



Looking Beyond the Binary: Gender and Owner Portraits in Later Medieval Devotional Manuscripts

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I am honored to contribute this essay to the special issue of Different Visions celebrating Rachel Dressler, a generous mentor and colleague whose groundbreaking scholarship on medieval representations of masculinity has been an inspiration and a beacon since I first encountered it. I wish to thank the journal editors and readers, Tracy Chapman Hamilton and one anonymous reader, for their feedback and suggestions; S. C. Kaplan for advice and encouragement on an early draft; and the members of my dissertation committee, especially adviser Dale Kinney, who may recognize parts of this argument. I am grateful to the librarians and curators at the Bodleian Library, the Bibliothèque nationale de France, the Bibliothèque municipale de Marseille, and the National Gallery of Victoria for granting me access and generously sharing images of the books in their care, and to Margaret M. Manion, for sharing her wisdom on the Aspremont-Kievraing volumes when I was just getting to know them. My thanks to Bryn Mawr College, the Fulbright Commission, and Eastern Connecticut State University for supporting on-site study of these manuscripts.

On one page of an elegantly illuminated prayer book from northern France, a woman, dressed in clothing evoking a religious habit, prostrates herself in prayer, holding an open book before her intensely fixed gaze (Fig. 1). Another page in the same book shows a layman in an ermine cloak kneeling in prayer across from Saint Francis displaying his stigmata; a smaller laywoman kneels in prayer below (Fig. 2).



Figure 1. A woman (in a religious habit?) lies prostrate with an open book. Franciscan Psalter-Hours (psalter fragment). Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France lat. MS 1076, fol. 66v. Photo: BnF.

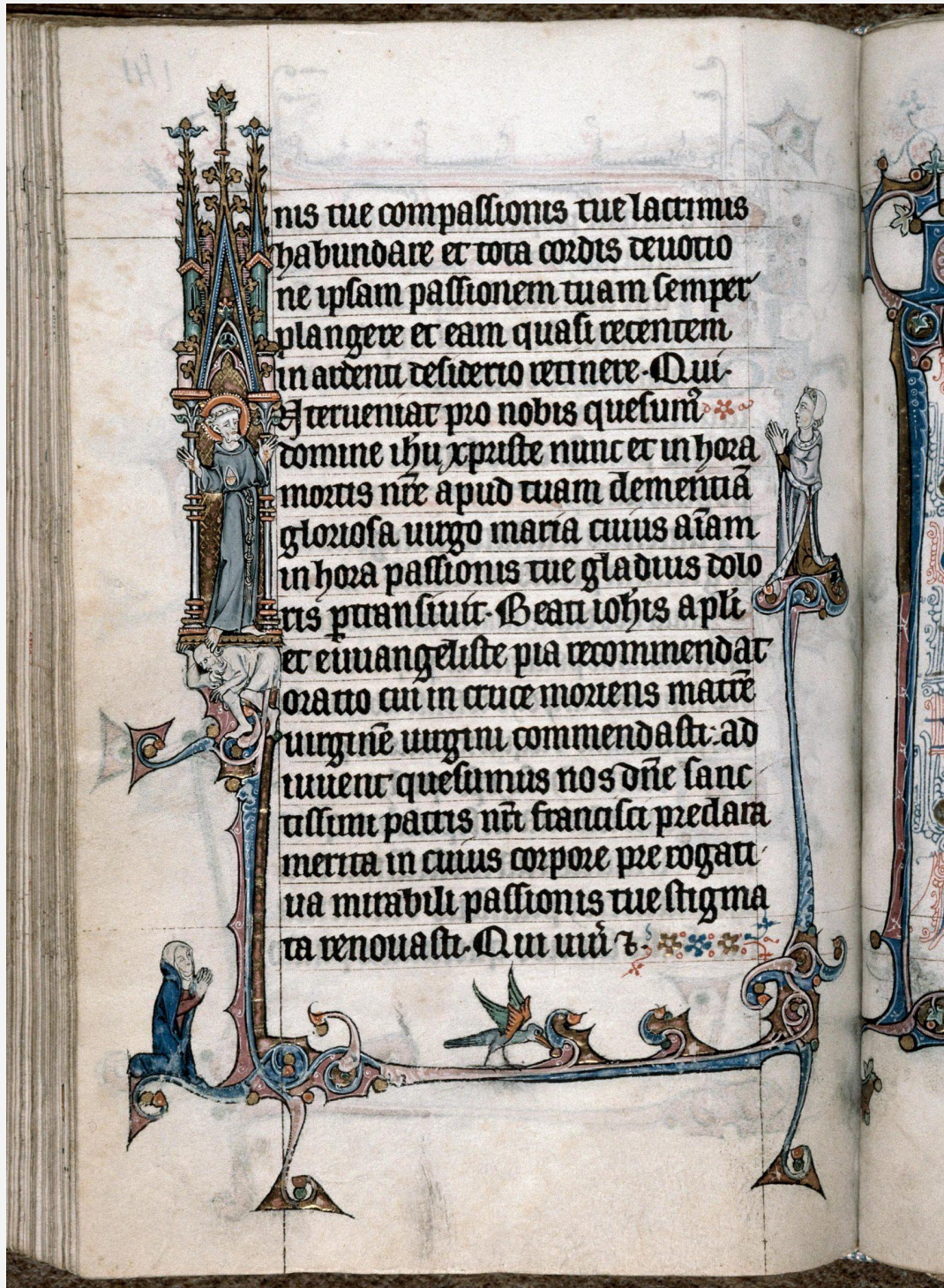


Figure 2. Saint Francis displays his stigmata while a layman and laywoman kneel in prayer. Franciscan Psalter-Hours (hours fragment). Marseille, Bibliothèques de Marseille, Fonds Patrimoniaux, MS 111, fol. 141v. Photo: IRHT.

Dozens of men and women dressed in lay clothing and religious habits appear separately and together throughout the pages of this prayer book. While these images conform to the conventions of the owner portrait, showing their figures in pious poses that anticipate the devotional activities of their viewers, they raise questions about such images' reception and interpretation by the book's medieval readers. Owner portraits, images of women and men in prayer in the margins or initials of their devotional manuscripts, were an increasingly common inclusion in illuminated prayer books in the era of the book of hours (from about 1250 onwards).[1] While most books with owner portraits represent a single figure only once, a small number of lavishly illuminated books made in northern France and Flanders in the decades surrounding 1300 contain numerous devotee images representing different types of people numerous times.[2] Singular owner portraits use oblique identifiers and recursive elements to produce an intimate relationship with their anticipated subject-viewer, functioning as what Alexa Sand has called a "reflexive" image.[3] These portraits operate by inviting a viewer to recognize themselves in the otherwise generic images of prayerful figures.[4] In books with portrait figures of different types of people, each portrait still invites the viewer to identify with its subject, but the plurality of potential identifications in these books challenges tidy interpretations of owner portraits and their gendered meanings. Through a close study of two devotional manuscripts produced around 1300, I argue that the emphatic gendering of owner portraits creates opportunities for devotional performances that traverse, even transcend the gender binary. I use the term "transgender reception" to describe the dynamic these gendered representations of prayer produce when they interact with the gendered experiences and identities of their viewers. The multiplicity of transgender receptions available to the elite readers of these manuscripts situate personal devotional manuscripts as sites for exploring expansive concepts of gender identity in the later Middle Ages.

Two manuscripts with numerous owner portraits of different types form the focus of this study: the Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book and the Franciscan Psalter-Hours.[5] The Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book has the more clear medieval provenance, as the heraldry of its original owners appears throughout the book's illuminations, including on many of its portrait figures.[6] The arms of the Aspremont and Kievraing families associate the book with Isabelle de Kievraing (d. 1337) and Joffroy d'Aspremont (d. 1302), who were married by 1285, when Jacques Bretel featured both in his epic poem celebrating the tournament that took place that year at Chauvency.[7] The two-volume manuscript contains over 100 portrait figures representing Joffroy, Isabelle, and members of their extended familial and social circles identified in many instances by their heraldry (Figs. 3-8). The appearances of

Joffroy and Isabelle together on a number of prominent pages present them as co-owners of the book.[8] In the Franciscan Psalter-Hours, thirty-some appearances of a lay woman and man similarly suggest co-ownership, although this couple appears together only once (Figs. 2, 9, and 10).[9] In addition to the more typical lay devotees, the Franciscan Psalter-Hours also includes a surprising number of men and women in religious habits among its portrait types. The inclusion of religious figures among and adjacent to the lay portrait figures opens possibilities for identifications across another binary—for the presumably lay readers to imagine themselves in a more rigorous performance of prayer. Each book showcases a range of gendered identities for its viewers' potential identification with distinct emphases: religious or spiritual orientations in the Franciscan Psalter-Hours and courtly identities in the Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book. Although this range is not typical of thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century owner portraits or devotee images, the divergences in both speak eloquently to matters of gender, representation, and performance in medieval devotion at the turn of the fourteenth century.

Delineating Gender in Manuscript Owner Portraits

The manuscript owner portraits in these books can be readily recognized by the conventions of the genre: a prayerful figure in contemporary dress, sometimes with the recursive attribute of a prayer book or other devotional paraphernalia. While these conventions are, by 1300, clear-cut, the identities of portrait subjects are less consistently defined. This, as I have argued elsewhere, grants the owner portrait an intimacy and immediacy unique among medieval portrait forms and appropriate to its setting in personal devotional books: rather than identifying their subjects explicitly, owner portraits invite viewers to recognize themselves and their own devotional performances in the image of the prayerful figure.[10] As the two manuscripts examined show, names, physiognomic likenesses, and heraldry are often absent, gender is one of the few “identity signs” consistently depicted in manuscript owner portraits from the book of hours era.[11] Gender appears to be intrinsic to the owner portrait form, perhaps even more so than the subject's specific identity: while a viewer could be trusted to fill in the personal or familial identity left obscure by the portrait painter, the gender of the praying figure is almost always specified. Given the importance of gender alongside owner portraits' call for readers' self-identification, what happens when a reader's gender does not match that of the subject depicted?[12]

Because of the essentially reflexive nature of the owner portrait, the presence of owner types of different genders in the manuscripts I discuss here imbue their

reception with queer potential. In defining the term, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick wrote, "'Queer' seems to hinge ... on a person's undertaking particular, performative acts of experimental self-perception and filiation."^[13] I propose that the opportunities in these books for reception of devotional portraits across the gender binary open up rich possibilities for "experimental self-perception and filiation," for a transgender reception that queers the gendered experience of literate prayer. Cáel M. Keegan's concept of the "trans object" articulates the powerful role images can play in queering gender:

I might theorize a *trans object* as offering the subject a normally unseen transfer between seemingly irreconcilable points (male/female, self/culture, insight/fact, present/future). A trans media object would cultivate trans consciousness by offering an aesthetic space in which the subject might feel a way forward through the closed phenomenological horizon of binary gender.^[14]

In reading the Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book and the Franciscan Psalter-Hours as trans objects, I call on Jack Halberstam's concept of "transgender space" and Jeanne Vaccaro's crafty metaphor of felt to outline the possibilities for transgender reception that unfold within the context of the reader's private encounter with the prayer book.^[15]

Ironically, it is the emphasis in the manuscripts' illuminations on defined, normative gender roles that creates opportunities for transgender reception. Our consideration of gender in manuscript owner and devotional portraits must, therefore, begin by addressing the ways in which these images manifest gender differences and identities. The bodies of devotees, on the whole, display no discernable signs of sexual difference.^[16] Gender identity is communicated, instead, by clothing and hairstyle.^[17] Among lay figures, women are identified by long robes with or without mantles (Figs. 2, 3, 4, 9).



Figure 3. Two women kneeling at prie-dieu with open books beneath the risen Christ. Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book (abbreviated breviary volume). Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria inv. 1254-3, fol. 132r. Photo: National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne.

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Headgear that either covers or shapes long hair further identifies and differentiates women according to social status and standing as well as fashion.[18] Men, meanwhile, may wear either courtly dress or armor (Figs. 2, 5, 10). As E. Jane Burns has observed, masculine courtly dress is similar to feminine costume: a long robe, sometimes with a surcoat or a hood worn around the neck.[19] Knightly dress, on the other hand, is distinctly masculine: chain mail from neck to toes covered by a surcoat, occasionally a chain mail coif or (rarely, in portrait contexts) a plate helmet. Habits of holy orders create a further gendered category for men and women in the Franciscan Psalter-Hours (Figs. 1, 11–13).[20] As we shall see, gender identity can also be expressed and reinforced through individuals' performances of prayer or the effects of their devotions. The situation of these figures in the margins of the prayer books makes their typically tidy, pious appearances even more striking. Numerous illuminations in each manuscript juxtapose devotees with figures from the topsy-turvy world of the margins, further accentuating the former as embodiments of social norms (Figs. 2, 6–8).[21]

The conceptions of gender encoded into these illuminated prayer books are delineated and shaped by the means by which gender is represented—that is, by clothing and hairstyle. The central role of clothing in marking portrait subjects' gender and other identities recalls the role that clothing often plays in medieval narratives involving gender transitions.[22] In Burns's reading of the thirteenth-century romance *Floris et Lyriope*, by Robert de Blois, she argued that, "courtly garments can function in place of the anatomical body," with feminine clothing transforming Floris in all meaningful ways into a woman.[23] In a context where clothing replaces anatomy as the defining marker of gender, Burns noted that the unisex nature of medieval courtly dress creates opportunities for men to move within a gendered "sartorial continuum" with only a change of clothes.[24] Burns's study points to a dialectic within medieval literature, and medieval courtly society as a whole, wherein the strict, binary construction of masculinity and femininity creates possibilities for queer spaces in between.[25] This dialectic is echoed in medieval medical, scientific, and religious discourses, as well.[26] Similarly, the multiple owner and devotee types in the manuscripts I discuss here outline distinct boundaries between masculine and feminine roles, yet offer readers opportunities to imaginatively try on a wide range of gendered devotional identities and performances.[27] Through their delineations of strict masculine and feminine roles, manuscript owner portraits encode opportunities for imaginative movements across and between categories of gender and social order in devotional performances.

While shifting gender presentations, bodily transformations, and other forms of transitions and gender fluidity have for some time been recognized as fundamental aspects of medieval literature, hagiography, spirituality, drama, festivals, and medical lore, it is only recently that scholars have begun to use the term “transgender” to describe medieval subjects. For historians working in trans studies, transgender represents a productive term to examine the varied ways in which medieval conceptions of gender were open, flexible, fluid, or mutable.[28] In this paper, I use transgender (or trans) in this broad sense to encompass the wide range of experiences or conceptions of gender beyond the binary assigned at birth.[29] Roland Betancourt pointed out the term’s “ethical importance for acknowledging and retrieving forms of identification that might not have been available to a person at any given historical moment.”[30] Gabrielle M. W. Bychowski and Dorothy Kim articulated another ethical dimension: “By saying that trans people have an acknowledged past, trans people can imagine a better future.”[31] A consideration of trans-ness within medieval society encompasses more than transitions between the binary categories of “woman” and “man.” In a paper she presented at the International Congress on Medieval Studies in 2018, Bychowski emphasized the expansiveness of the category of “transgender” as it can be applied to the medieval past:

Let’s not just consider those we once called “male to female or female to male” but also those mothers to virgins, reproductive men who become eunuchs, knights who become monks, intersexual hermaphrodites and trans masculine Amazons. Trans does not just allow for movement across the binary or the creation of a space in between but a breaking open of the binary so we see that even within the category of man and woman there are many identities and transitions between.[32]

In this paper, I draw on literature from transgender studies to describe the experience some medieval viewers may have had in their encounters with gendered owner portraits. I do not argue that the users or readers of any of the medieval books discussed here would have considered themselves transgender in the sense that we use it today. There were, of course, transgender people in the Middle Ages, and the recovery and recognition of historical transgender subjects is an important area of research within trans studies, but that is not my project.[33] Rather, my aim is to explore the ways in which portraits in devotional books create opportunities for performances of gender that undermine the gender binary, even as they rely upon it to signify. I also do not intend, in proposing the potential for imaginative fluidity in gender performance in this medieval devotional context, to ignore or erase the lived

experiences of people whose identities transited or transcended the gender binary in the Middle Ages or today.[34] Even though I will not address specific examples of transgender historical figures, my analysis of illuminated portraits reveals medieval modes of conceptualizing gender and its performance that could undergird a medieval subject's experience of the plurality of gender transitions possible within European society.

Gendered Prayer and Transgender Space

Through their portraits of lay men and women, both the Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book and the Franciscan Psalter-Hours model distinctly gendered performances of prayer informed as well by social order and class. These gendered distinctions are subtle in the Franciscan Psalter-Hours, but the variety and range of portraits within the Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book emphasize and thematize gender difference as a function within courtly society. In this stark delineation of gender roles, I argue that the illuminations also inadvertently create the opportunity for receptions and interpretations across the gender binary, opening up a transgender space.[35] In the Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book, the numerous portraits of Isabelle and Joffroy model gender roles appropriate to the couple's courtly station. Isabelle, who appears over eighty times in the manuscript's two volumes, is almost always represented in prayer, often with some specifically devotional attribute or furniture, like a book, a prie-dieu, or a cross. Joffroy's portraits, on the other hand, range from conventional devotional portraits to surprisingly personalized parodies of courtly behavior. Separate illuminations of each owner receiving an attribute from a heavenly hand exemplify the differences in their attitudes: Isabelle, kneeling at a prie-dieu, receives a prayer book; Joffroy, on the other hand, kneeling in armor with heraldic ailettes on his shoulders, receives a shield with his family's arms (Figs. 4–5).



Figure 4 (left). A laywoman (Isabelle de Kievraing) kneels in prayer at a prie-dieu and receives a prayer book from a heavenly figure. Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book (psalter volume). Oxford, Bodleian Libraries MS Douce 118, fol. 24v.

Figure 5 (right). A knight (Joffroy d'Aspremont) kneels in prayer and receives a shield with the Aspremont arms from a heavenly hand. Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book (psalter volume). Oxford, Bodleian Libraries MS Douce 118, fol. 49v.

Joffroy's status as a man—and, moreover, a knight—seems to allow for more freedom in his representation, reflected in the variety of costumes he wears as well as the range of activities he undertakes in the margins, from praying to jousting to fighting dragons.[36]

In contrast to the clear articulation of gender roles in the Aspremont-Kievraing portraits, the owner portraits in the Franciscan Hours present their male and female subjects as partners in prayer. The lay owners of the Franciscan Psalter-Hours appear

together only once, in adoration of Saint Francis, in one of the many examples of Franciscan imagery that give this manuscript its name (Fig. 2).[37] Beyond this one example of joint prayer, they appear separately throughout the manuscript, sometimes accompanied by Franciscan friars. The conventional, pious, and independent representations of both men and women in the Franciscan Psalter-Hours communicate parity of devotional skill between the genders. Still, subtle differences in representation lend a gendered flavor to their prayer: women are represented with privileged access to the Virgin Mary and David, while men seem more closely affiliated with Saint Francis.[38] What is more, as in the Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book, only women among the lay devotees are shown holding and reading books. This gendered iconography contributes to a larger late medieval discourse associating women with prayer books and framing literate prayer as a feminine activity.[39]

The reception of owner portraits in the Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book and the Franciscan Psalter-Hours necessarily crosses gender lines, as men and women devotees appear in roughly equal numbers and are granted more or less distinct roles in each book. These gendered representations of prayer position the reader in a space between that recalls Jack Halberstam's reading of Shirin Neshat's 1998 video installation *Turbulent*. Halberstam wrote, "the space between the male singer and the female singer could provisionally be called a transgender space in the sense that it conjures up a site between two distinct genders where social conduct, religious doctrine, performance rituals, and cultural histories clash. ... Within this turbulence we can locate a transgender look, a mode of seeing and being seen that is not simply at odds with binary gender but that is part of a reorientation of the body in space and time." [40] Owner portraits of men and women reveal the potential for such turbulent, transgender spaces within early books of hours.

The many double portraits of Joffroy and Isabelle are especially effective at opening up these transgender spaces, as gendered attributes of arms and armor and devotional paraphernalia mark each of their figures. While sometimes the two devotees will appear side-by-side in the manuscript's lower margin, on especially ornate pages the artist will separate them and frame them in quatrefoil medallions in the border. One such ornate page opens Psalm 109 in the Psalter volume of the manuscript (Fig. 6).



Figure 6. The Trinity and two knights jousting, with images of Saint Margaret, a knight (Joffroy d'Aspremont) and a laywoman (Isabelle de Kievraing) in prayer in the border medallions. Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book (psalter volume). Oxford, Bodleian Libraries MS Douce 118, fol. 127r.

Joffroy kneels on one knee in chainmail and a heraldic surcoat in the center of the right margin, directly across from the large initial representing the Trinity; the head and leg of his horse are just visible to the right. A medallion in the lower border contains Isabelle, who kneels at a diminutive prie-dieu, her contemplative posture in sharp juxtaposition with the dynamic figures of the two jousting knights in the *bas-de-page* above (Fig. 7).



Figure 7. Detail of jousting knights and a laywoman (Isabelle de Kievraing) in prayer. Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book (psalter volume). Oxford, Bodleian Libraries MS Douce 118, fol. 127r.

A man or boy regarding this image, whether Joffroy or his heir, Gobert (who inherited his father's title as a minor), would have recognized his gender, class, and familial identities in the representations on this page and others of the kneeling knight wearing Aspremont heraldry.^[41] Yet this viewer would have recognized his immediate performance of prayer—kneeling with an open prayer book in his hands—more readily in the representations here and elsewhere of Isabelle and her women companions (Figs. 3, 4). The pronounced association of the book with the

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woman devotee in the manuscript's illuminations has the effect of feminizing the act of reading for anyone holding the manuscript itself.

Conversely, the manuscript also provides numerous opportunities for women readers to see themselves in the martial figures that embody the more masculine style of devotion. Marginal jousts such as the one at the opening of Psalm 109 appear in both volumes of the prayer book, and these polysemous images provide one avenue of cross-gender identification for women readers (Figs. 6–8).



Figure 8. The marriage of the Virgin and two knights jousting, with a knight (Joffroy d'Aspremont) in prayer in a border medallion and two laywomen (Isabelle de Kievraing and another) in prayer in a small miniature. Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book (abbreviated breviary volume). Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria inv. 1254-3, fol. 7r. Photo: National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne.

In each of the manuscript's four illuminated jousts, two armored knights charge each other on horseback in the bas-de-page of a heavily decorated page with a large

historiated initial and elaborate border frame. These prominent jousts have strong courtly resonances, and they provide an opportunity for the dynamic display of heraldry and, by extension, dynastic vitality and the gendered roles that uphold it. In two of the jousts, a knight wearing Kievraing arms faces off against a knight wearing the arms of Gaucher V de Châtillon, count of Porcien (Figs. 6–8); in another, the Kievraing knight rides against another opponent whose arms have been rendered illegible by overpainting.[42] The fourth joust features knights wearing the arms of Jean de Dampierre and the Bar family.[43] Curiously, despite Joffroy's well-documented participation in the tournament at Chauvency in 1285, Aspremont heraldry only appears on a parodic joust between two hybrid creatures accompanying the fool at the opening of Psalm 51.[44] The heraldry displayed in these jousts and elsewhere in the manuscripts situates the Aspremont-Kievraing family among the prominent families of Lorraine and Flanders.[45]

In addition to these secular, aristocratic meanings, the jousts also participate in the long-standing visual tradition of evoking spiritual struggle and combat.[46] Spiritual warfare emerged as a major theme of the psalter in Insular monastic contexts beginning in the eighth century, and Kathleen Openshaw has read the joust on the Beatus page of the early twelfth-century psalter made for anchoress Christina of Markyate (also known as the St. Albans Psalter) as the culmination of this monastic tradition.[47] We should also view the St. Albans Beatus joust at the head of a new iconographic tradition, developed within prayer books for elite lay and clerical readers over the thirteenth century, of allegorizing spiritual combat through images of courtly pastimes such as jousting and hunting.[48]

While these interpretations shed light on some of the meanings these marginal jousts may have held for their early viewers, an important question remains: why is the Kievraing knight so prominent, while the Aspremont knight is nowhere on the field? The arms of Aspremont and Kievraing feature prominently together in the manuscript's owner portraits and illuminated ornament (Figs. 3–8; much of the heraldry in the Melbourne volume has been painted over). The Aspremont absence from the joust is further underscored in the two Kievraing/Châtillon-Porcien jousts by small owner portraits in nearby medallions that show Joffroy at prayer in heraldic armor; in the Breviary volume, Joffroy actually appears in horseback with hands in prayer in a quatrefoil medallion between the two tilting knights (Fig. 8).

Nigel Morgan interpreted these jousts as representations of an actual tournament held at Bar-le-Duc in 1294, commemorating the marriage between Henri de Bar and Eleanor of England, at which he contends knights of the Kievraing, Châtillon, and Bar

families fought.[49] Stones, on the other hand, proposed a more complex set of associations for these blazons with the marriages Isabelle and Joffroy arranged for their children: their son Gobert married Marie de Bar in 1295 or 1296; their daughter Marie had married Guillaume de Dampierre and Saint-Dizier sometime before 1317; in 1305, Guillaume de Dampierre's sister, Marguerite, had married Gaucher II de Châtillon.[50] Stones's reading of the jousts forms part of the basis for her re-dating the manuscripts' illuminations, arguing that the work did not precede Joffroy's unexpected death in 1302, but was interrupted by it.[51]

Whether we understand the jousts as documentary references to a historic tournament or celebrations of family connections through marriage, the absence of the Aspremont arms is puzzling. Why choose to celebrate a tournament at which Joffroy had not participated? Why downplay the Aspremont arms in these demonstrations of familial connections? Considering the jousts' spiritual associations alongside these potential secular and social meanings may provide some clarity. The portraits of Joffroy throughout the prayer book frame his piety within his chivalric identity, creating a gendered imagery of prayer based in conceptions of martial masculinity.[52] The emphasis on Kievraing knights in the marginal jousts may have provided an entry for Isabelle or her daughters into this mode of prayer inflected by masculine militarism.

The Kievraing arms appear throughout the prayer book as the counterpart to the Aspremont device, as we can see in the illuminations opening Psalm 109, where the alternating arms of the two families fill the lines between the gilded letters beside the large initial D (Fig. 6). The pairing of the arms in the ornament throughout the manuscript as well as in three owner portraits of Joffroy and Isabelle together produce a strong affiliation between Isabelle and the Kievraing arms within the context of the prayer book.[53] Isabelle had no male relatives living who could claim the arms, and the Kievraing title and lands descended through her to her daughter, Mahaut, whose husband Simon de Lalaing became lord of Kievraing after Joffroy's death in 1302.[54] The three jousting Kievraing knights may have called to mind knights of the past (such as her father Nicolas or her ancestor Hauvel [Hauviel], who featured in Jakemés's poem *Châtelain de Coucy et la Dame du Fayel*) or the continuity of her line in the future.[55] Yet Isabelle or Mahaut may also have understood themselves as the bearers of the arms in the present. The three Kievraing knights in the marginal jousts thus may also have provided an alternative model for the mother or daughter's prayers: a devotional stance based not in feminine literate piety, but in the chivalric pursuits that defined her social class, if not gender.[56] Literary representations similarly emphasize class as a key element in the successful

chivalric performance of women and other knights who are not cisgender men, for example in the remarkable military career of the assigned female at birth protagonist in Heldris de Cournouailles's *Roman de Silence*.^[57] This potential for identification with the jousting Kievraing knight provides Isabelle and Mahaut access to the masculine mode of devotion the illustrations more explicitly attribute to Joffroy, just as the experience of reading the prayer book and seeing the image of Isabelle would have given Joffroy or Gobert access to a feminine style of devotion.^[58]

Isabelle's connection with the Kievraing knight is underscored, even encouraged, by the placement of her owner portrait at the opening of Psalm 109 (Fig. 7). In the quatrefoil medallion between the jousting Kievraing and Châtillon knights, a laywoman in a deep blue dress and white veil and wimple, identifiable as Isabelle, kneels at a prie-dieu, gaze and hands directed reverently towards the image of the Trinity above, but also towards the charging Kievraing knight. Figures in the other medallions of the page repeat the woman's prayerful gesture: in the right border, Joffroy kneels in heraldic armor, and Saint Margaret emerges from the dragon at the top. The presence of Saint Margaret, the patron saint of childbirth, aligned with Isabelle along the central vertical axis of the page, underscores the dynastic themes of the page's iconography. These dynastic concerns are intertwined with the spiritual and salvific content of the page, representing Isabelle's dual responsibilities for assuring the prosperity and the salvation of herself and her family line.

In their stark and distinct articulations of gendered devotion, the owner portraits in the Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book create between them a transgender space, a space that the reader must, by necessity, inhabit. The variety of devotional performances and styles that the owner portraits make available ensures that any reader within Isabelle and Joffroy's family could see themselves reflected in their family prayer book's owner portraits. Conversely, the use of slippery attributes and signifiers, such as prayer books and heraldry, among the varied and numerous portrait types in the manuscript invite readers' potential identification across gender lines. Whether the illuminations were completed before or after Joffroy's death in 1302, these flexible portraits could have aided the family in redefining their roles in his absence and inhabiting their new identities.

Gender, Order, and Ambiguity: The Franciscan Psalter-Hours

Like the Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book, the Franciscan Psalter-Hours contains numerous representations of a lay woman and a lay man, suggesting that this personal prayer book was made in anticipation of multiple readers (Figs. 2, 9, 10).

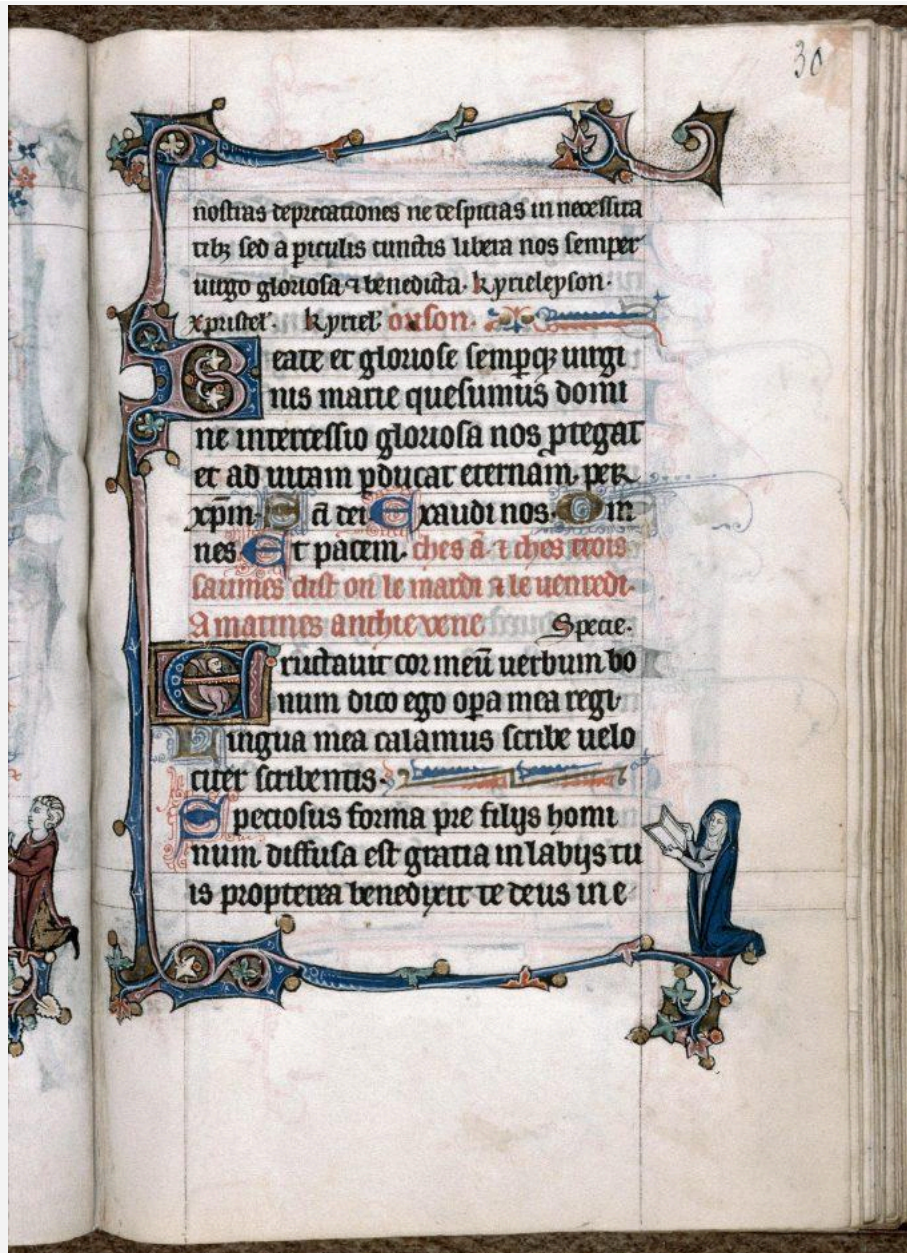


Figure 9. A laywoman kneeling with an open book. Franciscan Psalter-Hours (hours fragment). Marseille, Bibliothèques de Marseille, Fonds Patrimoniaux, MS 111, fol. 30r. Photo: IRHT.

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Figure 10. A layman kneeling in prayer before David playing the bells. Franciscan Psalter-Hours (psalter fragment). Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France lat. MS 1076, fol. 102r. Photo: BnF.

Yet the representations of both men and women owner types adhere much more closely to convention than those of the Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book, and gendered distinctions within lay prayer in the Franciscan Psalter-Hours are more subtle. The starker divide within devotional performance is between lay and religious figures, and between the devotion of friars and nuns. The Franciscan Psalter-Hours takes its name from the preponderance of Franciscan imagery within the manuscript's marginal illuminations, including eight representations of Franciscan friars in various postures (Figs. 11, 12).^[59] The illuminations also include five women who may be understood as nuns, although their habits are not as distinctly rendered as those of the friars (Figs. 1, 13). These figures open up another space between another binary, the lay/religious binary, which I argue we should understand as adjacent to and interconnected with that of gender. The privileged placement of lay devotees throughout the book still strongly suggests lay patronage and ownership of the Franciscan Psalter-Hours. The distinct devotional performances of mendicant men and women serve to expand the imaginative performance of the presumably lay reader and further inflect conceptions of gendered devotion.

In contrast to the emphasis on heraldry in the Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book, the numerous representations of mendicant saints, friars, and nuns prioritize Franciscan leanings over familial affiliations and impart a distinctly mendicant flavor to the manuscript, despite its apparent lay patronage. Since the foundation of the Order of Friars Minor in 1209 and its swift growth throughout the thirteenth century, Franciscans had been at the forefront of the shift within Latin Christianity towards an emphasis on introspection, personal responsibility, and an intimate relationship with God.^[60] Mendicant authors produced a body of penitential literature to support this new endeavor, literature that by the end of the thirteenth century had become popular with elite lay Christians striving to hone their devotional practice.^[61] This is the context for the spread of the manuscript owner portrait, which, similarly, guided and promoted its subject-viewers' self-awareness in their practices of prayer. In the Franciscan Psalter-Hours, images of friars and nuns go beyond self-inspection to provide lay readers a view, ostensibly, into the devotional practices of the Franciscan religious orders.

Francis appears over thirty times across the manuscript's two volumes, wearing either a grey or a brown habit, most often displaying the stigmata or carrying a closed book (Fig. 2).^[62] Other mendicant saints Clare of Assisi, Dominic, and Peter the Martyr also figure in the illuminations.^[63] Franciscan friars in grey or pale brown habits also appear eight times in the manuscript's margins (Figs. 11, 12).^[64]



Figure 11. A Franciscan friar kneeling in prayer before the Visitation. Franciscan Psalter-Hours (hours fragment). Marseille, Bibliothèques de Marseille, Fonds Patrimoniaux, MS 111, fol. 8r. Photo: IRHT.

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Figure 12. A Franciscan friar stands holding an open book. Franciscan Psalter-Hours (hours fragment). Marseille, Bibliothèques de Marseille, Fonds Patrimoniaux, MS 111, fols. 70v–71r. Photo: IRHT.

While images of saints are largely collected in the Psalter volume, friars appear more frequently in the Hours, in compositions that have direct equivalents in the lay devotee figures. Like representations of lay devotees, images in both volumes of kneeling friars and nuns in prayer mirror the anticipated behavior of the manuscript's reader and provide a positive model for and reflection of the viewer's performed activity. Other illuminations portray mendicant and monastic figures with distinct privileges and expertise. Like the lay devotee type, they invite the reader's imaginative self-identification and emulation; in so doing, they allow the reader access to the privileges of mendicant or monastic prayer.

Mendicant figures in the Franciscan Psalter-Hours margins frequently appear with books, which serve to mark their learnedness and sanctity. Saint Francis holds a closed book in fifteen illuminations;^[65] a female saint in an all-white habit and Peter the Martyr also hold closed books.^[66] Four of the eight marginal friars likewise carry books, two closed and two with their pages open, facing the viewer (Fig. 12).^[67]

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Another figure, a prostrate cleric in a dark robe, turns his open book away from the viewer, hiding its contents.[68] These varied interactions with books connect the marginal friars with their order's founder and draw on his learned authority. They also encourage a connection with the book's reader and the devotee images, just like the images of Isabelle de Kievraing reading in the Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book. Yet, these images of the bookish friars depart from the devotee reader types in significant ways. The closed books that most of the mendicant figures hold lack the immediacy of the portraits of Isabelle or other owner figures reading. The two friars with open books recall these more closely, yet neither friar appears to be in prayer, as one is seated and the other stands. These figures seem instead to be displaying their books to the viewer, aligning them more closely with the images of friars preaching to a seated audience than book owners in prayer.

Still, these varied interactions with books, in combination with other representations presenting friars as supplicants, allow Franciscans in this manuscript's margins to bridge the categories of lay devotees and saintly intercessors. The authority established in these representations adds extra weight to the representations elsewhere of the friars' prayers. It also reinforces the efficacy of the psalter-hours itself, the text of which was adapted for lay use from monastic devotional practices and texts. The mendicant and monastic figures in the margins of the Franciscan Psalter-Hours might have reminded a lay reader of the high standards of devotion to which they might aspire. The figures of friars holding, reading, or showing books in the Franciscan Psalter-Hours may have provided lay readers with another model through which to understand their engagement with the psalter-hours.

Their association with books is one of many ways in which friars are distinguished from lay men in the margins. As in the Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book, and in other prayer books of this period with representations of men owners, the illuminations pointedly refrain from any link between laymen devotees and either books or the act of devotional reading.[69] The illuminations of friars with books add a model of masculine, clerical authority to that of feminine devotional literacy embodied in the more typical figure of the reading laywoman devotee. Such a model would be available to lay readers of any gender, providing a clerical elevation of feminized devotional practices, and a masculine alternative for conceptualizing literate prayer. But for any lay reader, following or identifying with this exemplar would still require the imaginative traversal of a social boundary—that between the laity and the clergy—as well as, potentially, the gender binary.

The possible representation of women religious in the manuscript's margins further deepens the association between monastic prayer and the book and provides another potential point of identification across a binary. Five figures stand out among the female devotees for their heavy, grey, hooded mantles and their extreme performances of devotion (Figs. 1, 13).[70]

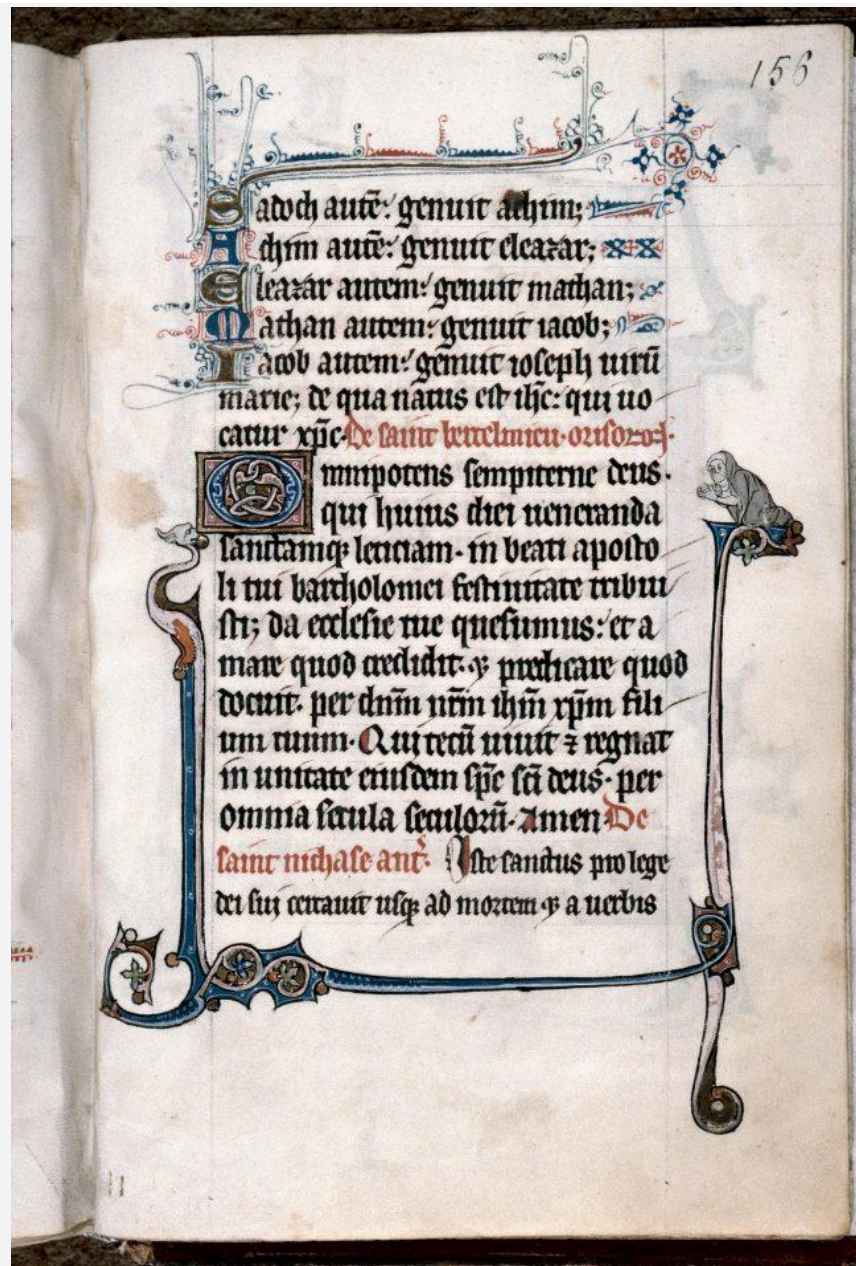


Figure 13. A woman (in a religious habit?) bows low in prayer. Franciscan Psalter-Hours (hours fragment). Marseille, Bibliothèques de Marseille, Fonds Patrimoniaux, MS 111, fol. 156r. Photo: IRHT.

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Although these figures are not marked by costume as clearly as the friars, the modesty and uniformity of their clothing evoke religious habits. While fully professed members of the Poor Clares wore a distinctive black veil and white wimple, lay sisters and novices simply wore white veils with their habits. None of the order's thirteenth-century Rules specified the color of the habit, only that it be "neither completely white nor completely black."^[71] Extra-religious groups such as the beguines would also adopt the habits of established orders to signal their piety, chastity, and collective identity, even in the absence of official vows.^[72] In the Franciscan Psalter-Hours, these figures' ambiguous habits reflect their strong devotion while destabilizing any certainty about their social status.

In addition to exaggerated postures of prayer, the images of nuns share an emphasis on reading: in the margin of Psalm 53, for example, a woman kneels prostrate on the vine border, holding a book open before her face (Fig. 1). By placing books in the hands of potential nuns, the illuminations of the Franciscan Psalter-Hours further align devotional reading with a more professional practice of prayer. Still, a gendered divide persists among the images of monastic readers. While the friars' books signify their authority and align with other outward-facing activities such as preaching, women with monastic markers use books more introspectively. The friars do not read the books they hold; whether open or closed, their books seem intended for an audience outside themselves. The women with books are readers all: they hold their books before their faces as they kneel, sit, or bow, gazes fixed on their open pages (Figs. 1, 9).

A divide is also clear in the relationship between lay and mendicant or monastic figures of each gender. Costume clearly distinguishes the laymen, in armor or courtly garb, from the mendicants in their brown or grey robes. While both figures may be shown in prayerful postures, friars appear with a range of other attributes, such as the book, and doing other activities, such as preaching. Among the women, on the other hand, the sartorial markers distinguishing nuns from laywomen are ambiguous. There is also much more overlap between the women's activities, as laywomen are also shown throughout the manuscript reading and praying with books and in exaggerated postures of devotion.^[73] The ambiguous social identities of the women in the margins of the Franciscan Psalter-Hours not only encourage laywomen viewers to see themselves more readily in a monastic devotional performance, but also suggest a more fluid boundary between lay and religious identities—at least, for women.

The depictions of women religious in the Franciscan Psalter-Hours stand in contrast with the distinct differentiation of lay and religious women in the Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book, despite the implications of their shared familial and class affiliations. Black-veiled women in both dark brown and black habits appear as devotees, usually accompanying or nearby a laywoman legible as Isabelle, as Nigel Morgan observed.[74] Whether or not these figures represent specific nuns close to the family, costume distinguishes them clearly from the laywomen with whom they most often appear, and with whom they share so many attributes and postures (Fig. 14).[75]

In presenting women religious as companions of pious laywomen, the Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book frames religious identity not as a distinct practice or orientation, but as another valence of aristocratic identity. Thus, the roles accorded to women religious reinforce the distinct emphasis in each book: while the supporting role of nuns in the Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer book reinforces the primacy of class identity, the ambiguous delineations between women in the Franciscan Psalter-Hours center spiritual performance and orientation as central to a reader's interactions with the prayer book's images and texts.

Once again, in each case, it is primarily sartorial markers that place the illuminated figures within the male/female and lay/religious binaries. In contrast to literary narratives, where clothing can be donned, doffed, and exchanged at will, the still images in medieval manuscripts necessarily collapse body, cloth, and embodied performance together. Clothes do more than mark figures' identities—they make them. This collapse resonates with Jeanne Vaccaro's theorization of transgender embodiment as felt, the textile that defies the mathematical grid of woven cloth. Vaccaro wrote:

In fiber arts and textiles, we may initially think of metaphors that will dress the body in a protective mask or identity, something that can be changed into and out of at will. ... However, my theoretical turn to fiber is not a method to imagine an outside for a supposed inside. I think with the tactility and metaphor of fiber to disavow the belief that transgender identity is a condition of either interiority or exteriority. Rather, it is the connective tissue between these dimensions.[76]

Vaccaro's emphasis on the interconnectivity of exteriority and interiority provides a fresh framework for considering the mutually constructive roles of prayer and identity in manuscript owner portraits and their reception in use. If the illuminated

devotees' (external) identities and performances of prayer (externalizations of an internal state) are mutually constitutive and enmeshed, what are the implications for the medieval reader's internal and embodied performances of prayer?

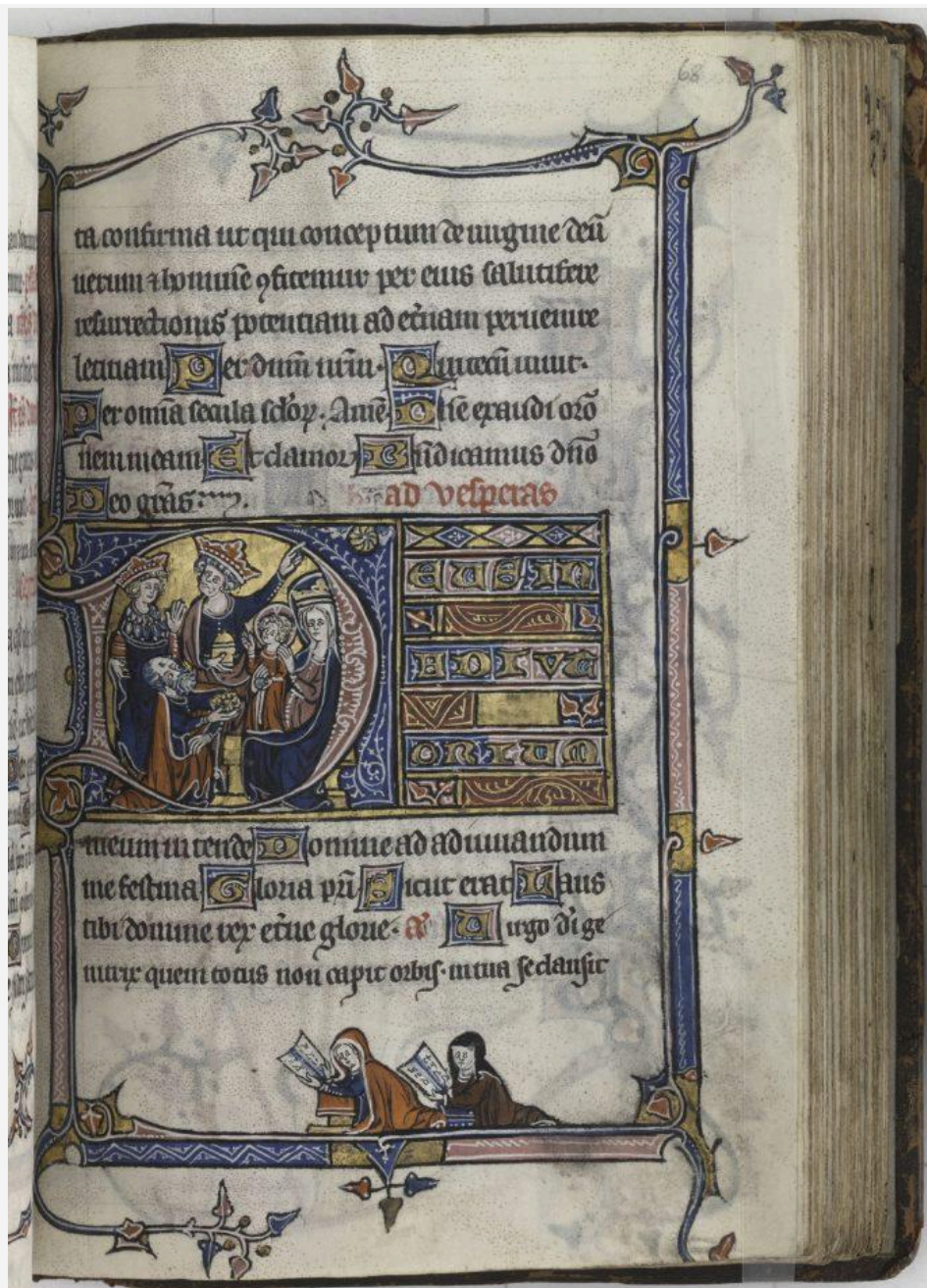


Figure 14. A laywoman and a nun in a dark brown habit (Franciscan?) kneel with open books. Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book (abbreviated breviary volume). Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria inv. 1254-3, fol. 68r. Photo: National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne.

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The metaphor of felt, as a textile formed by intermeshing fibers, figures transgender bodies as bodies that come into being through the creation of “connective tissue” between interior and exterior, through internal and external processes which are fundamentally connected and interdependent.[77] Vaccaro’s metaphor has interesting parallels with medieval conceptions of the devotional or penitential self, which is also produced through the push and pull of exterior and interior upon one another.[78] The performance of gender and the performance of devotion are similarly intertwined and enmeshed, and the prayer book provides a private space for experimentation with both.

The image of the book within the manuscript’s illuminations also plays a role in this complex reforming of the viewer’s performances. As we have seen, the recursive sign of the open book invites the actual reader’s self-identification with the reading figure; the book is the barb that hooks the reader, tugging them closer to and entangling them with each reading figure, regardless of their other orientations. Yet the book is also an attribute that expresses the gendered differences in each figure’s devotional performances, distinguishing between the outward-facing authority and didacticism of the friar, the daily piety of the laywoman, and the extreme introspection of the women coded as nuns. This variety in the use of books within the Franciscan Psalter-Hours’ margins provides the book’s actual readers with a range of models through which to conceptualize their own reading—and, by extension, their devotional performance and identity. The shared attribute of a book makes the authority of the mendicant men, the introspection of the monastic women, and the privileged spiritual connections of the lay woman all more available to the reader.

Religious figures of all genders remind the Franciscan Psalter-Hours’ anticipated lay audience of the high standards of devotion to which they might aspire. As in the representations of lay devotees, the recursive image of the open book in the mendicant/monastic figures’ hands invites the viewer’s performative self-identification with the reading figure. This opportunity for self-identification across the lines of gender and social order allows the reader imaginative access to the activities and privileges of mendicant or monastic devotion. In the case of the monastic women, their ambiguous costumes downplay distinctions between lay and monastic women and draw connections between the personal and introspective reading practices of both. Images of friars, meanwhile, create clear distinctions between the social orders for men, but provide rare representations of masculine literate devotion, conferring a masculine authority on the actual reader’s religious practices. The even more stark articulation of the gender binary between the Franciscan figures than between the lay devotees makes all of these gendered

performances available in some way to the book's reader. The reader occupies not just a transgender space between femininity and masculinity, but also between gendered lay and monastic or mendicant identities. Devotional performances marked on the page by external identifiers such as clothing, hairstyle, attributes, and gestures have the potential to fuse and mesh, like felt, with the interior identity of the reader adopting, adapting, or aspiring to the practice depicted.

Conclusion: Looking Beyond the Binary

These identifications cross boundaries and binaries that are closely aligned with those of gender in the Middle Ages. The transition from laywoman to monastic man is a trope in the literature of transgender saints throughout the medieval Christian world. The lay/religious binary, furthermore, represents one set of gendered identities between which medieval subjects transitioned routinely and with broad social sanction, as women and men entered religious orders. While we cannot speak with certainty about the identities of the Franciscan Psalter-Hours owners, we can see some examples of transitions in the lives of members of the Aspremont-Kievraing family.

Nothing in the scant historical record suggests a transgender identity for any member of this family. But a consideration of the reception of these images within the context of the family's history prompts consideration of the ways in which gender is actively constructed, and the ways in which a subject's gendered identity and performance would change over their lifetime. At Joffroy's death in 1302, Isabelle de Kievraing's status changed from wife to widow, and from lady to dowager, roles she held for thirty-five years until her own death in 1337.[79] Joffroy and Isabelle's oldest son, Gobert, unexpectedly became Lord of Aspremont, when previously he had been a boy. Their daughter, Mahaut, left her identity as a virgin behind when she married Simon de Lalaing, then returned to it in a way in 1333 when Simon died and she entered the Franciscan abbey at Valenciennes, where she lived an additional forty years.[80] While the effigy on Mahaut's tomb represented her simply as a nun, the lengthy inscription circumscribed her life with an account of her various identities, looking back from the final transition from life to death.[81] Manuscripts such as the Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book and the Franciscan Psalter-Hours had the capacity to prepare their readers for such transitions, perhaps even facilitate them, by modeling diverse performances of gendered devotion.

In this interplay of gendered performance and its representation, like in Vaccaro's metaphor of felt, gender identity and devotional performance are interconnected in

intimate, non-linear, and inextricable ways, and their fabric is constantly in transition. This transgender space may have been uncomfortable for certain medieval readers, which may provide some insight into why gendered performances are so starkly defined within medieval prayer books. Yet there may also have been something desirable and generative in the transgender space these portraits and their ritual function together frame. “A reorientation of the body in time and space,” to borrow Halberstam’s words again, would seem like an appropriate description of a medieval Christian’s hourly prayer. Perhaps for the owners and readers of these books, the reorientations of their gendered performances provided a means to step out of their present time and space and to better approach the divine.

Owner portraits, and the prayer books that contain them, are agents of normativity. The availability of portraits as alternative models for the performance of gendered prayer is an ironic side effect of their emphatic assertion of the gender binary. Nevertheless, it is through this assertion of the binary that its seams begin to show, opening up spaces between. These spaces require us to shift the terms we use to discuss objects like personal prayer books. Devotional books, like the comb or the mirror, were objects that were coded feminine in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, but were by no means restricted to women’s use. Books of hours and their like remain a rich resource for investigating the agency, anxieties, and experiences of medieval women as well as the means by which visual culture both reflected and constructed medieval conceptions of femininity. We should not forget, however, that for all they can tell us about feminine experience in the later Middle Ages, they can be equally eloquent about masculine experience as well as the transgender spaces that existed in between.

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- 2** In addition to the books discussed here, these include Cambrai, Médiathèque municipale MS 87; Cologne, Kolumba, König MS 2; Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum MS Ludwig IX 3; London, British Library Add. MS 36684 and New York, Morgan Library and Museum MS M.754; London, British Library Stowe MS 17; New York, The Met Cloisters L.1990.38; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France MS lat. 1077; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France MS lat. 10435; and Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Art Museum MS 44-18. See Doyle, "The Portrait Potential," for an extended discussion of the owner portraits in a subset of these manuscripts.
- 3** Sand, *Vision, Devotion, and Self-Representation*, 2.
- 4** Maeve K. Doyle, "Identity, Indeterminacy, and Audience: The Semantics of Portraiture in the De Brailes Hours," *Studies in Iconography* 43 (2022), forthcoming. <https://doi.org/10.32773/JGAD5430>
- 5** The Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book is a two-volume psalter and abbreviated breviary, ca. 1295-1305, Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Douce 118 (hereafter Douce 118) and Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria inv. 1254-3 (hereafter NGV 1254-3). The Franciscan Psalter-Hours is a two-volume psalter-hours, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France MS lat. 1076 (hereafter lat. 1076) and Marseille, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 111 (hereafter Marseille 111).

- 6 For the Aspremont-Kievraing Prayer Book, see E. G. Millar, "Livre d'heures executé pour Joffroy d'Aspremont et pour sa femme Isabelle de Kievraing," *Bulletin de la société française de reproductions de manuscrits à peintures* 9 (1925): 20–32; Margaret M. Manion and Vera F. Vines, *Medieval and Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts in Australian Collections* (Melbourne: Thames and Hudson, 1984), 70; Margaret M. Manion, Lyndsay Knowles, and John Payne, "The Aspremont Psalter-Hours: The Making of a Manuscript," *Art Bulletin of Victoria* 34 (1994): 25–34; Nigel Morgan, "Gendered Devotions and Social Rituals: The Aspremont 'Hours' in the National Gallery of Victoria and the Image of the Patron in Late Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth-Century France," *Melbourne Art Journal* 6 (2003): 5–24; Margaret M. Manion, *The Felton Illuminated Manuscripts in the National Gallery of Victoria* (Melbourne: Macmillan Art Publishing and the National Gallery of Victoria, 2005), 98–203; Alison Stones, *Gothic Manuscripts 1260–1320, Part Two*, vol. 1, *A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in France* (London: Harvey Miller, 2014), 60–72.
- 7 Jacques Bretex [Bretel], *Le tournoi de Chauvency*, ed. Maurice Delbouille, Bibliothèque de la Faculté de philosophie et lettres de l'Université de Liège, fasc. 49 (Liège: H. Vaillant-Carmanne, 1932), lines 1284–1290, 3221–3230; see also Millar, "Livre d'heures," 22–25; the relevant passages are translated in Manion, *The Felton Illuminated Manuscripts*, 114. For the death dates of Isabelle and Joffroy, and a description of Isabelle's tomb, see Louis Bossu, "La pierre tombale de Gillette de Dugny, à Saulmory," *Bulletin mensuel de la société d'archéologie lorraine et du musée historique lorrain* 5, no. 8–9 (September 1905): 176–77.
- 8 Douce 118, fols. 7r and 127r; NGV 1254-3, fols. 1r, 5v, 7r, 11r, 31v, and 50v. The superscript addition of feminine word endings to a prayer in the breviary volume (NGV 1254-3, fol. 99v) is an indicator of the manuscript's continued importance for at least one woman reader, but should not foreclose the possibility of wider use.
- 9 The Latin prayer *O Intemerata* (O Immaculate Virgin) contains word forms anticipating a feminine speaker (Marseille 111, fol. 152r), but this does not preclude shared use of the manuscript. For the Franciscan Psalter-Hours, see Joseph-Hyacinthe Albanès, *Marseille, Catalogue général des manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France: Départements* 15 (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1892), 43–45; Victor Leroquais, *Les psautiers manuscrits latins des bibliothèques publiques de France* (Mâcon: Protat Frères, 1940), 2:63–65; François Avril, catalog entry in *L'Art au temps des rois maudits: Philippe le Bel et ses fils, 1285–1328* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1998), 308–9; Elizabeth Moore Hunt, *Illuminating the Borders of Northern French and Flemish Manuscripts, 1270–1310* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 69–78; Alison Stones, *Gothic Manuscripts*

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- 10 Doyle, “Identity, Indeterminacy, and Audience.”
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- 11 Richard Brilliant, *Portraiture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 14.
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- 12 I refer specifically here to the imagined reader’s gender assigned at birth. Throughout this essay, my use of gendered descriptors (women/female/feminine and men/male/masculine) refers in most cases to gender assigned at birth or cisgender categories, social constructions that representations such as those discussed here both produced and enforced.
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- 16 Rachel Ann Dressler, *Of Armor and Men in Medieval England: The Chivalric Rhetoric of Three English Knights’ Effigies* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 108–9 observed the same bodily similarity within representations of male and female tomb effigies in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century England, with the notable exception of men dressed in armor. One potential counter-example in manuscript portraiture is a book of hours with the Life of Saint Margaret, today split between the British Library and the Morgan Library, in which Michael Camille observed that the owner “is so often depicted that she appears to change shape, costume, and size, sometimes swelling up larger, sometimes elongated and empty” in a way that evokes pregnancy. Michael Camille, *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 54.
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- 17** Saisha Grayson underscored the crucial role clothing served in medieval representation in her study of AFAB (assigned female at birth) monks, which illuminates the fundamental challenge trans saints posed to medieval representational conventions: Saisha Grayson, "Disruptive Disguises: The Problem of Transvestite Saints for Medieval Art, Identity, and Identification," *Medieval Feminist Forum* 45:2 (2009): 138–174. Vanessa Wright's study of illuminations St. Eufrosine/Esmarade adds important depth to this issue by highlighting two early fourteenth-century artists' inventive combinations of masculine and feminine clothing and hairstyles to signal their subject's queer gender identity: Vanessa Wright, "Illuminating Queer Identity in the Manuscripts of the *Vie de sainte Eufrosine*," in *Trans and Genderqueer Subjects in Medieval Hagiography*, ed. Alicia Spencer-Hall and Blake Gutt (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021), 155–176. See also Stephenie McGucken, "Vice & Virtue As Woman? The Iconography of Gender Identity in the Late Anglo-Saxon *Psychomachia* Illustrations," in *Visions of Medieval Trans Feminism*, ed. Dorothy Kim and M. W. Bychowski, special issue, *Medieval Feminist Forum* 55, no. 1 (2019): 46–49, <https://doi.org/10.17077/1536-8742.2148> for a discussion of similar issues in early English *Psychomachia* manuscripts.
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- 18** For example, on NGV 1254-3, fol. 41v, where two women in dresses charged with the Aspremont arms pray before an image of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple. See Madeline H. Caviness, "Hats and Veils: There's No Such Thing as Freedom of Choice, and It's a Good Thing Too," in *Founding Feminisms in Medieval Studies*, ed. Laine E. Doggett and Daniel E. O'Sullivan, Essays in Honor of E. Jane Burns (Boydell and Brewer, 2016), 73–96. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781782046196-010>
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- 19** E. Jane Burns, *Courtly Love Undressed: Reading through Clothes in Medieval French Culture*, Middle Ages (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 130–31.
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- 20** Nuns also appear as devotees in the Aspremont-Kievrain Prayer Book, but monks or friars do not. Nuns can be seen in Douce 118, fols. 25v, 85r, 129r, and 136v, and in NGV 1254-3, fols. 46v (repainted?), 57v, 68r (with a laywoman), 120r (with a cleric and a laywoman), and 125r (with a laywoman). Clerics appear in prayer in NGV 1254-3, fols. 70r (with a layman) and 120r (with a nun), and performing a Mass before a kneeling laywoman in Douce 118, fol. 38r. See Morgan, "Gendered Devotions," 20–23; Manion, *The Felton Illuminated Manuscripts*, 116–19.
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- 21** These juxtapositions may be seen to illustrate Michael Camille's interpretation of marginal images as "anti-models," "consciously constructed signs of incoherence and disorder on the edges crucial to the construction of coherence and order at the centre." Michael Camille, "Play, Piety and Perversity in Medieval Marginal Manuscript Illumination," in *Mein ganzer Körper ist Gesicht: Groteske Darstellungen in der europäischen Kunst und Literatur des Mittelalters*, ed. Katrin Kröll and Hugo Steger (Freiburg im Breisgau: Rombach Verlag, 1994), 172; see also Michael Camille, *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), especially 26–31. On marginal owner portraits between anti-model and model, see Doyle, "The Portrait Potential," 87–99.
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- 22** For this theme in medieval texts, see Robert L. A. Clark and Claire Sponsler, "Queer Play: The Cultural Work of Crossdressing in Medieval Drama," *New Literary History* 28, no. 2 (April 1997): 319–44; Valerie R. Hotchkiss, *Clothes Make the Man: Female Cross Dressing in Medieval Europe* (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2012); Roland Betancourt, *Byzantine Intersectionality: Sexuality, Gender and Race in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020), 89–120; Wright, "Illuminating Queer Gender." For important critiques of the widespread, uncritical use of the outdated term "transvestite" in this scholarship, see Betancourt, *Byzantine Intersectionality*, 90; M. W. Bychowski, "The Authentic Lives of Transgender Saints: *Imago Dei* and *imitatio Christi* in the Life of St Marinos the Monk," in Spencer-Hall and Gutt, eds., *Trans and Genderqueer Subjects*, 245–265.
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- 23** Burns, *Courtly Love Undressed*, 121–22.
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- 24** Burns, *Courtly Love Undressed*, 122, 142.
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- 25** Burns, *Courtly Love Undressed*, 146.
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- 26** Joan Cadden, *Meanings of Sex Difference in the Middle Ages: Medicine, Science, and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 202, 225; Miri Rubin, "The Person in the Form: Medieval Challenges to Bodily 'Order,'" in *Framing Medieval Bodies*, ed. Sarah Kay and Miri Rubin (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1994), 100–122; Jacqueline Murray, "One Flesh, Two Sexes, Three Genders?," in *Gender and Christianity in Medieval Europe: New Perspectives*, ed. Lisa M. Bitel and Felice Lifshitz (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 34–51; Leah DeVun, *The Shape of Sex* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2021); see also Meghan L. Nestel, "A Space of Her Own: Genderfluidity and Negotiation in The Life of Christina of Markyate,"
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Medieval Feminist Forum 55, no. 1 (2019): 102–4 for a critique of the “third gender” terminology often used in these discussions.

- 27** For gender and performance broadly, see Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 24–25, 136–141; José Esteban Muñoz, *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999). I expand on devotion as a gendered performance in the medieval context in Maeve K. Doyle, “Picturing Men at Prayer: Gender in Manuscript Owner Portraits around 1300,” *Getty Research Journal* 13, no. 1 (February 2021): 39–46. <https://doi.org/10.1086/713429>
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- 28** Robert Mills, *Seeing Sodomy in the Middle Ages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 81–87; Betancourt, *Byzantine Intersectionality*, 90–91; see also Karl Whittington, “Medieval,” *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 1, no. 1–2 (May 1, 2014): 125–29; M. W. Bychowski and Dorothy Kim, eds., “Visions of Medieval Trans Feminism,” special issue, *Medieval Feminist Forum* 55, no. 1 (2019). Transgender includes nonbinary genders, and for these specifically, see DeVun, *The Shape of Sex*. On terminology, a recent and essential resource is Alicia Spencer-Hall and Blake Gutt, “Trans and Genderqueer Studies Terminology, Language, and Usage Guide” in Spencer-Hall and Gutt, eds., *Trans and Genderqueer Subjects*, 281–330. For an extensive bibliography, see Nico Mara-McKay, “Trans and Translike Medieval Bibliography,” accessed January 13, 2022, <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1St09yZAO2x6RMI2Do4HcplQt0JnKfN9jUVEn5w15dqA/edit?usp=sharing>.
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- 29** See the entry for “Trans(gender)” in Spencer-Hall and Gutt, “Trans and Genderqueer Studies Terminology,” 316–317.
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- 30** Betancourt, *Byzantine Intersectionality*, 91.
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- 31** M. W. Bychowski and Dorothy Kim, “Visions of Medieval Trans Feminism: An Introduction,” *Medieval Feminist Forum* 55, no. 1 (2019): 10. Blake Gutt makes a similar point in his article in Bychowski and Kim’s special issue of *Medieval Feminist Forum*: “Recognizing and acknowledging characters who can be read as trans in medieval texts—characters in whom modern trans people might see themselves—is a powerful affirmative act for trans visibility,” and, “Without an awareness of our long history, we are left vulnerable to ignorant ideological attacks on the present. ... The more familiar trans perspectives become, the less they can be denied or marginalized.” Blake Gutt, “Medieval Trans Lives in Anamorphosis: Looking Back and Seeing Differently (Pregnant Men and Backward Birth),” *Medieval Feminist Forum* 55, no. 1 (2019): 188, 204. See also
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Alicia Spencer-Hall and Blake Gutt, "Introduction," in Spencer-Hall and Gutt, eds., *Trans and Genderqueer Subjects*, 11.

- 32** M. W. Bychowski, "The Future of Medieval Transgender Studies: Kalamazoo 2018," May 21, 2018, <http://www.thingstransform.com/2018/06/the-future-of-medieval-transgender.html>; see also M. W. Bychowski, "The Necropolitics of Narcissus: Confessions of Transgender Suicide in the Middle Ages," *Medieval Feminist Forum* 55, no. 1 (2019): 214. Betancourt also cites the breadth of identities encompassed by the term as part of his reason for using it. Betancourt, *Byzantine Intersectionality*, 91. <https://doi.org/10.17077/1536-8742.2188>
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- 33** Kadin Henningsen, "'Calling [Herself] Eleanor': Gender Labor and Becoming a Woman in the Rykener Case," *Medieval Feminist Forum* 55, no. 1 (2019): 249–66; Nestel, "A Space of Her Own"; Betancourt, *Byzantine Intersectionality*, 89–120; and many of the essays in Alicia Spencer-Hall and Blake Gutt, eds., *Trans and Genderqueer Subjects*; see also Gabrielle Bychowski, "Were There Transgender People in the Middle Ages?," *The Public Medievalist*, November 1, 2018, <https://www.publicmedievalist.com/transgender-middle-ages/>. In Ruth Mazo Karras's re-visitation of her earlier work on Eleanor Rykener, she and her co-author, Tom Linkenen, adapt Judith Bennett's term "lesbian-like" to describe individuals whose actions and experiences correlate with the modern category of transgender, but for whom we have no record of their actual self-identification; Robert Mills critiques this tentative terminology, arguing that it "runs the risk of implying that premodern versions of transgender simply represent half-baked or 'early' precursors to a phenomenon that finds its fullest accomplishment in modernity." Ruth Mazo Karras and Tom Linkinen, "John/Eleanor Rykener Revisited," in *Founding Feminisms in Medieval Studies: Essays in Honor of E. Jane Burns*, ed. Laine E. Doggett and Daniel E. O'Sullivan (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2016), 112; Mills, *Seeing Sodomy in the Middle Ages*, 86; see also M. W. Bychowski, "The Transgender Turn: Eleanor Rykener Speaks Back," in *Trans Historical: Gender Plurality before the Modern*, ed. Greta LaFleur, Masha Raskolnikov, and Anna Kłosowska (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2021), 95–113.
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- 34** Sally Hines critiques a poststructuralist and postfeminist "focus upon transgender as a symbolic site of gender deconstruction [that] leaves transgender subjectivities under-explored." Sally Hines, *TransForming Gender: Transgender Practices of Identity, Intimacy and Care* (Bristol: Policy, 2007), 183–84. <https://doi.org/10.46692/9781847422552>
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- 35** Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place*, 106–107.
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- 36** Maeve K. Doyle, "Picturing Men at Prayer."
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- 37** On the Franciscan Psalter-Hours, see Albanès, *Marseille*, 43–45; Leroquais, *Les psautiers manuscrits*, 2:63–65; *L'Art au temps des rois maudits*, 308–9; Hunt, *Illuminating the Borders*, 69–78; Alison Stones, *Gothic Manuscripts 1260–1320, Part One*, A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in France (London: Harvey Miller, 2013), 2:576–581; Sand, *Vision, Devotion, and Self-Representation*, 174–77.
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- 38** Doyle, "Picturing Men at Prayer," 46–51.
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- 39** On this topic, see Susan Groag Bell, "Medieval Women Book Owners: Arbiters of Lay Piety and Ambassadors of Culture," *Signs* 7, no. 4 (July 1982): 742–68; Lesley Smith and Jane H.M. Taylor, eds., *Women and the Book: Assessing the Visual Evidence* (London: British Library, 1997), especially essays by Wendy Armstead (pgs. 57–74) and Sandra Penketh (pages 266–281); Michael Clanchy, "Images of Ladies with Prayer Books: What Do They Signify?," in *The Church and the Book: Papers Read at the 2000 Summer Meeting and the 2001 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. R. N. Swanson, Studies in Church History 38 (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2004), 106–22; Virginia Reinburg, "'For the Use of Women': Women and Books of Hours," *Early Modern Women* 4 (2009): 235–40; Doyle, "Picturing Men at Prayer."
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- 40** Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place*, 106–7.
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- 41** On the Aspremont family, see Mathias Auclair, "Grandeur et décadence d'une famille seigneuriale lorraine: Le lignage d'Apremont des origines à la fin du XIV^e siècle," *Lotharingia* 10 (2001): 127–77, especially 155–157.
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- 42** MS Douce 118, fol. 127r and NGV 1254-3, fols. 7r and 57r; Morgan, "Gendered Devotions," 8; Manion, *The Felton Illuminated Manuscripts*, 114–16; Stones, *Gothic Manuscripts, Part Two*, 1:68.
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- 43** NGV 1254-3, fol. 29r. Morgan, "Gendered Devotions," 6; Manion, *The Felton Illuminated Manuscripts*, 114–16; Stones, *Gothic Manuscripts, Part Two*, 1:66, 68.
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- 44** MS Douce 118, fol. 60v. For *Le tournoi de Chauvency*, see above, note 7.
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- 45** Morgan, "Gendered Devotions," 6–8; Manion, *The Felton Illuminated Manuscripts*, 114–16; Stones, *Gothic Manuscripts, Part Two*, 1:68–69.
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- 46** Howard Helsinger, "Images on the Beatus Page of Some Medieval Psalters," *The Art Bulletin* 53, no. 2 (June 1971): 174–76.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00043079.1971.10790465>; Kathleen M. Openshaw,
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- “Weapons in the Daily Battle: Images of the Conquest of Evil in the Early Medieval Psalter,” *The Art Bulletin* 75, no. 1 (1993): 17–38.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/3045930>
- 47** Hildesheim, Dombibliothek MS St. Godehard 1, p. 72; Openshaw, “Weapons in the Daily Battle,” 17–18, 34–38.
- 48** Helsinger, “Images on the Beatus Page,” especially 174.
- 49** Morgan, “Gendered Devotions,” 8; Morgan does not cite a source for this, and I have been unable as yet to confirm it.
- 50** Stones, *Gothic Manuscripts, Part Two*, 1:68–69.
- 51** Stones, *Gothic Manuscripts, Part Two*, 1:69.
- 52** Doyle, “Picturing Men at Prayer.”
- 53** Isabelle and Joffroy appear wearing their respective arms together on Douce 118, fol. 7r and NGV 1254-3, fols. 1r, 5v, 7r (with another laywoman).
- 54** Théodore Bernier, “Chronologie historique des seigneurs de Quiévrain,” *Annales du cercle archéologique de Mons* 20 (1887): 263–64.
- 55** Jakemes, *Le roman du castelain de Couci et de la dame de Fayel*, ed. John E. Matzke and Maurice Delboulle (Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1936); Morgan, “Gendered Devotions,” 6.
- 56** While regent of Brabant, Aleyde of Burgundy made a similar maneuver in her self-representation on her seal, where she appears as a hunter on horseback. I am grateful to Tracy Chapman Hamilton for pointing out this comparison. See Tracy Chapman Hamilton, *Pleasure and Politics at the Court of France: The Artistic Patronage of Queen Marie de Brabant (1260–1321)* (London: Harvey Miller, 2019), 59–62.
- 57** Robert L. A. Clark, “Queering Gender and Naturalizing Class in the *Roman de Silence*,” *Arthuriana* 12, no. 1 (2002): 56–63. Examples of courtly (or less courtly) women in martial combat include the *Tournoiement aus dames*, where specific contemporary noblewomen take to the field; Pierre Gencien’s *Tournoiement as dames*, which does not identify its more modest combatants; and the combat between allegorical figures in the *Roman de Fauvel*. See Holger Petersen Dyggve, “Les personnages du »Tournoiement aus dames»,” *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 36, no. 3 (1935): 145–192; Helen Solterer, “Figures

of Female Militancy in Medieval France,” *Signs* 16, no. 3 (Spring 1991): 522–549; Nancy Freeman Regalado, “Allegories of Power: The Tournament of Vices and Virtues in the *Roman de Fauvel* (BN MS Fr. 146),” *Gesta* 32, no. 2 (1993): 135–146, especially 141.

- 58** These allusive images also sidestep the sexual and middle-class implications that Emily Shartrand traces within representations in other manuscripts of women tilting at male opponents using a distaff in place of a lance. See Emily Shartrand, “The Distaff as Weapon in the Margins of Two Thirteenth-Century Arthurian Romances,” *Medieval Feminist Forum* 56:1 (2020): 172–220. <https://doi.org/10.17077/1536-8742.2174>
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- 59** Franciscan friars appear on lat. 1076, fols. 153v (kneeling in prayer before Saint Francis) and 162r (holding closed book) and Marseille 111, fols. 6r (standing holding blank scroll), 8r (kneeling in prayer), 17v (preaching to seated audience), 21r (standing or walking with hands in prayer), and 71r (standing and reading open book). See also below, note 62.
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- 60** Neslihan Şenocak, *The Poor and the Perfect: The Rise of Learning in the Franciscan Order, 1209–1310* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), 2. <https://doi.org/10.7591/9780801464249>; D. L. D’Avray, *The Preaching of the Friars: Sermons Diffused from Paris before 1300* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 14–17; Leonard E. Boyle, “The Fourth Lateran Council and Manuals of Popular Theology,” in *The Popular Literature of Medieval England*, ed. Thomas J. Heffernan, *Tennessee Studies in Literature* 28 (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 30–43. For the Franciscan presence in the Pas-de-Calais, where the Franciscan Hours was illuminated, see Bert Roest, *Order and Disorder: The Poor Clares between Foundation and Reform* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 138–139, 211–212; Richard W. Emery, *The Friars in Medieval France: A Catalogue of French Mendicant Convents, 1200–1550* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), 3, 7–8, 101–2.
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- 61** Boyle, “The Fourth Lateran Council”; Pierre Michaud-Quantin, *Sommes de casuistique et manuels de confession au moyen âge (XII – XVI siècles)*, *Analecta medievalia namurcensia* 13 (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, 1962), 15–33.
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- 62** Saint Francis appears on lat. 1076, fols. 59r, 71r, 75v, 78r, 81v, 87v, 104v, 105v, 108v, 112v, 135v, 141r, 142v (receiving the stigmata), 145v, 151r (with Saint Dominic), 153v, 154r, 156r, 158r, 159v, 161r, 161v, 163r, 165r, 170r, 172r, 173r, and 181r and Marseille 111, fols. 74r, 139r, and 141v. An additional, unlimbed friar in a brown habit displays the stigmata on lat. 1076, fol. 113v.
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- 63** Clare of Assisi appears on lat. 1076, fols. 130r, 160r, and 164v, Dominic on lat. 1076, fols. 151r (with Francis) and 156r, and Peter the Martyr on Marseille 111, fol. 24r.
- 64** On the inconsistent coloring of Franciscan habits in the thirteenth century, see Cordelia Warr, *Dressing for Heaven: Religious Clothing in Italy, 1215-1545* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), 61, 63–65. My thanks to Nancy Thompson for guiding me to this source.
- 65** Lat. 1076, fols. 59r, 71r, 75v, 80r, 81v, 104v (hiding his face), 108v, 111v, 141r, 151r, 156r, 156v, 172r, and 181r, and Marseille 111, fol. 74r.
- 66** Lat. 1076, fol. 153r and Marseille 111, fol. 24r.
- 67** Lat. 1076, fols. 156v and 162r; Marseille 111, fols. 71r and 107v.
- 68** Lat. 1076, fol. 85r.
- 69** Doyle, “Picturing Men at Prayer.”
- 70** Hunt, *Illuminating the Borders*, 74, 75; Stones, *Gothic Manuscripts, Part One*, 2013, 2:577. Stones identifies the figures on lat. 1076, fols. 66v, 76r, 148r, and 159v as nuns. I add the figure cloaked in light grey on Marseille 111, fol. 156r to the list of potential nuns.
- 71** Warr, *Dressing for Heaven*, 134–35, the 1263 rule of Urban IV quoted and translated on p. 135. On the loose dress code in women’s religious orders, see Eva Schlotheuber, “Best Clothes and Everyday Attire of Late Medieval Nuns,” in *Fashion and Clothing in Late Medieval Europe*, ed. Rainer C. Schwinges and Regula Schorta (Riggisberg: Abegg-Stiftung, 2010), 1–23; see also Desirée Koslin, “The Dress of Monastic and Religious Women as Seen in Art from the Early Middle Ages to the Reformation” (Ph.D. diss., New York, New York University, 1999).
- 72** Alejandra Concha Sahli, “Habit Envy: Extra-Religious Groups, Attire, and the Search for Legitimation Outside the Institutionalised Religious Orders,” in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, ed. Monica L. Wright, Robin Netherton, and Gale R. Owen-Crocker, vol. 15 (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2019), 137–56. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781787444782-010>
- 73** Marseille 111, fols. 30r (praying with a book), 137v (reading), and 148v (exaggerated prayerful gesture).

- 74** Nuns with dark brown habits with black veils feature on Douce 118, fols. 25v, 85r, and 129r, and NGV 1254-3, fols. 46v and 68r. Nuns dressed fully in black appear on Douce 118, fol. 136v and NGV 1254-3, fols. 57v and 120r. In addition to these figures, which are original to the manuscript, two further women have black habits and veils painted over their original clothing on NGV 1254-3, fols. 33v and 126r; Morgan also notes that the nun's black veil on NGV 1254-3, fol. 46v may be overpainted. Morgan, "Gendered Devotions," 14–15, 23; Manion, *The Felton Illuminated Manuscripts*, 116–119.
- 75** For two different perspectives of the identity of the nuns, see Manion, *The Felton Illuminated Manuscripts*, 116–119; Stones, *Gothic Manuscripts, Part Two*, 1:69.
- 76** Vaccaro, "Felt Matters," 93.
- 77** Vaccaro, "Felt Matters," 94.
- 78** Dallas G. Denery, *Seeing and Being Seen in the Later Medieval World: Optics, Theology, and Religious Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) especially 65–69. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511496462>
- 79** Bossu, "La pierre tombale de Gillette de Dugny," 176–77.
- 80** Bernier, "Chronologie historique," 264; Bossu, "La pierre tombale de Gillette de Dugny," 177.
- 81** The inscription, as recorded in Bernier, "Chronologie historique," 264–65, reads: A vous prie qui par ci passez, / Pour Dieu, qu'il ne soit passez / De regarder seulement me lame, / Et que voeillez prier pour l'âme, / Dou cors qui ey est accouviers. / Dont li chars est pasture à viers, / Medame Mehault fut nommé, / Ung seigneur eust de renommée, / Simon de Lalaing fut nommé, / Chevalier en bien renommé, / Nonnain fut en ceste église, / Par longtemps mors l'en advise, / L'an de grâce mil trois cens / Sysante et treize paya le cens / A mon mort perverse et amère, / Noble fut de père et de mère, / De Mortaigne et de Couchy, / D'Aspremont et de Kiévraing ossy, / Débonnaire fut et piteuse, / En Dieu servant religieuse. / Prions celi qui tousiours règne, / Qui le mèche ossy en son règne, / Et qu'il pardonne ses pékiés, / Que s'ame n'ait les painnes griés.