Vives and Erasmus in terms of friendship and similarity.⁴⁰⁹ Drawing on ancient dialogues of friendship, Vives posited that a husband and wife were bound by “a certain secret consente and similitude of nature.”⁴¹⁰ His 1529 treatise *Office and Duetie of a Husband* included the assertion that “every man doth call unto him [...] that is most likest unto him, or els through a certain contagiousness or some familiar conversation, he becometh like unto it.”⁴¹¹ The shared bindings, media, composition, and posture of Anne and Charles can be further understood in this way (Figure 54). When the volume was opened and the pendant portraits became visible, the physical connection between them, rotating round a single axis, was repeatedly reinstated by the observer’s hand and sight. Their images further shared a series of resemblances that highlighted bodily similarity as opposed to dichotomous difference. Indeed, the deep V shape of the Duchess’ pearls and bodice find a precedent, as opposed to opposite, in the acute angle of Charles’ ornamented breastplate.

The shared motif of the curtain, pulled back from either side toward the centre of the book, further emphasises the similitude and unity shared between each

⁴⁰⁹ Constance M. Furely, “Bound by Likeness: Vives and Erasmus on Marriage and Friendship,” in *Discourses and Representations of Friendship in Early Modern Europe, 1500-1700*, ed. Maritere López (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 30-31.

⁴¹⁰ Juan Luis Vives, *The Office and Dutie of an Husband*, trans. Thomas Paynell (London: John Cahwood, 1553) cited in Furely, “Bound by Likeness,” 40.

⁴¹¹ Vives, *The Office and Dutie of an Husband*, cited in Furely, “Bound by Likeness,” 40.

pendant couple. The drawn curtains link the images of Philippe de Salain and Marguerite de Ligne (Figure 55) and Saletin van Isenburg and Antoinette Guillemette (Figure 56). In some instances it is the treatment of the fabric, rather than the mirrored positioning, that bind the pair. The pendant of Robert de Ligne and Claude Rintgrave (Figure 57), for example, both display an exaggerated plasticity of form. A notable exception to this pattern appears in the images of Charles de Croy and Marie de Brimeu (Figure 58). Here the fabric is completely absent from the female portrait and, conversely, covers the entire background of the male image, creasing and looping over the familial shield. Charles' portrait is ornate and detailed, including a chair, baton, and pillar. Marie, on the other hand, is depicted in a sparse field of dull green without props and in notably plain dress. She faces away from her spouse and, in doing so, dilutes the visual likeness between the pair.

It is tempting to read this anomalous pendant as a direct reflection of the marriage between Charles de Croy (1560-1612) and Marie de Brimeu (1550-1605) which, by 1590, had broken down beyond repair. Marie was a Calvinist and, after a brief and costly dalliance with Protestantism, Charles returned to the Catholic faith and separated from his wife. The union had not produced any children and, unable to divorce Marie, Charles faced a crisis of succession and lengthy legal proceedings concerning her possessions.⁴¹² It is certainly likely that the austere aesthetic of Marie's portrait correlated with her absence from the family, a lack of model or portrait to copy, and the removal of clothing to study in

⁴¹² Florike Egmond, *The World of Carolus Clusius: Natural History in the Making 1550-1610* (Oxon: Routledge, 2010), 60.

detail. It is also possible that the particularly opulent approach to Charles' portrait positioned the Duke in a resistant position to his estranged wife by asserting confidence in the cohesion of the Arenberg material environment. Despite these pronounced differences, however, Marie is included within the album and therefore remains a component of the clan alongside her patrimonial lands, titles, and possessions. Her portrait defies the separation of the corporal body in line with Alberti's teaching on the power of painting to make the absent present.⁴¹³ She continues to be bound by the mechanics of the book, sublimated into her husband's family and the collective dynastic whole it manifested.

To conclude his discussion on likeness and marriage, Vives quoted the first line of Psalm 18: 26, "With the holy thou shalt be holy." As Constance Furey describes, this biblical imperative reflected the "key premise of Christian soteriology, that like can only be known by like. Thus one who desires to be saved, to dwell with God, must seek to become holy like God."⁴¹⁴ In using this passage, Vives positions the correspondences between husband and wife in a larger chain of elevated similarities. He described marriage as a "marvellous mystery"⁴¹⁵ based on the creation of mankind as laid out in the Book of Genesis.

When a woman marries she must call to mind the origins of marriage [...] God, the originator and founder of this great institution, after bringing man into the world [...] joined to him a living partner [...] God brought woman to man, which means that God himself was the chief author and

⁴¹³ Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting*, trans. John R. Spencer (New Haven: Yale, 1966), Book II: XXV.

⁴¹⁴ Furey, "Bound by Likeness," 40.

⁴¹⁵ Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman*, Book II: I.

mediator of marriage. [...] As soon as man looked upon the female of the species, he began to love her above all else and said: 'This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called woman because out of man she was taken. Because of her man will leave father and mother and will cleave to his wife and they shall be two in one flesh.' When he says 'one flesh' it means literally one flesh. [...] Therefore those who were previously two human beings become one [...] This is the marvellous mystery of marriage, that it so joins and unites the two spouses that the two become one, which was true also of Christ and the Church [...] No power could bring this about except it were divine. Of necessity this must be a very holy thing since God is present in it in such a special manner.⁴¹⁶

Erasmus, alternately, placed marriage in a chain of likenesses with the Incarnation, describing it as analogous to the meeting of divine and mundane. "In one and the same hypostasis were joined the Son of God, a human soul, and a human body, and an indissoluble link was forged between the heavenly and the terrestrial, the eternal and the mortal."⁴¹⁷ In both interpretations, the resemblances between husband and wife point heavenward and emphasise the sacred qualities of marital union. Vives even posits the behaviour of the idealised wife within this chain of resemblances, reflecting "the image of the Church, which is both most chaste and tenaciously preserves unshaken faith in its spouse Christ."⁴¹⁸ Marriage was considered an official sacrament within the Catholic Church.⁴¹⁹ It was a recognised moment of holy presence and encounter, a

⁴¹⁶ Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman*, Book II: I.

⁴¹⁷ Erasmus, "Institutio Christiani Matrimonii," 226.

⁴¹⁸ Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman*, Book II: I.

⁴¹⁹ Whilst well established within Catholic theology, it was not until the Council of Trent, in 1563, that the doctrine of sacramental marriage became dogma. The official confirmation of the belief was instigated by criticism of Protestant reformers whose de-sanctification of the event came as part of a wider system of changes to the wedding liturgy. Christine Peters, "Gender, Sacrament and Ritual: The Making and Meaning of Marriage in Late Medieval and Early Modern England," in *Past and Present* 169 (Nov. 2000): 64.

translation of divine grace from God to his faithful.⁴²⁰ The communal marital body created by the sacrament was therefore a holy thing, a mirror of the Eucharistic body, a “hinge”⁴²¹ between earth and heaven. As the album pages turned around the crease of the spine this communal sacramental body was perpetually displayed and affirmed. The volume became analogous to it, echoing the manifestation of the holy through the tangible materiality of the parchment and bindings.

The significance imbued in this pivotal movement aligned the volume to the mechanics of a diptych. Attached by a hinge, the two panels of a diptych were, as Alfred Acres describes, “separate but inseparable.”⁴²² Acres has explored the liminal space produced between two such pieces, asking to what extent the painter does something more than simply put two scenes together. Cavity or

⁴²⁰ Erasmus recorded a detailed explanation of the sacramental status of marriage. As in the other sacraments of the Church, he argued, marriage is tripartite. There are three integral aspects: *Imago*, defined as a certain congruence or likeness shared between sign and signified; *Exemplem*, whereby Christians find in that likeness something to venerate and imitate; and *Arrha*, which is considered a gift of spiritual grace. Marriage as *Imago* is signified by the likeness between the joining of divine and mundane in the body of Christ as well as the union between Christ and the Church taken from the Book of Ephesians. Chapter Five states, “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.” Ephesians 5: 22-24 (KJV); Philip Reynolds, *How Marriage Became One of the Sacraments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 734.

⁴²¹ Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman*, Book II: I.

⁴²² Alfred Acres, “The Middle of Diptychs,” in *Push Me, Pull You: Imaginative, Emotional, Physical, and Spatial Interaction in Late Medieval and Renaissance Art*, ed. Sarah Blick and Laura Deborah Gelfand (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 597.

corridor, he argues, there are profound implications to this central region. It crackles with energy, generating potential significance in the friction between recto and verso. Yet, as Acres continues, without the secondary external hinge of the observer, the potential of this liminal space cannot be fully realised. Unlike a triptych where spatial priorities are preordained as focus and then periphery, the diptych “is always asking something of us.”⁴²³ The observer is the point of recognition and mediation. It is in the encountering body that the bond between adjacent scenes of infancy and passion, Bethlehem and Calvary, divine and mundane, husband and wife, become part of larger narrative of devotion and salvation or dynastic continuance. Indeed, as Acres argues, the powerful “betweenness is made visible and productive only to one able to occupy and indeed control it from outside the closable work.”⁴²⁴

In this arrangement the observer of the album is awarded a privileged place. They become the crux point, the site at which the holy significance of the sacramental body is made manifest and the wider narratives offered by the material can be realised. Furthermore, the overarching theme of dynastic development is inserted into the visual genealogy that positioned images and prototypes in a chain of resemblances leading to God and salvation, like to like, holy to holy.⁴²⁵

⁴²³ Acres, “The Middle of Diptychs,” 621.

⁴²⁴ Ibid, 614 and 615.

⁴²⁵ Woodall, *Portraiture*, 3.

The Idealised Widow

The complex system of visual exchange between portraits and their overlapping models of marriage and gender, difference and similitude, is particularly pronounced in the collection of bodies positioned around Anne de Croy at the centre of the album. The visual relationships are played out across the surface of the painted clothes that powerfully construct the bodies on display. Anne Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass have explored the socially productive nature of clothing in early modern Europe. "It was investiture, the putting on of clothes, that quite literally constituted a person as a monarch or a freeman of a guild or a household servant. [It was] the means by which a person was given a form, a shape, a social function."⁴²⁶ Clothes were "deeply put on,"⁴²⁷ permeating the wearer, fashioning from within. They undid the opposition of inside and outside, surface and depth.⁴²⁸

As a crucial component in the construction of the self, dress could enact gendered ideals, staking out and assembling differences between men and women.⁴²⁹ As Carolyn Springer argues, armour and combative dress worked as part of a dichotomous Aristotlean model as, "to be open, permeable, and accessible, is the nature of femininity; virility is closed, secure and (literally)

⁴²⁶ Anne Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 2.

⁴²⁷ Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory*, 2.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

⁴²⁹ Currie, *Fashion and Masculinity in Renaissance Florence*, Introduction.

impregnable.”⁴³⁰ The centrality of clothes in the maintenance of difference meant that costume was policed at sites of risk and vulnerability. It was not only female dress that was subject to restriction and surveillance. Conduct literature paid special attention to the clothing of young men without family or professional duties who were considered more at risk from deviating from approved sexual practices.⁴³¹ Clothing prescribed bodily movement and restriction; it enclosed female bodies and performed the virility of the male. It facilitated different prototypes of masculinity and femininity according to context as typologies of dress adapted and blended in the social space of the court, household, market or church.⁴³²

Ulinka Rublack has examined the nature of illustrated dress in relation to Matthäuss and Veit Konrad Schwarz’s *Book of Clothes*. She argues that this collection provides scholars with an unparalleled chronicle of Renaissance costume and insight into how fashion was integral to consumerist society, performing as an agent in its own right. The painted clothes of the patron can be understood as a controlled documentation of well-performed masculine social roles, enlisted for the mediation of a tricky urban world by an expert in self-fashioning.⁴³³ Painted in detail and bound together in a single form, such clothing

⁴³⁰ Springer, *Armour and Masculinity in the Italian Renaissance*, 15.

⁴³¹ Currie, *Fashion and Masculinity in Renaissance Florence*, Introduction.

⁴³² Currie, *Fashion and Masculinity in Renaissance Florence*, 6.

⁴³³ Ulinka Rublack, “Introduction I: The First Book of Fashion,” in *The First Book of Fashion: The Book of Clothes of Matthaeus and Veit Konrad Schwarz of Augsburg*, ed. Ulinka Rublack and Maria Hayward (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 22.

could be worn all at once, fashioning the body in a multiplicity of roles regardless of age, weather, social situation or wealth. Indeed, represented clothing was not subject to the limitations of linear time, finite space, and transient movement.

The painted textiles of the Arenberg album similarly transcended the ephemeral nature of real clothing, negating the wear and tear of cloth, moths, light exposure, broken seams, shifting fashions, or body shapes. The figures that they sculpted were not subject to death or distance. The dialogues they created lasted long after the fashions they signalled and they were not dependant on continual expenditure and maintenance. Conjured in the mind of the artist, the attire performed in a visual realm where imaged pearls or diamond-studded velvet could draw from painted convention and did not necessarily correspond to a real model.⁴³⁴ Indeed, as will be shown below, the represented dress in the portrait of Margaret de la Marck severed the link between sitter and subject, performing gendered ideals and visual exchanges that had little correlation to the actual lived experience of the Countess.

The outline of Margaret's body is primarily constituted as a broad convex curve that signals the edge of a black cloak (Figure 59). Sharp diagonal bands of white

⁴³⁴ The painted pearl necklace in Anne de Croy's portrait may serve to position the image in relationship with other images. In Harwick Hall, in Derbyshire, for example, a magnificent pearl necklace is displayed in the portrait of Anne Keighley, wife of William Cavendish. Within the Harwick Hall collection, a similar necklace is worn in portraits of Mary Cavendish (sixteenth-century English school) and Elizabeth 'Bess' of Hardwick (painted by Robert Lockey in 1592) creating a visual genealogy between the women. The rare scale and magnificence of such ornaments produced a visual community of elite women that crossed generations and geography.

divide the centre of this dark field, suggesting the trim of a gown open from the neck. There are slits at chest level, and a sash that falls from either shoulder to a golden pendant displaying a minute crucifixion scene. At the centre of the form, hands grasp prayer beads and a creased handkerchief. A high, ruffled collar sits tightly under Margaret's chin and there is no sign of hair, instead a close fitting white coif curves into a point at the centre of her forehead.⁴³⁵ On the adjacent page, the body of Jean de Ligne cuts a similar silhouette. One arm is bent into a broad expanse of red paint whilst the other tracks the right side of the body, ending in a gloved fist. To the left, an area of white, creased with blue, suggests the lining of a mantle. The head is positioned high above the shoulders, framed by a white collar and the red *barrett* associated with the Order of the Golden Fleece.

The alignment of Margaret and Jean's dressed bodies insert the images into Sixteenth-century discourses concerning widowhood and the aging female form. A plate in Bartolomo Grassi's 1585 costume book *Dei veri ritratti degl'habiti di tvtte le parti del mondo. Libro primo* (Figure 60) displays a drawing of three Flemish women in contemporary fashion. The costume print does not specify the marital status of the women presented. However, the furthest on the right is described as a 'dame' as opposed to 'vrouw,' denoting high rank or noble standing.⁴³⁶ Her covered head and simple triangular gown resemble the costume

⁴³⁵ Gourguine Courtais, *Women's Hats, Headdresses and Hairstyles: With 453 Illustrations, Medieval to Modern* (New York: Dover Publications, 2006), 54.

⁴³⁶ Ingrid Van Alpen and Alessandra Corda, "Treatment of 'woman' and 'man' in the Dutch 'Word Thesaurus,'" in *Gender, Language and New Literacy: A*

depicted in Margaret de la Marck's portrait. It is a form with very little relation to the natural curve of the female body, conflating the lower limbs and torso into one monolithic pyramid. The all-encompassing geometry of the dress manipulated the female figure to show in the "whole demeanour what they profess in name,"⁴³⁷ fidelity as a wife and chastity as a widow. The clothing evidenced and safeguarded the modesty with which, Vives argued, "the whole body of a woman is covered."⁴³⁸ Likewise, the form constructed by mourning dress performed social differentiation, separation, piety, chastity and a sense of withdrawal from the world.⁴³⁹ It addressed the problematic status of the widow who, sexually experienced but unbound by marriage, required redefinition within the patriarchal community in which she resided.⁴⁴⁰

Conduct literature emphasised the dramatic implications of widowhood on the state of the female body. In *The Education of a Christian Woman* (1523) Vives described how "a ship without a rudder is not free, but abandoned, and a child without a teacher is not free, but directionless, without rule or law. So a woman bereft of her husband is, in the true meaning of the word, widowed- that is,

Multilingual Analysis, ed. Eva Maria Thüne, Carla Bazzanella, and Simona Leonardi (London: Continuum, 2006), 48.

⁴³⁷ Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman*, Book III: VI.

⁴³⁸ Ibid, Book II: VII.

⁴³⁹ Lou Taylor, *Mourning Dress: A Costume and Social History* (Oxon: Routledge, 2009), 87.

⁴⁴⁰ Alison Levy, "Effaced: Failing Widows," in *Women and Portraits in Early Modern Europe: Gender, Agency, Identity*, ed. Andrea Pearson (Aldershot: Routledge, 2008), 76.

destitute and deserted.”⁴⁴¹ To counter such anxieties the idealised widow was constructed as an entity imbued with grave modesty and honest shame, avoiding obvious display and any bold, forceful, sudden, or carefree motion. Her sight and thought was tempered, her laugh silenced, and her smile absent. Her words were few and honourable. Only so clad could she go about in public to do charitable works and perfect her piety.⁴⁴² Giulio Cesare Cabei’s *Ornaments of the Gentle Widow* (Venice, 1574) laid out practical instructions for such behaviour, focusing on fasting and spiritual efficacy. He argued that abstinence in all areas of life was necessary to show that the widow had buried “all pleasure, all delight, and every thought contrary to honour”⁴⁴³ alongside her husband.

In line with this, Margaret’s painted mouth is small and her head is completely encircled by fabrics. She is differentiated from the environment in which she is located. Her imaged body shows little evidence for potential movement. Indeed, the only other option implied for her hands is in the slits in her mantle, a space through which the arms could be inserted to warm the cold aging body but also to maintain a prayer position.⁴⁴⁴ Margaret holds her handkerchief in her right

⁴⁴¹ Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman*, Book I: IV.

⁴⁴² Rudolph Bell, *How to Do It: Guides to Good Living for Renaissance Italians* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 270.

⁴⁴³ Giulio Cesare Cabei, *Ornamenti della gentil donna vedova (Ornaments of the Gentle Widow)*, (Venice, 1574), 30, translation in Erin J. Campbell, *Old Women and Art in the Early Modern Italian Domestic Interior* (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 151.

⁴⁴⁴ Cordula van Wyhe has explored how similar slits in the habit of Isabella Clara Eugenia corresponded to the seventeenth-century prescribed prayer position of crossed arms over the chest with hands resting on the girdle. “The Making and Meaning of the Monastic Habit at Spanish Habsburg Courts,” in *Spanish Fashion*

hand. The white cloth appears soft and crumpled, a noticeable trait in the context of her boldly outlined form and the diagonal slices of white that appear within the bulk of her figure. Like the rest of her body, the handkerchief is all but free from adornment and features a simple tasselled edge. It gathers in the palm of the hand, spilling out under Margaret's thumb.

The display of handkerchiefs in sixteenth and seventeenth-century portraiture shifted across time and between contexts. As an accessory they could signify both sorrow and wealth but crucially, as William Fisher has examined, helped to produce femininity by "materialising gender identity."⁴⁴⁵ Painted into the hands of an elderly woman or widow, the handkerchief evoked self-mastery of emotions and religious consolation for bereavement.⁴⁴⁶ Indeed, the accessory offered multifaceted performances of grief. The association between the fabric and tears brought to mind archetypal figures of the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene, lamenting Christ's suffering or washing his feet. Such display of emotion could be understood as evidence of a privileged spiritual state, but it was one that demanded careful balancing in line with codes of public decorum.⁴⁴⁷ The fabric replaced the presence of bodily fluids but,

in Early Modern Europe: The Prevalence and Prestige of Spanish Attire in the Courts of the 16th and 17th Centuries, ed. José-Luis Colomer and Amalia Descalzo (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica, 2014), 272-273.

⁴⁴⁵ Will Fisher, *Materialising Gender in Early Modern English Literature and Drama* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2006), 41-42.

⁴⁴⁶ Stephanie S. Dickie, "'Met een wenende ziel ... doch droge ogen': Women holding handkerchiefs in seventeenth-century Dutch portraits," *Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art* 46 (1995): 340.

⁴⁴⁷ Dickie, "Met een wenende ziel," 342.

simultaneously, as an agent for wiping away tears, signified the remedy for sorrow.⁴⁴⁸ Indeed, in her stoic management of grief, the widow acknowledged both her loss and her consolatory hope in Christian salvation. Her husband was absent and yet joined with God in a perpetually holy state. Stephanie Dickie cites the correspondence of Dutch woman Maria Tesselschade who, in 1654, wrote of her “weeping soul, oppressed heart and grieving spirit, but with dry eyes [...] consoling myself in the Divine Will.”⁴⁴⁹

The construction of the widowed body through non-reflective, light-absorbing matter suggested the textile restrictions laid out in Netherlandish clothing manuals. Such texts specified the restriction of shiny materials like silk or polished leather on mourning clothing. Garments were to be made of dull wool and accessories such as belts, shoes and gloves from black chamois. Ribbons, bows and lace were discouraged altogether.⁴⁵⁰ On the subject of widow portraiture Alison Levy argues, “if the dark, flat surface of her gown marks her as one man’s mourner, the same identifying abstraction ironically erases her. Or does it? [...] What is signified upon her body- an empty hollow? A black hole?”⁴⁵¹ The painted widow is a void that, having upon marriage been “matter desiring

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁹ Dickie, “Met een wenende ziel,” 345.

⁴⁵⁰ Marieke De Winkel, *Fashion and Fancy: Dress and Meaning in Rembrandt’s Paintings* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 70.

⁴⁵¹ Levy, “Effaced: Failing Widows,” 71.

form,”⁴⁵² returns to an entropic state of being. She mourns and thus maintains her husband’s memory but her presence marks only his absence.⁴⁵³

Medical treatises also described the aging female body in terms of deficiency. Michael Scots’ *Der vrouwen natuere ende complexie*, republished in 1570 in Dutch from the Latin twelfth-century work, was based in Galenic theory, the mainstream model in sixteenth-century Europe. Scots emphasised the crucial purgatory role that menstruation played in the female form. Once this cleansing process ceased, the body was far more susceptible to illness and evil than in fertile youth.⁴⁵⁴ Female aging was understood as a process of cooling and drying out. The naturally cold and wet body gradually lost its ability to excrete excess fluids due to the hardening of fibres, narrowing of uterine vessels and thickening and slowing of the blood.⁴⁵⁵ Such shifts dramatically impacted the perception and classification of the individual. The change in temperature and loss of moisture signalled, in Hippocratic terms, “the reassimilation of the female body to the male.”⁴⁵⁶ As Daniel Schäfer has argued, “older women ‘gain’ access to the

⁴⁵² Erasmus, “Institutio Christiani Matrimonii,” 226.

⁴⁵³ Levy, “Effaced: Failing Widows,” 75.

⁴⁵⁴ Michael Scots, *Der vrouwen natuere ende complexie* (n.p, 1570), cited in Cordula Van Wyhe, “The Fabrics of Female Rule in Leone Leoni’s Statue of Mary of Hungary, c. 1556,” 157 and 152 n 95.

⁴⁵⁵ Michael Stolberg, “A Woman’s Hell? Medical Perceptions of Menopause in Preindustrial Europe,” *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 73, no. 3 (1999): 403.

⁴⁵⁶ Lesley Dean-Jones, *Women’s Bodies in Classical Greek Science* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 107.

masculine physiology of old age: thus old women do not exist; they are completely absorbed in the male principle of aging.”⁴⁵⁷

The pendant portraits of Margaret and Jean de Ligne perform the rescinding of one form into another, the female into the male, the mourning wife into the absent husband. The eye is drawn to Jean de Ligne over that of Margaret. One is vibrant and the other demure. Even the red beads twisted around the wrist of the Countess, the only colour to invade the otherwise monochrome figure, direct the eye back across the spine to the previous page. The images also manifest the shifted gender of the widow. The wife has become her husband and, in some manner, has become male. Notably, this idealised construction of the aging, mourning woman had little connection to the public self-fashioning undertaken by Margaret de la Marck in real life.⁴⁵⁸ As examined in the previous chapter her glazed portrait in Gouda displayed the Countess in the attire of a perpetually married woman despite her recent bereavement. Her clothing was courtly, luxurious and, enlivened by the light passing through the glass, sumptuously coloured. Similarly, François Clouet’s portrait of Margaret, drawn in around 1570 during her time as chaperone to Elizabeth of Austria, displays equally lavish costume (Figure 61).⁴⁵⁹ Margaret’s embroidered and bejewelled dress and decorated bonnet shows off her partially covered hair and does little to imply the

⁴⁵⁷ Daniel Schäfer, *Old Age and Discourse in Early Modern Medicine* (London: Routledge, 2011), 172.

⁴⁵⁸ Margaret continued to play an active role in the administration of the dynasty. Marini, *Anna van Croy*, 95.

⁴⁵⁹ Maes de Smet, “Margaretha van der Marck- Arenberg (1527-1599),” 39.

reserve and withdrawal prescribed for virtuous widows. Instead she is recorded as being part of a celebratory elite group, shouldering political and maternal responsibilities at court.

The album portrait appears to be the earliest surviving representation in which Margaret is constructed through sombre self-effacing costume. As such, it draws attention to the fact that the image was not an index of the sitter's personality and the dissolution of the female form into male was not a direct reflection of lived experience. Rather, the image performed as part of a sequence, a visual dialogue that sculpted an idealised model of widowhood as a component in an extended portrait of Anne de Croy. Indeed, just as the identifying inscriptions continually directed attention back to the Duchess, the clothes of Margaret can be understood to work towards the construction of this other centralised body.

Generational Shift

The marriage of Charles and Anne marked the completion of Margaret's maternal duties. She had spent many years negotiating the marriages of her children playing, as Mirella Marini describes, "a game with high stakes."⁴⁶⁰ It was a game in which the future of the Arenberg and Ligne genealogy hung in the balance and, despite several false starts, the album listed Margaret's final

⁴⁶⁰ Mirella Marini, "Margaret de la Marck (1527-1599) and Arenberg Family Strategy During the Dutch Revolt," in *Women, Diplomacy and International Politics since 1500*, ed. Glenda Sluga and Carolyn James (New York: Routledge, 2016), 57.

accomplishment in a series of successes in the field.⁴⁶¹ The union of Charles d'Arenberg proved to be the most challenging of Margaret's marital projects. Early in 1567 Margaret stayed in the company of Duchess Christina of Lorraine and made plans with the Count of Vaudémont to marry her son to his eldest daughter Louise of Lorraine, Countess of Vaudémont. Both families were in agreement, Philip II gladly gave his consent to the pair and a mutually agreed engagement to marry was put on paper. Despite this, however, the marriage never took place and, in 1575, Louise van Vaudémont became the wife of the French king Henry II.⁴⁶²

For ten years afterwards, Margaret pursued an alliance between Charles and Sybilla of Jülich-Cleves-Berg, the last unmarried daughter of William V, Duke of Jülich-Cleves-Berg, due to inherit a portion of the Cleves patrimony. The union would have raised the Arenberg family wealth and status considerably and Margaret doggedly pursued the contract in spite of Sybilla's Protestant leanings. However, when the Emperor Rudolf II was consulted about the marriage he strongly advised against it, citing the difference in familial status. The Arenberg

⁴⁶¹ In 1569 Philip II gave his consent for the Countess' daughter Marguerite to marry Count Philippe de Salain von Lalaing, Baron van Escornaix. The Count held a good reputation as Lord High Steward of Henegouwen, member of the Council of State and bearer of the Golden Fleece. The marriage of Margaret's second daughter, Antoinette Guillemette, to Saletin van Isenburg was also permitted by Philip II. Saletin was the last living male in his family and stepped down from his position as Archbishop in order to marry. Finally, Margaret's youngest son Robert was married to the daughter of the late Count of the Rhine in 1588. The approval of Philip II was vital to Margaret de la Marck as he had promised to provide dowries of 10000 guilders for each of her daughters after the death of her husband in loyal service to the Spanish crown. Maes de Smet, "Margaretha van der Marck-Arenberg (1527-1599)," 43.

⁴⁶² Ibid.

clan was still too young, only having recently become part of the highest echelons of nobility.⁴⁶³ Indeed, it was only a few years since Margaret had received confirmation of the Arenberg family's authority over the land, and the glass and lead in the great family commission, the *Judith* window, had barely settled into its frame.

When Margaret's persistence failed to result in a match in 1585, she turned her attention to dynastic opportunities in the aristocracy of the Low Countries, quickly discovering an appropriate daughter-in-law in the figure of Anne de Croy.⁴⁶⁴ The Croys were an attractive prospect, boasting an ancient Burgundian lineage that had mixed with royalty over centuries. By the late 1580s however, the branch into which Anne was born was experiencing difficulties, not least the crisis of succession initiated by the separation of Charles de Croy and Marie de Brimeu. Margaret successfully brokered a union between the dynasties. Her involvement can be clearly discerned in the makeup of the marriage contract drawn up between Anne and Charles, which bore a remarkable similarity to her own, signed by Margaret and Jean de Ligne in 1547.⁴⁶⁵

⁴⁶³ Ibid, 45.

⁴⁶⁴ Marini, "Margaret de la Marck (1527-1599) and Arenberg Family Strategy," 57-58.

⁴⁶⁵ Mirella Marini has examined the two marriage contracts in detail, revealing the remarkable nature by which both contracts include clauses that favoured the matrilineal line. The contract stipulated that the Margaret's Marck-Arenberg patrimony would go to the couple's eldest child whilst Jean Ligne-Barbançon's name, coat of arms and title would pass to a second child. This arrangement allowed both parental dynastic titles means of continuation but favoured that of Arenberg over Ligne. Conversely, a generation later, Margaret deliberately allowed the temporary subordination of the Arenberg titles to that of Croy. The contract between Anne and Charles stated that "the eldest son of said damsel

Whilst in real life, Margaret continued to play a central role in the administration of the Arenberg clan alongside Anne de Croy, the pictorial exchange that takes place within the portrait album describes a dichotomous relationship between the two painted women.⁴⁶⁶ The demure, monolithic and monochrome figure of the Countess contrasts potently with the thickly detailed limbs of the Duchess displayed overleaf. Every inch of Anne's painted costume is worked with tiny marks and flicks of paint that signify a profusion of embroidery and adornment. The palette is rich and dominated by gold. Multiple layers, textures and materials are simulated as punctured lace competes for attention with ropes of pearls and loops of stitching. The women are arranged in sequence, the body of Margaret preceding that of Anne on the verso side of the volume. The album pages perform the recession of the Countess and the emergence of the Duchess. Indeed, Margaret is visually diminished twice over. She dissolves firstly into her husband and secondly into her daughter-in-law. The transition enacts the passage of Vives directed towards aging women who have fulfilled their maternal duties.

But when she arrives at this age, with her children all married, freed from earthly cares, turning the eyes of her body to the earth, to which she must render her body, and with the eyes of her soul looking to heaven, where she is to go to take up residence, she will raise all her senses, her mind, and her soul to the Lord, and girding herself for that departure, she will meditate on nothing that is not suited to that impending journey.⁴⁶⁷

Anne will have to carry name and coat of arms of Croy [...] said eldest son will hold on the title of duke of Aeschot with the dame and the coat of arms of Croy, divided by those of Arenberg." AAE. Bio 2, fol. 192v-205v 'L'Originel traicté de marriage,' translated in Marini, "From Arenberg to Aerschot and Back Again," 111.

⁴⁶⁶ Marini, *Anna van Croy*, 95.

⁴⁶⁷ Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman*, Book II: VIII.

The pivot of the page around the spine echoes the reorientation of Margaret from the vanguard of the family to a past generation. As the parchment shifts it buries the Countess under the image of her progeny, positioning Anne de Croy, quite literally, in her place. Thus the album portraits display both an idealised widowhood and an idealised dynastic shift between generations. It frames the entire narrative of marriage, presenting in one material form the amalgamation of the unmarried woman into a solid, collective patriarchal body and the virtuous management of bereavement and the avoidance of dissolution.

The Multifaceted Costume of Anne de Croy

Closer examination of the costume conjured in the portrait of Anne de Croy reveals that, in addition to the paragons of wife and widow, the painted body meshed together contrasting ideals of femininity prescribed for the active courtier and Flemish burgher woman. Anne's illusory dress is comprised of a huge amount of expensive, luxurious fabric. It consists of a black velvet *vlieghe*, an open fronted, mantle-like garment worn over a separate gown or stomacher and skirts. The voluminous sleeves are heavily embellished with intertwining couched gold loops and taper at the wrists into finely articulated lace cuffs. The *vlieghe* was a characteristic garment of Netherlandish burgher women. It was often fur lined, could be worn with or without sleeves and, most importantly,

was the prerogative of a wife.⁴⁶⁸ Indeed, within the inventories of women explored by Marieke de Winkel, vliegghers appear only in the trousseaux of married women.⁴⁶⁹ Anne's vlieggher is painted open from the neck and features the densely ornamented shoulder rolls in a style that was fashionable in the final years of the sixteenth century.⁴⁷⁰

The dress creates a distinctive conical silhouette recognisable in contemporary representations of Flemish women. A portrait of Marie de Huelstre, painted by Pourbus the Younger on the occasion of her marriage in 1591, provides a good example of this (Figure 62). The painting displays a similar style of clothing and broad body shape. The sitter is shown wearing multiple gold rings, bracelets and chains around her neck. Her punctured silk sleeves celebrate the reflective qualities of the material, a rich substance that inserted the body into the international trading environment and the heart of the burgher community. The thick display of lace in Anne de Croy's portrait similarly describes the painted body in terms of global trade and the rich domestic textile industry. The Flemish lace produced in the later sixteenth century was exported across Europe and provided a major source of wealth for the area. The regional characteristics of

⁴⁶⁸ Paul Zumthor, *Daily Life in Rembrandt's Holland* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 59; Doreen Yarwood, *Illustrated Encyclopedia of World Costume* (London: Dover Publications, 1978), 397, and De Winkel, *Fashion and Fancy*, 77.

⁴⁶⁹ De Winkel, *Fashion and Fancy*, 286 n 99.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid, 286 n 102.

the textile meant that despite adherence to international court styles, the lace was inscribed with geographic identity.⁴⁷¹

Despite this, inconsistencies in Anne's 'Flemish' costume remind the observer that the portrait does not reference worn clothing, but rather constructs a multifaceted body. Anne's head is uncovered despite the fact that married burgher women invariably wore their vliegheer with a set ruff and white cap or coif.⁴⁷² In addition, towards the end of the sixteenth century, the appearance of the Netherlandish silhouette became more pronounced. Skirts worn beneath the vliegheer began to push forward through the opening of the gown directed by padding worn underneath the stomacher. This can be seen in the portrait of Hortensia del Prado, wife of Jean Fourmenois, painted by Gortzius Geldorp in 1596 (Figure 63).⁴⁷³ Anne's costume denotes a very different construction, one in which the internal layers of fabric, although gathered, remain decidedly beneath the exterior of her outermost gown. Indeed, one of the very few shadows to appear within the portrait makes this clear, a line of shade cast down from the right edge of the vliegheer onto the skirts beneath. The stomacher is also smooth and rigid, implying a reinforced flat surface as opposed to the convexly curved bodice apparent in the portrait of Hortensia del Prado. The effect fits into

⁴⁷¹ Flanders, along with Venice and France, was a centre for lace production throughout the Early Modern era. Technique and design for bobbin lace differed according to whether the workshop was located in Mechelin, Binche, Valenciennes, Brussels, or the region of Brabant. Earnshaw, *A Dictionary of Lace*, (Mineola and New York: Dover Publications, 1999), 63-64.

⁴⁷² Ibid, 77.

⁴⁷³ Zumthor, *Daily Life in Rembrandt's Holland*, 59.

the visual conventions of Spanish style.⁴⁷⁴ It resonates with the three quarter-length portrait of the incoming regent of the Netherlands, Isabella Clara Eugenia, painted between 1598-1600 by Pourbus (Figure 64) in which the Archduchess' torso and skirts appear stiff to the point of geometric.

The costume slips between the physically restrictive luxury of the Catholic Habsburgs and the rich sobriety of the Dutch burgher community in a manner impossible in lived experience. It draws on two very different models of femininity, prescribed to women in very different situations in the sixteenth-century Netherlands. As Wayne Frantis has argued, the paragon of female virtue in the Dutch Republic was the domestic housewife who managed the inward sphere of the family home in harmony with the outward facing business of her husband.⁴⁷⁵ Social commentators and moralists advertised this archetypal figure in text and image. Jacob Cats described it as a natural and attractive model that needed little enforcement; "there are no yokes for the wife, nor slave's shackles or fetters on her legs."⁴⁷⁶ Thus, the emblem of the tortoise, a slow and placid creature organically bound to its home was used to symbolise the perfect wife.⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷⁴ Doreen Yarwood, *Illustrated Encyclopedia of World Costume* (London: Dover Publications, 1978), 397.

⁴⁷⁵ Wayne Frantis, *Women and Domesticity in Seventeenth Century Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

⁴⁷⁶ Jacob Cats, *Houwelijck* (Middelburg: Jan Pietersz. van de Venne, 1625) translated in Laurinda S. Dixon, *Perilous Chastity: Women and Illness in Pre-Enlightenment Art and Medicine* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 137.

⁴⁷⁷ Lotte C. van der Pole, "The Lure of the Big City. Female Migration in Amsterdam," in *Women of the Golden Age: An International Debate on Women in Seventeenth-century Holland, England and Italy*, ed. Els Kloek, Nicole Teeuwen and Marijke Huisma (Leiden: Uitgeverij Verloren, 1994), 73.

Such exemplary behaviour manifested in codes of dress, particularly in the perilous negotiation of material wealth, outward display, and Christian modesty. The teaching of Dutch Reformed Minister Willem Teellinck addressed such an issue. In 1620 Teellinck's *Den Spieghel der Zedigheyt, Aen de Gemeynte Christi binnen Middelburgh* proclaimed that it was not the purse but social position that determined one's dress.⁴⁷⁸ He encouraged women to "eliminate expensive fabrics, superfluous details and accessories, frivolities and decorations"⁴⁷⁹ whilst also admonishing those "who dress with austerity more from pride than from true fear of God."⁴⁸⁰

Anne's painted vliegheer references the ideal burgher housewife and is steeped in notions of commerce. However, it shows little concern for the prescribed balance between austerity and display. Indeed, the costume also suggests the conspicuous consumption and visibility prescribed for noble bodies within the context of a royal court. Castiglione described the ideal female courtier as

Imbued with good conditions, and the exercises of the bodie comely for a woman shall she do with an exceeding good grace, and her talke shall bee plenteous and full of wisdom, honestie, and pleasennesse: and so shall she be not only beloved but revered of all men, and perhaps worthy to be

⁴⁷⁸ Willem Teellinck, *Den Spieghel der Zedigheyt, Aen de Gemeynte Christi binnen Middelburgh* (Amsterdam: Marten Jansz. Brandt, 1620), 24 translated in De Winkel, *Fashion and Fancy*, 146.

⁴⁷⁹ Teellinck, *Den Spieghel der Zedigheyt*, 170 translated in De Winkel, *Fashion and Fancy*, 75.

⁴⁸⁰ Teellinck, *Den Spieghel der Zedigheyt*, 33 translated in De Winkel, *Fashion and Fancy*, 77.

compared to this great Courtier, as well for the qualities of the minde as of the bodie.⁴⁸¹

Implicit within such a model were notions of visibility, education, and wit that diverged from the paragon of the silent, contained domestic housewife. Indeed, the female courtier was constructed through public signs, codes of behaviour, and material utensils that established distinctions between groups and mapped out social status between nobles.⁴⁸² Anne de Croy's painted costume constructs the body in a meshwork of relations. It simultaneously refers to the burgher elite and the Spanish courtier, positioning the form in relationship with those socially above, below and within different models of hierarchy.

The prominent positioning of the white handkerchief over the densely patterned gown further adds to this meshwork of references and relations. It allows the body constructed to exhibit both chastity and fertility. Within the court context of display, the handkerchief could be used as a signal of deportment and a tool to exaggerate graceful movement.⁴⁸³ However the modes of interaction it facilitated required careful negotiation. Within the Habsburg court, ideals of femininity and the public performance of the female courtier were guided and restricted by the Spanish ceremonial of the Imperial dynasty. The Brussels court of the Archdukes in the early seventeenth century placed a high value on female chastity. The households of Albert and Isabella were segregated and the metaphor of court as

⁴⁸¹ Castiglione cited in Ruth Kelso, *Doctrine for the Lady of the Renaissance* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1978), 218-219.

⁴⁸² Fisher, *Materialising Gender*, 40.

⁴⁸³ Winkel, *Fashion and Fancy*, 79.

monastery was cultivated to counter literature that described the court as a place of vice.⁴⁸⁴ The courtier's need to cultivate favour with the sovereign could easily attract criticism of deceitfulness and vanity. Modesty, humility, and a consensus between internal intention and external demeanour were therefore required to virtuously negotiate courtly interaction.⁴⁸⁵

Anne's handkerchief is positioned in the left hand but bears little relationship to the fingers that apparently grasp it. There is no attempt to suggest the texture of the cloth, instead it is constructed as a series of geometrically creased rigid planes. The impossibly folded fabric appears to defy gravity, rising up out of the hand into a peak before falling in a manner that displays as much of the lace border as possible. The miniscule fronds of white pigment curved into webs at the edge of the handkerchief manifest the almost intangible quality of lacework. The design suggests the publically visible nature of the female courtier and yet, unlike the creased textile grasped by Margaret de la Marck, the handkerchief curtails any association with the leaky humeral body. The complex tracery of the lace border matches that encircling the head and wrists, pushing the edge of the body outwards to affirm the boundaries between the corporal and the external environment.⁴⁸⁶ The pure white of the collar, cuffs, and handkerchief describe an

⁴⁸⁴ Cordula van Wyhe, "Between Chastity and Passion: The Impact of the French exiles on the Cult of Courtly Love at the Brussels Court in the 1630s," in *Passion, Affekt, und Leidenschaft in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Anselm Steiger, *Wolfenbütteler Arbeiten zur Barockforschung*, Vol. 11 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz in Kommission, 2005), 959-957.

⁴⁸⁵ Wyhe, "Between Chastity and Passion," 958.

⁴⁸⁶ Harold Koda, *Extreme Beauty: The Body Transformed* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004), 20; Bert Watteuw, "Framing the Face.

immaculate and disciplined and chaste form. They correlate with the virtuous qualities of the pearl described at the start of this chapter. Indeed, the pearls painted into the portrait of Anne de Croy can be similarly understood to divide and contain the body, balancing feminine ideals of purity and virginity with fertility and progeny.

Anne's thick necklace extends the reach of the torso, pulling it down deep into the lower portion of the dress. It generates dramatic division within the portrait, slicing across the surface to produce a completely enclosed, interior space. The pearls frame the site of the womb, the nexus of fertility. They describe the body as one of familial confluence, branding it with the AC monogram and claiming it for the use of the combined Arenberg/Croy line. Indeed, close examination of the embroidery letters inscribed clearly by the pigment across the lower portion of the body resemble those that proliferate across the grand dynastic bed painted by Pourbus and explored in the Introduction to this thesis (Figure 65). The bed was the site of dynastic birth, death, and sexual union.⁴⁸⁷ The bespoke pattern stitched onto the crimson fabric appropriately bound the initials of the spouses and their families, Anne de Croy, Charles d'Arenberg, Anne and Charles, Croy and

Patterns of Presentation and Representation in Early Modern Dress and Portraiture," in C. Santing, B. Baert and A. Traninger, *Disembodied Heads in Medieval and Early Modern Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 258.

⁴⁸⁷ A richly ornamented bed of great value is included within an inventory of Enghien Castle taken not long after Anne's death. It is recorded as a wooden bed with curtains featuring gold and silver brocade. See "S'ensuivent les meubles quy sont a ladite chambre tant pour l'hijver que l'este" in 'Annex II: Inventoire et Declaration des Meubles et Utensils que nous Laissons Dedans Notre Chateau D'Enghien...' Delannoy, "L'Ameublement du Château d'Enghien au Commencement du XVIIe siècle," 365.

Arenberg.⁴⁸⁸ Together the illustrated dress and embroidered textile form a pattern, a visual convention within the Arenberg clan that affirms the fecundity and continued pedigree of the group long into the future.

The painted costume weaves together fertility and chastity. It enmeshes the courtier and the burgher noblewoman, those with generational privilege and those who had acquired social status through trading networks and civic service. Through the network of sartorial similarities and differences constructed within the album, the composite body of Anne de Croy further connects to various members of the clan and ideal manifestations of marriage and widowhood. The potency of the form outlives the finite bodies and inventoried swathes of silk to produce and celebrate the clan generations after the volume was first created. The sharp planes of the white handkerchief and the wide surface of legible embroidery, as items of display and performance displayed and performed in paint within the album, drew attention to their own artificial quality. As will be shown below, this carefully publicised subterfuge did little to diminish the power of the painting. Rather, it pointed to the overarching narrative of change and inscribed the album with another layer of material value.

The Jewel Book

And so I send a present- no common present, for you are no common friend, but many jewels in one small book.⁴⁸⁹

⁴⁸⁸ Archival documents record Anne's purchase of swathes of black velvet embroidered with the same monogram design as shown across the family bed. ACA (43/24) Biography 110: Inventaire des chambres completes at autres meubles. Cited in Marini, *Anna van Croy (1564-1635)*, 161.

Generating an idealised community within the format of a book aligned with contemporary practice of keeping *memoriaals* or *familieboeks*. Such practices were not restricted to dynastic nobility and as the albums of the Van Loon, Backer and Banning Coch families demonstrate, hand-painted books also performed the consolidation of material possessions and familial identity amongst the commercial elite of the Netherlands.⁴⁹⁰ These albums combined family portraits, genealogical histories and texts, and watercolour miniatures displaying family residences and great artistic commissions including a version of Rembrandt's *Night Watch*. Such objects were passed down over generations, expanding with the patrimony of the clan, and treasured as precious objects in family archives.

A particularly interesting example belonging to the Dukes of Bavaria was stored in the private ducal and electoral Chamber of Artefacts for almost three centuries

⁴⁸⁹ Erasmus' book dedication to Pieter Gillis, Secretary of the Famous City of Antwerp, 1515. Desiderius Erasmus, "Erasmus of Rotterdam to Peter Gillis, Secretary of the Famous City of Antwerp," in *The Collected Works of Erasmus: Antibarbari/Parabola*, ed. Craig R. Thompson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 130.

⁴⁹⁰ The Backer family album, preserved in the Stadsarchief Amsterdam, contains hundreds of small uniform portraits, copied from larger oil paintings distributed amongst the family. The Van Loon album, still in the possession of the family museum, includes large and detailed watercolour shields as well as oil paint portraits. Gavaghan, "The Family Picture," 85; I thank Dr Cordula van Wyhe for allowing me access to her images of the Banning Coch album. Also, "The Company of Banning Coch (The Night watch)," Gerrit Lundans after Rembrandt, NG289, *The National Gallery*, accessed Sept 2, 2018, <https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/gerrit-lundans-after-rembrandt-the-company-of-captain-banning-cocq-the-nightwatch>.

after its creation. The exquisitely painted jewellery in Hans Mielich's *Jewel Book of the Duchess Anna of Bavaria*, now stored within the Royal Library in Munich, provides a particularly interesting precedent for the Arenberg portrait album. The volume does not portray family members but instead contains over a hundred portraits of jewellery, gems, and chains, most belonging to Anne of Austria, daughter of Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand I. It has been described as a "pictorial inventory of her jewels,"⁴⁹¹ however the vellum pages do not depict the ornaments simply as items of dress. Rather, each painting produces a visual performance of illusion and display.

The book itself is jewel-like with gold-toothed leather bindings and ornate clasps. The pages present stone-laden brooches, rings, and pendants, some hanging from architectural niches, others looping across strap-work curls that rise from the surface in bright and apparently three-dimensional forms. In their highly worked rendering of precious stone and metal the fantastical images are truly lustrous and yet they also celebrate their own artifice and power of illusion. The thick, gold chain of a trilobe pendant studded with rubies, emeralds and fat hanging pearls becomes its own frame for the gem (Figure 66). The line of the chain traces the dimensions of the page and the edges of the flat ornamental pattern painted around it. The nature of such self-reflexive paintings will be explored to a greater extent in relation to the Croy landscape watercolours, the case study examined in the next chapter. However, the celebration of painterly

⁴⁹¹ Tawny Sherrill, "Fleas, Fur, and Fashion: Zibellini as Luxury Accessories of the Renaissance," in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Vol. 2, ed. Robin Netherton and Gale R. Owen-Crocker (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), 127.

deception performed here self-consciously invests value into the viewing process and the book at hand rather than simply referencing an external source of material value. It draws attention to the fact that the portraits did not profess to correspond to actual lived bodies but narrate a wider fiction of dynastic ambition and security in the face of change.

A further parallel between the *Jewel Book* and Arenberg portrait album is the consolidation of dynasty through representation of the married female form. The *Jewel Book*, produced shortly after Anne of Austria wed Duke Albert V of Bavaria in 1546, may be understood as a record of her dowry. It lists the material wealth that the bride brought into the marital union from her father's household and may be liable for return upon the husband's death.⁴⁹² Indeed, the book conspicuously conflates the value of Anne of Austria as a wife with the richness of her gem collection. The first page of the volume displays a lavish arrangement of heraldry combining the family arms of wife and husband. Next appears a small scene enclosed within a lavish architectural frame in which portraits of Albert and Anne play chess surrounded by the figures of family members. Latin inscriptions painted either side of the game playing correspond to Psalm 127, "the wife is a fruitful vine on the sides of thy house, your children are as a branch of olives around your table." The text above the scene references Matthew 19: 5, "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be in one flesh."⁴⁹³ The volume embodies the teaching of

⁴⁹² Simons, "Women in Frames," 9.

⁴⁹³ "The Jewel Book," *BibliOdessey*, Jan 7, 2007, accessed Aug 31, 2018, <http://bibliodysey.blogspot.com/2009/01/jewel-book.html>.

Alberti, cited at the beginning of this chapter, that a “woman’s character is the jewel of her family; the mother’s purity has always been a part of the dowry she passes on to her daughters.”⁴⁹⁴ The series of empty pages at the back of the jewel album leave room for later additions, aligning the growth of material patrimony with the success of the female body as mother.

The *Jewel Book* and the Arenberg album objectified female virtue and fertility. They manifested intangible qualities and conflated them with the commercial worth of the painterly material. Within the portrait volume, the ideal married body was not a lived experience but a series of material exchanges. It was a changeable, yet highly regulated and contained surface across which the wider nobility and privilege of the Arenberg clan could be consolidated and negotiated in the face of internal disruption. It presents, in the words of Erasmus, “many jewels in one small book,”⁴⁹⁵ inherently valuable in narrative and material.

The object is female centred, dealing with changes to the family from within the family, contrasting and conflating ideals of femininity, and working in a media that prescribed a private, domestic context of encounter. In this manner, the portrait album can be thought of as a pendant to the Croy landscape albums, which form the subject of the following chapter. These watercolour images also dealt with the shifting nature of the noble body and dynastic clan but within the public, external environment of the countryside. The paintings synthesised

⁴⁹⁴ Alberti, *The Family in Renaissance Florence*, 83.

⁴⁹⁵ Erasmus, “Erasmus of Rotterdam to Peter Gillis,” 130.

professional processes of documentation and measurement, and the idealised experience of the noble body, the male body, in the fluctuating rural space.

Chapter Four.

The Croy Lille, Douai, Orchies Landscape Album.

'A Goodly Map'

Farmer: [...] Sir, we poor Countrymen do not think it good to have our Lands plotted out, and methinks indeed it is to very small purpose: for is not the field itself a goodly Map for the Lord to look upon, better than a painted paper? And what is he the better to see it laid out in colours? He can add nothing to his Land, nor diminisheth ours; and therefore that labour above all may be saved, in mine opinion.

Surveyor: [...] you utter not what you think: for a plot rightly drawn by true information, describeth so the lively image of a Manor, and every branch and member of the same, as the Lord sitting in his chair, may see what he hath, where, and how it lieth, and in whose use and occupation every particular is, upon the sudden view [...].⁴⁹⁶

John Norden's manual entitled *The Surveyor's Dialogue* was first published in London 1607 and included a dedication to the politician Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury. The text examines the surveying techniques of the early seventeenth century and takes the form of a fraught conversation between an unnamed Surveyor and Farmer. Throughout the text the Farmer continuously expresses anxiety about the absence of the Landlord, distanced from his property by the introduction of new maps and diagrams. Once such devices are plotted, the Farmer argues, he can see no reason why the Lord would need to interact with the labourer, share the same space, experience the weather conditions, or tread

⁴⁹⁶ Jonathan Norden, *The Surveyor's Dialogue* (Oxon: Routledge, 2010), 25.

in the soil of “the field itself.”⁴⁹⁷ The distancing of their bodies threatens to reduce their relationship to one of impersonal figures and charts, rising rents, and tenancy conflicts.⁴⁹⁸

An example of the “painted paper”⁴⁹⁹ so feared by Norden’s Farmer appeared on sale at Sotheby’s in London on the 20th May 2014 in an auction of the Music, Continental and Russian Books and Manuscripts Department. It is described in the Lot Record as an “early seventeenth-century French manuscript, made for Charles, Duc de Croy, (1560-1612) containing five coloured views and maps, signed and annotated by the Duke (“deCroy”) and dated by him 30 April 1606.”⁵⁰⁰ The manuscript is large; it includes 260 pages of secretarial hand recording details of landownership, businesses, vineyards, churches, rents, pastors, labourers and other matters concerning the (now Belgian) villages of Sivry and Sautin. Inserted within this extensive description is a vividly coloured map of Sivry, executed in ink and watercolour (Figure 67). The map displays the village divided into regulated parcels of land, each portion delineated with clearly defined edges and sharply ruled boundary markers. The areas are

⁴⁹⁷ Norden, *The Surveyor’s Dialogue*, 25.

⁴⁹⁸ W. H. R. Curtler, *A Short History of English Agriculture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909), 106.

⁴⁹⁹ Curtler, *A Short History of English Agriculture*, 106.

⁵⁰⁰ The manuscript sold for £12500. “Sotheby’s Lot Record: 117 ‘Croy, Charles III, Duc de. Early seventeenth-century french manuscript, made for Charles, Duc de Croy, containing five coloured views and maps, signed and annotated by the Duke (“deCroy”) and dated by him 30 April 1606,” *Sotheby’s*, accessed March 20, 2018, <http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2014/music-continental-books-manuscripts-114402/lot.117.html>.

carefully numbered and colour-coded in shades of pink, orange, and green that correspond to property listings written in text on the verso of the sheet. In the bottom right hand corner, a separate space includes a carefully rendered pair of compasses that indicate the scale of the map. In practice, the compasses worked as a tool for gauging traverse measurements between geographic points. Here, they attested to the presence and accuracy of the surveyor's hand, the hinge that negotiated the relationship between the landscape and the map viewer. At the top of the parchment, positioned over all of the property on display, the signature of Duke Charles de Croy, the landowner, can be clearly discerned.

Also included within the Sotheby's parcel of documents, alongside the Sivry property map, is another watercolour, this time in the form of a miniature landscape painting (Figure 68). This alternate image portrays the village from an elevated position, looking down into Sivry from a nearby hill. There are no numbers or colour-coded land parcels, only the suggestion of enclosed fields and tree lines. Red houses nestle close together without obvious distinction, and a stream, so strongly described in the previous image, appears only briefly between the buildings, running through the centre of the settlement. The small village is positioned within a wider environment, lodged between a hilly horizon that stretches into a large expanse of pale sky, and the undulating earth of the immediate foreground, sandy and sparse save a single tree. The flowing lines and polychrome tones of the landscape are suddenly met on every side by the sharp jambs of a painted frame. The frame weaves together strap-work curls, tassels, garlands, and intertwining cord. Foliage and flowers embellish the uppermost

plane, reaching upwards from an urn to the space above the painting where, once again, the date and signature of Charles de Croy can be distinguished.

The illusory frame, analogous to the compasses on the Sivry map, points to the processes of image making and viewing that the painting involves. It plays with scale and space, with tangible forms and abstract pattern, suggesting three-dimensionality and demonstrating an attention to detail not evenly shared across the landscape portion of the image. Indeed, there is a contrast between the ornate approach to the border and the humble, simply rendered forms inside. The viewer and viewing process seem to be given visual priority over the accurate presentation of the village. The map and watercolour realise the fears of Norden's farmer and the ambitions of his Surveyor. They allow "the Lord sitting in his chair" to "see what he hath, where, and how it lieth, [...], upon the sudden view."⁵⁰¹ They distance the landowner from his tenants and renegotiate and describe a new relationship between the body and land. This relationship is egocentric, a world-view in which the landscape, through the intermediary of "a goodly Map,"⁵⁰² is presented to and orbits around a single privileged body.

The Sivry documents performed a small part in a much wider surveying and painting project commissioned by the Duke de Croy. Beginning in 1590, this endeavour spanned twenty years, recorded multiple regions and produced an extraordinary body of work that resulted in around 2500 miniature landscape

⁵⁰¹ Norden, *The Surveyor's Dialogue*, 25.

⁵⁰² Ibid.

paintings bound into multiple volumes. Today the various tomes are distributed across the world between private collections, archives, and libraries in Vienna, Prague, Paris and Brussels.⁵⁰³ The magnitude of this surveying project, the sheer number of miniatures, the vast geographic region they reference, and the disparate locations of the volumes present great challenges to those studying the subject. Only one scholar, Jean-Marie Duvosquel, has approached the project as a whole. His twenty-six volume study entitled *Albums de Croÿ: propriétés des Croÿ* examines the different regions depicted, with the assistance of contributing scholars including Félicien Machelart, who has written about the landscape artist Adrien de Montigny, and Paul Culot who explored the content of the painted frames included within the albums.⁵⁰⁴ Outside of Duvosquel's monumental work, scholars have focused on individual books, using them as historical or geographical documents relating to the specific regions they portray. Roger Berger and Raymond Dubois, for example, have published a study of *Quatre cents vues des villages d'Artois en 1605-1610 tirées des albums de Charles de Croÿ* whilst J. Muller focused on an alternative area within *Albums de gouaches: neuf siècles de l'histoire du Hainaut au Roeulx*.⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰³ Jean-Marie Duvosquel, *Albums de Croÿ: propriétés des Croÿ*, Vol. I (Bruxelles: Région Nord-Pas de Calais et Crédit communal de Belgique, 1985), 15-17.

⁵⁰⁴ Félicien Machelart, "Adrien de Montigny, Peintre de Valenciennes," and Paul Culot, "La Typologie Ornementale des Encadrements dans les Albums de Croÿ," both in Duvosquel, *Albums de Croÿ*, Vol. XXVI.

⁵⁰⁵ Roger Berger and Raymond Dubois, *Quatre cents vues des villages d'Artois en 1605-1610 tirées des albums de Charles de Croÿ* (Arras: Mémoires de la Commission départementale des Monuments historiques du Pas-de-Calais, 1960); J. Muller, *Albums de gouaches: neuf siècles de l'histoire du Hainaut au Roeulx* (Mons: n.p, 1959).

The geographic flavour of the current body of scholarship produced on the landscape albums recognises the large scale and ambition of the project. However, it does not focus on the fact that the images are powerful fictions. As Martin Heusser has argued, “landscapes are constructs- they do not exist as objective realities. Although they encompass scenery as well as environment, they are neither.”⁵⁰⁶ This chapter will not seek to examine the specific locations represented in paint as though the page were simply a glass through which the geography of the land presented itself without mediation. However, it will also not attempt to sever the landscape painting from the land in so strict a manner as Heusser promotes. Indeed, by emphasising the socially constructed nature of the landscape, Heusser does not take into account the sense of place imbued in the image; he states that “landscapes can essentially only be symbolic- a characteristic that makes them ideally suitable for the reification of cultural and political ideas.”⁵⁰⁷ The following study will seek a different way to understand the images. It will demonstrate the potently self-reflexive nature of the album landscapes and how they performed an active role in producing the body and environment that they described.

The investigation will begin by examining how the consistent format of the images, their shared composition and palette can be understood as synonymous

⁵⁰⁶ Martin Heusser, “Cultural Appropriation and National Identity: The Landscapes of Albert Bierstadt and James Fenimore Cooper,” in *On Verbal/Visual Representation: Word and Image Interactions*, eds. Martin Heusser, Michéle Hannoosh, Eric Haskell, Leo Hoek, David Scott and Peter de Voogd (Rodopi: Brill, 2005), 151.

⁵⁰⁷ Heusser, “Cultural Appropriation and National Identity,” 151.

with the processes of land documentation and image making that both produced the album and redrew ancient traditions concerning land and body relationships. The documents echo the sharp edge of new technological developments in the surveying field, slicing through older models and parading the carcass, using the image of an ancient feudal arcadia as the frontispiece for a very different, commercialised land/body power relationship. The materiality of the book, the self-reflexive frames, and the uniform perspective from which each landscape was described positioned the land around a single observer, asserting and confirming them as the sovereign eye of the visual world and the true subject of the composition.

Indeed, the paint directs attention towards the authority of Charles de Croy, describing his shifting role as landowner in the nascent capitalist environment. The volume positions the Duke above the urban elite and simulates a tailored noble experience of the countryside rich in health-giving diversion and self-examination. This is further enhanced by a spiritual dimension that blends Charles' authority over the terrain with notions of Christian duty and personal salvation. Ultimately, the album performs the transformation of both landscape and landlord across a single surface. It is an angst-ridden business and conjures the image of the Duke, sitting in his chair, seeing "what he hath, where, and how it lieth,"⁵⁰⁸ turning over the thousands of watercolours to endlessly reassert his place in the changing world with a concern equal to that of Norden's Farmer.

⁵⁰⁸ Norden, *The Surveyor's Dialogue*, 25.

The Recurrent Aesthetic of the *Lille, Douai, Orchies* Album

In 1590 the Duke Charles de Croy entrusted to the surveyor Pierre Bersacques, along with two of his sons, the task of producing a cartulary of the rents and feudal dues on the lands of Hallewin (Halluin) and Comines, properties he had inherited from his mother, Jeanne de Hallewin, in 1581.⁵⁰⁹ Once this project was underway, the Duke broadened his attention to include the titles and extensive lands he had received as dowry from his wife, Marie de Brimeu in 1580. An extract from the marriage contract between the two includes mention of the principality of Chimay, the visconte of Dorlens and Picardie, and the lands of Orcimont and Argimont amongst many others.⁵¹⁰ Charles further expanded the scope of the surveying to include his patrimonial inheritance, received in 1595, and all the lands in which he held official posts of influence, collected rent, or maintained familial links.⁵¹¹ Bersacques surveyed the Principality of Chimay

⁵⁰⁹ Jean-Marie Duvosquel, "De la gestion domaniale a la bibliophilie: les 'cadastres,' besognes et albums du duc Charles de Croy, 1612," in *Les Albums de Croy: Exposition a la bibliotheque royale albert ler du 22 septembre au 27 octobre 1979* (Brussels: Societe Royale des Bibliophiles et Iconophiles de Belgique, 1979), 7.

⁵¹⁰ "Extrait du contrat de mariage passé entre Charles de Croÿ, prince de Chimay, et Marie de Brimeu, contesse de Meghem, relative aux biens fonciers des futurs époux. Aix-la-Chapelle, 13 Septembre 1580," transcribed in F. Reiffenberg, *Une Existence de grand seigneur au seizième siècle. Memoirs autographes du duc Charles de Croy* (Brussels: Société des bibliophiles de Belgique, 1845), 17-19.

⁵¹¹ These lands were listed in the testament of Jeanne de Halluin and Philippe de Croy III. See "Extrait de l'avis de père et de mere de Philippe III de Croÿ et de Jeanne de Halluin relative a la devolution de luers biens fonciers," Anvers 18 Avril 1579. Copie libre de la fin du XVI siècle, Archives de la Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Fonds d'Arenberg, n 976 (anc. F. 216), 1 cahier de papier, transcribed in Duvosquel, *Albums de Croÿ*, Annex I.

between 1593 and 1598, the Baronies of Aarschot, Bierbeck and Heverlee in 1597 to 1598, the Barony of Rotselar in 1600, Beveren-Waas in 1602, the County of Beaumont in 1604, and the Seigneuries of Blaton, Walters, and Avesnes in 1606.⁵¹² The surveyor used pre-existing documents along with the help of local officials to gather information in the field, drawing up new registers and colour-coded maps with numbered descriptions.⁵¹³ Charles actively sought information from local communities concerning the cultural life and history of the people who lived in his properties. He sent multiple letters and extensive questionnaires, some made up of 400 individual points, enquiring about local custom.⁵¹⁴ The Duke requested information regarding the foundation of religious institutions, local men renowned for their piety or knowledge, relics or reliquaries, notable graves, connections to famous persons, and historic events.⁵¹⁵

⁵¹² Roger J. P. Kain and Elizabeth Baigent, *The Cadastral Map in the Service of the State: A History of Property Mapping* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 39.

⁵¹³ Duvosquel, "De la gestion domaniale a la bibliophilie," 10.

⁵¹⁴ Jean-Marie Duvosquel, "Charles de Croÿ en quête de commentaires pour ses Albums (1600-1601). À propos de l'origine et de l'histoire de l'abbaye d'Anchin," *Revue du Nord* 356-357 (2004/3): 801.

⁵¹⁵ "1601, 22^e de janvier. Mémorial à Messieurs l'Abbé et Religieux d'Anchin pour satisfaire à ce que Monsieur le Duc de Croÿ et d'A[r]schot leurs at requis par ses lettres du 25 de décembre 1600, ensuite du commandement de Son Alteze Sérénissime," Royal Library of Brussels, Office of Manuscripts, No. 7876, transcribed in Duvosquel, "Charles de Croÿ en quête de commentaires pour ses Albums," Appendix 3.

Contemporaneous to the surveying activity, Charles commissioned Adrien de Montigny, a painter from Valenciennes, to reproduce a number of key plans on parchment with accompanying panoramic views of cities and villages. The first paintings were synthesised into two sumptuous albums.⁵¹⁶ Montigny travelled the breadth of Charles' domain, sketching views in the summer before retreating to his studio to paint the final watercolour landscapes with the assistance of his workshop throughout the colder months.⁵¹⁷ Beginning in 1596, the Duke patronised Adrien de Montigny almost continuously over two decades, funding the production of further albums that recorded the County of Hainaut; Tournai and Tournaisis; Lille, Douai and Orchies; Namur; and Artois. The project only finally ended with the Duke's death in 1612, leaving the last scenes as those produced between 1607 and 1609, documenting towns and villages situated along the banks of the rivers Sambre, Lys, Escaut and Scarpe. The finalised albums brought together lands scattered across a huge region and properties that had passed to the Duke through the bodies of his mother, father, and wife.

This chapter will focus on an album described as *Lille, Douai, Orchies* by the National Library of the Czech Republic in Prague, the institution in which it is

⁵¹⁶ Out of the two initial albums, one remains in the possession of the Croy family whilst the other was sold at Sotheby's in 2001 and, subsequently, broken up and dispersed. "Sotheby's Lot Record: 117 'Croy, Charles III, Duc de. Early seventeenth-century french manuscript, made for Charles, Duc de Croy, containing five coloured views and maps, signed and annotated by the Duke ('deCroy') and dated by him 30 April 1606,'" *Sotheby's*, accessed March 20, 2018, <http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2014/music-continental-books-manuscripts-l14402/lot.117.html>.

⁵¹⁷ Daniel Lefèvre, "Dans l'univers des Albums de Croÿ," *Albums de Croÿ*, accessed July 20, 2017, <http://www.miniatures-de-croy.fr>.

preserved. The title references the geographic area that each landscape points to, a dense collection of villages, abbeys, and towns in Northern France now nestling along the border with Belgium (Figure 69). The album is complete and available to consider as a whole, unlike most other surviving examples. It is also dated to 1603, the mid point of the project and the height of productivity for the artist, surveyor, and Duke. Indeed, archival records from the turn of the century show that the Duke made multiple payments to Montigny. In 1601, for example, “600 lb sur les 768 12s” was paid to the artist for having “painted and illuminated all the villages of the prévosté of Binche, of that of Bavay and of the bailliage of Lesine.”⁵¹⁸ Now, centuries later, the spine of the book is in a state of disintegration, the leather covering is crumbling, the gold-tooled design is disappearing from sight, and the stitched pages are exposed and vulnerable. The mechanics of the binding process have been revealed and, as a result, a number of the parchment sheets appear to be coming loose, curving away from the stiff cardboard covers, fighting the regularity that they impose. Inside are 194 pages, each measuring 52.5 x 39cm. On every sheet, recto and verso, a detailed image is painted in bright gouache shades. Of the resulting 388 paintings, 183 are small landscapes, 194 are illusory frames, and eleven are elaborate cartouches containing descriptive text, emblems or heraldry.

⁵¹⁸ “Extrait d la recette générale de Charles de Croÿ de l’année 1601, relative au paiement à Adrien de Montigny des vues des prévôtés de Binche et de Bavay et de baillage de Lessines,” Heverlee, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven. Château d’Arenberg, NI. V. 31, f 498 r. Reproduced in Duvosquel, “De la gestion domaniale a la bibliophilie,” plate 3 and 14, translation my own.

The paintings alternate throughout the book, ensuring that when the pages are turned the viewer encounters a framed landscape and framed space (Figure 70).

To begin the series an ornate introductory watercolour inscription reads,

A particular description of all the province of Lille, Douay and Orchies. Beginning first with the Abbeyes, male and female, Priories, Chanceries, High Court, Towns and Villages made by ordinance of Monseigneur the Duke of Croy and of Aerschot. Begun on 3rd March by A. D. Montigny.⁵¹⁹

A visual trope is maintained throughout the volume, an almost rhythmic repetition of composition and tone that shifts only in the minor details of each painting. The framed spaces demonstrate a clear uniformity, varying only slightly in their makeup and maintaining a consistent palette throughout. The landscapes share a similar consistency of content. Each presents a small representation of an abbey, town, or village nestled into a valley and surrounded by hills, fields, or woodland. The depiction of Milonfosse is a typical example of the landscape form within the album (Figure 71). The village is represented from an elevated perspective. It sits low in the composition, crouching under a huge expanse of cold, pale sky, the size of which disproportionately dominates the painting and gives the impression of a great and vacuous space. In the foreground of the landscape a figure on horseback appears to meander down a wide track, moving away from the observer. On the right, sheep graze under the watch of an attendant shepherd who stands alone in the shade of tall trees, lush foliage weighing down the branches. Further along the road, ploughed farmland welcomes the eye as it winds down into the village. The red walls and grey

⁵¹⁹ Album of the Duke Charles de Croy, Volume XII (Lille, Douai, Orchies) 1603 XXIII.A.9b; National Library of the Czech Republic, Prague. 2v.

rooftops gathered on the periphery stand out against the green tones of the land but offer little clue as to their identity or specific function. Beyond the settlement, the landscape stretches out over countless fields and hedges into distant blue hills. The cusp forms the horizon, articulated sharply against the pale sky and dotted with tiny marks suggesting the presence of birds in flight.

Surrounding the peaceful scene is an illusory frame. It is painted with a multi-layered ornamented inner and external edge, highlighted with carefully rendered white lines and slight shadows to emulate the presence of a three dimensional structure. Between these perimeters is painted an arrangement of cut flowers. Cornflowers, dianthus, periwinkle, and arum lilies appear as though sliced from the stem, continuing the bright gouache shades of green, pink and blue beyond the remit of the landscape itself. An intricate cartouche identifies the village in pale letters. It protrudes into the space of the landscape as if attached to the inner lip of the frame, hanging heavily over the blue wash of watercolour sky. The illusory emblem includes a large dark gem, ornate gold work, and tasselled crimson cord painted onto the surface in minute detail. Outside of this elaborate frame, a strip of black watercolour forms a secondary border, filling the remaining space available around the perimeters of the parchment sheet.

As the pages of the volume are turned, the format, composition, and palette apparent in the Milenfosse landscape recur. The representation of Pottes (Figure 72), for example, demonstrates the similarity in approach. It once again depicts a quiet scene observed from an elevated viewpoint. A lone traveller makes his way into the settlement on a road lined with narrow trees. A grand, jewelled

cartouche announces the location whilst, encircling the landscape, a bountiful selection of fruit and vegetables crowd the ornate frame. The landscapes described as the Abbey of Marquette (Figure 73) and Comines (Figure 74) display larger settlements and include windmills, waterways, moated towers, shields, and formal gardens within ornate frames of curling strap-work or 'gilded' pattern. Their palette and elevated perspective differs little from that used to describe even the most humble location within the album. Such homogeneity of shape, tone, and style generates a rhythmic cadence to the pages. There is a repetition and a familiarity imbued within the volume. One landscape appears to flow into the next, over the same painted soil and under the same painted sky. Each horizon is positioned a third of the way up the composition and each makes a claim to eternity, either stretching into a distant horizon or down a road leading out of sight.

The format continues beyond the binding of the *Lille, Douai, Orchies* album to include watercolours from other volumes. It is apparent, for example, in the landscape entitled Fremícourt (Figure 75) from the *Hainaut* album preserved in the Austrian National Library in Vienna. When each watercolour is considered as an index both of the hundreds of other similar landscapes that share the same bindings and thousands further spread between other volumes, the visual potency of the repeated pattern is emphasised. The true scale of the image is revealed, miniaturised and yet monumental. They do not conform to Susan Stewart's dichotomous description of the miniature as an experience of interiority whose viewing process is one of possession, versus the monumental

as a projection outwards and the experience of being possessed.⁵²⁰ Instead, the landscapes collapse the gigantic into the small and render the enormous through the minute. The tiny dots of pigment rendered carefully across the parchment present an endless landscape; the marks are too small and the forms too vast to be comprehended by the eye.⁵²¹ The single pages are capable of being handled by an individual person yet also make reference to a dozen other volumes and a thousand other pages that could (and at one time did) fill a library.⁵²²

The landscape described by the paintings defies measurement, and yet as it will be seen, the images can be understood as synonymous with measuring. As Joan Kee and Emanuele Lugli have explored, processes of measurement and scale are seeped in social and political authority. Measurements claim and preserve power, performing as a tool of normalisation through widespread and repeated

⁵²⁰ Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993), 44, 69 and 95. Joan Kee and Emanuele Lugli, "Scale to Size: An Introduction," *Art History* 38, no. 2 (April 2015): 254.

⁵²¹ The power of the miniature to provoke the imagination and thus the sublime and the colossal as a character of the miniature is described by Jacques Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Ian McLeod (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1987), 119-22; Kee and Lugli, "Scale to Size," 254-55.

⁵²² Records show that Charles de Croy stored his precious landscape albums, surveying maps, and administrative documents at his familial residence, within the 'Salamander' tower of Beaumont Castle in the province of Liège. The tower was the site of the Duke's study, extensive library, and collection of illuminated manuscripts but it also afforded him a view across the surrounding region. Daniel Missone, "Les Albums de Croy: Histoire de la Collection," in *Les Albums de Croy: Exposition a la bibliotheque royale albert ler du 22 septembre au 27 octobre 1979*, ed. Paul Culot, Jean-Marie Duvosquel and Daniel Misonne (Brussels: Societe Royale des Bibliophiles et Iconophiles de Belgique, 1979), 25 and David Buisseret, *The Mapmaker's Quest: Depicting New Worlds in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 172.

use.⁵²³ They can appear objective and untouched by prejudices and yet the version of the environment they describe and produce is anything but. In line with this, the Croy watercolours register the power-laden processes of documentation and image making, marking of pages and mixing of pigment that performed as a vehicle for reformulating the landscape itself during the early seventeenth century.

Rewriting the Landscape

The process of making the specific album under consideration is well documented in a series of letters exchanged between Charles de Croy and the surveyor Pierre Bersaques at the end of 1600. A letter dated 8th December from the Surveyor reads,

Dear friend,

We are sending you herewith by urgent courier, a bundle of all the plans of Rotselaer. Haect and Weercht prepared and painted by the hand of our painter [...] you will straightway have to put them in order and inscribe each sheet, then return them to us speedily and by the same means, carefully bound and suitably parcelled that they may suffer no damage.

Until then, may Our Lord keep holy watch over you.⁵²⁴

⁵²³ Kee and Lugli, "Scale to Size," 259.

⁵²⁴ Letter between Charles de Croy and Pierre de Bersaques dated 8th December 1600. Archives de l'État à Courtrai, Acquisitions, n° 7008 (jadis Arch, État Gand, Petit varia, n° 27b). Transcription in Jean-Marie Duvosquel, "La Correspondance du Duc Charles de Croÿ avec son Arpenteur Pierre de Bersaques (1598-1606): A Propos de la Confection des Cadastres de ses Seigneuries," in *Cartes et Plans Anciens. Sources pour la Géographie Historique des Pays-Bas Méridionaux*, ed. H. Hagen, F. Daelemans and E. Ermen (Brussels: Archives et Bibliothèque de Belgique, 1986), Appendix no. 7. Translation by Elspeth Nicholson. nicholson_elspeth@yahoo.co.uk.

The hasty reply from the Duke, dated to the same day, seems to approve of the work and qualifies his next instructions.

You should also complete diligently all the work that remains relating to the baronies of Comines and Gallewin, their appurtenances and dependencies, and when they are finished, bring them to us yourself, as we need to speak to you on this matter and we must then arrange for you to receive a goodly sum of money, advising us by this same means when you have nearly finished, in order that according to this we may decide how to proceed.

Your beloved
Charles, Duke of Croy and Arschot.⁵²⁵

Despite this amiable start, it is clear that by the following spring the relationship had cooled as the surveyors had yet to deliver their promised documents.

Charles writes in apparent frustration at the delay to the project, “we are truly astonished that you have not yet come to find us as you promised to do.” He urges “one is at this time needing the papers for Comines and Hallewin, delay with which has been very costly and which cannot be completed until you have brought that to me.”⁵²⁶ When, by the autumn, his commission was still missing Charles wrote tersely of his disappointment with some of the work, threatening to use martial force upon the surveyors in order to claim what was his own.

⁵²⁵ Letter between Charles de Croy and Pierre de Bersacques dated 8th December 1600. Archives de l'État à Courtrai, Acquisitions, no. 7008 (jadis Arch, État Gand, Petit varia, no. 27b). Transcription in Duvosquel, “La Correspondance du Duc Charles de Croÿ,” Appendix no. 7. Translation by Elspeth Nicholson: nicholson_elspeth@yahoo.co.uk.

⁵²⁶ Letter from Charles de Croy to Pierre Bersacques dated April 20th 1601, Louvain. Archives de l'État à Courtrai, Acquisitions, no. 7008 (jadis Arch, État Gand, Petit varia, no. 27b). Transcription in Duvosquel, “La Correspondance du Duc Charles de Croÿ,” Appendix no. 7. Translation by Elspeth Nicholson: nicholson_elspeth@yahoo.co.uk.

Hitherto I have been patient and did not think that a good man, as I thought you to be, would fail to keep his word [...] But as I see that you do not come and as I need all the plans for my works at Commynes and Hallewin [...] and also to point out to you that you have not done everything relating to my castle in Heverlee well, I wished to write to you briefly in this urgent missive that you hasten to have money handed to you, otherwise if you truly do not wish to attend, I shall have you brought here by a fine commanding officer of law who will come to seek you out as you deserve.⁵²⁷

Some explanation for this particularly strained process of production can be discerned in a final letter, dated to some years later, after the completion of numerous other albums. In this correspondence, Charles once again passionately reprimands Bersaques and his sons.

I should never have thought that your children, after serving me for so long and for the few lands I still have to have finished, the remainder of which they have had the honour of completing, should have played such an underhand trick on me as they did, [...] you should send both of them to me to complete only my lands in Walers and Blaton which remain unfinished. And if the elder is receiving payment to work outside the area as you tell me and he does not want to return, at least send me the younger to complete the said lands to which ends I shall hand him all the necessary papers and maps, assuring you that as soon as they have arrived, I shall arrange for them to be given a satisfactory sum of money and following the contract that I shall make with them for what they will do anew, they may be assured of payment each month. So, I pray you not to fail in this otherwise since I have clearly offered you such a good arrangement and you do not wish to take it, you will make me feel the pain of it one day. Therefore I shall await your response to this so that I may act accordingly.

Until which time, may Our Lord keep you safe.⁵²⁸

⁵²⁷ Letter from Charles de Croy to Pierre Bersaques dated 7th September 1601, Heverlee. Archives de l'État à Courtrai, Acquisitions, no. 7008 (jadis Arch, État Gand, Petit varia, no. 27b). Transcription in Duvosquel, "La Correspondance du Duc Charles de Croÿ," Appendix no. 7. Translation by Elspeth Nicholson: nicholson_elspeth@yahoo.co.uk.

⁵²⁸ Letter from Charles de Croy to Pierre Bersaques dated 17th August 1607, Beaumont. Archives de l'État à Courtrai, Acquisitions, no. 7008 (jadis Arch, État Gand, Petit varia, no. 27b). Transcription in Duvosquel, "La Correspondance du

The letter suggests that the surveyors had multiple sources of income whilst engaged in the album project and were liable to be distracted from the commission of the Duke. Indeed, Charles de Croy seems to have been obliged to advertise himself as an eager and worthwhile patron. Such an arrangement positions the landscape project at the very heart of the shifting approaches towards the documentation of land that were occurring in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. In the Netherlands, the ancient feudal order of the countryside had gradually disappeared through a slow process of disintegration and disruption, transitioning into a capitalist model of agriculture and administration.⁵²⁹ Land surveying had played a significant role in this process of “reconceptualization,”⁵³⁰ promoting an attitude towards land as a commodity as opposed to social space, renegotiating ancient systems of power and authority.

The primary role of the medieval surveyor had been one of boundary definition, surface area management, and land allotment.⁵³¹ Surveyors had been rooted

Duc Charles de Croÿ,” Appendix no. 7. Translation by Elspeth Nicholson: nicholson_elspeth@yahoo.co.uk.

⁵²⁹ Hartmut Harnish, “Peasants and Markets: The Background to the Agrarian Reforms in Feudal Prussia East of the Elbe, 1760- 1807,” in *The German Peasantry: Conflict and Community in Rural Society from the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Centuries*, ed. Richard J. Evans and W. R. Lee (Oxon: Routledge, 2015), 37.

⁵³⁰ Garrett A. Sullivan, *The Drama of the Landscape: Land, Property, and Social Relations on the Early Modern Stage* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 38-39.

⁵³¹ C. Koeman and M. Egmond, “Surveying and Official Mapping in the Low Countries, 1500-ca. 1670,” in *The History of Cartography, Volume 3: Cartography in the European Renaissance*, ed. David Woodward (Chicago: University of

within individual manorial communities, participating in judicial processes concerning property rights or grazing disputes. They had acquired their regional knowledge directly from the experience of their predecessors.⁵³² However, over the course of the sixteenth century, engineering schools across Europe began to train surveyors as independent agents. By the turn of the century, the Netherlands was well established as an international centre of map making, engineering education, and surveying publication.⁵³³ In 1600, for example, Stadholder Maurice, Prince of Orange founded the Duytsche Mathematique School of Engineering in Leiden.⁵³⁴ His actions were praised in the dedication of *Practijck des Landmetens* (The Practise of Surveying) by Johan Sems and *Van het Gebruyck der Geometrijsche Instrumenten* (Of the Use of Geometric Instruments) by Jan Pietersz Dou, volumes published together in Leiden the same year.⁵³⁵

Chicago Press, 2009), 1254.

⁵³² Koeman and Egmond, "Surveying and Official Mapping in the Low Countries," 1254.

⁵³³ The concentrated growth of such practices related to mercantile and imperial expansion but also responded to the need for water management. Polder authorities required increasingly sophisticated maps and charts for the administration of trade, taxation and drainage projects. S. Muller, *Dutch Art: An Encyclopedia* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 397 and John Pickles, *A History of Spaces: Cartographic Reason, Mapping and the Geo-Coded World* (London: Routledge, 2014), 101.

⁵³⁴ A. Dijkstra, "A Wonderful Little Book. 'The Dissertatio Astronomica' by Johannes Phocylides Holwarda (1618-1651)," in *Centres and Cycles of Accumulation in and Around the Netherlands During the Early Modern Period*, ed. Lisa Roberts (Münster: Low Countries Studies on the Circulation of Natural Knowledge, 2011), 81 n 16.

⁵³⁵ Sullivan, *The Drama of the Landscape*, 38.

The formulaic aesthetic of the Croy landscape paintings suggests the standardised approach to the land practised by professional surveyors. It conveys an overarching methodology with little if any diversification for regional characteristic. Indeed once produced, the surveying documents and subsequent landscape volumes superseded the need for localised knowledge and customs that had tied tenants and landowners to both the soil and each other over generations. Establishing land boundaries had traditionally been part of Rogentide, a Catholic custom performed on the days preceding Ascension Thursday.⁵³⁶ Known often as ‘beating the bounds’ or ‘veldgang’ (going to the fields), the Rogation rituals differed between countries and regions but generally centred around teaching young members of the community the outermost limits of their settlement and integrating them into a custom-based landscape.⁵³⁷ During the ritual, the community was led by priests, physically walking the boundaries of the territory and marking key points of interest, such as a threshold, by reciting prayers, listening to the choir sing a specific antiphon, eating and drinking, or through acts of bodily violence.⁵³⁸ Boys were habitually

⁵³⁶ Elisa A. Foster, “Moveable Feasts: Processions as Multimedia Performance in Le Puy-en-Velay,” *Peregrinations: Journal of Medieval Art and Architecture* 5, no. 1 (Autumn 2015), 49.

⁵³⁷ In Venice, Rogation rituals were adapted for the seafaring community to involve a flotilla of boats that proceeded to the edge of the lagoon. Meanwhile in Germanic lands, ‘Kreuzwoche’ rituals involved the procession of the sacrament through the fields and the sprinkling of holy water onto crops. Dorothy Gladys Spicer, *Festivals of Western Europe* (Charleston: Forgotten Books, 1973), section 2; Sullivan, *The Drama of the Landscape*, 17 and Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 73.

⁵³⁸ Steve Hindle, “Beating the Bounds of the Parish: Order, Memory, and Identity in the English Local Community 1500-1700,” in *Defining Community in Early Modern Europe*, ed. M. Havlorsonand and K. E. Spierling (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 218-219.

pinched, beaten, or knocked against boundary markers.⁵³⁹ The overtly sensory experience of these perambulation rituals instilled a strong physical memory and sense of place and communal identity in the young, even after the bruises had faded from their skin. The rituals tied the community together through the solidarity of shared bodily experience and “collective systems of remembering.”⁵⁴⁰ The corporal negotiation of the landscape, be it cold boggy marshland, ridged plough furrows or lush fallow field was accompanied by pain and pleasure, tastes, sights, and sounds that echoed and reverberated through generations of bodies.⁵⁴¹ It nurtured an identity housed in what Bakhtin described as the “collective ancestral body of all the people.”⁵⁴² It constituted a shared form that was inseparable from the earth and was constantly under renewal.⁵⁴³

The work of the surveyor and artist generated a different paradigm. Indeed, the systematic account of the landscape offered by the watercolour album dramatically diverged from one measured in footsteps and shared corporal

⁵³⁹ P. Gooche, “Feet Following Hooves,” in *Ways of Walking: Ethnography and Practice on Foot*, ed. T. Ingold and J. L. Verguns (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 87 and A. McRae, “To Know One’s Own: Estate Surveying and the Representation of the Land in Early Modern England,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 56, no. 4 (Autumn, 1993): 343.

⁵⁴⁰ Nicola Whyte, “Landscape, Memory and Custom: Parish Identities c. 1550-1700,” *Social History* 32, no. 2 (2007): 169.

⁵⁴¹ Sullivan, *The Drama of the Landscape*, 45.

⁵⁴² Michael M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Hélène Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 19.

⁵⁴³ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, 19.

experience. The papers, compasses, inked figures and formulaic painted horizons seized the act of measuring from the common man and presented an attack on the communal body. They sliced through the collective veins of memory and custom, reducing land and tenancy into saleable objects of knowledge and power.⁵⁴⁴ The Jacobean playwright Thomas Middleton addressed such an assault directly in his work *Father Hubbard's Tales*, performed in London in 1604. He stated, "that which many thousand drops of his grandfather's brow did painfully strive for, one drop now of a scrivener's inkhorn did easily pass over. A dash of pen stood for a thousand acres."⁵⁴⁵ The material pages and watercolour pigment signified the soil and so superseded and substituted it.

Surveying / Surveillant

The ornate borders that surround each image further performed the objectification and reformulation of the landscape. They imitated the shape of a cassetta frame, a flat frieze placed between two layers of moulding situated at the back and sight edge of an image.⁵⁴⁶ In this guise, the frames asserted the self-reflexive nature of each watercolour as meta-image, a picture of a picture, a thing to be beheld and handled, and an object to be possessed. As Elizabeth Honig has

⁵⁴⁴ Sullivan, *The Drama of the Landscape*, 43.

⁵⁴⁵ Thomas Middleton, *Father Hubbard's Tale*, line 480-7 cited in Edward Gieskes, "'From Wronger and Wronged have I fee:' Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Legal Culture," in *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture: A Companion to the Collected Works*, ed. Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 117.

⁵⁴⁶ Timothy Newbury, *Frames* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2007), 442-443.

argued, meta-pictures were prolific in the seventeenth-century Netherlands and performed at once as documents and interpretations of visual culture.⁵⁴⁷ They engaged with their own conditions of making and processes of viewing from within the context that produced and observed them.⁵⁴⁸ The landscape images commented on and professed their own artifice, celebrating the power of illusion whilst dramatically breaking it across their split composition. The inclusion of the frame within the work pointed beyond itself to the viewer. As in the words of W. J. T. Mitchell, the meta-image “deploys its self knowledge of representation to activate the beholder’s self knowledge of the spectator position.”⁵⁴⁹ By looking at the watercolours the observer became more aware of their act of looking, their place in the performance of sight conjured by the painted scene.

The scrutiny of the onlooker and the celebration of observation and artifice are particularly potent in the context of the power-laden surveying activity that produced the landscape albums. Indeed, whilst the formulaic appearance of the watercolours suggests the means of production, the frames and their proclamation of deception subverted and complicated the empirical measuring eye of the surveyor. The clear signs of imagination entered the images into humanist discourse concerning art and poetry in which invention was understood to surpass nature. Indeed, Alberti praised the creative impetus of the

⁵⁴⁷ Honig examines Flemish gallery pictures, garland pictures, and cabinet pictures as prominent examples. Elizabeth Honig, *Jan Brueghel and the Senses of Scale* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2016), 37.

⁵⁴⁸ Honig, *Jan Brueghel and the Senses of Scale*, 37.

⁵⁴⁹ W. J. T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 61.

artist whilst Cennino Cennini's *Il Libro dell'arte* (ca. 1400) argued for their inventive faculty or *fantasia* that collated images of the outside world, combining them into new and perfected assemblages to produce pictures not seen in the natural environment.⁵⁵⁰

The watercolour frames, by underscoring the artistic, artificial nature of the landscapes, highlighted the observer's involvement in a choreographed performance that was distanced from the act of measurement. Indeed, they split the significance of the surveying act, differentiating between hand and eye, surveying as mechanical and surveying as sight. Such a distinction is present in Nordon's treatise as, whilst it is the professional that draws, it is the patron that sees. It spells out hierarchy, the frames reasserting the idea that the edges of the landscape are the domain of the singular landowner or observer, a space defined and policed in relation to a noble form and not the collective body of the people.⁵⁵¹ They can also be understood to socially position the landowner above the professional surveyor, the interiorised intellectual sense of sight presiding over the more tactile bodily senses engaged by the Bersaques family.⁵⁵²

⁵⁵⁰ Cennino Cennini, *Il libro dell'arte*, ed. F. Brunello (Neri Pozza: Vicenza, 1971); Norman E. Land, *The Viewer as Poet: The Renaissance Response to Art* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 109-110.

⁵⁵¹ This hierarchical interpretation of the relationship between outside and inside spaces draws on Joanna Woodall's analysis of Jan Brueghel's *Five Senses* paintings in which she argues that the split compositions of the works "enabled them to visualise hierarchical distinction *and* universal harmony between 'greater and lesser' positions in the cosmos." Joanna Woodall, "'Greater or Lesser?' Turning into the Pendants of the Five Senses by Jan Brueghl the Elder and his Companions," in *Cambridge and the Study of Netherlandish Art: The Low Countries and the Fens*, ed. Meredith M. Hale (Turnhout; Brepolis, 2016), 73.

⁵⁵² Woodall, "'Greater or Lesser?," 79.

The positioning of the landowner/observer through self-conscious acts of observation continues in the central portion of the composition. The uniform perspective implemented in each painting, distant and elevated, conjures a viewing experience that looks down over an entire settlement from fictional hills and an imaginary vantage point.⁵⁵³ The encounter produces a geography in which the landscapes of Milenfosse, Pottes, the Abbey of Marquette, and Comines, along with the Barony of Wavrin (Figure 76), Seclin (Figure 77), Hellem (Figure 78) and the remaining paintings, radiate from a single point. They perform Alberti's description of linear perspective, each place originating "within the eye,"⁵⁵⁴ the sovereign at the centre of this visual world.

The power of this sovereign perspective, particularly in relation to geographic and landscape traditions, has been explored by Simon Ryan in *The Cartographic Eye: How Explorers Saw Australia*. Here Ryan examines how the "explorative gaze"⁵⁵⁵ of colonizing travellers in the sixteenth century worked as a tool of appropriation. He argues that the elevated viewpoint, from which explorers to unknown continents would observe and record the land, implied a kind of

⁵⁵³ Graham Arader, "Natural History Offering of the Day: Watercolors from the Album de Croy," *Graham Arader*, Oct 21, 2011, accessed Sept 22, 2016, http://grahamarader.blogspot.co.uk/2011/10/natural-history-offering-of-day_21.html.

⁵⁵⁴ Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting*, trans. John R. Spencer (New Haven: Yale, 1966), 46.

⁵⁵⁵ Simon Ryan, *The Cartographic Eye: How Explorers Saw Australia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 4.

ownership. The European eye was an “organ of knowledge-generation,” a means of gazing “construed as an imposition of power.”⁵⁵⁶ It literally looked down across the land to survey, record, and thus appropriate space. It operated as a “microform of the divine gaze [...] always directed from the ‘higher’ point to the ‘lower,’ the ‘higher’ surveillant [...] invisible to those below, or at least shrouded in impenetrable mystery.”⁵⁵⁷ From within a Netherlandish context, Svetlana Alpers has explored the “aura of knowledge”⁵⁵⁸ imbued within maps and landscapes whose “making involved possession of a particular kind.”⁵⁵⁹ Such images automatically described a power balance between observer and landscape, subject and object, in which the gazer was produced as superior to the object of the gaze.⁵⁶⁰

The potency of such observation and representation was acknowledged by Thomas Elyot in his *The Book of the Governor*, which advised rulers to make certain use of “portraiture or painting”⁵⁶¹ as a means of comprehending terrain. Indeed, he argues, great rulers such as King Alexander instructed their lands

⁵⁵⁶ Ryan, *The Cartographic Eye*, 24.

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid, 93.

⁵⁵⁸ Svetlana Alpers, “The Mapping Impulse in Dutch Art,” 66.

⁵⁵⁹ Alpers, “The Mapping Impulse in Dutch Art,” 66.

⁵⁶⁰ Jonathan E. Schroeder, “Consuming Representation: A Visual Approach to consumer Research,” in *Representing Consumers: Voices, Views, and Visions*, ed. Barbara B. Stern (New York: Routledge, 1998), 21.

⁵⁶¹ Elyot, *The Book of the Governor*, 28.

“diligently and cunningly to be discribed and paynted.”⁵⁶² Philip II shared an interest in surveying, mapping and cosmology with numerous other Renaissance sovereigns, including his own father Charles V, who employed Imperial Geographer Jacob van Deventer to produce and print a number of provincial maps.⁵⁶³ Philip extended his father’s patronage of Deventer, perhaps influenced by the technical developments and artistic brilliance of cartography in the Netherlandish regions over which he ruled.⁵⁶⁴ Throughout the 1560s and 1570s, Philip embarked on extensive mapping projects, including one that suggests itself as an early model for Charles de Croy’s landscape albums.⁵⁶⁵

The King commissioned the Flemish artist Anton van den Wyngaerde to draw a series of topographical views of Spanish cities from an elevated distance (Figure

⁵⁶² Ibid, 42.

⁵⁶³ Richard L. Kagen and Benjamin Schmidt, “Maps and the Early Modern State: Official Cartography,” in *The History of Cartography, Volume 3: Cartography in the European Renaissance*, ed. David Woodward (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 666.

⁵⁶⁴ Barbara E. Mundy, *The Mapping of New Spain: Indigenous Cartography and the Maps of Relaciones Geográficas* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 2.

⁵⁶⁵ A further precursor of the album landscape project can be found in Albrecht V’s Munich *antiquarium*. This grand hall, dedicated to illustrious men of the Greek and Roman Empire, invited association with the Classical exempla and, used as a banqueting hall, framed the festivities of their modern successors. The lunettes of the windows in the vaulted hall were painted with 102 views of towns, markets and palaces belonging to the then Duchy of Bavaria. The paintings physically inserted the authority of the German court in the region into humanist dialogues concerning exemplary antique culture. Barbera Marx, “Wandering objects, migrating artists: the appropriation of Italian Renaissance art by German courts in the sixteenth century,” in *Forging European Identities, 1400-1700*, ed. Herman Roodenburg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 208; “Antiquarium. (Room 7).” *Residence Museum, Munich*, accessed Aug 26, 2018, <http://www.residenz-muenchen.de/englisch/museum/antiquar.htm>.

79). At the same time, the cartographer Pedro de Esquivel was employed to survey the countryside and produce maps of the area. Both representations were intended for compilation into corresponding atlases.⁵⁶⁶ A number of the views representing Flemish, Italian and Spanish cities, painted by Wyngaerde, were enlarged and displayed by Philip in the Pardo hunting lodge and the entrance hall of the Alcazar in Madrid.⁵⁶⁷ Barbara Mundy has argued in her study *The Mapping of New Spain: Indigenous Cartography and the Maps of Relaciones Geográficas* that the decision to display these localized representations, as opposed to great national topographical maps, was highly measured. She argues that Spain's proud grandees and privileged nobles would have filed into the palace surrounded by a version of Spain that underscored the importance of their localized authority.⁵⁶⁸

However, it can conversely be argued that the display of such landscapes allowed for the centralised sight of Philip II to be made tangible and publically recognisable. The monarch, sharing the same space as the images and nobles, could be seen to see over the extent of his terrain, a surveillant and superior figure at the heart of his Empire. Although predating Bentham's Panopticon model by several centuries, such a performance of kingly vision does anticipate

⁵⁶⁶ Wyngaerde's views were never fully synthesized unlike Esquivel's maps which formed an impressive atlas housed in the Escorial. Mundy, *The Mapping of New Spain*, 2-3 and 8.

⁵⁶⁷ Mundy, *The Mapping of New Spain*, 8.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid.

the regulatory mode of power described by Foucault.⁵⁶⁹ The images perform the individualisation and observation of place, conflating knowledge and sight with centralised authority and the production of docile subjects, loyal to the crown. At first glance, the Croy watercolours appear to manifest a similar system. The book arranges the landscapes in a cyclical orbit, images moving around the axis of the spine, each posited in perpetual relationship with the singular viewer whose encounter with the object controls its movement. The land 'observed' appears as a peaceful subject, free from revolt or disorder. However, unlike the royal images, the self-reflexive nature of the album paintings directs the surveillant gaze back out of the image.

Thus, the pages subvert the workings of the panoptical model. It is not the subject that self-regulates under the illusion of surveillance but rather the surveillant who positions themselves in relation to the illusion of a subject. The landowner formulates their position of rule in correspondence to the image of a ruled landscape.⁵⁷⁰ The watercolours impress this arrangement upon the observer en masse. The sheer number of repetitions and habitual movements involved in the mechanics of the book can be understood to serve, in Foucault's

⁵⁶⁹ Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writing*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986).

⁵⁷⁰ This idea draws on the complex web of self-reflexion and the positioning of sovereignty that plays out across the *Las Meninas* canvas discussed by Foucault and W. J. T. Mitchell. "Sovereigns, after all, [...] had to subordinate themselves to the discipline of tutors and advisors. The discipline of the eye and control of visual representation is central to the technology of sovereignty, especially those techniques of discipline adumbrated in the [...] 'Mirror for Princes.'" Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 61.

words, as an “instrument of power,”⁵⁷¹ normalising the model of authority it creates. Indeed, the patterns of viewing the books are so extensive that after twenty, two hundred, a thousand repetitions, the tired eye accepts the position of superiority thrust upon it and allows its illusory status to dissolve from consciousness.

The naturalising infrastructure of the album is perhaps why some previous scholars have not questioned the paradigm presented by the album. French artist Daniel Lefèvre has undergone a project to reproduce and display many of the album images. He describes the exercise as one of admiration for the thoroughness and accuracy of the paintings as well as awareness of what the towns and villages were like in the seventeenth century.⁵⁷² Lefèvre’s approach perpetuates the myth of a docile landscape displayed in the albums. Indeed, his detailed copies invest the originals with even more power and even more invisibility; they deny the influence of the watercolour and yet are completely subsumed by it.

Lefèvre’s project does not focus on the fundamental self-reflexive nature of the images and in doing so, does not address the fracture between the true subject of the painting, the authority of the observer/landowner, and the forms that appear on the page. Instead, his approach works with the visual façade through which

⁵⁷¹ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 184.

⁵⁷² Daniel Lefèvre, “Dans l’univers des Albums de Croÿ,” *Albums de Croÿ*, accessed July 20, 2017, <http://www.miniatures-de-croy.fr>.

the landscape is presented despite its incongruity with the new technological developments that were connected to the album. Indeed, as will be explored below, the discontinuity between the appearance and impact of the pigment, between the world shown and world created by the paintings, draws attention to the images not as descriptions of geography but of the particularities of the landowner and their position in the changing countryside.

Rewriting the Landowner

The space suggested by the watercolour album appears to be that of a peaceful and unchanging, ancient, feudal, pastoral arcadia. The landscapes are without shifting climates or social unrest. It is a place without seasons, famine, flooding, without decay or death. It is shown as the home of the peasant, a figure who existed “within a vacuum of time.”⁵⁷³ Many of the tiny figures that populate the landscapes within the *Lille, Douai, Orchies* volume are agricultural workers. Some hunt, tend flocks, or drive carts down narrow lanes whilst others converse in the street, carrying tools, or balance bundles on their heads like those shown in the tranquil settlement of St Andriev (Figure 80). Within Netherlandish textual and visual culture peasant figures were often comprehended as having an unchanging nature. Authors such as Ludovico Guiccardini penned histories that utilised the peasant as a historical device, a living insight into the ancient past. Guiccardini’s *Description de tout le Païs bas*, first published in Antwerp 1567,

⁵⁷³ Stephanie Porras, “Producing the Vernacular: Antwerp, Cultural Archeology and the Bruegelian Peasant,” *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 3, no. 1 (Winter 2011): 11.

claimed that the costume of Netherlandish peasants had not changed “from the time of Julius Caesar.”⁵⁷⁴ Agricultural communities were thus considered as a “living embodiment of Renaissance Europe’s own cultural past.”⁵⁷⁵ The topos of the diligent labourer, ever contentedly working on the land to feed all strata of society, promoted an idyllic balance. It offered a “vision of the world in order.”⁵⁷⁶

The harmonious image of the watercolour landscape, populated by figures of the past, can be understood as a manifestation of the pastoral tradition. This had roots in the ancient poetry of Theocritus and Virgil and gained momentum in the Italian paintings of Titian and Giorgione from the mid-fifteenth century.⁵⁷⁷ The pastoral aesthetic exemplified “the confluence of painting and poetry, the contemporary understanding of nature and man’s place within the landscape.”⁵⁷⁸ Pastoral images presented a believable view of the world and yet were also rich in artful metaphors, stimulating nostalgia for a lost Golden Age, the beauty of creation, and the glory of Classical Rome. Alberti discussed landscape painting in relation to villa architecture in his fifteenth-century treatise *On the Art of*

⁵⁷⁴ Lodovico Guicciardini, *Description de tout le Païs bas* (Antwerp: Guillaume Silvius, 1567), 39 translated in Porras, “Producing the Vernacular,” 7.

⁵⁷⁵ Porras, “Producing the Vernacular,” 11.

⁵⁷⁶ Ethan Matt Kavalier, “Pieter Bruegel’s ‘Fall of Icarus’ and the Noble Peasant,” in *Jaarboek Antwerpen: Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten* (1986): 84 and 98.

⁵⁷⁷ Sarah Cantor, “The Pastoral Landscape: Politics, Poetry and Piety in the Seventeenth Century,” in *Art and Social Change: Essays on the Collection of La Salle University Art Museum*, ed. Klaire Scarborough and Susan Dixon (Philadelphia: La Salle University Art Museum, 2016), 17.

⁵⁷⁸ Cantor, “The Pastoral Landscape,” 17.

Building in Ten Books. He recommended the health-giving benefits that such images could bestow on their noble patrons, allowing them to imagine themselves traversing the fields, and instilling feelings of rejuvenation and nourishment.⁵⁷⁹

In Valladolid 1539 Antonio de Guevara published his treatise *Menosprecio de corte y alabanza de aldea* (Contempt for the Court and Praise for the Village). Within the text Guevara railed against what he considered the excessively public nature of the court and the endless curiosity into other people's lives.⁵⁸⁰ Such obsession with externalities led to blindness to one's own self. He argued,

Much of our discontent is due to our perception that what we have seems so small, and what others have is much more plentiful [...] We approve the way of life that others lead and we condemn the way we live [...] We imagine that all others are happy and we alone are misfortuned, and worst of all, we believe in what we dream and we don't have faith in what we see.⁵⁸¹

At odds with this toxic environment of comparison, Guevara advocated the courtier move to the countryside as a place much better for introspection. The humble village offered the conditions of ethical existence. Free from complexity, it was the perfect place for self-examination, leisure, honest labour, innocent

⁵⁷⁹ Leon Battista Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, trans. Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach, and Robert Tavernor (London: MIT Press, 1988), 299; Cantor, "The Pastoral Landscape," 24.

⁵⁸⁰ Luis F. Avilés, "Care of the Self: Foucault, Guevara, and the Complexities of Courtly and Country Life," in *Pastoral and the Humanities: Arcadia Re-inscribed*, ed. Mathilde Skoie and Sonia Bjørnstad-Velázquez (Exeter: Bristol Phoenix Press, 2006), 81.

⁵⁸¹ Antonio de Guevara, *Menosprecio de corte y alabanza de aldea* (Valladolid, 1539), 133 cited in Avilés, "Care of the Self," 82.

company, and healthy amounts of solitude.⁵⁸² In the bucolic village, the courtier could emulate the words of Cicero that “nothing better becomes a well-bred man than agriculture.”⁵⁸³ Medical treatises further recommended the rural environment for its clean air, opportunities for exercise, and other noble pursuits. Physicians following Hippocratic traditions understood poor air to carry disease and sickness. It was vital to “keepe your selfe in a pure Ayre”⁵⁸⁴ to maintain a healthy, humourly balanced, body. In addition, the countryside facilitated the activities of walking, hunting, hawking, coursing of greyhounds, shooting, and sporting endeavours such as bowling.⁵⁸⁵

Whilst such advice was directed at the noble elite of Renaissance Europe, a comparable vein of health-giving pastoral imagery was produced for the developing urban classes in the mid sixteenth century. The printing house of Hieronymous Cock, located in Antwerp, the most volatile financial and commercial centre in Europe, published a hugely successful series of small landscapes. Each presented an eye-level view of a countryside estates, village,

⁵⁸² Avilés, “Care of the Self,” 84.

⁵⁸³ Ruth Mackay, *“Lazy, Improvident People:” Myth and Reality in the Writing of Spanish History* (London: Cornell University Press, 2006), 29.

⁵⁸⁴ T. Langley, *An almanac*, (London, 1643) SigB 3r cited in L. Hill Curth, “Lessons from the past: preventive medicine in early modern England,” *Medical Humanities* 29 (2003): 16-20.

⁵⁸⁵ G. Markham, *Country contentments* (London, 1615) sig A1r and H. Peachem, *The complete gentleman, the truth of our times and the art of living in London* (London, 1622) both cited in Hill Curth, “Lessons from the past,” n 28.

farmstead, pasture, or road.⁵⁸⁶ The cutting edge mechanical means of production and the status of the images as saleable and collectable jarred with the rustic world on display. However, as Alexander Onuf has explored, the success of the print series coincided with a refreshed interest in the rural as a place of retreat for those born below the rank of nobility. The prints, along with the construction of country houses in the regions surrounding Antwerp, established the countryside as the locus for relaxation, an 'other' to the city.⁵⁸⁷ The commercial audience encountered the landscape and the peasant or traveller who inhabited it with a curious and superior gaze. The titles encouraged such a reading, announcing "Delightful views," or "Very pleasant views to delight the eye."⁵⁸⁸ They professed, not the accurate representation of the geographic world outside of Antwerp, but the mental and physical pleasure that such an environment could stimulate. They drew on previously privileged themes of ageless arcadia to position a different, developing urban elite amongst the rolling hills and endless skies.

The *Lille, Douai, Orchies* album utilised a similar visual language of pleasure as the printed landscape, but reclaimed it from the realm of the burgher or wealthy tradesman. The materiality of the album drew on ancient and elevated image-making traditions, alluding to illuminated manuscripts, books of hours, and

⁵⁸⁶ Alexander Onuf, *The 'Small Landscape' Prints in Early Modern Netherlands* (Oxon: Routledge, 2018); Larry Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes: The Rise of Pictorial Genres in the Antwerp Art Market* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 1 and 6.

⁵⁸⁷ Onuf, *The 'Small Landscape' Prints in Early Modern Netherlands*, Introduction.

⁵⁸⁸ Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 6.

devotional treatises that were painstakingly crafted and invested with a huge amount of labour and time. Such volumes were the prerogative of royalty and the upper echelons of court society in the Burgundian and Habsburg dynasties.⁵⁸⁹ They were given as gifts and passed from one generation to the next. Manuscript illumination was a vehicle for piety, politics, and status as the patronage of luxury books inspired emulation throughout and between courts. Even the aesthetics of such objects reflected and influenced court splendour and display.⁵⁹⁰

The illusory frames that surround each of the watercolour landscapes partially emulate the eclectic trompe l'oeil forms that surrounded the miniatures of Flemish prayer books such as those within the 'Hours of Joana I of Castile' (also known as the 'London Rothschild Hours') (Figure 81). Here, a miniature of the *Maria Lactans* seated on a grassy bank is framed with a border of highly illusionistic cut flowers. The flowers present symbolic allusions to the purity and chastity of the Virgin (lilies and daisies), to Christ's blood and sacrifice (red carnations), and to memory and contemplation (pansies).⁵⁹¹ The blooms also evoke sensory and experiential dimensions of prayer. As Anne Margaret W. As-

⁵⁸⁹ Thomas Kren and Scot McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance: The Triumph of Flemish Manuscript Painting in Europe* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2003), 1.

⁵⁹⁰ Kren and McKendrick cite the specific example of woven brocade, rendered intricately on parchment and worn only by members of the ducal household. Kren and McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance*, 2.

⁵⁹¹ Celia Fisher, *Flowers in Medieval Manuscripts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 24; Anne Margaret W. As-Vijvers, "More than Marginal Meaning: The Interpretation of Ghent-Bruges Border Decoration," *Oud Holland Jaargang* 116, no. 1. (2003): 13.

Vijvers and Reindert Falkenburg have explored, scattering or picking flowers held associations with praying the rosary, the implied scent aligned to the pull of Christ on the soul, and the realistic petals could stimulate the taste of the “sweet fragrance of devotion.”⁵⁹² The three-dimensionality of the watercolour served to delight and trick the eye but also engaged the senses by mingling spaces of vision and tactility in a manner reserved for the privileged body.

The borders of the *Lille, Douai, Orchies* album all take the appearance of a cassetta picture frame and yet the nature of the frieze contained within the perimeter diversifies with each painting. The landscape of the Abbey of Marquette (Figure 73) is encircled by a dark border punctuated with intricate gold coils and a strip of ornament that professes to be the sight edge of a wooden frame articulated with an egg and dart design. Beyond this, the frieze is dominated by curling strap work that appears to rise off a dark surface into twists of pink, green, and blue. Bunches of foliage and bright cord also weave through the design. Turning the page, the observer encounters still more strap work artifice around the landscape of the Abbey of Fleînes (Figure 82); here the egg and dart-ornamented edge protrudes into the frieze, and flowers are replaced by delicate fronds of gold. Such gilt work features heavily in the landscape of Cheren (Figure 83), which eschews the illusory three-

⁵⁹² As-Vijvers, “More than Marginal Meaning,” 12, 16, and 29 n 38; Falkenburg, “The Household of the Soul,” 8; Reindert Falkenburg, *The Fruit of Devotion: Mysticism and the imagery of love in Flemish paintings of the Virgin and Child* (Amsterdam: John Benjamin’s Publishing Company, 1994).

dimensionality of previous designs in favour of a complex arrangement of flat lines and intricate points.

A different approach is found again in the frieze surrounding Turcoíng (Figure 84) in which bulbous pomegranates, pears, lemons, and a melon jostle for space between berries, wildflowers, and insects. The produce included in the Barony of Wavrin border (Figure 76) is shown under attack by a selection of birds, including a woodpecker, an amber-eyed eagle owl, a green finch, and a crane. They appear without a consistent scale, a characteristic most obvious in the two grey rabbits that inhabit the bottom left hand corner of the frame, outsizing an interested fox, whose body stretches along the base. A selection of mammals, each occupying its own grassy space, also fill the frame of the Hellem watercolour (Figure 78) and, in a similar manner to the fauna of the Barony of Wavrin piece, evade uniform scale. Upon close inspection the creatures can be seen to include diverse, exotic, and fantastical beasts. An ostrich, wolf, and camel appear with an interpretation of a lion and elephant, whilst a unicorn is situated along the right hand side. Fruit, flowers, vegetables, birds, beasts, and ornamental shrubbery fill the volume. Curls of strap-work and intricate gold designs occur throughout in varying formulations. The landscape of Herin (Figure 85) even boasts a winged cherubim head, a selection of armour, weapons, and a live, sparking cannon.

Previous scholars have, for the most part, (literally) overlooked the frames in order to focus on the landscapes within.⁵⁹³ Paul Culot is one of the only scholars to approach the subject matter. In “La Typologie Ornamentale des Encadrements dans les Albums de Croÿ,” in Duvosquel, *Albums de Croÿ*, Vol XXVI, Culot categorises every frame in the entire project within a tripartite system. Of the 2500 frame specimens, he argues, each can be described as ‘volute’ ornament, plants and animals, or architectural motif.⁵⁹⁴ According to Culot, each type has been utilised without apparent order and without obvious link to the specific location announced in the cartouche of each landscape.⁵⁹⁵ Culot focuses his argument on determining iconographic models for each decorative type, identifying the borders of medieval illuminated manuscripts along with contemporary printed books and pattern sheets as likely sources.⁵⁹⁶

Whilst Culot’s argument serves to contextualise the watercolour frames in relation to a wide range of image-making traditions, it is possible to argue against his assertion that the borders hold little relation to the landscape they surround. The frames simulated the idealised, sensory, health-giving, noble

⁵⁹³ Paul Culot, “La Typologie Ornamentale des Encadrements dans les Albums de Croÿ,” in Duvosquel, *Albums de Croÿ*, Vol. XXVI.

⁵⁹⁴ Culot, “La Typologie Ornamentale,” 327.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁶ He describes, for example, strap-work motifs in the album pertaining to the Hainaut region which seem to be directly lifted from a print by Jérôme Wierix after Philip de Galle. The pattern books of Hans Vredeman de Vries, naturalia of Jacques de Gheyn II, and miniature painting of Georg Hoefnagel are also suggested as potential source material. Culot, “La Typologie Ornamentale,” 335-340.

experience of the countryside. Turning the page from one frame to the next, the mind and body of the Duke could be transported from the outward concerns of court life. The different frames simulated the distraction, offering small details for amusement such as the copulating rabbits and defecating dogs around the Seclin landscape. Snippets of symbolism and narrative play around the borders. The stag hunt at the bottom of the Seclin landscape and the peacock that presides above hint at both ancient royal past times of the countryside or the princely menagerie. Other composites of beasts, both fantastical and exotic, supplemented images of the domestic wildlife to form *grilli*, entertaining assemblages described by Pliny in his *Natural History*.⁵⁹⁷ The unicorn, elephant, camel, ostrich and lion hunt of the Hellem frame blend the *naturalia* of royal collections and bestiaries with the mischievous and transgressive *bas de page* monkeys and monsters of the medieval manuscript.⁵⁹⁸

Traditions of border representation had, like the landscape, been subject to changes initiated by nascent capitalism. Michael Camille has argued that the flavour of the borders of illuminated manuscripts shifted in the Early Modern era from a space concerned with liminality, marginality, and transgression to one in which the personal paraphernalia of the owner could be reflected.⁵⁹⁹ A new vernacular world of things flooded into the frames and raised a cacophony of

⁵⁹⁷ Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, *Arcimboldo: Visual Jokes, Natural History, and Still-Life Painting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 39 and 105.

⁵⁹⁸ Camille, *Image on the Edge*, 11.

⁵⁹⁹ Michael Camille, *Image on the Edge: the Margins of Medieval Art* (London: Reaktion Books, 1992), 154.

stuff only possible in the context of a commercialised urban environment.⁶⁰⁰ In addition, the tangible illusionistic quality with which these objects were rendered allowed them to be “scrutinised with a veracity that [put] a price on them.”⁶⁰¹ Even within a privileged devotional context, the act of observation became one of commodification. Certainly, the borders of the *Lille, Douai, Orchies* album performed the objectification of the landscape by advertising the value of the book itself. However, the material value also served to underscore the position of the observer, as the appraising gaze reflected back out of the image to underscore privilege and, as will be shown, the Christian duty of the landowner in the countryside.

The Garden and the Gardener

It is notable that, whilst the idealised harmonious and health-giving countryside on display in the album resembles the pastoral tradition in many ways, there is no ruinous architecture, wild skies, or overgrown vegetation that often characterised such imagery and hinted at the power of God, the inevitabilities of time, and the mortality of man.⁶⁰² Instead, the well-tended fields, buildings and roads align with the model of landscape exemplified in contemporary Christian humanist attitudes towards nature. Chandra Mukerji argues that Renaissance humanists understood that the natural world, distorted at the Fall, was in

⁶⁰⁰ Camille, *Image on the Edge*, 130.

⁶⁰¹ Ibid, 157.

⁶⁰² Cantor, “The Pastoral Landscape,” 25.

desperate need of restoration. It was the Christian duty of a landowner to ensure the landscape was tamed, cultivated and improved upon. Such activity was thought upon as “fundamentally good.”⁶⁰³ Bernard Palissy, a notable Christian humanist and naturalist of the sixteenth century, believed that rational and informed land management was a way to mirror the process of Creation and show gratitude to God.⁶⁰⁴ Palissy’s biographer Henry Morley recorded his religious motivations:

I came to consider the marvellous deeds which the Sovereign has commanded nature to perform [...] when I had seen and contemplated such a thing I could find nothing better then to employ oneself in the art of agriculture, and to Glorify God, and to recognise Him in His marvels.⁶⁰⁵

The manifestation of land reform most closely allied to such Christian doctrine was the garden, the archetype for spiritually sanctioned land-use, a measure of responsible caretaking, and leadership skills.⁶⁰⁶ Through the garden, nature was made orderly and more usable to men in the manner it had been before the Fall.⁶⁰⁷ Following the death of Charles in January 1612, the Franciscan Père Philippe Bosquier delivered a funeral oration in which he repeatedly referred to

⁶⁰³ Chandra Mukerji, “Material Practices of Domination: Christian Humanism, the Built Environment, and Techniques of Western Power,” in *Theory and Society* 31, no. 2 (February 2002): 8.

⁶⁰⁴ Mukerji, “Material Practices of Domination,” 16.

⁶⁰⁵ Bernard Palissy cited in Henry Morley, *Palissy the potter: The life of Bernard Palissy, of Saintes, his labors and discoveries in art and science, with an outline of his philosophical doctrines, and a translation of illustrative selections from his works* (Boston: Ticknor, Reeds, and Fields, 1853), 238.

⁶⁰⁶ Mukerji, “Material Practices of Domination,” 4.

⁶⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 25.

the Duke in relation to the “jardiner d’ Haynault.”⁶⁰⁸ By using the analogy of a garden for the land, the Franciscan bestowed Charles with the title of gardener. This was a powerful metaphor and did not simply refer to the Duke’s interest in horticulture and plant collecting. The priest at once described the Duke’s capacity to control the landscape but also his benevolent and divinely ordained position within it.

In the early seventeenth century, the emblem of the walled garden was utilized by both Dutch and Flemish rulers to embody two very different modes of Christian authority over the landscape. The walled garden was used a metaphor for Holland, a new Garden of Eden separated from the rest of the Low Countries by a ring of fortified cities. It was a fertile oasis, a terrestrial paradise sometimes inhabited by the nation personified in the figure of the Maiden of Holland. Willem Buytewech’s 1615 print entitled *Allegory on the Deceitfulness of Spain and the Liberty and Prosperity of the Dutch Republic*, (Figure 86) presented a maiden within a wattle fence and architectural structure decorated with the arms of the United Provinces.⁶⁰⁹ Within the enclosure figurations of unified community and friendship, peasants, sailors, soldiers and townsmen tended to the garden by pulling up ‘weeds’ of tyranny, death and oppression. On the

⁶⁰⁸ Bosquier, extract of *L’oraison funèbre de Charles de Croy prononcée en 1612 pas le Père Philippe Bosquier* reproduced in Duvosquel, *Albums de Croÿ: propriétés des Croÿ*, Vol. XXVI.

⁶⁰⁹ Catherine Levesque, *Journey Through Landscape in Seventeenth-Century Holland: The Haarlem Print Series and Dutch Identity* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University, 1994), 77.

outside of the garden, personifications of Catholic Spain were shown excluded from the well-governed state.⁶¹⁰

Not long before the production of Buytewech's print, the Habsburg monarchy also utilised the emblem of the enclosed garden in relation to spiritual and genealogical authority over the Netherlandish landscape. The Archdukes Albert and Isabella drew on the Marian associations of the *hortus conclusius*, planting a heptagonal garden at the shrine of Scherpenheuvel.⁶¹¹ The act drew on a long tradition of associations between the Virgin Mary and the enclosed garden, inspired by a biblical verse in Song of Solomon which reads "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed."⁶¹² Luc Duerloo describes the Archdukes' devotional garden as linked to the couple's prayers for progeny and the continuation of their dynastic line at the forefront of the Southern Netherlands.⁶¹³

The analogy of the soul as garden was a key motif in the writing of Christian exempla such as St Theresa of Ávila. Kitchen gardens, kingly pleasure gardens, patio gardens, hermitage gardens, rain-soaked plots, and enclosures of flora and

⁶¹⁰ Levesque, *Journey Through Landscape in Seventeenth-Century Holland*, 77.

⁶¹¹ Duerloo, *Dynasty and Piety*, 75.

⁶¹² Song of Solomon 4: 12 (KJV).

⁶¹³ Duerloo, *Dynasty and Piety*, 75.

fauna richly populated her text.⁶¹⁴ The soul was allegorized both as a garden and gardener, tasked with creating a lush paradise from barren soil. The success or failure of the gardener's efforts corresponded to their prayerful relationship with God.⁶¹⁵ Devotional manuals instructed the prayerful to create an inner environment appropriate for meeting with the divine. As Reindert Falkenburg has examined, these texts described the specific layout of such a place, including types of flowers, herbs and trees that should be mentally 'implanted' and cultivated in such a way that they become consonant with the spiritual flourishing of the individual.⁶¹⁶

It is possible to perceive the watercolours of the *Lille, Douai, Orchies* Album as analogous to these political and spiritual enclosed or walled gardens. The ornate and illusory frames that surround each image hem in the landscape, curtailing the rolling fields and settlements on every side. The forms that populate the frames provide diversion and healthy stimulation for the observer; they emulate the aesthetics of prayer books whilst making claims over the Netherlandish terrain. Through this visual enclosure of the land, illusions of distance and externality, authority and stewardship meld with practices of interiority, Christian duty and personal salvation. The more time spent contemplating the

⁶¹⁴ Maryrice Ortiz Lottman, "The Gardens of Teresa of Ávila," in *A New Companion to Hispanic Mysticism*, ed. Hilaire Kallendorf (Leiden: Brill Publishing, 2010), 323.

⁶¹⁵ Ortiz Lottman, "The Gardens of Teresa of Ávila," 324.

⁶¹⁶ Reindert Falkenburg, "The Household of the Soul: Conformity in the Merode Triptych," in *Early Netherlandish Painting at the Crossroads: A Critical Look at Current Methodologies*, ed. Maryan W. Ainsworth (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001), 6-8.

various forms of the frames, the better the spiritual health of the viewer. The longer and further one looked out into the landscape, the deeper one looked into the soul.

Frictions and Factions

Shortly after the debate between Farmer and Surveyor, discussed at the start of this chapter, Nordon's *The Surveyor's Dialogue* includes the following passage,

Surveyor [...] For although men be endowed by the providence of God, and of his bounty, with honors, Manors, Castles, Houses, Lands, Tenements, Woods, and other like revenues, which indeed are the sinews and ligaments which conjoin and tie honor and habitability together, yet if these not be managed, guided, and carefully continued and increased by a discreet and honest Surveyor, [...] the Lord may be disabled to maintain that which he hath gotten, the title of honor; and where honor is without means, it wanteth the substance, and hath only the shadow of itself to delight in.⁶¹⁷

The text describes the bond between the landscape and landlord, suggesting that the terrain was not only a reflection or result of an individual's noble status, but crucial to the constitution of it. Indeed, in his advertisement for the role of the surveyor, Nordon emphasises the vulnerabilities of such an arrangement. Without the mediatory objects, measurements, and tools, the substance and security of the landowner is put at risk.

Anxieties about the transformation of the landlord and landscape manifested throughout Netherlandish and wider European culture. Robert Crowley was one

⁶¹⁷ Norden, *The Surveyor's Dialogue*, 27.

of the first to attack the changes. His pamphlet, *An informacion and petition agaynst the oppressours of the pore*, published in London 1548, described surveyors as “a plage, of al plagis most horryble.”⁶¹⁸ Within Netherlandish theatre the landlord and tenant were often portrayed as oppositional characters, alternating between castings as villain and hero.⁶¹⁹ *Gijsbreght van Aemstel* (The Angel of Amsterdam), written by Joost van den Vondel, was prominently performed in 1638 at the inauguration of Amsterdam’s first city theatre and told the story of a siege on the city following the death of Count Floris V.⁶²⁰ The playwright used the language of tenancy, praising Gijsbreght van Aemstel’s revolt against the Count as a just rebellion against a distant and tyrannical landlord who had abused the privileges of nobility.⁶²¹

On the English stage, the playwright and poet Ben Johnson utilised sartorial language to condemn foolish landowners. In 1605 his satirical play *Every Man Out of His Humour* was performed at court with the accusatory rally “you turned

⁶¹⁸ Robert Crowley, *An informacion and petition agaynst the oppressours of the pore commons of this real me, compiled and imprinted for this only purpose that amongst them that haue to doe in the Parliamente, some godlye mynded men, may hereat take occasion to speak more in the matter then the authoure was able to write*. (London: John Day, 1548) sig. A7r-v cited in McRae, “To Know One’s Own,” 334.

⁶¹⁹ Mcrae, “To Know One’s Own,” 83.

⁶²⁰ Reinder Meijer, *Literature in the Low Countries: A Short History of Dutch Literature in the Netherlands and Belgium* (The Hague: Springer, 1978), 132.

⁶²¹ Marco Prandoni, “Staging the History of Amsterdam in Vondel’s ‘Gysbreght van Aemstel:’ A Non-Confessional Dramatic Contribution to the Narrative of the Dutch Revolt,” in *Drama, Performance and Debate: Theatre and Public Opinion in the Early Modern Period*, ed. Jan Bloemaendal, Peter G. F. Eversmann and Elsa Strietman (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 302 n 18.

four or five hundred acres of your best land into two or three trunks of apparel”⁶²² whilst, on another occasion, “the mercer has your woods for her velvets.”⁶²³ In 1619, from the pulpit John Williams, advisor to James I and future Archbishop of York, preached a sermon in front of the English King. He vividly warned of the dangers posed by landlords who abused the new systematic model of agriculture, perceiving their land merely in terms of material profit and loss. Such a figure, he argued, has “a Farme clapt upon his feete, a Copy holde dangling up and down his legges, a Manor wrapt about his body.”⁶²⁴ Williams used the image of dress to decry the greed and extravagance of nobles who wasted the resources of their measured fields. He signified corrupt manorial lords who sold off parcels of land, greedily consumed natural and human resources, or who forced their tenants into arrears only to confiscate material possessions.⁶²⁵

Surviving letters describe the protection that Charles de Croy’s image-making project required whilst underway. In order to ensure the safety of Pierre

⁶²² Ben Johnson, *Every Man Out of His Humour*, ed. Helen Ostovich (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 45.

⁶²³ Johnson, *Every Man Out of His Humour*, 214.

⁶²⁴ John Williams, *A sermon of apparell preached before the Kings Maiestie and the Prince his Highness at Theobalds, the 22. of February, 1619 by Iohn Williams, Dr. in Diuinitie, Deane of Salisbury, and one of his Maiesties chaplaines then in attendance. Published by his Maiesties especiall commandement.* (London: John Bull, 1620), 18.

⁶²⁵ Instances of this are also recorded in Rechteren Manor in the Salland region of the Netherlands. Tim Kooijmans and Joost Jonker, “Chained to the Manor? Payment patterns and landlord-tenant relations in the Salland region of the Netherlands around 1750,” *TSEG* 12, no. 4 (2015): 98.

Bersacques, the Duke was obliged to send decrees from his residence in Heverlee to numerous regions under documentation. Arriving ahead of the surveyor, these documents insisted that the local authorities and tenants do nothing to hinder the surveying work in any way.⁶²⁶ As this chapter has demonstrated, the friction between the landscape and landlord, their shifting positions and relationship, was deeply encoded within the painted album. The processes of production suggested the transformation of the land, positioning it around a singular landowner. The painted forms described and affirmed this position of authority by simulating the privileged, health giving quality of the countryside, the moral responsibility of the Christian humanist, and the personal, spiritual wellbeing of the observer.

The potent impact of the album in formulating nobility in the face of conflict and uncertainty is evidenced in how the progression of the surveying and painting project correlated to the Duke's problematic social status and relationship with the Spanish Hapsburg authorities. Charles began his enterprise in the wake of significant personal and political instability. His religious loyalties had wavered throughout his marriage to Marie de Brimeu who, despite bringing great wealth and vast swathes of land to the union, was also a Calvinist. Under her influence, Charles temporarily abandoned his Catholic faith and support for the King of Spain. In 1582 Charles penned an 'apology' in answer to his critics, outlining the

⁶²⁶ Decree in Dutch dated 9th August 1598. Archives de l'État à Courtrai, Acquisitions, no. 7008 (jadis Arch, État Gand, Petit varia, no. 27b). Transcribed in Duvosquel, "La Correspondance du Duc Charles de Croÿ," Appendix no. 7.

reasons for his conversion to Protestantism, and attacking the King.⁶²⁷

Unfortunately Charles did not maintain a good relationship with Stadholder

William of Orange and faced arrest and detention on several occasions.⁶²⁸

Indeed, delayed by Orange, the apology was not published until after 1585 when

Charles, having separated from his wife, returned to the Catholic cause.⁶²⁹ His

reputation was in tatters and his future uncertain, even his servants fell under

scrutiny and suspicion.⁶³⁰ A letter, dated July 1586 and sent from Charles de Croy

to Lord Willoughby, governor of Bergen op Zoom, requested the release of the

Duke's men and his 'painter' upon the payment of a reasonable ransom.⁶³¹

The production of the first watercolour landscapes in 1590 coincided with a

period in which Charles actively sought to reshape his damaged public persona

amongst his peers at the Brussels court. His unnamed painter now free, the Duke

appears to have drafted all resources into the effort. Indeed, the documentation

and representation of the landscape correlated with the recovering fortunes of

the Duke. The album recording the Principality of Château-Porcien and the

⁶²⁷ Charles de Croy, *Ampliation du discours intitulé Histoire véritable des choses passées, soubz le gouvernement du tres illustre prince Charles de Croy, prince de Chimay* (Chimay, 1589), Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

⁶²⁸ Alistair C. Duke and Andrew Spicer, *Dissident Identities in the Early Modern Low Countries* (Oxon: Routledge, 2009), 259.

⁶²⁹ Paul J. Smith and Karl A. E. Enenkel, *Montaigne and the Low Countries* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 323.

⁶³⁰ Duke and Spicer, *Dissident Identities in the Early Modern Low Countries*, 259.

⁶³¹ Letter: 'CHARLES DE CROY, Prince de Chimai, to LORD WILLOUGHBY' National Archives: Lincolnshire Archives. Ref. 8ANC2/14.

Marquis of Montcornet in the Ardennes provides clear evidence of this.⁶³² The region included property that had been confiscated by France in the sixteenth century. It was not until the Peace of Vervins in 1598 that the land was returned to the Duke.⁶³³ In the immediate aftermath of its recovery, Charles commissioned his surveyor and painter to visit and record the landscape, completing the album just a few years later.

A codicil to the Duke's will, written in 1611, explicitly instructed his nephew and heir Alexander d'Arenberg to keep his collections intact and oversee the publication of catalogues detailing their contents.⁶³⁴ His medals, coins and antique gems were to be recorded but also his library and paintings which he described "together with their descriptions, stories, and notes, most memorable and useful for posterity."⁶³⁵ The absolute insistence on the collection remaining intact suggests a desire for Charles' patrimony, land and albums to move through subsequent generations as one entity. His words underscore the power of the material to formulate nobility in the face of disruption, physical, political and geographical. The Duke's wish appears to have been only partially fulfilled. The

⁶³² Album: "Vues et perspectives differentes du Comté du Hainaut, de l'Artois, de la Principauté du Porcien et du Marquisat de Montcornet." Montigny, A. ONB Cod. Min. 50/5 Han 1607.

⁶³³ Duvosquel, "Charles de Croÿ en quête de commentaires pour ses Albums (1600-1601)," 796.

⁶³⁴ Honig, *Brueghel and the Senses of Scale*, 116-117.

⁶³⁵ "[C]omme aussy du cathalogue de nostre bibliothèque et peintures, ensemble leur description, histoire et adnotation les plus mémorables et utiles pour la postérité." Charles de Croy, *Mémoires autographes*, 304 translated in Honig, *Brueghel and the Senses of Scale*, 117.

surveying documents considered at the start of this chapter came to auction in 2014 having remained in the possession of the Croy family and related descendants since their creation.⁶³⁶ Furthermore, the album of Authal, describing the regions of Brabant, Flanders, Artois, Picardy and Numurois, moved with the patrimonial land into the Arenberg line of descent through Charles' sister Anne de Croy.⁶³⁷ The unified movement of landscape, album, and title was less successfully maintained elsewhere. It is perhaps the greatest irony that so many of the albums were sold or dispersed after the Duke's death.⁶³⁸ The pages, so concerned with negotiating the bond between the noble body and the commercialised countryside, were subsumed into the process that they attempted to choreograph and traverse.

⁶³⁶ "Sotheby's Lot Record: 117 'Croy, Charles III, Duc de. Early seventeenth-century french manuscript, made for Charles, Duc de Croy, containing five coloured views and maps, signed and annotated by the Duke ("deCroy") and dated by him 30 April 1606,'" *Sotheby's*, accessed March 20, 2018, <http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2014/music-continental-books-manuscripts-l14402/lot.117.html>.

⁶³⁷ It remained within the Arenberg collection until 2001 when it was purchased through Sotheby's auction house for over a million euros. Graham Arader, "Natural History Offering of the Day: Watercolors from the Album de Croy," *Graham Arader*, Oct 21, 2011, accessed Sept 9, 2016, http://grahamarader.blogspot.co.uk/2011/10/natural-history-offering-of-day_21.html.

⁶³⁸ "Sotheby's. Lot Record: 117 'Croy, Charles III, Duc de. Early seventeenth-century french manuscript.'

Chapter Five.

The Adoration of the Magi Altarpiece.

The Funeral Rites of Anne de Croy

Statues of saints and relics surrounded the deathbed of Anne de Croy.⁶³⁹ The Duchess was attended by two of her daughters, along with two nuns and a number of Capuchin monks. She was dressed in the blue habit of a Conceptionalist sister and laid out on a simple straw funerary bier.⁶⁴⁰ As Anne slipped out of life, the artist Jan van Huldighen painted two portraits. He began the first in the final moments of her life, and the other immediately after death.⁶⁴¹ Anne's heart and entrails were removed, embalmed, and transported

⁶³⁹ Nicolas de Fief, Bishop of Arras, made a detailed account of Anne de Croy's death and funeral in 1634. Mirella Marini has interpreted this account in her article "Pendants in life and death: Vroomheid, identiteit en autoriteit in de testamentaire beschikkingen van Anna van Croy, hertogin van Aarschot en prinses-gravin van Arenberg (1564-1635)," in *Graven Spreken: perspectieven op grafcultuur in de middeleeuwse en vroegmoderne Nederlanden*, ed. P. Bitter, V. Bonenkampora and K. Goudriaan (Hilversum: Verloren, 2013).

⁶⁴⁰ The habit chosen by the Duchess was linked to the beneficiaries of her testament. She bequeathed 30,000 guilders to the Conceptionalist sisters for the construction of a convent in Aarschot. Marini, "Pendants in life and death," 159 and 168.

⁶⁴¹ The portraits are now lost and whilst Landelin Hoffmans claims an oval portrait of a woman within the Arenberg collection is one of these deathbed images, more recent scholarship has identified the sitter as Marie-Henriette de Cusance et de Vergy, another Arenberg Duchess. Landelin Hoffmans, *Les Portraits des d'Arenberg Dans Les Tableaux Religieux des XVIIeme et XVIIIeme Siecles a Enghien* (Brussels: Edgard Delward, 1941), 69-72; Peter Neu, "Marie-Henriette de Cusance et de Vergy (1624-1701)," in *Arenberger Frauen: Fürstinnen, Herzoginnen, Ratgeberinnen, Mütter. Frauenochicksale im Hause*

for separate burial in the parish church of St Nicholas, Enghien and in the Croy family seat of Heverlee.⁶⁴² The body resided in a castle antechamber lined with family portraits before the oldest and most important members of the Arenberg household carried the lead coffin to the castle chapel.⁶⁴³

The following day Anne was removed to her final resting place. The Arenberg household, monks, and torchbearers, clad in black, formed a funeral procession moving from the castle through the streets of Enghien to the Capuchin convent chapel in the centre of the town. Anne's deathbed portraits accompanied the body to a funerary space adorned with hundreds of family shields. Heraldry embellished everything from the church walls to the candlesticks that surrounded the altar and coffin.⁶⁴⁴ The entire town was mobilised as part of the mourning ritual. Enghien merchants supplied wine, fish, lemons and olive oil to the castle for funeral banquets, and weeks of bell ringing in the surrounding region continued to mark the occasion.⁶⁴⁵ In the parish church of St Nicholas, a daily mass was celebrated for Anne in the chapel of Our Lady of the Rosary and,

Arenberg in Sieben Jahrhunderten, ed. Peter Neu (Koblenz: Verlag der Landesarchivverwaltung Rheinland-Pfalz, 2006), 146.

⁶⁴² Marini, "Pendants in leven en dood," 165-166.

⁶⁴³ Ibid, 160-161.

⁶⁴⁴ Ibid, 162 and 170.

⁶⁴⁵ Details of the funeral feast are found in AAE. *Succ*, 139. Transcribed in Yves Delannoy, "Le Château et le Parc d'Enghien sous bannière des Arenberg 1607-1918: Part One," in *Annales du Cercle archéologique d'Enghien*, Vol. 33 (Enghien: Cercle Royal Archéologique d'Enghien, 1999), 56. The bell ringing is described in Marini, "Pendants in leven en dood," 169.

on feast days, a candle was burnt before the altar.⁶⁴⁶ Anne's corpse was interred in the family mausoleum located underneath the Capuchin chapel. The entrance to the crypt directly faced the altar and the large altarpiece positioned above.⁶⁴⁷ Of all the physical, sartorial, and material transitions performed as part of the funeral ritual, this final move was the most significant. It was a moment in which Anne's body entered into a powerfully transient material state, imbued with potential and promise.

As Erin Lambert has explored, the traditional funerary ritual that surrounded the body preceding its interment underscored the proof of resurrection at the end of days. Central to Christian belief, the doctrine of the Resurrection of Bodies decreed that, at the Parousia, Christ would return to earth and all those who had previously perished would awaken and be reunited with their corporal forms for a final reckoning.⁶⁴⁸ Christ would sift the eternally saved from the eternally damned, calling into being a new age of Creation, a new heaven and a new earth.⁶⁴⁹ The ringing of funerary bells signified the blast of the Last Trumpet and the voice of God that would call the dead from their graves to judgement. The

⁶⁴⁶ The testament of Anne de Croy included a legacy of 800 florins allocated for this repeated ritual. Yves Delannoy, "Anne de Croy, duchesse d'Arschot, princesse-comtesse d'Arenberg, et la ville d'Enghien," in *Annales du Cercle archéologique d'Enghien* (Enghien: Cercle Royal Archéologique d'Enghien, 1952), 49.

⁶⁴⁷ Marini, "Female Authority in the 'Pietas Nobilita,'" 18.

⁶⁴⁸ "Part 1. Article 11: The Resurrection of the Body, Catechism of the Catholic Church," *The Vatican*, accessed July 29, 2018, http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p2s2c1a3.htm.

⁶⁴⁹ This process is discussed in 2 Peter 3: 13 and Matthew 25: 31, 32 and 46 (KJV).

ceremonial mass and anointing with oil or holy water by monks and nuns affirmed the baptismal vows of the deceased and their continuing membership of the Church.⁶⁵⁰ Acts of charity, strewing of flowers, or giving of gifts associated with the funeral foretold the coming of spring after winter, organic renewal and reconsolidation. Furthermore, as Matthias Citardus, court preacher to Ferdinand I, declared in Vienna in 1565, walking in a procession demonstrated faith in the promise of the resurrection. It honoured the body of the dead by recognising the potential still inherent within their material form.⁶⁵¹ For the body of Anne de Croy such ritualistic prefiguration was eclipsed by the performance of the altarpiece. As this chapter will explore, the painting enacted the deliverance of the Arenberg clan, accommodating both the mausoleum and altar table to present the dynastic community triumphantly redeemed at the end of days.

The altarpiece is large, measuring 330 x 264 cm and takes the form of an *Adoration of the Magi* scene (Figure 87). It depicts the narrative in the Gospel of Matthew, prophesied in the book of Isaiah, in which a number of wise men or magi travel from the east to Jerusalem in order to pay homage to the Christ Child at the Nativity.⁶⁵² Within the composition, the Holy Family is shown situated in a ruined stone structure, littered with crumbling masonry and open to the night sky. A great number of faces appear behind them, a crowd of women on the left and men on the right. They appear somewhat crammed together in the central

⁶⁵⁰ Erin Lambert, *Singing the Resurrection: Body, Community, and Belief in Resurrection Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 163.

⁶⁵¹ Lambert, *Singing the Resurrection*, 163-164.

⁶⁵² Matthew 2: 1-12; Isaiah 60: 1-7 (KJV).

portion of the painting, roughly arranged into static lines. A large proportion of the foreground is taken up with the depiction of a sparse dirt floor onto which kneels an elderly magus in flowing silk robes. He is positioned at the base of an overgrown pedestal and reaches out towards the Virgin and Christ Child with an ornate offering. To his right a number of other richly dressed magi grasp golden caskets whilst, to his left, a Capuchin monk with tonsure and patched brown habit kneels in veneration. Above all the ruined vaults open to let in the night sky and its guiding star.

The painting has been accredited to Servaes de Coelx, a Flemish painter active in the Netherlands at the start of the seventeenth century. Little is known about Coelx and only one other painting is attributed to the artist, a Last Supper scene located in the Church of Sainte-Waudru in Mons. Correspondence between the artist and Anne de Croy suggest that she followed his progress with keen interest and was actively involved in choreographing the potential of the canvas.⁶⁵³ Much of the surviving exchange between Anne and Coelx discussed the family portraits that were loaned to the artist and then cleaned and amended after his use.⁶⁵⁴ In a letter dated to April 1616 the Duchess references sitting for the artist as model herself.⁶⁵⁵

⁶⁵³ Hoffmans, *Les Portraits des d'Arenberg*, 10.

⁶⁵⁴ In 1616, Coelx copied two images representing the Ducal couple and numerous others depicting their siblings and children. Hoffmans, *Les Portraits des d'Arenberg*, 9-10.

⁶⁵⁵ Hoffmans, *Les Portraits des d'Arenberg*, 10.

In light of these exchanges, the *Adoration of the Magi* scene can be considered as a family portrait. Indeed, previous scholarship on the subject has been dominated by this premise. Enghien historian Landelin Hoffmans has identified the faces of sixty-five individuals in the altarpiece by comparing the image with the notes of seventeenth-century and nineteenth-century Arenberg archivists.⁶⁵⁶ Hoffmans also compared contemporary portraits of the clan. He discovered particularly strong likenesses in the previously considered watercolour portraits of Margaret de la Marck, Jean de Ligne, and Charles de Croy (Figure 88). In addition, the kingly figure kneeling in the foreground of the piece was identified as a portrait of Charles d'Arenberg, recognised by the mantle of the Golden Fleece thrown over his shoulders.⁶⁵⁷

Anne's presence in the altarpiece is more problematic. Hoffmans identified her as the Virgin Mary, the youthful, dark haired figure seated opposite her husband, Charles d'Arenberg, in his form of the kneeling magus. Mirella Marini's analysis of the painting also supports this notion. The scholar examines the painting as a reflection of Anne de Croy's life at the head of the Arenberg house and the development of her personal devotional practice. She describes the altarpiece as

⁶⁵⁶ Hoffmans uses the seventeenth-century accounts of Arenberg treasurer Gilles Rasoir which list twenty five sitters by name. AAE 'Comptes de Gilles Rasoir, trésorier general de la Maison d'Arenberg á Enghien, dossier des Capuchins' no. 252/2. He also uses later nineteenth-century documents compiled by Arenberg archivist Père Ignace d'Oss, which identify forty nine sitters. *Archives des Capuchins de Belgique: ACB, Section II, 10.011, 15-16*. Hoffmans, *Les Portraits des d'Arenberg*, 9 and 12-15.

⁶⁵⁷ Hoffmans, *Les Portraits des d'Arenberg*, 16-17.

an “almost exact translation of the generational life of the [...] dynasty.”⁶⁵⁸ It was a “dynamic performance of aristocratic survival and religiously inspired political loyalty.”⁶⁵⁹ She further argues that the altarpiece as a whole formed a trinity with Anne’s funeral ritual and testament, working so that she could be seen as a pendant to her husband, his authority, dynastic position and lifestyle “even if she died twenty years after it was finished.”⁶⁶⁰ Marini argues that the specific positioning of certain figures within the composition corresponded directly to the power struggle that put Anne de Croy and her sons at loggerheads in the early seventeenth century.⁶⁶¹ The inclusion of both Croy and Arenberg portraits established the image as an “apotheosis of the combined family histories,” and worked as a trophy signalling victory in the battle for Aarschot patrimony.⁶⁶²

Building on Marini’s research, this chapter will take an alternate line, arguing that Anne’s presence in the altarpiece is more forward facing. It was part of a composition that facilitated the continuation of the dynasty *ad infinitum*. It did not simply reflect the life of the Duchess two decades before her death but anticipated her arrival in the mausoleum and, like the entire complex, was built for the future. The rows of empty vaults beneath the chapel looked optimistically on to generations of potential inhabitants. The community of friars who

⁶⁵⁸ Marini, “From Arenberg to Aerschot and Back Again,” 128-129.

⁶⁵⁹ Marini, “Female Authority in the ‘Pietas Nobilita,’” 17.

⁶⁶⁰ Marini, “From Arenberg to Aerschot and Back Again,” 128-129; Marini, “Pendants in leven en dood.”

⁶⁶¹ Marini, “Female Authority in the ‘Pietas Nobilita,’” 16.

⁶⁶² Marini, “From Arenberg to Aerschot and Back Again,” 129.

permanently resided in the structure passed their prayerful responsibilities from one cohort to the next. Likewise, the altarpiece actively performed within the chapel space to confirm the perpetual solidarity and impending redemption of the clan.

The composition and context of the painting hinges around the theological triad of Eucharist, Adoration, and Resurrection of Bodies, a constellation of beliefs, narratives, and principles that blend together across the canvas. As will be seen, the confluence of the three tenets concentrates in the brilliant silk cloak of the kneeling magus, an illusory triad that formulates the visual crux of the composition. Its dazzling quality and strong diagonal shape position all other forms in deferential reference to it. The painterly construction of this central motif dissolves the pictorial plane by appearing to reflect the divine light of the altar. In doing so, the pigment simulates processes of Eucharistic encounter, the divine penetrating the mundane through the membrane of the human body. The heightened material appearance of the fabric, so glorious it surpassed all earthly counterparts, also performs the potency of substance in the ritual. However, the inescapable allusions to luxury inherent in such an object disrupts the attempt to transcend tangibility and worldly status altogether.

In addition to Eucharistic significance, the cloak generated a powerful dialogue between the altarpiece and the family tomb below the chapel. The illuminated fabric delineated the production of a sanctifying likeness of the family and inserted it into discussion concerning the nature of the 'dressed' resurrected body as outlined in 1 Corinthians. The fabric displayed the act of transformation,

a body involved in an on-going process of change, shifting from one state of being to the next. It thus designated the altarpiece as a mediatory device, a component in the perpetual management of the Arenberg corpse undertaken by the community of Capuchin monks who frequented the chapel complex. Whilst the mausoleum was reserved for members of the noble family, the altarpiece celebrated the endless cohesion of a much wider community that encompassed servants and friars, the living and the dead.

Ultimately, this chapter will argue that analysis of Anne's 'portrait' as the Virgin Mary must recognise the transient and mediatory materiality that characterises the canvas. The likeness is imbued with notions of elevation and renewal and, far from illustrating the Duchess' life in 1616, formulated a body that dealt (to varying extents of success) with the liminal position of the corpse between burial and resurrection. The altarpiece showcases the power of material at the juncture between earth and heaven, death and life. Thus, any consideration of the canvas must take into account the ongoing potency of the matter.

The Adoration of the Magi Altarpiece: Context and Construction

In 1615 Anne de Croy and her husband Charles d'Arenberg undertook an extensive building project, establishing a new familial seat for their joined Arenberg/Croy dynastic line of descent. The family arrived in Enghien at the start of the seventeenth century with the purchase of the seigniory, a region encompassing the town, castle and over twenty villages situated within 23,000

hectares of land and 1,100 hectares of woodland.⁶⁶³ They extensively restored and refurbished the castle as their primary residence, created enormous gardens and hunting grounds, and built in the town itself, extending the reach of the dynastic estate beyond the castle walls.⁶⁶⁴ Over the following decades, the Arenbergs patronised Enghien merchants, employed the town apothecaries, and funded convents, hospitals, and orphanages. Their familial arms appeared in the streets and above the doors on numerous buildings within the settlement.

A crucial component of the Arenberg complex was the construction of the Capuchin chapel, family mausoleum and convent. This complex was the spiritual core of the dynasty. It was a site through which the family could assert their long-term investment in the region. It manifested dynastic integrity and conflated the political and social authority of the clan with the spiritual wellbeing of the wider community. The crypt itself was the largest private necropolis in Belgium, equipped with a double layer of vaults ready to house the coffins of multiple generations both future and past.⁶⁶⁵ The chapel was positioned in the heart of the town, near the parish church of St Nicholas, and a short distance from the family residence (Figure 89). The first stone of the church was ceremonially laid on Sunday 31st May 1615 in the presence of Duke Charles

⁶⁶³ See 'Un Papier Touchant a l'Ordannance de la Maison d'Orphelins cy-devant' Annex 1. Delannoy, "Anne de Croy, duchesse d'Arschot," 106-124.

⁶⁶⁴ The Enghien châteaux and adjacent fortified town dated back to the thirteenth century and required significant renovation. Yves Delannoy, "Enghien," *Le Patrimoine monumental de la Belgique: Wallonie. Province de Hainaut, arrondissement de Soignies* 23 (1997): 295-297.

⁶⁶⁵ Baudry Roland, "Le Carnet de la Protection: Le Couvent des Capucins á Enghien," *Trimestriel* 25 (Jan-Feb-Mars, 2012): 22.

d'Arenberg, Anne de Croy, and most of their children.⁶⁶⁶ The finished building comprised a steeply gabled roof, arched colourless windows, and whitewashed walls virtually free from architectural adornment. Large stone heraldic shields of both Anne and Charles were inserted into the space above the external entrance to the convent (Figure 90).

The simplicity of the structure followed the Capuchin guidelines as described by Antonius Sanderus in his “Chorographia Sacra Coenobii PP. Capucinatorum Bruxellensis” published in Brussels, 1662.⁶⁶⁷ The Capuchin friars, resident in the chapel and adjoining convent, were bound to the Arenberg family through reciprocal acts of service, insisting on surviving only from alms donations. The Order sought to strictly emulate the poverty and simplistic lifestyle of St Francis having split from the Observant branch of the Franciscan Order, believing that the established mendicant institutions had strayed from the true path.⁶⁶⁸ They had gained in popularity in the Low Countries in the late sixteenth century, bolstered by the support of Alexander Farnese in his role as Governor of the

⁶⁶⁶ Hoffmans, *Les Portraits des d'Arenberg*, 2.

⁶⁶⁷ Sanderus praised the restraint of Capuchin style “especially in its brightness and whiteness and in the equally careful harmony of the structure, from which is absent all ornament, which they completely mistrust.” Antonius Sanderus, “Chorographia Sacra Coenobii PP. Capucinatorum Bruxellensis,” in *Chorographia Sacra Brabantiae sive celebrivm aliquot in ea Provincia Ecclesiarum et Coenobiorum Descriptio* (Brussels: Philips Vleugaert, 1662) translation cited by Eelco Diederik Nagelsmit, “Venite & Videte: Art and Architecture in Brussels as Agents of Change during the Counter Reformation, c. 1609-1659” (PhD.Thesis, Leiden University Centre for Arts in the Society, Faculty of the Humanities, University of Leiden, 2014), 188.

⁶⁶⁸ M. G. Cornelius, “The Capuchin Order,” in *Encyclopedia of Monasticism*, ed. William M. Johnston (New York: Routledge, 2005), 239-240.

Spanish Netherlands. Farnese utilised the relative infancy of the Capuchin Order and their fresh emphasis on fervent preaching and conversion as part of his attempt to stabilise and re-Catholicise the region in the wake of the Protestant Reformation.⁶⁶⁹ The Arenberg family, as close associates of Farnese, supported the Order throughout the period.⁶⁷⁰ From 1586, the family patronised the Capuchin cloister in Brussels, playing a major role in the restoration efforts of 1619.⁶⁷¹ In 1626 Father Illiminé de Tramicourt, the Walloon ‘provincial’ of the Capuchins, referred to Anne de Croy as “notre protectrice et patronne,”⁶⁷² praising the role of her family for the success of the Order within the region. Two of Anne de Croy’s own sons, Eugene (later Desiré of Brussels) and Antoine (later Charles of Brussels) took orders and joined the Capuchin community themselves.⁶⁷³

⁶⁶⁹ Violet Soen, “Reconquista and Reconciliation in the Dutch Revolt: The Campaign of Governor-General Alexander Farnese (1578-1592),” *Journal of Early Modern History* 16 (2012): 17.

⁶⁷⁰ Charles d’Arenberg maintained regular correspondence with the Duke, following on from the plentiful letters shared between their respective mothers. Nagelsmit, “Venite & Videte,” 164. Letters between Margaret of Parma and Margaret de la Marck: ACA Corr. MM13.

⁶⁷¹ Anne herself patronised a chapel whilst her son Alexander commissioned Rubens to produce a grand *Pieta with St Francis* for the main altar. Upon her death Anne’s testament also promised a further sum of money to the Order. AAE, T1, fol. 288v in Marini, “Pendants in leven en dood.” The altarpiece is described in Sabine van Sprang, “Rubens and Brussels, More Than Just Courtly Relations,” in *Rubens: A Genius at Work*, ed. Joost Vander Auwera (Lannoo: Brussels, 2008), 15.

⁶⁷² AAE Correspondence de Anne de Croy, no. 968, P. Illimuné de Tramicourt. Cited in Marini, “Female Authority in the ‘Pietas Nobilita,’” 13.

⁶⁷³ Hoffmans, *Les Portraits des d’Arenberg*, 22 and 23.

The architectural sobriety prescribed for Capuchin buildings further reflected and performed their ascetic brand of religious practise. However, keen not to emulate the Protestant suspicion of devotional images, the Capuchins endorsed the use of rich ecclesiastic furnishings.⁶⁷⁴ The lack of structural ornament left plenty of space for extravagant paintings, altarpieces, and retables commissioned from the most famous and costly artists in the Netherlands.⁶⁷⁵ During the construction of the Capuchin chapel in Enghien, Charles d'Arenberg arranged for a lavish ebony tabernacle to be transported to the town from the family collegiate church in Naeldwyck.⁶⁷⁶ Simultaneously, an ebony frame for the altarpiece was commissioned, most likely from the Flemish sculptor Robert de Nole, who was in the employment of the Archdukes Albert and Isabella.⁶⁷⁷ The frame comprised two Corinthian columns of ebony inlaid with ivory and was surmounted by a highly ornamented broken pyramidal pediment. Within this space an inscription in gold lettering celebrated Charles and Anne "by the grace of God" as the patrons of the structure.

⁶⁷⁴ Nagelsmit, "Venite & Videte," 178.

⁶⁷⁵ Rubens provided a number of altarpieces for Capuchin churches in the Netherlands. Sprang, "Rubens and Brussels, More Than Just Courtly Relations," 15; Nagelsmit, "Venite & Videte," 188-189.

⁶⁷⁶ Hoffmans, *Les Portraits des d'Arenberg*, 3.

⁶⁷⁷ Júlia Tátrai and Lázló Lengyel, "Archduke Albert († 1621) on the Catafalque A picture of old-new acquisition," *Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beaux-Arts* (2008): 85.

A Constellation of Belief: The Adoration of the Magi, the Eucharist, and the Resurrection of Bodies

The theological connection between the Eucharist and Adoration of the Magi narrative was long recognised within the Catholic Church. Both professed the meeting of the divine and mundane through the incarnate body of Christ. As Joseph Leo Koerner described, the Adoration was “an event of mutual showing: God shows himself to the world through Christ, and the world responds by presenting itself to Christ in the form of the magi.”⁶⁷⁸ In the Eucharistic process, the transubstantiation of the host reverberated this sequence; God became substance and was encountered by man through the human act of eating and ingestion.⁶⁷⁹ Together, the Eucharist and Adoration framed the chronology of Christ’s life, birth and death. It thus encompassed the entire Christian doctrine of salvation as prophesied in the Book of Isaiah. This messianic prophecy described the birth, character, death, and eventual return of Christ. Isaiah 60 foretold the coming of the visiting magi:

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising [...]

⁶⁷⁸ Joseph Leo Koerner, “The Epiphany of the Black Magnus circa 1500,” in *The Image of the Black in Western Art: From the ‘Age of Discovery’ to the Age of Abolition: Artists of the Renaissance and Baroque*, ed. David Bindman, Henry Louis Gates, and Karen C. C. Dalton (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 60.

⁶⁷⁹ Nilgen, “The Epiphany and the Eucharist,” 311.

The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the Lord.⁶⁸⁰

Understood as a prophesy of the salvific death of Jesus, Isaiah 53, reads “But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”⁶⁸¹ Within the Adoration story, the gifts brought to the crib by the magi were also understood as a prefiguration of the life, death, and sovereignty of Christ. Gold was given for earthly royalty, frankincense for divinity, and myrrh (as an embalming tool) for suffering and death.⁶⁸²

The interwoven character of the Eucharist and Adoration of the Magi was made manifest in ecclesiastical ritual. From the fourth century, the feast of Epiphany that marked the arrival of the magi at the birth of Christ was celebrated on the date in January traditionally associated with the baptism of Jesus.⁶⁸³ Christians acted out the magi story as part of lavish festivals, including processions, gift giving, and distribution of money to the poor.⁶⁸⁴ Magi plays were integrated into church services and took place before the mass. Clerics, in the role of magi,

⁶⁸⁰ Isaiah 60: 1-3 and 6 (KJV).

⁶⁸¹ Isaiah 53: 5 (KJV).

⁶⁸² Greg Dues, *Catholic Customs and Traditions: A Popular Guide* (New York: Twenty Third Publications, 2006), 68.

⁶⁸³ The term Epiphany came from the Greek word for ‘manifestation’ or ‘appearance.’ Everatt Ferguson, *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity: Volume Two* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 381.

⁶⁸⁴ Elizabeth S. Cohen and Thomas V. Cohen, *Daily Life in Renaissance Italy* (Westport: The Greenwood Press, 2001), 172.

processed into the building and approached the main altar with bread and wine contained inside golden liturgical vessels.⁶⁸⁵ The magi figures were often symbolically invested with the totality of worldly authority and experience, representing in their bodies the three continents of Africa, Asia and Europe, along with the three ages of man.⁶⁸⁶ Variations of the ritual also involved the congregation who joined the procession of the magi and moved towards figurations of the Madonna and Christ Child that were placed on, or in vicinity of, the altar.⁶⁸⁷ Medieval theologians developed the analogy of altar-as-manger on which the body of Christ rested in the form of bread for the devout.⁶⁸⁸ In this framework, the magi “appeared as prototypes of the church congregation, which in faithful veneration [streamed] to the true Bethlehem, the Church, and to the true manger of the heavenly bread, the altar.”⁶⁸⁹ Such rituals conflated Holy Communion and Epiphany into an extended moment of profound encounter, exchange, and revelation within the church service. It was a performance of overt visibility, heaven and earth made apparent in immediate and dazzling movement and materiality.

⁶⁸⁵ Maurice B. McNamee, *Vested Angels: Eucharistic Allusions in Early Netherlandish Paintings* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 163.

⁶⁸⁶ John Oliver Hand and Martha Wolff, *Early Netherlandish Painting: National Gallery of Art, Washington* (Washington: Princeton University Press, 1986), 213.

⁶⁸⁷ Ursula Nilgen, “The Epiphany and the Eucharist: On the Interpretation of Eucharistic Motifs in Mediaeval Epiphany Scenes,” *The Art Bulletin* 49, no. 4 (Dec 1967): 313.

⁶⁸⁸ Ursula Nilgen has explored how the fourth-century figure of Athanasius recorded the idea before Aurelius Ambrosius, John Chrysostom, and Gregory the Great, amongst others, expanded and developed it. Nilgen, “The Epiphany and the Eucharist,” 311.

⁶⁸⁹ Nilgen, “The Epiphany and the Eucharist,” 311.

Parallel to the elision of Eucharist and Adoration, Early Church Patricians expressed a deep connection between Eucharistic theology and the doctrine of the Resurrection of Bodies. As Caroline Walker Bynum argues, the “Eucharist, like resurrection, was a victory over the grave.”⁶⁹⁰ By digesting God, the participant became indigestible to natural process and death.⁶⁹¹ It was a palpable assurance that finite flesh was to be united with the undigested and indigestible flesh of Christ in heaven.⁶⁹² The bond between the resurrection and the transubstantiated body of Christ is laid out in the Catechism of the Catholic Church Part Two, Article 3.

The Eucharist is the efficacious sign and sublime cause of that communion in the divine life and that unity of the People of God by which the Church is kept in being. It is the culmination both of God's action sanctifying the world in Christ and of the worship men offer to Christ and through him to the Father in the Holy Spirit [...] by the Eucharistic celebration we already unite ourselves with the heavenly liturgy and anticipate eternal life, when God will be all in all.⁶⁹³

As analogous to the Eucharist, the Adoration of the Magi narrative also pointed towards the Resurrection of Bodies and the ultimate redemption of the worthy. Some Early Church rituals made the explicit connection by processing priests as

⁶⁹⁰ Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity 200-1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 56.

⁶⁹¹ Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body*, 80.

⁶⁹² Ibid, 56.

⁶⁹³ “Part 2. Article 3. Catechism of the Catholic Church. The Sacrament of the Eucharist,” *The Vatican*, accessed July 29, 2018, http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p2s2c1a3.htm.

magi from the west to the east, prefiguring the direction of resurrection.⁶⁹⁴ A fourth-century sarcophagus in the Vatican Museo Pio Cristiano shows carvings that conflate the resurrection of dry bones (as envisioned in Ezekiel 37: 1-14) with the gift-laden magi (Figure 91). The composition clearly distinguishes between naked raised bodies and clothed; those without robes are prevented from reaching Christ whilst others in draping togas move forward in the easterly direction of the divine.

In such ancient examples, the mutuality of giving underscored the bond between resurrection and Adoration. For all the gold, offerings, and alms for the poor presented by the congregation, Christ could return no greater gift to such pilgrim magi than salvation.⁶⁹⁵ In later examples it was the creation of a new order of being or paradigm shift, exemplified in both tenets, that was emphasised. The notion was utilised by the Archdukes Albert and Isabella who, in August 1600, visited the Benedictine Abbey of Geraardsbergen in East Flanders, noticing in one of the chapels an *Adoration of the Kings* altarpiece by Jan Gossaert (Figure 92).⁶⁹⁶ The couple acquired the piece for 2,000 florins and installed it in their Brussels Palace chapel in 1603.⁶⁹⁷ Once hung the altarpiece was positioned

⁶⁹⁴ Richard C. Trexler, *The Journey of the Magi: Meanings in History of a Christian Story* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 33.

⁶⁹⁵ Trexler, *The Journey of the Magi*, 25.

⁶⁹⁶ Lorne Campbell, "Jan Gossaert: 'The Adoration of the Kings,'" in *National Gallery Catalogue: The Sixteenth Century Netherlandish Paintings with French Paintings before 1600* (London: National Gallery Company Ltd, 2011), 2.

⁶⁹⁷ Max J. Friedländer, *Jan Gossaert (Mabuse): The Adoration of the Kings in the National Gallery, London*, trans. Cecil Gould (London: P. Lund Humphries and Company LTD, 1948), 3.

directly in front of the Archducal dais, ensuring that for those visiting the court and seated behind the dais during mass, the figures of Albert and Isabella would be visually conflated with the *Adoration of the Kings* image.⁶⁹⁸ Through the painting they described themselves as part of a larger story of salvation and Catholic orthodoxy told from within the terrain they so wished to consolidate.⁶⁹⁹

Erwin Panofsky interpreted the pillar juxtaposed by ruinous architecture presented in the painting as a motif that symbolised the Christian paradigm superseding the Judaic.⁷⁰⁰ It performed the Old Testament giving way to New Testament, the old law fulfilled and overridden by the new law.⁷⁰¹ Thus the thematic crumbling old and ushering in of the new could be aligned with the ambitions of the Archdukes, the passing of the divided state and the initiation of a new period of unity and peace.⁷⁰² As regular and favoured members of the Brussels court, the Arenbergs would have been familiar with the potent impact

⁶⁹⁸ Werner Thomas, "Andromeda Unbound: The Reign of Albert and Isabella in the Southern Netherlands," in Thomas and Duerloo, *Albert and Isabella 1598-1621*, 12-13.

⁶⁹⁹ On his deathbed, Philip II tasked Isabella with uniting the seventeen provinces under Habsburg authority. The regions had formed a part of her dowry to the then Governor of the Low Countries, Archduke Albert, including those who did not recognize the Spanish crown. Margrit Thøfner, *A Common Art: Urban Ceremonial in Antwerp and Brussels during and after the Dutch Revolt* (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2007), 199-200.

⁷⁰⁰ Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, 135.

⁷⁰¹ Barbara Haegel also explores this motif within the work of Rubens, drawing on unpublished work by Vida Hull in "Rubens' 'Adoration of the Magi' and the program for the high altar of St Michael's Abbey in Antwerp," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 25, no. 1 (1997): 45 and 51.

⁷⁰² Werner, "Andromeda Unbound," 12.

of Gossaert's painting.⁷⁰³ Their utilisation of the Adoration of the Magi imagery may be understood as an expression of loyalty to their rulers. However, the inherent correspondence between the narrative, Eucharist and resurrection within the Arenberg *Adoration of the Magi* not only symbolically inserted the dynastic clan into a triumphant redemptive story but also initiated the experience of devotion required to reach the end goal. As will be explored below, the painterly production of the material echoed the Eucharistic transformation of the mundane, weaving together multiple layers of significance.

Transubstantiated Silk

The voluminous mantle of the Order of the Golden Fleece takes up a significant portion of the *Adoration of the Magi* foreground. It lays claim to most of the space of the right hand side of the canvas, draping heavily over the kneeling body it professes to conceal before falling onto the earth around it (Figure 93). The motto of the Order, 'Je Lay Emprins,' (I have undertaken it) can be discerned embroidered along the hem of the robe whilst the dark red velvet hat or *barrett* associated with the group is painted nearby on the ground.⁷⁰⁴ Light grazes the horizon of each fold before the heavy velvet declines into deep undulations that flow from shoulder to earth. The line of descent is only interrupted by the effects

⁷⁰³ In 1616, at the time of the Arenberg commission, Anne received a letter from her sister-in-law Antoinette Guillemette informing her that the Infanta wished to grant the Duchess access to her *Camera*, a privileged space in Isabella's apartments connected to the chapel. Raeymaekers, *One Foot in the Palace*, 208.

⁷⁰⁴ Stella Blum, *Fashions of the Habsburg Era: Austria-Hungary* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1979), 3.

of gravity as the folds crease under the weight and volume of the rich material above. A wide band of gold embroidery travels around the tubular curls that form at the base of the robe. Further fabrics are conjured behind this field where a large expanse of rose silk brocade envelops the figure of a standing magus. This textile appears to be trimmed in swags of pearls and studded with huge dark gems set in gold casing. Despite the detail invested in the embellishment, the eye is drawn back to the kneeling figure and the silk lining of the mantle that, although free from jewels, outshines every other surface rendered across the canvas.

The white silk lining of the mantle dazzles the eye and gleams from the surface even when observed at some distance. Despite this, the pure and reflective quality of the fabric is constructed from layered hues of taupe, stone, sand, and even muted green pigment. The paint has been applied to the canvas in such a way that it behaves to the eye like white silk. It puckers at the seams, each pinch in the textile spanning outwards into avenues and troughs of light and shade. In some places reflection collects in shallow pools whilst elsewhere dark shadows push deep scars into the surface. Under the knee and above the elbow the fabric seems to be pulled into the canvas, into hollows and crevasses beyond the comprehension of the observer. The pigment never allows the textile to settle into a smooth plane or lay flat against the canvas it disguises. Instead, the silk moves before the eye in a manner that captures attention away from the replication of jewels, precious metals, and even the Christ Child included elsewhere in the painted scene.

The roughly triangular outline of the mantle and silk lining bind the manifold parts of the composition together. The hypotenuse line stretches from the bottom right corner of the canvas, across the Duke's back, and on up the strong diagonal formed by the stone staircase and shadow that falls from the open doorway in the top left corner. Likewise, the vertical thrust of the silk lining positioned over the Duke's knee corresponds directly with the pedestal and column that split the crowds and rise to the very top threshold of the composition. The triangular is further referenced in the kneeling body of the monk, whose posture mirrors that of the Duke, subverting the glorious mantle in the dull modest brown of his coarse habit. The painted figures and architectural forms differentially orbit around the cloak. Even the furthest extensions of the canvas lead the eye back to this central motif. Yet, so crucial to the visual arrangement of the composition, the ecstatic fabric is also site of conflict and juncture. The brilliant light that appears to bounce off the silk differs from the warm glow that softly illuminates the rest of the canvas. The silk does not address the yellow celestial setting sun but something else, something positioned outside of the pictorial plane, and something close to the surface of the canvas.

The altar table takes up the position of this implied extra-pictorial light source. As the site of transubstantiation, the altar was the privileged arena of sacrament and worship. It was the focus of the Catholic mass and the space in which the divine and mundane conflated. The painted robes, by appearing to respond to the altar, endlessly declared and performed the tangible holiness of the site. It aligned the painted kneeling figure with the devotee participating in the ritual on

the other side of the pictorial plane. The magus modelled the posture of worship but also actively participated in the Eucharistic process. Likewise, the white cloth of the altar table and the red wine reverberated back and forth across the pictorial plane with the silk and velvet of the painted mantle. The correspondence highlighted the sacred transformation that occurred in the immediate vicinity of the painting, offering visual access to the mystery. In addition however, the transgression of the pictorial plane simulated the Eucharistic experience itself.

This idea draws on Mary Pardo's analysis of Giovanni Girolamo Savoldo's *Saint Mary Magdalene at the Sepulchre*. Here, the scholar reads the heavy lustrous shawl wrapped around the painted figure of Mary Magdalene as both a fantastic example of illusionistic skill and as an appearance of the divine, reflected across the fractured luminous surface. "The light that renders her visible and transforms her garment may be interpreted as the bodiless yet irrefutable manifestation of the resurrected Christ's presence."⁷⁰⁵ Pardo expands on this premise by arguing that the specificity of the light reflected across the cloak implies the exact position of its source, the risen Christ, as located outside of the pictorial plane and to the right of the observer. The viewer is thus caught up into a triangular subject/object relationship, a "net of reflections"⁷⁰⁶ with two other entities, one painted and the other resurrected.

⁷⁰⁵ Mary Pardo, "The Subject of Savoldo's Magdalene," *The Art Bulletin* 71, no. 1 (March 1989): 74.

⁷⁰⁶ Pardo, "The Subject of Savoldo's Magdalene," 74.

Pardo's analysis of the *Magdalene* examines how the painted silk heightened suggestiveness for the worshipper but also how such illusionistic qualities invited viewers into a spiritual absorption that presupposed expertise about the workings of the picture itself.⁷⁰⁷ In other words, the art theoretical and theological exegesis of the image were already contained and performed within the illusory objects, pigment and canvas. The expressive use of gesture broke the pictorial plane, conjuring spatial reciprocity with the beholder in a manner that was understood as a visual metaphor for the intrusion of the divine into the realm of the human.⁷⁰⁸ As examined in the first part of Chapter 2, the transgression of a semi-porous surface by beams of abstract or literal light paralleled the mystery of the Virgin birth. The metaphor was encapsulated in Renaissance perspectival theory, in which light rays transect the transparent picture plane and posit the orthogonal of spatial enclosure, generating a permeable threshold rich with incarnational significance.⁷⁰⁹ This was particularly potent when constructed in the vicinity of the altar. As Stefanie Solum argues,

A single spatial environment that unites holy figures and reads as visually contiguous with that of devout viewers was a powerful visual metaphor with which to represent the unseeable phenomenon brought about by the liturgy of the Mass: the conjoining of the earthly and heavenly realms. As the functional backdrop to the Eucharistic rite, every altarpiece,

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid, 76.

⁷⁰⁸ Ibid, 78.

⁷⁰⁹ Jonathan Unglaub, "Bernardo Accolti, Raphael, and the Sistine Madonna: The Poetics of Desire and Pictorial Generation," in *Ut picture amor: The Reflexive Imagery of Love in Artistic Theory and Practice, 1500-1700*, ed. Walter S. Melion, Joanna Woodall and Michael Zell (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 636.

regardless of destination or subject matter, shared a common brief to thematize it visually.⁷¹⁰

The glittering silk of the painted robe in the Arenberg *Adoration* that professed to reflect the divine light of the altar can be understood to perform the holiness of the sacrament twice over. By traversing the pictorial plane, the illusory textile emulated the meeting of divine and mundane in both process and appearance.

The heightened materiality of the fractured silk continued the thematic communion of heaven and earth still further, bringing into tension tangibility and otherworldliness. Indeed, the mixed palette of pigments that together transformed into purest white tempt the body as well as the eye. The robe appears touchable, invested with a smooth texture and fine weave that might slip between the fingers without traction. Such realistic appearance posits the fabric with the other textiles that performed as part of the mass, including liturgical dress, layers of coarse and fine altar cloth, corporeal sheets, and chalice veils. Barbara Lane has examined how the linen that covered the knees of the Virgin in many devotional images reflected the corporal cloth on which the host rested during mass.⁷¹¹ The illuminated mantle in the *Adoration* altarpiece, however, does not so much reflect or imitate the adjacent liturgical textiles as surpass them. Unlike the corporal cloth or chalice veil, the silk robes maintain an elevated distance. Even in their visual claim to imminence, they remain ocular,

⁷¹⁰ Stefanie Solum, *Women, Patronage, and Salvation in Renaissance Florence: Lucrezia Tornabuoni and the Chapel of the Medici Palace* (London: Routledge, 2015), 21.

⁷¹¹ Barbara Lane, *The Altar and Altarpiece: Sacramental Themes in Early Netherlandish Painting* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984), 60-68.

remote and abstracted from the bodily realm. This contradictory quality, the claim to both heightened materiality and exclusive immateriality, sets it apart from other substances.

The transformation and elevation of material at the heart of the Eucharistic rite was a cadence infused into every element of the painted material, discernable in the pictorial construction, the illusionistic appearance, and even the making process attached to the image. Indeed, the alchemic ability of pigment to disguise the canvas surface in a manner that produces something else, something above itself, is akin to divine processes of creation and incarnation. Mary Pardo's analysis of the *Magdalene* makes a parallel claim by examining the perceived relationship between painting and poetry in the Early Modern period. She cites Cennino Cennini's definition of painting as finding "things not seen"⁷¹² and revealing them to the world through processes of artifice and unveiling. According to Boccaccio's description, poetry similarly brings "forth far-fetched and unheard-of inventions [...] of the mind; it composes these mediations in a fixed order, adorns the whole composition with unusual interweaving of words and thoughts; and thus it covers truth with a comely veil of fable."⁷¹³ The common thread, Pardo argues, is that "poetic composition, represented as the weaving of a garment, assembles and combines [...] in such a way that from them an opaque, embellished fabric of sense is conjured up- though it is a purely

⁷¹² Cennino Cennini, *Il libro dell'arte*, ed. F. Brunello (Neri Pozza: Vicenza, 1971), 3-4 translated in Pardo, "The Subject of Savoldo's *Magdalene*," 84.

⁷¹³ Pardo, "The Subject of Savoldo's *Magdalene*," 85.

illusive surface.”⁷¹⁴ Similarly, on the canvas, meaning and truth are revealed through disguise. Pigment amounts to more than its material composition and manipulation. It is invested with significance and so transcends its chemical makeup, transubstantiated like the host it portrays.

Despite these multiple layers of Eucharistic significance, woven through the painted silk robes of the *Adoration* altarpiece, there is a paradox in the elevated quality of the material. Indeed, the more the silk transcends its earthly counterparts and mundane composition, the more it signals the labour and commercial value invested in the painting. It is a luxury item, an expensive image that depicts expensive fabrics, gems, and gold through an exacting, time-consuming and expensive process. As such, it draws to mind the thousands of Flemish Adoration scenes that flooded the Netherlandish art market during the first half of the sixteenth century. Flemish artists working in the commercial centres of Bruges and Antwerp took great advantage of the sacred role of materiality at the core of the Adoration of the Magi narrative. Their compositions were produced “perfectly in tune with consumer demands,”⁷¹⁵ boasting impressive visual spectacles saturated with artefacts, tactile surfaces, and exotic peoples. Many of the paintings were made in large workshops and were often composed around “ready-made”⁷¹⁶ formats designated for export to foreign markets.⁷¹⁷

⁷¹⁴ Ibid.

⁷¹⁵ Koerner, “The Epiphany of the Black Magnus circa 1500,” 47.

⁷¹⁶ Filip Vermeulen, “The Commercialization of Art: Painting and Sculpture in Sixteenth-Century Antwerp,” in *Early Netherlandish Painting at the Crossroads: A*

The *Adoration of the Magi* within the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Figure 94) provides one such example. The canvas aesthetically catalogues a host of commercial products, clothing, tiles, stonework, textiles, and landscape painting. In this way, the image addresses the contemporary concerns of merchants and tradesmen, their worldwide connections and the flow of products through circulatory networks of exchange.⁷¹⁸ Manufactured on speculation, images such as this functioned as merchandise themselves. They were imbued with an inescapably worldly quality, a luxuriousness that did not always align with the holy narrative on display. Indeed, there was an element of risk to the celebration of material wealth in this context. Vives, citing Cicero, declared, “How base it is to become enervated with luxury and delicate and soft living.”⁷¹⁹ Within the Arenberg altarpiece, the exquisitely painted silk creates an impossibility of heavenly worldliness. The very tangible quality of the substance, the rich and exclusive means of production, jars with its claims of immaterial sanctity.

Critical Look at Current Methodologies, ed. Maryan Wynn Ainsworth (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001), 49.

⁷¹⁷ This format was usually composed of a ruined palace set within an extended landscape. Allie Terry-Fritsch, “Florentine Convent as Practiced Place: Cosimo de’Medici, Fra Angelico, and the Public Library of San Marco,” in *Mendicants and Merchants in the Medieval Mediterranean*, ed. Taryn E. L. Chubb and Emily D. Kelley (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 118.

⁷¹⁸ Mary W. Ainsworth, “The Patrons of Art: Patrons, Clients, and Art Markets,” in *From Van Eyck to Bruegel: Early Netherlandish Painting in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, ed. Mary W. Ainsworth and Keith Christiansen (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1998), 36.

⁷¹⁹ Vives, *An Education of a Christian Woman*, Book I Ch VII.

The Resurrecting Shroud

Whilst the material value of the silk robe disrupted its correspondence to the altar, the liminal status of the fabric between heaven and earth heightened its significance in relationship with the family crypt below. Previous scholarship has interpreted the dialogue between painting and tomb as a *momento mori*, a juxtaposition intended to remind the living Arenbergs of their finite mortality.⁷²⁰ However, as will be examined here, the altarpiece suggested a much more complex affiliation between life and death.

The creation of a family necropolis, convent, and church at the heart of an urban community confirmed the Arenberg dynasty as one of the highest ranking in the Netherlands, mimicking, on a small scale, the largest building projects undertaken by the Habsburg monarchy in the sixteenth century. Over two decades Philip II oversaw the construction of the Escorial, his grand monastery, palace, college, hospital, reliquary, and royal tomb complex northwest of Madrid.⁷²¹ The Escorial was a project conceived to affirm both the stability and power of the Spanish Habsburgs and their proximity to God. It was a majestic act of thanksgiving, a celebration of the conservation and preservation of the Catholic faith, a channel of prayer for the royal dynasty, and a manifestation of Habsburg power maintained for perpetuity.⁷²² At the centre of this complex was

⁷²⁰ Marini, "Female Authority in the 'Pietas Nobilita,'" 18.

⁷²¹ Rosemarie Mulcahy, *The Decoration of the Royal Basilica of El Escorial* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 1.

⁷²² Mulcahy, *The Decoration of the Royal Basilica of El Escorial*, 3 and 5.

the basilica high altar, flanked by gilded bronze effigy statues that corresponded to the arrangement of family coffins interred in the crypt below. The positioning of these figures transformed the space into a funerary chapel.⁷²³ The basilica became the “spiritual powerhouse”⁷²⁴ of both the Escorial structure and the wider Spanish Habsburg dynasty, connecting the living members of the clan with those long dead and those yet to come.

The Escorial funerary groups of Charles V and Philip II were rendered in gilded bronze and positioned in an upright, kneeling posture, hands pressed together in prayer (Figure 95).⁷²⁵ Each figure was highly detailed and scaled up to slightly larger than life. Rosemary Mulcahy has described how the impressive combination of richness, restraint, detail and clarity allowed the artist to portray the particularities of each royal whilst creating a surface that reflected the light. The bronze symbolized and performed the essence of royalty and piety whilst generating a tension between realism and “the unifying and depersonalizing effect”⁷²⁶ of the medium. Positioned either side of the sanctuary and raised three metres on a socle, the figures faced towards the altar.⁷²⁷ Before his death Philip II stipulated that there should, at all times, be two monks kneeling in prayer

⁷²³ Ibid, 192.

⁷²⁴ Ibid, 6.

⁷²⁵ The figures were created by Milanese sculptors Leone and Pomeo Leoni between 1592 and 1600. Mulcahy, *The Decoration of the Royal Basilica of El Escorial*, 190 and 191.

⁷²⁶ Mulcahy, *The Decoration of the Royal Basilica of El Escorial*, 189 and 197.

⁷²⁷ Ibid, 189 and 196.

towards the Eucharist.⁷²⁸ The perpetual devotion of the Habsburg effigies shared this responsibility. Their three-dimensionality and reflective surface produced a dynamic quality that responded to the immediate environment and asserted an eternally active existence in the Eucharistic ritual.

Just as Philip II had gathered royal corpses from across Europe and ceremonially interred them in the mausoleum below his high altar, the Arenbergs reunited the cadavers of family members buried elsewhere for interment beneath their Enghien chapel.⁷²⁹ Anne de Croy ordered the exhumation of Jean de Ligne, Charles' father killed in battle in 1568, re-interring him in Enghien alongside his wife, Marguerite de la Marck, who had died in 1599.⁷³⁰ In the place of elaborate tomb sculpture, the *Adoration* altarpiece presented figurations of the family body in the chapel space above the mausoleum. In this position, the altarpiece fulfilled the role of effigy as a monumental body that maintained cultural unity and social continuity in the face of the physical rupture caused by death.⁷³¹ It spoke at once to the subject of depiction, the living observer, and all future generations of people.⁷³² In the same manner as the golden Escorial effigies, the specific materiality of the *Adoration* altarpiece choreographed the performance of the

⁷²⁸ Ibid, 7.

⁷²⁹ Ibid, 189-192.

⁷³⁰ Maes de Smet, "Margaretha van der Marck- Arenberg (1527-1599)," 47.

⁷³¹ Nigel Llewellyn, *Funeral Monuments in Post-Reformation England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 20.

⁷³² Peter Sherlock, *Monuments and Memory in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 2.

painting within the chapel space and ecclesiastical ritual. At the core of the composition, the illusory silk can be understood to suggest the nature of the whole painting as effigy. The liminal quality of the fabric and its allusion to clothing are particularly potent in relation to long running dialogues concerning the nature of the resurrected body.

Stephen Perkinson argues that effigies were not intended to mimetically reflect the appearance of the fallen, earthbound self.⁷³³ They were “future portraits,”⁷³⁴ anticipating the character of the body in a post-resurrection form.⁷³⁵ In 1215, the Fourth Lateran Council discussed the nature of the resurrected body, concluding that “all men, whether elect or reprobate, ‘will rise again with their own bodies which they now bear about with them.’”⁷³⁶ Over centuries, theologians debated at great length and detail the physical appearance of this renewed form. Questions were raised concerning the inherent assumption within the promise of resurrection that the body could persist over time despite decay.⁷³⁷ Peter Lombard’s twelfth-century *Sentences*, for example, included many passages

⁷³³ Stephen Perkinson, *The Likeness of the King: A Prehistory of Portraiture in Late Medieval France* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009).

⁷³⁴ Perkinson cites Sarah Lawson, “Cadaver Effigies: The Portrait as Prediction,” *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 5, no. 4 (1974): 519-23.

⁷³⁵ Perkinson, *The Likeness of the King*, 94.

⁷³⁶ “General Resurrection,” in *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 12, 2008, accessed Feb 2, 2017, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12792a.htm>.

⁷³⁷ Caroline Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 1991), 240-241.

devoted to the specific material re-assemblage of the body.⁷³⁸ What age, height, and sex would it be? Would all matter return to the body, including shed hair and nails?⁷³⁹ Metaphors of sprouting seeds, a rising phoenix, and the arrival of springtime all developed as descriptions of the subject.⁷⁴⁰ Each implied transformation but also personal continuity, that the body resurrected at the end of days would be both new and, in essence, recognisable as one's own.⁷⁴¹

The parallel themes of continuance and renewal find traction in the paradoxical illusory silk robe at the heart of the *Adoration* altarpiece. The golden stitching along the hem of the mantle clearly proclaims social position in the secular realm through membership of the elite Order of the Golden Fleece, but it also signifies the continuance of authority beyond the grave. It can be understood much like the crowns and ceremonial dress of royal effigies that asserted the perpetual and divinely ordained sovereignty of the deceased subject, crowned in heaven.⁷⁴² On the other hand, the dazzling silk surface of the painted lining signals the transformation of the body into something new and above earthly corporality. It aligns with Paul's description of the Parousia in 1 Corinthians,

⁷³⁸ The *Sentences* became foundational material for the formal study of Christian theology throughout the medieval period. Philip W. Rosemann, *The Study of a Great Medieval Book: Peter Lombard's Sentences* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 14.

⁷³⁹ Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity 200-1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 254-255.

⁷⁴⁰ Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity*, 143.

⁷⁴¹ *Ibid*, 23-26.

⁷⁴² Perkinson, *The Likeness of the King*, 94.

And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.⁷⁴³

Paul uses clothing to illustrate the central motif of the salvific process, the ‘putting on’ of a new state of being. As Jung Hoon Kim has explored in detail, Pauline sartorial imagery in this context described a change from the current to future ontology. “Believers wear a perishable form of existence as a garment at present, but they will wear the imperishable form of existence as a garment at the resurrection.”⁷⁴⁴ This transformation from finite to infinite is not only imagined as a process of dressing but also an image change. The believer shifts in likeness from Adam to Christ; those who have “borne the image of the earthy, [...] shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”⁷⁴⁵ Paul explicitly references the dichotomy between Adam and Christ in 1 Corinthians 15: 22, “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” One is made from dirt and, bound by decay and death, will return to dirt. The other is glorified and heavenly, belonging to the divine.

⁷⁴³ 1 Corinthians 15: 49-53 (KJV).

⁷⁴⁴ Jung Hoon Kim, *The Significance of Clothing Imagery in the Pauline Corpus* (London: T & T Clark International, 2004), 198.

⁷⁴⁵ 1 Corinthians 15: 49 (KJV).

Notably, the Pauline description of resurrection as a process of ‘putting on’ Christ-likeness does not imply undressing or the removal of Adam’s likeness. Rather, one external surface is covered over by another. Encapsulated in the altarpiece, the cloaked body is subject to a wave of fabrics, one texture overcoming the former, one colour folding into the next. Indeed, the painted textiles defy the worldly order of the mantle as a garment constructed from internal and external components. Here, both the red velvet and white silk behave as outward surfaces indicative of ontological states.⁷⁴⁶

In the New and Old Testament, white pertained to heavenly, celestial beings. It held allusions to purity, innocence and revelation and was also the colour of Jesus’ robes in the account of his Transfiguration.⁷⁴⁷ Mark 9 reads, “And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.”⁷⁴⁸ The apocryphal *Gospel of Philip* described God as a dyer who dyed the faithful white at their baptism. It also narrated a miracle in which Jesus, throwing seventy-two pigments into a vat, brought out only white cloth.⁷⁴⁹ Red was equally rich in symbolic meaning, pointing to blood, fire, sun, and wine. Stitched along the vulnerable edge and seams of clothing, red embroidery

⁷⁴⁶ Erasmus, “On the Christian Widow,” 199.

⁷⁴⁷ Marzia Cataldi Gallo, “Sacred Vestments: Colour and Form,” in *Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination*, ed. Andrew Bolton, Barbara Drake Bohem, Marzia Cataldi Gallo, et al. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of New York, 2018), 18.

⁷⁴⁸ Mark 9: 3 (KJV).

⁷⁴⁹ Cordelia Warr, *Dressing for Heaven: Religious Clothing in Italy 1215-1525* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), 219.

offered a protective barrier between the body and the world. Infants wore red coral necklaces to protect against disease whilst red wool or cloth kept smallpox at bay.⁷⁵⁰ The association between the colour red and the marking of boundaries was further evidenced in the robes of kings, nobles, clergy, judges and executioners who held power over life and death. The dye was subject to sumptuary laws and was costly to reproduce, signifying worldly authority and resource for those able to wear it.⁷⁵¹

In the Bible, the juxtaposition of red and white was a repeated motif connected to the incarnational body of Christ. It signified the Annunciation (Song of Solomon 2: 1) and the Passion (Revelation 7: 14), body and blood, bread and wine. Isaiah 1: 18 narrated the Christian salvific narrative, “though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” As a result, the combination of red and white fabrics featured heavily in liturgical dress, ecclesiastical furnishings, and devotional painting.⁷⁵² Indeed, iconographically, the blood-stained shroud of Christ, described as linen

⁷⁵⁰ Mareen Daly Goggin, “The Extra-ordinary Powers of Red in eighteenth and nineteenth-century English Needlework,” in *The Materiality of Colour: The Production, Circulation, and Application of Dyes and Pigments, 1400-1800*, ed. Andrea Feeser, Mareen Daly Goggin, and Beth Fowkes Tobin (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2012), 29-30.

⁷⁵¹ Daly Goggin, “The Extra-ordinary Powers of Red,” 30.

⁷⁵² In the thirteenth century William Durandus described papal attire as representative of “He who turned his clothing red for us.” This association remained strong in the late sixteenth century, when the dual symbolism of white and red intensified to underscore the Pope’s position at the head of the Church. In this context the colours were also thought to figure the clothes worn by Jesus before his death, white indicating the integrity of Christ and his vicar, red indicating the Passion. Cataldi Gallo, “Sacred Vestments,” 18-19.

sheets in all the Gospel texts, potently signified the redemptive and transformative quality of the incarnational body. In Rubens' 1612-1614 *Descent from the Cross* (Figure 96) the strong diagonal sweep of the shroud directs the entire composition. The brilliance of the material stained with blood contrasts against the dead, pallid flesh of the body that collapses into it. The fabric directs the eye downwards, showing off the force of gravity and yielding to the weight of the corpse it envelops. It is a far cry from the enlivened shroud that springs away from Christ's rejuvenated form in Ruben's *Resurrection* scene also housed within Antwerp Cathedral (Figure 97). Within both paintings the cloth emulates the transformation of the holy body, its movement from life to death and from tomb to resurrection. It encapsulates the process of renewal.

At the heart of the *Adoration of the Magi* composition, the assemblage of illusory white silk and red velvet perform the resurrection of the body in process. The fractious reflections of the mantle lining, contrasted against the soft texture of the cloak posit ongoing movement and change. The cloak appears to transform before the eye of the observer, shifting between textures, colours, and states of being. The fabric becomes a glorious shroud, a signifier of death but also an imminent new physicality. Such inbuilt material transformation can be discerned in other effigy forms, particularly the stone sculpture belonging to the transi tomb shared by Philipotte de la Marck and Reinoud III van Brederode, maternal cousins of Charles d'Arenberg.⁷⁵³ The tomb, situated in the St Mary's Assumption

⁷⁵³ The tomb dates from the mid sixteenth century and is attributed to the sculptor Colijn de Nole. Juliette Roding and Nico Hijman, "In Between the Secular and the Religious: Art, Ritual and Science in the Funeral Chapel of Reinoud III of Brederode, Lord of Vianen (1491-1556), and His Wife, Philipotte de la Marck (d.

Church in Vianen, Utrecht juxtaposes a sculpted risen body with a verminous earth-bound equivalent (Figure 98).⁷⁵⁴ Whilst the lower figure performs the mortality of the earthy body, the upper displayed the resurrected form, renewed and glorified through Christ's victory over death.⁷⁵⁵

The "poetics of the material,"⁷⁵⁶ the smooth, pale, polished marble of the effigies, celebrate their transitory state, displaying the body as though partially enshrouded in a thin layer of wrappings. The marble is finely carved to suggest a fabric that ripples and creases. It splays into fractious lines as though a sheet of skin threaded with arteries. The way that this fabric seems to peel around the body performs two parallel interpretations in one moment. It hints at the disintegration of the flesh separating from bone and muscle in death, wrapped in a shroud that collapses into the corporal form as time progresses.

1537), in the Reformed Church of Vianen," in *Images and Objects in Ritual Practices in Medieval and Early Modern Northern and Central Europe*, ed. Krista Kodres and Anu Mänd (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), 148.

⁷⁵⁴ Marisa Anne Bass, "The transi tomb and the genius of sixteenth-century Netherlandish funerary sculpture," *Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art* 67, no. 1 (2018): 160-187; Kathleen Cohen, *Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol: The Transi Tomb in the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973).

⁷⁵⁵ The decomposing remains were originally painted brown with the verminous worms highlighted in gold. The sculpture worked, not only as a *momento mori*, but also as a portrait of the soul passing through purgatory. In Northern Europe there was a belief that the petrification of the flesh synchronized with the purification of the soul. A dead individual could not join the community of the afterlife until this process was complete. Jakov Đorđević, "Made in the Skull's Likeness: of *transi* tombs, identity and *momento mori*," *Journal of Art Historiography* 7 (December 2017): 2-4.

⁷⁵⁶ Paul Binski, *Medieval Death: Ritual and Representation* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1996), 95.

Simultaneously however, the body can be understood as being re-dressed in its skin. The corporality of Reinoud is ever in the process of being reinstated, knitting together into a transformed state. A similar joint interpretation can be read from the parted lips of the effigy figure. They at once suggest the collapsed jaw of the dead man yet also imply the imminence of breath or speech. The sinewy wrists that appear to float the hands above the body both perform rigour mortis and the potential for upward movement (Figure 99).

The dual performance of life and death inherent in the Brederode effigies imitated presentation of the body of Christ in death. Images such as Holbein's *Body of the Dead Christ in the Tomb* (Figure 100) presented a narrow, claustrophobic composition in which the life-size decomposing body of Jesus is put on display. It invites active participation in the lamentation and yet, although the emaciated figure, pallid flesh and gaunt expression signify the dissolution of the buried corpse, they also heighten the potential for reinvigoration and re-emergence. It is as though the more tangible the signs of death, the more miraculous the revival in the eyes of the observer. As on the marble tomb, every hair, muscle, ligament, and toenail is carefully articulated. The figures crackle with heightened potential and collapse temporalities by suggesting, not the dichotomy of life and death, but the mutuality of death and resurrection.

The painted figures on the Arenberg altarpiece are not juxtaposed to verminous representations of the earth-bound body. Rather, they are positioned in relationship with the cadavers themselves. Both are in liminal states, midway through material transformation, anticipating the end of days. The Capuchin

Order was tasked with the administration of this transient material. As a community the monks prayed for the eternal souls of their patrons, supplicating for their swift journey through purgatory, whilst maintaining the tangible elements of the body left behind to take the longer linear route through chronology.⁷⁵⁷ The Order offered particular expertise in the administration of death and was skilled in the management of corpse preservation and embalming.⁷⁵⁸ Indeed, Capuchin practises emphasised the continuing significance of the material body after death, highlighting its anticipatory state, not lost but waiting for rejuvenation.⁷⁵⁹ The particular approach of the Order was recognised in the very highest echelons of society. At a similar time to the Arenberg family, the Austrian branch of the Habsburg Empire placed their royal corpses in the care of the Capuchin church in Vienna. The imperial crypt was founded in 1618 under Emperor Matthias III and became the final resting place for over a hundred Habsburg rulers of the dynastic line. Their bones and organs,

⁷⁵⁷ Lucy Wooding, "Remembrance in the Eucharist," in *The Acts of Remembrance in Early Modern England: Memorial Cultures of the Post Reformation*, ed. Andrew Gordon and Thomas Rist (Farnham: Routledge, 2013), 21.

⁷⁵⁸ In Palermo, for example, at the sixteenth-century Capuchin catacombs, the friars developed a complex system in which bodies were drained of fluids on ceramic racks, treated with vinegar and herbs, dried, and then dressed and made accessible to relatives. Ivan Cenzi and Carlo Vannini, *La Veglia eternal. Catacomb dei Cappuccini di Palermo* (Modena: Logos Edizioni, 2014), 57.

⁷⁵⁹ These practices included elaborate arrangements of bones and the dressing and positioning of corpses as though alive. The Capuchin crypt at the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Rome, for example, featured a decorative scheme across the walls and vaulted ceiling. Lamps and crosses were made from bones whilst skeletons were positioned about the place as though preaching or in repose. Father Rinaldo Cordovani OFM Cap, "The Cemetery Crypt," in *The Capuchin Museum*, ed. Father Carmine Antonio de Filippis (Rome: Gangemi Editore, 2012), 143-147.

embalmed separately in urns, were carefully watched over by a community of resident friars.⁷⁶⁰

The continuing importance that the Arenbergs awarded to the materiality of their bodies after death is underscored in the tripartite burial of Anne de Croy. Usually the preserve of royalty or prince-bishops, tripartite burials were extremely rare amongst women at the time. Anne was right at the forefront of the practice as it developed in the unsettled, politically and religiously divided environment of the early seventeenth century.⁷⁶¹ Weiss-Krejci argues that “the burial of a founder in their own monastery often created a bond between that place and successive generations of the founder’s lineage, who continued the patronage of the original foundation.”⁷⁶² The separated body parts were invested with the potency of the whole. Each pronounced and “confirmed the integrated quality of all its elements.”⁷⁶³ The body, heart, and entrails of Anne de Croy bound their corresponding burial sites in the parish church of St Nicolas with the Heverlee chapel and the Capuchin crypt. The altarpiece at the core of this corporal geography affirmed the continuing consolidation of the dynastic body

⁷⁶⁰ Amelia Sarah Levetus, *Imperial Vienna: An Account of its History, Traditions and Arts* (London: John Lane the Bodley Head, 1904), 37.

⁷⁶¹ Estella Weiss-Krejci argues that the increased number of heart burials can be linked to the limited access to previously used family tombs and the establishment of new religious Orders in “Heart Burial in Medieval and Early Post Medieval Central Europe,” in *Body Parts and Bodies Whole*, ed. Katerina Rebay-Salisbury, Marie Louise Stig Sørensen and Jessica Hughes (Oxford: Oxbow Press, 2010), 127.

⁷⁶² Weiss-Krejci, “Heart Burial in Medieval and Early Post Medieval Central Europe,” 132.

⁷⁶³ *Ibid*, 119.

despite the fissures of decay and distance. It was an intermediary device, narrating successful transformation in the gap between life and death, dissolution and re-composition.

The perpetual role of the Capuchin community as self-styled curators of Arenberg resurrection is confirmed within the composition of the *Adoration* altarpiece. The visual correlation between the kneeling monk and the illuminated body of the kneeling magus establishes a correspondence between the devotion of the friar at the crib and the salvation of the clan. His painted body is formulated in the image of Arenberg resurrection and Eucharistic worship. Gathered amongst the imaged noble bodies the presence of the monk also affirms the expanded notion of family displayed across the canvas.

Communal Clothing

Philip II's design for the Escorial effigies accounted for the addition of future generations. Space was left between the funerary groups for the insertion of further figures to fill the sanctuary.⁷⁶⁴ Latin inscriptions engraved on black marble behind the figures confirm this hope. They read, "The providence and care of descendants leaves this place vacant for sons and grandsons, who, after a long life, pay the natural debt of death."⁷⁶⁵ Further text on the east side of Philip II's effigy reads "This place is to be occupied by those of his descendants who

⁷⁶⁴ Mulcahy, *The Decoration of the Royal Basilica of El Escorial*, 199.

⁷⁶⁵ Ibid.

surpass him in virtue; otherwise let it remain empty.”⁷⁶⁶ Within the Arenberg altarpiece, the addition of future generations was implied, not by conspicuous absence as in the Habsburg arrangement, but by the profusion of faces that fill the centre of the composition. Figures are crammed into every inch of the mid ground. Their total number is unclear as indistinguishable bodies on the left hand side of the canvas and half visible faces squeezed along the right imply the existence of more gathered just out of sight. In many of the painted faces the features are hard to distinguish and their clothing remains unseen. Some are shown in profile whilst others are lost in the cramped recesses of the composition. Despite Hoffman’s attempt to name each face, the inability to fully comprehend the scale or identity of the group can be understood as an important aspect of the painting. Indeed, from the church floor, the family appear to go on without end. Interpretive room is left for the presence of the distant, long dead, and as yet unborn.

Positioned immediately behind the kneeling monk within the altarpiece, a woman is shown looking out of canvas holding a long walking stick or broom handle (Figure 101). She, like the friar, is given particular visual importance at the front of the crowd, despite this suggestion of physical labour. The socially integrated nature of the Arenberg household is suggested by documents preserved in the family archive. One surviving contract concerns a house and small garden, located close to the Capuchin chapel and two streets beyond St Nicholas church, which was leased by the Arenberg family to estate employees.

⁷⁶⁶ Ibid.

The tenancy of the house was free from monetary charge but made in expectation of a lifetime of service. The deed, drawn up in 1628, describes the provision of a wedding feast, in which Anne de Croy agreed that “all expenses will be paid by me.”⁷⁶⁷ In addition, the Duchess provided the home for two servants. Anne arranged:

To give [...] the whole house and inheritance that belongs to us and which is located within this city of Enghien, just in front of the House of the Capuchins, along with a garden dependant upon this house, free of any annuity. [...] Thus, they are now the owners of this asset, from this day and forever, that they can really enjoy it.⁷⁶⁸

The document also stipulated that:

The donees shall provide housekeepers for our house and castle of Enghien and any other things that we may require, and they shall remain in service within our castle for the rest of my life. They shall remain our loyal servants, sticking to our commands, whichever they can be in the future, and will never be allowed to give up.⁷⁶⁹

This pact was transgenerational, passed from mothers and fathers to sons and daughters through the occupancy of the house.⁷⁷⁰ It positioned the living

⁷⁶⁷ AAE T.2.10 ‘Copie du Codice de sene Mandame d’Arenberg de ce quelle a legato a ses domestiques...’ Translated by Transcription Services Ltd. linda@tslmanx.net.

⁷⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁹ The arrangement was made between Anne de Croy and her long serving chambermaid Fehenne Farquienart and her betrothed Pierre Oudart. AAE T.2.10 ‘Copie du Codice de sene Mandame d’Arenberg de ce quelle a legato a ses domestiques...’ Translated by Transcription Services Ltd. linda@tslmanx.net.

⁷⁷⁰ The document stipulates that only the children of the named servants would be allowed to “be the owners of the asset” which would technically remain in the possession of the dynasty. AAE T.2.10 ‘Copie du Codice de sene Mandame d’Arenberg de ce quelle a legato a ses domestiques...’ Translated by Transcription Services Ltd. linda@tslmanx.net.

conditions of both families in parallel, creating a blurred genealogy of blood and service in which the hierarchical, top-down, economic relationship of patron and servant conflated with personal ancestries of provision and favour, assistance and gratitude, parent and child. Although the *Adoration* painting confirmed and celebrated such bonds in life, the long-term Eucharistic and redemptive significance of the altarpiece emphasised the continuance of such community after death. It visualised the words of the liturgy that were performed in front of the altar. The Office for the Dead described a perpetual society united at the end of time,

O God, which among the Apostolic priests hast made thy servants to have power by pontifical or priestly dignity: Grant we beseech thee: that they may also be joined unto their perpetual society.

O God the giver of pardon, and the lover of human salvation, we beseech thy clemency: that thou grant the brethren of our congregation, kinsfolk, and benefactors, which are departed out of this world, blessed Mary ever virgin making intercession with all the saints, to come to the fellowship of eternal blessedness.

O God the creator, and redeemer of all the faithful, give unto the souls of thy servants men, and women remission of all their sins: that through Godly supplications they may obtain the pardon which they have always wished for. Who livest and reignest world without end.⁷⁷¹

The altarpiece gave a material dimension to this reunion of “brethren,” of “kinsfolk, and benefactors.” The figures of the composition drew the outermost social tendrils of the Arenberg family into the narrative of resurrection. The Office for the Dead ended a service punctuated with the plea, “Eternal rest give

⁷⁷¹ Office for the Dead taken from *The primer, or, Office of the Blessed Virgin Marie [electronic resource]: in Latin and English, according to the reformed Latin, and wvith lyke graces priuileged* (Antwerp: Arnold Conings, 1599), Early English Books Online Database: STC (2nd ed.) / 16094.

unto them O Lord: and let perpetual light shine unto them.”⁷⁷² The words resounded the glow of the altar across the illuminated robes. It heightened the crossing of the pictorial plane, binding the departed effigy figures with those gathered in the chapel space for worship. As the ritual bled into the pigment, the living and dead were united as a collective. The robe dressed all in the imperishable Christ-like form.

The communal element of the painted textile is further supported by the Pauline metaphor of the body of Christ as a collective entity. Romans 12: 4-5 reads, “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.” Paul’s description of the Church as the collective body of Christ did not refer to a corporate entity made by component parts, but rather the incorporation of disparate units into an overarching form belonging to the divine.⁷⁷³ Paul’s baptismal and Eucharistic theology similarly described the individual joining into the collective form of Christ.⁷⁷⁴ As a result, Jung Hoon Kim

⁷⁷² Ibid.

⁷⁷³ This is inferred by the use of a possessive genitive in the Biblical text. Arland J. Hultgren, “The Church as the Body of Christ: Engaging an Image in the New Testament,” *Word and World* 22, no. 2 (Spring 2002): 126.

⁷⁷⁴ 1 Corinthians 10: 16-17 (KJV) reads “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.” 1 Corinthians 12: 12-13 (KJV) reads, “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.”

argues, the metaphorical dressing or 'putting on' of Christ did not merely refer to an individual Christian's unification with Christ,

But also the collective Christian community's inclusion in Christ as a corporate personality. As a garment envelops the whole body of its wearer, Christ embraces the whole church as his body. As the body within the garment is an organic whole, the church is also an organic whole, which is corporately included in Christ.⁷⁷⁵

The significance of this communal clothing, or one form dressed on behalf of all in relation to the narrative of bodily resurrection, has been explored by Cordelia Warr. Her investigation of Italian Renaissance presentations of the Last Judgement concludes with analysis of the model composition that displayed Christ enthroned, surrounded by the twelve apostles seated as judges of the twelve tribes of Israel.⁷⁷⁶ Around the holy tribunal, the dead emerged from their tombs and the sea to be judged. Those found sinful were punished in hell, whilst the blessed were accepted into heaven where they appeared dressed. The dichotomy between the naked as they rose from the earth and the saved clothed in heaven correlated with understanding of costume as a means of achieving virtue or avenue into sin. The Capuchin Constitutions of 1536, for example, included detailed instructions regarding the virtuous clothing of friars. The document stipulated that worldly costume be renounced as "no one shall be clothed, unless first, if able, he has distributed all to the poor."⁷⁷⁷ Apparel was restricted to the "common, abject, austere, coarse and despised cloth" cut in the

⁷⁷⁵ Hoon Kim, *The Significance of Clothing Imagery in the Pauline Corpus*, 145.

⁷⁷⁶ Warr, *Dressing for Heaven*, 199.

⁷⁷⁷ *The Capuchin Constitutions of 1536*, trans. Paul Hanbridge (Rome: Collegio San Lorenzo da Brindisi, 2006), 5.

most economical manner so that “poverty, so loved by the Son of God, [...] may shine forth in everything.”⁷⁷⁸ A knotted girdle made from coarse cord was to be worn for mortification and friars were instructed to go about barefoot.⁷⁷⁹

In contrast to the austere costume of those in monastic orders during life, the tracts of the thirteenth-century Cistercian monk Caesarius of Heisterbach related heavenly reward after death with fantastical attire. His *Dialogus Miraculorum* included the description of a vision in which appeared,

Our brothers [...] all clad in the whitest cowls, the brightness of which my eyes could not endure, like the flash of dazzling lightening. [...] ‘He who lives blamelessly may hope for such garments. But if vice be hidden in his conversation, a spot will appear on his robe. Therefore shall he deserve to have a spotless robe, who keeps himself free from spot [...] whatsoever stains and destroys the purity of the heart.’⁷⁸⁰

In the light of such metaphors, the contrast between the coarse robes of the Capuchin monk and the illuminated mantle of the magi takes on heightened significance within the *Adoration* altarpiece. The silk, like ‘dazzling lightening,’ evidences the virtue of the Arenberg and Capuchin community in life, a litmus paper declaring the purity of all, the living and the dead. The inclusion of clothing in Last Judgement scenes also allowed for the recognition of the saved bodies, a crucial component of belief about the continuity of the self at the general resurrection. Through their vestments, painted figures could be distinguished as

⁷⁷⁸ *The Capuchin Constitutions of 1536*, 6.

⁷⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸⁰ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, cited in Warr, *Dressing for Heaven*, 218.

kings, queens, cardinals, or the founders of religious orders.⁷⁸¹ The clothing served to individualise those in heaven, suggesting personal identity was restored once saved, and providing a sharp contrast to the tumbling mass of flesh and limbs embroiled in hellish torture below.⁷⁸²

The dual significance of clothing at the resurrection of bodies as both communal and individualising correlates with the function of the embalmed body, buried in parts yet retaining the significance of the whole. It also relates to the portrait of Charles d'Arenberg as illuminated magus. His likeness, bathed in Eucharistic and salvific significance, encompassed the expanded Arenberg community whilst retaining a resemblance to a particular body and specific social status. The compositional importance awarded to the figure, front and centre of the painting and first at the crib, bolsters his pictorial role as representative for the clan. His position directly under the pedestal and the vine that springs from his body up the column invite a reading of the body as the foundation of the community and the source of its fecundity, both spiritual and corporal.⁷⁸³

⁷⁸¹ Warr, *Dressing for Heaven*, 205.

⁷⁸² I would like to thank my supervisor Dr Cordula van Wyhe for introducing me to the idea of resurrection as a communal event. She shared with me her research on Rubens' great *Last Judgement* to be published TBC as an article.

⁷⁸³ This notion adapts and expands on the idea posited by Mirella Marini that the vine symbolised the fertility of Anne and Charles at the head of the dynasty. Marini, "Female Authority in the 'Pietas Nobilita,'" 16.

Virgin, Altar and Effigy

The portrait of Charles d'Arenberg in the role of magus found precedent in the self-imaging of other contemporary rulers. Cosimo de' Medici, for example, commissioned a series of figurations of himself as magus in the decoration of the San Marco Convent in Florence (Figure 102). The distinctive kingly figure appeared in an *Adoration* fresco in Cosimo's cell and then again in a fresco of the crucifixion in the same building. The repetition of the distinctive figure linked the events and bound Cosimo into the entire narrative of Christian salvation as it played out across the walls of the religious establishment.⁷⁸⁴ The active involvement of the dynastic body in the Adoration story emulated the liturgical ritual performed by clergy and layperson. It allowed the subject to signify the entirety of worldly wealth and authority without intruding on the sacred flesh of the holy family. The 'portrait' of Anne de Croy as the Virgin Mary, however, transgressed this iconographical boundary. It conflated the mundane and holy figures despite this being carefully avoided in other family commissions.

An anonymous triptych in the Arenberg collection, painted around five years before the *Adoration of the Magi* scene, displays the Virgin Mary flanked by Anne and Charles kneeling in prayer beside their namesakes Charlemagne and St Anne and two of their children (Figure 103). In the side panels the remaining Arenberg children are positioned, male on the left and female on the right, whilst in the

⁷⁸⁴ Cosimo is associated with the figure of Caspar, the third magus who stands towards the centre of the composition and whose foot crosses the pictorial plane into the cell space. Terry-Fritsch, "Florentine Convent as Practiced Place," 260-261.

recesses of each scene St John is shown writing the Gospels under the inspiration of the Virgin and St Luke is shown painting her on a canvas within a workshop.⁷⁸⁵ Although crowded with over thirty bodies, the triptych maintains a pictorial barrier between the devotees and the Virgin Mary. The Virgin's robes and skirts generate a visual perimeter, separating the Arenbergs in a long vertical sweep of material that falls head to foot on one side and forms an almost geometric encasement on the other. In addition, the elevation of the Virgin's body above the base of the scene on which the family is positioned implies a physical separateness and hierarchal difference. Such division echoes the carefully manipulated relationship between donor and holy body in earlier Netherlandish triptychs, including Van der Weyden's *Pierre Bladelin Triptych* (Figure 104).⁷⁸⁶ Here, the donors also share the central panel with holy bodies and yet are distinguished from them by the curve of the Virgin's mantle and the brickwork of the ruinous stable.⁷⁸⁷

The portrayal of Anne de Croy as Virgin presents no segregation between the sacred and mundane, no "spatial buffer"⁷⁸⁸ to distinguish between devotee and the object of devotion (Figure 105). Meshing the holy and dynastic bodies in this

⁷⁸⁵ Édouard Laloire, *Recueil Iconographique de la Maison d'Arenberg* (Brussels: Phototypie E. Thill, 1940), no. 8.

⁷⁸⁶ Lynn F. Jacobs explored different divisions of space in donor portraits, including the use of side panels, in Netherlandish triptychs in *Opening Doors: The Early Netherlandish Triptych Reinterpreted* (Pennsylvania: Penn State University Press, 1995), 122-125.

⁷⁸⁷ Alfred Acres, "The Columbia Altarpiece and the Time of the World," *The Art Bulletin* 80, no. 3 (Sept. 1998), 428.

⁷⁸⁸ Acres, "The Columbia Altarpiece," 428.

way was an audacious and risky act. Marian blasphemy was taken seriously within the Counter Reformation environment. Charles V's legal code *Carolina* of 1532, renewed repeatedly over the following decades, stated that anyone dishonouring God's holy mother would be punished.⁷⁸⁹ Contemporary artists also faced accusations of sacrilege and blasphemy if their models did not live up to the standards of morality appropriate for those involved in the depiction of the Virgin.⁷⁹⁰

Previous scholarship has insisted that the portrayal of Anne in such a daring manner should be understood as an assertion of her "continuing crucial part in the administration of the House of Arenberg."⁷⁹¹ The soft, smooth skin was the sheen of steely armour worn against those who sought to undermine her whilst her fictionalised youth asserted authority, a tool by which the Duchess "purposefully distanced herself from the 'old' generation."⁷⁹² However, as this chapter has demonstrated, the altarpiece did not simply mirror its exact moment

⁷⁸⁹ Bridget Heal, *The Cult of the Virgin in Early Modern Germany: Protestant and Catholic Piety, 1500-1648* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 172-173.

⁷⁹⁰ In 1607, for example, Caravaggio's *Death of the Virgin* altarpiece was rejected by the Descalced Fathers of Santa Maria in Rome and publically criticized in print by Giulio Mancini. The motives for the rejection were, in part, connected to rumours that circulated concerning the identity of the model as a prostitute, the earthy nature of the painting, and the blasphemous connotations that the association between the two provoked. Francis Gage, "Caravaggio's *Death of the Virgin*, Giulio Mancini, and the Madonna Blasted," in *Caravaggio: Reflections and Refractions*, ed. Pericolo Lorenzo and David M. Stone (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2014), 83-84.

⁷⁹¹ Marini, "Female Authority in the 'Pietas Nobilita,'" 17.

⁷⁹² Ibid.

of creation but described the perpetual sanctification of the Arenberg family. The figure of the Virgin Mary, as an important part of the composition and narrative, should be understood in a similar transient and mediatory way.

The eye is drawn to the Virgin from the illuminated robe of the magus. The slope of the mantle rises in her direction and her face, framed by the grey cloak of the figure behind, occupies a distinct space within the composition. She is the most elevated figure in the foreground, positioned decidedly above the bodies that kneel in her direction. This hierarchical arrangement stakes a claim on the visual sovereignty held by the fantastical silk. Indeed, the figure of the Virgin can be understood as a secondary concentration of significance within the overall altarpiece composition.

As the focal point of devotion within the pictorial plane, the Virgin Mary formed a second altar, inserting Marian devotion into the narrative of Arenberg salvation. Theologically, both were sites of pilgrimage and devotion at which the body of Christ was made manifest, the epicentre of the incarnation and transubstantiation. Some Flemish altarpieces depicted the Virgin as altar by emphasising the angularity of her body, creating a table-like pose for the young woman.⁷⁹³ The conflation of altar and body also illustrated the legend of the 'Ara Coeli,' popularised in the thirteenth century. According to this story, Emperor Augustus asked the Tiburtine Sibyl if any man would ever surpass his own greatness. In response, she revealed a vision of the Virgin and Child accompanied

⁷⁹³ This is discerned in the left wing of Rogier van der Weyden's *Bladelin Triptych*. Lane, *The Altar and Altarpiece*, 20-21.

by a voice that proclaimed, "This woman is the Altar of Heaven."⁷⁹⁴ Whilst narratively, the Virgin's form signified the meeting of divine and mundane, visually the Eucharistic process of transforming material was evidenced in the smooth white skin of the female face.

Anne was over fifty years old when she sat for her portrait in the altarpiece. However, the body on display is clearly much younger, free from lined or pigmented skin. The smooth complexion of the Virgin was understood to characterize generational purity. For centuries artists had grappled with the challenge of depicting this quality, a result of the Immaculate Conception and the Annunciation. It was a task that required drawing the devotee's attention to an absence invisible to the human eye.⁷⁹⁵ As a result, the canonical youth that shone from the vast majority of Marian portraits became synonymous with her genealogical history of divine favour.⁷⁹⁶ In 1553, the biographer of Michelangelo recorded the artist defending his girlish *Pieta* by arguing "that women who are chaste remain much fresher than those who are not? How much more so a virgin who was never touched by even the slightest lascivious desire which might alter her body?"⁷⁹⁷ In the *Adoration* altarpiece this virtuous quality further enacted

⁷⁹⁴ Lane, *The Altar and Altarpiece*, 20-21.

⁷⁹⁵ Thomas Buffer and Bruce Horner, "The Art of the Immaculate Conception," *Marian Studies* 55 (2004): 184-185.

⁷⁹⁶ Mary Zirka Z. Filipczak, "Why are there no Old Women in Heaven?" *Jaarboek van het Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen Bis* (2000), 73.

⁷⁹⁷ Michelangelo cited in Ascanio Condivi, *The Life of Michelangelo*, ed. Helmut Wohl, trans. Alice Sedgwick Wohl (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1976), 24-27.

the elevation of the material that occurred through the adjacent silk robes and the altar table.

Transformed and yet recognisable, the body of the Virgin as Anne de Croy also worked as effigy figure, presenting a renewed form for the end of days. In this guise her impossible youth can be understood as a sign of the *aetas perfecta*, the perfected age of the resurrected body, which differed between men and women, promoting a female ideal at the peak of fertility and marriageable age.⁷⁹⁸ The transitory state of the effigy figure, signifying a body between two states of existence, is echoed in the self-effacing qualities of the media. Unlike the Duke's magus portrait, there are no embroidered robes or livery painted across the female body to firmly label the Duchess as the Virgin Mary. The result is a certain liminality that allows the likeness to slip in and out of focus. Anne is at once present and absent, holy and worldly, visible and yet not definite. The portrait attempts to disappear before the eyes of the observer.

However, in a similar manner to the elevated silk robes, the liminal position of the portrait is unstable and, despite attempts to rise above worldly status, remains rooted to the earth. The innate purity of the Virgin is undermined by the appearance of Anne surrounded by children and grandchildren. The family portraits attest to the Duchess' fertility and sexual activity, disrupting the professed spotless virginity of her painted body. There is a friction between the two states of being, an uncomfortable position between the holy and mundane

⁷⁹⁸ Kim M. Philips, *Medieval Maidens: Young Women and Gender in England 1270-1540* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 44-45.

that veers dangerously on the cusp of blasphemy. Indeed, the painting did attract some criticism in the seventeenth century. Just a year after installation the Minister Generalis of the Capuchins, Paolo da Cesna, accused it of being “grande artificio,”⁷⁹⁹ a far too luxurious an item for a humble religious establishment. The composition ignored rules set down by regional church authorities concerning the depiction of living persons on altarpieces.⁸⁰⁰ It also fed the habit of overt displays of devotion and piety for which the nobility and associated Capuchin Order attracted disapproval.⁸⁰¹

Despite this disruption, the *Adoration of the Magi* altarpiece remained in situ within the chapel interior. The bond between tomb, altar, and painting, between Adoration, Eucharist and salvation, survived intact over several centuries. The painting continued as part of the ecclesiastical ritual and Capuchin maintenance of the family tomb.⁸⁰² Even generations after its installation at the spiritual core of the dynasty, the painting offered a final material juncture for the noble body before judgement day.

⁷⁹⁹ Unnamed document in the Archives des Capuchins de Belgique, III, 7005, 209. Translation cited by Joris Snaet, “Isabel Clara Eugenia and the Capuchin Monastery at Tervuren,” in *Isabel Clara Eugenia: Female Sovereignty in the Courts of Madrid and Brussels*, ed. Cordula van Wyhe (London and Madrid: Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica and Paul Holberton, 2011), n 33.

⁸⁰⁰ The archdiocese of Mechelen banned the representation of living persons in altars at the third provincial council in 1607. Snaet, “Isabel Clara Eugenia and the Capuchin Monastery at Tervuren,” n 35.

⁸⁰¹ A further example occurred in 1624 when, as part of a Good Friday procession, a number of noble figures publically beat themselves with a level of ostentation that caused scandal at court. Nagelsmit, “Venite & Videte,” 178.

⁸⁰² The Capuchins continued to reside at the convent and the tomb remained in use until the end of the twentieth century.

Conclusion

This thesis has examined how the specific material composition of artworks produced nobility and privilege in the Sixteenth and early Seventeenth-century Habsburg Netherlands. It has shown how the Arenberg family commissioned objects at sites of noble liminality or crisis and how the particularities of tapestry, stained glass, paper, watercolour and oil pigment negotiated social authority through corporal encounter. Led by material processes, qualities, and narratives, the thesis has demonstrated the breadth of this practice and how it responded to the subjectivity of noble position in the shifting social and political environment. It has also unearthed fresh insight into objects and materials that have only been previously approached through the lens of archival research.

By following the materials, this thesis has shown how the woven media of the *Honour* tapestry formulated textile spaces that not only contested and transformed the architectural limitations of the household but also enveloped the body into a didactic and self-reflective cycle. The tapestry worked much like a 'mirror for princes' treatise, narrating the process of ennoblement it described. It cultivated privilege in the noble body from a young age, whilst still impressionable, "open and undeveloped."⁸⁰³ It bound together the weavers, artists, and humanist scholars that prescribed the ideal honourable body, yet also physically asserted social difference by dividing space and marking

⁸⁰³ Erasmus, *The Education of a Christian Prince*, 5.

boundaries. Removed from its previous designation as a copy of a royal original, the tapestry can be understood to have played an active role in the preservation of Arenberg privilege long into the twentieth century.

The material processes of stained glass produced hierarchy in a different manner and between different subjects. The window foregrounded materiality in both substance and narrative. It used a centuries-old regional language of commerce to socially position the Arenberg clan in relation to the trading congregation that frequented St John's Church in Gouda. The promotion of material through the elevating 'immaterial' qualities of stained glass chimed with the Eucharistic ritual of matter made holy performed within the ecclesiastical space. Depicted in the donor register in line with Habsburg sovereigns, the Arenberg clan also visually affirmed their loyalty and position amongst the upper echelons of court society but carefully avoided alienating the burgher community who encountered the window. By focusing on the nature of the glazed media, this chapter expanded understanding of the window from previous biographical interpretations. The *Judith and Holofernes* design can no longer be considered only as a reflection of Margaret de la Marck's life but as an open textured and productive device for formulating and justifying the position of nobility in the community.

The third and fourth case study demonstrated the capabilities of watercolour, parchment, and book bindings positioned at sites of profound dynastic change. Whilst the watercolour portrait album choreographed the internal disruption of dynastic confluence around the body of the married noble woman, the

landscapes negotiated the externally shifting position of the landlord in the commercialising countryside. The qualities of the media of both objects worked self-reflexively, drawing attention to the inherent value of the portrait as object and celebrating the deception and processes of looking initiated by the painted form. In both volumes, the omnipresence of the painterly media severs the direct correlation between form and subject. They announce their own artifice, that they are concerned with people and land, but that they are not real landscapes or lived bodies and so cannot be interpreted as such.

The final case study of this thesis demonstrated how the qualities of material were utilised in the affirmation of privilege in perhaps the most profound and far-reaching manner of all substances considered. The illusory power of oil paint echoed the crossing of the boundary between mundane and divine, the transformation of matter at the heart of the Catholic mass, and the resurrection of the noble body at the end of days. Indeed the *Adoration of the Magi* altarpiece, positioned in the main chapel above the family mausoleum, provided the final material juncture for the noble body before judgement day. Such a potent site of change, riddled with anxiety about the dissolution of the corpse and the continuation of the clan, demands interpretation beyond the social situation, legal battles, and correspondence of the family in the seventeenth century. The materials point to posterity and must, therefore, be understood in the widest timeframe possible.

Three major themes have developed as a combined result of all five case studies. The first is that the nobly productive qualities of specific materials were widely

recognised in the sixteenth century. Elyot's treatise on governance, cited at the start of this thesis, along with other general educational tracts such as Erasmus' *Education of a Christian Prince*, advocated the formulation of the prince "in all sorts of ways [...] carved in rings, painted in pictures, inscribed on prizes."⁸⁰⁴ Whilst "the teacher's objective is always the same [...] he must use different methods at different times."⁸⁰⁵ Nobility was produced by "perusing the abstracts & deuises in the hangings"⁸⁰⁶ in the domestic household or meditating on the "many coloured gems"⁸⁰⁷ of stained glass in the house of God. Certain pigments and painterly techniques were understood to "enricheth and innobleth,"⁸⁰⁸ whilst others brought "forth far fetched and unheard-of inventions [...] and thus [covered] truth with a comely veil of fable."⁸⁰⁹ The illusory nature of oil paint had "its role in inspiring virtue, its ability to instil discipline and to educate the people," and the ability to make them "truly noble."⁸¹⁰ Furthermore, painterly techniques could be used "to achieve a state of blessedness." Francisco Pacheco argued that,

⁸⁰⁴ Erasmus, *Education of a Christian Prince*, 10.

⁸⁰⁵ Erasmus, *Education of a Christian Prince*, 12.

⁸⁰⁶ Caxton, *The moste pleasaunt historye of Blanchardine*.

⁸⁰⁷ Abbot Suger of St Denis, "The Other Little Book," 63.

⁸⁰⁸ Hilliard, *The Art of Limning*, 42.

⁸⁰⁹ Pardo, "The Subject of Savoldo's Magdalene," 85.

⁸¹⁰ Francisco Pacheco, *The Art of Painting* (Madrid: Imprenata de Manua Galiano, 1866), translated in *Early Modern Spain: A Documentary History*, ed. Jon Cowans (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 169.

For the Christian, raised for holy things, does not content himself in his daily acts with looking at lowly things [...] but rather, raising his eyes to the heavens, sets himself a higher and more excellent goal, one found in eternal things [...] Therefore [...] painting [...] raises itself to a supreme aim, looking towards eternal glory, seeking to keep men away from vice, and leading them toward the true worship of our Lord God.⁸¹¹

The second overarching research theme to emerge from the case studies is that the specific qualities of each substance suggested the processes of social positioning required at each site of contest. The tapestry set, a grand and luxurious object of display, worked inwards, creating a privileged interior both in the home and in the introspective noble body. The media of stained glass was democratically available to anyone who entered the church space yet also reserved for those able to shoulder the immense expense and accommodate for the intensive labour involved in the commission and production. The tangible qualities of paper and watercolour drew on centuries of regal book illumination but also evidenced the commercial value of the noble body and the privileged experience of the countryside through the inherent material worth of the expertly rendered pigment. The self-effacing nature of oil paint conjured the illusory presence of an Arenberg community whilst also removing them from lived experience, raising them to something beyond the sensory world.

Finally, the third theme shared across all media and object case studies is the inherent fertility of the noble body produced at each site of conflict. As the objects hierarchically arrange the collective social makeup of the Arenberg family they produce an immortal form, unhindered by natural law or linear

⁸¹¹ Pacheco, *The Art of Painting*, 170.

chronology. Whilst differing between sites of contest and production, each collective body speaks to the future of the clan rather than solely emphasising its ancestral past. In *Strangers in Blood: Relocating Race in the Renaissance* Jean Feerick argues that the force of interlocking concepts like race, stock, or blood was “to track continuity across the ruptures of time, imagining a body linked intergenerationally through a palpable substance that lived on despite the passing of any individual body.”⁸¹² This thesis has shown that the nobility produced by materials supplemented the abstract nature of this pan-generational body with a tangible dimension. However, rather than working as lifeboats for the noble clan, buoying the family safely across a changing environment, the tapestry, window, books, and canvas wove the Arenberg bloodline into the shifting fabric. It enmeshed the noble family into different populations, ideologies, and conventions to paradoxically ensure noble continuity through perpetual change.

One of the most important contributions of this thesis is as an advocate for the potential of material as a primary methodological lens through which to engage with the sixteenth-century Habsburg Netherlands. As outlined in the Introduction, historical analysis into this area has been dominated by studies based on the rich national, regional, and familial depositaries of archival material in Belgium. Within the field of Art History, scholarship has begun to posit material substances, their composition and processes, as integral to

⁸¹² Jean E. Feerick, *Strangers in Blood: Relocating Race in the Renaissance* (Toronto and London: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 29.

understanding objects and artefacts native to the Netherlands.⁸¹³ This is particularly important in relation to the extensive exploration into sixteenth-century instances of iconoclasm and understandings of transubstantiation in which the power of material substance incited both violence and pilgrimage.

The scholarly field of 'Material Culture' is described in the recently published volume *The Routledge Handbook of Material Culture in Early Modern Europe* edited by Catherine Richardson, Tara Hamling and David Gaimster, as youthful but quick moving. It is a subject "coming into focus like the early modern map of the world."⁸¹⁴ The authors define Material Culture in terms of curiosity "about the things with which people interacted, the spaces in which they did so, the social relationships which cluster around their associations- between producers, vendors and consumers of various kinds- and the way knowledge travels around these circuits of connection."⁸¹⁵ Whilst explorations of Dutch material flows and social productive material networks have collected around the commercial centres of the Northern Netherlands, the Catholic South has received less attention from the field. By arguing for the production of nobility through materials, this thesis posits the Flemish nobility as a crucial topic for further consideration in the arena.

⁸¹³ See for example Cordula van Wyhe, "The Fabrics of Female Rule in Leone Leoni's Statue of Mary of Hungary, c. 1556," and Ann-Sophie Lehmann, "How Materials Make Meaning," in *Meaning in Materials 1400-1800*, ed. Ann-Sophie Lehmann, Frits Scholten and H. Perry Chapman (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

⁸¹⁴ Catherine Richardson, Tara Hamling and David Gaimster, *The Routledge Handbook of Material Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Oxon: Routledge, 2017), 4.

⁸¹⁵ Richardson, Hamling and Gaimster, *The Routledge Handbook of Material Culture in Early Modern Europe*, 4.

This thesis may also prove valuable to those investigating contemporary understandings of the commercial world in which our bonds with objects and bodies are, as ever, in a process of rapid change. Lars Svendsen in *Fashion: A Philosophy* argues that “the shaping of self-identity in the post-modern era is in a crucial sense a *body project*.”⁸¹⁶ The body is a plastic fashion object constantly working towards new cultural norms and ideals as they emerge.⁸¹⁷ Differently shaped clothing, diet, and physical activities all transform the body and the self, and the perception of the body and the self. Identity is enmeshed in these processes, the inseparable mingling of the corporal and the synthetic matter that describes and redraws the individual and its interaction with others. Simultaneously, new technologies and machines offer media in which identity can be detached from corporal or sensory experience. As Sherry Turkle has explored, “we remake each ourselves and our relationships with each other through our new intimacy with machines.”⁸¹⁸ Technology offers a substitute for bodily connection. It can conjure whole communities of relationships meditated through networked devices, versions of people with new bodies, homes, jobs, and romances that defy decay, death, and separation.⁸¹⁹ Such virtual immortality echoes the ambition of the sixteenth-century Arenberg clan, but the severing of

⁸¹⁶ Lars Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, trans. John Irons (London: Reaktion Books, 2006), 75.

⁸¹⁷ Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 76.

⁸¹⁸ Sherry Turkle, *Alone Together: Why we Expect More From Technology and Less From Each Other* (New York: Basic Books, 2012), 3.

⁸¹⁹ Turkle, *Alone Together*, 11.

material poses questions about whether virtual experience degrades sensory encounter and whether, over time, non-sensory experience become the sole mediator of identity.⁸²⁰ These concerns are particularly relevant to museums and other research institutions that are in the process of adopting virtual reality experiences as part of their curatorial approach. In such situations, digital technology may threaten to supplant and diminish the interpretive importance of the specific material processes and sensory encounters through which objects work.

The upcoming exhibition at the MLeuven entitled 'The Arenbergs' promises to bring back together artworks for the first time in centuries.⁸²¹ Despite the aforementioned reservations about the curation of the exhibition around famous artists and the risks that virtual reality poses to the collection, it presents a fantastic opportunity to examine materials that have been spread between archives and museums all over the world and compare their differing processes of noble production and continuation in the same exhibition space. The breadth of the exhibition, which aims to include architecture and music alongside tapestry, books of hours, and oil painting within an extended events program, has the potential to stimulate new projects and avenues of research. Akin to the *Albert and Isabella* exhibition of 1998-1999 at the Royal Museum of Art in Brussels, the event could be the nexus of a new field of enquiry, bringing Early Modern Court studies and Material Culture into an exciting and fertile

⁸²⁰ Ibid, 12.

⁸²¹ "The Arenbergs: European Nobility, Princely Collection," *MLeuven*, accessed June 19, 2018, <https://www.mleuven.be/en/arenbergs>.

confluence. The Arenberg family portrait painted by Pourbus in the closing years of the sixteenth century will form a highlight of the upcoming exhibition. Its scale, splendour, and famous artist have ensured a prominent place amongst the works of Rubens and Dürer. In addition to these credentials, the celebration of the painting is particularly apt given the multiple ideologies and visual conventions inscribed across the surface. The canvas unavoidably describes the multifaceted nature of nobility in the sixteenth century and the material fertility in which and through which the clan was perpetuated.

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