



Simiolus

Netherlands quarterly
for the history of art



Volume 45 2023–2024 Number 3/4

Most of the authors were pleased with Michael's work, however, and only very rarely did an author step aside and not show up again, preferring to publish their unkempt papers somewhere else or in their native Dutch.

Thinking of Michael, I think of fifty years of collaboration and continuous confidence in each other's work, which must have been rare by any standard. So, was Michael a saint and did he never annoy me? Phone calls always came when I had just sat down to dinner: *Michael, will you please not ring when I am just home from work and about to sit down and eat?* But Michael, of course, would find no fault in the answer that he knew he could always catch me at home between six and eight p.m. — and it was about *Simiolus*, wasn't it?

Michael was an extraordinary man, severe and very hard working. He was also a dedicated father, and sometimes, though rarely, he would talk about his private life. About his youth and his deep dislike of anything that smacked of religion, and about his arrival in the Netherlands, having been a sailor. *So why did you decide to stay*

in Holland? And his endearing answer that it had been because of a girl, of course. He wanted to be a musician at the time, and I still remember hearing him sing a very good Dylan cover at a birthday party at Ilja Veldman's place, making music with her husband Jan — although I did not know at the time that he had even recorded a song of his own in the Abbey Road Studios. He loved the Cirque du Soleil and Ted Hughes's poetry and reading Hilary Mantel, and he disliked stuffed shirts and bureaucrats, academic or otherwise.

I will remember him very warmly, and still recall his smile when I handed him the glass of wine he drank in the nursing home where he was taken care of in IJmuiden. He was not allowed to have alcohol there, but he knew I could get it for him at the bar, and sipping it cheered him up. And he deserved and enjoyed it, and perhaps it also pleased him to break yet another rule. I will always think of him with gratitude.

PETER HECHT

The Justice Panels by Rogier van der Weyden: A New Source on Their International Fame

Philip Muijtjens

Between 1439 and 1450, Rogier van der Weyden (1399/1400–1464) created a set of four panel paintings for Brussels Town Hall.¹ This commission was the largest project the famed artist would undertake during his career and was arguably one of his most significant artistic creations.² Unfortunately, the entire series of panels and most documentation relating to this project are lost. Originally located in the Town Hall's so-called Gulden Kamer (Golden Chamber), the four panels depicted scenes of justice being carried out by historical or legendary figures. From left to right, the panels showed a widow imploring the Roman emperor Trajan for justice for her son's murder, and Trajan ordering the execution of the murderer. This was followed by two important actions of Saint Gregory the Great. The first depicted the pope praying to a statue of Saint Peter, followed by his discovery of Trajan's skull in the emperor's tomb in Rome with the tongue miraculously intact. The series ended with two scenes of the legendary figure Herkinbald killing his sinful nephew

and, finally, his receiving the host by divine intervention on his deathbed after the bishop had refused to administer it. The highly unusual iconographic combination was introduced specifically for the Brussels context, possibly in consultation with the Augustinian canon Arnold Geilhoven (c. 1375–1442).³ Each panel was accompanied on the bottom edge of the frame by prose in sophisticated Latin in gold lettering.

This was not an unprecedented commission because the justice theme enjoyed popularity in the Low Countries and Germany to provide edifying examples for local magistrates.⁴ Nevertheless, Van der Weyden's panels were exceptional for the widespread fame they enjoyed, even before their completion in around 1450. The first attestation of their fame dates from 1441, when a group of aristocrats went to see the partially completed work in the Town Hall.⁵ In 1453, Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa (1401–1464) famously described in his treatise *De visione Dei* the experience of recognising Van der Weyden's sup-

I would like to thank Machtelt Brüggem Israël, Donal Cooper, Bregtje Dik, Susan Marti, Carl Strehlke, and Ruben Suykerbuyk for their valuable insights and comments on earlier versions of this article.

¹ The date of 1439 is based on a signature that was later transcribed. S. Schneebalg-Perelman, "La tapisserie bruxelloise sous le règne de Philippe le Bon" in exh. cat. *Rogier van der Weyden/Rogier de le Pasture. Peintre officiel de la Ville de Bruxelles. Portraitiste de la Cour de Bourgogne*, Brussels (Musée communal de Bruxelles/Maison du Roi) 1979, pp. 102–15, on p. 105; E. Dhanens, *Rogier van der Weyden: revisie van de documenten*, Brussels 1995, pp. 63–64; A. Châtelet, *Rogier van der Weyden: problèmes de la vie et de l'oeuvre*, Strasbourg 1999, p. 22.

² D. de Vos, *Rogier van der Weyden: The Complete Works*, New York 1999, p. 100.

³ Originally from Rotterdam, Arnold Geilhoven was a member of the Windesheim congregation at Groenendaal Priory near Brussels. He wrote about the stories of Trajan and Herkinbald in his work entitled *Gnotosolitos*, a compendium of moral stories for educational purposes. A. Cetto, *Der Berner Traian- und Herkinbald-Teppich*, Bern 1966, pp. 22 and 200; De Vos, op. cit. (note 2), p. 349; M. Stucky-Schürer, "Die Ger-

ichtigkeit des Trajan und des Herkinbald" in E. Lutz, J. Thali and R. Wetzel (eds.), *Literatur und Wandmalerei I. Erscheinungen höfischer Kultur und ihre Träger im Mittelalter. 1. Freiburger Colloquium vom 2. bis 5. September 1998*, Freiburg 2002, pp. 507–28, on p. 513; Dhanens, op. cit. (note 1), p. 60. For a broader discussion of his life and this work in particular, see N. Mann, "Arnold Geilhoven: An Early Disciple of Petrarch in the Low Countries", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 32 (1969), pp. 73–108; A. Weiler, *Het morele veld van de Moderne Devotie, weerspiegeld in de Gnotosolitos parvus van Arnold Gheylouven van Rotterdam, 1423*, Hilversum 2006.

⁴ Dhanens, op. cit. (note 1), p. 55; S. Kemperdick, *Der Meister von Flémalle. Die Werkstatt Robert Campins und Rogier van der Weyden*, Turnhout 1997, pp. 112–18; idem, "Robert Campin, Jacques, and Rogier van der Weyden: The Written Sources" in idem and J. Sander (eds.), exh. cat. *The Master of Flémalle and Rogier van der Weyden*, Frankfurt am Main (Städelsches Museum) 2009, pp. 53–75, on pp. 67–68; C. Blümle, *Der Zeuge im Bild. Dieric Bouts und die Konstitution des modernen Rechtsraumes*, Munich 2011, pp. 77–101.

⁵ Cetto, op. cit. (note 3), p. 212; Dhanens, op. cit. (note 1), p. 102.

posed self-portrait in the panel of Gregory the Great's miracle.⁶ More than a decade later, in 1467, the visiting Bohemian nobleman Jaroslav Lev of Rožmitál (d. 1486) described the panels as "excellentes picturae".⁷ Such was the fame of the Justice panels that in 1499 the city of Brussels ordered that the cartoons be destroyed to prevent them from being sent to other countries.⁸ Around the same time, a canon from Groenendael wrote that a short verse on Van der Weyden's immortal excellence was located close to the four panel paintings.⁹ Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528) saw the panels in 1520, while Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574) and many later authors would note their fame, sometimes with detailed descriptions.¹⁰ It is generally assumed that Van der Weyden's panels were destroyed in the bombardment of Brussels by French troops in 1695, although Elisabeth Dhanens has posited the theory that they survived until well into the eighteenth century.¹¹ Today nothing of them remains. Fortunately, the lengthy Latin inscriptions below the panels have come down to us through a transcription in the travelogue of the Spanish nobleman and poet Juan Cristóbal Calvete de Estrella (d. 1593) who admired the panels in 1549 during a visit to the Low Countries with King Philip II (1527–1598) (Appendix II).¹² Thanks to a description written between 1623 and 1628 by the French traveller François-Nicolas Baudot Dubuisson-Aubenay (c. 1590–1652), we also know that Van der Weyden signed the

panels twice and dated them 1439, the year he probably began work on them.¹³

Despite the panels' fame, which surpassed that of Van der Weyden's altarpiece *The Descent from the Cross* in the Chapel of Our Lady Without the Walls in Leuven during his lifetime, their impact on later artistic production is more difficult to establish because of the loss of the original work and most of the associated documentation.¹⁴ No visual representation of the panels was known until 1864, when Alexandre Joseph Pinchart (1823–1884) discovered that they had been copied as a large tapestry (fig. 1), now in the collection of the Bernisches Historisches Museum. Pinchart made this discovery through the astute observation that the *tituli* running along the bottom edge of the Bern tapestry were identical in almost every respect to Calvete de Estrella's 1549 transcription of those on the four panels in Brussels Town Hall.¹⁵ Since Pinchart's discovery, there has been a consensus among scholars that the Bern tapestry is a contemporaneous, more or less faithful rendition of most of Van der Weyden's lost panels.¹⁶ This insight has enabled later scholars to identify several drawings or studies as instances of the transmission of iconographic and compositional elements of the panel paintings. A well-known example is a study from around 1461 by a German draughtsman that depicts the miracle of Gregory the Great finding Trajan's skull and tongue.¹⁷ Two other drawings attributed to the

120–21; S. Kemperdick, *Rogier van der Weyden 1399/1400–1464*, Cologne 1999, p. 24; De Vos, op. cit. (note 2), pp. 59–60; Côté, op. cit. (note 6), pp. 117–18. Compare with Dhanens, op. cit. (note 1), pp. 69–71, 157 and 159–60.

12 His travelogue *El felicísimo viaje del muy alto y muy poderoso príncipe don Philippe* was published in 1552. For the entire description, which includes a full transcription of the original inscriptions, see the modern, two volume edition, Madrid 1930, vol. 1, pp. 253–61. Dirk de Vos cast some doubt on the veracity of Calvete's transcriptions. De Vos, op. cit. (note 2), p. 349.

13 De Vos, op. cit. (note 2), p. 57.

14 Kemperdick and Sander, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 12–17 and 24. For a recent discussion on the early reception of *The Descent from the Cross*, see A. Putzger, *Kult und Kunst — Kopie und Original: Altarbilder von Rogier van der Weyden, Jan van Eyck und Albrecht Dürer in ihrer frühneuzeitlichen Rezeption*, Berlin 2021, pp. 37–78.

15 A. Pinchart, "Roger van der Weyden et les tapisseries de Berne", *Bulletin de l'Académie royale des sciences, des lettres et des beaux-arts de Belgique* 17 (1864), pp. 69–77.

16 Ibidem. For a critical assessment of the faithfulness of the Bern tapestry as a copy, see R.-A. d'Hulst, *Vlaamse wandtapijten*, Brussels 1960, pp. 61–64.

17 Cetto, op. cit. (note 3), p. 104; Rapp Buri and Stucky-Schürer,

6 N. de Cusa, *De visione Dei* (ed. H.D. Riemann), Hamburg 2000, p. 5. The treatise was written in September 1453; idem, p. ix. See also H. Kaufmann, "Ein Selbstporträt Rogers van der Weyden auf den Berner Trajansteppichen", *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 39 (1916), pp. 15–30; E. Panofsky, "Facies illa Rogeri maximi pictoris" in K. Weitzmann (ed.), *Late Classical and Mediaeval Studies in Honor of Albert Mathias Friend, Jr*, Princeton 1955, pp. 392–400; A. Côté, "Les tableaux de justice de Rogier van der Weyden d'après ceux qui les ont vus" in P. Berthiaume and C. Vanderdorpe (eds.), *La passion des lettres. Études de littérature médiévale et Québécoise en hommage à Yvan Lepage*, Ottawa 2006, pp. 122–27.

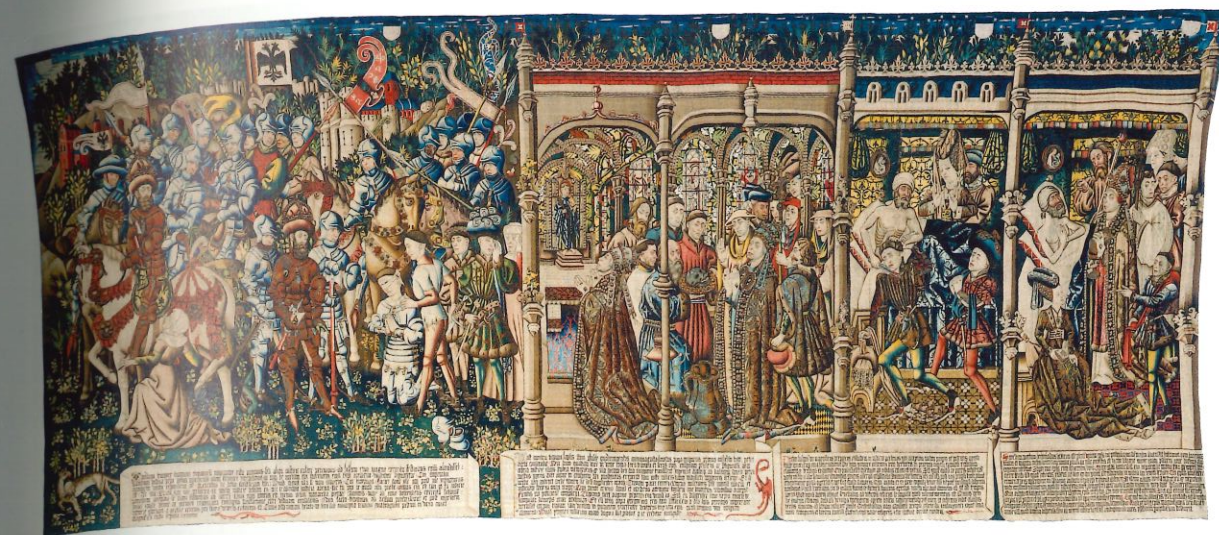
7 J. van Gelder, "Enige kanttekeningen bij de gerechtigheidsstaferelen van Rogier van der Weyden" in *Rogier van der Weyden en zijn tijd. Internationaal colloquium 11–12 juni 1964/Rogier van der Weyden et son époque. Colloque international 11–12 juin 1964*, Brussels 1974, pp. 119–64, on pp. 121–22; Dhanens, op. cit. (note 1), p. 120.

8 Dhanens op. cit. (note 1), p. 72; A. Rapp Buri and M. Stucky-Schürer, *Burgundische Tapissereien*, Munich 2001, p. 63.

9 Brussels, KBR, Ms. 21858 (*Manuale vitae scholasticae*), fol. 150; Cetto, op. cit. (note 3), p. 212.

10 J. Maquet-Tombu, "Les tableaux de justice de Rogier van der Weyden à l'Hôtel de Ville de Bruxelles", *Phoenix* 2 (1948/49), pp. 178–81; Dhanens, op. cit. (note 1), pp. 61, 66, 145–146, 148–150, 152 and 155.

11 Cetto, op. cit. (note 3), p. 23; Van Gelder, op. cit. (note 7), pp.



1 Brussels workshop (?), *The Justice of Trajan and Herkinbald*, c. 1450, wool and silk, 469 × 1053 cm, © Bernisches Historisches Museum, photo Stefan Rebsamen

anonymous draughtsman referred to as Pseudo-Aert Ortkens (act. c. 1510–c. 1540) have also been identified as possible studies after the original panels.¹⁸ Finally, there are the two anonymous panels from around 1521–30 that flank the so-called Justice Panel painted by Jacob Waben (c. 1590–c. 1634) for Hoorn Town Hall, now housed in the nearby Westfries Museum (fig. 2).¹⁹

THE BERN TAPESTRY Pinchart's identification of the source of the Bern tapestry revealed that Van der Weyden's Justice panels had been copied in woven form. Ever since, the place and date of the production of the Bern tapestry have been the topic of lively scholarly debate. A tapestry of such a large scale — it measures 461 x 1053 cm — and of such intricate design would have re-

quired detailed cartoons.²⁰ We know such *patroenen* existed at some point, because a 1499 document records that the city council had them burned to prevent them from leaving the city. Given this protectionism, it is likely that the tapestry was produced in a Brussels workshop. It has also been suggested that Van der Weyden himself was responsible for the cartoons for the Bern tapestry.²¹ Other scholars have advanced the theory that the cartoons originated from the circle of Jacques Daret (c. 1404–c. 1470) or Pasquier Grenier (d. 1493).²²

The documented history of the Bern tapestry can be traced back to 1461, when it was bequeathed to Lausanne Cathedral by George of Saluzzo (d. 1461), Bishop of Lausanne.²³ The tapestry remained in the cathedral until it was taken in 1536 as war booty to Bern, where it has

and 130–31.

22 Schneeberg-Perelman, op. cit. (note 1), pp. 106–08; Rapp Buri and Stucky-Schürer, (note 8), p. 62; A. Stauffer, "Auftragsvergabe und Verarbeitung von 'Fertigprodukten' aus flandrischen Stickwerkstätten im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert: drei Beispiele aus der Kathedrale von Lausanne" in idem and U. Bergemann (eds.), *Reiche Bilder. Aspekte zur Produktion und Funktion von Stickereien im Spätmittelalter*, Regensburg 2010, pp. 51–64, on p. 54.

23 The most comprehensive overview of George of Saluzzo's extensive bequest to Lausanne Cathedral is found in E. Dupraz, *La cathédrale de Lausanne: étude historique*, Lausanne 1906, pp. 24, 87, 117, 131, 173 and 187–92.

(note 8), pp. 58–61; L. Campbell and J. Van der Stock (eds.), exh. cat. *Rogier van der Weyden 1400–1464*, Leuven (Museum M) 2009, pp. 244 and 246.

18 De Vos, op. cit. (note 2), pp. 348–49; Campbell and Van der Stock, op. cit. (note 17), cat. no. 3.

19 Cetto, op. cit. (note 3), pp. 45–48; Van Gelder, op. cit. (note 7), pp. 126–27.

20 For an interesting discussion of some surviving full-scale cartoons for tapestries, see T. Kane, *The Troyes Mémoire: The Making of a Medieval Tapestry*, Woodbridge 2010, pp. 36–38.

21 Dhanens, op. cit. (note 1), p. 72; S. Schneeberg-Perelman, *La tapisserie des Pays-Bas sous les ducs de Bourgogne*, Brussels 2003, pp. 71–73



2 Anonymous, *The Justice of Trajan* (left) and *The Justice of Herkinbald* (right), c. 1521–1530, and Jacob Waben, *The Just Judges* (centre), 1622, oil on panel, 133.2 × 202.1 cm, Westfries Museum, Hoorn

been preserved ever since.²⁴ While there is no doubt that the tapestry was created before 1461, the precise date and place of its production remain under discussion. Most authors have estimated it to be between around 1445 and 1450 in Brussels or Tournai. However, some scholars maintain that Van der Weyden initially painted only the two scenes with Trajan, and that the two Herkinbald scenes were added after 1454 by order of Brussels' town council to honour the marriage of Charles the Bold and Isabella of Bourbon in the city on 30 October of that year.²⁵ This theory would push back the completion of

Van der Weyden's Justice series to at least 1455, if not later. As a result, Nello Forti Grazzini has argued that the Bern tapestry was created between 1455 and 1461.²⁶ This later date for the completion of the Brussels panels (and consequently of the Bern tapestry) is countered by the fact that Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa saw the panels in Brussels during a visit to the Low Countries in 1451–52, which he would describe soon after in *De visione Dei*.²⁷

It has been proposed that it was George of Saluzzo who commissioned the Bern tapestry. Apart from the fact that he is the first known owner, another argument

ofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting: Its Origin and Character*, Cambridge, MA 1953, p. 264. Châtelet even goes so far as to discuss the scenes of Trajan and Herkinbald in separate chapters. Châtelet, op. cit. (note 1), pp. 143–44 and 188–89.

²⁶ F. Joubert, *La tapisserie au Moyen Âge*, Rennes 1981, p. 20; Forti Grazzini, op. cit. (note 25), p. 11.

²⁷ Van Gelder, op. cit. (note 7), p. 125.

²⁴ E. Chavannes, *Le trésor de l'église cathédrale de Lausanne*, Lausanne 1873, pp. 55–56; Dupraz, op. cit. (note 23), p. 234.

²⁵ This theory was first posited in G. Hulin de Loo, "Les tableaux de justice de Rogier van der Weyden et les tapisseries de Berne" in *Actes du XIVe congrès international d'histoire de l'art*, 2 vols., Basel 1938, pp. 141–45. See also N. Forti Grazzini, *L'arazzo errarese*, Milan 1982, p. 12; E. Pan-



3 Brussels, Arras or Tournai workshop, *Adoration of the Magi*, c. 1450, wool and silk, 385 × 368 cm, © Bernisches Historisches Museum, photo Stefan Rebsamen

is that George might have had a taste for Netherlandish tapestries showcasing Van der Weyden's artistic influence.²⁸ His extensive bequest to Lausanne Cathedral in 1461 included a series of four tapestries from Tournai or Brussels depicting scenes from the youth of Christ. The cartoons for this series were probably influenced by Van der Weyden's work.²⁹ Only one of these tapestries, the *Adoration of the Magi* (fig. 3), survives and is also preserved in Bern.³⁰ On this basis, Anna Maria Cetto has ar-

gued that George of Saluzzo originally commissioned the tapestry with the Justice scenes for the Castle of Ouchy, where he presided over trials.³¹ Anna Rapp Buri and Monica Stucky-Schürer later proposed that George commissioned it for a chapter room in the cathedral complex at Lausanne.³² Both theories have been adopted in later publications on the Bern tapestry over the years.³³

However, given the complete lack of documentary evidence, it is not certain that George was responsible

²⁸ Stauffer, op. cit. (note 22), pp. 51–64.

²⁹ Kemperdick argued that the design for this tapestry was directly inspired by the work of Rogier van der Weyden and Jacques Daret. See S. Marti, T.-H. Borchert and G. Keck (eds.), exh. cat. *Karl der Kühne (1433–1477): Kunst, Krieg und Hofkultur*, Bern (Bernisches Historisches Museum) & Bruges (Groeningemuseum) 2008, p. 201.

³⁰ This tapestry made its way to Bern in 1536 as part of the same war booty as the larger Justice tapestry. Cetto, op. cit. (note 3), p. 38; exh. cat. *Die Burgunderbeute und Werke burgundischer Hofkunst*, Bern (Bernisches Historisches Museum) 1969, pp. 364–65; R. Wyss, "Der

Dreikönigsteppich im Historischen Museum Bern" in *De bloeitijd van de Vlaamse tapijtkunst: internationaal colloquium 23–25 mei 1961*, Brussels 1969, pp. 459–72.

³¹ Cetto, op. cit. (note 3), pp. 36 and 151; Campbell and Van der Stock, op. cit. (note 17), p. 266.

³² Rapp Buri and Stucky-Schürer, op. cit. (note 8), p. 61; Blümle, op. cit. (note 4), p. 72.

³³ A. Mottola Molino et al. (eds.), *Le muse e il principe: arte di corte nel Rinascimento padano*, 2 vols., Modena 1991, vol. 2, p. 62.

for the production of the tapestry.³⁴ As such, some scholars have proposed that he acquired the Bern tapestry via his extensive familial or ecclesiastical networks. André de Mandach has argued that the tapestry was created for Amadeus VIII, Duke of Savoy (1383–1451), also known as Antipope Felix V, in 1440 and that he bequeathed it to George upon his death in 1451.³⁵ George was indeed a longtime spokesperson of the Savoy court and enjoyed the trust of prominent members of the ducal family, not least of all Amadeus.³⁶

Other scholars have argued that the Bern tapestry was commissioned for a Ferrarese context. They cite a passage from *De politia litteraria* (completed c. 1464) by Angelo Decembrio (1415–after 1467) that states that Leonello d'Este (1407–1450) of Ferrara owned a tapestry depicting the scenes of Trajan and Gregory the Great.³⁷ This has led several scholars to argue for the possibility that Leonello, who is known to have owned a panel painting by Van der Weyden, also had a tapestry made after the Brussels panels.³⁸ Some have advanced the theory that this is the selfsame Bern tapestry.³⁹ Another factor in favour of a connection with Ferrara is the fact that George of Saluzzo, the first known owner of the Bern tapestry, had a familial connection with the court at Ferrara: he was related to Leonello's stepmother, Ricciarda da Saluzzo (1410–1474).⁴⁰ This has led Anna Maria Cetto and Nello Forti Grazzini to suggest the possibility that George acquired the tapestry via Ricciarda from Leonel-

lo's estate after his death in 1450.⁴¹

A closer look at the sources, however, quickly reveals that the evidence for the Ferrara theory is problematic. The credibility of Angelo Decembrio's account, which suggests the existence of an identical tapestry in Leonello's possession, has been contested.⁴² The description makes no mention of the Herkinbald scenes, for example, and the timing of the source cannot be correct, because it has been shown that the passage in question was added by Decembrio twelve years after Leonello's death.⁴³ Furthermore, the surviving inventories of the Este court contain no description at all that matches with Van der Weyden's panels.⁴⁴ Neither could Ricciarda da Saluzzo have played a role in George's acquisition of such a tapestry because she left the Ferrara court in 1443, years before Leonello's death in 1450.⁴⁵ The evidence for the theory that Leonello or his stepmother ever owned a tapestry of Van der Weyden's panels, or that it was ever in Ferrara, is therefore rather circumstantial and problematic.

The unreliable nature of Decembrio's account also has implications for our understanding of Van der Weyden's panels and their reproduction as tapestries. There is no consensus on the number of tapestries that were produced after the famous panels. There are written accounts from the fifteenth century that might suggest the existence of several tapestries with the Trajan scenes in the Royal Palace in Évora in Portugal, in a noble collection in Spain in 1461, and in the collection of Leonello

25), p. 12.

42 W. Gundersheimer, *Ferrara: The Style of a Renaissance Despotism*, Princeton 1973, pp. 104–05 and 119–21; Mottola Molino et al., op. cit. (note 33), vol. 2, p. 61; Decembrio, op. cit. (note 37), pp. 9–10.

43 Forti Grazzini, op. cit. (note 25), p. 11; Mottola Molino et al., op. cit. (note 33), vol. 2, p. 61–62; Decembrio, op. cit. (note 37), pp. 9–10; T. Campbell (ed.), exh. cat. *Tapestry in the Renaissance: Art and Magnificence*, New York (Metropolitan Museum of Art) 2002, pp. 98–99.

44 The inventory of the precious objects from the collection of Leonello d'Este was drawn up from 1441/2 to 1450. It was published in G. Ameri, *Lo specchio del principe. I beni preziosi e il collezionismo di Lionello d'Este*, Genoa 2016, pp. 61–167. See also Dhanens op. cit. (note 1), p. 73; F. Trevisani, *I gusti collezionistici di Leonello d'Este. Gioielli e smalti en ronde-bosse a corte*, Modena 2003, pp. 69–72. Another inventory of textiles and tapestries at the Este court was made between 1457 and 1469, and was published in Forti Grazzini, op. cit. (note 25), pp. 215–27.

45 G. Pardi (ed.), *Diario Ferrarese dall'anno 1409–1502 di autori incerti*, Bologna 1928, p. 27: "MCCCCXLIII, a dì xxiv de Ottobre, se partite madona Rizada, molgiere he fu del marchese Nicolò, et andete a Saluzzo per stare, et portò con lei, tra roba, veste, dinari et zoje, che furno estimate ducati sexanta milia."

34 Schneebalg-Perelman, op. cit. (note 1), p. 105. Jezler has even suggested that the Bern tapestry was begun before George of Saluzzo became involved and that the bishop had a hand in the final stage of its production. See Marti, Borchert and Keck, op. cit. (note 29), pp. 202–04.

35 A. de Mandach, "À propos de cet impénétrable Kissinger du xve siècle que fut Amédée VIII–Felix V: la tapisserie de son apothéose pontificale retrouvée à Berne", *Publication du Centre Européen Burgondo-médianes* 17 (1976), pp. 113–21.

36 For example, the Duke of Savoy allowed the coins from George's diocese of Lausanne to be circulated in the Duchy. Rapp Buri and Stucky-Schürer, op. cit. (note 8), pp. 28–29.

37 For the original Latin passage, see A.C. Decembrio, *De politia litteraria* (ed. N. Witten), Berlin & Boston 2002, pp. 427–28 (VI.68.10).

38 For more information on Leonello's payments to Rogier van der Weyden, see De Vos, op. cit. (note 2), p. 61 and 137–38.

39 Cetto, op. cit. (note 3), pp. 41–42; Forti Grazzini, op. cit. (note 25), pp. 11–12.

40 They shared a common ancestor in Tommaso II di Saluzzo (1304–1357). George was a member of a minor branch as he descended from Tommaso's younger son Eustachio (d. 1405). Ricciarda was Tommaso's great-granddaughter.

41 Cetto, op. cit. (note 3), pp. 41–42; Forti Grazzini, op. cit. (note

d'Este.⁴⁶ The sources, however, make no mention of Herkinbald, nor do they account for the fact that scenes of Trajan's justice enjoyed popularity in their own right, as several studies have demonstrated.⁴⁷ Lorne Campbell has convincingly argued that the tapestry preserved in Bern is the only such copy made after Van der Weyden's panels and that it came from a context other than Ferrara, Évora or Spain.⁴⁸

The preceding debates show that much still remains to be explored regarding the artistic impact of Van der Weyden's Brussels panels and the provenance of the Bern tapestry. A newly discovered description in a manuscript in Cambridge University Library, written by the German clergyman Matthias Ramung (d. 1478) on 11 September 1453, now provides evidence that Van der Weyden's compositions were known in Rome by the early 1450s and that the medium of tapestry played a vital part in this transmission. Moreover, as will be argued, this document provides evidence on the provenance of the Bern tapestry before 1461. The impact of this document on our understanding of the foregoing can only be fully appreciated after a detailed discussion of the source in question and its author.

THE CONTEXT OF THE SOURCE AND ITS SURVIVAL The description is contained in a manuscript preserved at Cambridge University Library (Appendix I). Although the existence of the text was briefly noted in a nineteenth-century published catalogue of the University Library

46 Cetto, op. cit. (note 3), pp. 38–41.

47 Idem, pp. 40–41; Dhanens, op. cit. (note 1), pp. 72–73.

48 Campbell and Van der Stock, op. cit. (note 17), p. 242.

49 A small part of the description was transcribed in H.R. Luard (ed.), *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts Preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge*, 6 vols., Cambridge 1856–67, vol. 3, p. 250. The famous author and scholar M.R. James (1862–1936) later copied this same transcription with some scribal errors in his individual notes on all the manuscripts held in Cambridge University Library. See M.R. James, "Unpublished description by M.R. James of Cambridge, University Library, Ms. Hh.1.7 (miscellaneous historical texts)", (2021, online at <https://www.repository.cam.ac.uk/>), no. 40.

50 For a list of the texts it contains, see James, op. cit. (note 49).

51 A drawing of Ramung's coat-of-arms is included in fol. 3, the start of the first text in the manuscript. See also nos. 48 and 63 in James, op. cit. (note 49).

52 Matthias Ramung was first identified as such by Henry Bradshaw (1831–1886), fellow at King's College, University of Cambridge. This identification was later taken over by M.R. James (see note 49). There are various spellings of his name in different publications: Matthias or Mathias, Ramung or (von) Rammung. I have opted for the most

manuscripts, the content of the text has never been identified or studied.⁴⁹ The manuscript itself contains a collection of transcribed fifteenth-century documents that were bound together not long after they were written.⁵⁰ Most of the texts are by the same person, who identifies himself in various parts of the manuscript as Matthias Ramung.⁵¹ He was also the compiler and first owner of the manuscript.⁵² A set of damaged dedicatory verses on fol. iv suggest that Ramung may have bequeathed the manuscripts to an institutional library at some point but not enough of them remain to make out the precise context. It is known, however, that Ramung bequeathed his personal collection of books to the library of Speyer Cathedral later in life.⁵³ This library, which attracted many scholars from abroad in the fifteenth century, was partially destroyed by French troops in 1689, after which several manuscripts were dispersed.⁵⁴ Perhaps the Cambridge manuscript originally entered the cathedral library as part of Ramung's bequest and was later removed, but this remains to be proven.

What is certain is that around 1700 the manuscript entered the important and extensive library of the bibliophile John Moore (1646–1714), Bishop of Ely. Moore purchased mostly from British book dealers who sourced their materials throughout Europe.⁵⁵ Unfortunately, Moore left few detailed records on the acquisition of individual books, so it is not known how or precisely when the manuscript was acquired.⁵⁶ In 1715, less than a year after Moore's death in 1714, the library was pur-

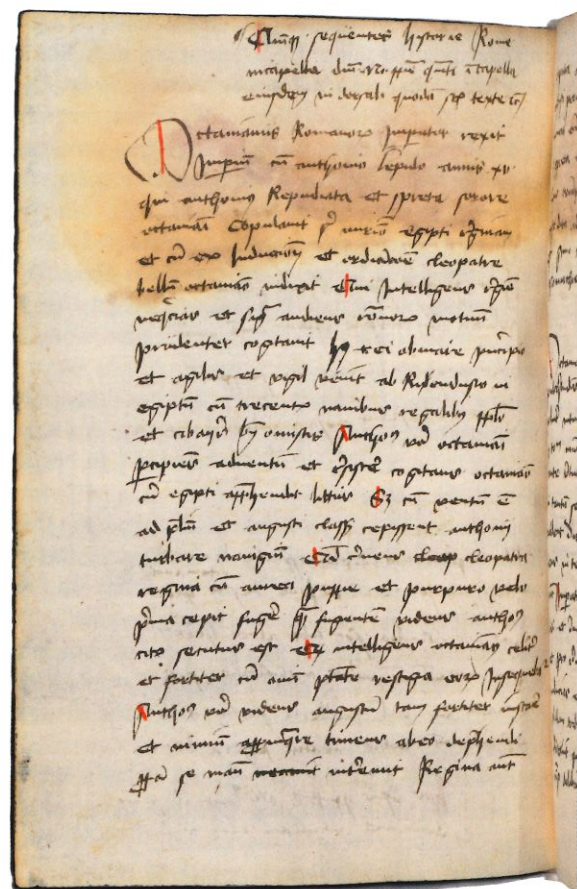
common spelling, Matthias Ramung, which is also found in contemporaneous documents, for example in charters dated 1452, 1457 and 1459 respectively. Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Abt. Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, A 602 Nr 11320 = WR 11320; idem, G 20 Bü 5 = A 602 Nr 135; idem, Abt. Staatsarchiv Ludwigsburg, B 189 I U 216. It is sometimes spelled Ramming, for example in one charter from 1456. Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg, Urk. Lehmann 307.

53 K. Andermann, "Matthias Ramung. Bischof von Speyer und Kanzler der Pfalz", *Archiv für mittelhessische Kirchengeschichte* 74 (2022), pp. 163–200, on p. 197.

54 P. Lehmann, *Die mittelalterliche Dombibliothek zu Speyer*, Munich 1934, p. 48.

55 D. McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library: A History. Vol. 2: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, Cambridge 1986, pp. 47–152; J. Ringrose, "The Royal Library: John Moore and His Books" in P. Fox (ed.), *Cambridge University Library: The Great Collections*, Cambridge 1998, pp. 78–89.

56 The manuscript does not fit any description in the published 1697 inventory of John Moore's library, attributed to E. Bernard: *Catalogi librorum manuscriptorum Angliae et Hibernae*, Oxford 1697, pp. 361–78 and 393–403.



5 First folio of the description by Matthias Ramung, 11 September 1453, Cambridge University Library, cod. Hh.1.7, fol. 134v, © photo Raffaella Losito, reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library

72 The phrase is also similar to the references to the *capella maior* in documents regarding its embellishment in the 1370s. For the most complete account of this, see J. Kirsch, *Die Rückkehr der Päpste Urban V. und Gregor XI. von Avignon nach Rom*, Paderborn 1898, pp. 108–65 and 239–62. The miniature first was discussed in K. Steinke, *Die mittelalterlichen Vatikanpaläste und ihre Kapellen. Baugeschichtliche Untersuchung anhand der schriftlichen Quellen*, Vatican City 1984, pp. 102–03.

73 R. Sherr, “The Papal Chapel in the Late Fifteenth Century” in A. Busse Berger and J. Rodin (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Fifteenth-Century Music*, Cambridge 2015, pp. 446–62, on p. 446.

74 See G. Moroni, *Le cappelle pontificie, cardinalizie, prelatizie*, s.l. 1841, pp. 8–12; J. O’Malley, *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome: Rhet-*

which was demolished during the papacy (1471–84) of Sixtus IV (1414–1484) to make way for the present Sistine Chapel.⁷² The term *capella* or *cappella*, in a papal context, designated a physical chapel but also the personnel affiliated with it and, more importantly, any religious service or ceremony attended by the pope.⁷³ The celebration of mass in the pope’s presence (often referred to in Latin as *coram papa*) increasingly took place in the fifteenth century in the *capella maior* as the ceremonial centre of the palace complex.⁷⁴ Ramung must have been aware of this double meaning of the term *capella*, because he included it twice in the title of his description. We may thus conclude that Ramung was inside the papal chapel on 11 September 1453 to attend a service in the presence of Pope Nicholas V himself. The phrase “in dorsali” (in a dossal) means that the object was located directly above an altar.

Ramung wrote that he was looking at tapestries. He explicitly describes the five *historie* as “texte” (woven). The word *historia* was commonly used to describe the individual scenes depicted in tapestries in the fifteenth century.⁷⁵ In this period, there was considerable appreciation for and interest in the composition of extensive *historie* in tapestries accompanied by *tituli* explaining the scenes they accompany. A particularly well-documented example is the elaborate set of instructions for the production of a set of tapestries for the choir stalls in the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene in Troyes (Aube) between 1416 and 1430. Surviving records show the active involvement of a local Dominican friar whose task was to compose the scenes (referred to as *hystoires* in the contemporaneous documents) and their *tituli* for the tapestries that were to depict scenes of the life of Mary Magdalene.⁷⁶ Another example is a fifteenth-century collection of eleven written compositions of *tituli* in French for a large series of tapestries of the Trojan War, of which several were made for, among others, Charles the

oric, *Doctrine, and Reform in the Sacred Orators of the Papal Court, c. 1450–1521*, Durham 1979, pp. 7, 9 and 13–20.

75 The use of the word *historia* in this context is not unusual. It was often used to denote the scenes of tapestries. For example, in 1441 a tapestry gifted by Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy (1396–1467) to Pope Eugene IV (1383–1447) was described as containing “trois histoires morales”. Smit, op. cit. (note 71), p. 26. It is also used regularly in a list from 1465 of tapestries lent by Pope Paul II (1417–1471) for the wedding of Alfonso II of Naples (1448–1495) and Ippolita Maria Sforza (1445–1488). E. Müntz, *Les arts à la cour des papes pendant le xvième et xvième siècle*, 3 vols., Paris 1878–82, vol. 2, pp. 121–22.

76 Kane, op. cit. (note 20), pp. 22–31.



6 Miniature of the papal palace complex with the old *capella maior* protruding in the foreground, 1457, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City, MS Vat. Lat. 2224, fol. 98r

Bold (1433–1477), Federico da Montefeltro (1422–1482) and Henry VII (1457–1509), King of England.⁷⁷

It was certainly not uncommon to use tapestries as dossals in fifteenth-century Europe. One example of a tapestry intentionally mimicking a dossal is preserved in the Royal Collections in Madrid.⁷⁸ A second example is the so-called *Tapestry of the Three Coronations*, commissioned by Cardinal Charles (1433–1488), later Duke of Bourbon for Sens Cathedral sometime after 1476. The design for this tapestry, which is smaller than the one in Bern and which has the typical form of a Brussels altarpiece, was probably made by an artist who was strongly influenced by the work of Van der Weyden. Finally, men-

77 Exh. cat. *Rogier van der Weyden/Rogier de le Pasture*, cit. (note 1), cat. no. 33; Rapp Buri and Stucky-Schürer, op. cit. (note 8), pp. 313–19.

78 A. Smolar-Meynart (ed.), exh. cat. *Âge d’or bruxellois: tapisseries de la couronne d’Espagne*, Brussels (Cathédrale de Saint-Michel) 2000, pp. 11–12 and 116; C. Herrero Carretero, *Tapices de Isabel la Católica*, Madrid 2004, cat. no. 1.

79 For a study of the provenance of the Sens tapestry, see L. Saulnier-Pernuit, *Les trois couronnements: tapisserie du trésor de la cathédrale de Sens*, Paris 1993. The dossal-tapestry commissioned by the bishop of Osma was extensively studied in E. Wetter and M. Wolff (eds.), *The Embroidered Altarpiece from El Burgo de Osma*, Riggisberg 2022.

80 For a discussion of the long tradition that this entity held at the papal court, see M. Ross, *The Papal Chapel 1288–1304: A Study in Institutional and Cultural Change*, unpublished PhD dissertation, University College London, 2013.

81 The best overview of documented regulations can be found in B. Schimmelpfennig, *Die Zeremonienbücher der römischen Kurie im Mittelalter*, Tübingen 1973.

82 K. Schäfer, *Die Ausgaben der apostolischen Kammer unter Benedikt XII, Klemens VI und Innocenz VI (1335–1362)*, Paderborn 1914, pp. 49–50,

tion should be made of the embroidered altarpiece commissioned by Pedro de Montoya (1453–1474), Bishop of Osma.⁷⁹

The use of a tapestry as a dossal would have been particularly apt in the context of the old *capella maior* in the Vatican Palace (fig. 6). This sparsely furnished space was used and adapted for many different functions.⁸⁰ Depending on the particular liturgical activities, the chapel was hung with tapestries and other textiles, as dictated by strict papal ceremonial orders on celebrations in *capella*.⁸¹ Numerous records from the fourteenth century show that textiles, and particularly tapestries depicting scenes or saints, played a pivotal role in the various uses of the papal chapel and the celebration of pontifical mass therein.⁸² The author Petrus Amelius (d. 1401) explicitly noted the presence of many tapestries in the chapel on the occasion of the canonisation of Saint Bridget of Sweden (d. 1373) in 1393.⁸³ Flemish tapestries gained prominence in Rome in the fifteenth century when the pope took up residence in the eternal city again. A particularly important impetus was given at the start of the papacy of Nicholas V in 1447, when he became the first pope to establish a workshop in Rome that employed Flemish tapestry weavers.⁸⁴ The old papal chapel saw a similar use of textiles from this time onwards. For example, in 1463 Pope Pius II (1405–1464) purchased a series of twelve *verdure banchali*, tapestries to cover the chapel’s bench seats.⁸⁵ The habit of filling the walls of the papal *capella* with a changing selection of tapestries was continued in

212–13, 373–74, 548, 626 and 784.

83 J. Mabillon, *Museum italicum*, Paris 1689, pp. 537–38; *Patrologia Latina* 78, p. 1359.

84 For more information on Nicholas V and his patronage of tapestry weavers in Rome, see E. Müntz, “La tapisserie à Rome au xvième siècle”, *Gazette des Beaux Arts* 14 (1876), pp. 173–77; J. Lestocquoy, *Deux siècles de l’histoire de la tapisserie (1300–1500)*: Paris, Arras, Lille, Tournai, Bruxelles, Arras 1978, p. 110; Smit, op. cit. (note 71), p. 21; Campbell, op. cit. (note 43), pp. 90–91; G. Delmarcel (ed.), *Flemish Tapestry Weavers Abroad: Emigration and the Founding of Manufactories in Europe. Proceedings of the International Conference Held at Mechelen*, New York 2002, p. 120.

85 These tapestries were commissioned from the famous tapestry weaver Giachetto di Benedetto from Siena who had worked for the papal court since the 1440s. Rome, Archivio di Stato di Roma, Camerale 1, no. 837, Mandati 1462–1463, fol. 169v (18 June 1463); Müntz, op. cit. (note 84), p. 319; Smit, op. cit. (note 71), p. 22. See also J. Lestocquoy, “Eugène IV, Jean Fouquet et Grachetto”, *Journal des savants* 1 (1976), pp. 141–48; Lestocquoy, op. cit. (note 77), p. 110; Campbell, op. cit. (note 43), pp. 90–91; Delmarcel, op. cit. (note 84), p. 120.



7 Giuliano Amadei, *Pope Sixtus IV Attending Mass Inside the Newly Consecrated Sistine Chapel*, c. 1483, body colour on paper, 10.8 × 16.3 cm, Musée Condé, Chantilly, © RMN-Grand Palais / René-Gabriel Ojeda

its famous architectural successor, the Sistine Chapel. The scholar and translator Andrea of Trebizond praised the new chapel's "walls covered in tapestries and gold".⁸⁶ A later miniature (fig. 7) by Giuliano Amadei (d. 1496) for a lost missal of Pope Innocent VIII (1432–1492) shows the walls behind the benches in the Sistine Chapel covered with *banchali* during what may be the consecration of the newly built chapel on 15 August 1483.⁸⁷ Amadei's effort to include meticulous representations of tapestries and other textiles underlines their continued importance in the use of this liturgical space.

Ramung's written description may seem straightforward because it starts and ends with inscriptions speci-

fying the content, date and location of writing, and the described object, but this is deceptive. More explanation is required about the structure of this written source. Although Ramung explicitly notes at the beginning of the document that he is describing five *historie* (scenes), his text provides no physical or visual information about the dossal, except that it consists of woven scenes (i.e. tapestries). Instead, Ramung transcribes a series of *tituli* that accompany each of the *historie* he saw on the dossal. Moreover, Ramung's division into five scenes does not mean that he saw them all in one continuous tapestry. A close reading of the description reveals that the transcribed inscriptions of the five *historie* can be further di-

⁸⁶ J. Monfasani, "A Description of the Sistine Chapel under Pope Sixtus IV", *Artibus et Historiae* 4 (1983), pp. 9–18, on p. 12.

⁸⁷ J. Shearman, *Raphael's Cartoons in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen and the Tapestry for the Sistine Chapel*, London 1972, p. 5; J. Al-

exander, "Fragments of an Illuminated Missal of Pope Innocent VIII", *Pantheon* 38 (1980), pp. 377–82; T. d'Urso et al., *Enluminures italiennes: chefs-d'oeuvres du musée Condé*, Paris 2000, cat. no. 12.

vided into at least two main separate sets, which suggests that Ramung saw multiple tapestries.

The inscriptions of the first three *historie* (Appendix I, fols. 134v–136) constitute a collection of three separate, reworked passages from Christian and late-antique biographies of emperor Augustus. The first one, starting on fol. 134v (fig. 5), discusses the emperor's victory over Marc Anthony and Cleopatra and the latter's suicide as described by Hugh of Fleury in *Historia ecclesiastica*.⁸⁸ This is followed by the inscription of the second *historia*, which recounts Augustus's encounter with the Tiburtine Sybil and the apparition of the Virgin and Child, drawing heavily on the accounts from the *Legenda Aurea* and *Mirabilia Romae*.⁸⁹ The third *historia* described by Ramung is a glorification of the first Roman emperor's work ethic, mixed with borrowed passages from Suetonius and Eutropius.⁹⁰ This last inscription, which Ramung marked as being "against idleness", might have been independent of the previous two.

After transcribing the inscriptions from the first three *historie*, Ramung transcribes further inscriptions but there is a clear break with the preceding. He writes that now "the *historia* of justice" commences (fol. 136v). The justice theme takes up the last two of the five *historie* in his description. Moreover, Ramung's tone changes as he describes the subsequent two *historie* as *ornativa* (decorative) and *pulchra* (beautiful; fol. 136v). This suggests that he moved to a different object that was located close or next to the previous set. The so-called *historia* of justice starts with an inscription about Gregory the Great's miracle of finding Trajan's skull and intact tongue at the emperor's tomb (fol. 136v). Ramung then transcribes an inscription that details Trajan's encounter with a widow and his subsequent judgement of her child's murderer

(fol. 137). The fifth and final *historia* consists of inscriptions of two scenes: Herkinbald stabbing his criminal nephew to death (fol. 137v), and his being denied the host on his deathbed but miraculously receiving it anyway (fols. 138r–v).⁹¹

The inscriptions of the last two *historie* represent highly unusual iconography for the context of the papal *capella maior* in Rome. In fact, the combination of these particular stories from the lives of Trajan, Gregory the Great and Herkinbald is identical to those chosen for Van der Weyden's panels in Brussels. This is not the only similarity. Upon closer inspection it becomes clear that the texts of the final two *historie* in Ramung's document are more or less identical to the inscriptions of Van der Weyden's panels, which have come down to us through the 1549 account by Calvete de Estrella (see Appendix II) and the long description by Dubuisson-Aubenay from c. 1623–28.

A quick comparison, however, of Ramung's transcription with those found in the aforementioned travel accounts shows systematic morphologic differences with the inscriptions on the original Brussels panels. The very same morphological and syntactic differences from Calvete de Estrella's account from 1549 are also found in the *tituli* of the Bern tapestry.⁹² Ramung's transcription and the *tituli* on the Bern tapestry are exactly the same and deviate from the original Brussels inscriptions in exactly the same places. Apart from some minor spelling mistakes on Ramung's part, the only notable difference between his text and the *tituli* on the Bern tapestry is that Ramung starts on fol. 134v with the inscription detailing the scene of Gregory the Great's miracle at Trajan's tomb, which is the second part of the Bern and Brussels inscriptions. The explanation for this, however, is given

⁸⁸ Hugh of Fleury, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, book III, v. 19; L. de Ruiter, *Hugo van Fleury: Historia Ecclesiastica, editio altera: kritische teksteditie*, unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Groningen, 2016, p. 47.

⁸⁹ See J. de Voragine, *Legenda Aurea* (ed. J. Grässe), Leipzig 1850, p. 44; J. Grässe, *Beiträge zur Literatur und Sage des Mittelalters*, Dresden 1850, p. 7.

⁹⁰ The section *Tertia: contra ocium* (Appendix, fol. 135v–136), which tells the story of emperor Augustus, is a reworking of the biography of emperor Octavian Augustus as found in Suetonius (v. 1–101). The phrase "in bello felicius nec in pace moderacior" (fol. 136r) in the same section of Ramung's description is almost identical to a phrase from Eutropius, *Breviarium Historiae Romanae* (ed. F. Ruehl), Leipzig 1887, pp. 56–57 (book VIII, 8).

⁹¹ The first known documentary appearance of the legend of

Herkinbald is found in *Dialogus miraculorum* (1219–23) by Caesarius of Heisterbach (1180–1240). Cetto, op. cit. (note 3), p. 134; Rapp Buri and Stucky-Schürer, op. cit. (note 8), pp. 66–68; A. de Mandach, "À propos de Césaire de Heisterbach (manuscrit de Bonn), Rogier van der Weyden et une tapisserie de la légende de la "Justice d'Archambaud", *Publication du Centre Européen d'Études Burgondo-médiennes* 13 (1971), pp. 106–14. His legend appears to have come from Brussels. L. Hibbard, "Erkenbald the Belgian: A Study in Medieval Exempla of Justice", *Modern Philology* 12 (1920), pp. 129–38; C. Dodgson, "An illustration by Holbein of the Legend of Herkinbald", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 3 (1940), pp. 241–43.

⁹² A complete transcription of the *tituli* of the Bern tapestry can be found in Cetto, op. cit. (note 3), pp. 10–12; De Vos, op. cit. (note 2), pp. 350–51.

by Ramung himself. He writes explicitly on fol. 136v that he mixed up the order of the first two scenes, and that the story of Trajan's encounter with the widow and his punishment of her son's murderer preceded that of Gregory the Great.

Thus, the five *historie* that Ramung saw cannot have been part of a single object. He must have seen them in separate tapestries suspended on a dossal in the papal chapel. It remains unclear how Ramung could have seen several tapestries on only a single dossal. Perhaps they were suspended one above the other? Or was the dossal, which could take on many forms in the fifteenth century, particularly large? The height of the old papal chapel, though lower than the current Sistine Chapel, could certainly have accommodated this. This might explain Ramung's initial confusion of the order of the scenes in his writing: he must have moved his gaze from one tapestry to the other while looking up from his papers and transcribing at the same time. The spelling mistakes suggest that Ramung hurriedly transcribed the *tituli* while standing in front of the altar and its dossal.

These are not the only similarities to suggest that the Bern tapestry is the one that Ramung saw in September 1453. There is also historical evidence that points in a similar direction. The ecclesiastical career of George of Saluzzo, the first known owner of the Bern tapestry, took him to the papal court in Rome at the same time that Ramung was visiting. After making an official visit to Nicholas V in 1449, George became a frequent guest at the papal court throughout the 1450s.⁹³ He even relocated from his diocese of Lausanne to Rome sometime after 14 November 1453, very shortly before or after the end of Ramung's stay.⁹⁴ George became a significant presence at the papal court because, in 1455, Pope Callixtus III (1378–1458) conferred on him the prestigious position of

the guardianship of the Castel Sant'Angelo.⁹⁵ The bishop remained an active and influential figure in papal circles in subsequent years.⁹⁶ He was Vice-Chamberlain of the Church until his permanent return to Lausanne in July 1461.⁹⁷ George was thus present only weeks after Ramung saw a tapestry whose *tituli* precisely match those of the tapestry that George would later own in 1461. Supported by the very plausible theory that Van der Weyden's Justice panels were copied as a tapestry only once, I argue that the tapestry that Ramung saw on 11 September 1453 is probably the one that George would later bequeath to Lausanne Cathedral and which is now preserved in Bern (fig. 1).

THE PROVENANCE OF THE BERN TAPESTRY Ramung's description proves that at the heart of papal courtly ritual in Rome there was, at least for a brief time, a tapestry that was a rendition of Rogier van der Weyden's famous panels for Brussels Town Hall. Moreover, the preceding analysis of the description strongly suggests that the tapestry that Ramung saw can be identified as the one preserved in Bern (fig. 1). This leaves us with the question of how the tapestry that Ramung described came to be in the *capella maior* in 1453.

If Ramung saw the tapestry in the Vatican Palace, did George of Saluzzo own it before 1453? As discussed earlier in this article, several scholars have argued that George did not commission the tapestry but that it passed into his possession via his extensive networks. Indeed, restoration reports held at the Bern Museum show that the five coats-of-arms along the top edge, the only material evidence of George's ownership of the tapestry, were applied after the tapestry was finished, with threads of a different weave.⁹⁸ Did Ramung view the tapestry before it was in George's possession? Or did the latter already

position within a year. Wildermann, *op. cit.* (note 93), p. 34.

⁹⁶ For example, on 27 April 1457 George represented Cardinal Ludovico Trevisan (1401–1465), cardinal-protector of San Lorenzo in Damaso. Florence, Archivio di Stato di Firenze, Fondo Martelli, Pergamene, no. 29.

⁹⁷ Documentary evidence of his activities as Vice-Chamberlain for the period of 1458–61 at the papal court can be found in Rome, Archivio di Stato di Roma, Camerale 1 – Quietanze per comuni e minuti servizi, reg. 1123 and 1124.

⁹⁸ Joubert, *op. cit.* (note 26), p. 20. Since its acquisition by the Bernisches Historisches Museum in 1894, the Bern tapestry has undergone two restorations, in 1959–60 and 1997. It was during the first restoration, carried out by Mme Flury-Lemberg, that the coats-of-arms were

own it? Given his position at the papal court and the high esteem in which he was held by successive popes, it is possible that the tapestry was given to George while he was in Rome. If so, this gift must have taken place sometime between his move to Rome in late 1453 and his return to Lausanne in 1461. Gifts of large tapestries were certainly not uncommon in fifteenth-century Italy. One well-studied example of this is a tapestry depicting a scene from the story of the fictive characters Gerart and Fromont, now preserved in the Musei Civici in Padua.⁹⁹

Unfortunately, Ramung's description does not tell us how, when and why the tapestry arrived in the place where he saw it. Could Van der Weyden's supposed visit to Rome in 1450 have played a role in the presence of this woven copy of his Brussels panels? Might he have brought cartoons or even the completed tapestry with him from a workshop in Brussels? However, the evidence for the artist's presence in Italy remains debated. The story of his supposed visit to Italy in 1450 goes back to Bartolomeo Facio's biography of the artist in *De viris illustribus* (1456). But documentary evidence, including payments to the artist, strongly suggests that he was not in Italy in 1450, or if so, only for a very brief period. Moreover, the credibility of the description in Facio's dialogue is diminished by the fact that it was written years after the supposed visit took place and that it is partially based on hearsay.¹⁰⁰

How the tapestry made its way to the papal court in Rome in the early 1450s thus remains an open question. Nevertheless, the preceding discussion of the historical connections between the Bern tapestry, Matthias Ramung, George of Saluzzo, and the papal court allow us to make some important new observations regarding the international fame of Rogier van der Weyden's Justice panels.

examined. In her restoration report she confirmed that the coats-of-arms were made of a different weave and were applied afterwards with a clearly less expert hand. I would like to thank Dr Susan Marti for making these documents available to me. Jozef Duverger came to the same conclusion as the restoration reports without having consulted them. J. Duverger, "Enkele gegevens betreffende Rogier van der Weyden en zijn kring" in *Rogier van der Weyden en zijn tijd*, cit. (note 7), pp. 83–102, on p. 101. See also Rapp Buri and Stucky-Schürer, *op. cit.* (note 8), p. 52.

⁹⁹ D'Hulst, *op. cit.* (note 16), pp. 7–16; N. Fortini Grazzini, "Alcune considerazioni sull'Incontro di Fromont e Gerart dopo il restauro" in

NEW LIGHT ON THE JUSTICE PANELS IN BRUSSELS While Rogier van der Weyden's Justice panels for Brussels Town Hall were one of the artist's most famous works during his lifetime, much still remains shrouded in mystery. This article has presented a description by the German clergyman Matthias Ramung from 1453, which provides answers to some questions and opens new avenues for future research. Ramung's description of the tapestries in the old *capella maior* in Rome is, first of all, a new and particularly elaborate source on the way in which Van der Weyden's work was spread throughout Europe. While much scholarly attention has been paid to how the artist's work came to be reproduced in many other parts of Europe, the network that facilitated this transmission still remains elusive. Ramung's description now provides a concrete example of how one fifteenth-century observer came into contact with Van der Weyden's work in Italy. His description provides us with a documented case of the transmission of Van der Weyden's work via the medium of tapestry. Although it is well known that tapestries played a vital role in the circulation of Flemish painted works of art, it is still rare to find written accounts that explain the context and the network through which this transmission occurred. Moreover, given the date of the description, 11 September 1453, we get an impression of the relative speed with which Van der Weyden's work became known abroad during his lifetime. If the Brussels panels were completed by 1450, then the tapestry must have been produced and subsequently transported to the old *capella maior* in Rome within only a couple of years. What makes this case even more special is that there is a close connection with the Bern tapestry, which has an unusually well-documented provenance. A careful comparison of the surviving inscriptions from the Brussels panels with those of the Bern tapestry and those witnessed by Ramung strongly suggests that the German clergyman saw the Bern tapestry in the papal chapel

⁹³ S. Guichenon, *Histoire généalogique de la royale maison de Savoie*, 4 vols., Turin 1778–80, vol. 4, p. 340. During this same visit Pope Nicholas V cemented his relationship with George by granting him permission to make his testament on 3 July 1449. For a transcription of the original charter, see C. Wirz, *Bullen und Breven aus Italienischen Archiven 1116–1623*, Basel 1902, p. lxxv. For more information and context, see A. Wildermann, *La visite des églises du diocèse de Lausanne en 1453*, Lausanne 1993, p. 32; Rapp Buri and Stucky-Schürer, *op. cit.* (note 8), p. 28.

⁹⁴ In December 1453 he petitioned the pope to rule in his favour in a dispute he had with the Bishop of Basel. Wildermann, *op. cit.* (note 93), pp. 32–34.

⁹⁵ This appointment took place on 21 April 1455, the day after Callixtus III was consecrated as the new pope. He would relinquish this

F. Pellegrini (ed.), *L'incontro di Fromont e Gerart e il suo restauro*, Padua 2006, pp. 23–47; R. Benedetti, "Jourdain de Blaye sul bordo del visibile parlare" in *idem*, pp. 49–59.

¹⁰⁰ E. Kantorowicz, "The Este Portrait by Roger van der Weyden", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 3 (1940), pp. 178–80; Mottola Molino et al., *op. cit.* (note 33), vol. 1, p. 314; Dhanens, *op. cit.* (note 1), pp. 15–16 and 74–76; De Vos, *op. cit.* (note 2), pp. 60–61; T.-H. Borchert (ed.), exh. cat. *The Age of Van Eyck: The Mediterranean World and Early Netherlandish Painting 1430–1530*, Bruges (Groeningemuseum) 2002, p. 110.

in Rome in 1453. The provenance of the Bern tapestry, which begins with George of Saluzzo, further allows for this possibility because he had very close ties with the papal court at the time of Ramung's visit. Finally, the material presented in this article illustrates the importance that was attributed to tapestries as prime examples of material and artistic quality. While surviving examples can only give us so much information about the use of tapestries in the fifteenth century, Ramung's description allows for a glimpse into the more ephemeral use of these intricate and impressive works of art.

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Appendix I – Matthias Ramung's description of the tapestries in the papal chapel at the Vatican (11 September 1453)

Cambridge University Library, Ms. Hh.1.7, fols. 134v–138v.

[fol. 134v] Quinque sequentes historie Rome in capella domini Nicolai pape quinti in capella eiusdem in dorsali quodam scilicet texte et cetera.

Octavianus Romanorum Imperator rexit imperium cum anthonio lepidio annis xii qui anthonius repudiata et sprete sorore octaviani copulavit sibi matrimonio egipti reginam et cum ex inductione et ordinacione cleopatre bellum octaviano indixit Eum intellegens regine nequicias et signum audiens romanorum motuum prudenter cogitavit huic rei obviare principio et agilis et vigil venit ab Ridendus in egiptum cum trecentis navibus regalibus populo et cibariis bene onustis Anthonius vero octaviani percipiens adventum et resistere cogitans octavianum cum egipti apprehendit littus Sed cum ventum est ad prelium et augusti classis cepissent anthonii turbare navigium Eidem cernens cleopatra regina cum aurea puppe et purpuro velo prima cepit fugere quam fugentem videns anthonius cito secutus est Qui intelligens octavianus celeriter et fortiter cum omni potestate vestiga eorum insequitur Anthonius vero videns augmentum tam fortiter instare et nimium appropinquare timens ab eo deprehendi propter se manum interemit Regina autem [fol. 135] cleopatra anthonium audiens mortuum ad pedes Augusti provoluta temptavit oculos eius luxuria eius sic anthonium credens vincere sed sprete ab eo desperavit quod augustus pio signo triumphi fecit observari Que incaute custodita ad mortem sibi serpentibus veneno mortua est anno vite augusti xxxiii Imperature xii Monarchie anno primo

Secunda

Octavianus Imperator Romanorum cum esset tante pulchritudinis et precipue in oculis quod nemo cum voluerit intueri et tante potestatis qui totium mundum ditioni Romane subegit est etiam tante virtutis qui pacem per universum orbem fecit in tantum senatui placuit ut eum pro deo colere vellent dicentes te volumus adorare pro deus in te est per quem hec omnia facis Pendens autem Imperator mortalem se intelligens nomine dei et immortalitatem sibi renuit usurpare et pro remedio inven-

iendo trium dierum postulavit inducias et ad se vocare faciens prudentem sibillam triburtinam sibi quod senatores dixerant recitavit que spacium trium dierum petiit super responso deliberandam Et post triduum imperatori [fol. 135v] respondit quod superius eius ymago ostendit Et illico apertum est celum et nimius splendor irrupit super eum et vidit in celo circulum aureum circa salem ut in sale virginem pulcherrimam sedentem super aram puerum tenentem in brachiis et miratus est nimis et audivit vocem verborum qui statim procidens prout in terram puerum adoravit et ei thura obtulit et postea se non solum non adorari sed neque dominum vocari promisit hec visio fuit facta in die natalis Christi in camera Imperatoris Rome in Capitolio Anno vite sue lxiii Imperature xlii monarchie anno xxxiii

Tertia: contra ocium

Octavianus augustus Imperator fuit forma corporis eximius et etate venustissimus semper pacis amator et iustitie distributor severissime regens disciplinam militarem liberalitatem et magnificenciam omnibus exhibuit et amicos suos nobiles magnos et potentes sic voluit esse Rome ut pari iure essent cum ceteris et legibus iudiciariis eque tenerentur amicitiam non facile amisit sed constantissime tenuit et sic erga [fol. 136] eciam subditos clementie maxime et civilitatis extitit bellum suscipiendum omnino negavit nisi cum maius emolumentum quam dampni metus videretur veste non alia quam comuni domestica usus cibi minimi erat et cibi parcissimus ebrietatem ut venenum fugiens et frenesi assimilans eloquenciam et studia liberalia ab etate prima cupide et laboriosissime exoravit et in tantum dilexit ut omni die autem legeret scriberet aut dictaret ita ut diceretur fovere ingenia seculi octaviani mortem esse asservabat et in tantum diligebat ut filiam propriam neptes ne ocio torperent lanificio assidue faceret Romam in edificiis et legibus renovavit tanto medio virtutis miscuit ut diceretur non minus vicia tam severe iustus quam virtutes digne prosecutus tanto eciam honore vitam finivit ut a Romanis nullus romanorum imperatorum nec in bello felicius nec in pace moderacior sibi fuisse dicatur qui obiit anno vite sue lxxvii Imperature lvi Monarchie xliiii [fol. 136v]

Historia iusticie ornativa et quarta

Post mortem Traiani lapsis annis plusq[uam] quadringentis quinquaginta sanctus papa Gregorius primus cathedram beati petri digne conscendit Qui dum quadam

vice in urbe Roma forum traianum et secus eius columpnam pertransiens ac prefiguratum atque cetera illius studia memoratus quod illa coram deo sub oblivione transissent mestus pergens ante altare in conspectu dei prostratus errorem tam iusti iudicem tam mansueti imperatoris et si verbo non auderet corde tamen sic deum suppliciter orans Traiani parce errori Clemens misericors domine quoniam iudicium et iusticiam fecit in omni tempore qui pro ut oriens simul et occidens simul attestatur tandem hoc divinitus responsum recepit flentis tui petitionem complevi Traiano licet pagano peperci cui veniam do sed tu diligenter cave ne pro quocumque dampnato deinceps orare presumas et cum beatus gregorius rem tam difficilem a deo suis precibus impetrare meruisset corpus traiani iam versum in pulverem reverenter detegens linguam q[uod] eius quasi hominis vivi integram adinvenit propter iusticiam quam lingua sua percoluit pie creditur contigisse

Pars sequens debet precedere partem super [iam] scriptam

[fol. 137] Quodam tempore Traianus Romanorum Imperator ritu paganus sed alias iusticie cultor precipuus ad bellum cum magno exercitu festinans equum ascendisset quedam vidua pedes ipsius apprehensa illum flebiliter interpellavit ut eam de quodam qui innocentem eius filium occiderat vindicare dignaretur Cui Imperator Mansueto vultu respondens ait reversus de bello satisfaciam tibi quid inquit illa si non redieris Cui traianus faciet tunc ille qui post me regnaturus est At illa quid hoc tibi proderit tu michi iusticie debitor es nec te liberabit iusticia aliena ffac tu pro te quod tibi prosit melius enim est tibi ut tu iusticie mercedem accipias quam illam transmittas ad alterum Is itaque tanta est tocius orbis monarcha pietate commotus mox ab equo descendens exercitum detinuit donec causa debite ac pleniter examinata condigna satisfacione esse viduam consolatus quo facto traianus ad bellum proficiscitur et post ingentem victorie gloriam a perside rediens pro fluxu ventris extinctus est cuius ossa delata in foro sub columpna centum xl pedum in urna aurea magnifico cultu sepulta leguntur.

[fol. 137v] Historia pulchra et quinta.

Herkinbaldus vir magnificus perpotens et illustris in iudicio personas non acceptans causam pauperis ut potentes agniti tamquam ignoti super equa lance indicavit Hic dum l[ong] graviter infirmus lecto decumberet in proxima

camera tumultum rigidum clamoresque femineos exaudivit Cui quid nam esset sciscitanti ab omnibus celata est veritas Sed tandem quidem ex pueris ut veritatem panderet sub oculorum evulsione commonitus pavens asseruit respondendo filius sororis vestre quem omnes post vos primum timent colunt et venerantur puellam oppressit et hec fuit c[aus]a clamoris Quo audito et re plene cognita senior suum nepotem carissimum suspendi mandavit Quod senescalcus cui id iussum fuerat se facturum similans egressus inveni nunciavit ammonens eum ut ad tempus lateret Post horas autem aliquot senescalcus ad infirmum rediens se implere quod iusserat mentitus est Quinto vero die iuvenis estimans avunculum de culpa immemorem Aperto hostio camere introspexit quem ut infirmus vidit blandis verbis advocans ad lectum reclinare promisit Herkinbaldus [fol. 138] itaque capillorum arrepta ceserie sui consanguinei capud plena manu retorquens et dextera cultellum gutteri eius valde infigit zelo iusticie occidit eiusdem Sane dum morbum Herkinbaldus letiferum esse persensit vocatur episcopus cui postquam cum sacramentis advenisset Infirmus cum lacrimis multis et magna cordis contricione omnia peccata sua nude confessus est tacito dumtaxat morte quam paucis ante diebus suo cognato inferebat Super quo episcopus eum redarguens dixit quare celas homicidium quo nepotem de manu tua peremptum vita carere fecisti ad quod infirmus respondit ait neque hoc peccatum esse iudico neque id michi a deo remitti depono Cui episcopus confitere crimen et deus miseribitur tui alioquin ab edulio te corporis Christi convenit abstinere At ille vir nobilis dixit attestor deum quod nepotem michi carissimum non livor non odium sed iusticie scelus traxit ad mortem Et si obid viaticum michi negaveris spero saltem spiritualiter communicari quo audito et languente sacramentaliter non referto Episcopus recedebat cui mox revocato dixit [fol. 138v] infirmus si in cappella sit sacramentum corporis perquire et dum aperta pixide eucharistia non appereret subiunxit egrotus ecce quem michi abnuens tecum portasti non se michi denegavit et illico apertis dentibus hostia in ore illius palam oribus demonstratur Quod ut vidit episcopus magnificans tantum miraculum quod divina dispensatione ob meritum iusticie factum non ambiguitur ad aures Christi fidelium pervigili cura deduxit

Rome xi septembris l.iii
m Ramung deo laus

Appendix II – Calvete de Estrella's transcription of the inscriptions on Van der Weydens Justice panels in Brussels Town Hall

Juan Cristóbal Calvete de Estrella, *El felicísimo viaje del muy alto y muy poderoso príncipe don Phelippe*, Madrid 1930 (ed. princ. 1552), vol. 1, pp. 254–60:

Quodam tempore dum Traianus Romanus imperator ritu paganus sed alias iustitiae cultor praecipuus ad bellum cum magno exercitu festinans equum ascendisset, quaedam vidua pede ipsius apprehenso illum flebiliter interpellavit, ut eam de quodam, qui innocentem eius filium occiderat, vindicare dignaretur. Cui imperator Mansueto vultu respondens, ait. Reveresus de bello satisfaciam tibi, Quid, inquit illa, si non redieris? Cui Traianus, faciet tunc ille, qui post me regnaturus est. At illa, quid hoc tibi proderit, tu mihi iustitiae debitor es, nec te liberabit iustitia aliena, fac tu pro te, quod tibi prosit, melius enim est tibi, ut tu iustitiae mercedem accipias, quam illam transmittas ad alterum. His itaque tantus et totius orbis monarcha pietate commotus, mox ab equo descendens exercitum detinuit, donec causa debite, ac pleniter examinate condigna satisfaction esset viduam consolatus. Quo facto Traianus in bellum proficiscitur, et post ingentem victoriae gloriam a preside rediens profluxu ventris extinctus est, cuius ossa Romam delata in foro suo sub columna centum quadraginta pedum in urna aurea magnifico cultu sepulta leguntur.

Post mortem Traiani lapsis annis plusquam quadringentis quinquaginta, sanctus papa Gregorius primus cathedral beati Petri digne conscendit, qui dum quadam vice in urbe Roma forum traianum et secus eius columnam petransiens, ac praefiguratum, atque coetera iustitiae illius studia memoratus, quod illa coram deo sub obliuione transiissent, ingemuit: statimque, ad basilicam sancti Petro moestus pergens ante altare in conspectus Dei prostrates, errorem tam iusti iudicis, tamque manuseti imperatoris amare defleuit, et si verbo non auderet, corde tamem sic Deum suppliciter orans. Traiani parce errori, pie Clemens et misericors Domine, quoniam iudicium et iustitiam fecit in omni tempore, qui prout oriens simul et occidens attestator, tandem hoc divitus responsum accepit. Flentis tui petitionem compleui, Traiano licet pagano perperci, cui veniam do, sed tu diligenter caue, ne pro quocunque damnato deinceps orare praesumas, et cum beatus papa Gregorius rem tam difficilem a deo suis precibus impetrare meruisset, cor-

pus Traiani conuersum in puluerem reuerenter detegens linguam eius quasi hominis viui integram adinuenit, quod propter iustitiam, quam lingua sua percoluit, pie creditor contigisse.

Herkinbaldus vir magnificus, praepotens et illustris in iudicio personas non acceptans causam pauperis, ut potentis, agnati, tanquam ignoti, semper aequa lance iudicavit, hic dum grauius infirmus lecto discumberet in prima camera tumultum rigidum, clamoresque foemineos exaudiuit. Cui, quidnam esset, sciscitanti ab omnibus coelata est veritas: sed tandem quidam ex pueris, ut veritatem diceret, sub oculorum evulsione commonitus paucis asserit, respondendo. Domine, filius sororis vestrae, quem omnes post te primum timent, colunt, et venerantur, puellam oppressit, et haec fuit causa clamoris. Quo audito et re plene cognita, senior suum nepotem charissimum suspendi mandavit, quod senescallus, cui id iussum fuerat, se facturum simulans, egressus iuveni nunciauit, admonens eum, ut ad tempus lateret, post horas autem aliquot senescallus ad infirmum rediens se implere, quod iusserat, mentitus est. Quinto vero die iuuenis existimans avunculum de culpa immemorem aperto ostio camerae introspexit, quem, ut infirmus vidit, blandis verbis advocans ad lectum reclinare permisit. Herkinbaldus itaque capillorum arrepta caesarie sui consanguinei, caput leua manu retorquens et dextra cultellum gutturi eius valide insigens zelo iustitiae occidit eundem

Sane dum morbum Herkinbaldus laetiferum esse persensit, vocatur episcopus, cui postquam cum sacramentis aduenisset, infirmus cum lachrymis multis, et magna cordis contritione omnia peccata sua nude confessus est, tacita dumtaxat morte, quam paucis ante diebus suo cognato intulerat, super quo episcopus eum redarguens, dixit. Quare celas homicidium, quo nepotem de manu tua peremptum vita carere fecisti? Ad quod infirmus respondens, ait. Neque ego hoc peccatum esse iudico, neque id michi a Deo remitti depono. Cui episcopus: confitere crimen, et Deus miserebitur tui, alioquin ab edulio corporis Christi te convenit abstinere. At ille vir nobilis dixit: attestor Deum, quod nepotem michi carissimum non lior, non odium, sed iustitiae zelus traxit ad mortem. Et si ob id viaticum michi negaueris, spero saltem spiritualiter communicari, quo audito, et languente sacramentaliter non refecto episcopus recedebat. Cui mox reuocato dixit infirmus. Si in capsella sit sacramentum corporis Christi, perquire: et cum aperta pixide eucharistia non appareret,

subiunxit aegrotus. Ecce, quem mihi abnuens tecum portasti, non se mihi denegavit, et illico apertis dentibus hostia in ore illius palam omnibus demonstrator. Quod ut vidit episcopus, magnificans Deum, tantum miraculum, quod diuina dispensatione ob meritum iustitiae factum non ambiguitur, ad aures Christi fidelium pervigili cura deduxit.