

1962

Problems of style in the Tres Riches Heures du Duc de Berry

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL

Thesis

PROBLEMS OF STYLE IN THE
TRÈS RICHES HEURES DU DUC DE BERRY

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
1962

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INTRODUCTION

Problem

The Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry, a late medieval manuscript, was originally the prized possession of the great bibliophile Jean de France. Prior to his death in 1416, he had engaged the talented Limbourg brothers to paint for his aesthetic satisfaction a Book of Hours which was to surpass all prayer books by reason of its artistic excellence. The fact that the brothers actually executed the work is verified by an entry made in an inventory taken after his death. It reads as follows: "Item en une layette, plusieurs cayers d'unes Très Riches Heures que faisaient Pol et ses frères, très richement historiez et enluminez."¹ Although this brief statement leaves no doubt about the name of the "atelier" which the Duc de Berry commissioned to carry out the task, there is no mention of how artists apportioned or painted the elements which constitute the miniatures. In other words, there is no record which furnishes information adequate enough to determine the style

¹Louis Reau, Histoire de la Peinture au Moyen-Age: La Miniature, Librairie d'Argences, Melun, 1946, p. 161.

of the different hands necessarily involved in producing such a monumental work.

Limitations

Due to a lack of concrete data, some scholars have asserted that the solution to such a problem is utterly futile; others, to the contrary, have claimed its merits, but their attempts at classifying the style of Pol and his collaborators have been too wide in scope and too general in nature. An analysis confined to a single division of the manuscript and limited as well to a specific element is a method of research which has been long overlooked as a means of discovering stylistic information about the Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry. In the following study the illustrations of the "Calendar" with particular stress on the figures will be the source of an examination which aims to lay bare the qualities of one particular style. The two months of September and November will be eliminated entirely from the research since these pages have been generally regarded as the work of Jean Colombe.

Procedure

An acquaintance with the historical background of the Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry, as well as a survey

of the currents of medieval art which it embodies, is fundamental to comprehending the nature of the problem of stylistic classification in its totality. Such information, therefore, constitutes a minor part of the thesis in order to explain how the final deductions of scholars like Durrieu and Hulin de Loo have been determined by unreliable knowledge and vague suppositions, instead of the basic criteria of painting. The major part of the thesis, however, deals with what is considered to be an objective method of deciphering the hand of a single artist in the "Calendar" series. Unlike Durrieu and Hulin de Loo, no references are made to inventories, influences, or theories about medieval "ateliers." Instead, each figure is analyzed in terms of traits of physiognomy and the patterns of drapery with which his apparel is executed. Relationships between figures of the same type and figures of different types are established by these two principal elements of style.

Throughout the entire process of study and investigation the following books were constantly used: Les Très Riches du Duc de Berry, presented by Jean Porcher and published by Les Éditions, Nomis, Paris, and Les Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry, published by Verve, Paris. Both consist of exquisite photographs of the "Calendar" illustrations, although the latter publication has the distinct advantage of featuring miniatures which are the exact same

size as those of the original manuscript at the Musée Condé in Chantilly. Despite superb photography and accurate size, the figures are nevertheless too small for the task of analyzing and comparing in minute detail. For this reason, they were enlarged by means of an opaque projector and then carefully sketched in order that the peculiarities of rendering line, effecting light and shadow, and organizing drapery folds might be easily discerned. These sketches contributed in no small measure to the discovery of stylistic qualities common to peasants and nobles alike and led to the inevitable conclusion that one artist must have been the creator of the "Calendar" figures. Their inclusion within the thesis serves to distinguish and emphasize those similarities within the representations which might not be too readily perceived.

CHAPTER I

AN HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Origin and Status of the Manuscript

Jean de France, Duc de Berry, died in 1416. Undoubtedly his person would have little meaning for us today if he had been an ordinary ruler with the usual ambitions for wealth and power. But, Jean de France was not an ordinary ruler. Craving objects of beauty and, especially, prayer books richly illustrated and decorated, he employed the most renowned artists of his day to fulfill his aesthetic demands. Not even old age allayed his artistic passion for, at the age of seventy, he secured the talents of the famous Limbourg brothers to create a prayer book which he ordered to be the last word in perfection. Upon his death in 1416, the book was incomplete even though the diligent triad had worked with painstaking labor for five years. The successors of the Duc, being of a more practical caste, dismissed the court artists as an unwanted expense and took an inventory of his numerous art possessions. Although other manuscripts owned by Jean de France were valued more highly from a monetary standpoint because of their gold and jewel

bindings, "the unbound quires of the Très Riches Heures, as far as the actual leaves of the book were concerned, were placed first in value among all books."¹

Today the "monarch of manuscripts" rests in the Musée Condé in Chantilly. After a long sojourn from one noble family to another, it was acquired by the Duc d'Aumale in 1855 for the absurd price of 18,000 francs at a convent in Pallavicini near Genoa. Described by Durrieu as "one of the most finished masterpieces the Middle Ages have bequeathed us,"² it is unquestionably the proudest possession of Chantilly.

The Task of the Limbourg Brothers

Although much material has been written about the Très Riches Heures, relatively little information has come down to us about the miniaturists engaged by the Duc de Berry except the scant material derived and deduced from various inventories. Originally from Limbricht (formerly Lymborch) in Guelders, the Limbourgh brothers--Pol,

¹Sir Martin Conway, The Van Eycks and Their Followers, John Murray, London, 1921, pp. 35-36.

²Paul Durrieu, Les Très Riches Heures de Jean de France Duc de Berry, quoted in Henri Malo Les Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry, the Calendar by Pol de Limbourg and Jean Colombe, Trans. Robert Sage, Verve, (April-July, 1940), p. ii.

Hennequin, and Hermant--sojourned to Paris in 1399 where they became apprenticed to a goldsmith, whose training is undoubtedly evidenced in the filigree-like ornateness and precision of their work.¹ The year 1402, however, found Pol and Hennequin in the employment of Philippe le Hardi; it is also probable that both served Jean sans Peur for a time. Having gained renown as painters for such celebrated personages, it is little wonder that in 1411 the services of the three brothers were secured by the Duc de Berry, the greatest bibliophile of the Middle Ages.

The task of the talented triad to produce a beautiful Book of Hours was actually no different from that of other professional miniaturists of the time. As a matter of fact, the Très Riches Heures follows the usual canons of division and opens with the "Calendar"; this is succeeded, in turn, by the seven "Penetential Psalms," the "Litanies of the Saints," the "Office of the Dead," and concludes with the illustrations of the "Hours of the Virgin," the "Passion," and the "Holy Ghost." Similar to other prayer books in the essentials, the work of the Limbourgs differs chiefly in its twelve, full-page miniatures depicting the occupations characteristic of each month of the year. In addition to

¹Irwin Panofsky, Early Netherlandish Painting, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1953, p. 62.

this marked departure from the medallions traditionally used to represent the same subject, Reau summarizes two other innovations in the "Calendar" which set it apart from contemporary works of its kind:

Les Signes du Zodiaque ne sont plus représentés à part comme dans les quadrilobes du soubassement de la cathédrale d'Amiens; ils font corps avec chaque tableau dont ils constituent le couronnement. Chaque scène est surmontée d'un tympan curviligne où le miniaturiste a modelé, en camaïeu bleu rehaussé d'or, le char du Soleil poursuivant, au galop de deux chevaux ailés, sa course éternelle d'un Signe du Zodiaque à l'autre.

En outre, pour imprimer au calendrier une marque personnelle, l'artiste a eu l'idée très heureuse de donner comme fond d'architecture à ces sujets une des nombreuses résidences du duc de Berry. L'intérêt de ces Résidences duciales, qui préludent aux Résidences royales de Louis XIV dans la célèbre tenture de Lebrun, est d'autant plus grand pour nous que presque tous les châteaux représentés dans le Livre d'Heures ont été détruits; de sorte que ces miniatures sont, en même temps que des œuvres d'art inégalées, d'inappréciables documents historiques.¹

Although the manuscript of the Très Riches Heures abounds in beautiful miniatures, the months of the "Calendar" continue to be acclaimed the most exquisite illustrations of the entire work. Unique in concept, they depict a world of reality which is the quintessence of artistic genius and the culmination of medieval painting.

¹Reau, op. cit., p. 163.

The Influence of Three Artistic Currents

In the "Calendar," as in other divisions of the Très Riches Heures, one is conscious of the importance of three artistic trends: mannerism, naturalism, and a strong Italian influence. Concerning the latter, many theories have been proposed by scholars to explain the Limbourgs' enthusiasm for the art of Italy. Panofsky attributes their imitation of Sieneese, Pisan, and Giottesque compositions to the influence of their predecessors at the court of the Duc de Berry, particularly Jacquemart de Hesdin.¹ Others have stated the opinion that, since the brothers drew directly from Italian sources for their inspiration, they must have made a trip to Italy. Examples such as the boar hunt of December, which produces stroke for stroke a page of the Album of Bergame, a manuscript drawn ten years before the Très Riches Heures, is proof enough for Muntz and de Mely that the Limbourgs resorted to the direct copying of Italian models, although the fact that the same scene appears later in the Grimani Breviary does not suggest to these same scholars that such a theme is actually international in character.² Since France abounded during the medieval period

¹Panofsky, op. cit., p. 62.

²Reau, pp. 166-167.

in numerous imitations of ancient sculpture, the belief of an Italian sojourn is regarded as highly suspect by Durrieu. The sun chariot, for example, which surmounts each one of the "Calendar" pictures is similar to the medallions of Constantine and Heraclius which the Duc de Berry purchased in 1402. Thus, if such likenesses exist between the manuscript and the objets d'art of the Duc's possessions, it is difficult to see why some scholars adhere so strongly to the theory of an Italian trip. Reau concurs with Durrieu's reasoning and summarizes his own thoughts on the subject when he says:

On voit que s'il ya dans les Très Riches Heures des frères de Limbourg, comme plus tard dans les Heures d'Étienne Chevalier de Jean Fouquet, des traces certaines d'influence italienne, elles sont loin d'avoir l'importance que certains historiens lui ont attribuée.¹

The second important element which pervades the "Calendar" of the Très Riches Heures is a manneristic tendency which is especially evident in the miniatures of January, April, May, and August. Figures with refined proportions and affected gestures dominate these pages, which glow with colorful brocaded textiles and richly ornamented armor and jewelry. Nowhere in the history of painting is there to be found such elegance and richness as in these

¹Ibid., p. 168.

famous months which describe the pastimes of higher society with unsurpassed delicacy and charm.

But, as powerful as the Italian influence and manneristic tendencies are in the Très Riches Heures, the naturalistic impulse is no less forceful. It is the introduction of the landscape with accurate "architectural portraits" depicting the famed residences of the Duc de Berry that set apart the work of the Limbourgs from that of other miniaturists of the time. Prior to their unique innovation, artists had contented themselves with backgrounds of ornamentation which they had substituted for the gold landscapes of the monastic period. The famous André Beauneveu, one of the predecessors of the Limbourgs in the court of Jean de France, had employed in his paintings the quadrille background of checkerboards or floral patterns. Hence, with a limited precedent of inspiration upon which to rely, the Limbourgs replaced the flat background with figures which they arranged in a natural world bathed in an atmosphere of air and light. The protagonists of the painted page, no longer considered silhouettes against the opaque screen of a curtain background, became the participants of a real world of grass and trees and sky. Summarizing the above contribution, Reau says:

C'est le début d'une véritable révolution dans l'histoire de la peinture. On ne saurait exagérer l'influence de cette oeuvre capitale qui tient

dans l'histoire de la miniature une place comparable à celle du retable de l'Agneau mystique de Van Eyck dans l'histoire de la peinture à l'huile. Sa leçon n'a été perdue ni pour le Tourangeay Jean Fouquet, ni pour les Flamands qui l'ont copiée dans le Breviaire Grimani, ni pour les Italiens eux-mêmes.¹

The Limbourgs' penchant for naturalism encompassed the inclusion of other details besides the topographical. The month of February, for example, with its genre scene of peasants warming themselves before a fire, gives evidence of the brothers' keen-eyed observation of the homely aspects of peasant life. The same is also true of the other pages of the "Calendar" where the farmer's seasonal occupations of plowing, sowing, and reaping are depicted with a certain poetry as well as fidelity to detail. In spite of a strong predilection for the actual world, there is no instance of a figure portrayed in terms of a ruthless realism which is so characteristic of art today. The modern concept of realistic and naturalistic representations was completely alien to the Limbourgs; and, as Fierens-Gevaert assert, not even the charm of the details will permit us to speak of a "cruel naturalism."²

¹Ibid., p. 168.

²Fierens-Gevaert, Histoire de la Peinture Flamande des Origines à la Fin du XV^e Siècle, Les Editions G. Van Oest, 1927, p. 43.

The neat perspective arrangement of the haystacks in the month of June has always aroused the admiration of scholars; it reflects the preoccupation of the triad to solve the problem of creating an illusion of depth. In the months of March and October, the figures, with their cast shadows projected on the ground, give additional proof of the artists' endeavors to represent the real world. Such attention to a natural detail had not occurred since Hellenistic antiquity; and, even in Italy with its epochal innovations, the cast shadow did not appear until the advent of Massacio.¹

In view of their singular accomplishments, it is little wonder that the Très Riches Heures executed by the Limbourg brothers and the members of their "atelier" is hailed by Durrieu as the "monarch of manuscripts." Although it retained certain conventions of medieval art, it nevertheless anticipated a concept of painting in which the portrayal of the real world would play a major part. With the masterpiece of the Limbourgs at the beginning of the fifteenth century, "the eyes of men had at last been opened to the beauty of the world--the face of nature. It was certain they would never again for long together be closed to it."²

¹Panofsky, op. cit., p. 66.

²Conway, op. cit., p. 41.

CHAPTER II

THE PROBLEM OF STYLISTIC CLASSIFICATION

The Nature of the Problem

The commission of the medieval miniaturist to conceive and execute a Book of Hours was such a monumental task that it is inconceivable how any one individual could possibly finish so grandiose a work within the span of a lifetime. Indeed, an inventory entry of the Duc de Berry's possessions clearly designates that Pol and his brothers were employed to paint the manuscript, but even this statement does not necessarily mean that the miniatures were products of their hands alone. According to historians of note, master painters like the Limbourg brothers often engaged the help of many assistants in their projects and thereby formed the modern equivalent of a workshop. Concerning this aspect of medieval painting, Durrieu writes:

Mais un atelier unique d'enluminure pouvait in France au moyen age, comprendre plusieurs individus. Les artistes, peintres au miniaturistes, avaient souvent auprès d'eux, comme l'indiquent les documents, des élèves ou, suivant l'expression du temps des "varlets" pour les aider dans leur tache.¹

¹Paul Durrieu, Les Très Riches Heures de Jean de France, Duc de Berry, Paris: Plon-Nourrit et Cie, Imprimeurs-Editeurs, 1904, p. 76.

It is obvious, therefore, from a statement of this description that the Très Riches Heures involved the collaboration of many hands of which some were undoubtedly more skilled and creative than others.

Although the medieval period abounds in records which enumerate the names of famous "ateliers," there are none so completely detailed that they inform us about the division of tasks in the painting of a manuscript. As a consequence of such a deficiency of information, one will search in vain the inventories of the Duc de Berry to find the names of artists listed with their corresponding contributions. Devoid of such essential source material, the problem of recognizing a variety of styles becomes even more complex when scholars relate that it was a customary procedure for several artists to illuminate a single page. In reference to this aspect Durrieu declares:

Rien ne s'opposerait à ce que plusieurs artistes aient mis successivement la main à la même image, l'un ayant dessiné l'esquisse générale, un autre ayant préparé la mise en couleurs et modelé les vêtements sans s'occuper des visages, et, réciproquement, un autre ayant été chargé plus spécialement des fonds, etc.¹

Certainly this mode of painting peculiar to the medieval "atelier" was also characteristic of the Limbourgs and their associates who worked together so intimately that

¹Ibid., p. 79.

the entire manuscript is marked by an appearance of unity. However, the problem of deciphering the labor of various hands is not merely a matter of attributing the faces to one artist, the figures to another, and the elements of the landscape to a third. Durrieu himself negates such an implication when he says that despite the existence of common characteristics throughout the Book of Hours one is likewise impressed by stylistic disparities.

Il est évident, par exemple, qu'on pourrait détacher du reste, pour en former un premier groupe, les tableaux de Mois du Calendrier; que toutes les scènes de la Passion constituent une suite très homogène; que dans certaines miniatures, comme l'Annonciation, les types sont moins élégants, les dispositions moins heureuses. La part faite au paysage est aussi variable. Ici, comme dans la Tentation du Christ, le paysage occupe la majeure partie du tableau; là au contraire, il n'a plus qu'une importance relative. Dans certaines cas, il est supprimé et remplacé par un fond d'ornementation conventionnelle.¹

It is obvious, therefore, from the above comment and all of the preceding observations that the question of classification is fraught with innumerable obstacles. The knowledge of three brothers tempts one to search for three distinct techniques of painting while the influence of three artistic currents urges a division of hands corresponding to Italian, manneristic, and naturalistic tendencies. Again the theory of the medieval "atelier" with its

¹Ibid., p. 76.

categories of specialization, although it obviates the foregoing conclusion, nevertheless advocates in its place a classification of styles according to the parts of the anatomy, the apparel of the figures, or the features of the landscape. The chief criticism with this latter supposition is that it is not fully developed as a method of investigation. If, for example, as Durrieu suggests, physical distortions have indicated that heads were painted separately by artists, there is no reason to question the opinion that certain members of the Limbourg "atelier" were specialists in portraiture.¹ But, instead of generalizing about such an important fact, it would seem more profitable to attempt a stylistic analysis of the lineaments of various faces as a means of defining the traits of a specific hand or hands. The same procedure would also be applicable to other sections of the body as well as to the integral parts of the landscape. However, despite the infinite amount of material which has been written about this major problem of the Très Riches Heures, no method as yet has been devised for a detailed comparison of the miniatures. Needless to say, if the problem of classification is to be solved, it demands a painstaking method of analysis.

¹Ibid., p. 78.

Investigation of the Problem

In view of the snares involved in discerning a number of stylistic variations, it is not surprising that the problem has engaged comparatively few scholars. Indeed, Durrieu goes so far as to denounce any such endeavor and states his objections indirectly in the following litany of interrogations:

Restent les divergences que nous signalions et qui sont ou, du moins, qui paraissent être indéniables. Seulement comment préciser les démarcations? Où s'arreter dans les divisions? Quels sont les elements qui meriteraient d'être pris en considération? En somme, nous n'avons rien de ferme pour nous guider et quelle que soit l'ingéniosité déployée dans les systèmes proposés, ce sera toujours le pur arbitraire qui y dominera.¹

Although these are difficult questions, it is even more difficult to comprehend why Durrieu admits of defeat so readily. Certainly every problem of art history is not answered by an explicit array of facts and data extracted from unequivocal sources. Nor does the fact that solutions are sometimes arbitrary automatically make them irrelevant and invalid. Theories, if they exist for no other purpose but to be disproved, nevertheless contribute to the reconstruction of an obscure phase, monument, or personality of the past.

¹Ibid., p. 78.

Durrieu accompanies his disapproval of stylistic research, however, by comparing the Limbourg "atelier" with the workshop of Rubens. Like the diligent triad of the Middle Ages, the great master of the Baroque period also enlisted the aid of many artists to help him execute such a grandiose commission as the gallery of Marie de Medici. But, what could be more futile, he asks, than the task of discovering the contributions of a Craeyer or a Van Dyke? Is not the acquisition of such knowledge really quite insignificant?

Malgré toutes ces traces évidentes de collaborations multiples, le galerie de Marie de Medicis ne continuerait-elle pas à rester un des titres de gloire de Rubens seul?¹

However true the ultimate conclusion of this analogy may be, the parallel is nonetheless quite limited. Since scholars have works undeniably attributed to the genius of Rubens, the task of classifying styles in this instance cited by Durrieu would be relatively simple. In the case of the Très Riches Heures, it is precisely because records and documents have assigned no explicit miniature to the hand of Pol Limbourg that the problem of classification is so complex. To say that the entire manuscript is ultimately the product of his skill and ingenuity is more than obvious.

¹Ibid., p. 79.

He was, after all, the leader of the "atelier" without whose inspiration and direction the task would never have been begun. But what traits constitute his style? How much influence did he have over his associates? Did he actually design all of the figures and organize the features of the landscape, or did he permit others to share in this important task? And, finally, to what extent do his contributions differ from the styles of his helpers? These and similar questions can be answered only by a careful and methodical study of the integral parts of each page. Is it a worth-while project? The answer to this question depends entirely on the attitude of the individual towards research as a means of gaining invaluable insights to the past.

Opposed to Durrieu's negative attitude about stylistic classification are the findings of Hulin de Loo who evidently believed that the efforts entailed in defining various hands was neither a hopeless or a futile undertaking. Some of his principal conjectures about the Limbourgs and their respective modes of painting have been summarized as follows:

January would be by hand A (Pol, a favorite of the Duc) who elongates to excess the limbs of his figures and who is wanting in aerial perspective, etc. The same characters are found again in the Purification, the Encounter of the Three Wise Men, and Jesus Healing a Possessed Man. April, May, August, and perhaps February would be by another

hand, hand B (Jeannequin?), the more idealistic of the group to whom one would attribute as well the Terrestrial Paradise, the Fall of the Angels, and the Coronation of the Virgin. Hand C (flesh tints more white and rose colored among the women, the whites of the eyes very apparent, etc.) would have executed June, March, and July. A fourth hand (?), (D), would account for December, Hell, and the wonderful "grisaille" of the Arrest of Jesus in the Garden of Olives. Herman would be hand C or D.¹

Although Hulin de Loo was cognizant of the limitations of his research, it will, nevertheless, be helpful to examine his conclusions. Generally speaking, it is apparent that his division of hands corresponds to the inventory entry of three brothers, each of whom he has made responsible for a distinct type of figure: one has executed the manneristic nobles; another has portrayed the more idealistic representations; and a third has rendered the forms of naturalistic peasants. A fourth hand, which he had considered problematic, has been assigned the hunters of December since their physiognomy and apparel differ considerably from the preceding types. Needless to say, however neat and precise this theory may be, it is far too facile to be credible. It proffers no norms by which one may judge the differences of the January nobles from those of the April, May, and August miniatures, nor does it indicate any basic criteria which

¹Fierens-Gevaert, op. cit., p. 44.

may be utilized to measure the dissimilarities noted between the rustic types of December and those of March, June, and July. Lacking specific elements of comparison, it conforms to historical data but fails to coincide with the findings of a more objective investigation.

A Proposed Solution

Although Hulin de Loo's categorization of styles is permeated with significant contradictions and inconsistencies, his attempts at classification, nevertheless, serve the purpose of warning the student of the Très Riches Heures about the hazards involved in such an undertaking. In the first place, the results of research must not be forced to coincide with historical data since the records and documents of the medieval past are distinguished for their paucity of information. Secondly, the qualities of naturalism and mannerism which characterize the representations of two different classes of society must not be considered synonymous with two distinct modes of painting. Such a conclusion negates the fact that a miniaturist of the Middle Ages was extremely capable of synthesizing within his style the chief artistic tendencies of his day. And, finally, the initial search for a style or styles in the great work of the Très Riches Heures must not be so universal in scope but, rather, restricted to a limited division as

well as to a specific aspect of the manuscript since each page was the result of collaboration instead of the achievement of a single individual.

In the ensuing chapter an attempt has been made to analyze the figures of the "Calendar" on a purely objective basis. Aware of the dangers inherent in the application of limited historical data, the knowledge of the three Limbourgs and the theory of the medieval "atelier" has been suppressed. Instead, the traits of physiognomy and the designs of the drapery have been considered the fundamental criteria for deciphering elements of style. To facilitate a more complete understanding of an investigation involving a careful scrutiny of the aristocratic and rustic types, sketches, made by means of an opaque projector, of figures on these two levels have been included in the Appendix. The enlarged drawings of the faces tend to emphasize the peculiarities of line and modeling employed by the artist to render the famed representations of nobles and peasants. The reproductions of entire figures, on the other hand, serve to indicate the various patterns abstracted from the folds of their drapery. It is hoped that this method of research by virtue of its objectivity will shed some light on the complex problem of stylistic classification within the Très Riches Heures.

CHAPTER III
AN ANALYTICAL AND COMPARATIVE STUDY
OF THE FIGURES OF THE CALENDAR

The Nobles

The "Calendar" pages of January, April, May, and August afford us some of the most elegant figures in art history (Plates I, IV, V, VIII). Richly-clad knights and ladies perform routine actions of courtly pastimes with matchless grace and dignity. No small contributing factors to their charm are the delicate proportions of their bodies. Small oval heads, elongated torsos, attenuated hands, legs, and feet characterize the men while the women have the same physical attributes but differ essentially in their small waists and distended abdomens. Such elements of style recur so constantly throughout these pages that some scholars have not hesitated to consider the figures the work of one hand.¹ If such is the case, a further investigation of details is necessary in order that significant parallels may be made with other representations of the manuscript.

¹Panofsky, op. cit., p. 65.

One of the most striking aspects encountered in a study of the full-scale portraits of the above mentioned months is the resemblance of all the faces to each other (Plates XIII, XIV, XVI). There is little doubt that the young nobles and ladies who are the objects of the Duc's favor are not in some way related to him. A detailed analysis of the physiognomy of both male and female types supports this impression and, what is more important, betrays the workmanship of a single artist. Let us consider some of the methods employed by the painter to achieve that facial kinship so typical of Jean de France and his associates.

In the first place, a close examination of the eyes discloses the use of the following shapes: an almond for the eye itself, a circle for the pupil, an arc for the eyebrows. These shapes vary, of course, when a face is depicted in profile view, but one always realizes behind the adaptation the original pattern. Such a simple geometric formula accounts in no small measure for the fixed expressions of the courtly protagonists whose encounters are somewhat somber and staid. In no instance is there evidence of the least highlight to soften the gaze of these royal personages who are engaged in apparently pleasant and entertaining tasks.

The second feature which the artist renders in a variety of ways is the nose. In general, the bridge extends from the forehead in an almost imperceptible indentation; it follows a curve which is slightly concave or convex in character. The tip of the nose, as observed in many of the profile portraits, is somewhat bulbous in shape while the nostrils are terminated with a hook-like curve. The Duc de Berry himself in the famed January miniature displays an example of this type of execution (Plate XIII, Fig. 1). Although the other nobles surrounding him do not have noses as pronounced in these two respects, it must be remembered that youthful faces are usually portrayed by softer, more delicate lines. Basically, the method employed by the artist to depict this feature in both the old and the young is the same; hence, the apparent difference is one of variation and not of style.

The face in frontal view, on the other hand, presents a different solution for the representation of this complex feature (Plate XIII, Fig. 8). In this instance, line is replaced by a subtle chiaroscuro on either side of the bridge of the nose; the tip is also shaded, but in such a way as to suggest the nostrils.

Of all the features, the delineation of the mouth and chin falls into the most definite pattern. Thick, fleshy lips, divided by a strong line, are suggested by a refined

use of shading, while the indentation of the chin is produced by a small, curved shadow placed immediately beneath the lower lip. Further shading, extending from the chin to the tip of the ears, contributes to the over-all definition of the face as an oval shape. This formula, as well as the others previously mentioned, tends to remain constant in all of the aristocratic masculine types of the January, April, May, and August miniatures.

So far, our discussion of physiognomy has dealt mainly with the prices of the "Calendar." A similar study of feminine lineaments in the same months reveals traits and qualities identical to those of the men. Apart from the lighter flesh tints employed by the artist for maiden-like complexion and the more delicate proportions used to illustrate facial properties, the fashionable ladies of the Duc de Berry's court are the female counterparts of the sophisticated courtiers; and, as such, they are unquestionably the work of the same hand (Plate XVI).

Although the study of facial properties has its merits, there is no doubt that an analysis of the drapery of individual figures is an even more objective method of deciphering very concrete stylistic qualities. Let us consider in the following paragraphs, therefore, some of the techniques devised by our hypothetical artist to simulate the complex apparel of aristocratic types.

In the miniatures featuring a springtime engagement, a May cavalcade, and a summer hawking party, there are several instances of identical patterns of drapery folds. The first striking example occurs in the gathering of material at the bend of the arms where a series of horizontal folds is enclosed by a large semi-circular fold. This particular scheme is found in nobles wearing a cloak, and it is also repeated in all those female figures who wear gowns with copious sleeves (Plates XV, XVII, XVIII). A second noteworthy example in which the drapery follows a definite plan may be seen in the skirts of the women mounted on horseback. It is obvious in each case that the material falls in a triangular shape set off by a series of smaller folds radiating from the knees. The importance of this observation is seen in its relationship to another maiden in the month of April. As the charming member of the engagement party stoops to pick flowers for the betrothed, her skirt falls into the same loose geometric shape already described. The difference in her position, however, causes the folds dropping from her knees to break at right angles or to settle into sharp "V" shapes. This latter formula is repeated in her friend, although the triangular pattern has been replaced by several crescent folds that span the breadth between her knees. As trivial as these stylistic peculiarities may appear to be, they recur with such

frequency throughout the April, May, and August miniatures that they compel us to believe that both aristocratic male and female types must be the creation of a single hand.

In his brief survey of the Très Riches Heures, Hulin de Loo proposed that January was not done by the same artist who composed the months of April, May, and August. Although it is true that a study of the drapery of the ducal princes discloses none of the designs previously discussed, a close inspection nevertheless reveals similarity of folds on a different level. Some of the January figures who wear garments with pleats arranged symmetrically above and below the waist are likewise to be found in each of the other three months. Allowing that this method of handling material is too general to be significant, it must not be forgotten that in regard to bodily proportions, facial features, and mannered gestures the January figures are unusually similar to those of the other months. Since things equal to the same things are equal to each other, we cannot agree with Hulin de Loo's theory. Indeed, all evidence proves that the courtly types of the January, April, May, and August miniatures are identical in execution.

The Peasants and their Relationship to the Nobles

With the characteristic traits of a definite style at our command, the next step which must be taken in the

process of our research is the correlation of noble male and female types with the second class of society found in the "Calendar" scenes, the peasants. There is no better starting point for such a series of comparisons than the month of August which, fortunately, includes the two basic divisions of the medieval social structure (Plate VIII). In this remarkable miniature a peasant is depicted accompanying his masters on a hawking party. As he runs alongside their prancing steeds, his attitude is one of fearful obeisance; indeed, the success of the expedition depends to a great extent upon his wit and skill. There is no denying the sociological implications of this scene, but a careful analysis of this rustic type on a stylistic level offers analogies with the aristocratic types which from an artistic point of view are no less important for a greater understanding of the Très Riches Heures.

At the outset of our comparison between the falconer and his masters, it is obvious that his bare arms and legs, his shabby clothes, and bearded face set him apart from the elegant appearance of his feudal lords. Readily perceived, too, is the fact that his bodily proportions, lacking the refined elongations of the upper class, are more normal and natural. His square, ruddy face, with its heavy stubble, contrasts with the oval shaped, bare, rosy-colored faces of the nobles. Sturdier and more muscular in frame, his

physique is opposed to the mannered figures with attenuated limbs who ride behind him. As he clammers over the dusty road, slightly apace the colorful retinue, his begrimed appearance and awkward demeanor mark him as a man of the soil, a being of a lower caste whose presence is tolerated by the upper echelons of society because of his native prowess. Portrayed with a considerable degree of realism, he nevertheless lacks those harsh details peculiar to the naturalism of twentieth century art. Neither despair, hatred, or smoldering rebellion becloud his expression, but only a readiness and willingness to serve.

A study of the falconer juxtaposed to the members of the ducal court raises the inevitable question as to whether or not he is the work of the same hand which we have been analyzing. Is it possible that the artist who painted the refined figures in their richly decorated robes produced as well this ungainly rustic in his tattered garb? From a logical point of view it would seem that the assistance of a second artist would be quite improbable for such a tightly-knit composition. But more tangible proof is offered to us for the argument of a single hand than this purely arbitrary opinion. An examination of physiognomy shows definite comparisons with the faces of the feudal lords (Plate XIX, Fig. 1). Although the shape of the peasant's head is unmistakably square, the features of his face are rendered by

the same formula: almond shaped eyes enclose a circular pupil of solid color; the nose extends from the forehead with a slight indentation and ends in a rather bulbous tip executed by a sharply-curved line; the mouth is formed by a heavy line on either side of which is subtly indicated thick, heavy lips; and, finally, the shadowing employed between nose and cheeks, as well as chin and neck, contribute to the volume of the face. Although different in type, the peasant with his facial traits obviously bears a close resemblance to his haughty masters.

The drapery of the falconer, unfortunately, affords us no design which can be utilized to establish a relationship with the garments of the upper social caste (Plate XXI, Fig. 4). His grey tunic gathered at the waist by a belt hangs in scant, shallow folds similar to those of the more simply dressed figures of the January miniature. Unlike the members of the ducal cavalcade, his skirt is cut into a "v" shape on the outside of both legs and thereby reveals shaded kneecaps and fleshy thighs. The upper part of his garment blouses over the belt of his costume, an effect which is achieved by heavy lines which terminate a little beyond the belt itself. In no aristocratic figure do we find a like formula of rendering clothes, although we do see its recurrence in other peasant figures depicted in the "Calendar" scenes. Does this difference in apparel and

treatment of drapery imply the introduction of a second hand to paint such a figure? I hardly think so. Dissimilarities of clothing as well as those of proportion and manner are bound to occur when representations of social opposites are placed together in the same miniature. The artist, only too aware of the disparity of types, emphasized the elegance of the one and the coarseness of the other by consciously effecting differences in size, shape, decorum, and dress. Indeed, the distinction between peasant and lord is so successfully portrayed that one wonders if a second hand could possibly have created such divergent figures without destroying the rapport and unity of the group. More natural and earthy in appearance, the falconer is, nevertheless, the accomplishment of that same hand to which we are indebted for the regal retinue.

In addition to the large-scale hawking party in the foreground, the background of the August miniature is animated with a limited number of figures engaged in a variety of tasks: one cuts hay with a scythe while two others are busy tying it in bundles; a few peasants, completely undressed, hover near the edge of a lake while their more daring companions are immersed in the water for a delightful swim (Plate VIII). Comparatively small for a detailed analysis in reference to style, the figures are nevertheless important in regard to their occupations and

resultant positions as a means of drawing significant parallels with the other figures of the "Calendar." The peasant cutting hay, for example, recurs in the June and July miniatures where we see, in each instance, a farmer not only employed in the same task, but laboring in the exact same dress and in the exact same stance (Plates VI, VII, XXIII). Larger in scale than their August prototype, these figures are also related to the falconer. Their proportions are natural; their bodies are sturdy; and, although they perform their work with ballet motions, there is little mistaking them as figures attached to the soil.

A study of the background peasants in the months of February and March likewise produces important relationships with the farmers of the three summer months of the "Calendar" (Plates II, III). Despite their lilliputian size, the figures are painted with such precision that the slightest gesture or least detail of wearing apparel is easily recognized. One of the figures who stoops to prune the vines in the March landscape compares favorably with the farmer bundling hay in the August miniature. Both of these figures, alike in their crouching attitudes, correspond, in turn, to the July reaper, while they relate, in a very general way, to the simple, stalwart serf who drives his donkey to market in the February illustrations (Plates XXIV, XXI-Fig. 2).

Needless to say, one could draw many more comparisons with the figures of the landscape in the "Calendar" series, but the above examples are sufficient to show how intimately these minor representations of the rustic type are related in costume and bearing. Two figures, however, are especially important for the purpose of establishing a connection with the large scale personages of the foreground. The July reaper, clad in his grey tunic, and the March laborer, clothed in similar attire with a white apron, are analagous to their more impressive companions in the months of March, July, and August (Plates XXI, XXII). Not only the color of their tunics, but the cut of their garments and the rendering of the perpendicular folds which fall between their knees are the same. The chief exception, of course, to this repetitious formula of depicting the peasants' skirts is the shepherd of July whose sitting position necessarily involves more complicated patterns of drapery. But, despite this one example of a basic difference, all of the farmers of this unique group are correlated by the execution of the upper part of their apparel where the artist has simulated, by means of dark, heavy lines at the waist, the effect of large, loose folds hanging over a hidden or partially hidden belt. This peculiarity, together with the more general traits already described, are quite convincing proofs that

the rustic types of the landscape are the workmanship of a single hand rather than the achievement of a close collaboration.

One of the final problems that demands an effective solution in the analysis of the "Calendar" figures is the relationship of the nobles to the peasants. In the discussion of the two classes juxtaposed in the August miniature, it was proposed that the falconer bore a resemblance to his feudal lords on the level of physiognomy. Unfortunately, the remaining illustrations supply us with no other adequate portraits of male peasants to crystallize this conviction. The faces of the March plowman and the July shepherd are too obscured to make definitive comparisons, although the nose of the March farmer greatly resembles that bulbous contour remarked as one of the signal traits of the Duc and many of his associates (Plate XIX-Fig. 2, Plate XIII-Fig. 1). However, outside of this one instance, no other parallels are possible without the risk of being highly speculative.

The representations of February and June, on the other hand, afford us some portraits which are large enough for establishing basic connections (Plates II, VI). Although more common and countrified in appearance, the features of these hard-working women recall the refined and sophisticated countenances of the attendants of the ducal courts since the manner of delineating and modeling their

facial properties is analagous to that of their social opposites (Plates XX, XVI). Even the complexion of the June haymakers matches the white and rose-colored flesh tints of the elegant damsels in the months of April, May, and August. Obviously, the February maid is darker in tonality, but her lineaments are related to those of her June peers as well as to those more elegant countenances of the social elite.

Since qualities of physiognomy tend to be quite elusive, more specific evidence is necessary to prove that the nobles and farmers of the "Calendar" are the creations of a single painter. Once again the July miniature furnishes the essential link for making an effective comparison. If we place the major protagonists of the summer landscape next to the two maidens who are picking flowers in the month of April, we shall note similar renderings of the drapery (Plates XXII, XVII). The skirts of both male and female peasants are depicted by the same "V" shape patterns and tubular forms which constitute the principal designs abstracted from the apparel of the aristocratic princesses. Nor does the comparison end here. The April noble woman dressed in a black and blue gown set off with white trim is comparable to the February maid whose voluminous skirt falls into a series of broad crescent shapes that span the breadth between her knees and legs (Plate

XVII-Fig. 2, Plate XX). Needless to say, the importance of these observations of apparel cannot be overstressed as a means of relating two diverse types of figures within the same manuscript. No matter how unified the appearances of nobles and peasants may appear to be, these patterns serve to substantiate the conviction that one artist must have been responsible for both the aristocratic and rustic representations. If style is the unique manner in which a painter renders a figure, a garment, or an element of the landscape, then the "V" shape designs and tubular forms discovered in the attire of both types necessarily admit of one style and one hand.

On a large scale basis the portrait figures of the "Calendar" proffer us no other examples of noteworthy drapery comparisons. Such a deficiency accounts for our inability to associate the female haymakers of the June miniature with any definite courtly figures (Plate VI). Similar to the royal types in regard to their facial features, they have no equivalents in dress among the ranks of the aristocracy. Clothed in tight-fitting bodices with white sleeves, they differ even among themselves in the depiction of their skirts. That of the maid wearing light blue material extends from the waist to the knees and hangs in several loose, unbroken folds; that of her companion in dark blue is attached to a cincture located below the waist

and falls in more narrow, uneven pleats well above the knees. The folds of the latter's petticoat, made evident by her upturned skirt, are similar in shape and volume to the less complicated drapery of her companion.

Since a clear-cut design is lacking to equate the above peasants with the other figures of the "Calendar," the problem presents itself as to how one may relate them to the work of the artist whose style we have been attempting to categorize. The toilers of the background, it seems to me, furnish the desired connection since they are repeated in dress or action in the months of February, March, July, and August. If, as we have proved, the background figures of the other miniatures corroborate with those of the foreground, is there any reason to doubt that the same relationship does not exist between the male and female haymakers in the month of June? Even though we lack a concrete analogy, what purpose does it serve to assign the young maidens to another artist? Indeed, comparable to the other peasants in respect to physiognomy, proportion, and demeanor, it would seem more logical to conclude that these debatable figures are the creation of the same hand.

The Peasants of October and December

In his conjectures about the number of artists involved in the painting of the Très Riches Heures, Hulin

de Loo designated a separate artist for the months of October and December (Plates X, XII). Certainly the monumentality of the figures, the increased realism with which they are portrayed as well as the difference of their apparel give substance to such an hypothesis. Although similar in many respects to the peasants of preceding months, they nevertheless evidence signs of an individuality which was to realize its fullest development in the period of the Renaissance.

Certainly one of the most striking and, at the same time, most alarming aspects of the fall and winter illustrations are the faces of the sower and the hunters. How forlorn and vacant are the expressions of these serfs who go about their daily round of duties! In contrast to the superficial interpretations of peasant life rendered in the previous miniatures, there is introduced into the final pages of the "Calendar" a more profound insight into the existence of the common man. Having pierced the veil of their apparently idyllic world, the artist depicts the lowly country folk of medieval society as beings who show the strain of their relentless toil and the hopelessness of their lot. Only the beautiful details of nature and the vivid colors of their costumes save them from being the prototypes of that harsh world of actuality so commonly represented in works of art today.

But who is the creator of these homely visages with their deep-set eyes, furrowed brows, sad lips, and gaping mouths? Have they no points of comparison with the portraits of the preceding miniatures? A close examination of the individual characteristics of each peasant is necessary to answer this important question. Let us begin with the farmer of October (Plate XXV).

The large figure of the sower wearily casting seed into freshly-made furrows recalls the plowman of March and the falconer of August (Plate XXI, Figs. 1, 4). As he trudges along the neat rows of earth, he places his right foot firmly on the ground and bends his left leg to such an extent that his toe barely touches the soil. In this respect, the sower has previous models and, one might add, that the two figures of the succeeding boar hunt also duplicate this gait (Plate XII). But, however distinctive such a stride is to these and other figures of the "Calendar," the trait is not important enough to confirm a continuity of style since one might rightly argue that such a manner of conveying the illusion of walking was employed by all the members of the Limbourg "atelier."

Despite the obvious differences of the sower with the other figures of the "Calendar," his facial features nevertheless bear a certain resemblance to those of preceding types (Plate XIX, Fig. 4). The eyes of his haggard

countenance are both outlined by the familiar almond shape although they are more impressive in size. His aquiline nose projects a little more boldly from the forehead but still relates in kind to that of the red and white clad prince in the month of January (Plate XIII, Fig. 6). Finally, his mouth, divided by a heavy line with a downward curve, is comparable to that of the Duc's although it lacks the same degree of sensuousness (Plate XIII, Fig. 1).

With the exception of the wrinkles that mark his brow, perhaps the greatest innovation in the portrait of the sower is the more daring use of *chioroscuro*. In other miniatures shading was applied timidly around the eyes, the bridge of the nose, and beneath the chin and the neck; but here, for the first time, it darkens the entire right side of the face and thereby indicates the artist's growing preoccupation with the science of light and shadow as a means of effecting a greater sense of volume.

The three faces of the boar hunters on the last page of the "Calendar" share the same traits of the above visage (Plate XIX, Figs. 5, 6, 7). As a matter of fact, the peasant who restrains a blood-thirsty hound from devouring the dead animal is almost a replica of the October farmer. His gaping mouth is, of course, a major departure from the sower's image, but close observation beneath an opaque projector reveals the same thick, fleshy lips.

Other salient marks of distinction are his hollow cheeks and the deep vertical furrows drawn between his eyes to create an expression of perplexity mingled with alarm.

The countenances of the two remaining members of the hunting party are undoubtedly the work of the same hand, but they lack some essential elements of physiognomy. The peasant who boldly pulls a dog away from his prey is not only painted with a beard but is considerably foreshortened. Although these two factors make comparisons rather limited, it is nevertheless apparent that his nose is similar to that of his apprehensive companion while the bold use of *chioroscuro* projects the left side of his face into the same kind of relief.

The lineaments of the third peasant are likewise difficult to analyze but for a different reason. Engaged in the task of signaling the rest of his comrades, the huntsman blows his horn with such intensity that his entire face is disfigured with large, puffed up cheeks. Fortunately, the May cavalcade supplies us with trumpeters whose cheeks are similarly distended in their efforts to usher in the spring with song (Plate XIV, Fig. 3). Undoubtedly, the December peasant is their rustic counterpart despite the fact that the shading of his bulging face is darker and his eyes like those of his friends are sunk more deeply into his head.

Although the physiognomy of these large scale figures admits of certain analogies with other portraits of the "Calendar," the apparel of these same figures is wanting in noteworthy comparisons (Plates XXV, XXVI). An analysis of the deep blue knee-length dress of the October peasant offers no designs or patterns of folds which may be related to such figures as the falconer or the plowman. On the contrary, the sleeves of his garment, wrinkled with small semi-circular creases extending from elbow to wrist, are entirely opposed to those sleeves with loose triangular folds observed in previous types, while the broad, deep folds of his skirt in no way parallel those scant, shallow pleats so frequently noted in the rendering of rustic attire.

The two large-scale hunters in the December miniature also present a completely different fashion of medieval dress. Clothed in overcoats with large balloon sleeves they are adequately protected against the harsh elements of winter storms. In both cases the heavy material of their costumes is gathered below the waist by a thick leather belt which holds the equipment necessary for their hunting expedition. Completely different in aspect from the more simple garb of the October sower, they nevertheless correspond in the broad, continuous folds which constitute the drapery of their skirts.

It is obvious from the above study of these two miniatures that the figures are related to each other and are inevitably the work of a single artist. Are they the product, however, of that hand responsible for the two types of the other pages of the "Calendar"? Certainly this is a difficult question to answer; but it would seem, in view of similarities of proportion, physiognomy, and bearing, that the sower and the hunters are also the creations of the same miniaturist. No doubt it will be argued that the greater tendency toward naturalism in modeling the peasants with light and shadow automatically indicates the presence of a more advanced style. Although it would be rash to dismiss such an observation, it is also impossible to deny that the linear aspects of the faces are extremely comparable. One can only say that if a second painter did execute these illustrations, then he managed to absorb successfully the characteristic traits of the first. However, it would seem more logical to conclude that the skillful use of *chioroscuro* is but a natural maturing of a style possessed by an artistic genius as he stood on the very threshold of the realistic world of the Renaissance.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

It has been the object of this thesis to isolate one style in the manuscript of the Très Riches Heures. The months of the "Calendar" were selected for the purpose of analysis not only because the series is the most famous of all the miniatures but because the figures, so exquisitely rendered, indicate by reason of their similarity, the workmanship of a single hand. The comparison of facial features and the analogy of drapery designs between the two distinct classes illustrated in the "Calendar" scenes have been the principal criteria employed to discern the singular aspects of an individual style. In summary let us consider the chief findings of these two important areas of research.

On the level of physiognomy it was discovered that the following elements recur with relative frequency among the peasants and nobles: eyes framed with semi-circular eyebrows are shaped like almonds; noses are delineated with slightly bulbous tips and sharply curved nostrils; chins are indicated by a small, heavily-shaded depression; cheeks and necks are emphasized by graded chioroscuro; and mouths with fleshy lips are divided by a thick dark line. There

are, of course, variations within each of these formulas used by the artist to execute facial properties; and it would be false to imply, for the sake of brevity, that the portraits of the Très Riches Heures all tend to conform to these patterns. On the contrary, the versatility of the artist is displayed in the alteration of many features. A nose, for example, is rendered by a subtle use of light and shadow when the face is depicted in frontal view; or again, the bulbous contour is supplanted on occasion by a delicate curve. However, the bulbous quality is stressed since this trait is found not only on the countenance of the Duc and his attendants, but on the faces of the peasants in the months of March, August, and December. Thus, the repeated appearance of this type of nose which is more distinctive than one which is modeled or normally curved serves to bind the figures of two different social groups together.

Since facial elements tend to be quite elusive, the more objective designs which were abstracted from the drapery are advanced as more concrete proofs of a single hand. In the case of the nobles in the months of April, May, and August, it was discovered that the sleeves of their garments were predominantly executed by a large semi-circular fold which enclosed a series of horizontal creases

at the bend of the arm. A further investigation of the female attire in these same miniatures revealed the form of a triangle between the knees of the maidens as well as long folds terminating in "V" shapes or tubular forms. These last two designs were found to be almost identically related to the treatment of drapery folds in the apparel of the shepherds of July and in the garment of the peasant warming herself before the fire in the month of February. It would be difficult to imagine in the light of such comparisons how different artists could possibly have conceived of simulating folds of material in exactly the same way. For this reason, it seems logical to conclude that the figures are the product of one hand.

The objection may arise at this point that the likenesses of physiognomy and the relationships of the figures with their corresponding designs of drapery does not necessarily constitute the work of a single artist. The medieval "atelier," as Durrieu asserted, consisted of a group of specialists, and, therefore, the faces could have been done by one hand and the drapery by another. Certainly this is a valid criticism of the hypothesis proposed; and one can only answer that if the heads and the figures with their apparel were painted separately, then we have the characteristic traits of two hands instead of one. However, since the representations evidence not the slightest signs

of disproportion, it would appear that they must have been done in their entirety by a master painter. At any rate, such a theory seems quite tenable until further proof is proffered to argue the contrary.

If one accepts the aforementioned supposition of one hand as the creator of the "Calendar" figures, unlimited possibilities lie before the student of the Très Riches Heures to learn more about the artist and his techniques. A diligent comparison of the aristocratic and rustic types with other sections of the manuscript will undoubtedly furnish additional information as well as confirm those traits already gleaned from the "Calendar" portraits. Once the knowledge of a particular mode of painting will have been ascertained, the way will be paved for the deciphering of the styles of other collaborators on a systematic and objective basis.

In view of the total picture of research which remains to be done on the Très Riches Heures, the stylistic analysis of the figures found in the "Calendar" is extremely limited in scope. However, every great problem needs a beginning; and it is hoped that the unique manner of rendering facial features and drapery designs disclosed in the study of one portion of the manuscript will eventually lead to more significant analogies in the succeeding divisions of the famed Book of Hours. Once the figures have

been successfully categorized, the important elements of the landscape and "architectural portraits" will demand separate examinations for the discovery of similarities and divergencies of a different nature. The gigantic task of making such innumerable comparisons on these levels will be painstaking and tedious, but the ultimate findings will lead to a more comprehensive understanding of how the medieval "atelier" actually functioned. Conscious of such a goal, it has been the sole aim of this thesis to establish the norms of a single style in an effort to initiate the solution of a monumental problem within a monumental work.

A P P E N D I X

PLATE I

JANUARY



PLATE II

FEBRUARY

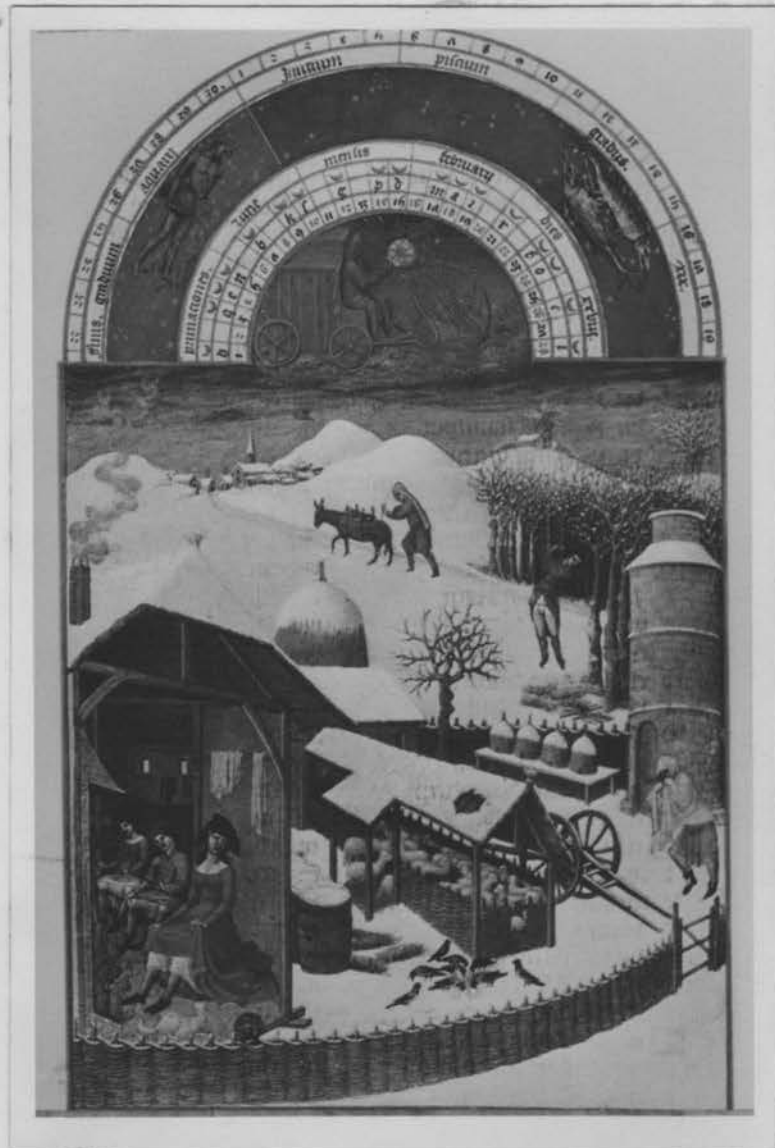


PLATE III

MARCH



PLATE IV

APRIL



PLATE V

MAY



PLATE VI

JUNE



PLATE VII

JULY



PLATE VIII

AUGUST



PLATE IX

SEPTEMBER

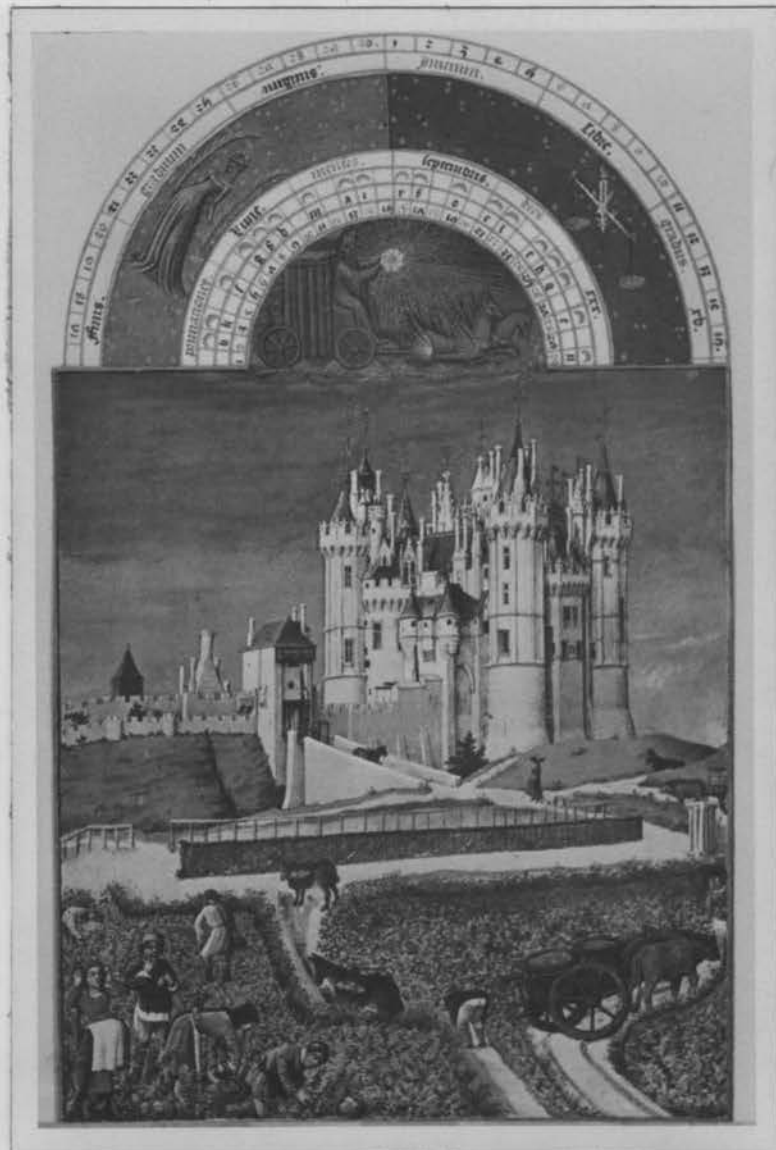


PLATE X

OCTOBER



PLATE XI

NOVEMBER



PLATE XII ·

DECEMBER



PLATE XIII

PORTRAIT STUDIES OF NOBLEMEN IN THE MONTH OF JANUARY



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

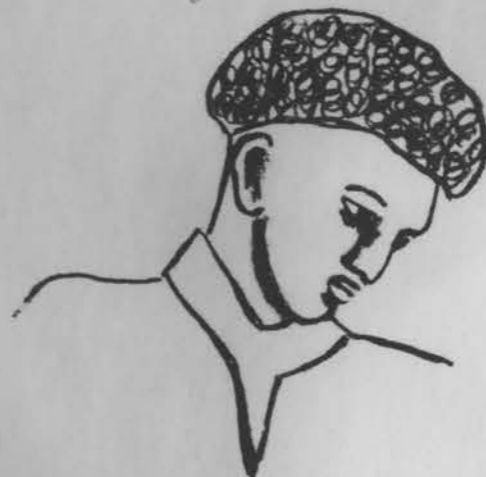


Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10

PLATE XIV

PORTRAIT STUDIES OF NOBLEMEN IN THE MONTHS OF
APRIL, MAY, AND AUGUST



PLATE XV

DRAPERY STUDIES OF NOBLEMEN IN THE MONTH OF AUGUST

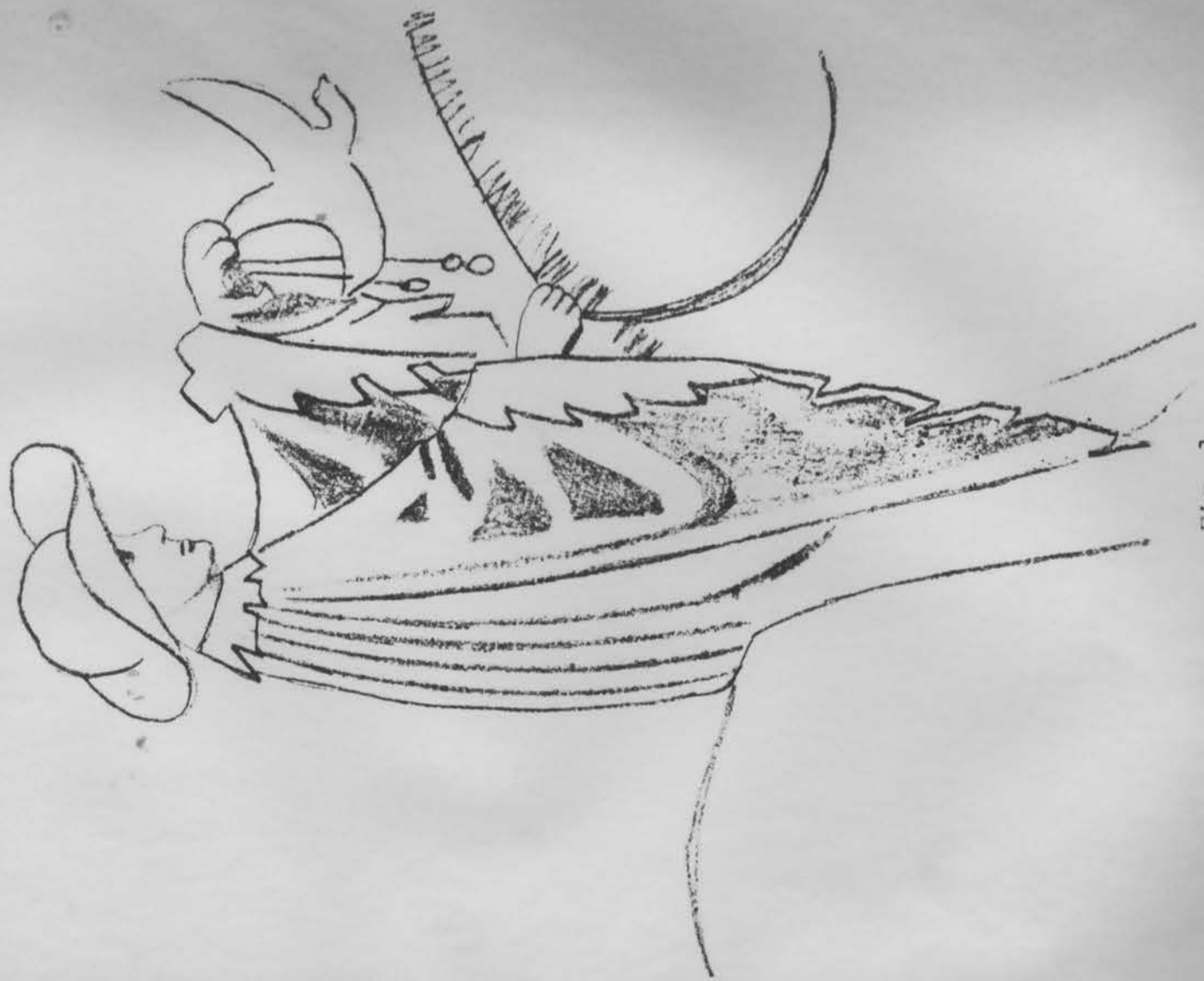


Fig. 1

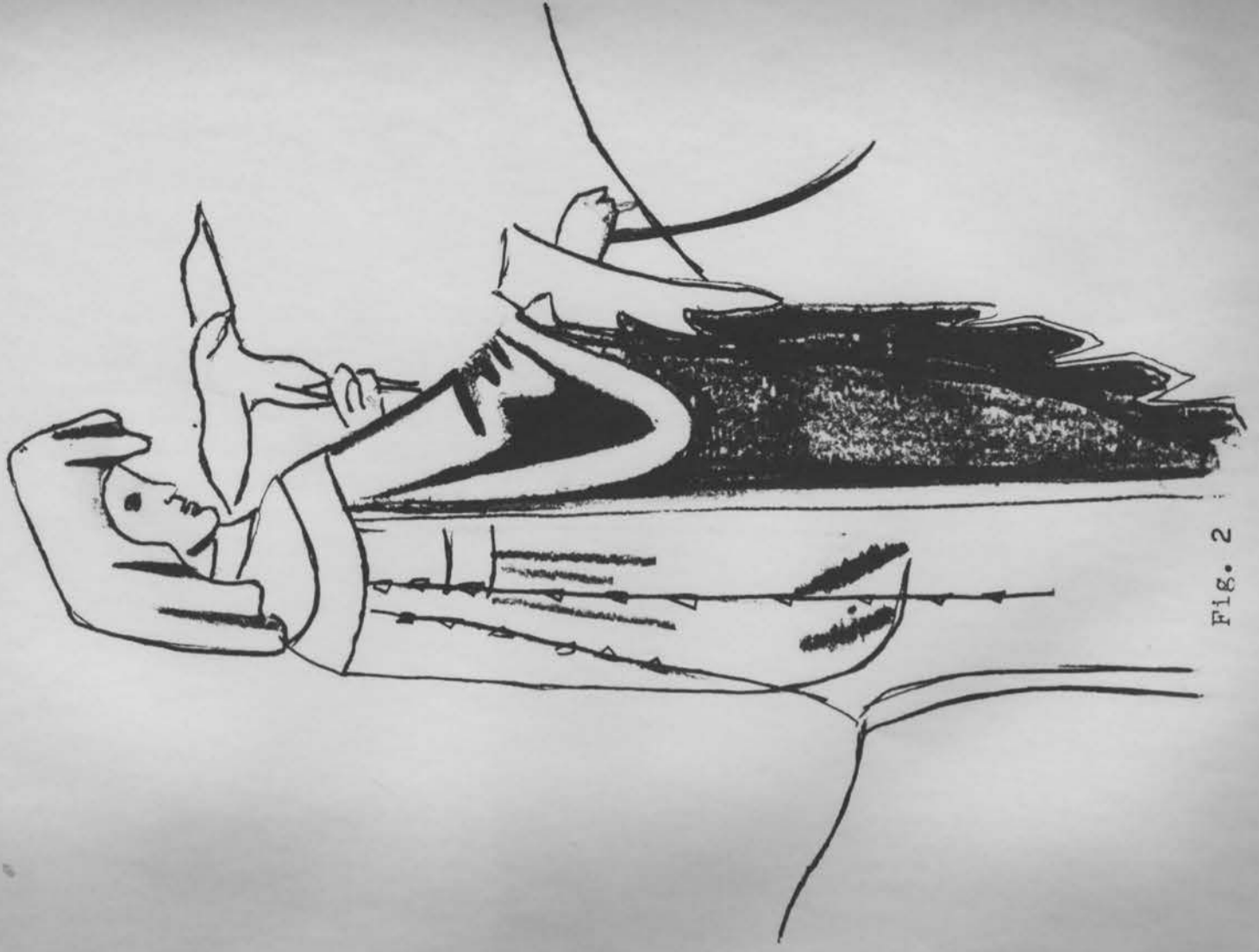


Fig. 2

PLATE XVI

PORTRAIT STUDIES OF NOBLEWOMEN IN THE MONTHS OF
APRIL, MAY, AND AUGUST



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

PLATE XVI

PORTRAIT STUDIES OF NOBLEWOMEN IN THE MONTHS OF
APRIL, MAY, AND AUGUST



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

PLATE XVIII

DRAPERY STUDIES OF NOBLEWOMEN IN THE MONTHS OF
MAY AND AUGUST



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

PLATE XIX
PORTRAIT STUDIES OF PEASANT MEN



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7

PLATE XX
DRAPERY AND PORTRAIT STUDIES OF PEASANT WOMEN
IN THE MONTHS OF FEBRUARY AND JUNE



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 1

PLATE XXI
DRAPERY STUDIES OF PEASANT MEN IN THE MONTHS OF
MARCH AND AUGUST



Fig. 1

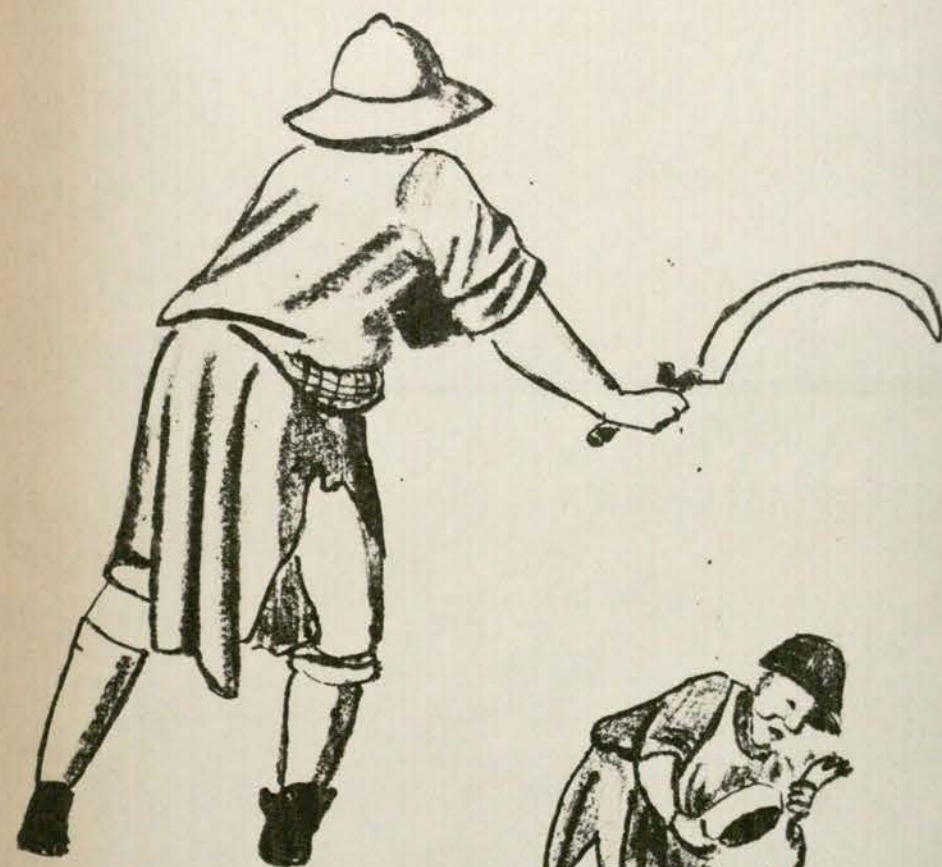


Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

PLATE XXII

DRAPERY STUDIES OF THE SHEPHERDS IN THE MONTH OF JULY



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

PLATE XXIII

A STUDY OF THE PEASANTS IN THE LANDSCAPES OF
JUNE, JULY, AND AUGUST

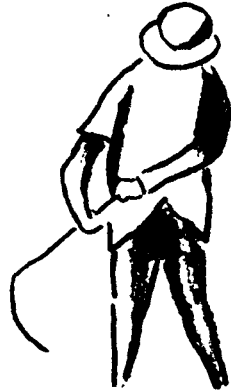


Fig. 1

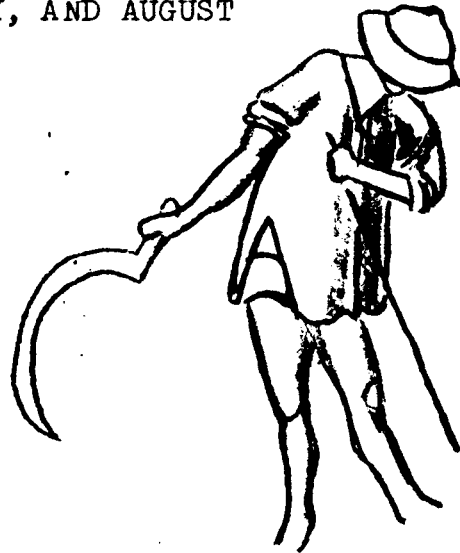


Fig. 2



Fig. 3

PLATE XXIV

A STUDY OF THE PEASANTS IN THE LANDSCAPES OF
FEBRUARY, MARCH, AND AUGUST



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

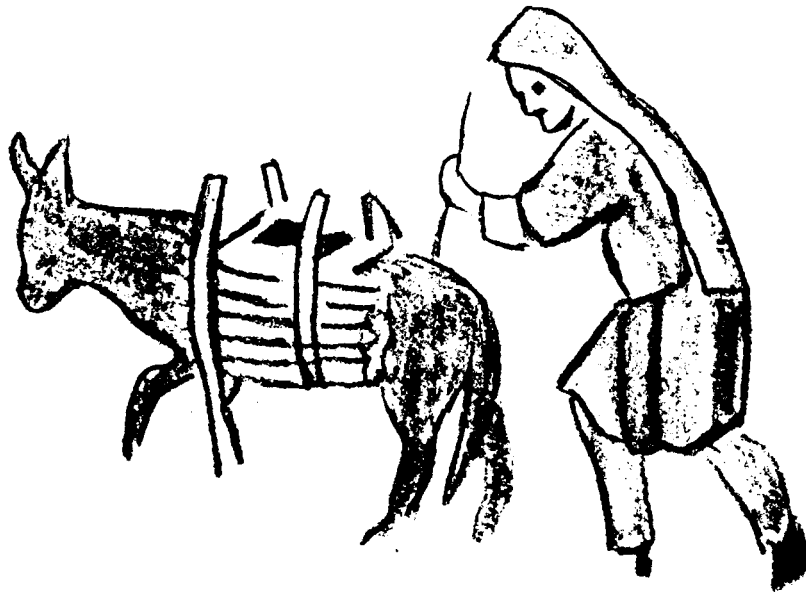


Fig. 3

PLATE XXV

DRAPERY STUDY OF THE SOWER IN THE MONTH OF OCTOBER



PLATE XXVI

DRAPERY STUDIES OF THE HUNTERS IN THE MONTH OF DECEMBER



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

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A B S T R A C T

ABSTRACT

A compendium of artistic achievement, the Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry poses many problems of a stylistic nature for the art historian. Although it is verified in a famous inventory entry around the year 1416 that the famous Book of Hours is the work of the Limbourg brothers and the collaborators of their "atelier," there are no records extant which designate the portions or aspects of the manuscript for which each hand is responsible. As a result of this paucity of information, many theories have been proposed as a solution for the classification of various artists. Approaching the problem negatively, Durrieu claims that an analysis of the illustrations is futile since medieval miniaturists were so specialized that one page could possibly be the product of several painters. Hulin de Loo, on the other hand, realizing the merits of such an investigation, suggests a category of his own but invalidates his research by making it conform to the historical data of three brothers as well as to the currents of naturalism, mannerism, and Italian influence so prevalent at the time.

Allowing that the study of the Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry on a stylistic basis is a worth-while project, the solution of classification demands a more objective

method of comparison than that proffered by Hulin de Loo. In the first place, the analysis must be limited to a definite section of the manuscript and, secondly, it must be confined to one major element of the pages selected. In this thesis the illustrations of the "Calendar" have been chosen for observation, while the figures constitute the chief object of consideration. The two aspects which have been compared for similarities of technique and style are those of physiognomy and drapery renderings. Characteristic traits of both elements have been arrived at by the process of enlarging the miniatures with an opaque projector and tracing the figures as a means of discerning the artist's idiosyncrasies of painting. The results of such a method of observing, abstracting, and comparing have produced a series of unique parallels in the figures of the "Calendar."

On the level of physiognomy, a close examination of one facial property at a time reveals qualities of line and chiaroscuro common to peasants and nobles, male and female types. In practically every instance, the eyes, framed with arc-like eyebrows, are derived from an almond shape and enclose a circular pupil of solid color. In the rendering of noses, two formulas are adhered to: noses in profile view extend from the forehead with a slight indentation and terminate with nostrils formed by sharp, hook-like curves; noses in frontal view are effected by heavy shading painted

on either side of the bridge of the nose. The mouth is defined basically with a heavy line subtly modeled to produce thick, fleshy lips, while the chin, indicated by a small depression, is emphasized by a dark shadow placed immediately below the lower lip. The final feature of note, the neck, is accented by a large area of shading which extends in subtle gradations of black to the base of the ear.

The second level of analysis is concerned with the unique designs of drapery folds which occur in the apparel of nobility and peasantry. In the miniatures of April, May, and August, the unity of lords and ladies is noted in the execution of the sleeve where a large semi-circular fold encloses a series of horizontal folds located at the bend of the arm. The delicate maidens are also related by the graceful folds of their skirts. The material spanning the breadth between the knees forms a large triangular shape while the remainder of the voluminous fabric falls to the ground in an organized mass of tubular forms and small or large "V" shapes. These two designs abstracted from the drapery of the charming ladies of the ducal court coincide with the basic patterns observed in the garments of the male and female shepherds of July as well as the peasant women of the February miniature.

Although the organization of the shepherd's skirt binds him to the noble element of the manuscript, the linear treatment of his waist with its indication of large, loose folds, establishes a relationship with the falconer of the August page. This key figure, who is the only peasant to appear juxtaposed to the members of the aristocracy, is the model for the background figures dressed in similar attire in the months of July and March.

Other minor figures who appear in the "Calendar" series are executed with different apparel and less complicated drapery designs. The farmer who wears a white, short-length tunic in the June miniature is duplicated in the exact same dress and pose in the illustrations of July and August. As one of the background figures of those pages in which indisputable stylistic parallels exist between peasants and nobles, his presence serves to unite the hay-makers with the other representations of the "Calendar" regardless of the fact that their blue dresses with limited drapery folds have no precedents.

The most monumental figures of this famous division are the sower of October and the hunters of December who are, nevertheless, similar to their companions on the level of physiognomy. The delineation of eyes, nose, and mouth is comparable to the definition of features in the foregoing portraits. However, a greater use of shading heightens the

concave areas of their faces and imparts to all of them a quality of naturalism which is entirely alien to the idealistic images of the January festival. The method of depicting features is the same, but added to the characteristic lines of rendering facial properties is a major preoccupation with modeling, a technique which betrays the growing interest of the artist to portray real people in a real world.

After an intense examination of the "Calendar" series, it is evident that all the figures are the work of a single artist. Since there are no traces of bodily distortions or no signs of certain parts of the anatomy executed by separate individuals, the theory of the medieval "atelier" with its competent specialists does not seem to apply to the representations of these pages. The analogies of physiognomy and drapery relate the figures on an objective basis of lines and patterns and give us as well the major techniques of a master craftsman who, in all probability, was Pol himself. But, regardless of his name, the isolation of one style brings in its wake the possibility of deciphering the members of the Limbourg workshop and of learning more about the creation of the greatest manuscript of the Middle Ages.