The relevance of the “Death Desired” as visualized in Fifteenth Century Books of Hours to the “Good Death” of contemporary Palliative Care.

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the representation of the “Death Desired” in Late Medieval Books of Hours and considers possible connections to the “Good Death” of modern Palliative Care. The death related themes of the illuminations in Books of Hours were examined by studying the role ritual, particularly religious ritual, played in framing the experience of Late Medieval death where Purgatory was an accepted belief. The possible meanings for the Medieval viewer are discussed in relation to differences between the content of these images and primary source descriptions of death related rituals. The depiction of liminal events is addressed in relation to the dead and the bereaved depicted in the illuminations. The use of images to underscore the importance of ritual and the concept of liminality for the dying and the bereaved provides potential discussion points for modern Palliative Care practice. The illuminations accompanying the text of the Office of the Dead from fifteenth century French and Flemish Books of Hours were studied because these Horae commonly have death, funeral and burial scenes as well as depictions of Heaven and Purgatory. These images demonstrated the function of ritual in allowing people to experience the changes that death brought for both individuals and community as well as illustrating how belief in Purgatory connected the living and the dead through rituals where the living prayed for the dead. Late Medieval culture was very visual with the users of Books of Hours able to “read” the prompts to pray for the dead and the demonstration of the appropriate performance of rituals. The visual nature of contemporary life and the deliberate use of images from multiple media to discuss aspects of death, dying and liminality may assist patients and families to overcome the lack of set rituals in modern death and dying to achieve the “Good Death”.
STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

This is to certify that:

(i) the thesis comprises only my original work towards completion of the Master of Theology except where indicated in the Preface,

(ii) due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used,

(iii) the thesis is less than 25,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, figures, bibliographies, and appendices.

Signed,

Eleanor Flynn

DATE
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CHAPTER 1

CONTEXT

How do people use the rituals and the images of rituals to help them find meaning and ways to endure the experience of death? Twentieth century Palliative Care was concerned with the “Good Death”, aiming to provide patients with a death that was peaceful and free from both physical pain and psychological distress. Because current medical understanding is that even the best possible Palliative Care input cannot guarantee a “Good Death” for everyone, the emphasis has changed to providing the most appropriate care for each person as an individual in their particular context. This context includes discussion of the spiritual and other beliefs of the patient and family and their understanding of dying and death and their wishes for both the time of dying and the period after death. The lack of ritual in many peoples’ lives means that the experience of dying and death for both the individual and the bereaved family and friends may have to be developed ab initio without a guiding framework.

One of the primary modern sources of images of dying and death is the media, particularly film and television. The deaths portrayed are often very violent and the viewers do not necessarily relate them to their own circumstances so many people who are not faced with a family death may not consider the reality of death.¹ Palliative Care practitioners, recognising the visual nature of modern society, have encouraged the use of art to assist the dying and the bereaved to accept the reality of death and dying is through art therapy sessions where a patient or a family member might create an art work to help them describe the feelings and concerns which they

struggle to articulate. Works can also be deliberately made as a legacy for family and friends, particularly when there are children involved or when relatives cannot visit before the person dies.

A recent innovation in palliative care education is in the use of art to help practitioners and especially students to become more aware of the holistic nature of their patients’ illnesses and the contexts in which people grapple with and understand death. Medical students are taught to interpret art as a way of both sharpening their own perceptual acuity and of considering the social context of patients and in particular, of death and dying, in relation to medical care. The students discuss the possible meanings of the art they are contemplating in a safe environment opened for them by art historians who can assist them to “see” things they may not otherwise have seen. The accompanying clinicians encourage the students to consider the patients they have recently seen on the wards and to connect their new skills of perception to the visualization of these ill people. The interaction between an art historian, clinicians and the students discussing the art in front of them and the patients they have seen on the wards encourages the students to consider the importance of the context of each patient they see in their learning experiences.

While the primary purpose of contemporary palliative care is no longer solely the care of the dying patient, this experience is still a major aspect of the discipline. In the search for ways to consider and portray the “Good Death”, it is appropriate for Palliative Care practitioners to turn to other eras when the “Good Death” has been clearly portrayed, not only in textual material but also specifically in art. The Late Middle Ages was a period where the population were very skilled in “reading” visual clues and one where numerous images in popular devotional material focused
specifically on the “Death Desired”. This study aims to examine these images of the “Death Desired” and to consider the possible meanings they had for their original viewers as well as considering how the insights gained from this study could be used to enhance their understanding of, and care for, dying patients within contemporary Palliative Care. In order to better interpret and understand the role of images and rituals in the modern “Good Death” I examined the depictions of the rituals dealing with death in a previous period which was also a very visual culture. The images in Late Medieval Books of Hours provided people with visual examples of the “Death Desired” as representations and reminders of the rituals that were designed to provide support, comfort and religious certainty in the face of the uncertainty of death.

In the Late Middle Ages many peoples’ spirituality, both religious and lay was characterised by a deeply affective quality, which had its roots in the monastic spirituality of the High Middle Ages. Such themes as the Passion of Christ, and the Lives of the Virgin and the saints stressed the human suffering and lives of these holy figures. The emphases on the humanity of Christ allowed the devout to identify with and find comfort in knowledge that their own experiences of suffering and death were shared with Christ. Many of these themes found expression in religious art, including Books of Hours.

The primary sources for the study are the illuminations accompanying the text of the Office of the Dead in Late Medieval Books of Hours (Horae). The Office of the Dead was an integral part of funeral rituals and universally present in Books of Hours in the Late Middle Ages. The clergy and the laity recited the same psalms and prayers

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3 Charity Scott-Stokes, Women’s Books of Hours in Medieval England: Selected Texts trans. Charity Scott-Stokes, The Library of Medieval Women (Woodbridge, Suffolk: DS Brewer, 2006), 10 reminds us that the term Books of Hours is a modern construct and in medieval times they were called Horae or hours, and in England were often called primers.
of the Office daily from their Psalters and Books of Hours, the living using these texts to pray for the souls of the dead. The illuminations that accompany the Office of the Dead in these *Horae* often depict the various rituals related to dying and death in that period and include the otherworldly spaces of Heaven and Purgatory emphasising the importance that eternal salvation held for the original viewers of the illuminations.

The analysis of the depictions of death and dying in these works explores the role ritual, particularly religious ritual, plays in framing the experience of death. An illumination from the commencement of the Office of the Dead in a fifteenth century Flemish Book of Hours shows a deathbed scene with a woman receiving the blessing of the priest and surrounded by her well-dressed and quietly praying family with an representation of Purgatory in a window above the bed (fig. 1).\(^4\) This image shows the importance of the proper performance of the rituals of dying and death and the connection between the rituals and Purgatory for these Book users in the Late Medieval period. This illumination will be further evaluated in Chapter four.

Background

Experiences of death and dying in the Late Middle Ages

While individuals in countries such as Australia in the 21\(^{st}\) Century much less commonly experience the deaths of others than was the case in the Late Middle Ages there is always uncertainty and a fear of the unexpected for those facing imminent death, as well as distress for the bereaved. These emotions are heightened when the death is either sudden or unexpected, or when the dying person is young. A major

\(^4\) Figure 1. Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS. 1185 Rés. Fol. 373v. Master of Antoine Rolin (illuminator), Flanders, c. 1490
issue for those in the 21st century arises when individuals want answers and a degree of certainty in the face of death, but having already left the institutions which previously provided that certainty, they experience tensions and difficulties in such situations. The imbalances and the tensions caused in these searches for meaning and certainty in an uncertain world can cause significant distress for people trying to accept their own imminent death or the death of a loved one. Although death was constant, fully ritualised and controlled by the Church in the Late Middle Ages, it was still a source of uncertainty and distress for the dying and for those who grieved. The themes of the illuminations accompanying the text of the Office of the Dead provided comfort and solace through their representations of the familiar rituals of the “Death Desired”, while also reminding the viewer of the need to pray for the souls of the dead.

Use of ritual in contemporary experiences of death and dying

Contemporary Palliative Care recognises that providing meaning in the uncertainty and separation of death helps the dying and the bereaved, and accordingly, sets up rituals within the discipline to assist in this endeavour. These include things such as family meetings to discuss treatments and outcomes with the patients and the family, ward rounds where doctors sit down to interact with patients and family to provide a personalisation of the medical ritual of the brief daily doctor patient interaction, and follow-up phone calls and cards or letters after patients are discharged to die at home and after the deaths of patients in hospitals or hospices. While many of these “rituals” might not initially be considered visual, the act of

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sitting down to discuss important issues with a patient and his or her family on ward rounds can be seen as echoing Victorian images of patients dying with the doctor sitting by the bedside (fig. 2). Such scenes contrast the intimacy of the 19th century deathbed with the modern scientific image of a group of doctors in white coats standing at the end of the bed consulting the patient’s chart.

Use of visual media in contemporary death and dying

As noted above, contemporary Palliative Care makes use of images, art and ritual to help people find meaning in death and bereavement. As well as in art therapy and education, this is also reflected in the design principles of hospices, which may have warmer colours than other hospital wards, and encourage individualisation of care spaces with decorations such as water features, aviaries and gardens. Palliative Care also uses visualisation of activities and images to assist the practitioners understand concepts and help in their explanations to patients and families. One simple example is a diagram to help clinicians plan and understand the issues in goals of care discussions. A more complex example is the film Life Before Death which uses clips from around the world to discuss the issues of pain management for dying patients and provision of Palliative Care; used to educate students and lobby politicians

Within the broader society, new and secular alternatives to religious funerals have developed rapidly, with the increased use of customised coffins, personalised music and PowerPoint presentations of the life of the deceased at the funeral or

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memorial service. The use of social media by both the dying to blog their experiences and their friends and family to post tributes and messages after their death offers another way of ritualising the dying and death experiences in visual formats.¹⁰

The use of images both within rituals and as a means of explicating them was as common in Late Medieval society as it is today. This thesis aims to demonstrate the meanings of the illuminations of death rituals for the users of the Books of Hours, at the time, and to use these findings to provide suggestions for the appropriate use of these images and other visual media in modern Palliative Care.

Books of Hours were used regularly, including at deathbeds, as shown in the illumination mentioned in the first chapter where there are open *Horae* in front of the daughters as their mother dies (Fig 1). As the ownership of Books of Hours increased across the fifteenth century, many families would have owned one and used it to pray the Office of the Dead regularly. Thus a study of the illuminations accompanying the Office of the Dead should provide information both on the iconography of these illuminations and the possible meanings for their original viewers. While death in the Middle Ages has become a subject of studies by scholars in recent decades, the illuminations with death related themes in Books of Hours have not been studied in great depth until very recently.

The scholars whose works are discussed in the following sections are primarily those who have written on the images of death in the Medieval period particularly those who have studied the death related images in Late Medieval Books of Hours. The work of other scholars, who have researched death rituals, both in theoretical terms and in relation to the actual performance of rituals in the Late Middle Ages, is reviewed, as is the work of writers on aspects of ownership and usage of Books of Hours, where their work is relevant.

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1Figure 1. Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS. 1185 Rés. Fol. 373v. Master of Antoine Rolin (illuminator), Flanders, c. 1490
Methodology

My methodology draws upon art history, history, theology, sociology and anthropology. The study of the visual material is informed by traditional art historical approaches: the content and place of these manuscripts and the development of this genre in the Late Middle Ages is considered. To explore the meanings generated by these images for their audiences, the thesis employs insights of death studies from the perspectives of social, cultural and devotional history. These contributions of predominantly textual sources are complemented by the interpretations of archaeologists researching the material artefacts of death. The scholarship of the archaeologists quoted in this study is related to the work of anthropologists studying the place of ritual in society.

Contemporary palliative care practitioners also draw on theories of ritual in their work. While these approaches encompass a range of disciplines from the clinical sciences to the social sciences, the emphasis of this study is on the contribution the social sciences make in informing their practice.

In the last three decades there has been an increase in studies of aspects of death in the Middle Ages. It could be suggested that this intensified interest in the study of the rituals of death and dying that occurred in a time of very formulaic and prescribed rituals might be related to the not yet clearly articulated wishes of these scholars to find certainty when they contemplate the current period of very elastic death rituals. Although there has been increasing research into death in the Medieval era, the death-related images accompanying the Office of the Dead in Late Medieval Books of Hours have only recently become the subject of detailed research.² Additionally the

study of Purgatory as a subject of these illuminations is rare and discussion of the possible effect of the images of death or Purgatory on the Medieval viewer is even less common. The following section identifies the scholarly perspectives which informed this study.

Art historical approaches to the images of death related rituals in Books of Hours

Art historical studies have traditionally focused on the attribution, visual and iconographic sources of the images through the identification of stylistic developments. Research over the last two decades has greatly expanded to include concepts informed by social history like patronage and gender. These later studies have contributed to a number of articles and monographs specifically concerned with documenting the role and place of women as patrons and users of Books of Hours.³ More recently scholars have begun to draw attention to the possible affectiveness of the images for the users of Horae.⁴

Paul Binski in his “essay” on Medieval Death provides an overview of the possible images seen in the illuminations accompanying the Office of the Dead including eight examples in his illustrations and documents the various rituals, both domestic and religious, that occurred after a death in the Middle Ages.⁵ He suggests that the reason that the recitation of the Office in church is such a common subject for an illumination was because of its “solemn nobility”.⁶ Binski’s interest in anthropology and ritual theory in relation to death is demonstrated in the discussion of the Office of the Dead in the context of a ritual, as a way of separating and

³Joni M. Hand, Women, Manuscripts and Identity in Northern Europe (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2013).
⁴Schell, 19.
⁶Binski, 54.
reintegrating the dead. He discusses the role of Purgatory in the Medieval view of death and demonstrates the theology of Purgatory in the beneficial effects of the performance of the mass for the release of the souls in Purgatory.

In any consideration of the images in the illuminations accompanying the Office of the Dead in Late Medieval *Horae* and their relationship to the death rituals of the period, the work of Roger Wieck is significant because of his knowledge of the subject in general and his extensive research into French and Flemish Books of Hours from the fifteenth century, which encompasses the range of this study. When describing the illuminations of the Office of the Dead, Wieck discusses them primarily from the perspective of the ritual activity depicted and only secondarily in relation questions of style and influence. This is contrasted with his discussion of the illuminations in the other offices, in which he provides more detail on the artist than the content of the illumination. This demonstration of his interest in, and comprehensive knowledge of, the Late Medieval rituals of death and dying is reinforced in the book chapter where he discusses only the images from the Office of the Dead. As noted in chapter one, he is responsible for the term “the Death Desired” to describe the deathbed scenes in these *Horae*, which he contends to be representations of idealised rather than historically accurate deaths.
Issues of historical accuracy

While Wieck acknowledges the idealisation of the deathbed scenes he also uses the term “archaeological accuracy” to suggest that the images accurately represent the historical reality. Although this interpretation of the images as direct evidence of the social and ritual behaviour of the period seems partly at odds with his earlier acknowledgement that the deathbed scenes do not necessarily reflect historical reality, there is no real contradiction. If we consider the sequence and content of the rituals, without considering the detail of the illuminations, then Wieck is almost certainly correct in suggesting that the subjects of the illuminations that accompany the Office of the Dead in Late Medieval Books of Hours when reviewed together do provide an accurate representation of all the possible rituals. His interpretation of the sequence of the rituals provides an independent confirmation of Binski’s documentation of the subjects of the illuminations as representing the order and content of the Medieval rituals.

While Wieck discusses the idealised nature of the deathbed scenes, the possible historical accuracy of the other death-related rituals and of the usage of Books of Hours in the Late Medieval period, he makes no comment on the possible spiritual effects of the illuminations on the users of these personal prayer books in the Late Middle Ages. Wieck and other scholars only comment on the issue of the historical accuracy of these images, both within a ritual and in relation to proper sequencing of

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13 Wieck, Painted Prayers, 444 “the entirety [of the medieval death and funeral] can be pieced together with from the Office of the Dead illustrations with remarkable, what might be called archeological, accuracy” and Wieck, The Death Desired, 434, “the events portrayed in the miniatures actually took place and the things depicted really existed. These miniatures, in other words, reflect reality; they are not an artist’s fantasy.” Roberta Gilchrist and Barney Sloane, Requiem: The Medieval Monastic Cemetery in Britain. (London: Museum of London Archeology Service; 2005), 22 comment in relation to Wieck’s statement about archaeological accuracy, due to the transient nature of the deathbed rituals, it is extremely rare to find archaeological evidence to support a factual basis for the deathbed illuminations.

14 Binski, 54.
the rituals, from the view of the modern researcher, rather than the possible interpretation of the Medieval viewer.

Whether the issue of the accuracy of the images of death-related rituals was a matter of concern for the initial users of these Books of Hours has not been considered, to my knowledge. We know from recent scholarship how familiar with “reading” images in their religious practices and devotions the owners of Horae were.\textsuperscript{15} If the aim of these scenes of rituals in their Books of Hours was to encourage prayers for the dead, then the images would need to remind the users of those rituals where the prayers of the living were considered to be the most efficacious for release of the souls of the dead.\textsuperscript{16} Given that the prayer books were in daily use and that the concern of the living for the dead was well documented we might expect that the these depictions of the rituals were either accurate enough to remind them of witnessed deaths and funerals or that they provided symbolic visual cues for the rituals.\textsuperscript{17}

Referring to the possible historical accuracy of these images, Sarah Schell, in her work on the images and music accompanying the Office of the Dead in English \textit{Horae}, remarks that we do not have enough evidence to use the images as historical fact without discussing this further.\textsuperscript{18} Of greater interest to this study, however, is her discussion of the subjective nature of the images and their possible effect on their Medieval viewers.\textsuperscript{19} Examining the illustrations of the Office from the perspective of the devotional trends of the time, she emphasises, echoing Binski, that these images

\textsuperscript{16}Craig Koslofsky, \textit{The Reformation of the Dead: Death and Ritual in Early Modern Germany, 1450-1700} (London; Macmillan Press; 2000), 22  
\textsuperscript{17}Christopher Daniell, \textit{Death and Burial in Medieval England 1066-1550} (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 42  
\textsuperscript{18}Schell, 17 “There is little acknowledgment ….to what extent [the images] can be used in this documentary fashion”  
\textsuperscript{19}Schell, 19
were used by people very practised at ‘‘reading’’ visual material.” This information provides support for my argument that the Late Medieval viewers of these images would have “seen” the priest blessing the dying mother, the daughters with their open Books of Hours and Purgatory in the window in the illumination mentioned previously and been reminded of their duty to pray for the dead and provided with examples of appropriate behaviour (fig.1). Schell also notes the depictions of transition between the “here” and the “hereafter” in the illuminations accompanying the Office of the Dead but does not use the word liminal to describe them.

Images of Purgatory

In her research on the earliest images of Purgatory, Louise Marshall provides evidence of the development of representations of Purgatory and considers their likely meanings to Medieval viewers. She proposes that the effect of the images on their original viewers would have been positive because these first images of Purgatory depicted Purgatory as a less horrible place than Hell. Her suggestion that viewing these images would have promulgated “the obligations of the living towards the dead” supports my contention that these representations of death rituals and the spaces of Heaven and Purgatory in Horae encouraged prayer for the dead by strengthening the relational bonds and evoking affective responses. Marshall also describes an early image showing the impact of the celebration of the mass in freeing souls from Purgatory demonstrating that this belief was extant from the early Medieval development of the Doctrine.

20Schell, 20.
21Figure 1. Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal, MS. 1185 Rés. Fol. 373v. Master of Antoine Rolin (illuminator), Flanders, c. 1490.
22Schell, 64.
Social, cultural and devotional historical approaches to the study of death and dying in the Late Middle Ages

The possible historical reality of the images of death rituals in the illuminations of the Office of the Dead is given some further interpretation from the works of two historians of religion, Paxton and van den Hoven van Genderen, who provide textual evidence of the rituals and the sequence of events in specific instances of deaths that occurred in the Late Middle Ages. \(^{24}\) Although they both describe the death rituals for monastic or clerical men in the Middle Ages, the sequence of events matches those in the description of the order of the rituals by Binski and also Wieck’s sequence derived from the visual examples. Given Aries’ contention that by the Late Middle Ages the clergy had taken over the death rituals of the laity the similarity of the events and their order in both clerical and lay funerals is not surprising. \(^{25}\) The pattern of rituals seems to have had a fixed order since the early Middle Ages and mostly depended on the need for one ritual to be completed before the next could commence.

Frederick Paxton’s account of the rites used when a monk died at Cluny in the Medieval period is informed by his understanding of Medieval theology and describes in detail the various activities and rituals that were mandated in this instance. \(^{26}\) As his study is based on theological and liturgical texts from the Monastery he makes no reference to visual representations of these rituals. In contrast, Bram van den Hoven van Genderen uses examples of illuminations from Late Medieval *Horae* to illustrate


\(^{26}\) Paxton, 45-52.
his descriptions of the prescribed rituals as performed when members of a group of canons in Medieval Utrecht died.  Although he uses illuminations from the Office of the Dead and comments on details of the depicted rituals in these illuminations, he does not directly address the problem of their accuracy in representing the performance of the rituals he describes.

Philippe Ariès’ consideration of death in the Medieval period is informed by the wide variety of visual and textual sources used in his descriptions of the changing reactions to death during the Middle Ages. He provides evidence of the increasing “clericalisation” of death in the later Medieval period and describes the rituals undertaken from death to burial across a wide period of history including the Late Middle Ages. His statement that the rituals of dying were performed simply and “with no great show of emotion” although opinion and not evidence supports my contention that the illuminations depict calm performances of the death related rituals. In his discussion of the death related art of the Late Medieval period, Ariès includes examples of the illuminations in Books of Hours of both deathbed and burial scenes and comments on the use of Horae by those depicted in the illuminations.

Ownership and usage of Book of Hours

The commissioning, ownership and usage of Late Medieval Books of Hours is relevant to this consideration of the images in the illuminations which seeks to show that the images influenced the use of the Books. Eamon Duffy’s studies on English

27van den Hoven van Genderen, 155-189.
29Ariès, Images of Man and Death, 94-137.
*Horae* focussed as they are on ownership and uses of the Books rather than the images provide valuable evidence on the predominantly female patronage, and use of Books of Hours. 31 This evidence of female involvement in the development and use of these *Horae* helps to explain the many representations of women calmly participating in the death rituals which occurred in the domestic sphere. If the images were specifically designed to be seen by women then images of widows, daughters and female retainers performing the rituals reverently without overt displays of grief would have acted as visual prompts to the Books’ users on the proper behaviour in such potentially distressing situations (fig.1). 32 The exemplary function of the images has not to my knowledge been discussed previously and in the detailed descriptions of the chosen illuminations I will examine this further. Duffy also provides evidence for the proposition that the text of the Office of the Dead was the most commonly used of all the prayers in Late Medieval England. 33 He explicitly connects the regular performances of the Office of the Dead at funerals and commemorations combined with the regular (if not daily) private recitations by the owners of *Horae* to the desire of the living to pray for their dead friends and kin in Purgatory. 34

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32Figure 1. Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal, MS. 1185 Rés. Fol. 373v. Master of Antoine Rolin (illuminator), Flanders, c. 1490
34Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 349
Purgatory

Jacques Le Goff’s influential study on Purgatory is important for the connection he makes between the three elements of Christian belief in relation to the dead (the practice of prayer for the dead, the need for purification of souls after death and the localisation of a place of purification) in the development of the doctrine of Purgatory. His scholarship combines insights from biblical, theological, historical and social aspects from the pre-Christian period to the Late Middle Ages. Le Goff’s detailed discussion of the Biblical texts used as the basis for the doctrinal development provides a background for some of the images used to illustrate the Office of the Dead. Disappointingly, his only mention of the art related to Purgatory is a brief section on the earliest depictions of Purgatory and he omits any discussion of the art in Books of Hours.  

Archaeological approaches to the study of death and dying in the Late Middle Ages

Christopher Daniell combines historical, archaeological and theological insights in his study of the death-related rituals in Medieval England. From this interdisciplinary perspective, he considers the way that death rituals were performed and the contemporary meanings ascribed to these rituals in the Middle Ages. Two particularly relevant aspects of his work are his connection of the rituals to the art of the period and his emphasis on the importance of Purgatory for Late Medieval believers. His sources include wills, reports of royal and other funerals, and ecclesiastical documents which he compares with representations in the Office of the Dead.

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36 Daniell, *Death and Burial in Medieval England 1066-1550*. 
Dead in Books of Hours and other art of the period. His contention that “beliefs in the afterlife are the predominant force in the rituals connected with death and burial” is underpinned by a substantial section on the place and significance of Purgatory. This section on Purgatory emphasises its importance for Late Medieval believers and the link between the living and the dead that Purgatory provided.

Gilchrist and Sloane’s archaeological study of thousands of Medieval monastic and lay burials in British monastic sites is informed by their knowledge of the rituals of death and burial in relation to Medieval beliefs. They portray the various rituals observed from death to burial using descriptions from similar primary sources to those quoted by Daniell, and provide an inventory of death-related ritual activities which includes the same rituals in the same sequence as those provided by both Binski and Wieck. There is a possible problem of circularity as they use Wieck’s descriptions from his works on the illuminations of the Office of the Dead to connect the images of the rituals in Books of Hours to the archaeological findings. However they do comment on the lack of evidence to support the details of deathbed illuminations.

**Ritual studies**

An understanding of ritual studies and the development of the concept of liminality in relation particularly to the rituals of death and dying is helpful in enabling the 21st Century viewer of these Late Medieval images to “see” the activities from the perspective of the participants and from the views of modern ritual theorists.

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37 Daniell, 50 He matches the rituals of burial to the art of the period, both in Books of Hours and stained glass.
38 Daniell, vii, 12, 52-56, “Purgatory dominated the theology, teaching, pastoral practice and the beliefs of ordinary people”
40 Gilchrist and Sloane, 22
The theoretical beginnings of ritual studies are considered to have commenced with Durkheim’s work on the development of a framework for rituals. Durkheim saw ritual from a religious perspective; the depictions of religious and other activities related to death are rituals because they are rules to direct the behaviour of those who are in the presence of the sacred.\(^{41}\) Later theorists, including Von Gennep and Turner, moved away from the purely religious aspects of ritual by extending the sphere of rituals to include many aspects of human behaviour. Von Gennep’s main contribution to the theoretical framework is the idea that each rite of passage, by which he means a principal biological or social change, was accompanied by formal practices and had a tripartite structure comprised of a separation from one state, a transitional threshold state and then a reintegration into society.\(^{42}\) The development of this model was based on observations of the similarities of the processes used for rites of passage across many cultures.

Turner’s importance in the further development of the ideas of ritual lies in his articulation of the concept of liminality in relation to rites of passage where a change is wrought in the person who moves from one state to another through a liminal phase.\(^{43}\) Liminality can be described as the transition between two stages of life or being, particularly when this involves crossing thresholds (*limen* is the Latin for threshold, or “betwixt and between”).\(^{44}\)


\(^{44}\)Gilchrist and Sloane, 18
Liminality

Medieval beliefs about death and the afterworld when related to the concepts of ritual demonstrate that the issue of the completion of the liminal period and reintegration of the deceased is more complicated than the basic three-phase model proposed by Von Gennep. Turner’s framework suggests that the liminal phase ceases at the beginning of the burial process when the body is reintegrated into the earth. Gilchrist and Sloane, who unusually among the scholars consulted discuss liminality in connection with Late Medieval death rituals, suggest the liminal phase continues until the conclusion of the burial rite or until the final resurrection at the Last Judgement. Either of these suggestions is totally congruent with the illuminations in Books of Hours, where the illustrations include burials with liminal souls being taken to Heaven and the images of the final resurrection with liminal souls rising from graves, however their statements are made in isolation of any reference to Medieval images or texts so it is not possible to know why they considered these possibilities nor whether they prefer one suggestion over the over.

That the souls in these images are meant to represent the concept of liminality accords with Douglas’ view that liminal individuals are a communal group in which all are equal in having nothing. The souls being taken to Heaven at deathbeds or burials, waiting in Purgatory and being raised from their graves at the Last Judgement in the illuminations in Books of Hours are always shown as naked small bodies

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45 Gilchrist and Sloane, 23-26 and 6
46 Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concept of Pollution and Taboo* (London New York: Routledge, 2005), 98 “no status, insignia, secular clothing, rank, kinship position, nothing to demarcate them structurally from their fellows”
indistinguishable from each other, suggesting characteristics associated with idea of liminality i.e. anonymity and lack visual markers to indicate individuality (fig 3). 47

Brown provides a possible middle view that the soul is liminal until it is released from Purgatory to Heaven. 48 While this connects the Medieval view of the efficacy of prayer after death with the ideas of the ritual theorists it does not allow for the Church’s teaching that the bodies of the faithful were only reunited with their souls at the final resurrection, and leaves open the question of the possible visual presentation of such freed souls.

Rituals and twenty first century Palliative Care

Those scholars considering rituals, particularly religious rituals, in the postmodern world sometimes interpret them as repetitions of statements and actions shorn of meaning. Modern rituals, often related to sport or historical remembrance, include the repetition of parts which serve to connect the memory of the performers to the rest of the group. Enacting these narratives allows those involved to interpret both their own, and the communal, experience of movement from the initial phase through a transitional stage to the final state. As contemporary rituals for death and dying evolve they often include aspects of sport or other relevant cultural references to connect those present to both the deceased and aspects of their lives that they shared with the deceased and each other.

Medical practice can also be considered in relation to ritual theory with the development of modern Palliative Care being likened to a ritual process

47 Figure 3. Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M. 166 Fol. 126v, Utrecht, Netherlands, 1500-1510. All the images seen in Books of Hours of souls being taken to Heaven from deathbeds and at burials and the images of the Last Judgment show souls as naked and anonymous.
demonstrating a phase of separation from other aspects of clinical practice, a transition phase and an incorporation phase into mainstream medicine, albeit with the concern of ossification into a new orthodoxy. Sociologists and anthropologists continue to study and report on rituals of death and dying in the current century by considering the behaviour of both clinicians and clients when confronted by death.

“Dominated by religion in the past and by medicine in the present: the idea of what constitutes a good death has changed .... Perhaps nowhere more so than in our globalized, Western cultures.”

Conclusion

The illuminations accompanying the Office of the Dead in Late Medieval Books of Hours have recently been the subject of study from several disciplines. Art historians and archaeologists have commented on the content and the historical accuracy of these images. The subjects and styles of the illuminations depicting dying, death, funerals and burials in these Books of Hours have been considered to provide a realistic representation of the Late Medieval performance of the rituals. Because the rituals around the deathbed were transient and have left minimal, if any, archaeological evidence we cannot judge with any certainty how accurately the images reflect the performance and actions of the Late Medieval period. However, the archaeological evidence and primary source descriptions of Late Medieval burial rituals provide a more reliable basis to enable evaluation of the historicity of the subjects of the illuminations of the burial rituals.

49David Clark, "Palliative Care History: A Ritual Process?", European Journal of Palliative Care 7, no. 2 (2000).
50One example of the anthropological approach to modern dying; "dying is not a medical event, it is a human experience” quote from the film “Life before death” which illustrates Palliative Care practices across the world. http://www.lifebeforedeath.com/movie/index.shtml accessed 5 October 2013.
Scholars have only recently considered the affective nature of the images and their putative effect on the viewer particularly in connection with praying for the souls in Purgatory. This study proposes that visualising the images of death while praying for the dead engaged the viewer through a process of identification and thus helped establish an empathetic link with the late medieval viewer and reinforced the concept of the efficacy of the prayers of the living for the dead. Involvement in rituals is when and how we experience liminal phases now and this was the case for the Medieval viewers of the illuminations in *Horae*. The evocation of the liminal may have assisted them in their remembrance of the souls in Purgatory and provided hope when these souls were shown being released. The scholarship of the theorists of rituals has added the concept of liminality to the interdisciplinary concepts of death and dying in both the Medieval and modern periods.
CHAPTER 3

LATE MEDIEVAL BOOKS OF HOURS AND THE OFFICE OF THE DEAD

Books of Hours

The text and the illuminations of the Office of the Dead in Late Medieval Books of Hours share a message of hope portrayed in both words and images and through the visual representations of performances of the Office and depictions of other death related rituals.

Books of Hours, often considered the most beautiful objects of the Late Medieval period, were personal prayer books created initially for royalty and the aristocracy. The illuminations that accompany the psalms, prayers and readings in the books are now regarded as works of art in their own right. Horae were often mentioned in wills; an indication of the high value placed on these devotional objects.\(^1\) Although originally de luxe items, by the mid fifteenth century less sumptuous editions were almost mass-produced in workshops for the growing middle class.

Books of Hours are so called because they contain the liturgical offices or “hours” which comprised the sets of prayers, biblical readings, psalms and other chants performed at particular times, or hours, of the monastic day. The primary impetus for their production was the desire of the laity to possess their own prayer books which would allow them to follow the monastic recitation of prayers but which would be more personal and portable than the breviaries and psalters used by the clergy. Breviaries contained all the seasonally appropriate readings and psalms for a

\(^1\)Eamon Duffy, *Marking the Hours English People and their Prayers 1240-1570* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press; 2006), 3 “the most glamorous and most familiar artefacts of the Middle Ages”
year so they were bulky and cumbersome to use. ² Another stimulus for the development of *Horae* was the desire of the individual lay commissioners to personally choose the offices and prayers they wished to include in a particular Book of Hours. Late Medieval continental Books of Hours commonly contain the Little Hours of the Virgin and the Office of the Dead plus other Offices and personal prayers or suffrages. These Offices were included because of their importance in the period and their lack of seasonal variation.³

Books of Hours studied for this thesis

The Books of Hours studied in this thesis are predominantly those from France and Flanders produced in the last three quarters of the fifteenth century. The illuminations that accompany the Office of the Dead in these *Horae* are much more likely to depict the rituals and evoke the associated liminality of dying, death, funerals and burial as noted by Wieck.⁴ They are also more often include the theological spaces of Heaven, Purgatory and Hell than those from other countries or earlier periods, though this detail does not seem to have been noted previously. Books of Hours from those regions were produced and have survived in greater numbers than those from other regions and earlier centuries so they have been studied in more detail than others. The Books studied personally were in major collections in the United

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²Duffy, *Marking the Hours*, 5 The breviary ‘was a dauntingly copious, complex and bewildering book, written in double columns and normally divided into summer and winter volumes’.
States and Europe, apart from a small number in Australia. Several others from international collections were seen in facsimile or were accessed on line.

**Texts of Books of Hours including the Office of the Dead**

The texts of the Offices in *Horae* were drawn from familiar liturgical texts: principally psalms, supplicatory prayers and biblical passages. The text of the Office of the Dead varied only minimally in the Late Medieval continental Books of Hours studied for this thesis, mostly in small details of responses, or minor changes to the readings from the book of Job. The “Office of the Dead was placed at the back of the book the way death itself was always at the back of the medieval mind”. The texts of the offices in the *Horae* viewed were in Latin, except in some later Dutch examples where they are in the vernacular.

**Development of the Office of the Dead**

The Office was developed by the ninth century but not included in “the full monastic cursus” until the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The Office of the Dead was originally called the Office for the Dead thus indicating that the early medieval clergy and laity really understood that the reason the office was performed was to gain the release of souls from Purgatory. Thus the Office for the Dead was actually for the living, those with relationships to the dead and especially those with

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5 Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, 10
6 Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, 117
7 Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, 10, “Geert Grote (d. 1384) translated the standard texts of the Book of Hours into Dutch as part of the *Devotio moderna*... which encouraged pious reading in the vernacular.”
9 Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, 117
obligations and expectations to pray for the dead. The office was recited regularly in monasteries from the 9th century till the mid 20th century, in many cases daily, and always after a death and at various set times after a death.

The text of the Office of the Dead

The Office of the Dead, like other offices, contains psalms and their responses, brief prayers and biblical readings. The biblical readings comprise nine readings from the Book of Job, all in the hour of Matins. The psalms and prayers chosen for the Office provide a message of hope for the faithful person who calls on God. Although the text of the Office was set down well before the formalisation of the doctrine of Purgatory the text provides recurrent calls to a responsive God suggesting that prayers for the dead will be heard. Vespers begins with Psalm 116 (NRSV) *Dilexi Dominum* (I will call on God) with the Antiphon *Placebo Domino in regione vivorum* (I will please the Lord in the land of the living) which is usually shortened to *Placebo Domino*. The psalm tells of God’s graciousness to those who call on Him from the “snares of death” and the “pangs of Sheol”. The psalmist says that God has “inclined His ear to me”, and that God “has delivered my soul from death”. So from the beginning of the Office the relationship between the supplicant and God is established. A loving and merciful God hears the supplicant’s pleas. Thus the prayers evoke an affective response from the reader. This emphasis on evoking feeling continues with Psalm 130 (NRSV) the *De Profundis* (Out of the depths have I cried to

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10 Christopher Daniell, *Death and Burial in Medieval England 1066-1550* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 64 “all the actions around the death bed and at the funeral were attempts to help the soul reach its desired goal: Heaven”


12 Psalm 116:3, NRSV *Sheol* is the Hebrew Hell

13 Psalm 116:2, Ps 116:8, NRSV
This overwhelming message of hope and trust in a God who will respond continues in the text of Matins which begins with the antiphon \textit{Dirige Domine} (Direct O Lord).\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Dirige}, later corrupted to dirge, would have been the first word that the mourners heard when they went to the Church in the morning for the completion of the Office and the requiem Mass and burial. Thus dirge became shorthand for both the funeral service and the chanting of the Office. Against this suggestion of gloom we discover that the first psalm for matins encourages the faithful to call on God for salvation. The psalm is psalm 5 (NRSV) which begins with the psalmist calling on God to “heed to my sighing”.\textsuperscript{16} From all of these examples it is obvious that the overwhelming message of the psalms used in the Office was one of hope in a God who would respond to the prayers of those calling on Him to release the souls of the dead from their time in Purgatory.

Unlike other Offices the only biblical readings are in the hour of Matins and all nine come from the Book of Job. The texts used are those in the middle of the book after the description of Job’s tribulations.\textsuperscript{17} This is a section where Job very clearly questions a God who could cause so much distress to a man who considered he had met all God’s requirements. Paxton suggests that these texts are used because of the direct confrontation between Job and God, an Old Testament way of reminding God.

\textsuperscript{14}Psalm 130:2 NRSV. A colleague recounts how this psalm was recited every time that she and her fellow boarders walked to the dining room of her Catholic boarding school (past the nun’s cemetery) in the 1960s in Australia. The students were encouraged to pray for the souls of the nuns on their way to each meal.

\textsuperscript{15}From a corruption of \textit{Dirige} we get the English word Dirge with its connotations of a sad lament, and as shorthand for the Office.

\textsuperscript{16}Psalm 5:1, NRSV

of the relationship between God and man. Hearing or reading the recitation of the interactions between Job and God in the knowledge of the positive resolution of their relationship would have provided the Late Medieval listener with confidence in the mercy of God for the living and the dead.

Unique aspects of the Office of the Dead in a Book of Hours

The Office of the Dead in a Book of Hours is unique among the other Offices in several ways which would have impacted on the user of the Horae and would have provided additional meaning to the illuminations of death related rituals accompanying the Office for the original viewer. Firstly the Office is exactly the same in both clerical and lay manuscripts unlike other Offices in Books of Hours. This meant that when the owner recited the Office from her Book of Hours she was praying the same psalms and prayers in the same order as the monks had chanted at any funeral or commemoration of the dead she may have attended. Modern scholars mention the replication of the text as a source of learning for the laity, whose familiarity with the text would have aided their memorisation of the Office. No scholar mentions that the knowledge that the clergy were reciting the identical texts in their prayers for the souls of the dead would have provided an extra source of support for the layman or woman praying the Office for these same souls, but this seems not only possible but also likely.

18Frederick S. Paxton, Christianizing Death: The Creation of a Ritual Process in Early Modern Europe (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 67
19Wieck, Time Sanctified, 6
Secondly the Office of the Dead is a fixed office where the texts and readings remain the same throughout the year thus anyone praying the text whether a laywoman from her Horae or a monk from his Psalter was using the same text across the liturgical seasons.\textsuperscript{21}

The third aspect of the unique nature of the Office of the Dead is the number of “hours” and their order. The Office consists only of the hours of Vespers, Matins and Lauds and the sequence in both clerical and lay manuscripts is that of the performative order at a funeral or commemoration of the dead, where Vespers is recited the night before a funeral and Matins and Lauds together the next morning.\textsuperscript{22} This order is completely different from all other Offices, where Matins is the first hour and Vespers the final one. The replication of the form and content of the text from clerical to lay prayer books would have enabled the laity praying at home to share the clerical experience of the recitation of the Office.

Ottonsen and other scholars consider that many of the clergy and laity of the period under review would have been able to recite large parts of the Office of the Dead from memory, because of the ubiquity and identical nature of the Office of the Dead in documents and performance coupled with the lack of seasonal variations and the limitation to three “hours”.\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{22}This is the case for all of the 100 Books of Hours and Psalters viewed with one exception. An English Book of Hours in the Walters Art Museum; W 102 has Matins and Lauds as the first parts of the Hours of The Dead.
\textsuperscript{23}Ottonsen, \textit{The Responsories and Versicles of the Latin Office of the Dead}, 31.
Performance of the Office of the Dead

The depiction of the performance of the Office was the most common scene in the illuminations of the Office of the Dead in the Horae reviewed for this study. We know that performance of the Office was the same after a death (either clerical and lay) as it was in the routine performance of the liturgical offices. Thus the user of a Book of Hours on seeing this image would be reminded of the many performances of the Office at funerals and minds (monthly or yearly commemorations of deaths), and of the efficacy of praying the Office for the souls in Purgatory. Vespers was chanted in the evening and then Matins and Lauds were chanted together as a consolidated “hour” the following morning. The recitations of the Office for lay people, both those immediately after the death and at the minds were usually performed by monks paid by the family and wills often specified the number of monks and other mourners to be present at each of the ceremonies.

The owner reading the familiar text while viewing the images of the rituals would be “hearing” the psalms, canticles and the readings exactly as they were chanted in Church. This internal hearing of the text combined with the visual reminders of the rituals of death and burial would be likely to cause the owner of the Book of Hours to pray, and possibly even chant, the Office of the Dead fervently.

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24 Gerard Montague, "The Office for the Dead," The Furrow 8, no. 11 (1957): 710-14 discuss the practice of reciting Matins and Lauds of the Office for the Dead before a requiem mass, it is assumed from the paper that the practice was common at the time. Also a colleague who witnessed the funeral rites of a Benedictine monk in 1998 reports that the service included the recitation of the Office that included the recitation of the Office.
25 Duffy, Marking the Hours, 103.
The devotional use of the Office of the Dead by the owners of Books of Hours

That the Office of the Dead in Late Medieval Books of Hours was used more than other Offices in the same books is shown by both recent research and personal observation. The implication from these observations is that the owners of these Horae would have spent time looking at the illuminations while praying the psalms and being reminded of their dead kith and kin. The first page, which contained the illuminations or historiated initials, of several of the Offices of the Dead that I examined were obviously more marked than the first pages of other Offices or sections of the same books. This marking at the lower external edge of the folio was what would be expected if the page had been held as it was being turned. This evidence of higher relative use of the Office of the Dead is supported by recent studies on the physical conservation of Books of Hours including an example of the Office of the Dead in another Book of Hours. These studies show evidence of page turning, holding the pages open, kissing or touching an illumination by their medieval owners. This indication of use supports the contention that the owners of Books of Hours were using the Office of the Dead more regularly than other Offices, thus suggesting the importance of the Office to the Medieval users of the Horae.

We know from a variety of sources (both textual and visual) that Late Medieval men and women used their Books of Hours to pray in family groups, as well as in

28 Kathryn M. Rudy, "Dirty Books: Quantifying Patterns of Use in Medieval Manuscripts Using a Densitometer," Journal of Historians of Netehrlandish Art, 2 No. 1-2 (2010) plus personal observation of numerous Books of Hours shows that the first page of the Office of the Dead was more worn and marked on the bottom outside corner than the similar pages at the beginning of other offices in the same Book of Hours.
29 Particular examples are KB 135 G 10, W 457, W205, W240, W260 and W289 Workshop of Bedford Master. In this last example the whole page is very worn, the words almost worn out in places and the devil in the illumination fighting St Michael seems to have been rubbed at so that his colour has spread over the areas near him.
30 Rudy, 11.
Church services.\(^{31}\) Examples of use in Church include the practices of guild members’ recitation of the Office of the Dead at the anniversaries of their members’ deaths.\(^{32}\) The use of a Book of Hours in church when the appropriate office was being chanted would have enhanced the connection between chanted text, the written text and the illuminations for the user. This meant that the owners of Books of Hours using them while attending the performance of the Office of the Dead as part of the funeral ritual or memorial service could have followed the psalms and prayers in their *Horae* and possibly “seen” the ritual being performed in Church in the illumination for the Office of the Dead. This connection would have strengthened the use of the Office in private by reminding the user of the funeral rituals in Church when she looked at the illuminations in the Office of the Dead where these were Church based.

**The illuminations accompanying the Office of the Dead in Late Medieval Books of Hours**

The illuminations that accompany the Office of the Dead in Late Medieval Books of Hours are more varied both in content and style than those that accompany the other offices in these Books of Hours.\(^{33}\) While the formats for the illuminations that accompany the Office of the Dead are the same as those in the other offices in any particular Book of Hours the differences are related to the subject matter of the illuminations and the relationship of the illustrations to the text. The most common types of illustration associated with the Office of the Dead vary between those in French and Flemish Books of Hours of the fifteenth century. Those of French origin

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\(^{31}\)Duffy, *Marking the Hours*, 57.  
\(^{32}\)Duffy, *Marking the Hours*, 57-60.  
commonly have a half-page illumination with the first lines of the Office below the illumination (fig 4). More rarely the Office of the Dead commences with an historiated initial; an early example depicts the performance of the office with two seated women reading books in the lower part (fig. 6). In contrast to the French model the pattern of illumination in Flemish Horae is more commonly a full-page illumination of a deathbed or funeral ritual opposite the commencement of the Office of the Dead. In these examples the Office frequently begins with an historiated D of the Dilexi of the first words of the Office. An example from a Book of Hours now in The Hague has a full-page illumination of a scene of a priest blessing the coffin in church opposite an historiated initial D whose illumination is of two souls kneeling calmly in Purgatorial flames (fig. 7). For most of the Offices in a Book of Hours the source of the illuminations is the text of the office complemented at times with themes from popular devotions. The illuminations for the Little Hours of the Virgin and the other offices commonly show scenes from Christ’s life, suffering and triumph and from the Virgin’s life using common iconographic tropes which the owners of Books of Hours would be familiar with from altarpieces, wall paintings in churches and personal devotional panel paintings.

34 Figure 4. The Walters Art Museum, MS W. 274 Fol. 118, Coëtivy Master (illuminator), France, c. 1460s is a perfect example of this type.
35 Figure 5. Pierpont Morgan Library. MS M. 453 Fol. 133v. Paris, France, c. 1425-1430.
36 Figure 6. Figure 6. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 76 G 17 Fol. 187v (Detail), Psalter-Book of Hours (use of Liège), Liège; c. 1250-1300.
37 Figure 7. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 76 G 13 Fol. 85v and 86r, Masters of Hugo Jansz. van Woerden (illuminator), Leyden, South Holland, c. 1490-1510.
The Differences between the Illuminations accompanying the Office of the Dead and other Offices in Books of Hours

The illuminations of the Office of the Dead are very different from those of the other offices in three major ways. Firstly these illuminations often depict the rituals related to death and dying of the people of the period rather than biblical events, secondly the behaviour of the people depicted in the death related rituals is often quite different from that of those depicted in images from other Offices and finally these images include the otherworldly spaces of Heaven and Purgatory which are uncommon in the case of Heaven and not observed in the case of Purgatory in the images of any of the other Offices.

An example demonstrating these differences comes from a Book of Hours in the Morgan Library with the two illuminations chosen being a Pieta which illustrates the Little Hours of the Virgin and a Deathbed scene from the Office of the Dead (figs. 8 and 9).\footnote{Figure 8. Pierpont Morgan Library MS M.231, Fol. 026r (detail), Paris, France, c. 1485-1490. Figure 9. Pierpont Morgan Library MS M.231, Fol. 137r, Paris, France, c. 1485-1490.} The Pieta shows the Virgin seated at the foot of the cross with the dead and bleeding figure of Christ on her lap, his head held by John the Evangelist on the left with Mary Magdalene standing on the right. All the figures are nimbed and the two saints are shown as very sorrowful with the Magdalene holding a cloth to her face (possibly to wipe away tears) with her right hand. The Virgin wears a bright blue gown and long blue cloak which covers her head. The Magdalene wears long open robe over long garments and has her head covered in a manner not dissimilar to those of the woman in the deathbed scene. St John wears a long robe with along cloak fastened at his neck unlike any of the garments worn by “ordinary” men in any other
images in this Book of Hours. This image would have been familiar to the user of the *Horae* and the display of emotion by the Virgin and her companions was an expected iconographic trope for depictions of the crucifixion and possibly especially the Pieta.

In contrast in the deathbed scene the new widow is not looking at her recently dead husband nor does she seek comfort from any of the clergy in the room. Instead she portrayed half kneeling and praying with her open Book of Hours on her lap. She is dressed in the fashion of the time in a red gold gown with a cream coloured shawl covering her shoulders and the back of her head. The bedroom is of the period (as judged from its similarity to many others viewed for this study) and the blessing cleric wears an alb and a stole. This household scene would have reminded the viewer of domestic interior rather than the holy setting of the Pieta. There is also an otherworldly scene in the representation of the deathbed; the angel carrying the soul of the dead man to God in Heaven, shown in a window on the back wall of the room.

The illuminations accompanying the Office of the Dead depict people of the time in the clothes of the period involved in the activities with which the viewer of the illuminations would have been extremely familiar. Even though the illuminations probably depict idealised deathbed scenes the illustrations of rituals in Churches and graveyards are more likely to reflect the rituals as they were performed at the time and with which the owners of Books of Hours would have been familiar.39 The narratives of the life and death of the Virgin and Christ were familiar to the viewer from their recitation and depiction in Church and at home. The visual images of these stories in their Books of Hours were extremely similar to those in altarpieces, stained glass windows and panel paintings in Churches and homes. In contrast the representations of the people in the illustrations of the Office of the Dead were very different from

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39 See comments in Chapter 2 on the historicity of the images.
those in the other Office in the Book of Hours but so recognisable as to command the
attention and empathy of the viewer.

Secondly the behaviour of the people, as evoked in their gestures and
expressions, in the illuminations that accompany the Office of the Dead is very
different from those accompanying the other offices. The illuminations in the Office
of the Dead which show death and burial scenes depict the protagonists in calm
reverent prayer even as their wife, mother or husband dies, or their son is buried. In
the more than one hundred illuminations studied for this thesis this calm demeanour
in the face of death is the norm, with very minor exceptions. The “common people”
and the holy persons depicted in the other Offices are often shown weeping at the
Crucifixion or the death of the Virgin, being astonished at the Resurrection and
terrified at the Last Judgment. Their reactions are in keeping with the narratives being
illustrated and again would have been familiar to the viewers in Books of Hours from
their very similar visual representations in Churches and domestic devotional art
works.

These behaviours would have captured the attention of the viewer for another
reason, that they were not necessarily reflective of reality. Medieval deathbeds were
often very busy and noisy places with several people competing to get the attention of
the dying person. 40 We know from primary sources that late medieval people cried at
the time of their relatives’ deaths and grieved later for dead relatives. 41 Also though

40 Daniell, 29 describes the death rooms as “full of action by a potentially large number of people.”
41 Daniell, 31 quotes Sandford Brown Meech and Emily Allen Hope The Book of Margery Kempe (The Early English Text Society, 1961 reprint), 212 although people at the time found Margery Kempe’s weeping excessive they all wanted her to “both weep and cry when they should die”. Also Kimberley-Joy Knight, “Si pusse calca a’ propri occhi The importance of the Gift of Tears for Thirteenth-Century Religious Women and their Hagiographers,” in Elina Gertsman Editor., Crying in the Middle Ages Tears of History (New York: Routledge, 2012),136 provides an excerpt from Vito da Cotona’a life of Umiliana de’Cerchi where she is reported to “have sometimes lamented the death of her kin”. Binski, 51 “in grieving gender divisions are equally notable; usually in medieval art the codification of grief is the special preserve of women”. Judith Steinhoff,”Weeping Women Social Roles and Images in Fourteenth-Century Tuscany” in Elina Gertsman Editor., Crying in the Middle Ages Tears of History
the illuminations for the Office of the Dead show people dying calmly at home we know that many people died suddenly in wars or on journeys away from home without the benefit of clergy or family at their death. It can be postulated that these deaths might be even more likely to cause the mourning relatives to demonstrate their grief, at home, if not in public.

Purgatory as an image in the illuminations in the Office of the Dead

The third major iconographic difference in considering the illuminations of the Office of the Dead is the depiction of Purgatory. While the Last Judgment with its portrayals of Heaven and Hell commonly appears in illuminations of the Penitential Psalms the only place that an image of Purgatory appears in a Book of Hours is in the illuminations of the Office of the Dead. The depiction of Purgatory in late Medieval Horae is still not common and when found is most likely to be in those from the Low Countries. Representations of Purgatory in the Medieval period in any form except in manuscripts are rare so their occurrence in the illuminations of the Office of the Dead is noteworthy. The paucity of images may relate to the slow development of the Doctrine of Purgatory and the fact that its final definition only occurred at the Council of Trent, but it remains a fascinating and thus far poorly researched fact.  

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42 Binski’s (New York: Routledge, 2012), 251 provides details of the sumptuary laws in fourteenth century Tuscany which detailed who could weep, and where and for how long after a death, as well as what could be worn when in mourning. Women were allowed to weep after a death but only inside the house and could not attend the funeral at all.

42 There are debates about whether particular early public images were of Hell or Purgatory and when the first images can be documented. The earliest images are in manuscripts of the late thirteenth century. Louise Marshall, “Purgatory in the Medieval Imagination: The Earliest Images,” in Gregory Kratzmann, ed Imagination, Books and Community in Medieval Europe (Melbourne: Macmillan and the State Library of Victoria; 2009) demonstrates a manuscript depiction from the early thirteenth century as well as providing more detail, of the images in the manuscripts described by Jacques Le Goff The Birth of Purgatory. trans Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press; 1981). The examples from Marshall are all from manuscripts while Le Goff does provide evidence of an early fourteenth century fresco. Le Goff disagrees with Braunfels W. Fegfeur. in: Engelbert
suggestion that because Purgatory was “instrumental” and not an end in itself it was therefore more likely to be represented by the depiction of the activities that would speed the souls out of Purgatory this does not fully explain the examples of images of Purgatory of which some, but not all, are combined with representations of these approved actions.43

Iconography of Purgatory in Books of Hours

In the illuminations of the Office of the Dead Purgatory is commonly shown as a place of fire; a place where souls “were licked by the most inoffensive flames”.44 The fire of Purgatory is almost always one which burns gently and neatly upward with flames reaching only to the waists of the souls therein, not one that consumes them (fig. 10).45 These souls are commonly shown embodied and naked and either standing or kneeling.46 A significant number of representations of Purgatory include angels ministering to the souls, while others show angels transporting the souls from Purgatory. The English view of Purgatory was of a more violent place of fire and punishment where souls are writhing in agony, and even less commonly Purgatory is shown as a place of ice or water.47

Kirrschbaum et al, Editors, Lexikon der Christlichen Ikonographie (Freiburg: Herder, 1970) in saying there are no depictions of Purgatory before the 14C.
42Binski, 198.
44Figure 10. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 133 M131 Fol. 196 v & 197r, Precursor of the Masters of Zweder van Culemborg (illuminator), Utrecht, c. 1425.
45Braunfels W. Fegfeur, Lexikon der Christlichen Ikonographie.


As the Office was originally called the Office for the Dead because the primary function of performing the Office in the Late Medieval period was to gain the release of the souls of the dead from Purgatory the images of Purgatory are surely there to encourage the viewer to be reminded of the souls in Purgatory and their need for prayers. The inclusion of Purgatory in the illuminations of the Office of the Dead in Book of Hours was a demonstration of a belief in life after death and accords with money left in Late Medieval wills for monks to chant the office and priests to say Masses for the soul of the testator.

Women and Books of Hours

Women were often portrayed as protagonists in the images accompanying the Office of the Dead though it is not obvious that this has been previously examined in any depth. We know that Books of Hours were often commissioned for and owned by women, sometimes at the suggestion of their spiritual advisors. Several scholars evidence the predominantly female ownership of Books of Hours in the period under review and the representations of the female owners in the illuminations of the Offices of these books. Increasing female literacy and a wish to express their increasing piety, as well as an improvement in general prosperity, particularly among the haute bourgeoisie in the fifteenth century, gave women the chance to express both

48 Montague, 710.
49 Daniell, 6.
50 John Higgitt, The Murthy Hours. Devotion, Literacy and Luxury in Paris, England and the Gaelic West (London: British Library; 2000), 2 discusses the probable ownership and the fourteenth century satirisation of Books of Hours as a feminine vanity by Deschamps demonstrating the connection at the time between women and Books of Hours.
51 Wieck, Painted Prayers, 19 “their patronage was essential, it was due to women that the genre took off” and Kathryn A. Smith, Art, Identity and Devotion in Fourteenth-Century England. Three Women and their Books of Hours (London: The British Library, 2003), 11 “the books of hours…. are the most tangible and substantial evidence of their owners’ very existence”.

their piety and affluence through the commissioning and ownership of Books of Hours.\textsuperscript{52}

Depiction of women in the illuminations of the Office of the Dead

Women are often depicted in the domestic death related rituals which are the subjects of the illuminations in the Office of the Dead. A possible aim of these illuminations was to remind the female owners of Books of Hours of the pressing need to pray for the souls of the dead so that they would be released from Purgatory. This was achieved by showing the women’s exemplary spiritual and devotional behaviour. The original viewers of these images were taught that prayerful performance of the Office and reverent attendance at Mass as well as personal prayers were among the most efficacious ways to release souls from Purgatory.\textsuperscript{53} The use of Books of Hours for the recitation of the Office and other prayers for the dead was encouraged by viewing the images of women using their Books of Hours in the rituals of death and burial. A particularly clear example of women behaving reverently at a death bed and using their Books of Hours is seen in the Hours of Isabella de Lalaing (fig. 1).\textsuperscript{54} In the illumination accompanying the Office of the Dead our eye is drawn to the three richly dressed young women beside the bed where their mother lies dying, kneeling reverently with their open Books of Hours.

\textsuperscript{52}Women’s Books of Hours in Medieval England: Selected Texts trans. Charity Scott-Stokes, The Library of Medieval Women (Woodbridge, Suffolk: DS Brewer, 2006), 10-16 provides information about Isabel Ruddock’s Hours plus several other English hours made for or used by English women.
\textsuperscript{53}George A. Keith, “Gregory the Great” in New Dictionary of Theology, Sinclair B. Ferguson, and David Wright, Editors. (Leicester: Intervarsity Press, 1988), 283
\textsuperscript{54}Figure 1. Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal, MS. 1185 Rés. Fol. 373v. Master of Antoine Rolin (illuminator), Flanders, c. 1490.
While many scholars have commented on the illuminations in Books of Hours and several have focussed their discussion on the illuminations in the Office of the Dead none have reported on the significance of the activities of the women in these illuminations in understanding the devotional life of women in the later Middle Ages. Wieck’s comments on the presence of women and their activities in the illuminations of the Office of the Dead are primarily related to the possible relationship of the women within the images to the deceased, or to their performance of activities. The images I studied showed women both praying calmly as they died and more commonly as their loved ones died. Other devotional activities depicting women included: almsgiving after death, sewing bodies into shrouds, and placing shrouded bodies into coffins. There were also representations of women reciting the Office of the Dead in church around the coffined body and reading their books at the funeral mass, as well as following the procession to the grave and praying calmly at the burial of family members. In all of these illuminations the women are shown as calm and prayerful and always showing respect to the deceased body.

Conclusion

Although Books of Hours are extraordinarily beautiful works of art their primary function was religious. They were designed to provide the laity, especially women, with their own portable prayer books which mirrored those of the clergy. Their owners used them as daily prayer books, as calendars and memorials both at home and in Church. The Office of the Dead, an invariable part of a Late Medieval Book of Hours, was used by the owner to pray for the souls of the faithful to be released from

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Purgatory in the identical text that the clergy used. There are significant deliberate differences in both content and style in the illuminations of the Office of the Dead from those of other parts of a Book of Hours. The images illustrating the Office of the Dead were there to encourage the owners of Books of Hours to pray for the souls of the dead to be released from Purgatory. These images of recognisably contemporary people performing the prevailing death related rituals which include depictions of Purgatory assist us in understanding how the Books’ owners might have “read” the illuminations in the Office of the Dead. In particular the illustrations of the calm and death accepting behaviour of women at the deathbeds and funerals demonstrated the expected behaviour when taking part in these rituals.
CHAPTER 4
ANALYSIS OF ILLUMINATIONS THAT DEPICT IMAGES OF PARTICULAR INTEREST AND DISCUSSION OF THE RECEPTION OF THE ILLUMINATIONS FOR MEDIEVAL VIEWERS

Introduction

The illuminations reviewed and analysed in this chapter containing images of Late Medieval dying, death, funeral and burial rituals. These scenes repay detailed study by the viewer as sources of depictions of idealised and routine contemporary devotional practices and the behaviour of the protagonists at these rituals. All of the rituals represented in the illuminations and discussed by the scholars mentioned previously are considered; however more time has been spent on topics of particular interest which have not been discussed in depth by previous researchers. These subjects are: the depiction of sacramental rituals, the presence of personal spiritual advisors in the images, the behaviour of the protagonists in the illuminations of death related rituals, the concurrent depiction of earthly and otherworldly spaces, the evocation of what might be identified by modern audiences as liminal events, and the possible reception of these images by their original viewers. Information from primary and secondary sources, particularly in relation to theological and devotional beliefs, has been incorporated into the analysis to assist the reader to understand and interpret the depicted participants’ behaviour in the rituals and the impact these images might have had on the Medieval viewer.
Sacramental rituals

The three sacramental rituals which are depicted in the illuminations, Confession of Sins, Extreme Unction and Eucharist do not seem to have been the subject of any detailed study thus far so they are discussed in some detail. Depictions of Confession and Extreme Unction are very uncommon and representations of Eucharist are very common in the illuminations accompanying the Office of the Dead. Suggestions for these differences are proposed in the analysis of the images.

Sacrament of Confession of Sins

The sacrament of Confession of Sins appears both as a deathbed ritual for the dying person and as a post death activity by family members in a Church and is uncommon as a subject in the illuminations of the Office of the Dead. The two examples of Confession of sins by the dying person discovered are both vignettes with other sacramental vignettes around larger death related images from French Books of Hours.¹ Both images are of a hooded and gowned person sitting beside and leaning toward a dying person in a room otherwise empty of people. The two examples of Confession by a family member after a death are also in vignettes from French Books of Hours (figs. 9 and 11).² The first depiction of the sacrament of Confession is in a church where a young man (as seen from his bare head and short

¹ The examples of Confession at the deathbed in the Bedford Hours Fol. 120 as seen in Eberhard König, The Bedford Hours. The Making of a Masterpiece (London: The British Library; 2007), 102 and the Sobieski Hours A French book of Hours c. 1420-25 now in Windsor Castle Fol. 111v – this image is reproduced and described in Roger Wieck Death Desired, 435 and plate 4. Scholars suggest members of the same workshop illustrated both.
² Figure 9. Pierpont Morgan Library MS M.231, Fol. 137r, Paris, France, c. 1485-1490. Figure 11. Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.359 Fol. 119v, Bedford Master and his workshop (illuminators), Île-de-France, Paris, 1430-1435.
garment) kneels beside a sitting priest who wears a stole and raises a hand, possibly in blessing. The other example is similar but smaller and less distinct.

Sacrament of Extreme Unction

Extreme Unction is the anointing with previously blessed oil of the body of the dying person by a priest in the home. The three examples of Extreme Unction illustrating the Office of the Dead found were found in the illuminations already mentioned which include images of Confession (fig. 11). In the image from the workshop of the Master of Bedford a small image in a lozenge shows a priest holding the hand of the dying person while next to him another priest holds an object, possibly the oils for blessing. Although images of the sacrament of Extreme Unction in the illuminations in Horae from the Late Middle Ages are rare there are some Late Medieval depictions of possibly idealised administrations of the sacrament in both altarpieces and doctrinal tracts suggesting that Extreme Unction was a familiar end of life ritual in the Late Medieval period (fig. 12). Descriptions of the expectation of performance of the sacrament of Extreme Unction in the primary sources studied by

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3 Figure 11. Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.359 Fol. 119v, Bedford Master and his workshop (illuminators), Île-de-France, Paris, 1430-1435. The images of Extreme Unction in the following Horae are very similar to that in Figure 11 the Bedford Hours Fol.120 as seen in König, The 102 and the Sobieski Hours Fol. 111v, seen in Wieck The Death Desired, 435 and plate 4.
4 Figure 12. Thomas Netter’s Doctrinale: Oxford, Lincoln College, MS. Lat 106, fol. 289v in Patrick Mullins, ‘Netter’s Defence of Extreme Unction Against Wyclif’, in Johan Bergström-Allen & Richard Copsey, (Editors.), Thomas Netter of Walden: Carmelite, Diplomat and Theologian (c.1372-1430), Carmel in Britain Volume 4, (Faversham: Saint Albert’s Press, 2009), 251-70. Also Rogier Van Der Weyden’s Seven Sacraments Altarpiece. Now in the Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Antwerp. The painting provides an idealised depiction of the seven sacraments, as they were imaged to have been administered at the time of the painting.
Daniell and others suggests this sacrament was regarded as a standard element in end of life rituals in this period.\textsuperscript{5}

Relative infrequency of depictions of Confession and Extreme Unction

The infrequency of depictions of Confession and Extreme Unction in the Office of the Dead are explicable for quite different reasons. Evidence from contemporary documents suggests that the Confession of sins before the reception of Eucharist at a deathbed seems to have been an expected and routine sacramental ritual.\textsuperscript{6} The opportunity for a last minute Confession with repentance and absolution could rescue the soul of the dying person from the tortures of endless Hell so it seems if it were available then the dying person would avail him or herself of the sacramental opportunity. The secondary sources do not provide any suggestions why Confession is less often depicted than communion. As Confession is, by its nature, a private sacrament it was possibly considered less interesting to portray than Eucharist or Extreme Unction because of the increased number of people in the room for those sacraments.

Although there is evidence of the administering of Extreme Unction for the dying in the Late Medieval period there is also some reason to think that it was less often administered than Confession or Eucharist. Extreme Unction was only performed at a deathbed where it was sometimes combined with the final Confession.


or sometimes took its place. Thus it was understood as the last thing by Medieval Christians. Those who recovered after the anointing of Extreme Unction were unable to receive this sacrament again. They were therefore doomed to lead a form of continued preliminal existence, a half-life in which they were banned from eating meat and from sexual activity with their spouses. While Extreme Unction was part of the Church’s sacramental armoury for the dying, it seems to have been less often administered than the other two sacraments. The relative paucity of administration compared to Eucharist (to be discussed below) may partially explain the small numbers of depictions of Extreme Unction in the illuminations of the Office of the Dead. Further study of the administration and illustration of these deathbed sacraments in the Late Middle Ages is outside the scope of this study but of interest.

Sacrament of Eucharist

The illuminations with Eucharist as a theme include both provision of Eucharist for the dying person (the Viaticum) at home and in funeral Masses in Church settings. Deathbed scenes where the dying person is offered the Viaticum are very frequent as a theme for the illuminations of the Office of the Dead however there are fewer illustrations of the Mass. We know that the Late Medieval owners of Books of Hours believed that the celebration of the Mass was the most important religious ritual whose performance would assist the souls of the dead to be released

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7 Placid Murray, “The Liturgical History of Extreme Unction,” The Furrow 11, no. 9 (©1960) 582 also “anointing also absolved the sins of people unable to speak or make confession”.
9 Viaticum may be translated as “for the journey”. The contemporary belief was that Communion provided to the dying person increased the likelihood of a rapid transition to Heaven for his or her soul.
from Purgatory, so this finding is perhaps surprising.11 One writer suggests that the infrequency of the depiction of the Mass in Books of Hours is because Books of Hours are based on the Office and do not usually include the text of the Mass so that illuminations of the Mass are not as relevant as those of the subject of the Offices.12 This suggestion accords well with the observation that the representation of a performance of the Office is one of the most popular themes for these illuminations. When considering that women were often the owners of Books of Hours and that there were some barriers to women’s attendance at the funeral services in the Late Medieval period perhaps the Mass was not depicted as often because while women would not always attend the Church-based rituals the illustration of the Office would remind the Books’ users of the text in front of them.13 In the Books of Hours studied there were several illuminations which portrayed women holding open Books of Hours in churches beside the bier (fig. 6).14 However these images may depict idealised rather than actual contemporary practice and may have been included to provide comfort and an example of appropriate behaviour to female viewers.

When a Requiem Mass is depicted in the Office of the Dead the moment represented is usually the Elevation of the Host at the consecration. The Late Medieval viewer of the illuminations in the Office of the Dead was taught to believe that viewing the Elevation of the Host at the consecration would protect her from sudden death. Seeing this image of the host might remind her to pray for protection

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11 Daniell, Ch. 2 provides extensive evidence of the custom and practice of having Masses said for souls after death, including the erection and staffing of chantry chapels for this purpose.
12 James McKinnon, “Representations of the Mass in Medieval and Renaissance Art,” Journal of the American Musicological Society. 31 no. 1 (1978), 34. However he goes on to state that the Office of the Dead is an exception with numerous Masses being depicted, but does not qualify or amplify the comment.
13 Binski, 52 claims that this primarily a monastic and clerical ban on women. Townsend p 60 says that women were sometimes excluded from the procession but were encouraged to attend the ceremonies in church.
14 Figure 6. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 76 G 17 Fol. 187v (Detail), Psalter-Book of Hours, Liège; c. 1250-1300.
against her own sudden death and to pray for the souls of those who had suffered this misfortune. The depiction of the priest holding the host out to the dying person in the deathbed scenes of the Viaticum may also have reminded the viewer of the Elevation of the Host at Mass and encouraged similar devotional responses.

**Specific images of deathbed scenes**

The idealised deathbed scene which depicted the dying person attended by clergy engaged in sacramental roles was a popular theme for the illuminations of the commencement of the Office of the Dead in Late Medieval Books of Hours from France and the Low Countries. These scenes almost always include family members shown calmly accepting the death of their relative. They may also include representation of the otherworldly spaces of Heaven and Purgatory. From a modern viewpoint these scenes may be considered to enact liminal events.

**Inclusion of a graveyard in a deathbed scene**

We have seen in the previous section that the representation of the deathbed Eucharist was a common theme for illuminations for the Office of the Dead. This scene portrays the administration of the Viaticum alongside several other narrative moments including the deathbed, a graveyard and includes a figure we might identify as a spiritual advisor (fig.13).\(^{15}\) We presume the woman is dying because the illumination occurs at the commencement of the Office of the Dead. The priest and his attendants are shown walking through a graveyard, indicated by a grave marker, to

\(^{15}\)Figure 13. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 74 G 37a Fol. 37r Hours of Simon de Varie' Paris, Master of Jean Rolin, Master of the Dunois Hours (illuminators) 1455. Added miniatures (74 G 37a), Tours, Jean Fouquet (illuminator), c. 1455.
reach the house of the dying woman. The two scenes are linked by showing the bedroom wall as cut away, in what Panofsky termed a “doll’s house view”.16 Such manipulations of architectural spaces allows the viewer to see both the inside and outside of the house simultaneously. The illuminator has used the cut away technique and simultaneous narrative to suggest the liminal or threshold time between dying and death as the viewer sees both the dying woman in the bed and the grave marker.

The dying woman, her head covered by a cap, sits up in bed with her eyes open and hands joined in prayer. She is attended by a woman standing on her right behind whom is the suggestion of other people in a corridor leading away from the bedroom. The attending woman stands beside the bed close to the head of the dying woman, looking at her but not otherwise interacting with her. The bed has dark red hangings decorated with gold fleur-de-lis, giving an impression of wealth and status.

Personal spiritual advisors present at deathbeds

Further indications of the dying woman’s status, if not wealth, is the friar who sits on a stool on her left holding a scroll. The friar was presumably praying or chanting before he turned to look toward the incoming priest. The presence of the friar, perhaps the personal spiritual advisor of the dying woman, as well as the attending clergy provide a visual example of the great benefit provided to the dying by the presence of priests to provide the sacrament of Eucharist and blessings and prayers at the time of death.

The inclusion of a monk or priest already in the room when the clergy arrive with the viaticum was relatively common in the deathbed scenes studied. Although it

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is likely that only a small proportion of the population would have had their own spiritual advisor it is not uncommon to see one or more in deathbed scenes in illuminations accompanying the Office of the Dead (figs. 9 and 10). They are depicted as quite separate to any priests bringing the Viaticum or blessing to the dying person and in all examples, are portrayed as being in the room before the visiting priest arrives. The owners of richly illuminated Books of Hours would have been the people most likely to have their own spiritual advisors or family chaplains so that their depiction in the death scenes of these books might be expected.

The inclusion of a figure identified as a personal spiritual advisor or family chaplain is characteristic of the idealised deathbed scene as an illumination in the Late Medieval Books of Hours studied for this thesis As is the inclusion of the figures of other clergy to bring the Viaticum and bless the soul as it leaves the body, and family members to pray as the person dies.

Behaviour of clergy and family members at deathbeds

In all the portrayals of deathbed scenes studied for this thesis the family members are shown dressed in their best clothes. The men appear clean-shaven or with trimmed beards and the monks and clergy in full habit or appropriate vestments. The clergy who bring the Eucharist or hear Confession are often shown wearing stoles as a sign of their sacramental role. In the deathbed scene described above the priest

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17 Figure 9. Pierpont Morgan Library MS M.231, Fol. 137r, Paris, France, c. 1485-1490. Figure 10. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 133 M131 Fol. 196 v & 197r, Precursor of the Masters of Zweder van Culemborg (illuminator), Utrecht, c. 1425.
18 Eamon Duffy, Marking the Hours English People & their Prayers 1240-1570. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press; 2006), 9-10 discusses the role of Dominican spiritual advisors for the owner and commissioner of the De Brailes Hours. Also see Taryn E. L. Chubb and Emily Kelley, “Mendicants and Merchants in the Medieval Mediterranean: An Introduction,” Medieval Encounters, 18, no. 2/3 (2012), 156 “The developing merchant class as well as the aristocracy had personal spiritual advisors most commonly from the mendicant orders”.
who brings the Communion is accompanied by another clerical figure, also tonsured and wearing a white alb plus two young men carrying lit candles (fig. 13).\textsuperscript{19} They are all shown walking reverently and concentrating on their task. The demeanour of the clergy in all the illuminations studied is of reverent calm, with one minor exception (fig 9).\textsuperscript{20}

All the deathbed scenes viewed depicted family members. Occasionally other people, possibly members of the household might also be included. The family members are usually shown praying, quietly observing the situation or reading from Books of Hours. In almost all the illuminations studied the family members do not make eye contact with either the dying person or each other. The exceptions occur when family members interact with the dying person through their involvement in a ritual. This lack of eye contact suggests that the protagonists were aware of the overriding need to pray for the dying person and that any glances between them might cause them to default from the prayerful to a grieving or distressed position. Many of the people portrayed around a deathbed are women. It seems likely that the lack of overt distress in the illuminations in the Books of Hours was intended to remind the female owners and readers of these books of the necessity of avoiding excessive displays of grief.\textsuperscript{21}

An especially striking example of a perfect deathbed comes from the previously mentioned Hours of Isabella de Lalaing (fig.1).\textsuperscript{22} The full-page illumination shows a beautifully and expensively furnished room with a large bed in which a woman leans

\textsuperscript{19}Figure 13. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 74 G 37a Fol. 37r Hours of Simon de Varie' Paris, Master of Jean Rolin, Master of the Dunois Hours (illuminators) 1455. Added miniatures (74 G 37a), Tours, Jean Fouquet (illuminator), c. 1455.
\textsuperscript{20}Figure 9. Pierpont Morgan Library MS M.231, Fol. 137r, Paris, France, c. 1485-1490. Here we see the priest portrayed with mouth open and his eyes wide as he blesses a man. His facial expression suggests he is aware of the angel carrying the soul above his head.
\textsuperscript{21} Binski, 52.
\textsuperscript{22}Figure 1. Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS. 1185 Rés. Fol. 373v. Master of Antoine Rolin (illuminator), Flanders, c. 1490.
back on pillows, her hands joined in prayer. On the far side of the bed two tonsured brown robed clerics kneel close to the woman. Nearby a young acolyte can be seen standing behind them. At the foot end of the bed a man wearing what seems to be a velvet and fur gown stands observing the scene with his hands loosely clasped.

The three young women in the foreground of the scene are presumably the daughters of the dying woman. They are shown dressed in flowing wide sleeved brown velvet gowns and white or black headdresses. Two are also shown with open Books of Hours in front of them. None of the protagonists appear to make eye contact with each other and all are reverently observing the blessing being performed by the attending clergy.

Late Medieval reception of images of deathbed scenes

Those viewing the illuminations and meditating on their own death and the need to be in the state of grace would be comforted by the representations of “ideal deaths” especially those scenes which depict souls being taken to Heaven as they die. Viewers might also be praying for the souls of their kith and kin perhaps especially for those whose deaths had not been as perfect as those portrayed in the images. Arguably these images would have assisted the viewer to develop a religious understanding of death and the afterlife and the benefits for the souls of the dead by the correct performance of the appropriate rituals and recitation of the approved prayers by the living. These images suggest the “correct behaviour” for a family member in the room of a dying relative to be the calm prayerful behaviour, including the use of Horae, demonstrated by the many women, and fewer men, shown in these images.
The inclusion of supernatural spaces in illuminations of death related rituals

The inclusion of images of the otherworldly spaces of Heaven, Hell and Purgatory as part of an illumination is more commonly seen in the Office of the Dead than other Offices in Late Medieval Books of Hours. In these examples Heaven is often represented by God in a window or mandorla beckoning to, or blessing, souls being angelically transported towards him. (figs. 9 and 14). The spaces of Heaven or Purgatory are usually depicted as part of either a deathbed or burial scene in French Books of Hours. In contrast in Flemish examples it is common to see Purgatory as the only otherworldly space in which case it is almost always shown as the subject of an historiated initial for the commencement of the Office. Hell is unusual as the subject of an image in continental Horae from the Late Middle Ages.

The iconography of otherworldly spaces in illuminations accompanying the Office of the Dead

The iconography of Heaven is usually indicated by a bust length God or Christ framed through a window or above the clouds. The divine figure holds an orb or makes a blessing gesture. Sometimes God or Christ is depicted with arms outstretched towards an approaching soul. There are almost uniformly one or more angels carrying the soul and sometimes others closer to God (fig. 14).

23 Figure 9. Pierpont Morgan Library MS M.231, Fol. 137r, Paris, France, c. 1485-1490.
24 Rob Dückers and Ruud Priem, Editors., The Hours of Catherine Cleves: Devotion, Demons and Daily Life in the Fifteenth Century (New York: Abrams, 2009), 357 plate 107 is a facsimile of Fol. 168v which shows the three mouths of hell.
25 Figure 14. Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.264 Fol.101r, c. 1400.
On the rare occasions that Hell is depicted in the Office of the Dead, it accompanies other images of death rituals and sometimes Purgatory.\(^\text{26}\) The iconography of Hell in the illuminations viewed followed the conventions of this subject in this period; devils push resisting souls into a large hell-mouth where leaping flames await the damned. As the principal subject of the illumination for the Office of the Dead, Hell would not have been a comforting image in a prayer book used by its owners to pray for the souls in Purgatory. While the depiction of Hell might have encouraged the user to pray for her own soul and to lead a good life it might be seen as suggesting that the fate of the souls being prayed for was already sealed in a negative way. In Dutch and Flemish examples in particular, Purgatory is almost always shown as a gentle fire which burns up to the waists of the kneeling souls (fig. 10).\(^\text{27}\) One French example has a more fiery Purgatory where the souls do not look so comfortable (fig. 4).\(^\text{28}\)

Domestic bedrooms and Heaven

Heaven in the illuminations of the Office of the Dead is often indicated by the depiction of God in a window or roundel at the top of the scene. The first example comes from a French Book of Hours in the Morgan Library where a composite illumination combines images of several death related rituals (fig. 9).\(^\text{29}\) In this folio the images comprise the whole page with the initial words of the text of Vespers of

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\(^\text{26}\) Duckers and Priem, The illumination of hell accompanies Vespers of the Office of the Dead with other illuminations of the rituals of death including souls in Purgatory Fol 97 (plate 67) and souls being released from Purgatory Fol. 107 (plate 70). Another example is Walters W 90 where a funeral service is the principal subject of the illumination for the Office of the Dead, with devils carrying souls to hell in a vignette below, described in Wieck, *Time Sanctified*, 131.

\(^\text{27}\) Figure 10. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 133 M131 Fol. 196 v & 197r, Precursor of the Masters of Zweder van Culemborg (illuminator), Utrecht, c. 1425.

\(^\text{28}\) Figure 4. The Walters Art Museum, MS W. 274, Fol. 118. Coëtivy Master (illuminator), France, c. 1460s.

\(^\text{29}\) Figure 9. Pierpont Morgan Library MS M.231, Fol. 137r, Paris, France, c. 1485-1490.
the Office of the Dead below the principal scene. The rituals represented are: the deathbed, shrouding, confession, procession to the graveyard and burial. The largest section of the illumination on the left of the page reveals a woman kneeling back on her feet with arms crossed and an open Book of Hours on her knees. She has her eyes closed and looks away from the bed on which a man, presumably her husband, has just died. We understand that he has died because he appears to lie inert on the bed with his head falling forward on his neck and his hands lying flaccidly across the bedclothes. An even more pertinent clue to his recent death is the angel who carries the small naked soul of the man to heaven.

God appears in a window behind and above the priests beside the bed. God holds an orb in his left hand and blesses the approaching soul, and by implication all souls, with his right hand. The priest and his acolyte are in the process of blessing the body of the dead man by sprinkling him with holy water. The inclusion of the clergy in the illumination reminds the viewer of the sacramental blessings only they can perform for the dying.

Burials and Heaven

An example of a burial with the soul being taken to Heaven as well as a woman at a graveside comes from a French Book of Hours (fig. 14). The illumination is a half page above the commencement of the Office of the Dead. The centre of the illumination shows a coffin containing the body of dark-haired young looking man with his arms crossed over a loincloth. A pair of mourners shown as smaller than the
clergy behind the grave kneel at his feet, a woman to the front and a man behind her, possibly his parents.

Behind the head of the dead man two priests chant from an open book, with meaningless markings, placed on a cross in the cemetery. In the upper centre of the picture Christ, with arms outstretched displaying his wounds and flanked by a pair of angels, welcomes the man’s soul. The angel on the left helps the soul escape from a pair of devils below the realm of Heaven, shown as a band of blue with stars.

Depictions of Purgatory in the death related rituals

The depictions of souls being released from Purgatory are often combined with scenes of the prayerful and sacramental activities of the living who assist in their release especially by praying at a Requiem Mass or burial (fig. 4 & Fig. 15). The illuminations of souls either waiting patiently in Purgatory, or being transported from Purgatory to Heaven, would have visually reinforced the benefit of the intercessory prayers of the Office for the release of the souls in Purgatory.

Purgatory is featured as part of deathbed scenes more often in Books of Hours from the Netherlands and Belgium. In contrast, the Office of the Dead from French Books of Hours are more likely to show the soul being taken straight to Heaven. The theological, cultural and historical implications of this observation are beyond the scope of this thesis but warrant further study.

While Heaven is quite frequently depicted together with other death related rituals, it is much less common for Purgatory to be represented in such images. The illumination for the Office of the Dead in the Hours of Isabella of Lalaing, previously

31Figure 4. The Walters Art Museum, MS W. 274, Fol. 118. Coëtivy Master (illuminator), France, c. 1460s. Figure 15. Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.1055, Fol. 87v, Rouen, France, c. 1465-1475.
mentioned as an example of the ideal death, features a window in the upper wall of the bedroom through which the viewer looks into Purgatory (fig 1).³² God appears holding an orb and looks down to a group of souls in a fiery place. This inclusion of Purgatory in the deathbed scene is much less common than those where God is shown looking toward the soul with the implication that the soul will be going straight to Heaven. This vivid evocation of Purgatory would surely have reminded the beholder of the need to pray for the souls of the dead.

The image of Purgatory is included occasionally in other death rituals and in particular is a major feature of the illumination of the Requiem Mass by the Coëtivy Master (fig. 4). Angels are depicted taking souls to Heaven from Purgatory in a space located below the Church where we see the Requiem Mass being performed. Again the viewer would be reminded of the efficacy of the Mass to obtain the release of souls from Purgatory.

Finally, depictions of burials which also include Purgatory are less common than those including Heaven (fig 15).³³ In this example a pair of angels take a soul from a region of flames populated by black devils reaching toward the soul. The scene appears above a burial where the shrouded body is being laid in a grave as the clergy chant the prayers.

Late Medieval reception of images of otherworldly spaces in death-related rituals.

This scene of a religious ritual unambiguously produces supernatural results. In effect the visualisation makes clear the Catholic belief in the efficacy of sacraments for the soul of the deceased. The performance of the church’s liturgy and the prayerful

³²Figure 1. Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS. 1185 Rés. Fol. 373v. Master of Antoine Rolin (illuminator), Flanders, c. 1490.
³³ Figure 15. Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.1055, Fol. 87v, Rouen, France, c. 1465-1475.
devotion of family members assist in the direct transit of the soul of the deceased straight to heaven. As we have already noted by singling out the calm and prayerful demeanour of the widow and mother the message of those scenes seems unmistakably intended to remind the female viewers and owners of Book of Hours of the conventions expected of them.

The depiction of liminality

To modern viewers it seems that certain scenes enact (or seem to) liminal events or even states of Liminality in many of the illuminations which occur in the Office of the Dead. The most common is the depiction of the moment of death where an angel appears carrying a small, embodied naked soul to heaven, as discussed previously (fig 10). A particularly noteworthy example is seen in a small Book of Hours now in the Koninklijke Bibliotheek with a deathbed scene opposite the commencement of the Office with an historiated initial containing a scene of Purgatory. This deathbed scene on close inspection has major differences with those discussed previously. These variations are seen in the interaction between the dying person and the family members, the depiction of the liminal i.e. threshold moment between life and death, and the depiction of Purgatory. While the illuminator has not chosen to demonstrate the wealth and power of those present the simpler style serves to concentrate the viewer’s attention on the figures and their activities.

The similarity to the other deathbed scenes is the presence of both family members and clergy supporting the woman dying in the bed compared with Fig 1. The clerical figure, wearing a black and white habit, sits beside the bed close to the

34 Figure 10. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 133 M131 Fol. 196 v & 197r, Precursor of the Masters of Zweder van Culemborg (illuminator), Utrecht, c. 1425.
woman’s left side. He looks toward the viewer’s space neither at the woman, nor at
the two young men on the other side of the bed. His position in the image and his
Dominican habit recalls the images of probable spiritual advisors seen in other
deathbed scenes. The two young red haired men are interacting with the woman and
looking at her, which is a major difference to the previous illuminations where the
family members are shown as neither making eye contact nor interacting physically
with the dying person. One kneels beside the bed assisting the woman to hold a
lighted candle. The other stands behind with his hands resting lightly on the kneeling
figure’s back.

Because there are no participating clergy the role of the sons moves to one of
active involvement in the rituals from the more commonly depicted familial role of
calm prayer seen in those illuminations where the clergy are leading the prayers. It is
obvious that the sons are praying with their mother as she dies and providing the ritual
of a lit candle as seen in other deathbed scenes.

The artist has evoked a liminal moment between life and death in the most
original way of all the images for this thesis viewed because an angel hovers above
the bed before the person dies. That the woman is still alive is shown by her ability to
hold onto to candle jointly with her son as she sits up against her pillows. The
presence of the angel suggests both that the woman while not yet dead is at the point
of death, and that as soon as she dies her soul will be taken to Heaven by the angel.
The artist has also chosen that none of those present are aware of the presence of the
angel.
On the facing folio the Office begins with an historiated initial D containing a scene of Purgatory (fig. 10). Two red haired souls kneel facing each other with hands joined in the prayer position in gentle flames reaching to their waists. At the top of the initial a white bearded God is shown as a bust with his right hand blessing them. This combination of scenes would have reminded the Book’s owner that the souls of the good will be taken to Heaven by angels so it is important to arrange for death bed sacraments and the involvement of the clergy. However because we do not actually see the angel taking the soul we can never be sure whether any particular soul has gone to Heaven or Purgatory so it remains important to pray for the deceased. The family characteristic of red hair may have been used by the illuminator to suggest to the viewer the relationship between the souls in Purgatory and the relatives around the bed. Such a visual reminder underlined for the viewer of these pages the importance of praying for the souls in Purgatory, especially member of one’s family.

Domestic rituals after death

After the death the body was washed, shrouded and placed in a coffin before being transported in a procession to the Church. The timing of these activities would have depended on many things. Contemporary records suggest that the body of the recently deceased was often taken to the Church by the evening of the day of death. We know from medieval monastic sources that psalms were recited at the death of a monk until his body was placed in the Church. During this period the body was also washed and shrouded (often in his habit). From the time of death until burial the

35 Figure 10. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 133 M131 Fol. 196 v & 197r, Precursor of the Masters of Zweder van Culemborg (illuminator), Utrecht, c. 1425.
36 Daniell, 44 quotes Wenzel S Fasiculus Morum: A Fourteenth Century Preacher’s Handbook. (London: Pennsylvania State University Press; 1989), 719 in saying that the body was usually moved from the house quickly “lest the people there should die of its stench”.
A deceased monk was never left alone. It is possible that the lay women and men who washed, shrouded and coffined bodies would have recited psalms or prayers as they participated in these rituals. We know that Beguines sometimes assisted in these rituals in the Low Countries and it is very likely that they would have chanted prayers or psalms.

Washing and shrouding the body and placing it in a coffin

In my review of illuminations in Books of Hours related to death and dying I did not find any examples of people washing the deceased body. However, there are several images showing activities just prior to the washing of the body. In one example two men place the naked body of the dead man onto a pile of rushes on the floor of a small room. After washing the body was shrouded. When shrouding is shown it is always as a small scene in a composite illumination, never as the sole illustration for the Office of the Dead (fig. 5). In another Morgan composite illumination the shrouding is a small scene located in the top right hand corner of the page (fig 9). The body has been moved from the bed to the floor and a woman is shown kneeling on the floor sewing the final stitch in the short arm of the cross that decorates the shroud. The women sewing these shrouds are depicted in calm and purposeful attitudes, as is the woman in yet another Morgan Book of Hours. In this small scene from a composite

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38 Simons, 78.

39 Pierpont Morgan Library MS M 945 Fol. 99v, Hours of Catherine of Cleves. The rushes would have absorbed any bodily fluids before the body was washed and then shrouded.

40 Figure 5. Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M. 453 Fol. 133v. Paris, France, c. 1425-1430.

41 Figure 9. Pierpont Morgan Library MS M.231, Fol. 137r, Paris, France, c. 1485-1490.
illumination the shrouding is shown in a lozenge on the side (fig 11). Here a woman in a wimpled veil, possibly a Beguine, is shown sewing the body into the shroud. In this example the body lies straight on a bed and its hands have been crossed modestly over the lower abdominal and genital area.

Once the body had been shrouded it was placed in a coffin. Images of this are uncommon and only one example was found. The illumination from a French Horae shows two women placing a shrouded body in a coffin from a Book of Hours in the Walters Art Museum. The scene is a vignette below a shrouding scene where the principal illustration is a burial. The two women who place the body in the coffin do so calmly and practically but are not dressed in the same manner as the women who shroud the body. Possibly there were differences in the domestic tasks expected of women of the period or perhaps the illuminator wished to show his ability to introduce visual variety.

As noted the shrouding of the body is done respectfully and possibly with the accompaniment of prayers or psalms. We know from monastic sources there was a constant recitation of psalms and prayers from death to burial for monks however there were no sources to indicate a practice of psalms being recited while the body of a layman or woman was being washed, shrouded or placed in a coffin. What is recorded is that the antiphon De terra formasti was recited before the body was removed from the house.

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42 Figure 11. Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.359. Fol. 119v Bedford Master and his workshop. Île-de-France, Paris, France, 1430-1435.
43 Simons, 78.
44 Walters Art Museum W. 249 Fol. 119r French c. 1490, Seen at the Walters but no image available.
45 Paxton, 48-52.
46 Schell, 43 No specific Psalms were prescribed to accompany the washing and shrouding, “the antiphon that was sung just before the procession left the house, De terra formasti, reflects the actions of washing and dressing.”
Late Medieval reception of images of deathbed and other death related domestic rituals

Those viewing the illuminations and meditating on their own death and the need to be in the state of grace would be comforted by the representations of “ideal deaths” especially where souls are being taken to heaven as they die. Arguably these images would have assisted the viewer to develop a religious understanding of death and the afterlife and the benefits for the souls of the dead by adhering to the correct performance of the appropriate rituals and recitation of the approved prayers by the living.

Almsgiving

Images of almsgiving are analysed here because it is a religious or devotional act connected with the release of souls from Purgatory which occurred in the domestic setting as well as in the Church settings. The depiction of almsgiving as part of the illumination for the Office of the Dead would have provided the viewer with a visual reminder of this duty and the reasons for it. When almsgiving is shown in the domestic sphere it is one scene in a composite illumination.

Almsgiving in the domestic situation

An example of domestic almsgiving occurs in a small scene at the bottom of the page of a composite illumination in the Office of the Dead. In a lozenge in the exuberant floral border a woman is depicted distributing alms to beggars from the
door of her house (fig. 5). She leans her right hand into a basket held by a person not clearly visible behind her. With her left hand she gives something, possibly bread, to two beggars, one with no shoes and the other with holes in his tunic.

Almsgiving in Church

Examples of almsgiving in a church scene include one from the previously mentioned funeral Mass by the Coëtivy Master and one from an Italian book of Hours in The Hague (figs. 4 and 16). While both examples show the moment of the Elevation of the Host in a Requiem Mass the almsgiving is treated quite differently in the two. In the first example a plainly clad beggar sits at the Church door with outstretched hand and a man takes money from a purse at his waist as he looks down at the beggar. In the other illumination a well-dressed small man (possibly meant to be a dwarf) approaches the mourners chanting beside the coffin in the Church. He leans on a stick and holds out a bowl towards the mourners.

Late Medieval reception of images of almsgiving in death-related rituals

Almsgiving, prayer and attending Mass were the designated devotions and pious practices that the living could assist the souls of the dead to escape from their fiery penance, which are all shown in the Coëtivy master illumination. Thus the message about almsgiving that the viewer of this illumination might have received was that it was beneficial to the souls in Purgatory. The viewer of the other illuminations would

47 Figure 5. Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M. 453 Fol. 133v. Paris, France, c. 1425-1430.
48 Figure 4. The Walters Art Museum, MS W. 274, Fol. 118. Coëtivy Master (illuminator), France, c. 1460s. Figure 16. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 78 G22 Fol. 88v, Hours of Isabella of Castile, Lombardy (Milan?), Master of the Modena Book of Hours (illuminator), c. 1390-1400. Added decoration Spain, 1475-1500.
have been reminded of the requirement to give alms but would not have seen the
depiction of the immediate benefit of this pious practice.

Transitional ritual of the procession of the shrouded and coffined body to Church

Once the body had been shrouded and coffined and the appropriate people
were ready the pall-covered coffin was carried to the Church in a procession
comprising both clergy and laity. An illumination comprising a whole page opposite
the commencement of the Office of the Dead from the Netherlands shows the coffin
being escorted into the church by clerics and mourners and men carrying torches (fig.
17). The torches are a sign of reverence but may also imply that these processions
sometimes occurred in the evening. It is very likely that all those in the procession,
both lay and clerical, would have been chanting psalms as they escorted the body to
the church. This depiction is of particular interest because the accompanying clergy
are shown in the habits of at least four different orders demonstrating that the laity in
the Late Middle Ages were likely to interact with members of more than one religious
order.

Mourners

As well as the clergy and the family in these processions we see a group of
people who do not appear in the domestic deathbed scenes but who will be seen in all

49 Figure 17. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 135 G 10 Fol. 83v, Use of Utrecht) Southern Netherlands,
Follower of Willem Vrelant (illuminator), c. 1440-1460.
50 Schell, 43
51 Chubb and Kelley, 149-173, discuss the way patronage was shared between different orders by
medieval merchants. Schell, 66 gives evidence of English wills of the time specifying that masses and
Diriges be said for years after the testator’s death by members of several orders.
the remaining rituals (fig. 17). These are the paid professional mourners who wear long black or grey hooded gowns. In most of the folios studied the hoods cover the faces of the mourners, either partly or fully, so that it is not possible to say whether they are male or female. This difficulty of determining the gender of the mourners is exacerbated by the iconographical convention of depicting them at the edges of the illustration; behind the coffin, or to the side of the family members or clergy. The mourners were sometimes the local poor who were paid to take an active part in all the death related rituals once the body left the home. They were often given their mourning garb as a practical example of almsgiving to the poor.

In English funerals the number of mourners present signified the importance of the person who had died and their weeping and recitation of the psalms was seen as service to the dead. In the illuminations of the Office of the Dead the presence of mourners may have been seen as an “expression of grief” and the viewer may have “taken the spiritual place of one of the mourners” and thus be involved in the prayer to relieve the suffering of the soul of the dead person.

Church based rituals

Recitation of the Office

The depiction of the recitation of the Office of the Dead is one of the most common images in the illuminations in the Horae from the Late Middle Ages. The first religious ritual to be performed the evening after the coffined body was received into the church was the recitation of the Vespers of the Office of the Dead. This was

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52 Figure 17. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 135 G 10 Fol. 83v, Use of Utrecht) Southern Netherlands, Follower of Willem Vrelant (illuminator), c. 1440-1460.
53 Daniell, 46. Schell, 98.
54 Daniell, 52.
55 Schell, 100.
performed by the clergy assisted by paid mourners and sometimes family members. The illuminations which depict the performance of the Office could be assumed to be the recitation of Vespers as it is both the first physical part of the Office and it was performed as soon as possible after the body was brought into the Church. The only iconographic hint that the Office being performed might be Matins and Lauds, performed together the next morning, is when there appears to be a simultaneous performance of the Office and the Requiem Mass. Matins and Lauds were commonly performed before this Mass. There is a greater similarity in the depiction of the recitation of the Office of the Dead in Books of Hours from different regions and at different times of the fifteenth century than for the other death ritual scenes (figs. 18 and 19). The images commonly show the coffin in the centre of a group of attending clergy reciting the Office usually from a book supported on a stand. There may be mourners present, or occasionally family members. The persistence of this visual formula could indicate that the recitation of the Office over the newly dead body in a church was always performed in the same manner in all churches. Alternatively, the trope was so familiar to both the artists and the commissioners of Books of Hours that the artists did not modify it for different books. An illumination in an English Book of Hours at the commencement of the Office of the Dead shows the coffin covered on a bier with a black cloth embroidered with a large white central cross with smaller red crosses on the large cross (fig. 20). Four lit candles surround the bier, which is in front of an altar in a small chapel or church.

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57 Figure 18. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 76 F 21 Fol. 137r, Paris, c. 1400-1410. Figure 19. Bibliothèque Municipale de Toulouse, MS 2882 Fol. 089r, French, 1410-1430.
58 Figure 20. Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.255 Fol. 67v, Winchester or Norwich, England, c. 1450.
The Requiem Mass

On occasion illuminations depicting the performance of the Office, this liturgy is shown occurring simultaneously with the funeral Mass in which case it could be assumed that the particular Office is the morning Offices of Matins and Lauds. As discussed previously there are fewer illuminations depicting the Mass alone than those illustrating the Office. A possible example of the simultaneous performance of the Office and the funeral Mass uses distorted perspective to frame the scene in which at the left of the composition a small priest faces an altar where the priest prays over a ciborium (fig. 21).\(^{59}\) Opposite this scene we see four tonsured clerics who pray from a book over the coffin. Those praying around the coffin appear much larger than the scene at the left and they do not look at the priest. A man in a red gown, also a smaller figure like the priest, celebrating the Mass kneels at a priè dieu looking at his open book open in the foreground at the left of the composition. This may be a representation of a simultaneous narrative of the funeral Mass and recitation of the Office or the contrast of scale within the composition may have been understood by the original viewer to signal the sequence of time.

Other performances of the Mass as a single theme of the illumination of the Office of the Dead have been discussed above in the section on the Eucharist and include examples such as the Coëtivy Mass (fig. 4).\(^{60}\)

The Absolution of the Soul

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\(^{59}\) Figure 21. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB MMW, 10 E2, Fol. 146v, Flanders, Masters of the Gold Scrolls (illuminator), c. 1450.

\(^{60}\) Figure 4. The Walters Art Museum, MS W. 274, Fol. 118. Coëtivy Master (illuminator), France, c1460s.
Unless the body was to be buried in the church the final church based ritual was the Absolution of the Soul. This involved a blessing over the coffin of the body about to be buried. An illumination depicting this moment occupies the whole page of an *Horae* now in The Hague (fig. 22). The scene portrays the Absolution of the Soul of the deceased where a priest sprinkles the body before burial with holy water from an aspersgill in his right hand. A group of mourners stand behind the bier with the altar of the church in the background. In this illumination one of the mourners wears a hat with a veil holding it in place. This style of head covering may identify a female figure; possibly the widow or another female family member. The images of the Absolution of the Soul are very similar across regions as is suggested by the following Italian example (fig. 23).

Late Medieval reception of images of Church based death-related rituals

These illuminations which portray Church based rituals for the dead would have provided familiar scenes for many viewers of these Late Medieval Books of Hours. It is likely that these would have been more recognisable to the male viewers of such illustrations though we have seen women depicted in some and women would have regularly attended Mass so these scenes would have been very well known to all Late Medieval viewers. Viewing such images, particularly those where the souls of the dead are shown being taken to Heaven, would surely have been comforting and given hope to the viewer that those souls she prayed for would have reached Heaven as they had also been the subject of the rituals as those in the illuminations in front of her.

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61 Figure 22. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 76 G 13 Fol. 85v and 86r, Leyden, Masters of Hugo Jansz van Woerden (illuminator), c. 1475-1500. Added section (ff. 98-123), South Holland, c. 1490-1510, with added miniatures Leyden, Masters of the Suffrages (illuminator): c. 1490-1510.

62 Figure 23. Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.1052 Fol. 188r, Cristoforo Mayorana. Italian, Campania, Naples, Italy, 1483.
The Transition from Church to the burial ground

When the body was to be buried in a graveyard the pall-covered coffin was carried to the gravesite. While depictions of this moment in the ritual are not uncommon they are more usually one of the scenes in a composite image than the sole representation of the rituals of death accompanying the Office of the Dead. Like the procession from the home to the church the coffin bearers are often shown as members of religious orders (fig 9). In this illumination the grave marker in the picture alerts the viewer that the procession moves toward the burial ground. Above the procession the sky is depicted with stars. This may not necessarily suggest the procession occurs at night. The stars might be a reminder of the heavenly realm that the soul of the deceased had either already entered or was about to enter.

Burials

Burials are a common subject found in the illuminations of the Office of the Dead. While the burials are usually depicted in graveyards adjacent to Churches; there are also representations of burials in churches and in cloisters. More commonly the burial scenes are set in graveyards surrounded by ecclesiastical buildings, and sometimes with charnel houses as well. Typical features of these images include tonsured clerics chanting prayers and/or blessing the bodies about to be or being buried. The body is usually enclosed in a shroud; though it may be semi or totally naked. It is very rare for the body to be buried in a coffin, but the coffin in which the body was carried to the burial site may be depicted. In continental graveyards the

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63 Figure 9. Pierpont Morgan Library MS M.231, Fol. 137r, Paris, France, c. 1485-1490.
bodies were buried for a period of time and then the bones removed to niches in surrounding walls. British burials were more often in the grounds surrounding a church where they usually remained. The custom of reburial in those graveyards with attached charnel houses explains the widespread representations of skulls and long bones on the ground in the illuminations of burials. Images of church and cloister burials will be discussed first, then the graveyard burials.

Church and cloister burials

The custom of church burial for most people in the Late Middle Ages was restricted to persons of influence. This might explain why images of church burials are rare. Only one example of a definite Church burial was identified in the illuminations examined for this study. A shrouded body is being placed in a grave below the church floor which has the digging implements beside the grave (fig. 24).

We know that the burial of important monks, especially abbots, often took place in the abbey church or the attached cloisters. A depiction of a burial in a cloister is in a Book of Hours for Dominican use features a pair of monks lowering a body, shrouded in his white Dominican habit with hands joined in the praying position, into a grave newly dug in the cloister as shown by the arcading behind the friars (fig. 24).

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65 The skulls and long bones of the legs and arms rot away more slowly than the ribs, vertebrae and digits so they are more commonly still present when the bones come to be reburied.
66 Daniell, 59.
67 Figure 24. Koninklijke Bibliothek, KB. 76 F 12, Fol. 100r, Besançon, France, c. 1450. Another possible example is seen in Figure 22. Koninklijke Bibliothek, KB 76 G 13 Fol. 85v and 86r, Leyden, Masters of Hugo Jansz van Woerden (illuminator), c. 1475-1500. Added section (ff. 98-123), South Holland, c. 1490-1510, with added miniatures Leyden, Masters of the Suffrages (illuminator): c. 1490-1510.
Four Dominicans stand behind the grave, all possibly praying or chanting responses.

Burials in graveyards

Representations of graveyard burials are the second most common subject for an illumination to accompany the Office of the Dead after recitation of the Office. Like the representations of the recitation of the Office or the Absolution of the Soul, there is similarity in the visual conventions for this subject across time and regions. In this illustration of a burial which is in a lozenge below the main scene we see a body being placed in grave. There is a red grave marker of another grave and some bones on the ground in the periphery of the image and a priest sprinkling the body as mourners watch (fig. 9).

Confraternity members at burials

The identification and analysis of those present at funerals has included the clergy, family members and paid mourners. In addition to family members a common group of laypeople were confraternity members. Laymen, and to a lesser extent laywomen, worshipped God through regular prayer and practised charity to their fellow men and women in these lay inspired groups. Members of confraternities frequently participated in burials as is evident in this burial scene from a French book.

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69 Figure 25. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 74G 36 122r, Liège (Maastricht?), Dominican use, c. 1505-1515.
70 Figure 9. Pierpont Morgan Library MS M.231, Fol. 137r, Paris, France, c. 1485-1490.
71 Figure 5. Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M. 453 Fol. 133v. Paris, France, c. 1425-1430.
of hours (fig. 5). The illumination comprises a half page above the commencement of the Office. The scene depicts a churchyard and charnel house burial. Surrounding the main scene other death related rituals are framed within three lozenges. In the main scene a tall blue-robed man stands behind the open grave dominating the scene. His robe is decorated with the figure of a female saint, probably the Virgin. He holds a bell in his left hand and the pall from the coffin over his right arm. The shrouded body has been removed from the wooden coffin which now lies in front of the grave and is being lifted into the grave by two men. The confraternity would have owned the pall which may have been reused, or be new for each member.

Late Medieval reception of images of burials

The viewer of these illuminations would have seen the roles of the clergy, mourners and confraternity members in the ritual of burial plus occasionally family members attending the burial. The depiction of these people would have provided some comfort that there would be people to pray when the time came for his or her burial. Those burial scenes which included images of souls being taken to heaven would have provided more obvious solace while more “ordinary” burial scenes might have reminded the viewer of the finalisation of the formal death related rituals and of the times of remembrance that would occur in the future for the souls of her dead relatives and friends.

Conclusion

These illuminations which represent the death related rituals of the Late Middle Ages offer several themes for discussion for the modern viewer and would have provided various subjects for reflection for their contemporary viewers. The illuminations represent the times when the body of the deceased was the focus of both the family and the clergy; a liminal time when the dead and the living exist together in a betwixt and between time. The original viewers of these scenes would have been reminded of their own experiences of the deaths of loved ones and the rituals that occurred at those times. The visual evidence of the sacramental and other religious and domestic rituals would possibly have afforded them comfort that all the proper rites had been undertaken for the souls of those family members who had died, and for all the dead for whom they might be praying.

The female users of these *Horae* would also “see” the calm and reverent behaviour of the widows, daughters and women attendants in these scenes and be reminded of the expected behaviour in these situations.

The modern viewer is possibly more aware of the almost omnipresent clerical presence in these illuminations. The viewer of the time would have expected that there would be priests to bring the sacraments and blessings to the dying, to perform the Office and the Requiem Mass over the coffined body and then recite prayers and blessings over the body as it was laid in the grave. Those who had experience of personal spiritual advisors would have expected them to be depicted in the deathbed scenes and many would also expect that several varieties of clergy would be
represented because they interacted with them in daily life. They accepted the clericalisation of death and dying because it was the norm for the period.\textsuperscript{74}

For modern viewers, even those who work in Palliative Care in religiously based services, the clerical presence is unusual and unexpected, and would be so for most of the families whose relatives are cared for in these settings. The depiction of the calm and reverent behaviour of those illustrated in the rituals is also unusual for the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century viewer and could provide a discussion point for staff and families in hospices and community palliative care services.

CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY OF THE
ILLUMINATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR CONTEMPORARY PALLIATIVE CARE

Introduction

This chapter will provide a brief overview of the ideas, concepts and insights learned and developed from this study of Illuminations accompanying the Office of the Dead in Late Medieval Books of Hours. This will include suggestions for ways that these insights and ideas might be used in contemporary Palliative Care, for patients, their families and staff members. Further discussion of their use in these situations as well as suggestions for the use of contemporary visual material to assist the dying, their families and the staff who provide care in the transitions through dying to disposal of the body will conclude the chapter.

Learnings from the study

The study of these illuminations afforded information about several areas of interest relating to Late Medieval Books of Hours and suggested possible new ways of interpreting the images and their meanings for their original viewers. These areas include: the owners and users of Horae, the relationship between the text of the Office and the illuminations, the themes or subjects of the illuminations, the differences (or lack of them) between regions and periods, the figures depicted in these illustrations...
of the Office and especially their behaviour in these situations of dying, death, funerals and burials. Other areas of interest were: the terrestrial and supernatural spaces, i.e. Heaven, Hell and Purgatory, represented in the illuminations, the evocation of liminal events and the possible affective relationship between the viewer and the images.

Owners and users and usage of Books of Hours

The knowledge that many of these *Horae* were owned and commissioned by women encouraged me to consider the effect on the women owners and users when viewing these vivid and evocative images of death related rituals and the roles and behaviour of the women in the representations. As the Late Middle Ages was a period of increasing affective spirituality the possible effect of these images on the mainly female viewers is an important issue to consider (fig 16).¹ Women’s use of their prayer books to pray the Office of the Dead where the illuminations represented everyday contexts and locations would surely have affected their view of death and dying and the role of religion in these events.

We know that many owners used their *Horae* daily and direct observation of the increased use of the Office of the Dead compared with the other Offices in individual Books was confirmed by recent scientific studies. The deep familiarity with the text is

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also likely given that many of the laity and clergy are thought to have rote learned the
text of the Office of the Dead.²

This combination of familiarity with the text and the affective nature of the
representations of the daily lives of the viewers must surely have engaged viewers
emotionally and spiritually. Scenes which depicted rituals related to death may have
recalled distressing experiences from the viewer’s own life, however the scenes which
portrayed souls being transported to heaven would surely have provided comfort.

The reverent disposition of the lay people in the illuminations who do not
display overt grief has not to my knowledge been previously noted. In my opinion
this emphasis on appropriate decorum of the figures portrayed was influenced by the
expectation that these figures were intended to model appropriate behaviour for the
women users of the Horae.

Relationship between text and illuminations

There is not an obvious connection between the themes of the images in the
Illuminations studied and the text of the Office of the Dead and even the images of
Job are not directly related to the readings in Matins of the Office. As I have argued in
Chapter 3 the psalms for all the hours evoke images of a responsive and merciful
God. This hope in a compassionate God is evoked in scenes which depict the soul of
the recently deceased being taken to Heaven by an angel. The devout viewer must
surely have responded to images which reiterated this belief in God’s mercy and
loving care for his people, alive and dead

² Kathryn M Rudy, "Dirty Books: Quantifying Patterns of Use in Medieval Manuscripts Using a
a Theological Place; Possibilities and Limitations in Interpreting Liturgical Texts as Seen for Instance
in the Office of the Dead," in Liturgy and the Arts in the Middle Ages, Editors. Eva Louise & Petersen
The themes and subjects of the illuminations

The principal insights gained from the study of the themes and subjects of the illuminations were the representation of all the possible rituals from dying to burial in the Late Middle Ages, the constant clerical presence in these images and the previously mentioned calm demeanour of the protagonists both clerical and lay in all the activities depicted. Other points of note, which have not to my knowledge, been discussed previously are the common representation of women in the scenes set in households, the presence of spiritual advisors in the deathbed scenes and the evocation of the liminal in the images.

The women are shown as both widows and daughters praying as their loved one receives the sacraments and dies, and as domestic workers attending to the laying out and shrouding of the body after death. Given that women outlive men in contemporary Australia and are often those at deathbeds, and women (nurses) still predominantly undertake the roles of preparing the body discussion of these images may provide resonances for Palliative Care staff members.

The representation of spiritual advisors in the Horae connects well to their known activities in providing spiritual support for the women plus advice in the choice of prayers and illuminations for their Books of Hours. ³

Events which we might consider as liminal as evoked in depictions of small naked souls in Purgatory or being taken to Heaven. To my knowledge art historians, cultural historians or anthropologist have not explores the visual depictions of death and dying and related imagery in the illuminations which accompany the Office of the

Dead in Books of Hours as a source to further investigate the historical understanding of liminality.

In reviewing the content of the images it was obvious that deathbed scenes, the performance of the Office and burials were the most common in the *Horae* studied with little variation in the iconography of these subjects across regions and time.

Scholars working in areas like social history and gender studies have argued that that women were not encouraged to participate in non-domestic rituals (like funerals) because of religious and social beliefs that women were unable to restrain their emotions. My research found that women were less commonly depicted in the rituals based in the church or burial ground. This result suggests there is some validity to the observations made by scholars concerning the presence of women (or lack there of) at public events like funerals. In the examples surveyed women were consistently depicted according to the conventions of, and expectations, that governed women’s behaviour in the domestic and public sphere. Their calm and devout figures perfectly exemplified Late Medieval social and religious gender values.

This limitation of visual representation of ritual does not have an immediate resonance in the modern era given the apparent multitude of possible rituals for death and dying. However in modern Australian Palliative Care practice decisions about the ritual options available to bereaved families for funerals and disposal of bodies are often are restricted to whether a service will be religious or secular with some personalisation of the details. In current practice cremation is the norm so burials are usually only organised by those with particular religious traditions. The development of totally new rituals is uncommon.

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Finally I turn to the way the earthly and otherworldly spaces in which the death rituals occur are treated. The depictions of Heaven and Hell are uncommon in the illuminations of other Offices in a Late Medieval Book of Hours and Purgatory is not found in other illuminations of the Offices. The inclusion of these places was surely to encourage those viewing the illuminations to continue their use of the Office to pray for the dead. The depiction of the deity and the sites of reward and punishment in an afterlife that many people no longer actively believe in may not have much resonance for modern Palliative Care but will have for those who do have such beliefs.

Use of these findings in Palliative Care

During the study of these illuminations my ideas for using them in clinical and educational Palliative Care contexts have developed and broadened from the purely historical depictions of dying, death, funerals and burials in previous times and places. The images of women dealing with the routine aspects of the care of dead bodies have great resonances for nurses who, almost uniformly in modern Palliative Care, perform these services. The depiction of the calm and reverent attitude with which these Late Medieval women are shown engaged in these actions is mirrored by their modern counterparts undertaking related activities.\(^5\)

The images of family members kneeling quietly around a deathbed and not making eye contact is very useful as a trigger for discussion with the staff about deathbed behaviours by family members. Working in a very multicultural service means that sometimes behaviours observed by the predominantly Anglo Celtic staff are regarded as unusual or disturbing when they may be very culturally appropriate.

\(^5\) [http://www.impactednurse.com/?p=5372](http://www.impactednurse.com/?p=5372) When nurses talk to the dead, accessed 1 Nov 2013. This study of nurses talking to the dead bodies as they wash them discusses the reverence that nurses feel for their dead patients.
for that patient and family. Showing staff an image of total calm with no interaction between the dying person and the family, which many of them would consider abnormal, helps them to discuss what they regard as “normal” behaviour in deathbed situations and how differences across cultures and time periods are normal for that situation. The images can also trigger discussions of who is not present who would be in 21st century deathbed scenes, doctors and lawyers perhaps, and why they are not depicted in these scenes from prayer books.

Household retainers and personal spiritual advisors would not be familiar figures in attendance at the bedside of the dying to-day. Images of such figures in late medieval scenes from Book of Hours might lead to discussion of the people who undertake these roles now. The images can trigger discussions about the use of rituals in death and dying. Staff and students could be encouraged to consider the use of rituals in contemporary life and the roles they play now compared with the use of rituals in previous times. Discussions using images with students about death rituals in their own families promote questioning and may expose students to unfamiliar cultural practices. It is hoped that such discussions and the images they invoke will encourage the students to remain open to such discussions with their patients.

Use of other visual material in Palliative Care

It is important for the Palliative Care staff to gain an understanding of the previous experiences of death and dying for the patient and family, as these will colour their current expectations. Patients and relatives are unlikely to discuss these experiences unless asked but the provision of material with images may assist them to
ask relevant questions. As many people will not have had personal experience of the death of a close family member and may base their expectations of death on those seen on film or television so it is necessary to elicit their views to discover any concerns.

Other conversations can very beneficially discuss the possibilities for personalisation of burial garments, coffin and images to be used in any memorial ceremony. In such situations it is useful for staff to have images to show grieving families of possibilities, including the ecologically appropriate. As these conversations are held at very emotionally fraught times staff must be open in their comments and not direct the conversation towards their own background, be it Anglo Celtic or established religion. The acceptance by staff and students of the various possibilities of ritual in contemporary death and dying situations will assist dying patients and their families to come to terms with the reality of death and the use of images can be a very powerful part of that assistance.

In conclusion my study of images created in a time of certain religious faith and regulated death and burial practices underlines the important function of ritual and the visualization of liturgies associated with death and dying for late medieval people. As I have argued the obligation to pray for souls in that era found visual expression in many of the scenes and subjects depicted. The rituals depicted more than five hundred years ago continue to trigger discussion about issues of death and dying in multicultural 21st century Palliative Care practice.

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Figure 2. Deathbed, Book of Hours. Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS. 1185 Rés. fol. 373v Master of Antoine Rolin, c. 1490.
Figure 3. Doctor. Sir Luke Fildes, 1891. Artstor accessed 18 Jan 2104.
Figure 4. Souls being taken from Purgatory, Book of Hours. Pierpont Morgan Library. MS M.166, Fol. 126v. Utrecht, Netherlands, 1500-1510.
Figure 5. Requiem Mass and Purgatory, Book of Hours. Walters Art Museum, MS W. 274, Fol. 118. Coëtivy Master (illuminator), France, c. 1460s.
Figure 6. Burial with other death rituals, Book of Hours. Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.453 Fol. 133v. Paris, France, c. 1425-1430.
Figure 7. Women reading at a Funeral, Book of Hours. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 76 G 17 Fol. 187v Psalter-Book of Hours, Liège; c. 1250-1300 (Detail).
Figure 8. Absolution of the Soul and Purgatory, Book of Hours Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 76 G 13 Fol. 85v and 86r. Masters of Hugo Jansz. van Woerden (illuminator), Leyden, South Holland, c. 1490-1510.
Figure 9. Deposition, Book of Hours. Pierpont Morgan Library MS M.231, Fol. 026r (detail). Chief Associate of Maître François (illuminator), France, c. 1485-1490.
Figure 10. Death bed and other death scenes, Book of Hours. Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M231 Fol. 137. Chief Associate of Maître François (illuminator), France, c. 1485-1490.
Figure 11. Death Bed and Purgatory, Book of Hours. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 133 M131 Fol. 196 v & 197r. Precursor of the Masters of Zweder van Culemborg (illuminator), Utrecht, c. 1425.
Figure 14. Deathbed Communion, Hours of Simon de Varie'. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 74 G 37a Fol. 37r. Master of Jean Rolin, Master of the Dunois Hours (illuminators) Paris 1455. Added miniatures (74 G 37a) Tours, Jean Fouquet (illuminator), c. 1455.
Figure 15. Burial, Book of Hours. Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.264 Fol.101r, c. 1400.
Figure 16. Burial, Book of Hours. Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.1055, Fol. 87v. Rouen, France, c. 1465-1475.
Figure 17. Beggar at Requiem Mass, Hours of Isabella of Castile. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 78 G22 Fol. 88v. Lombardy (Milan?), Master of the Modena Book of Hours (illuminator), c. 1390-1400. Added decoration: Spain, 1475-1500.
Figure 18. Procession into Church, Book of Hours. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 135 G 10 Fol. 83v. Southern Netherlands, Follower of Willem Vrelant (illuminator), c. 1440-1460.
Figure 20. Recitation of Office of the Dead, Book of Hours. Bibliothèque Municipale de Toulouse, MS 2882 Fol. 089r. French, 1410-1430.
Figure 21. Recitation of Office, Book of Hours. Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.255 Fol. 67v. English, Winchester or Norwich, England, c. 1450.
Figure 22. Requiem Mass, Book of Hours. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB MMW 10 E2 Fol. 146v. Flanders, Masters of the Gold Scrolls (illuminator), c. 1450.
Figure 23. Absolution of the Soul and Purgatory, Book of Hours. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB 76 G 13 Fol. 85v and 86r. Leyden, Masters of Hugo Jansz. van Woerden (illuminator), c. 1475-1500. Added section (ff. 98-123, South Holland, c. 1490-1510, with added miniatures Leyden, Masters of the Suffrages (illuminator): c. 1490-1510.
Figure 24. Absolution of the Soul, Book of Hours. Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.1052 Fol. 188r. Cristoforo Mayorana. Italian, Campania, Naples, Italy, 1483.
Figure 25. Burial in Church, Book of Hours. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB. 76 F 12 Fol.100r. Besançon, France, c. 1450.
Figure 26. Cloister Burial, Book of Hours. Koninklijke Bibliotheek KB 74G 36 122r. Liège (Maastricht?), Dominican use, c. 1505-1515.