

Judgment on Parchment: Illuminating Theater in Besançon MS 579

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Abstract

The fourteenth-century northern French manuscript Besançon MS 579 contains an extensively illuminated copy of the Middle French Antichrist and Last Days play known as the Jour du Jugement. Its illumination and mise en page shape the Jour in MS 579 as a book-based experience that capitalizes on the theatrical genre. The visual program works toward the creation of a spiritually profitable book, defined through the marriage of text, illuminations, and the theatrical form. I describe the strategies by which the manuscript is designed to engage a reader-viewer with its eschatological theme, including considerations of iconography, image placement, and the relationship between visual and sonic elements in the play. The essay then addresses the role of theater qua theater in the design of this play-within-a-book. I account for the clarity of genre in Besançon 579 as a component of its argument, considering how the subject of Antichrist and the form of an illuminated play combine to make reading an exercise in discernment and to comment on the role of art in preparing for Judgment. The combination of an Antichrist play, the manuscript medium, and the explicitly theatrical terms of the text's presentation renders the manuscript a durable production of the Jour designed to offer a means of preparation for the Judgment described in the drama. The theatrical genre itself becomes a subject of reflection in conjunction with the themes of the play and its stated project of spiritual aid for the spectator, here recast as reader-viewer.

Calm down, fair gentle folk:
It would be neither pleasant nor seemly
were you to make noise here,
for on a matter of grievous consequence
for everyone, which is not only true
but also, for those who retain it well,
profitable to body as well as to soul—
namely, the day of judgment—
I wish to deliver here to you a sermon.¹ [1–9; my emphasis]

The fourteenth-century Middle French end-of-days play known as the *Jour du Jugement* opens with an urgent injunction by the character of the Preacher that the assembly before him attend to the sermon he is about to deliver.² The Preacher will sketch Christian history from Adam to the Apocalypse, with special emphasis on the coming of Antichrist and the terrors of the Last Days. The 2,430 lines of dialogue and described or implied action that unfold after the sermon dramatize those Last Days, beginning with the conception of Antichrist, tracing his career of deception, and running through the culminating events of the Second Coming of Christ up to the separation of the damned and the saved. With its cast of ninety-three distinct characters, its thundering themes, diversity of locations, and bold presentation of

For their indispensable comments on this paper at various stages of its development, I warmly thank Patricia Blessing, Adam S. Cohen, Richard Emmerson, Marisa Galvez, Jeffrey Hamburger, Susanne Knaeble, Jesse Rodin, Linda Safran, Kathryn Starkey, Carol Symes, Grainne Watson, Laura Weigert, Edward Wouk, and the anonymous readers for *Gesta*. I am grateful to Bérénice Hartwig at the Bibliothèque municipale in Besançon for generously furnishing images and to the library for access to the manuscript. The essay is dedicated to Laura Weigert.

1. “Faites paiz, belle douce gent! / Pas ne seroit ne bel ne gent / Se vous faisies yci noise; / Quar d’une chose qui mont poise / A chascun et est veritable / Et a retenir profitable / Au corps et a l’ame aussiment / —Ce est dou Jour dou Jugement— / Vous vueil yci un sarmon faire.” French in Jean-Pierre Perrot and Jean-Jacques Nonot, eds. and trans., *Le mystère du Jour du Jugement: texte original du XIVe siècle* (Chambéry: Éditions CompAct, 2000), 64. English modified from Richard K. Emmerson and David Hult, eds. and trans., *Antichrist and Judgment Day: The Middle French “Jour du Jugement”* (Asheville, NC: Pegasus Press, 1998), 3. My emphasis is underlined, to distinguish it from the edition’s italicized Latin in later quotations. My thanks to Marisa Galvez for her adjustment to the translation. All line citations in brackets refer to the Emmerson and Hult translation.

2. The current consensus attributes both the play and its manuscript to northeastern France, about 1340–50. The common title, *Le Jour du Jugement*, was given to the play by its first editor on the basis of the Preacher’s speech: Émile Roy, *Le Jour du Jugement: mystère français sur le grand schisme, publié pour la première fois d’après le manuscrit 579 de la Bibliothèque de Besançon et les mystères Sainte-Geneviève* (Paris:

Gesta v55n1 (Spring 2016).

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major eschatological events, the *Jour du Jugement* represents a key witness in many possible lines of investigation, whether tending toward the nature of apocalyptic imagination in fourteenth-century France; the particularities of politics and theology expressed in the text; or the wit, scale, and spectacle of medieval theater at large.

The *Jour du Jugement* is great theater. My subject here is how we might think about the text *as* theater in view of the medium in which the play comes down to us: its single manuscript, Besançon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 579 (hereafter Besançon 579). The *Jour* quires of the codex have been dated, like the play, to the first half of the fourteenth century.³ The manuscript was produced on a scale fully equal to the dramatic ambitions of the script, boasting a full-page frontispiece, eighty-eight finely executed intracolumnar miniatures with ample color and gold, three segments of carefully

Bouillon, 1902), 21. In his dissertation on the play, Jean-Jacques Nonot supported Roy's dating of the text and its manuscript to 1398, ascribing to both a political program concerning the Rome-Avignon schism of the papacy. Nonot, "Le mystère du Jour du Jugement: édition critique du manuscrit no. 579 de la Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon; une lecture du rapport 'texte-image'" (PhD diss., Université Lumière, Lyon, 1987). Both the play and the manuscript have since been dated to the first half of the fourteenth century, on the basis of the French dialect and the style of the painting. For linguistic evidence dating and localizing the text and some stylistic commentary on the manuscript, see Emmerson and Hult, *Antichrist and Judgment Day*, xiii–xvi. Emmerson and Hult's attribution is accepted in the latest edition and French translation, Perrot and Nonot, *Le mystère du Jour du Jugement*.

3. The manuscript is a quarto measuring 252 by 180 millimeters. The full manuscript consists of 76 parchment folios, of which the *Jour* occupies fols. 1r–36v (text begins on fol. 3r). The *Testament* of Jean de Meun begins in a new quire on fol. 40r. Through most of the essay I use "Besançon 579" to refer only to the *Jour* quires, but in the last section I consider the manuscript as an anthology. The play is written in two columns with interpolated miniatures; at least four leaves, and possibly more, are missing. The final quire of the *Jour* (fols. 33r–39v) ends with three blank folios, of which fols. 37r–38v are ruled and fols. 39r–39v are not. For more on the codicology, see Emmerson and Hult, *Antichrist and Judgment Day*, xiii–xiv; and Auguste Castan, ed., *Catalogue général des manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France: départements*, vol. 32, *Besançon* (Paris: Plon, Nourrit et Cie, 1897), 338–39. A digitized version of the manuscript is available at <http://memoirevive.besancon.fr>. The manuscript's original provenance is uncertain. It appears in the 1695 inventory of the abbé Jean-Baptiste Boisot (1638–1694) as no. 84 and arrived in the library of Besançon as part of the wholesale gift of his collection (originally to the Benedictine abbey of Saint-Vincent in Besançon). Perrot and Nonot (*Le mystère du Jour du Jugement*, 12, 53n6) raise the possibility that it was part of the sixteenth-century collection of Cardinal Granvelle, bishop of Arras, part of which was bought by Boisot in 1664. Boisot's inventory number was provided by the Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon.

notated music, rubrics introducing speakers and occasional stage directions, and gold initials for each new speech. These riches secure Besançon 579 a place among the most lavish vernacular manuscripts of the later Middle Ages as well as star status among surviving medieval playscripts, few of which match this manuscript's level of sustained, original, and luxurious illumination.⁴

Besançon 579 may confidently be called one of the most explicitly and deliberately "theatrical" manuscripts of the entire medieval period. Because of this clarity of genre, the relationship between the *Jour du Jugement* and its manuscript has long been presented as a documentary one, in which the manuscript preserves and re-presents a version of the on-staged play. I argue here for an alternative approach to the overt theatricality of Besançon 579, pursuing the ways in which the integration of the *Jour* and the manuscript medium in Besançon 579 opens new avenues for assessing the relationship between medieval theater and the illuminated codex. I propose that the manuscript version of the *Jour du Jugement* is designed to prompt the book's audience to approach an end-of-days theme with heightened attention to the implications of medium for the drama's message and to assert the efficacy of the illuminated book itself as a useful prop in the reader-viewer's preparation for expected Judgment.⁵

4. Other possibilities for *mise en page* and visual apparatus in theatrical manuscripts appear in Geneviève Hasenohr, "Les manuscrits théâtraux," in *Mise en page et mise en texte du livre manuscrit*, ed. Henri-Jean Martin and Jean Vezin (Paris: Éditions du Cercle de la Librairie-Promodis, 1990), 335–40. The theatrical material collected by Carol Symes ("The Appearance of Early Vernacular Plays: Forms, Functions, and the Future of Medieval Theater," *Speculum* 77, no. 3 [2002]: 778–831) presents fundamental contrasts to Besançon 579's transparent approach to genre. Other major works on theatrical illumination appear in the following notes. The style and execution of the miniatures in Besançon 579 are best compared with commercial Parisian productions of the first half of the fourteenth century. For commercial production, see Richard Rouse and Mary Rouse, *Manuscripts and Their Makers: Commercial Book Producers in Medieval Paris, 1200–1500* (Turnhout: Harvey Miller, 2000). However, close iconographic parallels to several motifs scattered through Besançon 579 are clustered in the *bas-de-page* Judgment scene on fol. 261r of Jean le Noir's Breviary of Charles V (1340–80, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France [hereafter BnF], MS lat. 1052); cf. Besançon 579, fols. 2v, 14r, 22v, 33v.

5. I will argue that the *Jour*'s status as an Antichrist play is important to this point, but the idea that genre transparency has an impact on the way a piece is presented, and therefore interpreted, in manuscript applies across a spectrum of possible examples. The status of theater as a social enterprise that reflects on contemporary life in both content and form relates to a general assertion that genre-specific presentation bears consequences for the range of meaning in a manuscript's text. See also note 70 below.

The Problem of Type

In his seminal “typology” of surviving medieval play-scripts, Graham Runnalls classed Besançon 579 as “a luxury manuscript recording the text of a past performance, belonging to a patron or a guild, and not intended to be used as the basis of a performance; perhaps intended for reading.”⁶ Richard K. Emmerson and the play’s French editors, Jean-Pierre Perrot and Jean-Jacques Nonot, have all proposed that the descriptive action of the images partners with the perfectly clear dialogue and rubrics built into the *mise en page* to create a manuscript that looks toward (past) staged action at every turn, offering a valuable window on to the ephemeral world of medieval theater.⁷ In the most recent analysis of the

6. Graham A. Runnalls, “Towards a Typology of Medieval French Play Manuscripts,” in *The Editor and the Text*, ed. Philip E. Bennett and Graham A. Runnalls (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press with Modern Humanities Research Association, 1990), 96–113, at 99. Complicating Runnalls’s categories for later examples in France is Vicki Hamblin, “The Theatricality of Pre- and Post-Performance French Mystery Play Texts,” in *Les Mystères: Studies in Genre, Text and Theatricality*, ed. Peter Happé and Wim Hüsken (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2012), 43–70. A representative manuscript of this “luxury” type with a far clearer context of patronage, presentation, and use is BnF, MS fr. 819–20, a deluxe copy of the *Miracles de Notre-Dame par personnages* dated about 1400. Robert L. A. Clark, “The *Miracles de Notre Dame par personnages* of the Cangé Manuscript and the Sociocultural Function of Confraternity Drama” (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1994). Clark and Pamela Sheingorn argue for a reading of the illumination in MS fr. 819–20 as lively and evocative of action, but fundamentally conceived in a pictorial, rather than explicitly theatrical, spirit: Clark and Sheingorn, “‘Visible Words’: Gesture and Performance in the Miniatures of BNF, MS fr. 819–820,” in *Parisian Confraternity Drama of the Fourteenth Century: The “Miracles de Notre Dame par Personnages,”* ed. Donald Maddox and Sara Sturm-Maddox (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), 193–217.

7. Richard K. Emmerson, “Visualizing Performance: The Miniatures of the Besançon MS 579 *Jour du Jugement*,” *Exemplaria* 11, no. 2 (1999): 245–84. Emmerson and Hult (*Antichrist and Judgment Day*, xxii–xxxii) include a section on staging. Emmerson (“Visualizing Performance”) emphasizes the muscular role of the group of miniatures in Besançon 579 that visualize the “pre-text” of a performance by filling textual gaps in the play’s action, and he also describes other aspects of the iconography that bring the idea of a stage performance to life throughout the manuscript. Emmerson pays particular attention to settings, costumes, and dramatic actions or characters depicted in the miniatures but not present in the dialogue, construing these as key elements for reconstructing the play’s medieval staging. Nonot (“Le mystère”) argues forcefully for the miniatures’ reconstruction of a production in the round—an argument taken further in Jean-Pierre Perrot, “La mise en scène de l’Apocalypse au Moyen Âge: *Le Mystère du Jour du Jugement*; espace théâtral et espace intérieur,” in *L’imaginaire des Apocalypses*, ed. Jean Burgos (Paris: Lettres Modernes Minard, 2003), 113–42. Perrot goes

manuscript, Karlyn Griffith focuses less on the documentary than on the evocative character of Besançon 579’s relationship to the stage, describing how thoroughly the images engender a reading experience premised on the re-performance of the play *as a play*, supported by its book-based form and including the “representation” of the theater via stage properties and settings.⁸

Runnalls’s classification and the twentieth-century editor-translators’ confidence in a performed “pre-text” for Besançon 579 establish a highly reasonable base hypothesis for the genesis of the manuscript. Whether or not the *Jour* was ever performed, though, remains an uncertainty currently impossible to resolve.⁹ By contrast, while Besançon 579 possibly was commissioned to commemorate and preserve a grand stage performance, the manuscript certainly was made to play a post-production part within its patron’s library, as Griffith especially has recognized.¹⁰ The *Jour* also may never have been

so far as to suggest (115) that the artist of Besançon 579 actually took part in the production of the play.

8. Karlyn Griffith, “Performative Reading and Receiving a Performance of the *Jour du Jugement* in MS Besançon 579,” *Comparative Drama* 45, no. 2 (2011): 99–126, esp. 110 for theatrical specificity.

9. Emmerson and Hult (*Antichrist and Judgment Day*, xxii) note the lack of any performance record for the *Jour* and its “enormous” cast of ninety-three (ix). Even allowing for actors doubling up on roles, the play, if staged, would require a formidable assembly of personnel, special effects, and varied settings. This is by no means to impugn the possibility of producing the play, but the manuscript version might capitalize on pictorial freedoms to heighten the scale of the drama, and it is also worth considering the possibility that the play was crafted solely and specifically for a manuscript medium. The very anonymity of the *Jour du Jugement* compared with the Arras theatrical record, the Parisian *Miracles de Notre-Dame*, or the later civic productions from Valenciennes may indicate a kind of generalization and literary conversion in the manuscript record for the play.

10. Griffith, “Performative Reading,” 101. There is a high degree of flexibility in the way we might imagine Besançon 579 being used, running the gamut from public reading to private meditation, including a broad spectrum of performance types tied to reading. Jessica Brantley, *Reading in the Wilderness: Private Devotion and Public Performance in Late Medieval England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Joyce Coleman, *Public Reading and the Reading Public in Late Medieval England and France* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); and Darwin Smith, “La question du Prologue de la *Passion* ou le rôle des formes métriques dans la *Création du Monde* d’Arnoul Gréban,” in *L’économie du dialogue dans l’ancien théâtre européen: actes de la première rencontre sur l’ancien théâtre européen de 1995*, ed. Jean-Pierre Bordier (Paris: Champion, 1999), 141–66. Anna Russakoff and Kathryn Duys offer models of the way a dramatic book such as Besançon 579 might have been used in their considerations of the Gautier de Coinci compendia: Russakoff, “Imaging the Miraculous: *Les Miracles de Notre Dame*, Paris, BnF, n.acq.fr. 24541” (PhD diss., Institute of Fine Arts, New York

performed at all, and the manuscript may have been conceived *ex novo* as the most vivid, memorable, and appropriate way to offer an end-of-days theme to its readership.¹¹ In the absence of outside evidence, we are left with the manuscript itself and the crucial point that, whether or not there ever was a production of the *Jour*, the book stands alone and the theater remains an integral component of its character. I will argue that the relationship between the *Jour*, Besançon 579, and the vanished stage does not end with the possibility of documentation or support for historically realized drama played by human actors. Rather than further describing how the book serves the preservation and/or re-creation of the play, I am interested here in how the play serves the creation of a vivid and powerful book, in which theater itself becomes one of the subjects of salvation drama.¹²

My approach to the manuscript proceeds in three principal stages. First, I examine the workings of visual program in the manuscript setting of the *Jour*, with an eye to the compositional strategies used to involve the reader-viewer in the manuscript's durable production of the play and in the anticipation of Judgment that is the subject of both the play and the manuscript. Then I shift to a broader discussion of "manuscript theater" and the characteristics of Besançon 579 as a book useful in the face of Judgment, examining the implications of pairing the theatrical genre with an Antichrist theme. Finally, I consider how the *Jour* functions when we consider Besançon 579 as a whole book, acknowledging the fact that the manuscript in its present form includes not only the play but also a copy of Jean de Meun's *Testament* that was bound

with the *Jour* in the early fifteenth century—a point that has heretofore not been considered in studies of the play.

Making a Book of the *Jour du Jugement*

Besançon 579 is a rendition of the *Jour du Jugement* built for sustained engagement rather than the thrills of a transitory production. Before turning to the role played for the manuscript by theater itself, it is important to establish the artistic character of the book as a book and the work performed by its visual program. The manuscript functions not only to present the play in a vivid and entertaining fashion but also to shape its content toward a salutary end that has as much to do with the useful identity of the resulting book as it does with the subject of the text that book is made to present.

The illuminated codex is designed to be helpful in the face of the landscape of deception and judgment laid out in the Preacher's speech and played out through the subsequent drama. To account for this useful nature of the book, we must recognize how fully the *Jour du Jugement* play is absorbed by its manuscript medium while retaining many attributes deeply connected to performance and played drama. Griffith's observation of the deep debts to conventions of illuminated romance in the manuscript's format and pictorial allusions underscores that the *Jour* is presented in Besançon 579 in a manner that capitalizes on the book-based genres, reading experiences, and circles of patronage with which the codex should be associated.¹³ At the same time, the manuscript is designed to craft experiences of viewing and hearing that are shared by played drama and illuminated books.

A few broad observations on the manuscript's design are necessary to define the visual strategies by which the *Jour* is presented in Besançon 579 to render the manuscript a valuable and powerful aid in light of the coming Judgment. It must be emphasized that the manuscript is a highly original product of careful planning and some expense (Fig. 1). Every miniature except the frontispiece (Fig. 2, left) is executed on a gold ground, and the underdrawing is often very fine.

University, 2006), esp. chap. 5; and Duys, "Books Shaped by Song: Early Literary Literacy in the *Miracles de Notre Dame* of Gautier de Coinci" (PhD diss, New York University, 1997), esp. 236–47.

11. Runnalls ("Towards a Typology," 110) describes the *Destruction de Troye*, a dramatic text that appears in several manuscripts, as a play possibly conceived exclusively for manuscript "staging." On this genre, see also Laura Weigert, "The Afterlife of Spectacle: Creating a Performance of *The Vengeance of Our Lord* through Paint," in "Spectacle," ed. Jeff Persels, special issue, *EMF: Studies in Early Modern France* 13 (2010): 65–87; and eadem, "Anthoine Vêrard's Illuminated Playscript of *La vengeance nostre Seigneur*: Marketing Plays and Creating the King's Image," in *The Social Life of Illumination: Manuscripts, Images, and Communities in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. Joyce Coleman, Mark Cruse, and Kathryn A. Smith (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 251–93.

12. The absorption of drama into book form is a principal theme in an important article on the relationship between "bookishness" and performance in the *Jeu de Robin et Marion* manuscript: Mark Cruse, Gabriella Parussa, and Isabelle Ragnard, "The Aix *Jeu de Robin et Marion*: Image, Text, Music," *Studies in Iconography* 25 (2004): 1–46; see also Corneliu Dragomirescu, "Un guide dans le livre: *prescheur/meneur* du jeu/auteur dans les manuscrits enlumés des mystères," *European Medieval Drama* 12 (2008): 1–47.

13. Karlyn Griffith, "Viewing the Romance of Antichrist in the Miniatures of the *Jour du Jugement*, MS Besançon 579," *Athanos* 27 (2009): 25–33; and eadem, "Performative Reading," 103–5. For the full complement of Griffith's substantive work on the visual characterization of Antichrist in Besançon 579 and the interaction of genres, see Karlyn Marie Griffith, "Illustrating Antichrist and The Day of Judgment in the Eighty-Nine Miniatures of Besançon, Bibliothèque Municipale MS 579" (MA thesis, Florida State University, 2008), available at <http://diginole.lib.fsu.edu/etd/3956>. In the same vein of merging genres, Geneviève Hasenohr has observed that the *mise en page* of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century theatrical manuscripts is rooted in conventions derived from vernacular poetry. Hasenohr, "Les manuscrits théâtraux," 245, 335–40.



Figure 1. Left: Antichrist instructed, Antichrist begins to preach; right: healing of the Blind Man, the Blind Man goes forth, fols. 10v–11r, ca. 1340–50, Besançon, Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon, MS 579 (photo: CNRS-IRHT © Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon).

Throughout the manuscript, rubrics and bordered initials introduce new speakers. The miniatures, as Emmerison has established, represent largely unconventional compositions that are both precisely keyed to the text of the *Jour* and fully imbricated in its progress.¹⁴ Besançon 579 owes the skeleton of its layout to the scribe who copied the text first, reserving space for the images, initials, musical staves, and rubrics, which seem to have been added in roughly that order (based on overlapping inks).

Approximately half the miniatures are seamlessly integrated into the flow of action, either by supplying a picture of events required for the proceedings but not described in the text (the group most emphasized by Emmerison) or by functioning to signal a scene change or the entrance of a new character.¹⁵ The rest operate according to a different logic,

linking text to either side of the vignettes.¹⁶ These miniatures are usually placed between speeches, belatedly introducing previous speakers visually, or they break a single speech mid-stream without necessarily depicting a specific action performed or remarked on by the speaker. Many miniatures in

resolve to go see the baby (“I don’t wish to sit still any more this morning / until I come to Babylon” [440–41]). When they have finished speaking, an image showing Antichrist’s Mother in bed and the Girl presenting her with the child precedes the Girl’s speech: “Lady, look what a face / and what limbs your son has!” [456–57].

16. I owe recognition of the logic defining much of Besançon 579’s visual program to Howard Bloch, “Lancelot the Illustrator: Images of Seduction and the Seduction of Images in Yale 229,” in *Old Books, New Learning: Essays on Medieval and Renaissance Books at Yale*, Yale University Library Gazette: Occasional Supplement 4, ed. Robert G. Babcock and Lee Patterson (New Haven: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, 2001), 21–43. Having hypothesized a “linking” function for the Yale 229 column miniatures that corresponds to the pattern evident in Besançon 579, Bloch declares himself “disappointed” in their more conventional character as textual introductions for the Lancelot romance.

14. Emmerison, “Visualizing Performance.”

15. On fol. 8v, for example, a miniature cues a transition of setting between hell (depicted on fol. 8r; Fig. 9, right column) and the house of Antichrist’s Mother. The devils Hartz and Le Matam

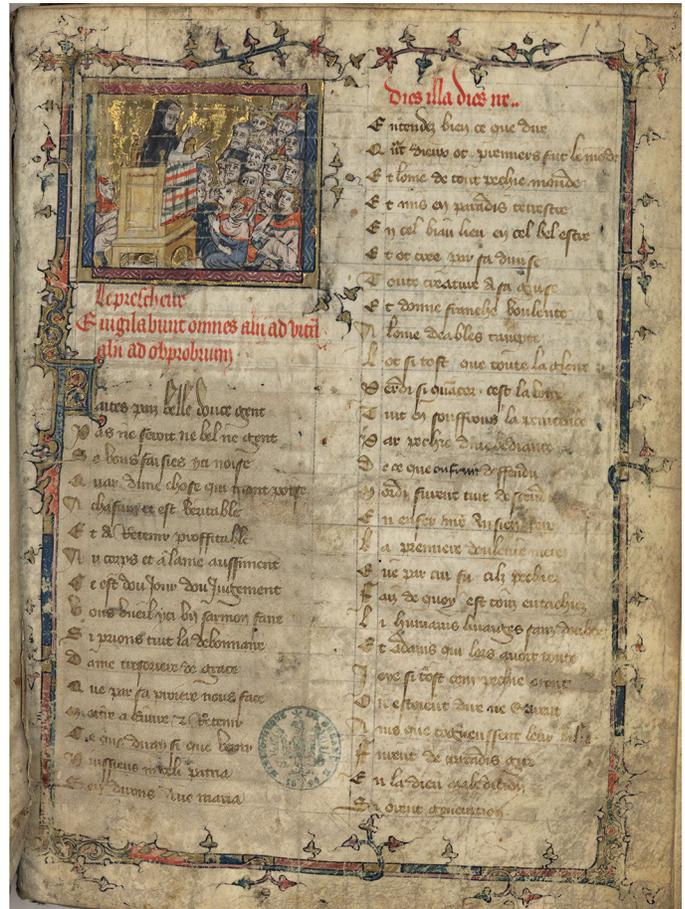


Figure 2. Left: Last Judgment; right: Preacher's sermon, fols. 2v–3r, ca. 1340–50, Besançon, Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon, MS 579 (photo: CNRS–IRHT © Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon).

this group fall between a question and answer, a command and capitulation, a call and response. Others provide an equal distribution of visualization to a cluster of characters whose voices speak toward the same end.¹⁷ When appearing midspeech, these miniatures often mark a shift of intent or tone. In this linking role, the pictures graph the progress of the play, often isolating dramatic passages that reward special consideration.¹⁸

17. E.g., on fol. 19r (Fig. 7), the miniature depicting the prophets' prayer appears between the speeches of Enoch and Elijah as they commend their souls to God before execution. Both speeches take the same tone, have the same addressee, and reinforce each other in content. The miniature similarly gives equal visual weight to the two speakers who flank it on the page.

18. On fols. 14r–15r, a series of brief speeches by each of the play's ten kings follows King Dagobert's initial question: "Lords, speak your thoughts / Can this at all be the truth, / that Antichrist has come to our cities / as the son of God the Father?" [828–31]. The miniature on fol. 14r showing Dagobert on the left addressing a cluster of kings on the right falls between Dagobert's question and

For a sampling of the interaction between images and text, we might consider fol. 11r (Fig. 1, right). Here, the intermediate stage in the false healing of a Blind Man is depicted between the Blind Man's pledge to the brown-robed Antichrist ("If you heal me / I will believe in you with a loyal heart" [608–9]), which appears above the miniature in the left column, and Antichrist's reply ("Come on over here, you of little faith, / and look at my beautiful deeds! / Mortal, I order you to open / your eyes and see: Look at me!" [610–13]). The miniature depicts an action not explicitly described in the text—the Blind Man kneeling for his cure—while linking the not-previously depicted Blind Man's readiness to

the first reply by Malabrum: "Whoever does not believe this will pay for it. / I can certify that I saw a man / who had been in the grave ten years: / I am certain that he resuscitated him" [832–35]. The miniature works as a call and response and also provides a visual reference for the speeches of all the following kings. However, it also isolates the crux of the scene: the question of Antichrist's veracity, the strongest "proving" miracle, and Malabrum's warning, "Whoever does not believe this will pay for it."

try Antichrist's skill and Antichrist's call to the spectators to gather round. The next miniature, showing the now-seeing man spryly bidding farewell to Antichrist, appears within the Blind Man's speech of thanks in the right column: "Lord, place me under your protection. / If it pleases you, I wish to serve you, / that I might thereby merit / your glory, which will never cease. / He who amply serves you will only be the better for it."—*miniature*—"I am going to proclaim everywhere, dear lord, / your great power and describe / how you gave me back my sight" [614–21]. The image signals the shift in the speech between the preface of praise and the declaration of the Blind Man's mission.

The logic of placement for many of the miniatures in Besançon 579 works according to the broadest principle that defines the manuscript's design: the visual elements reveal the structure of the drama. The miniatures, of course, make visible the characters, settings, and actions of the *Jour*, animating the play and providing a visual rendition of its events. The pictures are distributed several to a page and represent most of the play's major actions and characters. As a consequence, while the paintings directly partner the text, the program also builds a parallel version of the play as a purely visual progression whose shape and rhythm may be considered separately from the unfolding version of the drama constructed by reading every word in sequence (or, in a more drastic temporal contrast, by seeing the action played out on stage).¹⁹ One fundamental, well-recognized property of the illuminated book as a medium is the more flexible relationship allowed between the story it presents and the temporal aspect of the telling: unlike an exclusively oral reading or a stage performance, the story is materialized as a whole within a manuscript.²⁰ The

19. One could discuss a number of instances in which the placement of miniatures in Besançon 579, over and above their content, draws out aspects of the drama. The miniature depicting the imprisonment of the Pope in the left column on fol. 22r, for example, appears directly opposite the instant capitulation of the cardinals to Antichrist in the right column, as soon as the pontiff is gone. The placement of the miniature that shows the beating of the Good Christian on fol. 23r emphasizes the action with a column break (bottom left column, with two lines left blank: "Never again will you say such things," / *column break, miniature at top of right column* / "that's how you will be handled" [1441–42]). I thank Adam Cohen for the observation that the position of the devils' conference equidistant from the two scenes of Antichrist's birth on fol. 8r (Fig. 9) visually reflects on the hellish character of the birth itself.

20. Robert L. A. Clark and Pamela Sheingorn emphasize the evocation of rolling performance time and its contrast to the more flexible temporal experience of a book: Clark and Sheingorn, "Ces mots icy verrez juer": Performative Presence and Social Life in the Arras *Passion* Manuscript," in Coleman, Cruse, and K. Smith, *Social Life of Illumination*, 207–49, at 215. On this contrast, see also V. A. Kolve, *Chaucer and the Imagery of Narrative: The First Five Canterbury Tales* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1984), 17. The locus

medium of an illuminated page opens compositional possibilities that may be orchestrated to emphasize particular themes and to frame the reader-viewer's perspective on the content of a text. Engaging the manuscript, in turn, defines the reader-viewer's own relationship to the subject of the book as a whole.

Framing the Drama: The Profit Motive

The capacity of the book medium to establish the meaningful themes of a text through image and layout is exercised in Besançon 579 from the outset of the manuscript, where compositional work is turned immediately toward the project of creating a book useful in view of its Last Days subject. The book at once engages its reader-viewer in the sights and sounds of a play made to mediate the expectations of a world awaiting Judgment, offering him or her an interpretive frame for understanding the spectacle. This frame includes a vote of confidence in the utility of human craft in the lead-up to Apocalypse.

The salutary ambitions of the *Jour* as staged in Besançon 579 are verbally articulated in the Preacher's opening sermon. In the first passage, quoted above, the Preacher guarantees that the stakes of his sermon are high, assures the audience of his veracity, and articulates the idea of the "profitable" use of his text in the face of Judgment Day's "grievous consequence." The Preacher then develops the theme of spiritual profit, offering, in the process, a rather startling vote of confidence in the powers of oration in the face of general judgment:

Let us therefore all pray to that noble
Lady, dispenser of grace,
that, through her prayer, she might make us
act upon and attend to
what I am about to say, so that we might
be able to come *in celi patria*;
and then of her we shall say *Ave Maria*.
*Dies illa, dies ire.*²¹ [10–17; my emphasis]

In this passage, the agency of spiritual reform and ultimate salvation is assigned to human effort aided by man-made media.²² The Preacher calls for a prayer to the Virgin for her

classicus for comparing the structure of time to that of language is Augustine, *Confessions*, bk. 11, esp. chaps. 26.33, 28.38.

21. "Si prions tuit la debonnaire / Dame, tresoriere de grace, / Que par sa proiere nous face / Mettre a euvre et retenir / Ce que diray, si que venir / Puissens *in celi patria*; / Sen dirons *Ave Maria* / *Dies illa, dies ire.*" Perrot and Nonot, *Le mystère du Jour du Jugement*, 64; and Emmerson and Hult, *Antichrist and Judgment Day*, 3.

22. On late medieval reader-viewers' active relationship with manuscripts in working toward their own spiritual reformation,

intercession in helping the assembled “fair gentle folk” attain *caeli patria*, a homeland in heaven. The classic terms of Marian intercession, however, are nowhere to be heard. Mary should not help the populace by her forgiveness of their sins, by pleas to the mercy of her son, or by illuminating the essence of virtue. Rather, she is called on to ensure that the people first attend to the Preacher’s sermon and then act on what they learn there.²³ The Preacher’s own injunctions to pay attention to a spiritually salutary presentation also refer directly to his sermon (“what I am about to say”), but in the *Jour* as it comes down to us, the attention he calls for is directed to the medium in which the play unfolds: its manuscript. That manuscript is well made for the profit of body and soul by which the Preacher defines the play’s enterprise. The visual presentation of the *Jour* in Besançon 579 sets a weighted frame for the action such that the reader-viewer can see and understand the underlying structure of the frightening (and exciting) events as they take place. In progressing through the play-within-a-book, she may also build a profitable relationship for herself with the content of the play, by means of various compositional strategies described below.

From the initial folios of Besançon 579—which preempt the beginning of the *Jour du Jugement* proper—the play is visually oriented in a broad context of salvation history. The reader’s first encounter with the *Jour du Jugement* comes in the form of a rubricated cast list (fols. 1r–1v), laid out such that the names of minor characters are written in groups of two and major ones are spotlighted by blank lines above and below.²⁴ The characters are grouped not in order of appearance but, in effect, through dramatic crescendos of moral and immoral value. The devils head the list, and Antichrist crowns their section. The human sinners appear between the

blocks of evil and good, not inherently consigned to either camp; and the second half of the catalogue covers the heavenly court, ending with Christ (*Dieu*). The isolated character names are few: Antichrist, the Pope, the Mother of God, God. In an isolated spot reflecting his cosmic position outside the Last Days narrative but integral to the play’s presentation of it, the Preacher caps the whole roster. The isolated names correspond to the most theologically significant roles in the play, and they are heavily weighted toward the good. The visual disposition of the cast list already suggests that Antichrist, his dupes, and his progenitors will be overpowered by the forces of justice—equally distributed here between heavenly figures (Christ and the Virgin) and representatives of the Church (the Pope and the Preacher).

The first opening of the play proper appears overleaf from the cast list: a full-page Last Judgment frontispiece faces the beginning of the Preacher’s sermon with its accompanying miniature (Fig. 2, fols. 2v–3r). Along with the cast list, the frontispiece inaugurates a program of preparatory anticipation that accords with the Preacher’s stated goals of education and reform in the context of universal judgment. Perrot described the frontispiece as “a thematic front cover for the ensemble of the play.”²⁵ More than just a statement of theme and introduction of characters, the frontispiece establishes a structural and interpretive frame for the drama, of which all the subsequent text and miniatures of the *Jour* form part.

While the subject of the first picture indeed states the theme of the text (and of the book as a whole), a justification of the play also follows from the image that frames the manuscript. The form of the frontispiece, as well as its subject, offers reason for the reader-viewer to “act upon and attend to” the dramatic experience offered in the book. In its position as frontispiece, the first image casts everything that follows in its shadow. In its composition, the image provides an interpretive view of the events of Judgment.²⁶ This interpretation is delivered through geometry: the full-page image represents the only composition in Besançon 579 to utilize vertical hi-

see Aden Kumler, *Translating Truth: Ambitious Images and Religious Knowledge in Late Medieval France and England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011). On more common rhetorical tactics of preaching toward Judgment Day, see Hervé Martin, *Le métier de prédicateur en France septentrionale à la fin du Moyen Âge, 1350–1520* (Paris: Cerf, 1988), 337–41; and Thom Mertens et al., eds., *The Last Judgment in Medieval Preaching* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013). Griffith (“Illustrating Antichrist,” 12, 55) notes the moral contingency inherent in the structure of the play, whereby the fate of souls at Judgment appears as a direct consequence of their attitude toward Antichrist.

23. The Preacher’s methods contrast with a long scene later in the *Jour* itself (discussed below) in which a delegation of kings resolves to pray to the Virgin for help. A group of apostles then beseeches Mary to intercede with her son, which she successfully does on the basis of her *compassio*, requesting clemency for those who venerated her in familiar terms of Marian intercession [1676–1851].

24. Perrot and Nonot (*Le mystère du Jour du Jugement*, 61–62) reproduce the cast list as it appears in the manuscript.

25. “Une couverture thématique à l’ensemble du mystère.” Perrot, “La mise en scène,” 114.

26. On frontispieces as encapsulations and heralds of what is to come, see Elizabeth Salter and Derek Pearsall, “Pictorial Illustration of Late Medieval Poetic Texts: The Role of the Frontispiece or Prefatory Picture,” in *Medieval Iconography and Narrative: A Symposium*, ed. Flemming G. Andersen et al. (Odense: Odense University Press, 1980), 100–123; and Richard K. Emmerson, “Translating Images: Image and Poetic Reception in French, English, and Latin Versions of Guillaume de Deguileville’s *Trois Pèlerinages*,” in *Poetry, Place, and Gender: Studies in Medieval Culture in Honor of Helen Damico*, ed. Catherine E. Karkov (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 2009), 275–301.

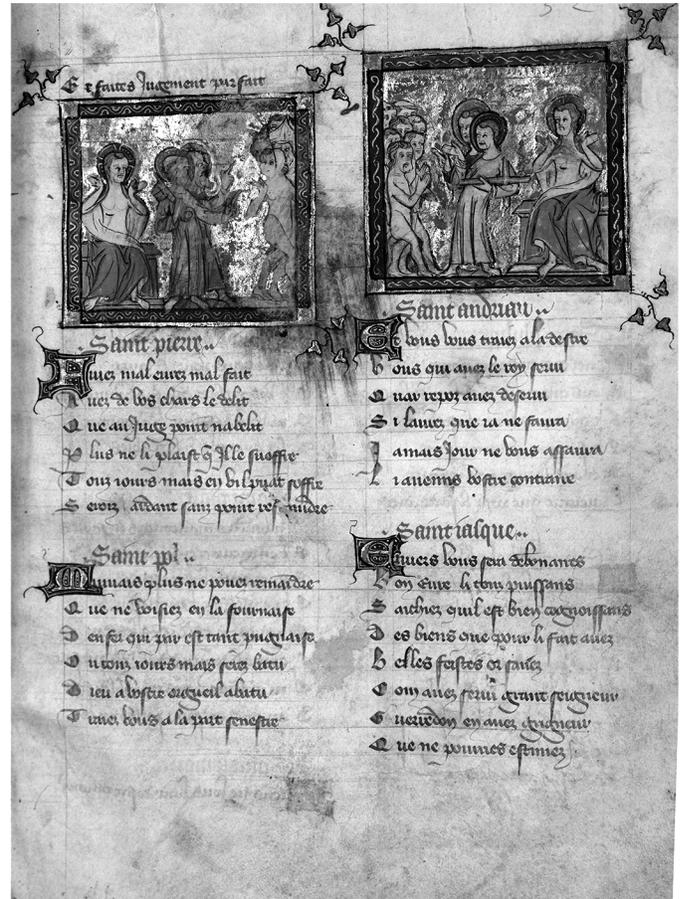


Figure 3. Left: Christ's ostentatio vulnerum; right: the Judgment, fols. 33v–34r, ca. 1340–50, Besançon, Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon, MS 579 (photo: CNRS-IRHT © Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon). See the electronic edition of *Gesta* for a color version of this image.

erarchy. On the one hand, this fact highlights by contrast the gravity-bound nature of the action in the intracolumnar miniatures internal to the play, described by Emerson as an element in the program especially evocative of staging.²⁷ Conversely, the intracolumnar miniatures, which concentrate on specific actions or a focused view of just a few people, throw into relief the frontispiece's pictorial approach to the subject of Judgment and the importance of including such an image as the frame for the book. It is worth remarking, too, that the choice to include a frontispiece for the *Jour* was not obvious and counts as a particularly “bookish” move on the part of the designers.²⁸

27. Emerson (“Visualizing Performance”) describes certain episodes rendered in horizontal composition as actively contrary to possible vertical configurations, reading the choice as a trace of the practical performability of the *Jour*'s action (e.g., the “ascension” of Enoch and Elijah depicted as a walk into paradise, fol. 22v).

28. Other “theatrical” manuscripts with which Besançon 579 has been compared (here and elsewhere) offer contrasts on this front.

The frontispiece contributes a global reading of the Judgment theme that both synthesizes and glosses its coming presentation in dramatic action. Compositional argument is by no means absent from the dramatic miniatures: in the Judgment sequence occupying fols. 33v–35v, the miniatures emphasize the moral split between right and left as Christ's gaze swings from one side to the other (Fig. 3). The frontispiece, however, organized according to an internal hierarchy on a vertical axis, simultaneously composes and comments on the multiple stages of Judgment that the play presents sequentially (Fig. 2). The gate of paradise is vertically aligned with the hellmouth, heaven is symmetrical while hell is chaotic,

While they all have first miniatures in a prefatory spirit, the most extensively illuminated *Jeu de Robin et Marion* (Aix, Bibliothèque Méjanès, MS 166 [Rés MS 14]) does not, in its present state, include a frontispiece; neither does the *Fauvel* (BnF, MS fr. 146), the *Miracles de Notre-Dame par personnages* (BnF, MS fr. 819–20), nor the *Griselidis* (BnF, MS fr. 2203), dated about 1395.

and the angels as heavenly envoys bring the principle of visual order to the similarly disorganized earth, rendering it a sphere combining sin and salvation.²⁹ Christ is by far the largest figure. The structural geometry of the frontispiece lays out the moral-theological principles of cosmic judgment as surely as do the words and actions that articulate those tenets within the play.³⁰ Both the position and composition of the major image not only reinforce the Preacher's theme but also anticipate the urgency of his call to attention and action. Rather than allowing the stream of the play simply to run its course, by including the frontispiece the book is constructed to color the drama by an interpretive anticipation of its ending.

The geometric exegesis of the frontispiece, in contrast to many of the highly original compositions in the intracolumnar miniatures, is not unique to Besançon 579. It works according to moral and compositional principles well established in public sculpture such as tympana (Fig. 4) and in manuscript contexts such as the thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century *Somme le roi* compendia (Fig. 5). In all these cases, the Judgment image provides more than a thematic context for the daily activity, ritual activity, or textual matter in which it is embedded: it reveals a cosmic structure by which its surrounding context should be understood. In any medium, a representation of the Last Judgment presents the viewer with a theme that bears on his or her individual fate in the medieval scheme of history.³¹ In contrast to public media (e.g., monumental sculpture and stage performance), the scale and functional contexts of more individualized media (e.g., manuscripts) further concentrate and personalize the broad principles presented in the composition.³² The frontispiece in

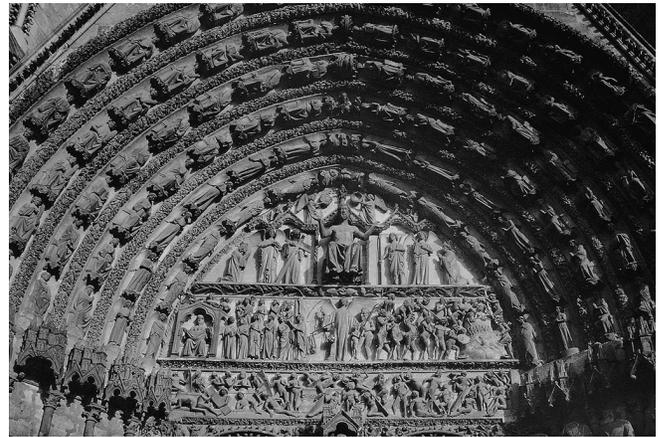


Figure 4. *Last Judgment, central tympanum, west facade, cathedral of Saint-Étienne, Bourges, 1200–1270* (photo: Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY). See the electronic edition of *Gesta* for a color version of this image.

Besançon 579 thus begins a process of knitting the reader-viewer into the theme of the drama, which then plays out through various other combinations of composition and content. The *Jour* is presented in its manuscript in a manner that builds tension between the universal and the particular and ultimately champions the book's own role in mediating that divide.

The Visual Structure of the Play, I: The Opening

All elements in the first opening of Besançon 579 harmonize to create the context of Judgment and posit the reader-viewer's own need to work toward salvation. Facing the frontispiece appears the image of the Preacher addressing his (mostly) attentive audience (Fig. 2, right). Launching the series of vignettes that show action and character, this depiction of orator and audience orients and implicates the reader-viewer in the *Jour's* theatrical context. The coming visualizations of eschatological events are presented both as continuous with the sermon and as part of a verbal and visual spectacle—in other words, as part of a play.³³

in the Thirteenth Century,” in *Images in Ivory: Precious Objects of the Gothic Age*, ed. Peter Barnet (Detroit: Detroit Institute of Arts in association with Princeton University Press, 1997), 38–45; and Sarah M. Guérin, “Meaningful Spectacles: Gothic Ivories Staging the Divine,” *Art Bulletin* 95, no. 1 (2013): 53–77.

33. This contrasts with the Anglo-Norman illuminated Apocalypse tradition, which stresses the continuity of manuscript visualizations with the idea of John's vision. Richard K. Emmerson, “Visualizing the Visionary: John in His Apocalypse,” and Peter Klein, “Visionary Experience and Corporeal Seeing in Thirteenth-Century English Apocalypses: John as External Witness and the

29. On the order of heaven and chaos of hell, see Pamela Sheingorn and David Bevington, “‘Alle this was token domysday to drede’: Visual Signs of Last Judgment in the Corpus Christi Cycles and in Late Gothic Art,” in *Homo, memento finis: The Iconography of Just Judgment in Medieval Art and Drama*, ed. David Bevington et al. (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 1985), 121–45; also, fundamentally, Madeline H. Caviness, “Images of Divine Order and the Third Mode of Seeing,” *Gesta* 22, no. 2 (1983): 99–120.

30. On geometry revealing cosmic order in medieval art, see Annemarie Mahler, “Medieval Image Style and Saint Augustine's Theory of Threefold Vision,” *Mediaevalia* 4, no. 1 (1978): 277–313; and Stephen Nichols, *Romanesque Signs: Early Medieval Narrative and Iconography* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 42–47. Perrot argues (“La mise en scène”) for a complex symbolic geometry underlying the staging of the *Jour du Jugement*, of which I am not convinced.

31. On the identification of viewers with a monumental Last Judgment composition, see Kirk Ambrose, “Attunement to the Damned of the Conques Tympanum,” *Gesta* 50, no. 1 (2011): 1–17.

32. On the translation of motifs between private/precious and public/monumental media, see esp. Paul Williamson, “Symbiosis across Scale: Gothic Ivories and Sculpture in Stone and Wood



Figure 5. Last Judgment, fol. 44v, *Somme le roi*, made in Paris, 1295, Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine, MS 870 (photo: © Bibliothèque Mazarine). See the electronic edition of *Gesta* for a color version of this image.

The Preacher's miniature literally sets the stage for the reader-viewer's position as spectator, but the first words of the *Jour* further the project of bookish awareness in their rubricated form. Their content, meanwhile, enhances the reader-viewer's involvement in the play. The line delivers a modified biblical quotation: "All will awaken, some to life and some to shame" (Evigilabunt omnes, alii ad vitam, alii ad obprobrium).³⁴ The prophecy as included in the *Jour* has been somewhat compressed, but notable for its deployment in the play and the involvement of the reader-viewer is the ex-

Rise of Gothic Marginal Images," both in *Looking Beyond: Visions, Dreams and Insights in Medieval Art and History*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Princeton: Index of Christian Art, Dept. of Art & Archaeology, Princeton University in association with Penn State University Press, 2010), 148–76, 177–202, respectively.

34. The line is adapted from Daniel 12:2, "And many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake: some unto life everlasting, and others unto reproach" (et multi de his qui dormiunt in terrae pulvere evigilabunt alii in vitam aeternam et alii in obprobrium ut videant semper). Latin from the Vulgate; English from the Douay-Rheims translation.

pansion of the qualified "many" in the original to an encompassing "all" in this version.³⁵ Below the rubric, the Preacher begins his sermon on salvation history, beginning with the Fall and ending with Antichrist, textually establishing the idea that time is finite and history is orchestrated by God.

Together, the opening elements of both manuscript and text remind the reader-viewer that his or her own soul hangs in the balance at the end of time, while the frontispiece and cast list assert the cosmic order governing all action, onstage and off. Because the biblical portion is rubricated, although it serves as the Preacher's "text" and as such is easily imagined spoken aloud in any form of the play's performance, visually the line is grouped with other apparatus-like aspects of the manuscript such as character names and the few stage directions. The same treatment is accorded the line "*Dies illa, dies ire*" [sic], spoken by the Preacher before launching the history section of his sermon [17].³⁶ Outside the Preacher's sermon, the other Latin lines scattered through the play are not rubricated. The two rubricated lines in the Preacher's sermon thus acquire visual emphasis as something bearing isolated consideration, as opposed, for example, to the Latin spoken by Christ when he introduces himself ("*Finis sum* and the beginning" [1692]). There the linguistic shift signals Christ's exceptional status and sonic connection to the Church, but his words receive no visual emphasis. The opening rubrics, by contrast, join the frontispiece in providing visually defined context for the rest of the play and its efforts at education. In the rubric, as in the frontispiece's affinity with other Judgment images, that context exercises the biblical/liturgical voice of the Church, which is several times presented in the drama as a means and context of salvation (the Pope, for instance, is not deceived by Antichrist). The play itself follows, cast as a constructive instrument in navigating the threatening situation laid out in the manuscript's first opening.

35. The modification is attested in other contexts, such as André Beauneveu's sequence of the Apostles' Creed in the Psalter of Jean de Berry, about 1386 (BnF, MS fr. 13091, fol. 25v), with a parallel French translation.

36. "That day, day of wrath." The biblical source is the prophecy of Sophonias (Zephaniah) 1:15 (*dies irae, dies illa*), but the primary tone of the citation is liturgical, as the phrase forms part of the *Libera me* in the Requiem Mass. On the fourteenth-century development of an additional *Dies irae* sequence (closely tied to a Franciscan context and not officially integrated into the Requiem Mass until the Tridentine reforms of 1570), see F. J. E. Raby, *A History of Christian-Latin Poetry from the Beginnings to the Close of the Middle Ages*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), 443–52; and Geoffrey Rowell, *The Liturgy of Christian Burial: An Introductory Survey of the Historical Development of Christian Burial Rites* (London: Alcuin Club/S.P.C.K., 1977), 67–68.

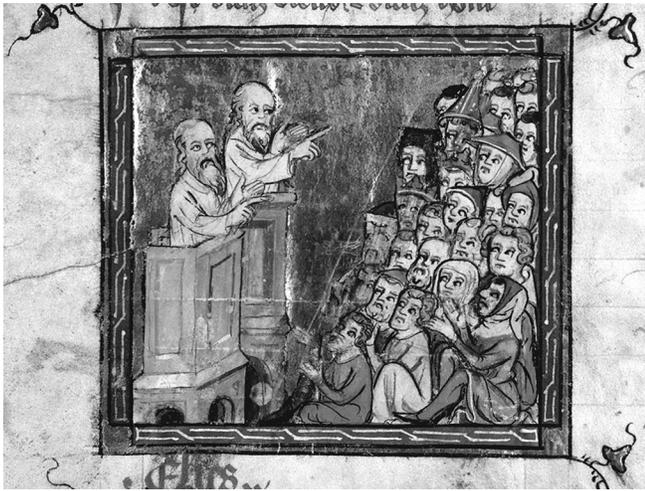


Figure 6. *Enoch and Elijah preaching*, fol. 9v, ca. 1340–50, Besançon, Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon, MS 579 (photo: CNRS-IRHT © Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon). See the electronic edition of *Gesta* for a color version of this image.



Figure 7. *Enoch and Elijah praying*, fol. 19r, ca. 1340–50, Besançon, Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon, MS 579 (photo: CNRS-IRHT © Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon). See the electronic edition of *Gesta* for a color version of this image.

The Visual Structure of the Play, II: The Action

The sense of eschatological scaffolding constructed in the prefatory material to the drama proper is reasserted periodically in the visual structures of Besançon 579 as the narrative of the Last Days unfolds. After the opening folios established that the entire play occurs in the context of Christ's assured Second Coming, Christ does not appear again in the miniatures until Antichrist's time is up and the Judgment is approaching. In effect, the whole visual theater of the book belongs to Antichrist for the time his power holds; the content of the miniatures mirrors the situation on earth described in the play. Withholding further reference to Christ after the frontispiece makes room for a counterpoint between dramatic tension and the knowledge that Antichrist's story plays out within the cosmic structure established by the opening of the manuscript.

The narrative of the Two Witnesses, Enoch and Elijah, stages a core example of the manuscript's visual negotiation of dramatic tension and the assertion of history's determined structure. In their series of vignettes, distributed between fols. 9r and 22v, the prophets are called by an angel out of the earthly paradise, preach against Antichrist (Fig. 6), are executed by the tyrant when their warnings do not influence the populace, and, finally, are resurrected and returned to their rest. Dramatic tension is both inherent to the pair's unfortunate situation and visually augmented in the program. In prelude to their execution, Elijah prays to Christ and Enoch to the Trinity, affirming their faith in all aspects of God that

Antichrist is not [1176–91] (Fig. 7). In contrast to the second instance of prayer to God in Besançon 579—the repentance of the Blind Man cured by Antichrist (Fig. 8)—there is no indication in the miniature accompanying the prophets' prayer that their words are heard in heaven; God would seem to have absconded from Antichrist's earth altogether. As the drama unfolds within the frame set by the visual and textual opening of the play, however, the book's audience knows that this is not the case. God is ever-present behind a structured history: he is certainly coming, but waiting for his cue.³⁷ In light of the frontispiece, the prophets' execution could be seen as an affirmation of divine plan rather than an actual challenge to God's power on earth. While the play offers suspense and the satisfaction of the Witnesses' ultimate triumph, the structure of the book ensures that Antichrist's threat is rendered fundamentally toothless (and probably the more entertaining because of it).

37. In his reconstructed stage production of the *Jour du Jugement*, Nonot argues ("Le mystère," 336) that God is onstage all the time, watching from his "mansion." This would amount to the visual equivalent in a theater of bearing the frontispiece in mind while reading Besançon 579. The book has the dramatic advantage in this case of playing with the reader's genuine deprivation of the sight of Christ except in the memory, in contrast to the visual presence of Antichrist. While Nonot raises the possibility of additional resonance between the experience of theater and the construction of the manuscript, I think the conventional hierarchical composition of the frontispiece precludes any suggestion that the first image might primarily represent the components of a stage set (heaven, hellmouth, etc.).



Figure 8. *Repentance of the Blind Man*, fol. 26r, ca. 1340–50, Besançon, Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon, MS 579 (photo: CNRS–IRHT © Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon). See the electronic edition of *Gesta* for a color version of this image.

The Sound of the Play: Music and Voicing

Besançon 579 includes three passages of music transcribed complete with staff and clefs; each is sung by angels who intervene in the narrative. The inclusion of music in the manuscript represents another key visualization of the play’s cosmic structure. The first song calls Enoch and Elijah from the earthly paradise to battle Antichrist (fol. 9r), the next resurrects the murdered prophets from the dead (fol. 22v), and the last announces the moment of Judgment contingent on Christ’s display of the wounds in his hands, feet, and side (*ostentatio vulnerum*; Fig. 3, left). Although the angels’ text is French, comprising passages composed for the play, their melodies are identifiably liturgical, drawn from the Latin hymn repertory: the voice of heaven is also the voice of the Church.³⁸ Worked into the flow of text in the manner of the

38. Hymns provided a natural choice for the playwright who wished to set his octosyllabic French verse to liturgical music, as the rhythm of the two forms is perfectly compatible. The playwright disregarded the semantic units of the Latin text, which are sometimes shared between musical lines, giving one French line per musical line. All three hymns appropriated for the *Jour* are common: Roy identified them as “Aeterne Rex altissime,” “Veni creator spiritus,” and “Urbs Jerusalem beata.” Keith Glaeske matched the first two hymn melodies included in the *Jour* quite precisely to an antiphony printed about 1508–18 in Paris for Cambrai Cathedral (Cambrai, Médiathèque municipale, Impr. XVI C 4). Glaeske, “The Music in Besançon 579,” in Emmerson and Hult, *Antichrist and Judgment Day*, 99–101. A match for the third melody (“Urbs”)—which Glaeske describes as particularly variable—has not been found but might, if discovered, provide further basis for the provenance of both the *Jour* and Besançon 579. The liturgical associations of the

miniatures but obviously signaling an alternative mode of speech and action, the visual integration of the music forms part of the manuscript’s orchestration of both the effects and the structure of the play.

Whether or not the three songs presented in Besançon 579 would have been the only music in a staged version of the play cannot be determined from the manuscript. It is not impossible that other angels sang their lines, and it is more than probable that the devils’ dance of victory at Antichrist’s conception would have included raucous accompaniment [360, depicted on fol. 7r].³⁹ Like the choice to pair the play with the explanatory geometry of the frontispiece, the choice to depict three specific musical passages adds interpretive thrust to the visual matter of the manuscript and also provides another avenue for involving the reader-viewer in the experience of the play in a way that surpasses the evocation of a stage drama’s sights and sounds. Nonot has convincingly argued that all three angelic songs mark important transition points between the three “epochs” of the play: the reign of Antichrist, the Last Days/destruction of the world, and the Last Judgment.⁴⁰ The distribution of the music in the manuscript thus reveals the fact that the story’s major transitions trace a divinely (and artistically) determined plan: the voice of heaven propels and shapes the drama.

While the placement of the musical passages is important to the visual structure of the manuscript, the full impact of the notated passages becomes apparent in their sound as well as their appearance and placement. That is to say, for access to the deeper registers of reference in the music, the reader-viewer must voice, recognize, or remember the marriage of French text and liturgical tone.⁴¹ A version of this principle applies equally to dialogue and is well exercised in the *Jour*, whose text suggests voices for different characters through its

hymns do not appear to correlate very specifically to the junctures of the play at which they are sung: the three texts are associated especially with Ascension, Pentecost and ordination, and the dedication of churches, respectively. It is perhaps worth noting the ecclesiological emphasis of the second two, which strengthens the association of the angels and the Church.

39. Richard Rastall, “The Sounds of Hell,” in *The Iconography of Hell*, ed. Clifford Davidson and Thomas H. Seiler (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 1992), 102–31.

40. Perrot and Nonot, *Le mystère du Jour du Jugement*, 40; the argument is repeated in Perrot, “La mise en scène,” 114. Nonot first articulated this reading in “Le mystère,” 6. He calls the Preacher’s speech and the childhood of Antichrist a long “prologue.”

41. On transcribed music and the evocation of voice, see Beth Williamson, “Sensory Experience in Medieval Devotion: Sound and Vision, Invisibility and Silence,” *Speculum* 88, no. 1 (2013): 1–43.

linguistic color and vocabulary.⁴² This variety helps make the play present and alive in the reader's mind and experience, which is essential for the activation of memory explicitly invoked by the Preacher and an essential component of medieval justification for religious drama.⁴³

In its play between visual and aural importance, the inclusion of music in the manuscript represents a broad principle of the *Jour's* setting in Besançon 579. The manuscript's design is partly based on an experiential dialogue between elements of the drama that are present on the page (e.g., the sight of music) and elements that are supplied by the reader (e.g., the sound of music). This dialogue promotes an active exchange between the reader and the book, which involves the reader personally in the salvation drama of the play.⁴⁴ At several junctures the reader is asked to supply a sound and a text that are not given on the page, as in the concluding command of St. Paul, "Let us now sing *Te Deum* / with ringing voices" [2437–38].⁴⁵ A similar prompt to supply the Ave Maria oc-

42. The soldiers and devils, for example, take a pally, rough-and-tumble tone with one another, while Engignart (Deception) adopts an obviously courtly manner when addressing Antichrist's Mother. On the theme of voice and manuscript, see Mark Cruse, "Pictorial Polyphony: Image, Voice and Social Life in the *Roman d'Alexandre* (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 264)," in Coleman, Cruse, and K. Smith, *Social Life of Illumination*, 371–401.

43. As, for example, in the late fourteenth-century (antitheatrical) English *Tretise of Miraclis Pleying*, which cites the argument that plays improve on paintings, having the mnemonic advantage of increased vivacity: "And betere [the miraculis of God] ben holden in mennes minde and oftere rehersed by the pleyinge of hem than by the peynteinge, for this is a deed bok, the tother a quick" (The miracles of God are held better and rehearsed more often in men's minds by the playing of them than by the painting, for painting is a dead book and the other a quick). Clifford Davidson, ed., *A Tretise of Miraclis Pleyinge*, rev. ed. (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 1993), 98. See Theodore K. Lerud, *Memory, Images, and the English Corpus Christi Drama* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), for significant expansion of the idea of drama as a "quick book" in the English context. On the importance of civic memory to medieval drama and its manuscripts, see Laura Weigert, *French Visual Culture and the Making of Medieval Theater* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015). Griffith ("Viewing the Romance of Antichrist") accounts for the theatrical element of the *Jour* in Besançon 579 in large part as an aide-mémoire.

44. On this theme, see Robert L. A. Clark and Pamela Sheingorn, "Performative Reading: Experiencing through the Poet's Body in Guillaume de Digulleville's *Pèlerinage de Jhesucrist*," in *Cultural Performances in Medieval France: Essays in Honor of Nancy Freeman Regalado*, ed. Eglal Doss-Quinby, Roberta L. Krueger, and E. Jane Burns (Rochester, NY: Brewer, 2007), 135–51.

45. "Te Deum or chantons / A hautes allenees!" Emmerson and Hult, *Antichrist and Judgment Day*, 88; and Perrot and Nonot, *Le mystère du Jour du Jugement*, 256. The *Te Deum* is a traditional ending for medieval plays, and so we may suppose either that a staged *Jour du Jugement* called on the audience and actors to sing the

curs during the Preacher's sermon quoted above; Perrot and Nonot argue that a Paternoster is called for here as well.⁴⁶ At the sermon's close, the Preacher intones:

Let us pray to God, who upholds all good things,
that he might consent to console us all
and sustain us in this life,
so that neither Antichrist nor another devil
will deceive us with their lies.
Rather may we all be able with confidence
to come to the Day of Judgment,
without any sin, by the grace of God;
Say *Amen*, may God let it come to pass.⁴⁷ [184–92]

Whether or not this call for prayer to God specifically prompts the Paternoster, both this instance and the earlier prompt for an Ave Maria ask the reader-viewer to lace words spoken from his own mind or memory into those given by the book—to integrate himself into the drama in a very literal sense. Moreover, it is not "literary" or free-form input that the reader supplies to complete the text; rather, the *Jour* scripts space and time for the voicing of codified liturgical prayer in supplication for an individual soul, further integrating the play, the manuscript experience, and the Church's task of preparing for the Last Days.⁴⁸

Composition and Deception

The pressing danger threatened by the Preacher is that Antichrist or another devil might "deceive us with their lies."

communal prayer at the end of the drama or that Besançon 579 independently invokes that custom of the theater and all it represents.

46. Perrot and Nonot, *Le mystère du Jour du Jugement*, 42.

47. "Prions Dieu, qui touz biens conforte, / Qu'i nous vielle touz conforter / Et en cest siegle comporter / Si qu'Entrecrist ne autres diable / Ne nous deçoivent par leur fable, / Mais puissions tuit seürement / Venir au Jour dou Jugement / Sanz nul pechié, par la Dieu grace. / Dites: 'Amen,' que Dieu le face!" Perrot and Nonot, *Le mystère du Jour du Jugement*, 82; and Emmerson and Hult, *Antichrist and Judgment Day*, 9–10.

48. On the tradition of framing formal prayer or praise with representative action, see Nils Holger Petersen, "Biblical Reception, Representational Ritual, and the Question of 'Liturgical Drama,'" in *Sapientia et Eloquentia: Meaning and Function in Liturgical Poetry, Music, Drama, and Biblical Commentary in the Middle Ages*, ed. Gunilla Iversen and Nicolas Bell (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), 163–202, at 197. Marisa Galvez proposed to me that the use of the French word *noise* in line 3 of the play warrants further attention, as the word carries a connotation of nuisance and interference, suggesting the spectators' reformation as they move from initial *noise*-making to participation in the body of the play. On the range of reference in the word, see Michelle Warren, "The Noise of Roland," *Exemplaria* 16, no. 2 (2004): 277–304.

One of the chief uses of the *Jour* in Besançon 579 as a preparation for Judgment is the manuscript's provision of a training ground in the effort to elude this trap without relying solely on God's grace. First, and most basically, by presenting the story with rich visualization the book lays out before the reader-viewer what Antichrist might do and how it all might look: forewarned is forearmed. More subtly, the manuscript involves the reader-viewer in a negotiation of truth and falsehood based on counterpoint between the specifics of the drama and iconographic convention.⁴⁹ This dialogic visual play engages with the problem of anti-Christian deception through an experiential mode that contrasts with the didactic mode represented by the Preacher.⁵⁰ Reading becomes an active exercise with spiritual consequences.

The greatest deception of Antichrist anticipated by the Preacher—the reason instruction and preparation for his coming are most needed—is that he will appear in his “miracles” precisely like Christ. One significant strategy employed in Besançon 579 toward the problem of Antichrist's deadly mimesis is very simple: the would-be usurper is never actually made to look like Christ.⁵¹ The visual authority of Christ's

49. On visual consonance between the iconographies of drama and those of static media, see esp. Lerud, *Memory, Images, and the English Corpus Christi Drama*; and Pamela Sheingorn, “The Visual Language of Drama: Principles of Composition,” in *Contexts for Early English Drama*, ed. Marianne G. Briscoe and John C. Col-dewey (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 173–91.

50. Nancy Freeman Regalado has analyzed the function of this kind of space created for call and response between the reader's expectations and the text before him: Regalado, “Villon's Legacy from *Le Testament of Jean de Meun*: Misquotation, Memory, and the Wisdom of Fools,” in *Villon at Oxford: The Drama of the Text; Proceedings of the Conference Held at St. Hilda's College, Oxford, March 1996*, ed. Michael Freeman and Jane H. M. Taylor (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999), 282–311. Michael Camille describes the strategic use of a limited array of images in print editions of Guillaume de Deguileville in the coordination of the reader's iconographic expectations, the text, and the image on the page: Camille, “Reading the Printed Image: Illuminations and Woodcuts of the *Pèlerinage de la vie humaine* in the Fifteenth Century,” in *Printing and the Written Word: The Social History of Books, circa 1450–1520*, ed. Sandra Hindman (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 259–91.

51. In both text and rubrics he is also never called anything but Antichrist, a continual indication for the reader, if not the dramatic personae, that he is decidedly not Christ come again. For other strategies used to depict Antichrist while undermining his ability to deceive, see Richard K. Emmerson, “Antichrist on Page and Stage in the Later Middle Ages,” in *Spectacle and Public Performance in the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. Robert E. Stillman (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 1–29. Gosbert Schüssler cites the fourteenth-century examples of the Velislav Bible (Prague, Národní knihovna České republiky [National Library of the Czech Republic], MS XXIII.C.124) and the Antichrist window at Frankfurt an der Oder's Marienkirche as cases of Antichrist presented as a “false



Figure 9. *Labor of Antichrist's Mother, birth of Antichrist, and devils' council*, fol. 8r, ca. 1340–50, Besançon, Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon, MS 579 (photo: CNRS-IRHT © Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon). See the electronic edition of *Gesta* for a color version of this image.

traditional iconography is reserved for Christ alone: with two oblique exceptions, every opportunity offered by the narrative to present Antichrist as Christ is declined, even as we are invited to imagine his birth (Fig. 9, left column), his mother's presentation of him to visitors, his miracles and his preaching (Fig. 1), and his holding court. The manuscript's design insists that the reader-viewer recognize Christ when he appears, speaking occasional Latin, surrounded by angels, and almost

Christ,” contrary to his figure in Besançon 579. Both cases render the resemblance particularly close but undercut it by including devils surrounding Antichrist; the Velislav Bible also occasionally gives him horns (fol. 131v) and includes entirely monstrous renditions of Antichrist as well (fol. 164r). Schüssler, “Studien zur Ikonographie des Antichrist” (PhD diss., Universität Heidelberg, 1975), esp. 346. For variations in the Antichrist iconography, see also Bernard McGinn, “Portraying Antichrist in the Middle Ages,” in *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, ed. Werner Verbeke, Daniel Verhelst, and Andries Welkenhuysen (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1988), 1–48.



Figure 10. *Christ among the doctors*, fol. 114r, *historiated Bible*, France, ca. 1390, *The New York Public Library, Spencer Collection, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations, MS 22* (photo: New York Public Library). See the electronic edition of *Gesta* for a color version of this image.

always either blessing, holding the orb of the world, or both (Figs. 14–15). After a bedroom vignette explicitly shows us that Antichrist was conceived in sin, leaving no doubt about his demonic origins (fol. 6v), his anti-Christian nature is continually reasserted. Antichrist never speaks Latin, is always accompanied by armed men and Jews, and, when performing miracles, is denied the blessing hand common, for example, in depictions of Christ’s Raising of Lazarus.

In two instances the program deploys a hint of Christomimesis only to complicate the suggestion immediately. When the devils Hazart and Le Matam visit the infant Antichrist, Antichrist’s Mother proudly presents her standing baby boy (fol. 8v). Like the infant Christ—often shown standing at a very young age or with the aspect of a miniature man—Antichrist is a prodigious child.⁵² Similarly, the figure of the young Antichrist seated to receive instruction in his evil powers recalls a composition current for Christ among the doctors in the Temple (Fig. 1, left, left column; cf. Fig. 10). In

52. Nonot (“Le mystère,” 275) compares Antichrist’s precociousness not with Christ’s but with Merlin’s. On further Merlin connections, see esp. Griffith, “Viewing the Romance of Antichrist,” 26–27; Emerson, “Visualizing Performance,” 262; and Emerson and Hult, *Antichrist and Judgment Day*, 10, note to text after line 192.



Figure 11. *Fauvel enthroned*, fol. 11r, *Roman de Fauvel*, made in Paris, ca. 1318–20, Paris, *Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS fr. 146* (photo: Bibliothèque nationale de France). See the electronic edition of *Gesta* for a color version of this image.

both cases, the differences between model and antimodel are as clear as they should be. Two devils rather than three kings pay homage to Antichrist, recognizing his perfidy and not divinity, while his mother appears in bed, not regally presenting the child, as in an Adoration of the Magi. Similarly, where Christ taught truth in the Temple, Antichrist is instructed in falsehood. The images, in context, prompt recognition of contradiction rather than promote a seductive mimesis.

The visual strategy of recognition and contradiction recurs in other contemporary visual approaches to the demonic usurpation of power. We might turn, for instance, to the early fourteenth-century *Roman de Fauvel*, an innovative and singular vernacular manuscript with an apocalyptic theme that offers instructive comparison to Besançon 579 in several respects.⁵³ Although their pictorial strategies are related,

53. BnF, MS fr. 146. Some features of the iconography bear comparison, notably the devils. The integration of text, music, and images in a two-column format is common to both. The deployment of liturgical music in the *Fauvel* offers perspective on the choice made for the *Jour*: in MS fr. 146, Latin text composed to suit the story is at times set to melodies that sound like plainchant, while

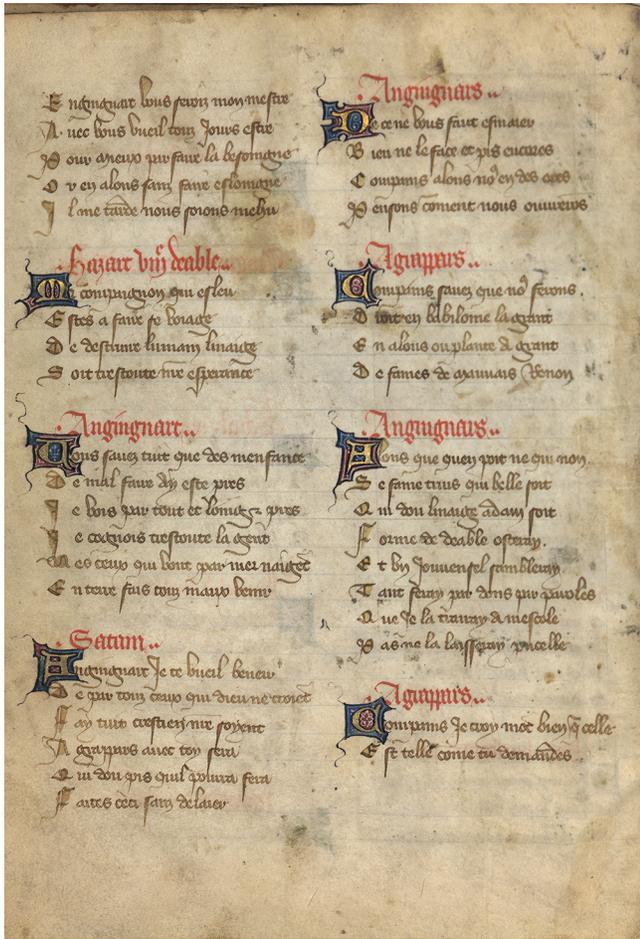


Figure 12. *Seduction of Antichrist's Mother*, fols. 5v–6r, ca. 1340–50, Besançon, Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon, MS 579 (photo: CNRS-IRHT © Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon).

the tone of iconographic play in the two manuscripts is not identical. In the *Fauvel*, the demonic horse-man co-opts the iconographic place of the legitimate ruler (and of Christ) (Fig. 11).⁵⁴ But *Fauvel* is so flagrantly unlike a just human king (let alone the King of Kings) that the force of his position is parody, not deception—ridiculous in one sense and also ominous in the poem's allegorical proposition that such an absurd

disjunction actually exists between the power of the French throne and the moral worth of the man who occupies it.⁵⁵

A satiric approach related to that of the *Fauvel* is occasionally employed in Besançon 579 through the selective use of recognizable iconography in a visual field that is normally entirely idiosyncratic. In the first scene of the play, the devils clearly establish that Engignart (Deception) will go to Babylon and beget Antichrist on the first Jewish prostitute he meets. “I shall not leave her a virgin,” Engignart brags [281]. “Since the devils seek a whore,” the play’s editors comment, “Engignart’s

the liturgy is precisely quoted at other junctures. The *Fauvel* thus meaningfully exercises a liturgical sound in a vernacular context, but French text is never set to Latin melodies as in the *Jour*. Susan Rankin, “The Divine Truth of Scripture: Chant in the *Roman de Fauvel*,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 47, no. 2 (1994): 203–43.

54. On the appropriation of iconography in the *Roman de Fauvel*, see Martin Kauffmann, “Satire, Pictorial Genre, and the Illustrations in BN fr. 146,” in *Fauvel Studies: Allegory, Chronicle, Music and Image in Paris*, Bibliothèque Nationale MS Français 146, ed. Margaret Bent and Andrew Wathey (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 285–306.

55. Richard K. Emmerson has shown that the first substantial source on the life of Antichrist, Abbot Adso of Montier-en-Der’s tenth-century *Libellus de Antichristo*, functions along similar lines, filling the format of a traditional saint’s life with demonic content. Emmerson, “Antichrist as Anti-Saint: The Significance of Abbot Adso’s *Libellus de Antichristo*,” *American Benedictine Review* 30, no. 2 (1979): 175–90.



Figure 13. *Virgin Annunciate*, fol. 43v, *Roman de la Rose*, illuminated by Jeanne de Montbaston, made in Paris, 1325–53, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS fr. 25526 (photo: Bibliothèque nationale de France). See the electronic edition of *Gesta* for a color version of this image.

comment is paradoxical. He may get carried away by his boast, or perhaps the author is here assimilating Antichrist's mother to Christ's.⁵⁶ Indeed, Antichrist's Mother waits in the garden in a pudic pose spoofing the Virgin Annunciate, waiting to activate her right hand in speech (Fig. 12, right, top; cf. Fig. 13). The parody is heightened by the timing of the miniature, which is planned with a slight delay between the textual and visual introductions of the prostitute (if one is reading sequentially): at the bottom of fol. 5v the devil Agrappart observes, "My friend, I indeed believe that this one / is what you are looking for" [282–83] (Fig. 12, left). The reader-viewer then confronts the red-clad woman in Mary's form at the top of the next left-hand column (Fig. 12, right).⁵⁷ The mockery continues: after Antichrist's unmistakably carnal conception and painful birth, when the midwife presents the swaddled baby to his resting mother, Antichrist's postnatal scene approximates a Birth of the Virgin or of John the Baptist, both miraculously conceived with divine agency (Fig. 9, lower left). The *Jour* in Besançon 579 stages the disjunction between these paradigms known from other contexts and the devilry

56. Emerson and Hult, *Antichrist and Judgment Day*, 13–14.

57. The parchment is ruled for twenty-eight lines per page. Miniatures generally occupy eight lines, but when it suited the layout, the planner of the manuscript hesitated neither to extend a miniature into the lower margin, rather than saving it for the top of the subsequent column, nor to leave the last lines of a column blank in order to place a miniature at the head of the next, resulting in several instances of deliberate miniature "timing." One more will be cited below; and see also note 19 above.



Figure 14. *Christ conversing with angels*, fol. 25r, ca. 1340–50, Besançon, Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon, MS 579 (photo: CNRS-IRHT © Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon). See the electronic edition of *Gesta* for a color version of this image.

presented in the play to create a situation in which Antichrist cannot deceive, because the form and content used to present his story draw both on the recognizably anti-Christian and on a flirtation with holy paradigms that never amounts to full appropriation.

Composition and Revelation

As befits their moral opposition, the depiction of Christ is as central to the strategic approach to iconography in Besançon 579 as the depiction of Antichrist. In his first few appearances, and throughout the final portion of the play, Christ appears in a flexible, activated incarnation of variants on his iconic image: blessing, holding the orb of the world, or raising two hands in judgment, often in combination with a speaking gesture and always in a three-quarter view (Fig. 3, right, and Fig. 14). At three junctures, though, the artist placed Christ in frontal, static mode—a strong, recognizable form, which in this manuscript makes a particularly emphatic contrast with the noncanonical, action-driven mode of the other miniatures. These frontal figures of Christ refer back to the Christ of the frontispiece, creating visual reverberation within the manuscript. A sense of confirmation between the diagrammatic scene that sets the stage for the *Jour du Jugement* and the attainment of that moment in the play works as proof of the opening image's inevitability and the urgency of its argument.

The images in iconic form appear at critical junctures in the action of the play and the reader-viewer's experience of the manuscript. Christ's first hieratic moment occurs at



Figure 15. *Kings plead with Mary for intercession*, fol. 27r, ca. 1340–50, Besançon, Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon, MS 579 (photo: CNRS–IRHT © Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon). See the electronic edition of *Gesta* for a color version of this image.

fol. 27r, where a delegation of kings pleads with the Virgin—all in three-quarter, narrative mode—for intercession with her son, who appears in full majesty at the right (Fig. 15). The composition suggests that the kind of active scene that has preceded this image, such as Christ’s attending to the angels on fol. 25r, sitting under a Gothic canopy (Fig. 14), has in effect been swung around so that the full impact of his divine presence is revealed.⁵⁸ The flat background and the Virgin’s shoulder hidden behind Christ’s framing architecture render his figure almost as if painted on a panel. The effect is the creation of a separate space: Christ clearly occupies a different sphere from the mediating Virgin and the suppliant kings.

58. This strategy of shifting viewpoints was perhaps most strikingly used by the Boucicaut Master through the Nativity/Epiphany sequence in the Boucicaut Hours of about 1410 (Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André, MS 2, fols. 73v, 83v), where a change of perspective reveals to the reader, along with the Magi, the royal cloth of honor implicit in the incongruous bed hanging of the Nativity scene. The images work in tandem to accomplish the revelation of divinity in a stable. James Marrow, “Symbol and Meaning in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance,” *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 16, nos. 2–3 (1986): 150–69, at 160–61. The image of Christ beneath the canopy finds a close parallel in the English De Bois Hours (New York, Morgan Library & Museum, MS M.700, fol. 113r), as an illustration to Psalm 14 with the Lord enthroned in his tabernacle. Kathryn A. Smith, *Art, Identity and Devotion in Fourteenth-Century England: Three Women and Their Books of Hours* (London: British Library and University of Toronto Press, 2003), 107, fig. 49.

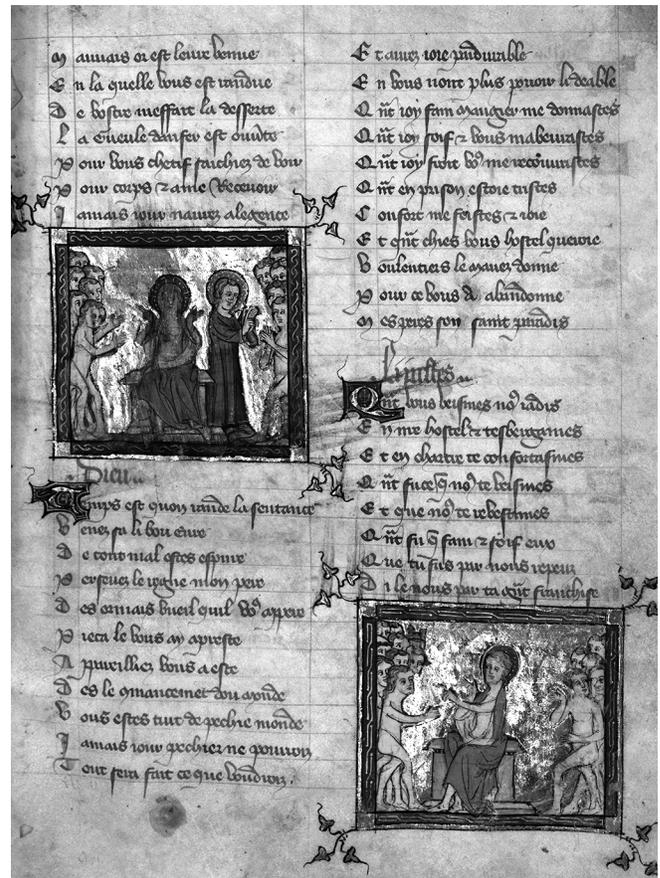


Figure 16. *Sentencing of the saved and the damned, Christ addresses the Just Man*, fol. 35r, ca. 1340–50, Besançon, Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon, MS 579 (photo: CNRS–IRHT © Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon). See the electronic edition of *Gesta* for a color version of this image.

His presence in the scene is asserted, not as one available for interaction (as elsewhere) but as something dominating and intangible.⁵⁹ This first frontal miniature immediately precedes Christ’s speech that begins “*Finis sum* and the beginning,” in which he outlines other aspects of his divinity and concludes by declaring his intention to judge the sinful world [1692–1715]. The visual revelation of Christ’s majesty coincides with his verbal self-revelation as the Judge.

The other two iconic moments in the miniatures (Fig. 3, left, and Fig. 16, left column) coincide with the display of Christ’s wounds, which are characterized in the *Jour* text as the basis on which Christ returns as Judge. The first comes as the culmination to his speech beginning, “It is now the time

59. The loss of three-dimensionality in Christ’s framing enclosure is particularly striking, as the artist has elsewhere been markedly interested in depth, depicting, for instance, bodies vanishing into structures (fol. 14r).

for me / to display my insignia to all people” [2171–2222], and ending with preparation for the Judgment. The second comes at the moment before Christ’s last words proclaiming salvation to the deserving. After this, the artist reverts to narrative mode for Christ’s final image in the *Jour*, in which he turns on his throne to address the Just Man in response to a plea for explanation of the mechanisms of salvation (Fig. 16, right column). On fol. 33v, the page design enhances the already textually suspenseful buildup to Christ’s *ostentatio vulnerum* by delaying the miniature that reveals the wounds (Fig. 3, left). Christ finishes speaking on fol. 33r, in the right column, at line 24. On fols. 33r–33v, the most dramatic road was taken with regard to layout: the remaining four lines of fol. 33r were left blank and the *ostentatio* miniature positioned as the first sight on fol. 33v. Textually, it is clear that Christ “actually” reveals his wounds by line 8 of the right column on fol. 33r, where he refers to “this lance” (ceste lance [2187, my emphasis]). But, in a serious rendition of the strategy used in jest with Antichrist’s Mother, the orchestration of the play within the manuscript at this juncture strengthens the reader’s experience of revelation both through delay and by exploiting the experience of actually turning the page to meet the judging Christ.

Hieratic frontality is a powerful visual strategy because it connotes a direct address to the viewer across the barrier of representation. As such, the iconic images of Christ become part of the reader-viewer’s personal involvement with the manuscript and its subject. The judgments pronounced in the play, as presented by the book, do not exempt the reader-viewer: it is his attention that Christ calls for, her soul that is at stake with the others, as promised by the Preacher’s initial rubricated text. Especially significant in this context is the placement of the final image that so directly involves the viewer, which appears in the middle of the left column on fol. 35r after the first sentencing of the damned (still pleading with St. Simon on Christ’s left) (Fig. 16, left column). Christ is in full judgment mode, but he had been so in the two preceding miniatures, showing his rhythmic turning to the right and left as his disciples deliver sentence (Fig. 3, right). As Christ turns again to a balanced, arbitrating position, the program includes the reader-viewer in Christ’s address to the saved. This move creates a dynamic of combined reassurance and warning. It implies that the engaged reader-viewer of the play, heeding its lessons and recognizing Antichrist’s deception, has worked the achievement of his or her own salvation. A seal on this personal involvement is set on reading the end of the play. As the final “act” of the *Jour*, the reader-viewer is once again asked to supply something to the manuscript: the *Te Deum*. The manuscript then confirms this praise to God with “Amen, Amen,” the final written words of the *Jour*. The reader’s real or mental voicing of the well-known canticle acts

to seal the “profitable” engagement with the work prayed for by the Preacher at the outset and promoted by the presentation of the play within the manuscript.

Besançon 579 and Manuscript Theater

The foregoing observations establish how richly the makers of Besançon 579 conceived of the manuscript as a medium for the play, and how fully the book was crafted to enact and support the Preacher’s call for attention to a salutary drama, including the construction of an active relationship between the reader-viewer and the *Jour*. I turn now to the implications of “staging” the *Jour du Jugement* in manuscript form, and how central we may consider the recognizable form of the theater itself to the book’s end-of-days theme.

Before suggesting some medieval terms by which to approach the role of theater in Besançon 579, it is necessary to dwell briefly on modern considerations of manuscript theater and performance. This will clarify the character I ascribe to Besançon 579 in light of several critical terms and prior analyses that have not yet been examined here. On one level, in shifting emphasis from the documentary nature of Besançon 579 to its self-sufficient strategies for presenting the *Jour*, this essay joins Griffith’s work in establishing a well-deserved place for Besançon 579 in the growing family of studies devoted to the “manuscript performance” of medieval texts.⁶⁰ That said, it is important to qualify that the term *manuscript performance* has largely been developed in relation to texts whose qualities of performance may or may not be explicitly tied to the idea of the stage.⁶¹ Indeed, this is one of the great strengths of the concept, but Besançon 579 requires another line of analysis. The book presents no need to draw out the

60. The collaborative work of Pamela Sheingorn and Robert L. A. Clark has largely defined this important concept, which Griffith embraces in “Performative Reading.” See, e.g., Clark and Sheingorn, “Performative Reading: The Illustrated Manuscripts of Arnoul Gréban’s *Mystère de la Passion*,” *European Medieval Drama* 6 (2003): 129–72. In their most recent contribution (“‘Ces mots icy verrez juer’: Performative Presence and Social Life”), Clark and Sheingorn focus on the cognitive and compositional processes that introduce the “live” and social aspects of theater into the experience of a play transmitted in manuscript.

61. E.g., Pamela Sheingorn, “Performing the Illustrated Manuscript: Great Reckonings in Little Books,” in *Visualizing Medieval Performance: Perspectives, Histories, Contexts*, ed. Elina Gertsman (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 57–82. Adrian P. Tudor invokes the *Jour* as an alternative to other manuscripts that “perform” texts in similar terms, because of the presumed staging that underlies the program. Tudor, “Talking Pictures: Performance on the Page,” in *Acts and Texts: Performance and Ritual in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. Laurie Postlewaite and Wim Hüsken (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), 151–82, at 167.

elements of voice and action that originally defined the idea of manuscript performance for other medieval texts, but it does present the need to account for the combination of full-fledged manuscript performance *and* explicit theatricality.⁶²

A key corollary point concerns transparency of genre as it relates to the terms *theater*, *drama*, and *performance*. Whether or not the play was ever staged, because of its textual composition and manuscript layout, the *Jour* in Besançon 579 is free of the ambiguity of “dramaticity” that complicates the categories of “liturgical drama” or other dialogic texts.⁶³ Along with dramatic books like the *Aix Jeu de Robin et Marion*, the *Jour* holds a particular place in the elastic and capacious understanding of “performance” related to medieval texts and images because its manuscript specifically evokes played drama in codex form.⁶⁴ When I speak of “theater” relative to

62. The Arras Passion as analyzed by Clark and Sheingorn (“‘Ces mots icy verrez juer’: Performative Presence and Social Life”) presents a similar case; see also Laura Weigert with Pascale Charron, “Illuminating the Arras Mystery Play: Text and Image in Arras B.M. MS 697,” in *Excavating the Medieval Image: Manuscripts, Artists, Audiences; Essays in Honor of Sandra Hindman*, ed. David S. Areford and Nina A. Rowe (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 81–106.

63. I borrow the term *dramaticity* from Petersen, “Biblical Reception,” esp. 191–201. On ambiguity of genre relative to the manuscript presentation of texts, see Symes, “Appearance of Early Vernacular Plays.” On the role of genre in the matter of pictorial “performance,” see Robert L. A. Clark, “Liminality and Literary Genres: Texts *par personnages* in Late Medieval Manuscript Culture,” in *Thresholds of Medieval Visual Culture: Liminal Spaces*, ed. Elina Gertsman and Jill Stevenson (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2012), 260–80; and Laura Weigert, “‘Theatricality’ in Tapestries and Mystery Plays and Its Afterlife in Painting,” in “Theatricality in Early Modern Visual Art and Architecture,” ed. Caroline van Eck and Stijn Bussels, special issue, *Art History* 33, no. 2 (2010): 224–35.

64. Along with core examinations of the *Jeu de Robin et Marion* manuscript, such as Cruse, Parussa, and Ragnard, “*Aix Jeu de Robin et Marion*,” and Jesse Hurlbut, “The Illuminations of *Le Jeu de Robin et Marion* in Aix-en-Provence,” *European Medieval Drama* 5 (2002): 113–22, Geri L. Smith’s reading of Adam de la Halle’s text is relevant to this discussion of genre. She describes Adam’s work as a lyric genre rendered theatrical in a manner highly conscious of the social implications in the shift. G. Smith, *The Medieval French Pastourelle Tradition: Poetic Motivations and Generic Transformations* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009), esp. 70–117. On the large question of interchanging elements of performance, orality, and visuality in literary/manuscript interactions, see esp. Kolve, *Chaucer and the Imagery of Narrative*; idem, *Telling Images: Chaucer and the Imagery of Narrative II* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009); and Kathryn Starkey, *Reading the Medieval Book: Word, Image, and Performance in Wolfram von Eschenbach’s Willehalm* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004). With special reference to French vernacular, see Sylvia Huot, *From Song to Book: The Poetics of Writing in Old French Lyric and Lyrical Narrative Poetry* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987); Evelyn Birge Vitz, *Orality and Performance in Early French Romance*

the *Jour* in Besançon 579, then, I mean to invoke the notion of performed action as a formal enterprise, with spectators (but not a particular staged performance).⁶⁵ By “theatricality” I mean the combined elements of scripted vivid action, dialogic speech, other sounds, and evoked spectatorship. Pamela Sheingorn and Robert Clark’s coinage “performative presence” offers an apt name for the affect of the *Jour* in Besançon 579, insofar as the visual quality of the manuscript evokes the utterance of words and the accomplishment of actions, creating an effect of embodiment, passage of time, and the realization of the play.⁶⁶ Departing from Emerson’s and Griffith’s respective emphasis on elements in the program that establish this kind of performativity, though, I take the evident performance qualities of Besançon 579 as essential to its theatricality, and the theatricality of the manuscript as a core component of its argument. The evocation (and even, potentially, the support) of played drama in Besançon 579 has a function surpassing the capacity of the manuscript to serve as the means of preservation for the putative memory of a theatrical production. Similarly, as part of the manuscript’s theatricality, the performative nature of the program has a function that surpasses the capacity of the reading experience to call the play to mind or involve the reader-viewer in its action. The generic assertiveness of the theater couched in the visual program of Besançon 579 itself represents an element of content that offers scope for interpretation.

In sum, by invoking “theater” and “theatricality” in Besançon 579, I do not seek to tie the manuscript specifically to a historic production on the boards (or the *platea*); nor do I use the terms as interchangeable with a “dramatic” character of storytelling. I aim, rather, for the middle ground, where an unquestionably dramatic and performative manuscript, made on a luxury scale for reading, is also so assertive in its genre that we may consider “playing” an important element of its

(Woodbridge: Brewer, 1999); Ardis Butterfield, *Poetry and Music in Medieval France: From Jean Renart to Guillaume de Machaut* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Evelyn Birge Vitz, Nancy Freeman Regalado, and Marilyn Lawrence, eds., *Performing Medieval Narrative* (Woodbridge: Brewer, 2005); and Marisa Galvez, *Songbook: How Lyrics Became Poetry in Medieval Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012).

65. Hurlbut (“Illuminations of *Le Jeu de Robin et Marion*”) notes a similarly generalized character in the *Jeu*.

66. For the modern range of reference included in the term *performativity*, including its departure from the strict Austinian sense of effecting a change of state, see Simon Shepherd and Mick Wallace, *Drama/Theatre/Performance* (London: Routledge, 2004), esp. 220–24; and Erika Fischer-Lichte, *Performativität: eine Einführung* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2012), esp. 27–29 on historiographic distinctions between “theatricality” and “performativity” or between “theater” and “performance.” Cf. J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962).

character—its fusion of text, image, and medium-specific presentation. On this basis, we may explore the role that the theatrical has to play in building the manuscript's particular character as a "profitable" reading-viewing experience, to return to the Preacher's description of the *Jour* with which we began.

The Jour du Jugement and the Uses of Theater

The stakes of suggesting that we consider the overtly theatrical character of Besançon 579 as primarily a matter of genre rather than documentation are considerably magnified by the fact that the *Jour* is not just any play. It is an Antichrist play, presented in concert with what Emerson described as the "most developed cycle of Antichrist images in art, in any medium and from any period."⁶⁷ The deception of Antichrist and the practice of theater are deeply and troublingly intertwined, and the *Jour* includes comment on the deception of playacting as one of the literally engendering qualities of Antichrist: to approach Antichrist's Mother, the devil Engignart takes on the appearance and speech of a handsome young man, successfully impersonating a courtly lover [284–321].⁶⁸ As the

embodiment of Christianity's worst mimetic perils, Antichrist is not a figure that can be performed without comment, explicit or implicit, on the representative practice proper to the stage medium.⁶⁹

The medieval stage was morally fraught, dogged by charges of impropriety and folly—foolish at best, wicked at worst—that the Lollards in England and the censors in France and Germany were quick to turn to their advantage. Partly because of the moral ambiguity attached to the medium but also, centrally, because theater has always been a medium of choice for posing charged explorations of community dynamics and religious tenets, the preservation of Antichrist's staging in pictorial form becomes a factor in the overall effect and the profitable work that a play like the *Jour* and a book like Besançon 579 are designed to facilitate.⁷⁰ The event of Antichrist's staging, whether onstage or on parchment, begs consideration of the virtues and limits of well-intentioned mimesis and representative craft. At the same time, staging Antichrist offers the notion of a guard against true demonic

67. Emerson, "Visualizing Performance," 254. On the place of the *Jour* in Antichrist literature, see Emerson and Hult, *Antichrist and Judgment Day*, xvi–xxii; and Emerson, "Antichrist on Page and Stage." The *Jour du Jugement* gives equal dramatic weight to Antichrist and the Last Judgment, which is unparalleled in other surviving medieval end-of-days scripts. Griffith ("Illustrating Antichrist") defines the artistic measures necessary to integrate the two narratives and situates the Antichrist material in wider visual and textual traditions. See also Rosemary Muir Wright, *Art and Antichrist in Medieval Europe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995); Richard K. Emerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A Study of Medieval Apocalypticism, Art, and Literature* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981); and note 51 above. On the history of the concept of Antichrist, see Bernard McGinn, *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994); and Kevin L. Hughes, *Constructing Antichrist: Paul, Biblical Commentary, and the Development of Doctrine in the Early Middle Ages* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2005).

68. Engignart describes his assumption of human form with the verbs *sambleray* and *affubleré*: "Se fame truis qui belle soit, / Qui dou linaige a Dam soit, / Forme de deable osteray / Et un jouvensel sambleray" (if I find a beautiful woman / who is a descendant of Dan, / I shall shed the form of a devil / and appear as a young man) [275–78]; "Je affubleré forme d'onme" (I shall cloak myself in the form of a man) [285]. Perrot and Nonot, *Le mystère du Jour du Jugement*, 88, 90; and Emerson and Hult, *Antichrist and Judgment Day*, 13, 14. Engignart is one of the few devils in the play whose name denotes his specific demonic talent: the other evildoers who participate in the first conference are Satan, Beelzebub, Pluto, Belial, Foule, Agrappart, and Hazart; Le Matam and Rapillart will speak later. In their apparatus, Emerson and Hult (*Antichrist and Judgment Day*, 10–12, 17, 86) comment on the devils' names.

69. On Antichrist and artistic deception, see John Parker, *The Aesthetics of Antichrist: From Christian Drama to Christopher Marlowe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007), esp. 72–82 on medieval staging of Antichrist. For the theological problem of acting, see Véronique Dominguez, *La scène et la croix: le jeu de l'acteur dans les Passions dramatiques françaises (XIVe–XVIe siècles)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007). With regard to the Antichrist plays of the Chester cycle, David Mills argues for the complicated navigation required to stage Antichrist in a theater convincingly while simultaneously undercutting his authority. Mills, "The Chester Cycle," in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Theater*, ed. Richard Beadle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 109–33. V. A. Kolve addresses the question of mimesis relative to the English cycles' project in Kolve, *The Play Called Corpus Christi* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1966), esp. 8–32, "The Drama as Play and Game."

70. For an overview of theatrical censorship, see Jonas A. Barish, *The Anti-Theatrical Prejudice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981). On the public functions of theater in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century France, see Carol Symes, *A Common Stage: Theater and Public Life in Medieval Arras* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007); and Jean-Pierre Bordier, *Le jeu de la Passion: le message chrétien et le théâtre français (XIIIe–XVIe s.)* (Paris: Champion, 1998). Sarah Beckwith develops the public role of theater along with its religious charge for the English context in Beckwith, *Signifying God: Social Relation and Symbolic Act in the York Corpus Christi Plays* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003). Jody Enders, *Death by Drama and Other Medieval Urban Legends* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002) offers a florilegium of extreme instances in which the boundary between theatrical representation and contemporary reality was thought to blur. The vast bibliography treating the question of close identification between audience and action in the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century English cycle plays is pertinent here; see, among others, Gail McMurray Gibson, *The Theater of Devotion: East Anglian Drama and Society in the Late Middle Ages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).

deception. Each of these factors is marshaled to forge the useful nature of Besançon 579, as I proposed when describing the visual construction of the manuscript. I wish now to consider the implications of the manuscript's theatrical genre toward the same profitable ends.

Theater and Discernment

Particularly in the context of an Antichrist play, we should consider the possibility that keeping the idea of theater at the forefront of the reader-viewer's experience augments Besançon 579's capacities as a spiritually useful book. The deployment of theatricality goes beyond the advantages gained by drawing on the positive mnemonic aspects of vivacity and emotional engagement traditionally associated with medieval theatrical performance.⁷¹ Taking the morally favorable mnemonic factor momentarily out of the equation, this might seem unlikely. Theater has never enjoyed an unequivocally positive reputation in religious contexts, and, if anything, the subject of Antichrist might be said to amplify the problem, posing, as it does, the most profoundly troubling mimesis of the Christian sphere and haunting the very existence of medieval "playing."⁷² In manuscript form, the specific dangers of falsehood posed by human actors are, of course, effaced.⁷³ The unmistakably theatrical format of the *Jour* in Besançon 579 might then be said to reintroduce the difficulty of morally questionable mimesis by raising the possibility of role-playing on the basis of the script, or at least by evoking the context of stage performance.⁷⁴

The deep seam of moral ambiguity in the theatrical medium, however, serves the *Jour du Jugement* very well. So does

the invocation of a genre profoundly allied with the public sphere and the ordering of contemporary life. We have seen that the "staging" of the *Jour* in Besançon 579 includes a number of instances in which the manuscript presentation works together with the scenarios and content of the text to orchestrate a situation of active discrimination or negotiation on the reader-viewer's part, offering him or her a privileged perspective on the matter of recognizing Antichrist and resisting the trap into which many characters in the *Jour* do fall as Antichrist's career proceeds. As such, if the very context of theater should put a Christian on her guard for precisely the same reasons that she should train herself to recognize Antichrist—distinguishing false forms from true—then the explicit incorporation of theater becomes part and parcel of the project of a work pitched toward resisting deception and gaining confidence in the face of coming judgment. The coordination of media is crucial to the manuscript's design—the play presented *as* a play partnering with subject matter that requires the exercise of discernment, which is facilitated here by visual forms.

Playing and Preaching

Since the earliest commentaries on the manuscript, scholars have drawn attention to a salient aspect of iconography in Besançon 579, namely, the distinct impression that Antichrist is garbed in monastic style, with the suggestion of a Franciscan habit (Fig. 1).⁷⁵ Whatever the regionally specific political implications of this gambit, it implicates Besançon 579 in a topical discussion of truth and falsehood, apparent and genuine virtue that was prominent in fourteenth-century France.⁷⁶ The *Fauvel* testifies to one aspect of this preoccupation; the rancorous treatment of the mendicants in both literary and polemical traditions of the period offers another.⁷⁷

71. For traditions of theatrical defense and the incorporation of the theater into theology, see Donnalee Dox, *The Idea of the Theater in Latin Christian Thought: Augustine to the Fourteenth Century* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004).

72. On play as a concept with both positive and negative religious valence, see Jörg Sonntag, ed., *Religiosus Ludens: das Spiel als kulturelles Phänomen in mittelalterlichen Klöstern und Orden* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013). On the definition of *pleyinge* in the *Tretise of Miraclis Pleyinge*, see Sharon Aronson-Lehavi, *Street Scenes: Late Medieval Acting and Performance* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

73. On the problem of actors, see Dominguez, *La scène et la croix*.

74. Eugene Vance's work might stand as another weight on the scales against the spiritual capacities of drama. Vance accounted for theatrical dialogue in thirteenth-century France as a medium that stages language and exchange as a particularly Christian problem of deceit and miscommunication that the performance itself comes to represent. Vance, "The Apple as Feather: Toward a Poetics of Dialogue in Early French Medieval Theater," in *Mervelous Signals: Poetics and Sign Theory in the Middle Ages* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 184–229, esp. 190–94, 217.

75. Émile Roy invests considerably in the Franciscan connection: Roy, "Un mystère français du XVe siècle: 'Le jour du Jugement' de la Bibliothèque de la ville de Besançon," *Mémoires de la Société d'émulation du Doubs*, ser. 7, 4 (1899): 121–239, at 137, 156, 230. As Schüssler ("Ikonographie," 344–45) notes, the reference is not fully carried through, as Antichrist always lacks the rope belt necessary to identify him as Franciscan, and his hood precludes sight of a tonsure or lack thereof. The hint of fraternal partisanship is extended by the Preacher's obvious tonsure and black robes.

76. Other topical elements may be in evidence in the play's violently negative attitude toward usury: the Usurer and his family are awarded an exceptionally long scene of accusation and lament during the Judgment, and the mark of the beast, designated explicitly as coin, is given a strictly set value by Antichrist. See Emerson, "Visualizing Performance," 257, on this point; and idem, "Antichrist on Page and Stage," 10–11.

77. In the antifraternal tradition, especially relevant is the core text of William de Saint-Amour, *De periculis novissimorum*

While Antichrist may never look like Christ in Besançon 579, it is worth observing that neither does he flagrantly look “like Antichrist”: there is no devil on his shoulder, he is not monstrous or even made to look “other,” in the way certain programs might handle a Jew.⁷⁸ Indeed, the figure whose pose and actions Antichrist most closely apes, in his first appearance as an adult cultivating his following, is that of the Preacher (Fig. 1, left, right column; cf. Fig. 2, right).⁷⁹

temporum, ed. and trans. G. Geltner (Leuven: Peeters, 2008). In a passage particularly relevant to our context, borrowing a formulation of Peter Lombard (and Augustine before him), William laments that false teachers compose that which “contradicts God” rather than the comparatively harmless material “sung in the theater” (et utinam talibus “quales in theatris cantantur et non tales quales adversus deum fingere potuissent!”); *De periculis*, 84–85. Cf. Peter Lombard, *In Epistolam II ad Timotheum*, chap. 4 (*Opera Omnia*, in *Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, 221 vols. [Paris: Garnier, 1844–64] [hereafter Migne, *PL*], 192 [1855]: col. 379D); and Augustine, *In Ioannis Evangelium Tractatus*, homily 97.3.11–15 on John 16:12, in *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina* 36, ed. R. Willems (Turnhout: Brepols, 1954), 574. If this description takes some of the potential political bite out of the theatrical medium, it underscores the idea that benign intent may justify whatever “buffooneries” (*scurrilitate*, in Augustine’s/Lombard’s terms) are staged. Schüssler (“Ikonographie,” 345) notes the importance of William and his influence on other texts, such as the *Liber de Antichristo et ejus ministris*, along with the currency of the idea (particularly among the Franciscans) of identifying Antichrist with a monk. On European antifraternalism, see G. Geltner, *The Making of Medieval Antifraternalism: Polemic, Violence, Deviance, and Remembrance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), esp. chap. 1, “Polemic,” on William de Saint-Amour and Jean de Meun. Regarding the fourteenth-century preoccupation with deceit, Emmerson and Hult (*Antichrist and Judgment Day*, 25, note to line 586) note the kinship of the Antichrist tradition to the *Roman de la Rose*’s Faus Semblant; Griffith (“Illustrating Antichrist,” 45–49) expands on the connection in the context of Romance and the contemporary relevance of shaping the Antichrist narrative through reference to the mendicants.

78. See Schüssler, “Ikonographie,” and McGinn, “Portraying Antichrist,” for a full range of variations.

79. On the threat of false preachers, see the opposition to the mendicants as cited in notes 75 and 77 above. For the common figure of the preacher in French drama, with special attention to the *Jour*, see Dragomirescu, “Un guide dans le livre”; and Clark and Sheingorn, “‘Ces mots icy verrez juer’: Performative Presence and Social Life.” On the deep connection between preaching and performance, see Marie Bouhaïk-Gironès and Marie Anne Polo de Beaulieu, eds., *Prédication et performance du XIIe au XVIe siècle* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2013), esp. the contributions of Andrea Livini and Charles Mazouer. For ascribed virtues of theater that apply also to the genre of preaching, see Martin, *Le métier de prédicateur*, esp. 485–535 (on narrative exempla), 567–84 (on connection with the audience), and 215–17 (for the link between Antichrist and false preaching). See also Kimberly A. Rivers, *Preaching the Memory of Virtue and Vice: Memory, Images, and Preaching in the Late Middle Ages* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010).

The representation of a false preacher to be distinguished from three true ones in the *Jour* (the Preacher, Enoch, and Elijah [Fig. 6]) raises a sinister aspect of the Antichrist figure that is present, as Kevin Hughes has observed, in the oldest roots of the tradition.⁸⁰ The deceiver is imagined both as a looming apocalyptic threat and as an already active snake in the garden of the Church. In the human proportions assigned to Antichrist in Besançon 579, theater is well positioned to counter treachery, as fire with fire. Crafted enactment of the divine plan—with a healthy measure of credit to the structures of the Church—exposes the presence of deceit in that plan and notifies an audience to be on guard. In some respects the genre of preaching appears as the most morally unstable craft in Besançon 579. The play reveals the fault lines in a representative mode credited with moral elevation by literally staging it in a morally equivocal context.⁸¹ Should not grace, after all, be a more reliable method of attaining salvation than attention to a sermon? While the construction of the manuscript champions the reader-viewer’s engagement and discernment, its specifically theatrical mode highlights both the theme of truth and falsehood and the idea that what takes place in the sphere of art, bound by the limits of craft, may serve as a valuable mirror for what takes place in the sphere of history, bound by limits of time.

Morality and Spectacle

The genre of the *Jour* manuscript and the character of its illumination ensure that the theater remains in the foreground of the reader-viewer’s experience. The prominence of the theater, in turn, aids the profitable project of staging the *Jour* in manuscript form. Perhaps the most famous instance in medieval book painting where assertive citation of the theater works toward a profitable end is the Martyrdom of St. Apollonia in Jean Fouquet’s *Hours of Étienne Chevalier* (Fig. 17).⁸² In this fifteenth-century context designed for pri-

80. Hughes, *Constructing Antichrist*, 250.

81. Valentina Berardini takes up the idea of risk in the proximity of the preacher’s and the actor’s crafts in Berardini, “Prédicateurs et acteurs: à la recherche d’indices de performance dans les sermons de la fin du Moyen Âge,” in Bouhaïk-Gironès and Polo de Beaulieu, *Prédication et performance*, 79–90.

82. Studies attempting to account for the Apollonia image by unpacking the implications of Fouquet’s explicit citation of theatrical genre include Thomas A. Pallen’s political allegory in “Caveat Emptor: A Reinvestigation of Jean Fouquet’s ‘The Martyrdom of Saint Apollonia,’” in *European Theater Iconography: Proceedings of the European Science Foundation Network: Mainz, 22–26 July 1998, Wassenaar, 21–25 July 1999, Poggio a Caiano, 20–23 July 2000*, ed. Christopher Balme, Robert Erenstein, and Cesare Molinari (Rome: Bulzoni, 2002), 141–54; and Leslie Abend Callahan, “The Torture of Saint Apollonia: Deconstructing Fouquet’s Martyrdom Stage,”

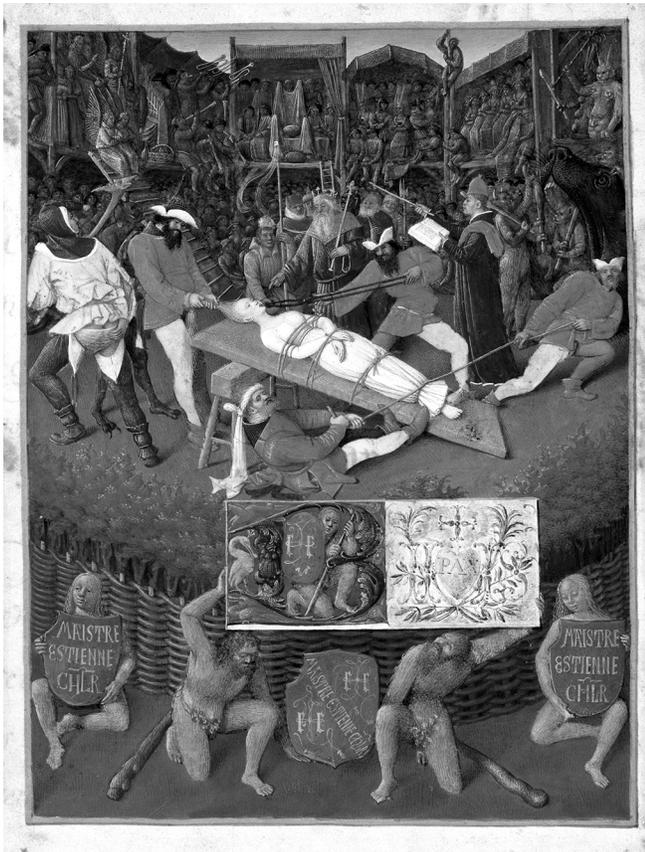


Figure 17. *Martyrdom of St. Apollonia*, fol. 39r, Hours of Étienne Chevalier, illuminated by Jean Fouquet, ca. 1460, Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 71 (photo: René-Gabriel Ojéda, © RMN–Grand Palais/ Art Resource, NY). See the electronic edition of *Gesta* for a color version of this image.

vate meditation, the theatrical spectacle proposed by Fouquet as the setting for Apollonia's torment becomes as much an object for reflection as the stalwart saint at the center of the scene. Considering the Apollonia image provides a useful foil for assessing the function of theater itself in Besançon 579.

Gordon Kipling's rich reading of Fouquet's image, developed in close conversation with Nicholas Davis's exposition on the Augustinian concept of *spectacula christiana*, offers a view on the representation of theater qua theater that speaks directly to the context for reading the *Jour* in Besançon 579 that I advocate here.⁸³ Davis develops a medieval concept of

Studies in Iconography 16 (1994): 119–38. Callahan adopts a mixed approach, linking the visual conventions of theater to those of public execution, but nevertheless arguing against a strict “documentary approach.”

83. Gordon Kipling, “Theater as Subject and Object in Fouquet's ‘Martyrdom of St Apollonia,’” *Medieval English Theater* 19 (1997): 26–80. This same issue of the journal includes a response by Graham

the theater, based in patristics, that builds on a principle of “diverse watching,” whereby the moral valence of spectacle is essentially determined by the way it is seen and understood, rather than the inherent worth of its execution.⁸⁴ Kipling locates Fouquet's positioning of his reader-viewer in this context, arguing that the perspective of the miniature proffers Chevalier “the best view in the house” from which to exercise his Christian discernment and sort out carnal spectacle from spiritual triumph.

The idea of *spectacula christiana* rests fundamentally on the difference between the celestial view regarding the apostles (explicitly including Enoch and Elijah) and the terrestrial perspective of the men who mocked and rejected them.⁸⁵ The concept also depends on Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 4 that “we are made a spectacle in this world to both angels and men for the sake of the Lord.” In Besançon 579, where the spectacle of Enoch and Elijah's execution is coupled with affirmation of the Witnesses' place in a divine plan, the prominence of the theatrical medium may serve as a reinforcement of the importance of spectators' self-consciousness and their exercise of judgment. Through the manuscript's text and its setting, the Last Judgment to be visited on the world in the aftermath of Antichrist becomes the premise for developing the judgment of the individual Christian in the shadow of the Last Days and the precarious moral status of present times. The reader-viewer's role as a discerning Christian becomes contingent partly on his or her ability to assume the position of spectator, able to see the structure of history as well as progress through its engaging detail. We have seen several ways in which the manuscript medium is well suited to the revelation of structure in the visualization of the end of days. The positioning of the reader-viewer specifically as spectator for the view of history constructed in Besançon 579 is part of the moral project of constructing perspective on the sweep of human time.

While the rich visuality of the manuscript ensures that the reader remains conscious of his concurrent role as a viewer, the question of witnessing and discerning is also made a theme in the pictorial program. Textual indications of an audience's presence include the Preacher's initial call to

Runnalls (“Jean Fouquet's ‘Martyrdom of St Apollonia’ and the Medieval French Stage,” 81–100) from a “documentary” perspective on the miniature as a representation of theatrical practice, and a rejoinder by Kipling (“Fouquet, St Apollonia, and the Motives of the Miniaturists' Art: A Reply to Graham Runnalls,” 101–20). See also Nicholas Davis, “*Spectacula Christiana*: A Roman Christian Template for Medieval Drama,” *Medieval English Theatre* 9, no. 2 (1987): 125–52.

84. Davis, “*Spectacula Christiana*,” 143; and also Kipling, “Theater as Subject and Object,” 75n58.

85. Kipling, “Theater as Subject and Object,” 54.

attention and Christ's later rallying call before the revelation of his wounds: "Now all of you give me your undivided attention: / I am Jesus Christ, your King" [2180–81].⁸⁶ The visual presence of an audience is established by the spectators who attend the Preacher's sermon (Fig. 2), but they disappear for a spell. After Antichrist's rise to power, crowds of people always watch and comment on the action (Fig. 1, right). As these staged spectators are taken in by Antichrist, their failure of discernment becomes part of the *spectaculum* available to the reader-viewer.⁸⁷ Telling the story of Antichrist in the vehicle of a *spectaculum* draws attention to the parallel between what happens in the context of watching/reading a play and what should be happening in the larger theater of the world.

The principle of parallel between the form of the theater and the form of the world was articulated long before Shakespeare in a rare source of commentary on the late fourteenth- or early fifteenth-century theater: the English antitheatrical tract known as *The Tretise of Miraclis Pleyinge*, whose Lollard author must cite the principles commonly used to defend drama in order to refute them. His list includes the idea that plays are beneficial because they prompt "[men's] seeinge furthermore that al this worldly being heere is but vanite for a while, as is miraclis pleying, wherthoru they leeven ther pride and taken to hem afterward the meke conversacion of Crist and of his seintis" [156–60].⁸⁸ This statement amounts to the idea that understanding the transitory nature of a play—the very essence of its form—imparts a spiritually valuable lesson because it showcases the bounded and fleeting nature of the

world in comparison to eternity.⁸⁹ The *spectacula christiana* concept includes a version of the argument that the moral and temporal structure of the theater parallels that of the human world at large.⁹⁰ One function of the illuminated program in an explicitly theatrical manuscript like Besançon 579 is to fix those moral and temporal structures in the reader-viewer's gaze.

The Function of Form

The *Jour du Jugement*, of course, is not an English dramatic cycle, in which the entire arc of human history is played through. Here it is the Preacher's sermon, beginning with Adam and Eve and ending with Judgment Day, that invokes this kind of "complete" time for the drama. Since biblical times are past and the fourteenth-century world of the spectators is in progress, the role of the Preacher is to raise awareness of the full structure of history, while the role of the

89. The notion of seeing earthly time in juxtaposition to eternity has broad purchase in medieval theology and makes its way into artistic language in myriad contexts (one might cite in particular the *mappae mundi*). On Augustine's vision of time, specifically regarding its mirrors in human expression, see Eugene Vance, "Saint Augustine: Language as Temporality," in *Merveilous Signals*, 34–50, esp. 46–50. On theatrical time in conversation with "real time," history, and eternity, see Thierry Revol, *Représentations du sacré dans les textes dramatiques des XIe–XIIIe siècles en France* (Paris: Champion, 1999). This discussion is especially well developed in the context of the English cycles; see, e.g., Sarah Beckwith, "The Present of Past Things: The York Corpus Christi Cycle as a Contemporary Theatre of Memory," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 26, no. 2 (1996): 355–79, repr. in *Signifying God*, 3–22; Paula Lozar, "Time in the Corpus Christi Cycles: 'Aesthetic' and 'Realistic' Modes," *Papers on Language and Literature* 14, no. 4 (1978): 385–93; and Daniel P. Potteet II, "Time, Eternity and Dramatic Form in *Ludus Coventriae* Passion Play I," *Comparative Drama* 8, no. 4 (1974–75): 369–85.

90. Kipling ("Theater as Subject and Object," 54) describes Hrabanus Maurus's reception of Isidore of Seville's *De rerum natura*, in which theater becomes "an anagogical or mystical figure for the present world, in which those of this generation who pursue luxury mock the servants of God and rejoice in witnessing their pains" (Mystice autem theatrum praesentem mundum significare potest: in quo hi, qui luxum hujus saeculi sequuntur, ludibrio habent servos Dei, et earum poenas spectando laetantur). Hrabanus Maurus, *De universo*, chap. 36 ("De theatro") (*Opera Omnia*, in Migne, *PL* 111 [1864]: col. 553C). Donnalee Dox has also argued for a consciousness of the same formal analogy in the writing of Honorius Augustodunensis on the Mass as human craft: Dox, "Roman Theatre and Roman Rite: Twelfth-Century Transformations in Allegory, Ritual, and the Idea of Theatre," in *The Appearances of Medieval Rituals: The Play of Construction and Modification*, ed. Nils Holger Petersen et al. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 33–48, esp. 46. Symes (*Common Stage*, 168–70) discusses a version of the Mass-as-theater concept specific to thirteenth-century Arras; and Beckwith (*Signifying God*) works extensively with the related concept of "sacramental theater."

86. Emerson and Hult, *Antichrist and Judgment Day*, 79 ("Entendez tuit a une voiz! / Je suis Jhesucriz, vostre Roiz"); and Perrot and Nonot, *Le mystère du Jour du Jugement*, 240. On the relationship between preacher and audience in later theatrical manuscripts, see Laura Weigert, "L'image peinte du 'prescheur' et la transformation du public théâtral (1470–1577)," in Bouhaïk-Gironès and Polo de Beaulieu, *Prédication et performance*, 229–50.

87. It is worth observing that while the depiction of spectatorship is evocative of a stage medium, it is not exclusively theatrical: watching, pointing, or adoring crowds play important roles in, for instance, the Belleville Breviary of about 1323–26 (BnF, MS lat. 10483, fols. 213r, 214r, the adoration of Christ and the prophecy of Isaiah). This kind of scenic vocabulary common to theatrical and pictorial media—evident also in the Breviary of Charles V, as cited in note 4 above, or in the framing canopies of the Bourges tympanum (Fig. 4), which mirror those in the *Jour*—raises the question of when we should attempt to distinguish between a "dramatic" or "theatrical" mode in static compositions and an explicit evocation of theater. On this theme, see esp. Weigert, *French Visual Culture*.

88. "Seeing, furthermore, that all this worldly existence here is but vanity for a while, as is the playing of miracles, through this they [men] abandon their pride and subsequently take to themselves the meek conduct of Christ and his saints." Davidson, *Tretise of Miraclis Pleyinge*, 97. My thanks to Bridget Ruth Whearty for improving this translation.

play is to provide the missing portion. In the *Jour* as we know it, in manuscript form, the frontispiece, the musical passages, and the called-for prayers raise a structural awareness of the play's temporality. These elements—made part of the “book-ish” nature of the *Jour* in Besançon 579, as discussed above—work in concert with the invocations of theater to render the manuscript a theatrical medium in this broad temporal sense as well, paralleling the drama of the *Jour* to the drama of general salvation playing out in real time, in which the reader-viewer is himself involved.⁹¹ This universal drama, after all, is the broadest context in which the Preacher's call to attend to the lessons of art becomes imperative.

So, the lessons built into the reading and viewing of Besançon 579 are not only topical, urgent, and experiential, they are broadly self-reinforcing as they represent the approach of art to Judgment. The hieratic image of Christ that creates a sense of confirmation between the frontispiece and intracolumnar miniatures reverberates beyond the boundaries of the codex, echoing apocalyptic compositions in many media, contexts, and scales. The recognizable Judge thus represents a deferral, an image of images.⁹² This deferral affirms a consistency within the closed circle of art and its capacity to serve, like the Church itself, in the gap before the Second Coming. One may, in this case, safely pray to the Virgin that she prompt attention to art designed as an instrument of preparation for Judgment, without any danger that the tool might be identified as anything else—not visionary truth, and not the reality of Judgment itself. That is the precarious proposition of actual substitution that constitutes deception in Antichrist's own mode. But because the play is recognizably a play, and because the play-within-the-book is laced with images that sound the notes of other artistic endeavors, it is clear that the presentation of the *Jour du Jugement* as we know it does not claim to preempt the sights and sounds of the Second Coming. Because of the manuscript's obvious craft,

91. On the theme of salvation history as drama, see esp. Rainer Warning, “The Fall in the Ambivalence of Dramatic and Substantial Dualism,” in *The Ambivalences of Medieval Religious Drama*, trans. Steven Rendall (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), originally published as *Funktion und Struktur: die Ambivalenzen des geistlichen Spiels* (Munich: Fink, 1974).

92. See Parker, *Aesthetics of Antichrist*, on artistic deferral. The question of “pictorial” composition in medieval theater is particularly relevant here, as it affects the complexity of the strategy. Do we remain essentially in the “theatrical” register while still joining a circle of iconography common to many media? Or does the invocation of static frontality also constitute a reversion to primarily “pictorial” representation? See note 49 above; Meg Twycross, “Beyond the Picture Theory: Image and Activity in Medieval Drama,” *Word & Image* 4, nos. 3–4 (1988): 589–617; and Martin Stevens, “The Intertextuality of Late Medieval Art and Drama,” in “Probing: Art, Criticism, Genre,” special issue, *New Literary History* 22, no. 2 (1991): 317–22.

in other words, it does not preach with intent to deceive.⁹³ Rather, the transparency of genre in Besançon 579 creates a book that combines the strengths of diverse media to offer its reader-viewer a means of preparation for the end of days that invests circumspectly in the capacities of art as a stopgap, an aid, and a delight.

Besançon 579 as an Anthology

The quarto size of Besançon 579 facilitates handling, and its pages and miniatures are worn in places: the manuscript seems to have seen a good deal of use.⁹⁴ Beyond this evident popularity of the splendid book, there is evidence to suggest medieval engagement with the idea that the *Jour du Jugement* in Besançon 579 had value as a salutary aid, not only in its theme but also in its form. The final point to consider here is that to do full justice to Besançon 579 as a book crafted for profitable use, we must examine not only the *Jour* quires but the manuscript as a whole. This approach leads us beyond the probable transcription of the playscript in the fourteenth century into its apparently enduring status as a valued part of a fifteenth-century literary library.

The *Jour* survives in a fifteenth-century binding, compiled with the *Testament* of Jean de Meun.⁹⁵ The cursive script of the *Testament* has also been dated to the early fifteenth century. Despite the differences in script, it is worth noting that the

93. On strategies of asserting truth in theater through transparent artificiality, see Jean-Pierre Bordier, “Art du faux, miroir du vrai: les mystères de la Passion (XVe siècle),” in *Spectacle and Image in Renaissance Europe: Selected Papers of the XXXIInd Conference at the Centre d'études supérieures de la Renaissance de Tours, 29 June–8 July 1989*, ed. André Lascombes (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 60–80.

94. At a number of points in the manuscript the miniatures are effaced in a suggestive way; the most salient examples are the head of Antichrist's Mother on fol. 6r, the fallen body of Antichrist on fol. 25r, and the full figure of Christ on fol. 35r. The possibility of angry abrasion or affirming touch presents itself. The parchment is discolored in patches throughout the *Jour* quires, including areas extending underneath undamaged miniatures. Water damage, or the chance that the quality of the parchment affected the binding of the pigment, must also be considered. As a rule, the damaged sections are burnished smooth. Given the notable specificity of much of the wear, someone may have consciously abraded the miniatures, and that abrasion was later smoothed out or worn down.

95. See note 3 above. The binding is leather, covered in a diamond pattern filled with fleur-de-lis and crowns and the repeated word *Maria* in Gothic script. I thank one of the anonymous readers for *Gesta* for the intriguing question of how archaic the Middle French dialect would have seemed in the fifteenth century: the issue becomes whether the *Jour* would have been valued then primarily for its visual aspects—a point that holds, of course, in the fourteenth century as well, when we consider the possibility of varied literacy levels in its readership.

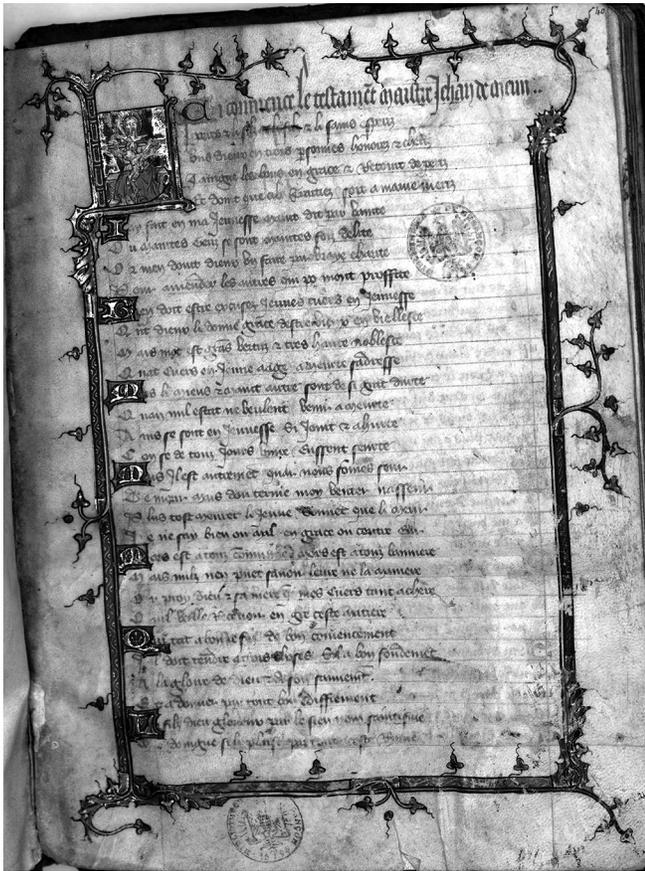


Figure 18. *Throne of Grace*, fol. 40r, *Testament of Jean de Meun*, early fifteenth century, Besançon, Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon, MS 579 (photo: CNRS-IRHT © Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon). See the electronic edition of *Gesta* for a color version of this image.

framing devices for the opening of the *Testament* are precisely comparable to those of the *Jour*, and its single worn initial miniature, depicting the Throne of Grace, bears comparison in its execution to the illuminations of the play (Fig. 18).⁹⁶ We may posit a similar production milieu for the two texts, but their differences preclude assertion that the *Jour* manuscript was originally paired with the *Testament*. Rather, the coupling of the *Jour* and the *Testament* argues for a fifteenth-century recognition that the *Jour* manuscript might be used to the same ends as the *Testament*.⁹⁷ To view the two texts as

96. The *Testament* in Besançon 579 is written in a single text block, rather than columns, occupying fols. 40r–74r. The miniature is a standard luxury preface to the text, which begins with an invocation of the Trinity. Aimée Céleste Bourneuf, “The Testament of Jean de Meun: Vat. MS 367” (PhD diss., Fordham University, 1956), lvii.

97. The anthologizing of medieval playscripts is a theme unto itself. Véronique Dominguez discusses the anthology spirit of the *Jeu d’Adam* manuscript and its importance for reading the twelfth-century play in Dominguez, “Les signes de la performance: une étude du *Dit des Quinze signes* dans le manuscrit Tours, BM 927,” in

a pair is to reflect once again on the importance of genre to the character of the illuminated book—now in the context of the intertextual dialogue constructed by the full compilation of Besançon 579.

The *Testament* speaks primarily in the voice of a serious and “charitable” preacher, imparting principles of salvation to an aristocratic audience explicitly in preparation for death and Judgment, and it includes several episodes of dialogue. The text is often found in Jean’s collected works, along with the *Roman de la Rose* and several of his shorter pieces.⁹⁸ In a few surviving cases the *Testament* was grouped with texts by other popular authors of the late medieval period without much regard for thematic unity,⁹⁹ but it was often classified by subject as much as by author and compiled with myriad other pieces to form volumes of moral and spiritual instruction.¹⁰⁰ As such, the fact that the *Testament* was bound with

Bouhaik-Gironès and Polo de Beaulieu, *Prédication et performance*, 47–70. The *Jeu de Robin et Marion* was bound with the *Roman de la Rose* in BnF, MS fr. 1569: a pairing of the “stridently bookish” literary work and the play that Cruse, Parussa, and Ragnard (“Aix *Jeu de Robin et Marion*,” 5) describe as “a thematic counterpoint and dialogic flourish.” On the importance of the anthology as a strategy both for the medieval and the modern interpretation of manuscript texts, see esp. Seth Lerer, “Medieval English Literature and the Idea of the Anthology,” *PMLA* 118, no. 5 (2003): 1251–67; Theo Stemmler, “Miscellany or Anthology? The Structure of Medieval Manuscripts: MS Harley 2253, for Example,” in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript: The Scribes, Contents, and Social Contexts of British Library MS Harley 2253*, ed. Susanna Fein (Kalamazoo: TEAMS in association with University of Rochester, Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 2000), 111–21; and Stephen G. Nichols and Siegfried Wenzel, eds., *The Whole Book: Cultural Perspectives on the Medieval Miscellany* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996).

98. For a detailed catalogue of the *Testament*’s manuscript history and its contents, see Bourneuf, “Testament of Jean de Meun”; Silvia Buzzetti Gallarati, “Nota bibliografica sulla tradizione manoscritta del *Testament di Jean de Meun* 1,” *Revue romane* 13 (1978): 2–35; Regalado, “Villon’s Legacy”; and Buzzetti Gallarati, *Le testament maistre Jehan de Meun: un caso letterario* (Alessandria: Edizioni dell’Orso, 1989).

99. Most of these collections include lyrics by Machaut and Alain Chartier. Several compendia that include the *Testament* seem to have been assembled based on an entirely personal logic. London, British Library, Lansdowne MS 214, for instance, compiled for the count of Chimay about 1455, includes Lucius Tungrensis on the antiquities of Belgium and Gaul, a translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth, various wonders of England, a tract on the ancient philosophers, and the *Testament*. Bourneuf, “Testament of Jean de Meun,” lxii.

100. The list of other moral texts bound with the *Testament* is long. It includes the *Lapidaire*; the Physiologus bestiary; *Le doctrinal sauvage*; *Le Miserere* and *Le roman de Carité* by the Reclus de Mollens; Renaud de Louens’s *Livre de Melibee et Prudence*; several moralized books on chess; Brunetto Latini’s *Trésor*; the *Fauvel*; and very often Boethius’s *Consolation of Philosophy*. More explicitly spiritual

the *Jour du Jugement* indicates how Besançon 579 as a whole may have been used and conceived as an instrument of spiritual reform.¹⁰¹ The play presents the warning of impending Judgment and the minefield of deception leading up to it and proposes some measures to navigate the problem successfully. The *Testament* offers a solution in another, closely related, vein.

Crucial to the character of Besançon 579 as an aid in spiritual exercise is the fact that the similarly pitched content of the *Jour* and the *Testament* does not constitute the manuscript's full tool set serving preparation for Judgment. The form of both texts and the experience constructed by the complete manuscript are just as important. The characterization of Besançon 579 as a useful book benefits from the "performance" of the *Jour* by harnessing some of the most effective strategies attributable to medieval theater as a spiritual help: the book is vivid and memorable, and it collapses the distance between the reader and sacred history. By virtue of housing a play and the *Testament*, Besançon 579 also operates globally on the principle of a multivocal approach to information: a prized strategy in medieval wisdom literature and exegesis of the Bible.¹⁰² As the Preacher's sermon yields to the play text in the *Jour*, authoritative monologue is deemed inadequate for teaching.¹⁰³

Dialogue is a favored strategy in medieval wisdom literature because its form, promoting enlivened exchange and negotiating multiple points of view, is instructive above and beyond any particular content. The presentation of the *Jour* in Besançon 579 amplifies this virtue of the dramatic form.

texts appear in Bourneuf's catalogue as well, including treatises on the sacraments, penitence, the pains of hell, the Ten Commandments, and the debate between body and soul; saints' lives; and frequently the prayer called "Le Codicille" and the "Sept articles de la foi," sometimes attributed to Jean de Meun himself.

101. On contextualization that affects the interpretation (and perceived moral worth) of drama, see Glending Olson, "Plays as Play: A Medieval Ethical Theory of Performance and the Intellectual Context of the *Tretise of Miraclis Pleyinge*," *Viator* 26 (1995): 195–221.

102. On the medieval value of dialogue, see Kumler, *Translating Truth*, esp. 50–63; Petersen, "Biblical Reception"; Brantley, *Reading in the Wilderness*, esp. chaps. 6–7; Seth Lerer, *Boethius and Dialogue: Literary Method in "The Consolation of Philosophy"* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), esp. 51; Klaus Jacobi, ed., *Gespräche lesen: philosophische Dialoge im Mittelalter* (Tübingen: Narr, 1999); and Thomas Reed, *Middle English Debate Poetry and the Aesthetics of Irresolution* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1990). Works on multivocality and theatrical mode in the Bible (particularly the Psalms and the Song of Songs) are also relevant here.

103. Stephen G. Nichols cites a similar instance of a troubadour manuscript combining dialogue and an expository sermon. Nichols, "'Art' and 'Nature': Looking for (Medieval) Principles of Order in Occitan *Chansonnier* N (Morgan 819)," in Nichols and Wenzel, *Whole Book*, 83–121, at 100.

While asking for negotiation among the different voices of the play—just and unjust, false and true—the manuscript facilitates the reader-viewer's dialogic interaction with its text and images, concentrating the multivocal into the personal. The pairing of the *Jour* and the *Testament* of Jean de Meun creates another dialogue within the full manuscript, offering the reader a potent prop for playing his or her part in the drama of salvation—a project as pressing in the fifteenth century as it was in the fourteenth, since Judgment Day had not yet arrived.

In conclusion, by the fourteenth century drama (like theater) was an entrenched part of reader-viewers' artistic and religious experience.¹⁰⁴ When faced with the presence of a play-within-a-book, we must ask how the theatrical mode works toward the greater project represented by the manuscript, above and beyond its preservation of the text. Carol Symes has shown how difficult it can be to identify plays within larger manuscripts, since their visual presentation may share so much with other forms of literature and their experience may blend with other texts and images on the same pages.¹⁰⁵ Besançon 579 clearly does not present this difficulty, but Symes's observation points in two directions. If drama is often undifferentiated from other forms of manuscript experience—poems, prayers, songs—then other forms of manuscript experience are similarly often undifferentiated from drama. Theater has a deeply embedded presence in many genres of medieval art.¹⁰⁶ This has long been recognized, but until quite recently it had also long been treated primarily as a chicken-and-egg question of source material.¹⁰⁷ The more pressing question is

104. Seminal studies of the productive relationship of the Church to theater include E. K. Chambers, *The Mediaeval Stage* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903); Glynne Wickham, *The Medieval Theater* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1974); and O. B. Hardison, *Christian Rite and Christian Drama in the Middle Ages: Essays in the Origin and Early History of Modern Drama* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965). Complicating Hardison is John Parker, "Who's Afraid of Darwin? Revisiting Chambers and Hardison . . . and Nietzsche," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 40, no. 1 (2010): 7–35.

105. Symes, "Appearance of Early Vernacular Plays."

106. Kathryn A. Smith has recently contributed one such case in the Beauchamp-Corbet Hours; K. Smith, "A 'Viewing Community' in Fourteenth-Century England," in Coleman, Cruse, and K. Smith, *Social Life of Illumination*, 121–76, at 153.

107. Émile Mâle's magisterial studies of "the origins of medieval iconography" in France in the twelfth century, the thirteenth century, and the late Middle Ages, published between 1898 and 1922, like M. D. Anderson's *Drama and Imagery in Medieval English Churches* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), provide classic examples of what Sheingorn, quoting A. M. Nagler and engaging Gail McMurray Gibson's criticism of the term, called the "primo-dopo" problem of source material: Sheingorn, "On Using Medieval Art in the Study of Medieval Drama," in *Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama* 22 (1979): 101–9.

to identify what preserved theatrical experience, defined as such, brings to forms of art outside the theater.

There is, to be sure, a foggy region of pictorial representation in which the line blurs between a representation of theater per se and the adoption of a dramatic spirit in a pictorial medium, in which draftsmen draw on the virtues of theater in their creation of images—resulting, perhaps, in marked vivacity, physicality, and specificity of place. At the opposite end of the spectrum, when a manuscript is made to insist as fully as does Besançon 579 on its unmistakable identity as a playscript, we must account for this distinction from the standpoint of the larger concerns evident in the codex (which will vary, depending especially on what we know of its production context). In Besançon 579, thanks largely to

the book's visual character, the theatrical mode has been developed and used to its fullest. The theater itself was treated as an essential component in the affect of the illuminated manuscript. The manuscript's presentation of the *Jour du Jugement* engages the fact that the play is preserved and performed within a book, orchestrating a version of the text that works in media-specific ways with and on its audience. Housing an Antichrist play and presenting it with an extraordinary combination of overt theatricality and strategies of structural exegesis proper to a manuscript medium, Besançon 579 is well designed to equip its reader-viewers for the Judgment Day they must face outside the provinces of art, and for the challenges of truth and falsehood already confronting them before *dies illa*.

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