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Department of Medieval Studies  
Budapest



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Edited by  
Gerhard Jaritz, Kyra Lyublyanovics, Ágnes Drosztmér



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The Judgment of Paris, ivory comb, verso,  
Northern France, 1530–50. London, Victoria and Albert Museum, inv. no. 468-1869.

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**A MYTH IN THE MARGIN:  
INTERPRETING THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS SCENE  
IN ROUEN BOOKS OF HOURS**

*Eszter Nagy*

An unusual scene, the Judgment of Paris, appears in the margin of four books of hours following the use of Rouen and made c. 1460–80 (figs. 1–4).<sup>1</sup> Three of them, two manuscripts from The Morgan Library and Museum in New York (M 131 and M 312), and one from the Bibliothèque municipale in Aix-en-Provence (ms. 22), are attributed to the workshop of the Master of the Rouen Échevinage, while the Villefosse Hours was painted by a Flemish illuminator, the Master of Fitzwilliam 268.<sup>2</sup> In three of them, the Judgment scene accompanies an image of the Penitent King David illustrating the Penitential Psalms, while in the Aix-en-Provence manuscript it is depicted under the image of the Virgin and the Child, which opens the text of the Mass for Our Lady. Some questions arise immediately: why was the Judgment of Paris scene painted into books of hours? What role can a mythological representation play in a prayer book? How did the medieval reader perceive this image in such a context?

Only a handful of other books of hours are known to me in which mythological representations are depicted in the margins. Better known and studied are those manuscripts in which subjects taken from classical pagan culture appear in the

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<sup>1</sup> This article is based on my MA thesis “The Judgment of Paris in Rouen Books of Hours from the second half of the Fifteenth Century” (Budapest: Central European University, 2017). I am greatly indebted to Claudia Rabel for calling my attention to the Judgment of Paris scene in the Villefosse and Aix-en-Provence books of hours, as well as to the article of Paul Durrieu, and providing me with the manuscript of her unpublished DEA dissertation about the illuminated books of hours associated with the Master of the Rouen Échevinage. I am also thankful to my supervisor, Béla Zsolt Szakács.

<sup>2</sup> For the attribution and dating, see Gregory T. Clark, “The Master of Fitzwilliam 268: New Discoveries and New and Revisited Hypotheses,” in *Flemish Manuscript Painting in Context: Recent Research*, ed. Elizabeth Morrison and Thomas Kren (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2006), 134; “Initiale,” <http://initiale.irht.cnrs.fr/>; “Corsair,” <http://corsair.themorgan.org/> (both accessed Oct. 3, 2017). The Villefosse Hours was last documented in the possession of René Héron de Villefosse in 1959; see René Héron de Villefosse, “En marge d’un rare livre d’heures: Les Étranges enluminures d’un manuscrit du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle,” *Connaissance des arts* 87 (1959): 56–59.



calendar part.<sup>3</sup> Since in these cases, the names of the months readily explain the insertion of mythological images, they cannot serve as helpful analogies for the interpretation of the Judgment of Paris scene in the Rouen books of hours. The Hours of Charles of Angoulême – where the Death of the Centaur representing the fight against vices illustrates the Office of the Dead – cannot provide a useful parallel either.<sup>4</sup> Being a lavishly illuminated, unique piece, painted by the famous illuminator, Robinet Testard, in an intellectually inspiring milieu for the father of the future king of France, Francis I, it represents a different artistic level than the books of hours from Rouen.

So far, only Paul Durrieu has attempted to interpret the presence of this mythological scene in the Rouen books of hours.<sup>5</sup> However, his study, written almost a hundred years ago, needs significant revisions in part because he did not know about the two books of hours in The Morgan Library and Museum, and more importantly because he based his interpretation on an erroneous identification of the Judgment of Paris scene.<sup>6</sup>

Although the myth had a rich medieval literary tradition, this does not provide a direct explanation for the association of the Judgment of Paris with

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<sup>3</sup> E.g., the *Bedford Hours*, London, British Library, Add. 18850 (c. 1410–30); *Hours*, London, British Library, Add. 11866 (late fifteenth century), see François Avril, “Un echo inattendu des *Tarots* dits de Mantegna dans l’enluminure française autour de 1500,” *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 58 (2009): 95–106.

<sup>4</sup> *Hours*, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 1173, fol. 41v (late fifteenth century). See Ahuva Belkin, “La Mort du Centaure: A propos de la miniature 41v du *Livre d’Heures* de Charles d’Angoulême,” *Artibus et Historiae* 11 (1990): 31–38.

<sup>5</sup> Paul Durrieu, “La Légende du roi de Mercie dans un livre d’heures du XVe siècle,” *Monuments et mémoires de la Fondation Eugène Piot* 24 (1920): 149–82. The article by René Héron de Villefosse, then the owner of the manuscript, only repeats Durrieu’s opinion, see Héron de Villefosse, “En marge,” 56–59.

<sup>6</sup> He described it as the English legend about the obscure Alfred III, King of Mercia, and the three daughters of his vassal; William of Albanac Durrieu, “La Légende,” 164. In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, many representations of the Judgment of Paris, especially the paintings by Lucas Cranach the Elder, were reinterpreted as depictions of this old English anecdote. See Christian Schuchardt, *Lucas Cranach des Aeltern: Leben und Werke* (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1851–71), vol. 2, 64–65, 155–6, 273–5 and vol. 3, 48–61; Johann David Passavant, *Le Peintre-graveur*, vol. 3 (Leipzig: Rudolph Weigel, 1862), 153. For convincing arguments definitively refuting these identifications, see J. Adrien Blanchet, “Sur une plaquette représentant le Jugement de Paris et l’Annonciation,” *Bulletin des musées* 4 (1893): 233–6; Ernst Krause, “Mercurius, der Schriftgott, in Deutschland: Ein Beitrag zur Urgeschichte der Bücherkunde,” *Zeitschrift für Bücherfreunde* 1 (1897): 482–7; Richard Förster, “Neue Cranachs in Schlesien,” *Schlesiens Vorzeit in Bild und Schrift* 7 (1899): 269–70; Marc Rosenberg, “A propos de la légende du roi de Mercie,” *Revue Archéologique* 27 (1928): 105–6.



Fig. 1.  
*Nathan Rebuking David; margin:  
 scenes from the Life of David  
 and the Judgment of Paris, Book of Hours,  
 Rouen, c. 1480. New York,  
 Pierpont Morgan Library, M 131, fol. 73r.*  
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 of the Pierpont Morgan Library,  
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King David or the Virgin Mary.<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, the manuscript circulation of texts incorporating an account of the myth proves that the story was circulating in Rouen in the second half of the fifteenth century.<sup>8</sup> Though similar evidence for

<sup>7</sup> See Margaret J. Ehrhart, *The Judgment of the Trojan Prince Paris in Medieval Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987).

<sup>8</sup> Such manuscripts: Benoît de Saint-Maure, *Roman de Troie*, Rouen, Bibliothèque municipale, ms. O.33 (in the possession of Nicolas Ouyn, living in Rouen); see Marc-René Jung, *La Légende de Troie en France au moyen âge: Analyse des versions françaises et bibliographie raisonnée des manuscrits* (Basel: Francke, 1996), 500–2. Dares of Phrygia, *De excidio Troiae* and Guido delle Colonne, *Historia destructionis Troiae*, Rouen, Bibliothèque municipale, ms. 1127 (owned by Petrus Comitiss from the diocese of Rouen); see Louis Faivre d'Arcier, *Histoire et géographie d'un mythe: La Circulation des manuscrits du "De excidio Troiae" de Darès le Phrygien; VIIIe–XVe siècles* (Paris: École des chartes, 2006), 81. Guido delle Colonne, *Historia destructionis Troiae*, Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria, L.II.7 (made for Jeanne du Bec-Crespin, wife of Pierre de Brézé, seneschal and captain of Rouen [1412–65], now severely damaged); see Paul Durrieu, "Les Manuscrits à peintures de la Bibliothèque incendiée de Turin," *Revue Archéologique* 3 (1904): 402–3. In addition, fifteen out of the thirty-five extant manuscripts of Jean Courcy's *Bouquechardière* were made in Rouen, eleven of which were illuminated by the Master of the Rouen Échevinage or his workshop, see Béatrice De Chancel, "Les Manuscrits de la *Bouquechardière* de Jean de Courcy," *Revue d'histoire des textes* 17 (1987): 233–83; Claudia Rabel, "Artiste et clientèle à la fin du Moyen Age: Les Manuscrits profanes du Maître de l'échevinage de Rouen," *Revue de l'Art* 84 (1989): 50.



Fig. 2.  
*Nathan Rebuking David;*  
*margin: scenes from the Life of*  
*David and the Judgment of Paris,*  
*Book of Hours, Rouen, c. 1470–*  
*80. New York, Pierpont Morgan*  
*Library, M 312, fol. 80r.*  
© With permission of the Pierpont  
Morgan Library, New York

the myth's visual presence in Rouen is lacking, its visual tradition demonstrates that from the second half of the fifteenth century, this subject appeared more and more often outside of its textual and narrative context. It was depicted in separate printed sheets<sup>9</sup> and in clay moulds and casts, i.e. in media affordable for less wealthy people as well.<sup>10</sup> It was also presented several times as *tableau vivant* in royal

<sup>9</sup> E.g., two engravings by the Master with Banderols (Geldern or Overijssel, third quarter of the fifteenth century), see Max Lehrs, *Geschichte und kritischer Katalog des deutschen, niederländischen und französischen Kupferstichs im XV. Jahrhundert*, vol. 4 (Vienna: Österreichische Staatsdruckerei, 1921), 134–35, nos. 90–91, pl. 109; “Albertina, Sammlungen Online,” accessed Oct. 3, 2017, <http://sammlungenonline.albertina.at>

<sup>10</sup> Moulds: Liège, Musée Curtius, inv. no. I.16.28; see Imre Holl, “Gotische Tonmodel in Ungarn,” *Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 43 (1991): 32. Zurich, Schweizerisches Nationalmuseum; see “Ankäufe,” *Jahresbericht, Schweizerisches Landesmuseum Zürich* 26 (1917): 20, pl. 2. Formerly in the collection of Albert Figdor; see Wilhelm von Bode and Wolfgang Fritz Volbach, *Gotische Formmodel: Eine vergessene Gattung der deutschen Kleinplastik* (Berlin: G. Grote'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1918), 43. Cast: Rouen, Musée des Antiquités; see Blanchet, “Sur une plaquette,” 235.

entries in the Burgundian Netherlands.<sup>11</sup> These examples indicate that the story must have been familiar for a wide stratum of people who were not necessarily erudite. Therefore, it may have been easily recognizable and understandable even in the context of books of hours, where no text explained them. In the absence of texts directly explaining the insertion of the Judgment of Paris scene next to the image of either the Penitent King David or the Virgin Mary, I will turn towards the visual context in which it appears in the books of hour in order to decipher the meaning of this mythological image.

### The Bathing Bathsheba and the Judgment of Paris

In the two New York books of hours, the Judgment of Paris appears in the margin together with scenes from the life of King David, including a representation of the Bathing Bathsheba. The female nude creates a strong visual link with the naked goddesses of the Judgment scene. The connection between the two representations is further emphasized in M 312 by their placement in the same landscape, while all other marginal images are separated by frames. This visual link suggests that the meaning and function of these two depictions are also related, and thus the Bathing Bathsheba can serve as a key for deciphering the role played by the Judgment of Paris.

Before offering an interpretation for the Bathing Bathsheba scene, it is necessary to define the possible audience of these images. Although in M 312 the text uses masculine forms, the woman kneeling in front of the Lamentation (fol. 133r) indicates that the book probably belonged to a female owner.<sup>12</sup> The ownership of M 131 is more complex. Here, a couple is kneeling under a depiction of Saint Anne instructing the young Virgin Mary with Saint John the Baptist standing by them (fol. 45r). The double suffrage dedicated to Saint John the Baptist and Saint Anne and their combined image identify them as the patron saints of the owners, whose coats of arms have not been identified yet. However, in front of the Lamentation (fol. 111r) only the wife is depicted,

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<sup>11</sup> In Bruges in 1463, in Lille in 1468, in Antwerp in 1494, in Brussels in 1496; see Scot McKendrick, "The Great History of Troy: A Reassessment of the Development of a Secular Theme in Late Medieval Art," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 54 (1991): 80. A depiction of the *tableau vivant* in the 1496 entry is preserved in Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, ms. 78 D 5.1 (fol. 57r) for which, see Paula Nuttall, "Reconsidering the Nude: Northern Tradition and Venetian Innovation," in *The Meanings of Nudity in Medieval Art*, ed. Sherry C. M. Lindquist (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 172, 304–5, pl. 8.

<sup>12</sup> "Corsair."



*Fig. 3. Bathing Bathsheba and the Judgment of Paris, ivory comb, recto and verso, Northern France, 1530–50. London, Victoria and Albert Museum, inv. no. 468–1869.*

*© Victoria and Albert Museum, London*





*Fig. 4. Master of Fitzwilliam 268, David in Prayer; margin: Judgment of Paris, Villefosse Hours, second half of the 1470s.*

*Whereabouts unknown. Source: Durrien, "La Légende," pl. X.*



Fig. 5. Master of Fitzwilliam 268, *Fall of Adam and Eve*, *Vilefosse Hours*, second half of the 1470s. *Whereabouts unknown*. Source: Durrieu, “*La Légende*,” pl. X.

which again identifies the woman as the real owner.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, the emphatic depiction of the couple and their coats of arms suggest that the codex might have been commissioned on the occasion of their marriage. That seems even more probable when we consider that books of hours often served as wedding gifts.<sup>14</sup>

What can the Bathing Bathsheba mean for a woman? For this, Geoffroy de la Tour Landry’s didactic book intended for the education of his daughters can provide a useful textual analogy. Geoffroy, identifying the cause of David’s double sin in Bathsheba combing her hair before the king’s eyes, warns his daughters, “Every woman should cover herself, and should not take pride in herself, nor display herself so as to please the world with her beautiful hair, nor her neck, nor her bosom, nor anything that should be kept covered.”<sup>15</sup> Geoffroy’s book, written in the late fourteenth century, was quite popular in the fifteenth century, but in the absence of data on the place of production or provenance of its manuscripts, it is

<sup>13</sup> Hanno Wijsman, based on the corpus of manuscripts illuminated in the Netherlands between 1400 and 1550, also proposed that books bearing the ownership marks of a couple actually belonged to the wife; see Hanno Wijsman, *Luxury Bound: Illustrated Manuscript Production and Noble and Princely Book Ownership in the Burgundian Netherlands; 1400–1550* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 134–7.

<sup>14</sup> Sandra Penketh, “Women and Books of Hours,” in *Women and the Book: Assessing the Visual Evidence*, ed. Jane H. M. Taylor (London: The British Library, 1996), 270.

<sup>15</sup> *Sy se doit toute femme cachier [...] ne ne se doit pas orguëillir, ne montrer, pour plaire au monde, son bel chef, ne sa gorge, ne sa poitrine, ne riens qui se doit tenir couvert*. Geoffroy de la Tour Landry, *Le Livre du Chevalier de la Tour Landry pour l’enseignement de ses filles*, ed. Anatole de Montaiglon (Paris: P. Jannet, 1854), 155. Translation in Thomas Kren, “Looking at Louis XII’s Bathsheba,” in *A Masterpiece Reconstructed. The Hours of Louis XII*, ed. Thomas Kren and Mark Evans (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2005), 50. See also Mónica Ann Walker Vadillo, *Bathsheba in Late Medieval French Manuscript Illumination: Innocent Object of Desire or Agent of Sin?* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2008), 97.

impossible to say how much this text was known in Rouen in the second half of the fifteenth century.<sup>16</sup> In any case, it can serve as a helpful analogy for presenting Bathsheba to women as a negative example against vanity.

The danger of female beauty and the sinful consequences of exposing the body to the male gaze provide an interpretative framework in which the Judgment of Paris scene can fit. A group of objects – the only artworks known to me that link the Bathing Bathsheba with this mythological subject – also supports this interpretation. Five carved ivory combs, produced around 1520–50 in Northern France or the Netherlands, have a depiction of the Bathing Bathsheba on the one side, and the Judgment of Paris on the other (fig. 6).<sup>17</sup> Due to the chronological distance and the lack of any specific common motive, a direct link between the combs and the miniatures is not probable. However, the general concept behind linking the two subjects, namely the power of female beauty over men, can be the same in both cases.<sup>18</sup> Of course, this generic idea offers different meanings in different contexts. On the combs, the power of beauty certainly has positive connotations; it promotes the care for one's physical appearance, and thus the product itself on which these subjects are depicted. In a prayer book, the power of beauty obviously has different overtones. The Rebuke of Nathan in the main scene makes it clear that here the emphasis is on the disastrous effects of female beauty. It led David into adultery and murder, while Paris's choice caused Troy's destruction.

A group of misogynous texts also confirms that it is the power of female beauty that links the two stories. David and Paris often appear together in texts that blame women and especially their seductive beauty for the fall of various famous men. They are mentioned one after the other in a poem by Hildebert of Lavardin (1055–1133) who states, “A woman deprived Paris of his sense and Uriah of his life, / David of his virtue and Solomon of his faith.”<sup>19</sup> The *Livre du*

<sup>16</sup> Out of twenty surviving manuscripts, fourteen come from the fifteenth century, and there is no data on five; see “Arlima,” <http://www.arlima.net>, accessed Sept. 9, 2017.

<sup>17</sup> Paris, Musée du Louvre, inv. no. OA143; London, Victoria and Albert Museum, inv. nos. 2143–1855 and 468–1869; Madrid, Museo Lázaro Galdiano, inv. no. 345; and a fragment in Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, inv. no. 66.974. See Philippe Malgouyres, *Ivoires du Musée du Louvre, 1480–1850* [exhibition catalog], Dieppe, Château-Musée (Paris: Somogy Édition d'Art, 2005), 46–48; Paul Williamson and Glyn Davies, *Medieval Ivory Carvings, 1200–1550* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2014), vol. 2, 628–31, cat. nos. 218 and 219.

<sup>18</sup> Malgouyres, *Ivoires du Musée du Louvre*, 46–48.

<sup>19</sup> [...] *femina mente Parim, vita spolavit Uriam, / et pietate David, et Salomona fide* [...] Hildebertus Lavardinensis, *Carmina minora*, ed. A. Brian Scott (Leipzig: Teubner, 1969), 40. Translation in Kren,



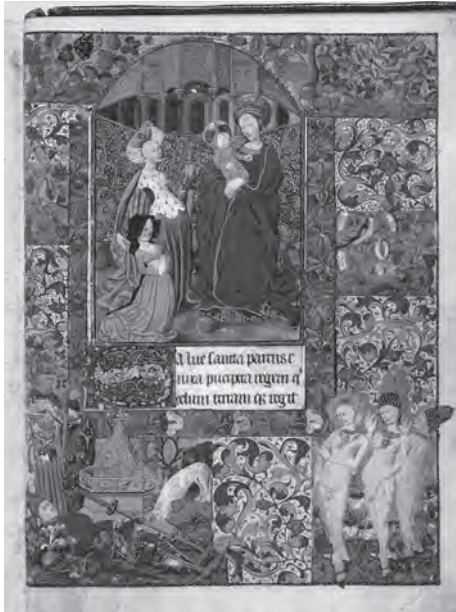


Fig. 6. *Virgin and Child with St Catherine of Alexandria and donator; margin: Judgment of Paris, Book of Hours, Rouen, c. 1460–70. Aix-en-Provence, Fonds Bibliothèque Méjanès, ms. 22, 329.* © With permission of the Bibliothèque Méjanès, Aix-en-Provence

*trésor* by Brunetto Latini, a very popular and widespread work, also attributes both the fall of Troy and the sin of David to the beauty of a woman. In connection with foolish love, Brunetto says:

It happened several times that love seized them so much that they had no power of their own [...] and in this way they lost their sense [...] such as [...] David, the prophet, who for the beauty of Bathsheba had [Uriah] murdered and committed adultery, [...] everybody knows about Troy, how it was destroyed [...].<sup>20</sup>

This work was certainly known in Rouen in the second half of the fifteenth century because one of its copies was illuminated by the Master of the Rouen Échevinage.<sup>21</sup> However, it is hard to prove that Brunetto's passage or another

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"Bathsheba Imagery," 169.

<sup>20</sup> [...] *il avient maintefoiz que amor les seurprent si fort que il n'ont nul pooir de soi meismes, [...] et en ceste maniere perdent il lor sens [...] si comme [...] David li prophetes, qui, por la biauté de Bersabée, fist murtre et avoutire; [...] de Troi, comment ele fu destruite le sevent tuit [...]*. Brunetto Latini, *Li Livres dou tresor*, ed. François Adrien Polycarpe Chabaille (Paris: Imprimerie Impériale, 1863), 431–2.

<sup>21</sup> Brunetto Latini: *Le Livre du trésor*, Geneva, Bibliothèque de Genève, ms. 160; see Rabel, "Artiste et clientèle," 53.

specific misogynous text directly inspired the insertion of the Judgment scene next to a representation of the Bathing Bathsheba. Nonetheless, the recurrent appearance of both David and Paris (or Troy) in these misogynous lists makes it likely that placing their stories in this context was widely known.<sup>22</sup>

### The Judgment of Paris in the Villefosse Hours

In contrast to the New York books of hours, in the Villefosse Hours the Judgment of Paris appears on its own in the margin of the Penitent David. Therefore, it is necessary to take into consideration the whole pictorial program of the manuscript to define the role of the Judgment of Paris. In the margins of this manuscript, all New Testament scenes are accompanied by their Old Testament type, well known from one of the most popular typological works, the *Biblia pauperum*.<sup>23</sup> In this context, the Judgment of Paris can be interpreted as the prefiguration of the Praying David. I know of no other example where a mythological scene prefigures an event from the Old Testament in a typological cycle,<sup>24</sup> but the practice of attributing Christian allegorical meaning to classical myths was the most common way of handling the classical legacy.<sup>25</sup> The *Ovide moralisé* and the *Ovidius moralizatus*, perhaps the best known of such works, provide a Christian interpretation for the Judgment of Paris as well, but they interpret the Judgment as the Fall of Man where the apple of discord corresponds to the apple of Eve.<sup>26</sup> There is no mention of King David at all. However, a viewer with only a basic knowledge of the myth could have drawn an analogy between the two stories; choosing a woman for

<sup>22</sup> Further examples: Walter Map, "The Letter of Valerius to Ruffinus, against Marriage, (c. 1180)," in *Woman Defamed and Woman Defended: An Anthology of Medieval Texts*, ed. Alciun Blamires, Karen Pratt and C. William Marx (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 103–14, esp. 105 and 107; *Grant malice des femmes*, anonymous poem, late fifteenth century, for which, see Anatole de Montaiglon, ed., *Recueil de poésies françaises des XV<sup>e</sup> et XVI<sup>e</sup> siècles*, vol. 5, Morales, facétieuses, historiques (Paris: P. Jannet, 1856), 305–18, esp. 309 and 312.

<sup>23</sup> For the description of the manuscript's pictorial cycle, see Durrieu, "La Légende," 152–56. For the representations of the *Biblia pauperum*, see Gerhard Schmidt and Alfred Weckwerth, "Biblia pauperum," in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, vol. 1, ed. Engelbert Kirschbaum (Freiburg: Herder, 1994), 294–6.

<sup>24</sup> Pagan-Christian typology is not without precedent. For example, early Christian writers considered Apollo, Orpheus, and Hercules as figures foreshadowing Christ; see David S. Berkeley, "Some Misapprehensions of Christian Typology in Recent Literary Scholarship," *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 18 (1978): 5.

<sup>25</sup> Jean Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan Gods: The Mythological Tradition and Its Place in Renaissance Humanism and Art* (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1953), 84–95.

<sup>26</sup> Ehrhart, *The Judgment*, 88–94, 97.

her beauty led to both the moral fall of David and the existential fall of Troy. At the same time, the almost identical posture of the goddess in the middle and Eve in another marginal image, representing the Fall of Man, seems to echo the interpretation provided by the *Ovide moralisé* (figs. 4–5). Thus, the Judgment of Paris scene in the Villefosse Hours provides a mythological analogy not only for the individual fall of King David, but also for the universal fall of humankind.

### The pictorial cycle of the New York books of hours

Compared to the almost exclusively typological cycle of the Villefosse Hours, the marginal decoration of the New York books of hours, especially of M 131, is much more heterogeneous.<sup>27</sup> In M 131, most of the New Testament images are accompanied by scenes extending their narrative (fols. 25r, 48r, 52v, 58r, 63r, 67r, 70r, 111r). Besides, Old Testament subjects familiar from typological cycles are depicted in the margin of three main images, but they are all wrongly paired with the New Testament representations. Moses and the Burning Bush and the Sacrifice of Isaac, standard prefigurations for the Annunciation and for the Crucifixion, appear in the border of the Four Evangelists (fol. 13r). Gideon's Fleece, originally the type of the Annunciation, is depicted under the Flight into Egypt (fol. 60v). The Adoration of the Magi is accompanied by an image of Augustus and the Sybil, the type for the Nativity in the *Speculum humanae salvationis* (fol. 55v). In addition to this, in the border of the Visitation another type of image, a miracle of the Virgin Mary, is depicted – two scenes from the Legend of the Penitent Theophilus (fol. 33v). In the clearly typological marginal cycle of the Villefosse Hours, the Judgment of Paris could have functioned as a mythological analogy for an Old Testament scene that did not have itself an Old Testament prefiguration. But what is the role of the Judgment of Paris in a more heterogeneous pictorial cycle in which (inaccurate) typology represents only one layer?

According to my hypothesis, the answer lies precisely in the variety of images. Another book of hours, also illuminated in Rouen around 1470, can shed more light on the function of this iconographical diversity.<sup>28</sup> It also features various types of images in the borders. Beyond the usual cycle of the labors of the months, the calendar is decorated with allegorical figures of the Virtues and Vices, with Old Testament scenes sorted out rather randomly, and with scenes

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<sup>27</sup> For reproduction of the miniatures and for a description of the whole pictorial program, see "Corsair."

<sup>28</sup> New York, The Morgan Library and Museum, M 32. For a description of the manuscript, see "Corsair."

from Christ's life. In addition, two of the main images illustrating the hours are accompanied by scenes coming from typological cycles. Under the Nativity, the Tiburtine Sybil's prophecy appears in accordance with the *Speculum humanae salvationis* (fol. 51r), while the Annunciation to the Shepherds is paired with the Miracle of the Manna that would more correctly appear as a type for the Last Supper (fol. 39r). Moreover, the Visitation is accompanied by the representation of Hercules chasing Nessus, who raped his wife, Deianira (fol. 26v). To my knowledge, this is the only other book of hours containing a mythological image in the margin outside of the calendar section. Unfortunately, the manuscript is incomplete in its present state, since apart from the already mentioned images, the other parts of the Hours miss their traditional illustrations. In the absence of the whole original pictorial program, it is hard to define the exact role of the Hercules scene. In the *Ovide moralisé*, this myth was interpreted as a struggle for the soul, something which may have validated its insertion in a prayer book, but its pairing with the Visitation seems to be rather random.<sup>29</sup>

For the purposes of this article, it suffices to observe and interpret the variety of marginal images. I think this iconographic diversity in both M 32 and M 131 can be associated with the special status books of hours had in manuscript ownership. Often, it was the only book in one's possession.<sup>30</sup> The rather mediocre quality of the illumination in all three New York books of hours suggests that the customers of these manuscripts were perhaps less wealthy. For such owners, as Virginia Reinburg demonstrated, the book of hours could fulfil other functions beyond being simply a prayer book. For example, it could be used for recording family events or for primary education.<sup>31</sup> I think that the role of the diverse, although at some points haphazard, pictorial cycle in the New York manuscripts can also be understood from this point of view. The images in the margin, merging bits and pieces from various cultural fields, such as ancient mythology, miracles of saints, and Old Testament typology, could render this book, which might have been the only or one of very few in the reader's possession, a multi-faceted volume.

<sup>29</sup> Marc-René Jung, "Hercule dans les textes du Moyen Âge: Essai d'une typologie," in *Rinascite di Ercole: Atti del convegno internazionale di Verona* (May 29–June 1, 2002), ed. Anna Maria Babbi (Verona: Fiorini, 2002), 48–50.

<sup>30</sup> Dominique Vanwijnsberghe, "*De fin or et d'azur*": *Les commanditaires de livres et le métier de l'enluminure à Tournai à la fin du Moyen Âge (XIV<sup>e</sup>–XV<sup>e</sup> siècles)* (Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 58.

<sup>31</sup> Virginia Reinburg, "An Archive of Prayer: The Book of Hours in Manuscripts and Print," in *Manuscripta Illuminata: Approaches to Understanding Medieval & Renaissance Manuscripts*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Princeton: Index of Christian Art, Department of Art & Archaeology, Princeton University, 2014), 221.

## The Aix-en-Provence Book of Hours

In contrast with the other three manuscripts, in the Aix-en-Provence Book of Hours, the Judgment of Paris is not attached to the Praying King David, but to an image of the Virgin and the Child.<sup>32</sup> A further peculiarity of the Judgment's representation is its fusion with another subject, the unicorn purifying water poisoned by the serpent so that the other animals, arranged around the fountain next to which Paris is sleeping, can drink it.<sup>33</sup> The allegorical meaning of this legend is evident: the serpent is the devil who poisons the world with sin while the unicorn can be identified with Christ the Savior.<sup>34</sup> The fountain and the unicorn are recurrent motifs in the borders of the Aix-en-Provence Book of Hours. As a symbol of Christ, a fountain is depicted under the Crucifixion (p. 197).<sup>35</sup> A fountain, together with a representation of the Hunt for the Unicorn appears under the Enthroned Virgin and Child that illustrates the opening lines of the *Fifteen Joys of the Virgin* which refer to Mary as the "fountain of all good" (p. 309). The *fons signatus* ("sealed fountain") from the Song of Songs was considered a symbol of Mary's virginity, while the Hunt for the Unicorn was often interpreted as an allegory of the Incarnation and the Passion.<sup>36</sup>

While the connection between the fountain, the unicorn, and Mary is clear, it is less evident why the Judgment of Paris was linked with them – beyond the purely motivival relationship that could have inspired the insertion of this mythological scene at this point. An image from the margin of another book of hours, painted by the Master of the Rouen Échevinage c. 1470, might shed

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<sup>32</sup> For a detailed description of the manuscript, see Joseph Hyacinthe Albanès, *Catalogue général des manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France*, vol. 16: Aix (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1894), 31–36.

<sup>33</sup> Another oddity is that each goddess is holding a ring. This also appears with one of the goddesses in the Villefosse Hours and in the engravings by the Master with Banderols (see note 9). It might have originated as a misunderstanding of the apple, often represented as a small golden dot, but even if it was originally conceived as an allusion to Paris's marriage, confusion regarding its symbolism immediately emerged since it is held by Juno and Pallas in the engravings.

<sup>34</sup> Bruno Faidutti, "Image et connaissance de la licorne (fin du Moyen Age – XIXème siècle)" (PhD diss., Université Paris XII, 1996), 59.

<sup>35</sup> Alois Thomas, "Brunnen," in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, ed. Engelbert Kirschbaum, vol. 1 (Freiburg: Herder, 1994), 331–35; Esther P. Wipfler, "Fons vitae," in "RDK Labor," <http://www.rdklabor.de/w/?oldid=88560> (accessed Oct. 3, 2017).

<sup>36</sup> Esther P. Wipfler, "Fons signatus," in "RDK Labor," <http://www.rdklabor.de/w/?oldid=88782> (accessed Oct. 3, 2017). For the interpretation of the Hunt for the Unicorn, see Faidutti, "Image et connaissance," 43.

light on the meaning of this pairing.<sup>37</sup> Here, next to the fountain depicted under the Annunciation, a mermaid appears swimming in the water with a comb and a mirror in her hands, which are well-known attributes of vanity. Thus, the border decoration combines a Marian symbol with a representation of vanity serving as an antithesis to the Virgin Mary humbly receiving Gabriel's announcement. In the Aix-en-Provence Book of Hours, the Judgment of Paris under the image of the Virgin and the Child could play a similar role: as the choice of worldly beauty and vanity, expressed by the rich jewelry of the goddesses, it opposes the figure of the Virgin who, pure and humble, accepted the will of God.

### **The relationship between the four books of hours**

The comparison of the four books of hours reveals that although their decoration is related at several points, none of them can be considered a copy of the other. In the New York manuscripts some of the main images are very close to each other,<sup>38</sup> yet neither of the manuscripts seems to follow the other directly. The rich marginal cycle of M 131 cannot derive from the more modest decoration of M 312, nor could the Judgment of Paris scene in M 312 have been made after the miniature in M 131, where the statue on top of the fountain is cut off by the frame and the posture of the goddesses is also different. In M 312 and in the Villefosse Hours, not only is the composition of the Judgment very similar, but also the representation of the Three Living and the Three Dead.<sup>39</sup> Nonetheless, the lack of Paris's horse in the Villefosse Hours, and the correct typological cycle – which is completely missing in M 312 – in the margin of the Villefosse Hours, preclude that either of them could have been copied from the other. The inaccurate typological cycle of M 131 cannot go back to the Villefosse Hours either, since the former contains a depiction of Gideon's Fleece not present in the latter. Moreover, although the Aix-en-Provence manuscript is dated earlier (c. 1460s or 1470) than the other three books of hours (c. 1470–80), the myth's insertion in it proved to be more difficult to explain than it did situated next to the Bathing Bathsheba as we see in the New York manuscripts. Considering the Aix-en-Provence Book of Hours a derivative version can offer an answer for that.

<sup>37</sup> New York, The Morgan Library and Museum M 167, fol. 29r.

<sup>38</sup> The Visitation (M 131, fol. 33v and M 312, fol. 38r), the Presentation in the Temple (M 131, fol. 58r and M 312, fol. 63v), the Flight into Egypt (M 131, fol. 60v and M 312, fol. 66v), the Crucifixion (M 131, fol. 67r and M 312, fol. 98r), the Lamentation (M 131, fol. 111r and M 312, fol. 133r).

<sup>39</sup> M 312, fol. 104r. For a reproduction of the miniature in the Villefosse Hours, see Durrieu, "La Légende," pl. XI.

These observations raise the possibility that one or several other lost books of hours containing a depiction of the Judgment of Paris in their margin may have been produced in Rouen in the 1470s, or even earlier. The visual link created by the female nudes between the Judgment of Paris and the Bathing Bathsheba scenes, as well as their common misogynous overtones, suggest that it might have been the Bathing Bathsheba that first inspired the insertion of this mythological scene in the margins of books of hours. At some point – maybe at the moment of the invention – the Judgment could have been included in a more-or-less complete and correct typological cycle running in the margin, as the Villefosse Hours and M 131 indicate. There was a special interest in typological cycles in Rouen from the 1470s onwards, as another group of manuscripts also testifies. Ágnes Tóvizi argued that the Master of the Rouen Échevinage created two typological cycles for books of hours in the 1470s, where an Old Testament event occupies the major place on the page, while a New Testament scene is either relegated to the lower margin or completely omitted.<sup>40</sup>

Books of hours with a pure typological cycle, the four books of hours containing the Judgment of Paris scene and M 32 with the depiction of Hercules chasing Nessus demonstrate together that a tendency to diversify the standard iconography of books of hours evolved in the 1470s in Rouen. In the books of hours examined in this paper, the insertion of a mythological image in the border goes hand in hand with the enrichment of the marginal decoration. It is placed in a correct typological cycle in the Villefosse Hours, it appears together with some symbolical images in the Aix-en-Provence Hours, while in M 131 and M 32 it becomes part of a more heterogeneous pictorial program. Such diverse pictorial cycles must have served as a means of making the product more attractive and, by offering bits and pieces from various cultural fields, they instructed and delighted the beholder at the same time.

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<sup>40</sup> Ágnes Tóvizi, “Une oeuvre inconnue de Robert Boyvin à Budapest et les cycles vétéro-testamentaires dans les livres d’heures de Rouen,” *Acta Historiae Artium* 46 (2006): 25–28. One cycle is based on the *Speculum humanae salvationis* and it is preserved in a manuscript now in Baltimore (Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, W. 224, c. 1480), while the other, which follows the *Biblia pauperum*, can be reconstructed with the help of the works of the Master’s pupil, Robert Boyvin (Budapest, Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, Cod. Lat. 227; New York, The Morgan Library and Museum, H 1).



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