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## **'Fro Paris to Ingland'? The danse macabre in text and image in late-medieval England**

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## CHAPTER 2

### **‘Depicte ones on a walle’: the *Danse Macabre* in late-medieval Paris**

The *Dance of Death* poem by the Bury monk-poet John Lydgate (c.1371-1449) might seem the obvious starting point for an investigation into the occurrence of the *danse macabre* in Britain. Yet Lydgate’s poem is a translation of the ‘exawmple’ which he ‘fownde depicte ones on a walle’, a reference to the wall-painting in the cemetery of Les Saints Innocents in Paris.<sup>1</sup> King Charles VI (1368-1422) was dead and the French capital under Anglo-Burgundian control when this celebrated *Danse Macabre* mural was painted and when Lydgate visited the city not long after; he claims to have been persuaded by ‘frensshe clerkes’ there to translate what he called ‘Macabrees daunce’ (E:22, 24).

This chapter aims to establish how the political situation impacted on the Parisian mural scheme and its accompanying poem.<sup>2</sup> The almost overnight fame of the *Danse Macabre* at Les Innocents suggests that there must have been other reasons for such keen interest in a theme that at first sight does not appear to offer anything very different from the conventional warnings about vanity and mortality in literature and art of this period. Directly or indirectly, the English occupation of Paris and of much of France may have played a major role in the mural’s creation and repute, and thereby have influenced the development of the theme and its spread across Europe.

One of the first literary adaptations of the mural in Paris, Lydgate’s poem itself soon came to be incorporated in a painted scheme on the walls of Pardon Churchyard at Old St Paul’s Cathedral, London. Both sets of paintings at Paris and London have long since been lost, but it is important to remember that the French as well as the English poem were once accompanied by paintings, and *vice versa*. Only by understanding the visual and literary model that inspired Lydgate’s poem can we hope to appreciate what the *danse macabre* meant to contemporaries both in England and on the Continent.

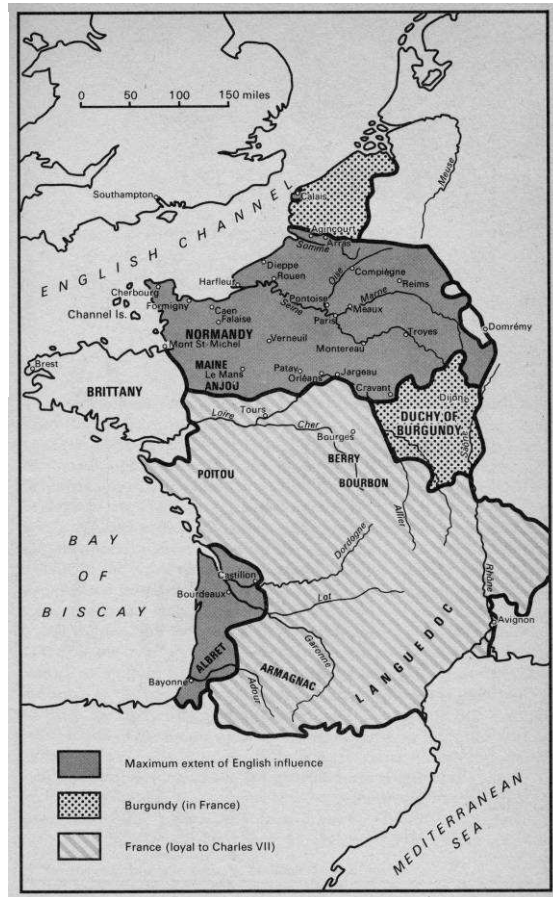
#### **The historical and political context**

Henry V’s victory at Agincourt in 1415 and his subsequent conquest of Normandy were to have a major impact on the kingdoms of England and France. In 1426, when Lydgate is believed to have visited Paris, the city had been under Anglo-Burgundian control for six years as a result of the Treaty of Troyes, signed on 21 May 1420; it would remain so until 1436.<sup>3</sup> The Treaty of Troyes itself was ultimately the result of the murder by the dauphin’s men of the Burgundian duke John the Fearless at a supposed negotiation meeting between the dauphin and the duke on the bridge at Montereau-fault-Yonne on 10 September 1419. This murder was in turn an Armagnac retaliation for the assassination on John’s orders of Charles VI’s brother Louis, duke of Orléans, in Paris in 1407.<sup>4</sup> Louis was later to be commemorated by his grandson, King Louis XII, in a (now lost) wall-painting in the family chapel at Les Célestins, which showed the duke about to be despatched by Death’s dart – the epitome of sudden death and an image likely to have been derived from the *danse macabre* theme that made its first recorded appearance in these turbulent times (**Fig. 1**). Thus, in its divided state under the nominal rule of Charles VI, whose recurrent bouts of insanity

(probably a form of schizophrenia) since 1392 had left him a helpless tool in the hands of his weak-willed queen and the rival political factions, France appeared to have reached its nadir in the early 1420s.

2. (Right) Map of France in 1429: the dark shade represents areas under English control.

1. (Below) Wall-painting commemorating Louis, duke of Orléans, in the family chapel at the monastery of Les Célestins, Paris, commissioned in the late fifteenth century by his grandson Louis XII and destroyed c.1779. Antiquarian Gaignières drawing (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Gough-Gaignières 1, fol. 1r).



Henry V formally entered Paris as regent of France and heir to the throne on 1 December 1420, confirming his status by marrying Catherine of Valois, daughter of Charles VI and his wife Isabeau of Bavaria. Their only child, the future Henry VI, was born on 6 December 1421. Henry V died at Vincennes on 31 August 1422, aged only around 35; he was followed on 21 October by the ailing Charles VI, who had been king of France for over forty-two years. These two royal deaths in quick succession left the supposed dual kingdom with a joint king who was not yet a year old but who at least survived, unlike so many medieval infants – the *Danse Macabre* mural was to feature both a dead king and an infant in his cradle. Young Henry's interests had to be protected so his paternal uncle John, duke of Bedford (1389-1435), was appointed regent in France while actual power in England was shared by Henry Beaufort (1375?-1447), bishop of Winchester and 'cardinal of England', and the king's younger uncle, the 'good Duke Humphrey' of Gloucester (1391-1447).<sup>5</sup> The king himself was placed under the protection of Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick (1382-1439), as his tutor in 1428 – the same earl who may have summoned Lydgate to Paris in 1426, as the next chapter will show. Meanwhile, Charles VI's disinherited son the dauphin, later Charles VII (1403-61), set up a rival 'kingdom of Bourges' with the help of foreign troops, including many from Scotland.<sup>6</sup> His coronation at Rheims on 17 July 1429 after Joan of Arc's relief of the city was followed by Henry's own two coronation ceremonies as king of England at Westminster Abbey on 6 November 1429 and as king of France at Notre-Dame in Paris on 2 December 1431.<sup>7</sup>

Throughout this period the third Valois duke of Burgundy, John the Fearless's son Philip the Good (1396-1467) – a political opportunist – seldom visited Paris and seems to have shown no desire to play a key role in the government of the city or the country, although he did marry off his sister Anne to the duke of Bedford in 1423.<sup>8</sup> Bedford's rule at least offered the citizens of Paris a period of relative peace and stability, but its trade position was threatened by Rouen in wealthy Normandy. Bedford also took steps to found a university at Caen, obtaining authorisation from pope Martin V on 31 March 1424 – a move that naturally caused concern in Paris, which prided itself on its university.<sup>9</sup> France thus remained a seriously divided country with friction between Paris and Normandy within the Lancastrian camp, and with communication between the occupied capital and the 'kingdom of Bourges' officially forbidden except with special permission (**Fig. 2**).<sup>10</sup>

The Anglo-Burgundian alliance was weakened by the death in 1432 of Anne of Burgundy, who had been a capable intermediary between her brother Philip and her husband Bedford and who had enjoyed great popularity in Paris. In 1433 Bedford married sixteen-year-old Jacquetta de Luxembourg (niece of the unpopular Chancellor of France, Bishop Louis de Luxembourg) and settled in Rouen where he died on 14 September 1435. By then he had seen the tide turn irreversibly against the Lancastrian cause in France, partly because of insufficient support from England. The Franco-Burgundian Treaty of Arras between Charles VII and Philip the Good was sealed around the same time. Finally, in April 1436, the English were expelled from Paris, although they managed to hold on to Normandy until 1450.

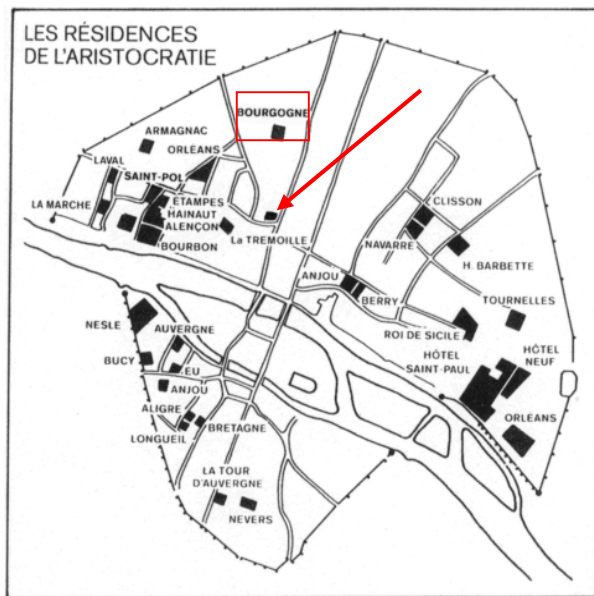
So this was Paris as Lydgate found it when he visited the city probably in 1426 (see chapter 3). As the map below shows (**Fig. 3**), the cemetery of Les Innocents was situated to the north of the Seine and the Île-de-France in the area where most of the English officials lived, including Bedford. Here he discovered the *Danse Macabre* mural on which he based his *Dance of Death* poem – newly painted and already considered remarkable enough to attract visitors who left a record of what they saw.

### **The *Danse Macabre* mural: location, painting and poem**

It was the earlier period of Bedford's regency that saw the completion of the *Danse Macabre* wall-painting in the cemetery of Les Saints Innocents. The parish church of Les Innocents was situated in a key position on the rue Saint-Denis (the main thoroughfare from the Porte Saint-Denis to the north); its large cemetery ran along the rue de la Ferronnerie (which connected the former to the rue Saint-Honoré, the main thoroughfare from the Porte Saint-Honoré in the west), close to where Les Halles used to be and also in the vicinity of the hôtel de Bourgogne with its defence tower built by John the Fearless in 1409-11 (**Figs 3-4**).<sup>11</sup> It was an ancient burial place, having originally served as a Merovingian necropolis, although there are no records that provide a date for the foundation or dedication of the later parish church. In the early medieval period, the development of Paris had been concentrated on the Île-de-France and the left bank. The subsequent expansion of the capital northwards on the right bank meant that, as the churchyard of the small new parish of Les Saints Innocents, the cemetery became part of a lively urban environment; King Philippe-Auguste is said to have ordered the construction of its outer walls in the late twelfth century.<sup>12</sup>

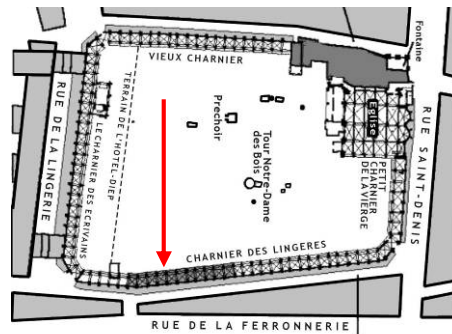
If the parish of Les Innocents itself was small, through donations of land it came to possess an extensive churchyard, which the importance of Christian burial might have made a potentially valuable commodity to the parish.<sup>13</sup> This was not necessarily the case, however. Other parishes and institutions had an established (albeit frequently

contested) right to use the cemetery for their own burials, including the hospital of Sainte-Catherine and the Hôtel-Dieu; as each of these employed their own vergers and, if they so wished, their own grave-diggers, this shared use brought no financial benefits to the parish itself.<sup>14</sup> Because it was believed to contain soil brought back from the Holy Land that miraculously achieved decomposition of corpses within only nine days, Les Innocents became one of the most sought-after cemeteries in Paris, resulting in the erection of monuments, chapels, churchyard crosses, and cells for anchoresses in the churchyard.<sup>15</sup> Situated at the heart of a thriving commercial district and with five doors giving access to its grounds, the cemetery also served as a popular meeting place where goods were bought and sold, and as an ideal setting for open-air sermons and other events, which would have made it hardly a true place of rest.<sup>16</sup>



3. (Left) Map of medieval Paris: the red arrow indicates the location of the church and cemetery of Les Saints Innocents.

4. (Below) Map of the cemetery of Les Saints Innocents, with the location of the danse macabre mural in the charnier des Lingères indicated in dark grey.



Because of a perennial lack of burial space typical of medieval cemeteries, Les Innocents offered only a temporary resting place to its dead – disregarding rank and status – before their remains were dug up and removed to the charnel houses situated above the arcaded galleries. Here, as evidenced by later illustrations, the piles of skulls and bones were clearly visible through the openings that allowed the circulation of air and thereby the desiccation of the remains.<sup>17</sup> A miniature in the Cremaux Hours of c.1440 shows a near-contemporary image of such a charnel house (**Fig. 5**; compare Introduction, fig. 7): the skulls of the long dead almost seem to be watching the burial scene below through the apertures in the roof space.<sup>18</sup> This type of environment would have been familiar to Lydgate whose *Dance* was to be displayed in another cemetery setting at Old St Paul's Cathedral, which had its own charnel houses. The *charniers* at Les Innocents are mentioned in records from the early fourteenth century on. Some are known through inscriptions to have been founded by wealthy citizens such as Nicolas Flamel. He paid for the construction of the fourth gallery of the 'vieux charnier' in 1389 before founding a second one in the 'charnier de la Vierge' along the rue Saint-Denis in 1407; in the first bay of the latter was placed the tomb of Flamel's wife Pernelle, who thus received a more privileged resting-place than the anonymous human remains overhead.<sup>19</sup> Other gallery bays were likewise appropriated for family monuments and chapels, some of them closed off by gratings.

The demolition of the thirteenth-century church of Les Innocents and its huge cemetery was authorised in 1786 amidst growing concern about the insalubrious



effects of burial grounds in populated areas and also because of the delapidated state of the church fabric. The *Danse Macabre* mural itself, however, had been lost much earlier, probably in 1669 when the rue de la Ferronnerie was widened, although sources disagree.<sup>20</sup> A painting of c.1570 by an unknown Flemish master, which is now in the Musée Carnavalet in Paris, still gives an idea of the layout and overall appearance of the cemetery (Fig. 6). It shows the church in the background and in front a huge churchyard viewed from the west with galleries on the north, east and south sides, above which one can see the charnel houses with their contents clearly visible. It is even possible to glimpse the *Danse Macabre* on the back wall of the south gallery of the 'charnier des Lingères' on the right. The mural consisted of a continuous chain of dancers with the poem copied underneath, one stanza for each dancer: the scheme could be viewed from inside the churchyard through the open arcades.<sup>21</sup> According to an anonymous source, the so-called manuscript of the 'Epitaphier du vieux Paris' dated 1663 (*i.e.* before the demolition of the wall), the *Danse Macabre* mural occupied ten or eleven bays: 'Icy commence la Dance macabee [*sic*] qui dure 10 arcades en chacune desquelles y a 6 huitains dont le premier cy apres – les 4 dernieres arcades en ont 8'.<sup>22</sup> Also shown inside the churchyard are some raised tombs and several churchyard crosses, as well as a covered platform towards the south-west corner, presumably for the use of preachers.

5. (Below) Burial scene in a churchyard with a charnel house in the background, miniature in the *Cremaux Hours*, French, c.1440 (London, BL, Add. MS 18751, fol. 163r).



6. (Above right) Church and cemetery of Les Saints Innocents, with the danse macabre mural visible through the arcades on the right, Paris, c.1570, painting by an unknown Flemish master, Paris, Musée Carnavalet.

The creation of the *Danse Macabre* scheme at Les Innocents had been sufficiently noteworthy to be recorded in the journal of events by the so-called 'Bourgeois de Paris' in the period 1405-49. A Parisian, the anonymous Bourgeois actually belonged to the clergy; he may well have been a canon of Notre-Dame and a member of the university.<sup>23</sup> The *Journal*, which exists in a number of later manuscript copies (no autograph copy survives), offers a fascinating insight into life in Paris

during this period; the author's sympathies lay with the Burgundians but he appears to have largely approved of Bedford and his wife Anne. The church of Les Innocents and its cemetery are mentioned repeatedly in the *Journal*. The relevant entry about the *Danse Macabre* reads: 'Item, l'an mil CCCC XXIII, fut faicte la Danse Macabre aux Innocens, et fut commencée environ le moys d'aoust et achevée ou karesme ensuivant'.<sup>24</sup> The completion of this large mural by Lent – the traditional period of abstinence and penance – suggests an apt deadline specifically chosen by the patron.

The Bourgeois found a second occasion to mention the scheme in 1429 in connection with a sermon by a popular itinerant preacher, a Franciscan named Richard, who had previously inspired audiences in Troyes with his eloquence. It may be the Bourgeois' references to this preacher, and perhaps the inclusion of a *cordelier* (Franciscan) amongst the characters in the *Danse*, that gave rise to the assumption by later authors (perpetuated in the ever growing *danse macabre* literature) that Les Innocents was a Franciscan cemetery whereas it actually belonged to a parish church, as explained earlier. Nonetheless, Franciscan preachers were apt to use such settings for their sermons, often to the chagrin of local incumbents; depictions of foxes preaching to geese on misericords and in marginalia are usually interpreted as a satirical comment on the preaching activities of friars,<sup>25</sup> just as Chaucer mocked another eloquent member of the confraternity in his *Summoner's Tale*. The *danse* would admittedly fit in well with Franciscan preaching so the theme and the order are frequently linked.<sup>26</sup> The French scholar Emile Mâle even claimed that the theme must have originated in mimed sermons on death conceived by either a Franciscan or a Dominican.<sup>27</sup>

Brother Richard appeared in Paris some eight days after the arrival on 4 April 1429 of the duke of Burgundy and his train and preached a series of apparently very popular sermons against vanities and superstition from a high scaffold in the cemetery of Les Innocents near the area of the *Danse Macabre* mural:

et après, environ VIII jours, vint à Paris ung cordelier nommé frere Richart, homme de tres grant prudence, scevant à oraison, semeur de bonne doctrine pour ediffier son proisme. Et tant y labouroit fort que enviz le creroit qui ne l'auroit veu, car tant comme il fut à Paris il ne fut que une journée sans faire predicacion. Et commença [le] sabmedi XVIIe jour d'avril IIII<sup>e</sup> XXIX à Sainte-Genevieve, et le dimanche ensuivant, et la sepmaine ensuivant, c'est assavoir, le lundy, le mardy, le mercredy, le jeudy, le vendredy, le sabmedy, le dimenche aux Innocens; et commençoit son sermon environ cinq heures au matin, et duroit jusques entre dix et unze heures, et y avoit touzjours quelque cinq ou six mil personnes à son sermon. Et estoit monté quant il preschoit sur ung hault eschauffaut qui estoit pres de toise et demie de hault, le dos tourné vers les Charniers encontre la Charonnerie, à l'endroit de la Dance Macabre.<sup>28</sup>

The Bourgeois is quite specific about the location of Brother Richard's sermons – and of the *Danse Macabre* – even if he is probably guilty of exaggerating the number of people attending. Brother Richard's success run in Paris was short-lived. Having raised the suspicions of the English government, he fled the capital before his scheduled sermon on 1 May and thereafter embraced the dauphin's cause, becoming a confessor to Joan of Arc; his defection greatly upset his Parisian followers.<sup>29</sup>

A manuscript dated 1436, which contains the *Description de Paris* by the Grammont-based scribe Guillebert de Metz (*libraire* to both John the Fearless and

Philip the Good), also made reference to the scheme in the 'cimetiere moult grant' of the church of Les Innocents, explaining at the same time the nature of the cemetery:

[...] la est ung cimitiere moult grant, enclos de maisons appellés charniers, la ou les os des mors sont entassés. Illec sont peintures notables de la dance macabre et autres, avec escriptures pour esmouvoir les gens a devocion. Lune partie du cimitiere appartient à leglise des Innocens, lautre partie est pour le grant hospital, et la tierce partie est pour les eglises de Paris qui nont point de cimetiere.<sup>30</sup>

The cemetery even featured as the setting for a stag hunt as part of the pageants to celebrate the coronation of Henry VI at Notre-Dame in December 1431, as noted by the Bourgeois. Young Henry, 'lequel se nommoit roy de France et d'Angleterre', had taken up residence at the royal abbey, and thus entered the city through the Porte Saint-Denis. He watched a performance of mystery plays before moving to Les Innocents: 'et là fut fait une chace d'un cerf tout vif, qui fut moult plaisant à veoir'.<sup>31</sup> In later years, the poet François Villon (1431-after early 1463) is likely to have drawn inspiration from the *Danse Macabre* wall-painting at Les Innocents.<sup>32</sup>

These early references to the cemetery indicate in what a key location the earliest known *Danse Macabre* mural was set. Yet a look at the plan and the anonymous painted view of the cemetery (**Figs 5-6**) shows that the mural only took up a small proportion of the available wall-space in the arcaded gallery of but one of the charnel houses that lined this extensive churchyard on all sides. Painted onto the back walls of the gallery, partly hidden behind the supporting outer columns, and located on the south side of the cemetery where the sun never directly lights up the paintings, the mural might easily have been missed by a casual visitor, especially as the cemetery appears to have contained other noticeable features, including further wall-paintings as implied by Guillebert de Metz. The attention that the *Danse* attracted from French and foreign observers alike so soon after its completion is quite remarkable and presupposes either exceptional artistry or a subject that was quite out of the ordinary.

Whereas the Bourgeois gives a specific date for its execution he does not mention the artist or workshop responsible nor, even more intriguingly, the patron responsible for paying what was clearly a large, impressive and therefore expensive project. This is not unprecedented, but nonetheless curious if one considers the stone sculpture of the Three Living and the Three Dead on one of the south portals of the church, which featured a lengthy French verse inscription on the cornice, recording that it had been commissioned in 1408 by John, duke of Berry.<sup>33</sup> One source even claims that this sculpture commemorated the duke's nephew Louis, duke of Orléans, who had been murdered the previous year – something that the inscription itself makes no mention of.<sup>34</sup> It is improbable that Berry also commissioned the *Danse Macabre* scheme at Les Innocents: the duke died in 1416.<sup>35</sup> In contrast, we do know who paid for the slightly later Dance of Death schemes at Pardon Churchyard in London and in the Guild Chapel at Stratford, viz. the London Town Clerk John Carpenter and the former London mayor Hugh Clopton, respectively, both wealthy civilians (see chapter 3). A seemingly obvious explanation in the case of Les Innocents might be that it was the church authorities who paid for the mural in their own cemetery, but the parish was small and far from wealthy. If there was a private patron instead, why was the name not recorded either by contemporaries or by later generations when the *Danse* made it into print? It is almost inconceivable that there was no record whatsoever of the generous donor(s) – whether private or institutional: a Parisian guild or confraternity is one possibility – who paid for the execution of this famous mural with what would



appear to be a very worthy, didactic message aimed at all who visited this public and popular location. After all, it would have been the perfect means to perpetuate one's memory as a pious benefactor.

The author of this earliest recorded *Danse Macabre* poem in the mural at Les Innocents is likewise unknown; Lydgate mentions the Parisian origins of his poem, but not the author. Some scholars have suggested the theologian Jean Gerson (1363-1429), Chancellor of the University of Paris, who was at this time in exile in Charles VII's 'kingdom of Bourges', together with his deputy Gérard Machet.<sup>36</sup> This attribution is not generally accepted and Gerson's known anti-Burgundian stance makes it less likely that a poem by him would have been displayed in such a prominent location not far from the hôtel de Bourgogne during the Anglo-Burgundian occupation of Paris, though the poem might have been written by someone in his circle.<sup>37</sup> Yet the question of authorship also hinges on the date one wishes to assign to the original poem, just as the date depends on the identity of the anonymous author: the poem itself appears to offer no internal evidence on either. Other possible authors have been suggested, but without firm evidence; only the line 'Je fis de Macabré la dance [...]' in *Le Respit de la Mort* of 1376 may indicate an earlier poem by Jehan Le Fèvre.<sup>38</sup> The idea that the French poem in the mural at Les Innocents may ultimately be based on an earlier (Latin?) prototype carries some weight, for it will become evident not only that its overall scheme is too well developed to be a completely novel invention but also that it contains some anomalies which make it likely that the poem was adapted from an earlier version.<sup>39</sup> In any case, the question of origins does not just relate to the French poem but to the whole concept of a 'dance of death' (or of the dead). Lydgate himself appears to refer to the author of the French poem as 'Machabre the Doctoure', which has only fuelled speculation about the origins of the very term 'macabre', although it matches the label 'Machabre docteur' in one early manuscript copy of the French poem (BnF, ms.fr. 14989).<sup>40</sup> The French printer Guy (or Guyot) Marchant instead labelled the seated scholarly figures in the first and last woodcuts of his *Danse Macabre* edition the *acteur*, while some early French manuscript copies of the text refer to the second figure as *le maistre*.<sup>41</sup>

Whoever the original author of the French poem may have been, it was probably the furore caused by the *Danse Macabre* wall-painting executed at Les Innocents that helped spread the theme throughout France and further afield. It is unfortunate that, due to the loss of the original mural, scholars have to rely largely on the woodcut edition of the *Danse Macabre* that was first published by Marchant in Paris in 1485 (see Appendices 1 and 3). Although this work is generally believed to offer a fairly reliable impression of the poem and the overall appearance of the scheme as painted on the walls beneath one of the charnel houses at Les Innocents, evidence suggests a degree of updating in terms of dress and appearance of some of the figures, one example being the late fifteenth-century style Italian armour of the *connestable*.<sup>42</sup> Mâle already noted that the shoes worn by the figures in Marchant's woodcuts are not the *souliers à la poulaine* with very long pointed toes that were worn from the early fifteenth century until c.1480, but instead the later square-toed shoes fashionable in Marchant's day.<sup>43</sup> This may not even have been a conscious updating by the printer and his chosen artist, however, because murals were subject to fading and weathering, and therefore often retouched or even completely repainted. A claim that the plants and grasses strewn across each scene are not likely to have been a feature of the original mural but instead belong to the printer's repertoire is debatable.<sup>44</sup> As we shall see, plants and grasses do occur in illustrations of the *Danse* in some early manuscripts and may be based on the mural's original appearance.

The chain of dancers that ran along the back wall of the 'charnier des Lingères' across at least ten bays was impossible to reproduce in book format so that Marchant was obliged to divide the original chain of dancers into two pairs per page, framed by arches. The designer of the woodcuts may have taken further liberties with the poses of the characters, especially at the start or the end of each arcade, for whereas there is usually physical contact between the figures within each arcade there is nothing to link them to those in other arcades. Instead, the dead dancers at the start of each arcade are either turned towards their next victim or are shown holding a large dart or grave-diggers' attributes, such as a spade and a coffin-lid.<sup>45</sup> The idea of a continuous chain of figures suggest that at this time the dead dancers in the *danse macabre* were regarded as dead counterparts of the living (*le mort* as also in Marchant's edition) rather than as personifications of Death himself (*la mort*), just as is the case in the story of the Three Living and the Three Dead. Mâle illustrated this idea of dead and living counterparts very aptly through the text of the emperor, who regrets that he must die and 'Armer me faut de pic, de pelle / et d'un linceul' (ll. 11-12); in Marchant's woodcut he is grasped by a shroud-clad *mort* who carries these same implements across his right shoulder, much like a mirror image of what the emperor (himself still armed with a sword and orb) will soon become.<sup>46</sup>

Admittedly, there may well have been earlier printed editions of the *Danse*, but none are extant and only a single, incomplete copy of Marchant's 1485 edition survives.<sup>47</sup> There are no extant manuscript copies of the text predating Marchant's edition that contain illustrations.<sup>48</sup> The evidence that we have of the lost mural is relatively sparse and Lydgate's poem is therefore all the more important as early testimony to its popularity and overall composition (see Appendix 3). Although in many ways an adaptation rather than a faithful translation, Lydgate's *Dance of Death* belongs to the French *danse macabre* tradition of which the mural in Paris is the first firmly datable manifestation. Yet there are two rival traditions which require brief discussion here because of the light they may shed on some compositional anomalies in the French poem to be explained later in this chapter.

### The Spanish *dança de la muerte* and the Latin-German *Totentanz*

The idea of a Latin prototype for the *danse* holds great appeal for many scholars in this field, but it raises the question where this Latin version might have originated, if there was indeed one single point of origin. If the poem incorporated in the mural at Les Innocents was itself in some ways an adaptation of an earlier version, as will be discussed below, a comparison with other *danse macabre* traditions may reveal potentially significant similarities and differences.

Whereas Lydgate himself named the mural in Paris as the source for his *Dance of Death*, the situation is less clear with regard to the Spanish *Dança General de la Muerte* poem (see Appendix 5). The author of the *Dança* is unknown and its date a matter for debate: proposed dates range from the mid fifteenth to the late fourteenth century, depending on conflicting theories that the *Dança* was actually based on the French *Danse Macabre* or that both were derived from an earlier common prototype.<sup>49</sup> There is also no pictorial tradition for the *Dança* in Spain. The earliest *Dança General* poem shares many characteristics with the French *Danse*, such as the octave verse format and a strict alternation of clerical and lay characters, many of which also occur in the *Danse*, including the *condestable*. The *Dança* starts with a prologue and a dialogue between Death and the preacher. New are such typically Spanish characters as the rabbi and the Moorish *alfaqui* versed in Islamic theology

and law, illustrating how the *danse* could be adapted to local circumstances. There are no female characters, apart from a summons by Death to two unspecified maidens before the *Dança* proper commences with the pope and the conventional hierarchy of church and lay figures. One other difference with the French poem is that, instead of opening the dialogue, *la muerte* responds to each figure's lament and only addresses the next victim in the last line of his stanza. Yet the *mort*'s stanzas to the Carthusian, monk, friar and hermit also open with an address to preceding characters, just as the first four lines of the *mort*'s stanza for the pope are aimed at the reader, which are probably remnants from an earlier French composition that was later revised.

This is not the place for a wider discussion of the Spanish *dança*, which requires further research: important here are the similarities it shares with the French *Danse* and the range of characters. The same applies to the Latin-German *Totentanz* tradition, especially in view of the possibility of an original Latin prototype of the *danse*. Only one early Latin poem survives, but it has German origins; in fact, it is a combination of two Latin lines per character, terse in style but effective (see Appendix 6), followed by four German lines that are a free and expanded translation of the same. It is not a dialogue like the *Danse Macabre*, however: there are no stanzas for Death itself. The earliest surviving manuscript copy of this Latin-German text (Heidelberg University Library, Cpg 314, fols 79r-80v) dates from c.1443-47; it does not feature any illustrations but a note at the beginning of the text ('vide de hoc in albo codice de commendatione animarum a principio picturas') suggests that the scribe was copying an earlier, no longer extant, illuminated model.<sup>50</sup>

Like the French poem, the Latin-German *Totentanz* has a prologue and an epilogue with a preacher addressing the reader in both Latin and German (*Theutunice*). This is followed by a lament from a series of characters each facing Death, whose presence (and music) is merely implied in the words of his victims, and probably also originally in the accompanying illustrations. An actual dialogue with four added German lines for Death occurs in later versions, e.g. in the Heidelberg blockbook of c.1458-65 where the Latin lines are absent.<sup>51</sup> The twenty-four characters in the Latin-German *Totentanz* at first sight appear to follow a familiar hierarchical order (see Appendices 4 and 6), starting with the pope (*papa*) and emperor (*caesar*), but anomalies occur almost immediately with the third character: the empress (*caesarissa*). She is one of three female characters, together with the noblewoman (*nobilissa*) and the mother (*mater*); the latter concludes the cycle. There is no strict adherence either to the alternation of clerical and lay figures that we find in the French *Danse*, although this may indicate a corruption of the original composition.

The version found in Heidelberg Cpg 314 belongs to a group of variant texts collectively known as the 'oberdeutsche vierzeilige Totentanz' or OBD to distinguish it from other *Totentanz* types, such as the *mitteldeutsche* tradition published in Heinrich Knobloch's *Totentanz mit figuren* around 1488, which was modelled on Marchant's *Danse Macabre* edition.<sup>52</sup> Probably the most influential OBD variant was the so-called Groß-Baseler *Totentanz* mural in the lay cemetery of the Dominican convent at Basel, which comprised fifteen male and female characters more than the twenty-four found in Cpg 314 and also per stanza four new lines for Death, thereby changing the monologue into a dialogue proper.<sup>53</sup> This celebrated scheme with a total length of nearly 60 m is believed to have been painted soon after the plague epidemic of 1439; frequently restored over time, the wall-painting was largely destroyed in 1805 and only fragments survive. Another early scheme with OBD verses, sadly lost during World War II, was the mural of c.1440 in the Wengen convent at Ulm.<sup>54</sup> If these dates are correct, the Basel and Ulm murals predated manuscript copy Cpg 314.

The variations within the German tradition raise many questions, such as whether the *Totentanz* started as a poem which then became part of a mural scheme, or whether the idea of a mural came first – perhaps inspired by the fame of *Danse* at Les Innocents – and the poem was specially composed for it. The fact that the German stanzas are based on the Latin two-line monologues and were then expanded to create dialogues suggests that the Latin lines preceded the German version; the original twenty-four characters were probably increased to thirty-nine for the monumental mural scheme at Basel.<sup>55</sup> It is equally unclear whether the Cpg 314 text constitutes an earlier, shorter version or merely an incomplete rendition of the larger scheme of thirty-nine characters found at Basel; the Heidelberg blockbook version contains only the same twenty-four characters found in Cpg 314.

Whether there is any relation between the Latin *Totentanz* verses and the presumed Latin prototype underlying the French *Danse* cannot be established: they may have developed separately, perhaps inspired by a shared but lost proto-source. Earlier (German) claims that the Latin *Totentanz* text in Cpg 314 is the earliest *danse macabre* scheme of all – even as early as 1350 in date – can no longer be taken seriously, although the possibility that the French *Danse Macabre* was preceded by a German *Totentanz* tradition or by the Spanish *Dança General de la Muerte* is still alive and well.<sup>56</sup> Without new evidence this truly European debate about the origins of the scheme is unlikely to be resolved soon. Even so, a comparison with the order and characters in the Latin-German *Totentanz* does prove useful when discussing the French and English poems, as this study will show.

## The dissemination of the *Danse Macabre* in manuscripts and print

While uncertainty remains about the *danse macabre*'s origins prior to the creation of the mural in Paris, the situation is further complicated by the loss centuries ago of this painted scheme and the problem that we cannot rely on Marchant's 1485 edition being an accurate representation. This section will present a brief overview of other appearances of the *danse* – as both text and image – in manuscript and print in order to try and obtain a better idea of the original scheme and the theme's later popularity.

### • *The Danse Macabre in manuscripts*

Not long after the completion of the mural in Paris, manuscript copies of the poem began to appear.<sup>57</sup> The scheme at Les Innocents is specifically named in at least two early copies, which suggests that the poem was then firmly associated with the mural. The first (BnF, ms.lat. 14904) features the sentence 'Prout habetur apud Sanctum Innocentem';<sup>58</sup> it is dated 1429 and also contains works by Jean Gerson and Nicolas de Clemanges. The second (BnF, ms.fr. 25550) is a composite manuscript, with the *Danse* copied by two different scribes: it contains the sentence 'Dictamina Choreae macabre prout sunt apud innocente[m] Parisii'.<sup>59</sup>

Another early manuscript copy on paper (BnF, ms.fr. 14989) was copied in or soon after 1428; this date is based on the evidence of its watermarks and the fact that the manuscript also contains the anti-dauphinist propaganda poem *Division des Orleanois contre les Anglois*, which was written after the death in 1428 of Thomas Montacute, earl of Salisbury.<sup>60</sup> An intriguing detail is that this copy once belonged to Philip the Good. Comparisons between some of these early copies appear largely to confirm the text and the original order of characters in the Parisian *Danse* as reproduced by Marchant in his 1485 edition: the main difference is that the *advocat* and the *menestrel* probably preceded, rather than followed, the *curé* and the *laboureur*.

(see Appendix 3).<sup>61</sup> Moreover, ms.fr. 14989 names the *maistre* as *lastrologien* (as in Marchant's 1486 edition) and the usurer's companion as *lomme qui emprunte*.<sup>62</sup>

Whereas we have additional early manuscript sources to judge Marchant's printed text by, it is more difficult to find earlier visual evidence for the lost paintings at Les Innocents. The wars and the removal of the French royal court from Paris inevitably had an impact on the production of art, including manuscript illumination.<sup>63</sup> Nonetheless, the continued presence in Paris of the university, the church, trades and administration meant that there remained a steady demand for books. Some English patrons also shared a taste for luxury manuscripts, although this does not necessarily imply that such books were specially commissioned by them when they could also be adapted or bought second-hand.<sup>64</sup> Thus, English owners might end up with psalters and books of hours of the Use of Paris instead of Sarum; while Paris Use need not point to a French patron, 'The combination of French manufacture and Sarum Use is a sure indication of an English patron', as one author noted.<sup>65</sup>

Two extant illuminated books of hours with marginal *danse macabre* decorations are believed to date to the time of the English occupation of Paris or shortly thereafter, yet both have received surprisingly little attention.<sup>66</sup> The first features elements of the *danse* as marginal decorations on two of its pages at the start of the Office of the Dead (BnF, ms. Rothschild 2535, fols 108v-109r, **Fig. 7**). The patron is unknown and the attribution of this manuscript is still a matter for debate, but the accepted date is c.1430-40 with a preference for the earlier part of the decade on the basis of dress (see below).<sup>67</sup> The foliate borders of the two facing folios of the Rothschild manuscript illustrate the problem of adapting this mural scheme to a book format. The result is a group of living and dead representatives somewhat haphazardly arranged on several 'islands' strewn with gold flowers not dissimilar to the background of Marchant's woodcuts (Appendix 1). The treatment of the foliate decoration is very different on both pages, with painted foliage on fol. 108v and penwork *rincaux* on fol. 109r.



7. Danse macabre as marginal decoration in a Parisian book of hours, c.1430 (Paris, BnF, ms. Rothschild 2535, fols 108v-109r: blank borders cropped in this illustration).



Running clockwise, the sequence starts underneath the burial miniature on fol. 108v with a dead figure carrying a coffin on the left shoulder, who pulls the pope along towards the right, *i.e.* in the opposite direction of that taken by the figures in Marchant's woodcuts and probably also in the original mural. Then follows not another *mort* but the bearded emperor, who holds an orb in his left hand and his sword aloft in his right; significant is his heraldic mantle, which will be discussed later. Next, the cardinal finds himself manhandled by two dead dancers, one dark-skinned and one pale-skinned. Above this group stands a crowned beardless king wearing a royal mantle decorated with fleurs-de-lis. The traditional order is overturned in the next scene by a fashionably dressed couple moving towards the left, the woman in her horned headdress hovering behind the man. This rare female presence in the French *danse* at this period may explain the inclusion of some female figures in Lydgate's *Dance of Death* poem, as will be discussed in chapter 3; she may be not a character in her own right but rather the attribute of the *amoureux*.<sup>68</sup> The woman's dress is helpful for dating purposes as very wide sleeves went out of fashion very rapidly after 1430: this means either that the Rothschild manuscript should be dated not much later than 1430 or that the illuminator closely modelled his figures on those in the wall-painting of 1424-25 at Les Innocents, or both.<sup>69</sup> At the top of the page a single *mort* stretches both his arms between a labourer with a shovel across his shoulder and an infant in his cradle on the right, immediately above the miniature (see also chapter 5).

The sequence on fol. 109r runs anti-clockwise from the bottom left corner where a dead dancer greets a bishop whose back is turned towards the other dancers. To the right, another *mort* seems to mock the physician as the latter holds a urine sample against the light in his raised left hand; his counterpart in Marchant's woodcut scrutinises a phial in his right. The bareheaded knightly figure above wears a blue heraldic tabard that is very much of the period but completely different from the fancy feathered hat and long mantle in a later style worn by Marchant's knight. The bearded hermit with his rosary and book resembles more closely his counterpart in Marchant's edition. Finally, the last *mort* is shown digging a grave at the top of fol. 109r.

If we accept a date of *c.*1430 for this manuscript, this would make the marginal decoration on fols 108v-109r a rare early visual example of the *danse* from a period when more such schemes may have been created but since lost. The decorative scheme contains an intriguing mixture of similarities with Marchant's woodcuts and variations, particularly in the introduction of a female character; we shall see later whether this implies more faithful adherence to the mural at Les Innocents than shown by Marchant's woodcuts with their often updated fashion styles. What is also important to note is that the theme was already sufficiently familiar to stand on its own as a decorative scheme without the need of explanatory texts other than the context of the Office of the Dead, which did not have a fixed iconography, however.<sup>70</sup>

The second illuminated book of hours of a similarly early date (New York, Morgan Library, MS M.359, **Figs 8-9** and Introduction, fig. 2) contains an extraordinarily large *danse macabre* cycle of fifty-seven marginal scenes, nearly twice as many as at Les Innocents (Appendix 7). This luxury manuscript is believed to have been illuminated in Paris *c.*1430-35 by the Bedford Master and his workshop (fl. 1415-30): typical of the Bedford style are the small secondary scenes contained in marginal medallions in the outer borders of the pages.<sup>71</sup> Unfortunately, there are no coats of arms or contemporary inscriptions that could help identify the original patron; the earliest recorded owner is Charles de Bourgueville (1504-1593), sieur de Bras, of Caen – the Norman city held so long by the English.<sup>72</sup> The Use of Rome may indicate a member of the clergy since the original patron and the calendar points to a Paris



origin, but it must date from the time of the English occupation as suggested by the inclusion of typically English saints, e.g. St George (23 April) in gold letters.<sup>73</sup>



8-9. Danse macabre medallions in the outer margins of a Parisian book of hours of c.1430-35: (left) the constable of France with his ceremonial sword and (right) the infant in his cradle (New York, Morgan Library, MS M.359, fols 127r and 151r).

The Office of the Dead opens on fol. 119v with a large miniature of a funeral service, complete with a sequence of marginal scenes illustrating burial and mass that continues on fols 120r-122v (Appendix 7). The actual *danse macabre* cycle starts on fol. 123r with the traditional author or doctor seated at a lectern, but there is no second doctor at the end of the cycle, which finishes instead with the infant (**Fig. 9**). The author is followed on fol. 123v by the pope in a circular medallion flanked by two *mort* figures, as is the emperor on fol. 124r (**Fig. 11**): a number of figures are shown with just a single dead dancer, sometimes in a half-medallion. The *morts* are not so much dancing with the living as coercing them, which is also suggested by the sergeant's words in the *Danse* poem: 'Je ne scay quel part eschapper: / Je suis pris: deca et dela'; yet in these isolated scenes the impression of force seems stronger than may have been the case in the original chain of dancers at Les Innocents where each living figure would also have been flanked by two *morts*. The dead in M.359 carry no musical instruments or other attributes, except for a dart in the last medallion (**Fig. 9**). Their bodies are at different stages of decomposition, as indicated by their colours varying from shades of grey to light and very dark brown, just as in ms. Rothschild 2535 (**Fig. 7**); this may also have been a feature of the mural at Les Innocents.

All victims in the M.359 *danse* cycle are male, as is typical of the French *Danse*: quite unusual, however, is the preponderance of the clergy and the choice of figures. The cycle opens with the conventional ordering of pope, emperor, cardinal, king, but the eleventh character of the knight templar – or, perhaps more likely in France in this period, a knight of St John (fol. 128v) – is surprising. Moreover, there are numerous abbots, friars and monks in a variety of habits belonging to orders that in some cases defy identification, including a Trinitarian (recognisable by his red and blue cross), an Alexian or Cellite(?), and a Servite(?).<sup>74</sup> This remarkable range and number of religious figures cannot be explained by just a need to fill fifty-seven medallions. While the inclusion of such diverse lay characters as the goldsmith and the blacksmith is noteworthy – neither occurs in the *Danse Macabre* poem – it is more likely that the

choice of religious characters in this book of hours contains clues about the identity of the original (clerical?) patron, whether English or French.

A final feature that should be mentioned about the MS M.359 *danse* is the setting in which each encounter of victim and *mort(s)* is presented: there are schematic landscapes, patterned backgrounds, but also examples of figures placed instead in an everyday setting befitting their occupation or status. We thus find the apothecary in his shop with pots on the shelves behind him (fol. 142r; Introduction fig. 2); the money-changer with scales, weights and coins on his desk (fol. 144r); the goldsmith at his table (fol. 145r); the ploughman following his horse or ox (fol. 146v); the blacksmith at his anvil (fol. 149v); and the partly-swaddled infant in his cradle (fol. 151r, **Fig. 9**). These individualised settings do not match the stylised landscapes of Marchant's woodcuts or of ms. Rothschild 2535, which may or may not have been based on the mural at Les Innocents. Tables and basic props do occur in later German *Totentanz* woodcuts, but only to help identify characters, e.g. a pestle and mortar for the *Apotheker* or a desk for the *Wirt* (host). The unique copy of the poem *Le Mors de la Pomme* of c.1468-70 contains *danse macabre* scenes in everyday settings complete with tiled floors, but it is dated several decades later than MS M.359.<sup>75</sup> The variety of settings in MS M.359 may have been an individual choice of the miniaturist and not based on the mural at Les Innocents. Later still, Holbein was to use such settings to even greater artistic effect in his woodcuts.

The decorative cycle in Morgan MS M.359 constitutes important *danse macabre* evidence, and not just because of its early date. Its unparalleled range of characters and its unusual variation in backdrops may have deviated from the mural that provided the original inspiration for this decorative programme. Yet just like the border decoration in BnF ms. Rothschild 2535, the M.359 cycle is both an early adaptation of the *danse* as popularised through the mural and an indication of how familiar the theme had become to artists and patrons alike, not just as a poem. In addition, this cycle contains some characters and iconographic details that may shed further light on the scheme at Les Innocents, as we shall see.

### ● *The Danse Macabre in print*

Marchant's 1485 edition is admittedly the first known printed *Danse* to have been published in France, but it is not inconceivable that the mural at Les Innocents inspired earlier printed versions that could have provided further evidence if they had but survived. At least two printed German *Totentanz* editions preceded Marchant's.<sup>76</sup> It would be curious, though not impossible, if Paris – home not just to possibly the oldest and most famous *Danse Macabre* scheme in art but also, as a university town, to many publishers – had not produced an earlier printed edition when manuscript copies had been in circulation for decades.<sup>77</sup>

It should be noted, however, that printing was still a risky business in the fifteenth century, especially as books that relied heavily on illustrations required an initial investment in design and woodcuts that the publisher would need to recoup.<sup>78</sup> Knowing the risks, many printers understandably re-used woodcuts whenever they could, even within the same publication: for example, 645 different woodcut designs were used to produce the 1809 illustrations in Anton Koberger's 1493 *Liber Chronicarum* (see Introduction, fig. 1).<sup>79</sup> The *Danse Macabre*, on the other hand, required special illustrations for each of its characters and these could not be used elsewhere; an exception was the image of the *acteur*, which could easily adapt to other contexts, e.g. as an author portrait (see chapter 3).

Guy Marchant's origins are unknown. He may have moved to Paris by 1482 where he was to run a very successful independent printer's workshop in the Sorbonne area.<sup>80</sup> He appears to have specialised in Latin humanist and theological tracts aimed at an academic and religious readership, but he also recognised a market for moralising texts on the subject of death: his publication of at least five editions of *De arte bene vivendi beneque moriendi tractatus* (or *Ars Moriendi*) in 1483, 1491, 1494, 1497 and 1499 suggests that he was a good judge of a profitable print-run and ready to reprint in cases of continuing demand.<sup>81</sup> His first *Danse Macabre* folio edition – dated 28 September 1485 in the colophon – was so successful that a new expanded edition followed on 7 June 1486, which also comprised *Les dis des trois mors et tros [sic] vifz*.<sup>82</sup> This second edition furthermore contained six new woodcuts depicting four skeletal musicians (Introduction, fig. 3) and ten new characters not occurring in the original version (**Fig. 20**), as well as *Vado mori* verses above the *Danse Macabre* woodcuts.<sup>83</sup> Then, one month later on 7 July 1486, Marchant expanded this second edition with the *Danse Macabre des Femmes*, albeit with only one additional woodcut for the queen and the duchess and otherwise re-using the same two woodcuts for the *acteur* (the latter with the corpse figuring as *la royne morte*) and that of the four skeletal musicians – perhaps a sign of haste on the part of a publisher eager to meet a continuing demand for such macabre literature.<sup>84</sup> This revised second edition also contained *Les dis des trois mors et tros vifz*, *Le débat du corps et de l'ame* and *La complainte de l'ame damné*. A fully illustrated *Danse Macabre des Femmes* was published by Marchant on 2 May 1491, but with new woodcuts by an inferior artist and the added figures of the *bigotte* and *sotte*, which were not part of the original poem usually attributed to Martial d'Auvergne (1430/5-1508).<sup>85</sup>

The success of Marchant's 1485 *Danse Macabre* edition made it inevitable that other printers would follow suit, such as Antoine Vérard. The mural at Les Innocents was no longer the model nor, perhaps, the source of inspiration. New versions ranged from luxury editions on vellum to cheaper pirate copies.<sup>86</sup> In fact, there were at least seven different *Danse Macabre* editions by Marchant alone in the period 1485-91, including a Latin version, and the theme continued to appear in print as late as 1533.<sup>87</sup> The absence of *Danse Macabre* copies in private inventories after c.1525 and the considerable stock still held by some booksellers as late as 1551 may indicate that interest in the theme had waned by the second quarter of the sixteenth century, as one author has claimed.<sup>88</sup> However, the use of the *danse* as a decorative motif in printed books of hours and the publication of Holbein's woodcut series at Lyons in 1538 suggest that the *danse* remained very much alive and open to new interpretations.

### History or convention: a new interpretation of the *Danse Macabre*

The evidence of the text, Marchant's woodcuts and the medallion on fol. 123r of Morgan MS M.359 (chapter 3, fig. 6) suggests that the mural at Les Innocents opened with the *docteur* or *acteur* who explained the didactic intentions of the *Danse*. The reader is addressed as 'O creature roysonnable' and the *danse* will serve him (or her) as a 'miroer' in order to show that 'Mort nespargne petit ne grant'; in fact, Marchant described his 1486 edition on the title page as a 'Miroer salutaire pour toutes gens: Et de tous estatz'.<sup>89</sup> In this purported mirror contemporaries were thus expected to recognise themselves as well as the society they lived in, and to learn the ultimate fate of all estates, starting with the highest ranks – 'Tu vois les plus grans commancer' – after which the *Danse* proper opens with the pope. This lesson is confirmed by the *roy*

*mort* towards the end of the poem, who reminds readers that nobody is spared: all 'estats diuers' will become 'viande a vers', food for worms – even a crowned king.

The *Danse* may have been an apposite theme for a cemetery setting, but its highly conventional message does not quite explain why the scheme at Les Innocents excited such keen interest, unless there was another reason that has so far not been recognised. Social satire, which is evident throughout the *Danse*, cannot have been the sole reason for its popularity; contrary to the *acteur*'s claim, the *danse* is in fact elitist in its choice of characters and fails to include craftsmen or workers other than the *laboureur*. There may be yet another reason – one dictated by the political circumstances of the period when the mural was first created in Paris only a few years after the deaths of Henry V and Charles VI. To understand the *Danse* better, therefore, it is imperative to investigate some of its key characters, especially among the upper ranks, to ascertain if they were not merely conventional social stereotypes but also contained political resonances that contemporaries would have understood.

### • *The dead king*

First of all, albeit nearly last in the scheme, there is the *roy mort* who is presented in Marchant's woodcut as a naked corpse with his crown toppled beside him; the caption 'Le roy mort que vers mignent' in BnF, ms.fr. 14989 indicates that, unlike Marchant's woodcut, the original mural depicted the dead king as being devoured by worms.<sup>90</sup> Admittedly, the fall of kings was a familiar image from representations of the Wheel of Fortune, especially in contemporary manuscripts of Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium* (see chapter 3, fig. 8).<sup>91</sup> The *roy mort* also resembles the type of cadaver or *transi* monument that had begun its spread across northern Europe at this time with a similar moral about mortality and *vanitas* (see chapter 7).<sup>92</sup>

Notwithstanding the purportedly conventional message about death being the ultimate fate of both 'bons et peruers', upon completion of the mural by Lent 1425 few beholders can have forgotten the demise of two kings in quick succession in 1422: Henry V at Vincennes – an unexpectedly early death of the foreign invader-turned-heir apparent – but especially Charles VI in his room in the Hôtel de St Pol. The long-suffering monarch had not been seen in public much in his later years, but his subjects had shown their love for him by rejoicing and shouting 'Noel!' when the king and queen returned to Paris from a sojourn in Senlis in mid September 1422.<sup>93</sup> At the time of his death on 31 October, he had been king of France for over forty-two years and the common people of Paris greatly mourned their 'good King Charles', as the Bourgeois records at length.<sup>94</sup> For two or three days after his death, his body had been laid out in his bed at the Hôtel de St Pol for all to see, his face uncovered, while during the funeral procession the customary funeral effigy in the king's likeness (*cf.* Fig. 16) had been carried along on top of the coffin under a gold canopy like the body of Christ at the feast of Corpus Christi, according to the Bourgeois:

Item, il estoit hault comme une toise, largement couché en envers en ung lict, le visaige descouvert ou sa semblance, couronne d'or, tenant en une de ses mains ung sceptre royal, et en l'autre une maniere de main faisant la benediction de deux doyz, et estoient dorez et si longs qu'ilz advenoient à sa couronne.<sup>95</sup>

The image of the *roy mort* in the mural could be interpreted both as a generic image of (royal) pride after a fall and as a specific reference to a dead king of France: after all, the cemetery was situated along the road to the royal mausoleum at Saint-Denis (Figs 3-4) where the Bourgeois claimed that more than eighteen thousand

people went from Paris to honour Charles VI. The *roy mort* stanza may even be a later interpolation for it does not fit into the overall dialogue pattern and it occurs in neither the *Totentanz* nor the *Dança*. Meanwhile, the dual kingdom was left to be ruled nominally by a mere toddler not much older – at the time of the completion of the mural, at least – than the *enfant* snatched from his cradle slightly earlier in the mural.

### • *The pope*

As the highest church dignitary the pope is the obvious figure to start the *Danse Macabre* proper, yet the papacy was not above criticism, especially at the time of the mural's completion less than a decade after the end of the Great Schism (1378-1417). The move of the papacy from Rome to Avignon in 1309 had ultimately resulted in an embarrassing situation where two rival antipopes ruled the (divided) Christian nations from Avignon and Rome simultaneously, and this was made worse in 1409 with the election of Alexander V as an alternative third antipope at the Council of Pisa; a solution that failed when his rivals Benedict XIII and John XXIII refused to abdicate. To say that the co-existence of three antipopes undermined the authority of the papacy would be an understatement. Only in 1417 at the Council of Constance (1414-18) was the situation resolved through the election of Martin V (1368-1431) as sole pope with English support. The new pope refused the French offer of Avignon as his papal residence in favour of Rome where he eventually arrived in 1420.

The question is whether there are resonances of this recent papal ignominy in the *Danse* at Les Innocents. The invitation by the *mort* to the pope to start the dance 'comme le plus digne seigneur' is tinged with irony if one considers his papal dignity and the church's stance on dancing (see Introduction). This impression is strengthened when the pope proceeds to describe himself as God on earth, 'qui suis dieu en terre / Jay eu dignite souuerainne / En leglise comme saint pierre' – biting satire that is often not recognised.<sup>96</sup> As we shall see in chapter 3, Lydgate's Death likewise protests too much in a stanza even more pseudo-reverential in tone than its French model.

Public censure of the papacy is usually linked to the Reformation a century later, although there was already a flourishing of anti-clerical satire by the late fourteenth century. One author claimed that the pope was not usually criticised in *danse macabre* or *Totentanz* schemes until Niklaus Manuel's lost mural of 1516-19, which was painted before the 1528 Reformation and iconoclasm in Berne.<sup>97</sup> Yet in the accompanying poem believed to be by Manuel, the pope mocks the world's foolish reverence for his seeming holiness, as if he alone were responsible for barring people from heaven.<sup>98</sup> His words are really an expanded echo of the pope's ostensible holiness as conveyed in the terse words of the Latin *Totentanz* poem (Appendix 6), 'Sanctus dicebar' (I was called holy) – a seemingly innocuous phrase yet at the same time quite ambiguous, and also found thus in other related German *Totentanz* texts.<sup>99</sup> The Knoblochtzer text goes even further with 'Got was ich off erden genant' (On earth I was called God), echoing the French poem's 'qui suis dieu en terre'.<sup>100</sup>

There is no reason to suppose that the figure of the pope at Les Innocents was meant to be read as a satirical portrait of a specific pope, least of all the autocratic Martin V. Yet there are parallels: it was alleged in the seventeenth century that the figures of the pope, emperor and king in the Groß-Baseler *Totentanz* of c.1440 represented the later antipope Felix V (1383-1449), Emperor Sigismund (1368-1437), and his Habsburg son-in-law and successor Albrecht II (1397-1439), although this can no longer be verified.<sup>101</sup> Moreover, the king in Holbein's woodcut is claimed to be a portrait of Francis I of France (**Fig. 17**) while the emperor could be Maximilian; the portly beardless pope in Manuel's mural of 1516-19 may have resembled pope Leo X

(1513-21); and on the Dresden *Totentanz* relief of 1534-37 the emperor is usually identified as Charles V, the king as Ferdinand I, and the duke as George the Bearded of Saxony (who commissioned the frieze) followed by his sole surviving son John, both wearing the Order of the Golden Fleece.<sup>102</sup> The inclusion of historical figures – alive and dead – is thus not unique, which is an important consideration when we turn to the emperor and the king in the *Danse Macabre*.

### ● *The emperor*

There is nothing controversial in the text for the emperor in the *Danse*, unless it is the almost excessive courtesy with which the *mort* addresses him as 'le non pareil du monde / Prince et seigneur grant emperiere'. The irony mainly hinges on the fact that the emperor must abandon his imperial insignia ('la pomme dor ronde: / Armes: ceptre: timbre: baniere') and arm himself instead with 'pic', 'pelle' and 'linceul' (pick-axe, spade and shroud) – in other words, he must become like a typical *mort* himself; his 'grandeur mondaine' is over. Lydgate's *Dance of Death* follows the French poem very closely, while the Latin *Totentanz* presents the emperor as an all-conquering emperor who in turn is himself conquered by Death, so that he can no longer be called emperor or even man, 'non Caesar, non homo dictus'. Yet even if the text contains no personal references, there is the possibility that the image of the emperor in the mural was a cryptoportrait of a real-life counterpart, if we can trust the presumed identification of Sigismund in the Groß-Baseler *Totentanz*.

Sigismund must have sprung to mind to contemporaries viewing the image of the emperor in the mural in the 1420s. Ambitious and powerful, Sigismund was politically important to both France, England and Burgundy. His rise to a number of royal titles and the imperial throne was somewhat tortuous; a son of the Holy Roman emperor Charles IV of the House of Luxembourg, he officially succeeded his elder (already deposed) half-brother Wenceslas as German King upon the latter's death in 1419, but was only crowned emperor in Rome in 1433.<sup>103</sup> His sister Anne of Bohemia had been Richard II's wife and in 1411 there had been a rapprochement with England when Henry IV had sought imperial support against France.<sup>104</sup> The emperor saw himself rather as a mediator, however: his ultimate goal was the cessation of the Hundred Years War and the establishment of a Christian alliance to liberate the Holy Land.<sup>105</sup> After the Battle of Agincourt Sigismund paid a long visit to England in 1416 to try and make peace between England and France; on 15 August he sealed a treaty of perpetual friendship with Henry V at Canterbury. (This was followed in October by a rendezvous between Henry and John the Fearless at Calais, a meeting that probably resulted in a promise by John not to oppose further English intervention in France.<sup>106</sup>) Sigismund's later (unsuccessful) attempts to curb the growing Burgundian power was to cause conflict with John and with the latter's son Philip the Good.

Marchant's woodcut, ms. Rothschild 2535 and Morgan MS M.359 (**Figs 10-11**) all show the emperor with a beard, as the Paris mural may well have done: Sigismund also wore a beard, as seen in a contemporary portrait by an unknown artist in Vienna (**Fig. 12**).<sup>107</sup> Sigismund was an exceptionally well-travelled emperor; he had been on crusade and also paid lengthy visits to France, England and Italy. The image of the hirsute emperor would have been recognisable throughout Europe not just because of Sigismund's travels but also through his depiction in painting and sculpture, e.g. on seals, especially when combined with imperial heraldry and insignia; physiognomic likeness itself is a debatable issue in medieval portraits.<sup>108</sup> From the late fourteenth century, an increasing interest in portraiture is also evident in the creation of various painted and sculpted *gravenreeksen* representing the counts of Flanders and of



Holland, which at Courtrai and Haarlem were later updated with additional portraits of the dukes of Burgundy.<sup>109</sup> According to recent research, Sigismund moreover featured in a remarkable number of cryptoportraits.<sup>110</sup> The question is whether the image of the emperor at Les Innocents was one such example, hitherto unrecognised.

One vital detail in Marchant's woodcut is the emperor's robe decorated with double-headed eagles, a device that Sigismund was to adopt as the emperor's official coat of arms from 1433, though this heraldry had been unofficially associated with the emperor from the thirteenth century on: the colours are always a black double-headed eagle on a gold field (*or a double-headed eagle sable*).<sup>111</sup> In depictions of the Nine Worthies from the fourteenth century on, this heraldry was assigned to Julius Caesar.<sup>112</sup> A bearded and fierce-looking figure of Julius Caesar in a wall-painting of the Nine Worthies of the 1430s in the *sala baronale* of the Castello della Manta (Piedmont, Italy), recognisable by this traditional coat of arms, is believed to be a cryptoportrait of the then reigning emperor Sigismund (**Fig. 13**).<sup>113</sup>



10. The emperor (detail) in a danse macabre border decoration in a Parisian book of hours of c.1430 (Paris, BnF, ms. Rothschild 2535, fol. 108v).



11. The emperor in a danse macabre medallion in a Parisian book of hours of c.1430-35 (New York, Morgan Library MS M.359, fol. 108v).



12. (Above) Anon., Portrait of Emperor Sigismund, 1420s, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.



13. Wall-painting of the Nine Worthies (detail), 1430s, sala baronale, Castello della Manta (Piedmont, Italy): on the far left Julius Caesar (cryptoportrait of emperor Sigismund?) and second from the right emperor Charlemagne with his shield hanging on the tree on his right.

In the fictitious Nine Worthies heraldry, as illustrated in the same mural in the Castello della Manta (**Fig. 13**), Charlemagne's coat of arms is a combination of the imperial arms on the dexter side and on the sinister the fleurs-de-lis that signal him as King of the Franks (*or a eagle sable impaling azure semy of lis or*).<sup>114</sup> The emperor in Morgan MS M.359 (**Fig. 11**) wears an outer mantle with a reversed version of this heraldry, albeit without the fleurs-de-lis. However, the fork-bearded emperor in MS Rothschild 2535 (**Fig. 10**) is dressed in an heraldic mantle that matches the traditional heraldry of Charlemagne, except that the eagle on the dexter side is unmistakably double-headed (*or a double-headed eagle sable impaling azure semy of lis or*).

Nothing in the French poem points to Sigismund in particular, but the image of the emperor in the mural might have been a cryptoportrait with heraldry and hairstyle as determining factors, if we accept that the figure in ms. Rothschild 2535 was modelled on that at Les Saints Innocents. Yet although intriguing, these two combined factors remain far from conclusive: Charlemagne was also traditionally depicted with a beard, and his fictitious heraldry may even have been used deliberately to preclude associations with the still living emperor Sigismund. Such ambiguity may have been intentional, but there is one crucial difference with Sigismund's presumed cryptoportrait in the Groß-Baseler *Totentanz*: when that was painted Sigismund was dead.

### • The king

In both Marchant's woodcut and ms. Rothschild 2535 (**Fig. 14**), the crowned king wears an ermine collar over a mantle decorated with fleurs-de-lis. Yet whereas the former has shoulder-length hair and a short beard, the latter is beardless with shorter hair and a lined face. The king in Morgan MS M.359 (**Fig. 15**) is likewise beardless but has rather bland – even stereotypical – features, while his ermine-lined mantle has been left plain blue like the dexter half of the emperor's mantle (**Fig. 11**).



14. The king (detail) in a danse macabre border decoration in a Parisian book of hours of c.1430 (Paris, BnF, ms. Rothschild 2535, fol. 108v).



15. The king in a danse macabre medallion in a Parisian book of hours of c.1430-35 (New York, Morgan Library, MS M.359, fol. 125r).

The heraldry in all three images (if we ignore the absence of fleurs-de-lis in the M.359 medallion) indicates that the character was firmly intended to represent a king of France; in the *Totentanz* tradition his counterpart would have been the German king or king of Rome, *i.e.* heir to the emperor, albeit not in Knoblochtzer's woodcut where



he carries instead a fleur-de-lis banner.<sup>115</sup> The king in the *Dance of Death* mural at Stratford also appears to have worn a mantle decorated with the English royal device of three lions *passant gardant* (see chapter 3, fig. 11).<sup>116</sup> However, the differences in hairstyle and beard suggest a later updating in Marchant's woodcut, and the possibility of another cryptoportrait in the mural at Les Innocents if we can rely on the Rothschild 2535 figure having been modelled on its counterpart there.

Portraiture and likeness had become an important political tool under Charles V. Akin to the *gravenreeksen* in Flanders and Holland was a series of portrait statues commissioned by Charles V for a monumental staircase (*grande vis*) at the Louvre, which included the king, his wife Jeanne de Bourbon, his three brothers (the dukes of Anjou, Berry and Burgundy) and uncle (Philip, duke of Orléans), and two sergeants-at-arms; two extant contemporary figures of the king and queen (Louvre) are quite individual in appearance.<sup>117</sup> Unlike his father, Charles VI had very regular features that make him more difficult to recognise in depictions.<sup>118</sup> The king's funeral effigy has failed to survive, but the figure in ms. Rothschild 2535 shows very individual traits and as such resembles the royal tomb effigy at Saint-Denis (**Fig. 16**), which is believed to have been based on a death mask, just as the funeral effigy is likely to have been.<sup>119</sup> Two later parallels are the putative cryptoportraits of Francis I (1494-1547) in Holbein's woodcut (**Fig. 17**) and the figure of the king in the sixteenth-century mural at La Ferté-Loupière, which was based on one of Marchant's later editions but updated presumably to resemble the reigning monarch (**Fig. 18**).<sup>120</sup>



16. (Left) Tomb effigy of Charles VI by Pierre de Thoiry, commissioned c.1423-24 for the king's monument at the royal abbey of Saint-Denis.



17. (Above, middle) *Death and the king* (cryptoportrait of Francis I?), from Holbein's *danse macabre* woodcut series published in 1538: the cloth of honour behind the king appears to feature fleurs-de-lis.



18. (Above, right) *Updated figure of the king* (cryptoportrait of Francis I?) in the sixteenth-century *danse macabre* mural at La Ferté-Loupière (Yonne).

The stanzas for the king in the French poem support the above hypothesis, albeit not so much the description of him by the *mort* as 'Renomme de force et de proesse', which would hardly have suited Charles VI, even if he had formerly been engaged in military activity – he was on campaign against the duke of Brittany in 1392 when struck down by his first attack of madness. At first sight, the king's bitter response to the *mort*'s invitation appears to be a rare reference to the musical aspect of the *Danse*, 'Je nay point apris a danser / A danse et note si sauuage', which is echoed by Lydgate as 'I haue not lerned here-a-forne to daunce / No daunce in sothe of fotyng so

sauage' (E:113-14). These lines have traditionally been interpreted as a sign that while there is equality in death, musical tastes differed radically amongst the different ranks of society, with Death often playing lowly instruments (see Introduction).<sup>121</sup> On the other hand, it may be an allusion to the *bal des sauvages* (or *bal des ardents*, as it became known) of 28 January 1393, a notorious near-fatal incident that had caused outrage in Paris where the king enjoyed great popularity (he was known as 'le Bien-aimé, before his illness caused this soubriquet to be changed into 'le Fol').

The *bal des sauvages* was described in vivid detail by Jean Froissart (c.1337-c.1405) in his *Chroniques*, several extant early copies of which contain illustrations of the scene.<sup>122</sup> Shortly after his recovery from his first bout of madness, the king and five of his courtiers decided to dress up as wildmen (*hommes sauvages*) as a prank to liven up the wedding of one of the queen's maids of honour on 28 January 1393: they wore highly combustible linen costumes soaked in pitch or wax and covered with frazzled hemp.<sup>123</sup> These costumes accidentally ignited when Louis of Orléans and his friend Philippe de Bar entered with torches, causing the agonising death of four of the dancers and nearly killing the king himself. To assuage Parisian anger, Louis had to do public penance; he also erected a chapel at Les Célestins in expiation.

Visitors to the cemetery may well have grasped the reference to the *bal des sauvages* in the *Danse* at Les Innocents, all the more so since the incident was still cited years later among Louis's misdeeds in the *Justification du duc de Bourgogne*, a manifesto designed to defend his assassination as justified tyrannicide.<sup>124</sup> Moreover, the king's stanza ends with the telling conclusion that the greater and lesser alike will be turned to mere ashes: 'En la fin fault deuenir cendre'. Of course, this aphorism is also an apt reference to the phrase 'Earth to earth, dust to dust, ashes to ashes' from the burial service, and the ambiguity is no doubt deliberate. It is impossible to know if Lydgate recognised any hint to the event of 1393 when he translated the last line as 'For [w]e shalle al to dede asshes turne' (E:120); he may have been more mindful of the late King Henry V as the 'som-tyme crowned kyng' (E:638).

The combined evidence of heraldry, likeness and textual allusions all point to the king in the *Danse* at Les Innocents having been intended as a cryptoportrait of Charles VI. This idea is reinforced by the appearance of the *roy mort* at the end of the poem, who complements the earlier, still living king in a way similar to the occurrence of dual effigies on 'double-decker' tombs (see chapter 7). Further support for this idea may be found in the remains the cadaver tomb of Cardinal Jean de La Grange (d. 1402) in Avignon, which formerly incorporated figures of the cardinal's former patrons Pope Clement VII and King Charles V, the latter's sons Charles VI and Louis of Orléans, and the cardinal himself, each kneeling in a separate register before a scene from the Five Joys of Mary.<sup>125</sup> If the hierarchical arrangement of these five figures and the inclusion of seven putrefying heads of further dignitaries above the *transi* at the bottom are indeed references to the *danse macabre*, this would lend further support to both an earlier dissemination of the *danse* prior to the mural in Paris and to the hypothesis of cryptoportraiture in such a context. If the hypothesis about a cryptoportrait of Charles VI at Les Innocents is correct, it also means either that the *Danse Macabre* poem was written after 1393, or more likely – particularly in view of Jehan Le Fèvre's mention of the *danse* in 1376 – that it was specially adapted from an earlier (lost) version to include references to the *bal des sauvages*.

### ● *The constable*

Despite everything that has been written about social stereotypes, it would be wrong to think that the *Danse* presents a straightforward if satirical picture of medieval social

hierarchy. Just as there had not been a single pope during the Great Schism until 1417, there was no single constable of France when the mural at Les Innocents was painted. The rank of *comes stabulari* was originally established in 1060; first officer of the crown and commander-in-chief of the army, the constable was one of the original five great officers of the crown.<sup>126</sup> The badge of office was the elaborate royal sword 'Joyeuse', dating from the 1300s, which was carried by the constable in front of the king in coronation ceremonies; its scabbard was embellished with fleurs-de-lis.

The *connetable* was a key national figure, but recent holders of the post had met a violent end: two successive constables were killed at Agincourt while a third – Bernard, count of Armagnac – had been murdered in Paris in 1418 when the city was seized by the Burgundians.<sup>127</sup> After Bernard's murder, Queen Isabeau appointed as the new constable of France Charles II, duke of Lorraine, who held the post from 1418 until his resignation in 1425;<sup>128</sup> thereafter, the English government continued to appoint its own constables. Meanwhile, however, the dauphin in his 'kingdom of Bourges' had also been appointing his own constables: first in 1421 the Scot John Stuart, earl of Buchan, who died in 1424 at the Battle of Verneuil against Bedford's army, and then in 1425 Arthur, comte de Richemont and brother to John V, duke of Brittany. Originally an Armagnac supporter, Richemont was a rather controversial character who in 1424 turned sides from Bedford to the dauphin despite having been given another of Philip the Good's sisters for his wife in 1423; yet his service to the dauphin's cause was questionable and the Bourgeois claimed that 'the English used to say that they feared neither war nor defeat so long as he was constable of France'.<sup>129</sup>

The text of the French *Danse* contains no clear pointers to any identifiable constable of the period. There are conventional warnings about the uselessness of weapons and valour since Death will take even 'Les plus fors comme charlemaigne' (l. 3) – perhaps not just an *ubi sunt* reference but also an allusion to the earlier figure of the emperor whose heraldry may have been that of Charlemagne (see above). In response, the constable's words convey a mixture of justification and brute force. A cryptoportrait in the original mural could have offered clues to the identity of an actual constable, but such evidence is no longer available. The constable in Marchant's woodcut is visually one of the most impressive figures in the whole series as he fills the arched space vertically, his ceremonial sword raised aloft, but his armour is of much later date than the mural as a comparison with his counterpart in Morgan MS M.359 shows (**Fig. 8**). Whatever the image of the constable at Les Innocents may have looked like, contemporaries would have known that France no longer had one constable, but two.

### • *The missing link: the duke*

Despite the careful hierarchical order of the French *Danse*, at least in the first half of the poem, a comparison with other schemes reveals a conspicuous omission: whereas the clerical rank includes the anachronistic figure of the patriarch (to be discussed below), the line of lay characters jumps from king *via* constable to *chevalier* or knight, missing out the duke (see table below).

The omission of the duke has so far failed to attract the attention of scholars, yet it is illogical and unlikely to be coincidence in view of the carefully planned hierarchy of the *Danse*.<sup>130</sup> The inclusion of both a duke and a count in the Latin-German *Totentanz* makes much better sense, while the Spanish *Dança* at least has *el duque*. That the duke would normally have been part of such an hierarchical scheme is also evident from his inclusion in the Morgan MS M.359 cycle (see Appendix 7 and **Fig. 19**), where he is placed before the constable on fol. 127r, as in the Spanish *Dança*. His

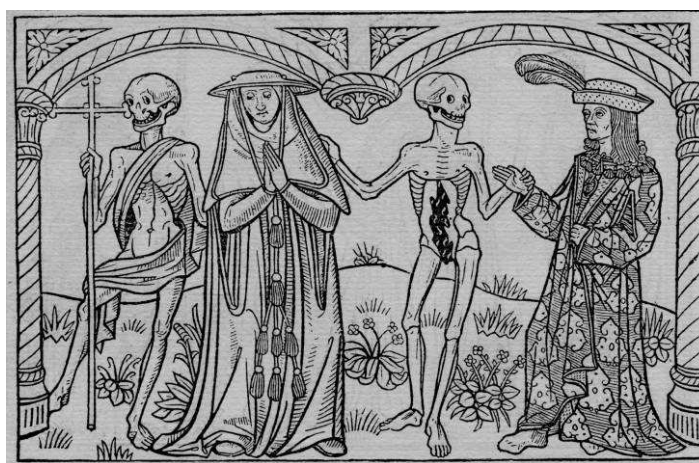
court dress with its ermine collar is the sign of his rank; he carries no other attributes. Even Knoblochtzer's *Totentanz* version includes the duke although that can be explained by a look at Marchant's 1486 edition, which features the *duc* as one of the ten added characters (**Fig. 20**): he is inserted before the patriarch and in turn preceded by another new figure, the papal legate, so that the alternation of clerical and lay representatives is maintained.

**Table. Sequence of the first twelve characters in the danse macabre.**

| INNOCENTS,<br>PARIS | LYDGATE<br>(A version) | DANÇA GENERAL<br>DE LA MUERTE | Latin-German<br>TOTENTANZ |
|---------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Pope             | 1. Pope                | 1. Pope                       | 1. Pope                   |
| 2. Emperor          | 2. Emperor             | 2. Emperor                    | 2. Emperor                |
| 3. Cardinal         | 3. Cardinal            | 3. Cardinal                   | 3. Empress                |
| 4. King             | 4. King                | 4. King                       | 4. King                   |
| 5. Patriarch        | 5. Patriarch           | 5. Patriarch                  | 5. Cardinal               |
| 6. <b>Constable</b> | 6. <b>Constable</b>    | 6. <b>Duke</b>                | 6. Patriarch              |
| 7. Archbishop       | 7. Archbishop          | 7. Archbishop                 | 7. Archbishop             |
| 8. <b>Knight</b>    | 8. <b>Baron</b>        | 8. <b>Constable</b>           | 8. <b>Duke</b>            |
| 9. Bishop           | 9. Lady                | 9. Bishop                     | 9. Bishop                 |
| 10. Squire          | 10. Bishop             | 10. <b>Knight</b>             | 10. <b>Count</b>          |
| 11. Abbot           | 11. Squire             | 11. Abbot                     | 11. Abbot                 |
| 12. Bailiff         | 12. Abbot              | 12. Squire                    | 12. <b>Knight</b>         |



19. The duke in a danse macabre medallion in a Parisian book of hours of c.1430-35 (New York, Morgan Library, MS M.359, fol. 126r).



20. The papal legate (left) and the duke (right), additional woodcut in Guy Marchant's new expanded Danse Macabre edition published in Paris on 7 July 1486.

If we accept the hypothesis that the duke was included in an earlier prototype of the *Danse* but omitted from the mural at Les Innocents, there remains the question whether Marchant simply adopted two stanzas already known and available, or whether the additional stanzas for all ten new characters were commissioned specially. We know that the theme was adaptable and that new stanzas were added to the different *Totentanz* variants as well as to Lydgate's *Dance of Death* (see chapter 3). In the 1486 edition the 'tresnoble' duke is praised by the *mort* for his prowess and nobility, but then reminded that 'Les grans souuent sont premier pris' (the great are



often taken first).<sup>131</sup> This concluding sentence matches the duke's sentiment that 'Hault estat nest pas le plus seur' (high estate is not the most secure) and he is rightly fearful because 'De mort suis assailliz tresfort: / Et ne say tour pour me deffendre' (I am very fiercely attacked by death and know no trick by which to defend myself).

The likelihood is that Marchant's stanzas for the duke were newly written together with those for the other added characters in the 1486 edition; any stanzas from an earlier *Danse* version would by then probably have been lost or forgotten. However, in the 1420s such stanzas for the duke would have reminded readers of the two dukes assassinated in 1407 and 1419 without much chance of defending themselves. The exclusion of the duke from the *Danse* at Les Innocents was undoubtedly prompted by the political circumstances of the time: not just the earlier murders of Louis of Orléans in 1407 and John the Fearless in 1419, or the capture at Agincourt of Louis's son Charles (whose subsequent imprisonment in England was to last until 1440), but more importantly the political stand-off between the Regent Bedford and Duke Philip the Good, allies though they might have been – the former *de facto* ruling Paris, but the latter enjoying great popularity there.<sup>132</sup>

Whereas the pope and the emperor were sufficiently far away and Charles VI was dead (and thus in no position to allow or disallow a cryptoportrait of himself in the mural at Les Innocents), there were several interested parties who might have been sensitive about any representation of a duke in such a public scheme. Lydgate may have had similar reasons for not adding the duke to his *Dance of Death*, such as the power struggle between Cardinal Beaufort and the duke of Gloucester, although the subsequent reattribution of the *chevalier's* stanzas to the baron ('Erl or Baron' in the Lansdowne version) and the *escuier's* to the 'Knyht or scwyer' (Lansdowne) may have made the omission less obvious (see Appendix 2 and chapter 3). In the mural at Les Innocents, however, the original scheme must have been adapted – probably at the unknown patron's insistence – with the intention of removing any political embarrassment, unless the duke was meant to be conspicuous by his very absence.

There is a grim irony in the fact that at least one dead duke was to be remembered in another *Danse Macabre*-inspired wall-painting in Paris: the image of Louis of Orléans being attacked by Death was commissioned by his grandson King Louis XII (1462-1515) for the family chapel at the monastery of Les Célestins in Paris.<sup>133</sup> An antiquarian drawing of the mural in the Gaignières collection (**Fig. 1** and also chapter 8) shows the duke kneeling before Death who utters the conventional words 'IVVENES AC SENES RAPIO' (I kill young and old alike).

### • Other characters

The characters discussed above constitute the strongest evidence for the presence of cryptoportraits and allusions to historical figures and events in the *Danse* at Les Innocents. Yet the mural may have contained other, more subtle references that contemporaries might have grasped, but that are much more difficult for later researchers to recognise.<sup>134</sup> Any political connotations are more likely to be found among the upper ranks of the *Danse*, so a number of key figures will be discussed in this final section.

The **cardinal** follows the pope as the second-highest ranking cleric and is easily recognisable by his characteristic red hat, to which the Latin *Totentanz* cleverly refers in a pun and which Lydgate's cardinal also specifically mentions ('Mi hatte of rede', *E*-102).<sup>135</sup> The image of the cardinal might have reminded some viewers of Beaufort, the powerful and supremely rich bishop of Winchester, who owed his cardinal's hat to pope Martin V in return for supporting his candidacy in 1417 and who on a number

of occasions visited Paris with more pomp than even Bedford could muster.<sup>136</sup> However, it is hard to find a likely French counterpart who could have been portrayed in the mural. Marchant's woodcut shows the cardinal shrinking back and averting his gaze from his dead counterpart, a pose not dissimilar (but reversed) in ms. Rothschild 2535. The text offers only general reminders of how the cardinal has lived 'haultement / et en honneur', but also how such grand living makes one forget the inevitable end. In reply the cardinal pays a sad farewell to the rich trappings of his status, including his 'Chapeau rouge chappe de pris'.

Whereas the cardinal is a prominent church dignitary, the **patriarch** is rather an historical anomaly at this time, a relic of the crusading era. After the fall of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem no longer had an actual diocese, although the Church continued to appoint titular patriarchs of Jerusalem;<sup>137</sup> there were other Latin patriarchates still, but it was really an empty title.<sup>138</sup> As one author remarked, only the clergy can have known what this title signified exactly, and the patriarch's inclusion makes the omission of the duke all the more remarkable.<sup>139</sup> Yet the patriarch is present in the French *Danse*, in Lydgate's *Dance of Death*, Morgan MS M.359, the Spanish *Dança* and various *Totentanz* variants (see Appendix 6 and table above). His attribute is his staff with its characteristic double cross, as shown in Marchant's woodcut. He must have been a sufficiently familiar church dignitary to be included to augment the clerical ranks, even if it is doubtful that the patriarch in the *Danse Macabre* was modelled on any particular holder of that title. The text just contains one intriguing remark that might suggest otherwise: after mocking his 'basse chiere' (*i.e.* his fallen countenance, as indicated by the turn of the patriarch's head in Marchant's woodcut), the *mort* reminds the patriarch not only that another will inherit his staff but that he himself will not become 'pape de romme'. Was there a particular patriarch at this time who was known for his papal ambitions? It was an elevation of which Beaufort may have entertained brief hopes when he attended the Council of Constance, but although he held numerous titles (including that of papal legate) he was never a patriarch, and no other candidates for this figure in the mural can be identified.

In Marchant's image of the **archbishop** with his metropolitan cross-staff, there is a close connection between illustration and text, which may mean that the woodcut resembled the figure in the mural. The *mort*'s opening lines 'Que vous tires la teste arriere / Archeuesque: tirez vous pres' (how you draw back your head, archbishop; draw near!) match the posture of the figure in the woodcut. Yet does this pose convey hauteur or apprehension? In the text the *mort* asks him whether he does so perhaps out of fear of being struck by someone ('Auez vous peur quon ne vous fiere'), but Lydgate instead has Death ask the archbishop 'whi do 3e 3ow with-drawe / so frowardli as hit were bi disdeyne' (*E*:152-53). The pose could be intentionally ambiguous (although the face suggests hauteur), with the *mort* opting for the wrong explanation to mock the prelate. Medieval archbishops were not usually timid; Jean Montaigu, archbishop of Sens, had even died fighting for France at Agincourt, but it would be hard to prove that the mural alluded to him. Curiously, in Rothschild ms. 2535 it is the bishop with a prominent crosier whose body language resembles the archbishop's in Marchant's woodcut (**Fig. 21**): perhaps a case of iconographical mix-up? The painted figure has rather individual features, perhaps modelled on a cryptoportrait in the mural. The only other potential allusion is the archbishop's frivolous regret that he will no longer be able to rest 'en chambre peinte', *i.e.* in a painted bedchamber of the type that was once common in medieval palaces, as the Palais des Papes in Avignon still testifies.



21-22. The bishop (far left) and the knight in a heraldic tabard (left), details of a danse macabre border decoration in a Parisian book of hours of c.1430 (Paris, BnF, ms. Rothschild 2535, fol. 109r).

The **bishop** in the *Danse* had many real-life counterparts, but the local prelate would have been a natural target for pointed satire. The position of the medieval bishop of Paris was complicated in that his diocese fell under the metropolitan jurisdiction of the archbishop of Sens, whereas he was elected by the cathedral chapter of Notre-Dame; his appointment then had to be confirmed by the king before he could be consecrated and officially installed in his cathedral, for which papal approval was required. In the turbulent first half of the fifteenth century this often did not happen, and the 1420s saw some candidates for the see elected but not confirmed, or in one case appointed but then rapidly transferred by the pope.<sup>140</sup> Apart from the upset that this frequent change of bishops may have caused to the diocese at large, there was the power that a local bishop could wield over matters of church revenue. In 1441 Denis du Moulin (Charles VII's candidate for the see of Paris in 1439) was to forbid all processions and burials in the parish church and cemetery of Les Innocents for four months after demanding more money in tithes than the impoverished parish could afford to pay, as the Bourgeois indignantly recorded.<sup>141</sup> In 1424-25 this conflict was still in the future, but it is evident that relationships between the bishop and the churches in his diocese could be fraught, and tax was a major cause of resentment. It is telling, therefore, that the focus of the *mort*'s stanza is on the need to render account of one's conduct ('De vous subges fault rendre compte'). His words make the bishop realise that the world ultimately disinherits everyone; God will hold all to account, 'Dieu vouldra de tout compte oir' (l. 11), and only merit will serve, 'Tout ce passe fors le merite' (l. 16). The choice of this accounting jargon for the bishop may reflect parish resentment, while Death's final line 'Nest pas assure que trop hault monte' (he who mounts too high is not secure) could have been intended as a pointed reference to the uncertainties facing those in high positions at this time, bishops (elect) included. Yet as long as we do not know for certain who commissioned the mural, we cannot be sure whether there was a specific target for the satire in the bishop's portrayal.

The exclusion of the duke meant that the **chevalier** assumed a place in the *dance* hierarchically above his status. The non-military apparel of the knight in Marchant's woodcut is almost certainly an updating and totally different from the heraldic tabard that the beardless and bareheaded figure in ms. Rothschild 2535 wears over his armour (**Fig. 22**). The Rothschild knight's blazon (*azure, a chevron between six martlets or*) might suggest a cryptoportrait, if we accept that the illuminator based this figure on the mural, but the coat of arms cannot be positively identified.<sup>142</sup> In the poem, the *mort*'s focus is the knight's habit of dancing (presumably all night) with 'Les dames'; he orders his victim to forget 'trompettes clarons' – the music of battle, hunting and action – and to follow him 'sans sommelier' (without snoozing) to a

different dance. Vainly does the knight recall the esteem he has enjoyed, the love of the ladies, and how he was never defamed 'A la court de seigneur notable'. It is a satirical, but rather stereotypical summary of knightly pleasures. Even so, the possibility of a cryptoportrait cannot be ruled out: as in the case of the emperor, it is possible that a fictitious coat of arms was used intentionally to disguise the identity of the real-life counterpart of the *chevalier* in the mural.

## Conclusion

Whereas the genesis of the *danse macabre*, the mural in Paris, the poem and its illustrations in Marchant's edition have all been extensively studied, surprisingly little attention has been paid to the circumstances under which the wall-painting was created in 1424-25. As a result, the characters in the *Danse* have been regarded as social stereotypes: interesting for the information they may contain about medieval life, society and morality, but without further historical relevance.

When the large and no doubt costly *Danse Macabre* mural came to be painted at Les Innocents, its didactic theme was already familiar: literary and visual warnings about death abounded in this period. The text of the poem was almost certainly adapted from an earlier (lost) version, as suggested not only by the stanza of the king but also by the addresses by the *mort* to the reader and to preceding characters in five stanzas; this latter feature – characteristic of the Spanish *Dança* – would originally have emphasised the idea of a continuing chain of living and dead dancers.<sup>143</sup> What may have made the mural so famous so soon is the adaptation of a moralizing theme into a social satire on a monumental scale, but with political and historical connotations that contemporaries would have recognised. The (presumed) presence of cryptoportraits in the mural at Les Innocents is paralleled in earlier art – for example, there are good reasons to believe that the figure on Jeremiah on Claus Sluter's *Well of Moses* at Champmol was a cryptoportrait of Philip the Bold<sup>144</sup> – and in later *danse macabre* schemes elsewhere, which raises the question whether the latter were inspired by the celebrated example in Paris.

Without knowing the identity of the patron it is difficult to establish the specific intention of the mural. (The identity of the artist is less important in this respect, as is that of the original author whose earlier version may have been superseded by the later adaptation of the text.) France was in chaos, and had been for quite some time, but with the death of the once popular Charles VI in 1422 the Parisians had lost their national sovereign; the Bourgeois has left a vivid account of their grief at the king's death and dismay that his only royal mourner should be the duke of Bedford – a foreigner.<sup>145</sup> At the time of the mural's creation, their choice was between a foreign regency on behalf of an uncrowned boy king, the political manoeuvring of an ambitious Burgundian duke, and the as yet unproven claims of a dauphin who had been disowned by his parents and whose legitimacy was in doubt.<sup>146</sup>

It is, therefore, not impossible that in some way the mural was intended to serve as a nationalistic homage to the deceased Charles VI as the last king of a united France, whose tomb effigy was commissioned by his widow Isabeau (still resident in Paris until her death in 1435) around the same time. As long as the (overt) message was not politically controversial, the English authorities could not have objected to such a scheme: their king Henry VI was, after all, the grandson and heir of Charles VI. Likewise, Philip the Good was himself a Valois and the late king's second cousin, as well as his son-in-law, having married in 1409 Charles VI's daughter Michelle who had predeceased her father in June 1422.

This brings us to the question of who the unknown patron may have been. Like his father and grandfather before him, Philip the Good knew the importance of art for political and propaganda purposes: for example, life-size figures of Philip the Bold and Margaret of Flanders were added to the painted *gravenreeks* in the Count Louis of Mâle's intended funerary chapel at Courtrai in 1406, just as its design was copied for a similar series in the chapel at Ghent in 1419, the year of Philip the Good's succession.<sup>147</sup> Allusions in the Paris mural to the 'bal des ardents', which was still debated at the Council of Constance in 1415 as one of Louis of Orléans' crimes, would have suited the Burgundian faction but not the Orléans-Armagnac supporters. Above all, Philip was keen not to associate himself too closely with the English regime but to steer a politically safe course; he carefully avoided attending the deaths of both Henry V and Charles VI, and also spent very little time in Paris during Bedford's regency. Even so, the year in which the painting was commenced saw not one but three rare visits by Philip to Paris, viz. 10-23 February, 12 June-5 July and 20 October-24 November 1424.<sup>148</sup>

The mural was situated not far from Philip's hôtel in Paris in an area that one historian described as Burgundian territory in view of the small number of confiscated Armagnac properties in the triangle between the rue Saint-Denis and the rue Saint-Honoré.<sup>149</sup> Moreover, Philip's *libraire* Guillebert de Metz specifically named the mural in his *Description de Paris*. Intriguing is also a record of the numerous snow sculptures that were set up around Arras during the severe winter of 1434-35.<sup>150</sup> Joan of Arc had been held captive in Arras in November 1430; the city belonged to the duke of Burgundy who would sign a treaty there with the former dauphin in late 1435. Amongst the named snow sculptures at Arras that winter were 'le Grande Puchelle' with 'gens d'armes' (often explained as Joan the Maid with armed men, although the interpretation of 'Grande Puchelle' is debatable) and 'la dansse machabre où estoient en figure de nege l'Empereur, le Roy, le Mort et Manouvrier' (the *danse macabre* in which there were snow figures of the emperor, the king, Death and worker).<sup>151</sup>

Whether or not the Arras *danse* in snow carried a political message, it indicates a surprisingly rapid dissemination into popular culture within a Burgundian-controlled area as well as a change in politics: as mentioned earlier, Philip owned an early manuscript copy that contained the *Danse Macabre* text (BnF, ms.fr. 14989) alongside an anti-dauphinist poem. His interest in the theme is also suggested by a 'jeu, histoire et moralité sur le fait de la danse macabre' that was performed for the duke in his hôtel in Bruges in September 1449.<sup>152</sup> Coupled with the fact that the duke was a *maecenas* with the means to pay for an expensive mural, there may be enough circumstantial but suggestive evidence to propose Duke Philip the Good as the unknown patron of the mural at Les Innocents, although further research of the ducal records is needed to prove this hypothesis – if any such written evidence remains.

Whoever the patron may have been, a painted memorial to his royal father cannot have displeased Charles VII when he finally re-entered Paris in 1436 with Burgundian support. By that time, the fame of the mural and the theme of the *Danse Macabre* had already spread across Europe to be adapted yet further to what local patrons on either side of the Channel wanted it to be: a moralising text or a decorative border in manuscript or print, a mural, a window, sculpture, or whatever suited their tastes and purposes. The irony is that these later adaptations may have obscured the original intention of the mural and its patron.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> F. Warren (ed.), with introduction and notes by B. White, *The Dance of Death, edited from MSS. Ellesmere 26/A.13 and B.M. Lansdowne 699, collated with the other extant MSS.*, EETS, o.s. 181 (London, 1931, repr. 2000), 'Verba translatoris', l. 20 in the Ellesmere MS. Further quotations in the text will be based on this edition, with *E* referring to the Ellesmere and *L* to the Lansdowne manuscript versions.

<sup>2</sup> Since this chapter was written, its key findings have been published in S. Oosterwijk, 'Of Dead Kings, Dukes and Constables: The Historical Context of the *Danse Macabre* in Late Medieval Paris', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 161 (2008), pp. 131-62.

<sup>3</sup> For the historical background, see G.L. Thompson, *Paris and its People under English Rule: The Anglo-Burgundian Regime 1420-1436* (Oxford, 1991), and W. Paravicini and B. Schnerb (eds), *Paris, capitale des ducs de Bourgogne*, Beihefte der Francia, 64 (Ostfildern, 2007). Also C.T. Allmand, *Lancastrian Normandy 1415-1450: The History of a Medieval Occupation* (Oxford, 1983); C. Allmand, *The Hundred Years War: England and France at War c.1300-c.1450* (Cambridge, 1988); C. Allmand (ed.), *Power, Culture, and Religion in France c.1350-c.1550* (Woodbridge, 1989); C. Allmand (ed.), *War, Government and Power in Late Medieval France* (Liverpool, 2000). For Bedford, see J. Stratford (ed.), *The Bedford Inventories: The Worldly Goods of John, Duke of Bedford, Regent of France (1389-1435)* (London, 1993), and for a lively, if not always accurate account of his life and career, E. C. Williams, *My Lord of Bedford 1389-1435, Being a Life of John of Lancaster, first duke of Bedford, brother of Henry V and Regent of France* (London 1963).

<sup>4</sup> Paris had inevitably been the main scene of conflict between these rival factions, who controlled the capital at different intervals. The city had been seized in 1418 by the Burgundians, taking advantage of the distractions caused to the Valois-Armagnac government by the English military campaign in Normandy; a massacre of their Armagnac opponents was carried out during May and June. As pointed out by Thompson, *Paris and its People*, p. 10, most exiles from Paris had fled because of the Burgundians seizing the city in 1418, not because of the arrival of the English in 1420.

<sup>5</sup> Biographical details throughout have been checked in H.C.G. Matthew and B. Harrison (eds), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004). Henry Beaufort was the illegitimate son of Henry VI's great-grandfather John of Gaunt and his then mistress (and subsequently third wife) Katherine Swynford; the Beaufort children were later officially legitimised by papal bull and by Richard II.

<sup>6</sup> B.G.H. Ditcham, '"Mutton Guzzlers and Wine Bags": Foreign Soldiers and Native Reactions in Fifteenth-Century France', in Allmand, *Power, Culture and Religion*, pp. 1-13.

<sup>7</sup> These two events were retrospectively illustrated in the famous *Pageant of the Birth, Life and Death of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick* (BL, Cotton MS Julius E. iv, art. 6, fols 23v-24r); see the facsimile edition by A. Sinclair (ed.), *The Beauchamp Pageant* (Donington, 2003).

<sup>8</sup> Thompson, *Paris and its People*, pp. 13-15, notes how Philip carefully avoided being in Paris at the deaths of Henry V and Charles VI; he also failed to attend the coronation of Henry VI at Paris in 1431, as noted in Allmand, *Lancastrian Normandy*, p. 39. See also H. vander Linden, *Itinéraires de Philippe le Bon, duc de Bourgogne (1419-1467) et de Charles, comte de Charolais (1433-1467)* (Brussels, 1940). However, both John and Philip enjoyed great popular support in Paris and more than one historian has assumed that Philip was actually thwarted by Bedford taking on the regency; see, for example, N. Pons, 'Intellectual Patterns and Affective Reactions in Defence of the Dauphin Charles, 1419-1422', in Allmand, *War, Government and Power*, pp. 54-69, at p. 55. R. Vaughan, *Philip the Good: The Apogee of Burgundy* (1970, repr. Woodbridge, 2002), p. 16-17, notes that Philip allowed Bedford to take the title of regent as he himself 'had never been seriously interested in French affairs'; his military efforts also dwindled once French revenues passed to the English administration in Paris, although he did offer military support on request and in return for full payment.

<sup>9</sup> Allmand, *Lancastrian Normandy*, pp. 105-20, esp. p. 107.

<sup>10</sup> Thompson, *Paris and its People*, pp. 8-10.

<sup>11</sup> The church and cemetery are extensively discussed and illustrated in M. Fleury and G.-M. Leproux (eds), *Les Saints-Innocents* (Paris, 1990), with thanks to Didier Jukan for finding me a copy of this book. There is also a discussion of the cemetery in V. Harding, *The Dead and Living in Paris and London, 1500-1600* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 101-13. The 'Tour Jean sans Peur' still exists, situated to the north of where the cemetery used to be. See also Paravicini and Schnerb, *Paris*.

<sup>12</sup> The reasons for the dedication of the church to the Holy Innocents are unclear but under Philippe Auguste's reign the body of a young 'martyr' – a boy named Richard who was said to have been crucified by Jews in Pontoise c.1179 – was brought to the cemetery for burial; some medieval texts refer to the church as 'Saint-Innocent'. See G.-M. Leproux, 'Le cimetière médiéval', in Fleury and Leproux, *Les Saints-Innocents*, pp. 37-53, at p. 38, with reference to Rigord's *Gesta Philippi Augusti*.



An alabaster cadaver statue of c.1530 from the cemetery (now in the Louvre) is also known as *La Mort Saint-Innocent*.

<sup>13</sup> For an entertaining survey of Christian burial in the Middle Ages, see R.C. Finucane, 'Sacred Corpse, Profane Carrion: Social Ideals and Death Rituals in the later Middle Ages', in J. Whaley (ed.), *Mirrors of Mortality. Studies in the Social History of Death* (London, 1981), pp. 40-60.

<sup>14</sup> Leproux, 'Le cimetière médiéval', pp. 39, 41.

<sup>15</sup> B. de Andia, 'Triomphe de la vie sur la mort', in Fleury and Leproux, *Les Saints-Innocents*, pp. 12-24, at p. 15. Leproux, 'Le cimetière médiéval', pp. 50-51, recounts how on 11 October 1442 one Jeanne la Verrière was ceremoniously walled up by Bishop Du Moulin in a newly constructed cell in the proximity of Alix la Bourgotte, who died in 1470 after having been a devout anchoress for forty-six years; Alix might thus have witnessed the mural in the cemetery being painted. An involuntary anchoress was Renée de Vendômois, who in 1486 had her death sentence for the murder of her husband commuted by parliament into perpetual detention in a purpose-built cell at Les Innocents.

<sup>16</sup> An evocative description of the cemetery is given in J. Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages: A Study of the Forms of Life, Thought, and Art in France and the Netherlands in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (1919, transl. 1924, repr. Harmondsworth, 1982), esp. pp. 143-44.

<sup>17</sup> A smaller version of such a medieval cemetery arrangement survives in the Aître Saint-Maclou in the heart of Rouen, which originally dates back to the thirteenth century but which was reconstructed probably in the later 1520s after a recurrence of the plague in 1521-22. It features a sculpted *danse macabre* cycle on the pillars supporting the charnel-houses in its upper galleries (since converted). See P. Levasseur, 'Observations sur l'iconographie de l'Aître Saint-Maclou: une synthèse de l'art macabre et des apports de la renaissance', in *Actes du 11e Congrès International d'études sur les Danses macabres et l'art macabre en général* (Meslay-le-Grenet, 2003), pp. 39-56; B. Venot and J.P. Mouilleseaux, *L'Aître Saint-Maclou de Rouen: petit guide à l'usage des habitués du lieu et de ceux qui le découvrent* (Rouen, 1980), which illustrates all *danse macabre* pairs on pp. 35 and 45.

<sup>18</sup> For a discussion of funeral and burial scenes in late-medieval manuscripts, especially illustrating the Office of the Dead in fifteenth-century books of hours, see G.K. Fiero, 'Death Ritual in Fifteenth-Century Manuscript Illumination', *Journal of Medieval History*, 10 (1984), pp. 271-94; compare also other burial scenes with charnel-houses visible in the background in figs 4 (New York, Morgan Library, MS 453, fol. 133v) and 8 (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Astor A. 16, fol. 178r). The suggestion in G.T. Clark, *The Spitz Master. A Parisian Book of Hours* (Los Angeles, 2005), pp. 48-52, that the burial scene on fol. 194 of the Spitz Hours may depict the cemetery of Les Innocents and thus provide evidence about the mural, is based on a misunderstanding of the mural's actual location.

<sup>19</sup> Leproux, 'Le cimetière médiéval', p. 44 and fig. 27.

<sup>20</sup> For example, G. Kaiser (ed.), *Der tanzende Tod. Mittelalterliche Totentänze* (Frankfurt am Main, 1983), p. 71, claims it happened as early as 1529. Instead, B. and H. Utzinger, *Itinéraires des danses macabres* (n.pl., 1996), p. 83, and J.M. Clark, *The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Glasgow, 1950), p. 24, state that the mural was lost in 1669 when the charnel-houses on the south side were demolished in order to widen the rue de la Ferronnerie, which R. Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik des Todes: die mittelalterlichen Totentänze und ihr Nachleben* (Bern/Munich, 1980), p. 167, claims to have happened in 1634. I. le Masne de Chermont, 'La danse macabre du cimetière des Innocents', in Fleury and Leproux, *Les Saints-Innocents*, pp. 84-109, at p. 101, confirms 1669 as the date. That was in any case too late for King Henri IV, who was assassinated on 14 May 1610 when his open coach was held up by traffic in the narrow rue de la Ferronnerie. H. Couzy, 'L'Église des Saints-Innocents à Paris', *Bulletin Monumental*, 130, IV (1972), pp. 279-302, provides a detailed description of the church and its demolition in 1787.

<sup>21</sup> Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, pp. 167-68 and pl. 1; Utzinger and Utzinger, *Itinéraires*, pp. 82-83 with enlarged details of the Carnavalet painting that show a mural with figures and a text band below.

<sup>22</sup> Transl.: Here begins the 'Dance macabee', which carries on for ten arcades in each of which there are six octaves, of which the first one hereafter – the four last arcades have eight. The use of the word *arcades* may be ambiguous: it is not clear whether the author meant ten bays, which is more likely, or ten arches separating eleven bays. Some maps indicate eleven bays for the mural (see Fig. 4). J.C. le Bot, 'L'art macabre médiéval à Paris', in *Actes du 11e congrès international d'études sur les Danses macabres et l'art macabre en général* (Meslay-le-Grenet, 2003), pp. 277-92, at p. 279, without source reference; the text in BnF, fonds Clairembault, ms. fr. 8220 is also mentioned by abbé Valentin Dufour in his 1873 *Recherches sur la danse macabre peinte en 1425 au cimetière des Innocents*, as confirmed to me by Didier Jugan. In the later printed edition of the *Danse* by Guy Marchant, and in manuscript copies of the poem, each character (i.e. *le mort* and the living) has a single *huitain* or octave: besides the thirty pairs, there are the *acteur* at the start with two such stanzas, the beggar accompanying the

usurer and the additional dead dancer after the hermit with one stanza each, one stanza for the dead king and finally two more for the *acteur*, totalling an uneven number of 67 octaves. Either the account in the 'Epitaphier' manuscript is wrong, or there is one stanza unaccounted for. The spelling 'macabee' is one of several variants which one finds in medieval references to the theme.

<sup>23</sup> See C. Beaune (ed.), *Journal d'un bourgeois de Paris* (Paris, 1990), introduction. The Bourgeois probably stated his identity and intentions in a prologue, which has not survived.

<sup>24</sup> Transl.: Item, in the year 1424 the *Danse Macabre* was made at the Innocents, and it was begun around the month of August and finished the following Lent. A. Tuetey (ed.), *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris, 1405-1449, publié d'après les manuscrits de Rome et de Paris* (Paris, 1881), p. 203. Tuetey, n. 2, adds that only the manuscript version in Rome (Vatican, Reg. Lat. 1923, second half of the fifteenth century) mentions that the painting was started in August 1424; the Paris manuscript only gives the year 1425. In 1425 Easter fell on 8 April.

<sup>25</sup> See, for example, C. Grössinger, *The World Upside-Down: English Misericords* (London, 1997), chapter 8, 'Preaching'.

<sup>26</sup> For example, the discussion of Franciscan iconography in Mallorca, Gerona and Morella in F. Massip and L. Kovács, 'Les Franciscains et le genre macabre: les Danses de la Mort et la prédication', *European Medieval Drama*, 8 (2004), pp. 91-105, or the claim in Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, p. 157, that the Franciscan preacher at the start of the *Totentanz* mural in the Marienkirche in Berlin and the division into two separate rows of religious and lay characters are typically Franciscan elements.

<sup>27</sup> E. Mâle, *Religious Art in France. The Late Middle Ages: A Study of Medieval Iconography and its Sources*, Bollingen Series, 90:3 (1908, 5th edn 1949, transl. Princeton, 1986), pp. 330-31, with a reference to the documented *Danse Macabre* performance in the church of Saint-Jean in Besançon in 1453 that he suggested 'was perhaps still accompanied by a sermon'. Worth mentioning here is also the hypothesis in H. Rosenfeld, *Der mittelalterliche Totentanz: Entstehung - Entwicklung - Bedeutung* (1954, revised edn Cologne/Graz, 1968), esp. pp. 56-78, that the original Latin *Totentanz* poem (to be discussed below) can be attributed to a German Dominican around 1350, with the German translation originating in the Würzburg area soon after; a claim that cannot be proved and that has since been dismissed by most scholars.

<sup>28</sup> Transl.: And some eight days later a Franciscan named Brother Richard came to Paris, a man of great judgement, wise in prayer, a sower of good doctrine for the edification of his neighbours. And he worked so assiduously that it was hard to believe for anyone who had not seen it; for while he was in Paris there was only one day on which he did not preach. And he started on Saturday 16 April 1429 at Ste Geneviève; and the following Sunday and next week, i.e. the Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, at the Innocents. And he would commence his sermon around 5 a.m., and he would continue until between 10 and 11 a.m., and there would always be some five or six thousand people for his sermon. And while preaching he would be standing on a high platform which was nearly one and a half *toises* high, with his back turned towards the charnel-houses opposite the Charronnerie, near where the *Danse Macabre* was located. Tuetey, *Journal*, pp. 233-34. As explained by Tuetey (n. 3), the name 'Charronnerie' referred to that part of the rue de la Ferronnerie that ran along the Innocents' charnel-houses (*charniers*); the Paris manuscript actually reads 'encontre la Feronnerie, à l'androit de la Dance Machabée' (n. 4).

<sup>29</sup> Tuetey, *Journal*, p. 233, n. 2; J. Shirley (transl.), *A Parisian Journal 1405-1449* (Oxford, 1968), pp. 234-35 and 238-39.

<sup>30</sup> Transl.: There is a very large cemetery, enclosed by so-called charnel-houses where the bones of the dead are piled up. In this place are remarkable paintings of the *Danse Macabre* and other subjects, with inscriptions to incite the people to devotion. One part of the cemetery belongs to the church of the Innocents, the second part is for the great hospital, and the third part is for those churches in Paris that do not have a cemetery at all. Edited text published in [A.J.V.] Le Roux de Lincy and L.M. Tisserand, *Paris et ses historiens aux XIVe et XVe siècles* (Paris, 1855, 2nd edn 1867), 'Description de la ville de Paris sous Charles VI par Guillebert de Metz 1407-1434', pp. 117-236, at pp. 192-93; quoted in part with slight variations in Le Masne de Chermont, 'La danse macabre', p. 88; Le Bot, 'L'art macabre', p. 278; and C. Reynolds, "'Les Angloys, de leur droicte nature, veullent touzjours guerree': Evidence for Painting in Paris and Normandy, c.1420-1450", in Allmand, *Power, Culture, and Religion*, pp. 37-55, at p. 43. The sole extant manuscript of Guillebert de Metz's *Description* is in the Royal Library in Brussels. Le Bot suggests that Guillebert visited Paris in 1424-25. Also Clark, *Dance of Death*, p. 23.

<sup>31</sup> Transl.: And there a hunt was organised of a live deer, which was very pleasant to watch. Tuetey, *Journal*, pp. 275-76. Beaune, *Journal*, p. 306 (n. 233), points out that the stag was the emblem of Henry's rival Charles VII.

<sup>32</sup> See, for example, K. Varty, 'Villon's Three *Ballades du Temps Jadis* and the *Danse Macabre*', in D.A. Trotter (ed.), *Littera et Sensus: Essays on Form and Meaning in Medieval French Literature Presented to John Fox* (Exeter, 1989), pp. 73-93; I. Siciliano, *François Villon et les thèmes poétiques du Moyen Âge* (Paris, 1967).

<sup>33</sup> As quoted from Dom Jacques du Breul's *Théâtre des Antiquités*, p. 835, in G.-M. Leproux, 'L'église des Saints-Innocents', in Fleury and Leproux, *Les Saints-Innocents*, pp. 74-83, at p. 80; Le Masne de Chermont, 'La danse macabre', p. 85, situates the sculpture on the exterior of the chapelle Saint-Michel. It should be noted that although Guillebert de Metz also describes how 'La sont engigneusement entailliés en pierre les images des trois vifz et [des] trois mors', he does not mention the duke as the patron; see Le Roux de Lincy and Tisserand, *Paris et ses historiens*, pp. 192-93. The duke himself desired to be buried at Les Innocents, although probably in a more permanent tomb.

<sup>34</sup> Leproux, 'L'église des Saints-Innocents', p. 81.

<sup>35</sup> Basing himself on the abbé Valentin Dufour's 1874 study *La Danse macabre des SS. Innocents de Paris d'après l'édition de 1484*, S. Cosacchi, *Makabertanz. Der Totentanz in Kunst, Poesie und Brauchtum des Mittelalters* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1965), pp. 698-700, claimed that the *danse macabre* mural at Les Innocents was commissioned by Berry from the painter Jehan II d'Orléans in memory of his murdered nephew Louis, Jehan II being a conveniently known member from a dynasty of painters active in Paris in the fourteenth century, although he would almost certainly have been too old for such a major commission in 1424. Cosacchi's argument is linked to his attribution of the text to Jean Gerson, a known advocate of the widow and children of Louis of Orléans in their struggle to obtain justice for his murder. Even more anachronistic is the claim in 1597 by Noël du Fail in his *Contes et discours d'Eutrapel* about the 'Dance Marcade' that 'ce savant et belliqueux roi, Charles le Quint [d. 1380], y fit peindre'; see Le Roux de Lincy and Tisserand, *Paris et ses historiens*, p. 284.

<sup>36</sup> Thompson, *Paris and its People*, p. 219. Because of Gerson's open stance against the theologian Jean Petit's defence of Louis of Orléans' assassination as justifiable tyrannicide, John the Fearless had prevented his return to France from the Council of Constance in 1418, where the *doctor christianissimus* had played a major part in ending the Great Schism that had earlier seen three rival antipopes after the 1409 Council of Pisa. The Burgundian slaughter of Armagnac supporters in Paris in 1418 inspired Gerson to write a *Deploratio* in Latin. After John's murder in 1419 Gerson ended his exile in Germany and settled in Lyons.

<sup>37</sup> Some of the reasons for attributing the poem to Gerson are rather convoluted. On the one hand, a 1497 translation into Catalan by Pedro Miguel de Carbonell names as the author 'un sanct homme doctor e Canciller de Paris [...] Johannes Climachus sive Climages', presumably Nicolas de Clemanges who was a magister and Rector, rather than a doctor and Chancellor, and not named 'Johannes', but indeed a friend of Jean Gerson. On the other hand, and perhaps more tellingly, a copy of the poem survives in an early manuscript (BnF, ms.lat. 14904, from the rich library of the former abbey of Saint-Victor in Paris) that also contains tractates by de Clemanges and especially Gerson. See Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, p. 168; Clark, *Dance of Death*, pp. 28-29; E.P. Hammond (ed.), *English Verse between Chaucer and Surrey* (1927, repr. New York, 1965), p. 426. Cosacchi, *Makabertanz*, p. 701, chose to see Gerson's known opposition to the Burgundian cause as the reason why his authorship of the poem could not be revealed.

<sup>38</sup> G. Hasenohr-Esnos (ed.), *Le Respit de la Mort par Jean le Fevre*, Société des Anciens Textes Français, (Paris 1969), p. 113, l. 3078. See also Rosenfeld, *Mittelalterliche Totentanz*, esp. pp. 118-35, and the objections to his highly speculative argument in, for example, Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, p. 168, and Kaiser, *Tanzende Tod*, p. 72. Le Fevre is credited with a 'now lost *danse macabre*' by W.E. Pfeffer in W.W. Kibler and G.A. Zinn (eds), *Medieval France: An Encyclopedia* (New York/London, 1995), p. 535.

<sup>39</sup> As Appendices 3 and 5 show, there is a strict adherence in the *danse* to the alternating order of clerical and lay characters, which may be based on the logic of an earlier prototype; however, for this sequence to work, academically trained figures such as the *maistre*, the *medecin*, the *advocat* and the *clerc* must be counted as clerical; it is thus not strictly a division between religious and lay figures.

<sup>40</sup> Rubric to stanza LXXXI in the Ellesmere MS. For BnF, ms.fr. 14989, see H. Wijsman, 'La Danse macabre du cimetière des Saints-Innocents et un manuscrit de Philippe le Bon', in *Actes du 12e congrès international d'études sur les Danses macabres et l'art macabre en général* (Meslay-le-Grenet, 2005), 1, pp. 135-44: at the start of this manuscript copy the label 'Docteur loquitur' is used.

<sup>41</sup> Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, p. 169.

<sup>42</sup> Le Masne de Chermont, 'La danse macabre', p. 94.

<sup>43</sup> Mâle, *Religious Art*, p. 332.

<sup>44</sup> Le Masne de Chermont, 'La danse macabre', p. 94.

<sup>45</sup> Although the third implement is frequently described as an adze or pickaxe, it may instead be Death's traditional emblem of the scythe as implied in the description in Jeremiah 9:21-22 (Douai-Rheims translation of the Vulgate): '21 For death is come up through our windows, it is entered into our houses to destroy the children from without, the young men from the streets. 22 Speak: Thus saith the Lord: Even the carcass of man shall fall as dung upon the face of the country, and as grass behind the back of the mower, and there is none to gather it.' There is the possibility of iconographical confusion on the part of the designer as the tool is held in two distinct ways: carried across the shoulder by the dead dancers fetching the emperor, the bishop and the monk, but used to lean upon by the dancer facing the *curé*. Adzes or mattocks can be observed amongst the objects relating to funeral and burial on the carved frieze of the medieval cemetery in Rouen.

<sup>46</sup> Mâle, *Religious Art*, p. 333-34.

<sup>47</sup> Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, p. 169; *La Danse Macabre de 1485, reproduite d'après l'exemplaire unique de la Bibliothèque de Grenoble et publiée sous l'égide de la Société des Bibliophiles Dauphinois* (Grenoble, 1969).

<sup>48</sup> Marchant's edition is the version most frequently studied by scholars, rather than any manuscript copies closer in date to the mural. Hammond, *English Verse*, pp. 426-35, includes an edited version of an early manuscript copy of the French *Danse Macabre* poem (Lille, ms. 319) with an introduction; Warren, *Dance of Death*, Appendix I, pp. 79-96, instead chose to edit the version in BL, Add. MS 38858. Another edition based on the expanded 1486 version (with an English translation) is E.F. Chaney (ed.), *La Danse Macabre des Charniers des Saints Innocents à Paris*, Publications of the University of Manchester, 293 (Manchester, 1945).

<sup>49</sup> See F. Whyte, *The Dance of Death in Spain and Catalonia* (Baltimore, 1931), and J. Saugnieux, *Les danses macabres de France et d'Espagne et leurs prolongements littéraires* (Lyons, 1972), with an edited version of the *Dança general* text on pp. 165-82; also L.P. Kurtz, *The Dance of Death and the Macabre Spirit in European Literature*, Publications of the Institute of French Studies, Inc. (New York, 1934), chapter 9, and Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, pp. 160-62. An expanded version of the *Dança* was printed in Seville in 1520, preceded in print in 1497 by a Catalan translation of the French *Danse* written by the royal archivist Pedro Miguel de Carbonell.

<sup>50</sup> Transl.: See the pictures about this subject in the white codex about the commendation of souls, at the start. The second preacher's address at the end is preceded by another Latin note, 'Item alius doctor depictus predicando in opposita parte de contemptu mundi' (Again, another teacher is depicted preaching on the opposite side about the contempt for the world); the last line of the Doctor's Latin prologue likewise refers to visual imagery (Appendix 6). See Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, pp. 29-39 and 149; V. Leppin, 'Der lateinische Totentanz aus Cpg 314 als Ursprungstext der europäischen Totentanztradition. Eine alte These neu bedacht', *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, 77:2 (1995), pp. 323-43.

<sup>51</sup> See the introduction and facsimile of this 'Oberdeutsche vierzeilige Totentanz' in Kaiser, *Tanzende Tod*, pp. 276-329. This blockbook is usually dated 1465 but an earlier date of 1458-65 is proposed in P. Layet, 'Die bimediale Münchner Totentanzhandschrift Xyl. 39', in U. Wunderlich (ed.), *L'art macabre*, 1, Jahrbuch der Europäischen Totentanz-Vereinigung (Düsseldorf, 2000), pp. 80-96, at p. 95.

<sup>52</sup> Layet, 'Totentanzhandschrift', offers a useful overview of OBD versions on pp. 94-96. For the *mitteldeutsche* variant (or *mittelrheinische Totentanz*), see R. Brand, 'Die mitteldeutsche Totentanztradition. Ein Werkstattbericht', in U. Wunderlich (ed.), *L'art macabre*, 3, Jahrbuch der Europäischen Totentanz-Vereinigung (Düsseldorf, 2002), pp. 21-36. Knobloch's *Totentanz* version was probably based on Marchant's 1486 edition; see the facsimile editions in Kaiser, *Tanzende Tod*, pp. 108-93, and M. Lemmer (ed.), *Der Heidelberger Totentanz von 1485* (Frankfurt am Main/Leipzig, 1991). Lemmer's title shows how confusing the terminology (and dates) used for German *Totentanz* variants can be. In addition, there is the *niederdeutsche* tradition with at its centre the poem incorporated in the lost scheme of 1463 in the Marienkirche in Lübeck.

<sup>53</sup> F. Egger, *Basler Totentanz* (Basel, 1990); Kaiser, *Tanzende Tod*, pp. 194-97; Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, pp. 183-88.

<sup>54</sup> Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, p. 160; Layet, 'Totentanzhandschrift', p. 89.

<sup>55</sup> Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, p. 184, suggests that the added figures of the Jew and the male and female pagan are derived from the Spanish *Dança*.

<sup>56</sup> See, for example, B. Schulte, *Die deutschsprachigen spätmittelalterlichen Totentänze. Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Inkunabel 'Des dodes dantz'. Lübeck 1489*, Niederdeutsche Studien, 36 (Cologne, 1990), pp. 162-68, on Rosenfeld's hypothesis about the 'Würzburger Totentanz'. Although still regarded as a key study, Rosenfeld's *Mittelalterliche Totentanz* has the power to confuse the unwary researcher; see Kaiser, *Tanzende Tod*, p. 276, n. 1, and also pp. 25, 27, 72. For the Spanish

*Dança*, see Whyte, *Dance of Death*; Saugnieux, *Danses macabres*, esp. pp. 41-87, 165-82; also Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, pp. 160-62, and Schulte, *Totentänze*, pp. 153-57.

<sup>57</sup> Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, p. 168, cites three examples of which two (BnF, ms.lat. 14904 and ms.fr. 25550) originated in the abbey of Saint-Victor in Paris and a third (Lille, Bibl. publ., ms. 139) from the Dominican convent in Lille; Hammond, *English Verse*, pp. 426-27, lists in addition BnF, ms.fr. 25434 (from the Célestins, no date given), ms.fr. 1181, ms.fr. 1055, and two manuscript copies at Tours and in the Musée Condé in Chantilly, as well as the later BnF, ms.fr. 14989 and ms. fr. 995. The *Danse Macabre des Femmes* section of the richly illuminated ms. fr. 995, which is usually dated to the early sixteenth century, was published by A.T. Harrison (ed.), with a chapter by S.L. Hindman, *The Danse Macabre of Women: Ms.fr. 995 of the Bibliothèque Nationale* (Kent/London, 1994).

<sup>58</sup> Transl.: As can be found at St Innocent. See Le Bot, 'L'art macabre', p. 280; also Hammond, *English Verse*, p. 426. This is another instance of the church being referred to not as Les Innocents, i.e. the Holy Innocents of Bethlehem, but as dedicated to a single 'St Innocent'; see n. 12 above.

<sup>59</sup> Transl.: The words of the *danse macabre*, as found at [St] Innocent in Paris. Le Bot, 'L'art macabre', p. 280; Hammond, *English Verse*, p. 427.

<sup>60</sup> Wijsman, 'Danse macabre'.

<sup>61</sup> Hammond, *English Verse*, pp. 427-35. Warren, *Dance of Death*, Appendix I, pp. 79-96.

<sup>62</sup> According to Warren, *Dance of Death*, p. 90, BL Add. MS 38858 also has 'Lomme qui emprunte'.

<sup>63</sup> For example, Reynolds, 'Les Angloys', p. 49, notes the apparent disappearance around 1420 of the great Parisian workshop of the Boucicaut Master. See also F. Avril and N. Reynaud, *Les manuscrits à peinture en France 1440-1520* (Paris, 1993), pp. 18-19, 23; W. Voelkle, 'Morgan M.359 and the Origin of the "New Iconography" of the Virtues in the Fifteenth Century', in S.A. Stein and G.D. McKee (eds), *Album Amicorum Kenneth C. Lindsay: Essays on Art and Literature* (Binghamton, NY, 1990), pp. 57-90, at p. 69.

<sup>64</sup> For example, the famous Bedford Hours (BL Add. MS 18850) was probably only adapted for the duke and duchess, and not originally commissioned by them: see Reynolds, 'Les Angloys', p. 51, and E.P. Spencer, 'The Master of the Duke of Bedford: The Bedford Hours', *Burlington Magazine*, 107 (1965), pp. 495-502.

<sup>65</sup> Reynolds, 'Les Angloys', p. 53.

<sup>66</sup> Reynolds, 'Les Angloys', p. 43, where no date is assigned to either manuscript.

<sup>67</sup> C. de Hamel, *The Rothschilds and their Collections of Illuminated Manuscripts* (London, 2005), pp. 64-65 and fig. 30a, suggests the Bedford Master. G. Bartz and E. König, 'Die Illustration des Totenoffiziums in Stundenbüchern', in H. Beckeret et al., *Im Angesicht des Todes. Ein interdisziplinäres Kompendium*, 2 vols (St. Ottilien, 1987), 1, pp. 487-528, at p. 516 and fig. 4, attribute the manuscript instead to the Master of the Munich *Légende Dorée* (active in Paris between 1420-30 and 1450-60).

<sup>68</sup> The image of Death preying on romantic couples was to become a theme in its own right, e.g. in the graphic work of the Housebook Master. See also this thesis, chapter 6, fig. 13.

<sup>69</sup> The outfit of the man is also of around the same date. I am grateful to the dress historian Dr Margaret Scott for her information on medieval fashion.

<sup>70</sup> Subjects for illustration of the Office of the Dead include the Last Judgement, the Vigil of the Dead, deathbed and burial scenes, Dives and Lazarus, Job on the dunghill, the Raising of Lazarus, and the Three Living and the Three Dead. See R.S. Wieck, 'The Death Desired: Books of Hours and the Medieval Funeral', in E.E. DuBruck and B.I. Gusick (eds), *Death and Dying in the Middle Ages*, Studies in the Humanities, 45 (New York/Canterbury, 1999), pp. 431-76, and also Fiero, 'Death Ritual'.

<sup>71</sup> The manuscript contains 174 vellum leaves and is richly decorated throughout with twelve large miniatures, 332 small border miniatures and twenty-four calendar illustrations; a wealth of illumination suggestive of an important patron. Its decorative programme is in many ways unusual: for this and other information on this manuscript, see Voelkle, 'Morgan M.359', and the Morgan Library's CORSAIR website at <http://utu.morganlibrary.org>; also R.S. Wieck, *Painted Prayers: The Book of Hours in Medieval and Renaissance Art* (New York, 1997), pp. 30, 55, nrs 14, 36.

<sup>72</sup> Indicated in a sixteenth-century hand on fol. 173v: see Voelkle, 'Morgan M.359', p. 71.

<sup>73</sup> Also included are St Botolph (translation 9 March, and 17 June), St Edward (18 March), St Augustine of Canterbury (27 May), and St Edmund of Canterbury (19 November), in addition to St Geneviève (3 January) and St Denis (9 October) for Paris.

<sup>74</sup> The Trinitarian order was founded in the late twelfth century; its primary charitable duty was the ransoming of Christians held captive by the 'Turks', which in this post-Crusade era might have been somewhat less relevant although the fall of Constantinople to Sultan Mehmed and his muslim troops

was not far off. The Alexian order was established around 1400; its mission was to bury the dead in the recurrent outbreaks of the plague.

<sup>75</sup> See Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, fig. 256; Kaiser, *Tanzende Tod*, pp. 316, 326; L.P. Kurtz (ed.), *Le Mors de la Pomme*, Publications of the Institute of French Studies Inc. (New York, 1937), p. v and illustrations. Figures are also placed in either a landscape or a room in the miniatures in the so-called Kasseler *Totentanz* manuscript, whose text belongs to the *mitteldeutsche* variant; see Brand, 'Mitteldeutsche Totentanztradition', esp. pp. 22-26, and Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, pp. 198-206 and pls 266-91. Compare also the discussion of the central scene of the *Danse Macabre* misericord in St George's Chapel, Windsor, in chapter 6 of this thesis.

<sup>76</sup> The Heidelberg blockbook may be as early as 1458, while the fragmentary Munich blockbook is dated c.1460-70 by Layet, 'Totentanzhandschrift' and c.1480 by Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, p. 153.

<sup>77</sup> There were publishing houses in other French towns such as Lyons, which has been associated with 'popular printing' in this period, but there is no record of any of them having produced a printed edition of the *Danse* prior to Marchant's. See S.L. Hindman, 'The Career of Guy Marchant (1483-1504): High Culture and Low Culture in Paris', in S.L. Hindman (ed.), *Printing the Written Word: The Social History of Books, circa 1450-1520* (Ithaca/London, 1991), pp. 68-100, at p. 69 and n. 3.

<sup>78</sup> For comparison, M. Tedeschi, 'Publish and Perish: The Career of Lienhart Holle in Ulm', in Hindman, *Printing the Written Word*, pp. 41-67, traces the brief period of activity of a printer whose business only lasted from Spring 1482 to late 1483, producing six expensive high-quality imprints before going bankrupt.

<sup>79</sup> Thus, the ninety-six woodblocks depicting emperors, kings and popes were used 598 times, i.e. an average of six times each. See A. Wilson, assisted by J.L. Wilson, *The Making of the Nuremberg Chronicle* (1976, repr. Amsterdam, 1978), p. 55.

<sup>80</sup> For Marchant's career, see Hindman, 'The Career of Guy Marchant'.

<sup>81</sup> Hindman, 'The Career of Guy Marchant', p. 70 and the preliminary list of Marchant imprints on pp. 93-100.

<sup>82</sup> See P. Champion (ed.), *La Danse Macabre, reproduction en fac-similé de l'édition de Guy Marchant Paris 1486* (Paris, 1925).

<sup>83</sup> In her chapter 2 on the illustrations in Harrison, *Danse Macabre of Women*, p. 16, Sandra Hindman claimed that the six extra woodcuts depicted eleven new persons, thus bringing the total number of characters to forty-one. However, Marchant expanded the actual *Danse Macabre* scheme to forty characters by adding the following pairs, all with new woodcuts: *le legat* and *le duc*, *le maistre descole* and *lomme darmes*, *le promoteur* and *le geolier*, *le pelerin* and *le bergier*, *le hallebardie* and *le sot*, the latter with a different woodcut design showing trees in the background but no arched setting. Hindman may have failed to take into account the fact that Marchant renamed the 'maistre' 'lastrologien'. The author of these additional verses is unknown.

<sup>84</sup> In the early sixteenth century these additional ten male characters and the skeletal minstrels were included in the richly illuminated *Danse Macabre* manuscript BnF, ms. fr. 995 that also comprises a *Danse Macabre des Femmes* with thirty-six characters. As pointed out by Hindman, confusion has been caused by Hammerstein's mistaken belief (based on nineteenth-century studies) that there was an earlier lost illuminated manuscript of c.1483 (Paris, BnF, ancien fonds Colbert No. 1849, ms. du roi, vélin no. 7310, i.e. the earlier shelfmark for ms. fr. 995), which thus would have preceded Marchant's edition. See Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, pp. 177-78 and pls 64-65, 244, and Hindman in Harrison, *Danse Macabre of Women*, p. 15 and n. 1.

<sup>85</sup> S. Oosterwijk, "'Alas, poor Yorick': Death, the Fool, the Mirror and the Danse Macabre", in S. Knöll (ed.), *Narren – Masken – Karneval. Meisterwerke von Dürer bis Kubin aus der Düsseldorfer Graphiksammlung 'Mensch und Tod'*, exhibition catalogue (Regensburg, 2009), pp. 19-31 and 132-34 (catalogue entries).

<sup>86</sup> See, for example, Hindman, 'The Career of Guy Marchant', p. 94, no. 10; Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, pp. 173-75, 181, and pls 49-53, 66, 245, 249.

<sup>87</sup> Marchant's Latin edition entitled *Chorea ab eximio Macabro versibus alemanicis edita et a Petro Desrey trecacio quondam oratore nuper emendata* was printed for Geoffrey de Marnef on 15 October 1490. See Hindman, 'The Career of Guy Marchant', preliminary list, pp. 93-100, nos 9, 10, 11, 27, 28, 35, 36; also Champion, *Danse Macabre*, 'Notice', p. 7. Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, pp. 181-83 and pls 24-25, discusses the two editions of 1528 and 1531 by Nicolas le Rouge in Troyes and the 1533 edition by Denis Janot in Paris.

<sup>88</sup> Hindman, 'The Career of Guy Marchant', pp. 91-92 and n. 58.



<sup>89</sup> See Champion, *Danse Macabre*, fol. a.i, and the discussion in J.A. Wisman, 'La symbolique du miroir dans les *dances macabres* de Guyot Marchant', *Romanische Forschungen*, 103 (1991), pp. 157-71. Lydgate likewise uses the image of a 'myrrow[r]e' (E:49).

<sup>90</sup> Wijsman, 'Danse macabre', p. 141-42.

<sup>91</sup> The French prose translation of Boccaccio's text was Laurent de Premierfait's *Des Cas des Nobles Hommes et Femmes*, which in turn was to be translated by Lydgate as *The Fall of Princes*. Premierfait had been another victim of the Burgundian attacks on Armagnac supporters in Paris in 1418; see J. Laidlaw, 'Alain Chartier and the Arts of Crisis Management', in Allmand, *War, Government and Power*, 37-53, at 43.

<sup>92</sup> See also F. Baron, 'Le médecin, le prince, les prélats et la mort. L'apparition du transi dans la sculpture française du Moyen Age', *Cahiers Archéologiques*, 51 (2006), pp. 125-58. A new article by Paul Binski, 'John the Smith's Grave', in S. l'Engle and G.B. Guest (eds), *Tributes to Jonathan J.G. Alexander: The Making and Meaning of Illuminated Medieval & Renaissance Manuscripts, Art & Architecture* (London, 2007), pp. 386-93, identifies an indent at Brightwell Baldwin (Oxfordshire) as potentially the earliest known shroud brass, dating to the 1370s. Touching upon the mural's historical context, M. Dujakovic, 'The Dance of Death, the Dance of Life: Cemetery of the Innocents and the *Danse Macabre*', in L.U. Afonso and V. Serrão (eds), *Out of the Stream: Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Mural Painting* (Newcastle, 2007), pp. 206-32, at 227-30, interprets the 'roy mort' as symbolic of the French nation.

<sup>93</sup> Shirley, *Journal*, pp. 178-79.

<sup>94</sup> Shirley, *Journal*, pp. 179-83. Charles had succeeded his father Charles V upon the latter's death on 16 September 1380.

<sup>95</sup> Tuetey, *Journal*, p. 179. Transl.: Item, it [*i.e.* the effigy] was a good six feet ['une toise'] tall, lying on its back in a bed, the face – or the likeness of his [*i.e.* the king's] face – uncovered, wearing a gold crown and holding in one of its hands a royal sceptre, and in the other a type of hand giving a blessing with two fingers, and these were gilded and so long that they reached the crown. Several such English royal funeral effigies survive at Westminster Abbey, including that of Charles VI's daughter Catherine; see P. Lindley, 'The Funeral and Tomb Effigies of Queen Katharine of Valois and King Henry V', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 160 (2007), pp. 165-77.

<sup>96</sup> For example, N.Z. Davis, 'Holbein's *Pictures of Death* and the Reformation at Lyons', *Studies in the Renaissance*, 3 (1956), pp. 97-130, at p. 99, claims that although the *danse* traditionally contained criticism of the clergy, 'A few clerics are spared, such as the pope, "dieu en terre", who must die like all humans but who is still entitled to the place of honor at the dance as "le plus digne seigneur"'.

<sup>97</sup> K. Holderegger, 'Der Tod und der Papst', in *Tanzend ins Jenseits. Vorstellungen – Darstellungen – Erfahrungen zu Sterben und Tod in Mittelalter und Gegenwart*, publication accompanying an exhibition in Zurich, St Jakob am Stauffacher (Zurich, n.d.), pp. 10-11, at p. 11. Yet J. Tripps, 'Den Würmer wirst Du Wildbret sein.' *Der Berner Totentanz des Niklaus Manuel Deutsch in den Aquarellkopien von Albrecht Kauw (1649)*, *Schriften des Bernischen Historischen Museums*, 6 (Berne, 2005), p. 32, describes Manuel's lines as typical of the anti-clerical nature of the fifteenth-century *Totentanz*.

<sup>98</sup> 'Vff Erd scheÿn groß min Heÿligkeÿt / Die torrecht wällt sich vor mir neÿgt / Als ob ich vff schluß s Himmelrych. / So bin ich jetz selbs ouch ein Lÿch'. Tripps, *Berner Totentanz*, pp. 32-33. Each character in the mural scheme in Berne was accompanied by the coats of arms of an individual aristocratic patron who had paid for that particular scene, in this case Burckhard von Erlach (who had been in the service of Pope Julius II) and his wife Ursula von Seengen.

<sup>99</sup> The corresponding German line in Heidelberg cpg 314 reads 'Ich was ein heiliger pabst genant', which matches the Heidelberg blockbook line; see Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik*, p. 32, and Kaiser, *Tanzende Tod*, p. 280.

<sup>100</sup> Kaiser, *Tanzende Tod*, p. 116.

<sup>101</sup> Kaiser, *Tanzende Tod*, pp. 194-95; Clark, *Dance of Death*, p. 65. Felix V was Amadeus VIII, count and duke of Savoy until his abdication in 1440; he was elected antipope by the rebellious Council of Basel in 1439 as an alternative to Pope Eugenius IV, and only resigned under pressure ten years later. The interpretation of the figures in the Basel wall-painting is by the Basel-born artist Matthäus Merian the Elder (1593-1650), whose engravings of this *Totentanz* were published in 1621.

<sup>102</sup> Tripps, *Berner Totentanz*, p. 32; M. Winzeler (ed.), *Dresdner Totentanz: das Relief in der Dreikönigskirche Dresden* (Halle an der Saale, 2001), pp. 4, 5, 13. For the emperor and pope (another portrait of Leo X?) in Holbein's woodcuts, see Davis, 'Holbein's *Pictures*', p. 101 and n. 47.

<sup>103</sup> Sigismund had been *de facto* emperor since his (second) election as German King in 1419; no emperor had been officially crowned since his father Charles IV in 1355. See M. Kingzinger,

'Hausmachtspolitik oder internationale Politik? Die Diplomatie Sigismunds in Europa', in M. Pauly and F. Reinert (eds), *Sigismund von Luxemburg. Ein Kaiser in Europa* (Mainz, 2006), pp. 35-42, at p. 35.

<sup>104</sup> A. Bárány, 'Anglo-Luxembourg Relations during the Reign of Emperor Sigismund', in Pauly and Reinert, *Sigismund von Luxemburg*, pp. 43-59.

<sup>105</sup> Sigismund had good reasons for wanting another crusade: his Hungarian lands were under threat from the Turks and Sigismund himself had only narrowly escaped the disastrous defeat of the French forces by the Ottoman sultan Bayezid I at Nicopolis in 1396, when many leading French nobles were either killed or captured, including the future duke of Burgundy, John the Fearless. See also J.M. Bak, 'Sigismund and the Ottoman advance', in Pauly and Reinert, *Sigismund von Luxemburg*, pp. 89-94.

<sup>106</sup> Allmand, *Lancastrian Normandy*, p. 7.

<sup>107</sup> See V. Tátrai, 'Die Darstellung Sigismunds von Luxemburg in der italienischen Kunst seiner Zeit', in I. Takács (ed.), *Sigismundus, Rex et Imperator. Kunst und Kultur zur Zeit Sigismunds von Luxemburg 1387-1437*, exhibition catalogue (Mainz, 2006), pp. 143-67, and also U. Jenni, 'Das Porträt Kaiser Sigismunds in Wien und seine Unterzeichnung. Bildnisse Kaiser Sigismunds als Aufträge der Reichsstädte', in Pauly and Reinert, *Sigismund von Luxemburg*, pp. 285-300. The portrait's former attribution to Pisanello is nowadays rejected.

<sup>108</sup> See, for example, the seminal discussions of medieval portraiture in G.S. Wright, 'The Reinvention of the Portrait Likeness in the Fourteenth Century', *Gesta*, 39 (2000), pp. 117-34, and S. Perkinson, 'From "Curious" to Canonical: *Jehan Roy de France* and the Origins of the French School', *Art Bulletin*, 87 (2005), pp. 507-32.

<sup>109</sup> Wim van Anrooij (ed.), *De Haarlemse gravenportretten. Hollandse geschiedenis in woord en beeld*, *Middeleeuwse studies en bronnen*, 49 (Hilversum, 1997); S. Nash, 'No equal in any land'. André Beauneveu: Artist to the Courts of France and Flanders (London, 2007), esp. pp. 26-27. The herald with a text scroll at the start and the figure of Death at the end of the extant Haarlem series, which is dated between 1486 and 1491, did not occur in an earlier mural that these panels replaced.

<sup>110</sup> See the many examples discussed in V. Colling-Kerg, 'L'iconographie de l'empereur Sigismond de Luxembourg en Italie (1368-1437)', in *Le rêve italien de la maison de Luxembourg aux XIV<sup>e</sup> et XV<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Luxemburg, 1995), pp. 189-227. Although one cannot help but suspect a tendency to interpret every bearded figure in fifteenth-century Italian art as potentially based on Sigismund, the idea has found wider support. See also G. Pochat, 'Zur Genese des Porträts', in Takács, *Sigismundus*, esp. cat. 2.1, pp. 124-42, at p. 141: 'Kaum ein Herrscher der Zeit wurde so häufig in Handlungs- und Kryptoporträts dargestellt wie Sigismund'.

<sup>111</sup> W. van Anrooij, *Helden van weleer. De Negen Besten in de Nederlanden (1300-1700)* (Amsterdam, 1997), p. 83-85, with mention of Matthew Paris' use of the double-headed eagle in these colours for the imperial arms of Otto IV and Frederick II. According to Van Anrooij, these arms were used both for the Holy Roman Emperor, the German King, and later the Empire itself (after Emperor Maximilian had declared them the official state arms in 1508). I am grateful to Philip Lankester of the Royal Armouries, Leeds, for additional heraldic information and terminology.

<sup>112</sup> Van Anrooij, *Helden van weleer*, pp. 41, 83, mentions a Nine Worthies pageant in Atrecht in 1336 as the earliest recorded occurrence of this heraldry.

<sup>113</sup> Tátrai, 'Darstellung Sigismunds', pp. 143-67, fig. 10; Colling-Kerg, 'Iconographie', esp. 191-94.

<sup>114</sup> This is also how Charlemagne is depicted in a miniature in a manuscript of c. 1310-20 of Jacob van Maerlant's *Middle Dutch Spiegel Historiae* (The Hague, KB MS KA XX, fol. 217v); see M. Meuwese, *Beeldend Vertellen. De verluchte handschriften van Jacob van Maerlants Rijmbijbel en Spiegel Historiae*, doctoral thesis (Leiden, 2001), p. 110. Although this heraldry was fictitious, Charlemagne had used the eagle as an emblem of the Holy Roman Emperor; see Van Anrooij, *Helden van weleer*, pp. 85-86 and 238, n. 45.

<sup>115</sup> In the Latin *Totentanz* stanza for the king (Appendix 6) the city ('urbem') mentioned would thus be Rome itself: see Leppin, 'Lateinische Totentanz', pp. 325-26. For Knoblochtzer's woodcut, see Kaiser, *Tanzende Tod*, p. 136; the emperor (p. 134) is accosted by a dead musician whose trumpet is decorated with a banner showing the double-headed eagle. As mentioned earlier, Knoblochtzer's edition is believed to have been modelled on Marchant's.

<sup>116</sup> C. Davidson, *The Guild Chapel Wall Paintings at Stratford-upon-Avon* (New York, 1988), fig. 20, illustrating a drawing made by William Puddephat in 1955 when the damaged mural was temporarily revealed.

<sup>117</sup> K. Morand, *Claus Sluter: Artist at the Court of Burgundy* (London, 1991), pp. 54-56 and figs 13-14. Compare also C.R. Sherman, *The Portraits of Charles V of France: 1338-1380* (New York, 1969); Wright, 'The Reinvention', pp. 129-32; and the portrait quality of Charles V's tomb effigy by André Beauneveu in Nash, 'No equal in any land', chapter 1. The *grande vis* at the Louvre was demolished in

the early seventeenth century; the provenance of the standing figures now in the Louvre is still a matter for debate.

<sup>118</sup> Charles VI wore his hair short and, like his father, had no beard. Another representation of the beardless Charles VI is his statuette in an enamelled blue jacket with gold fleurs-de-lis that forms part of the famous *Goldenes Rössl*, a New Year's gift from Queen Isabeau to her husband in 1405. See Taburet-Delahaye, *Paris 1400*, cat. 95 and P. Lorentz's essay 'Des rois qui se suivent mais ne se ressemblent pas: à propos des portraits de Charles V et de Charles VI', pp. 28-30.

<sup>119</sup> C. Sauvageot (photos), and S. Santos (text), *Saint-Denis, dernière demeure des rois de France* (La Pierre qui Vire, 1999), fig. 57. A record of a meeting at Saint-Denis between the king's executors and the sculptor on 5 November 1424 is cited in M. Beaulieu and V. Beyer, *Dictionnaire des sculpteurs français du Moyen Age*, Bibliothèque de la Société Française d'Archéologie (Paris, 1992), p. 90. According to Taburet-Delahaye, *Paris 1400*, cat. 226A, Charles VI's portrait-like tomb effigy is the first attested example of an actual death-mask in France.

<sup>120</sup> The king in the mural is situated between the cardinal and the papal legate. Marchant's woodcut of the king suggests that he also chose to have the figure updated, perhaps to make the king resemble Charles VIII (1470-1498), unless the mural itself had been altered by then.

<sup>121</sup> Taylor, 'Translation as Reception', pp. 188, 190, and by the same author, 'Que signifiait danse au quinzième siècle? Danser la Danse macabre', *Fifteenth Century Studies*, 18 (1991), pp. 259-77, esp. p. 265.

<sup>122</sup> B.W. Tuchman, *A Distant Mirror: The Calamitous 14th Century* (London, 1979), pp. 503-5. Fifteenth-century miniatures of this scene include BL, MS Harleian 4380, fol. 1r; BL, MS Royal 18 E II, fol. 206r; and BnF, ms.fr. 2646, fol. 176r, with thanks to Dr Martine Meuwese.

<sup>123</sup> There is an intriguing parallel between the *homme sauvage* and the *mort*: the former represents the uncivilised or bestial side of human nature while the latter is man's dead counterpart.

<sup>124</sup> The *Justification*, which had been presented by Master Jehan Petit to the French royal court on behalf of John the Fearless in 1408 and subsequently circulated around Europe, was still debated at the Council of Constance in 1415; see R. Vaughan, *John the Fearless: The Growth of Burgundian Power* (1966, repr. Woodbridge, 2002), pp. 71, 210-11, pl. 4, and n. 36 above.

<sup>125</sup> See A.M. Morganstern, 'The La Grange Tomb and Choir: A Monument of the Great Schism of the West', *Speculum*, 48 (1973), pp. 52-69. I am grateful to Prof. Pamela King for reminding me of this article. See also P.M. King, 'Contexts of the Cadaver Tomb in Fifteenth-Century England', unpublished DPhil thesis, University of York (1987), p. 459, and P. Pradel, 'Le visage inconnu de Louis d'Orléans, frère de Charles VI', *Revue des Arts*, 2 (1952), pp. 93-98.

<sup>126</sup> None of the others – seneschal, chamberlain, butler and chancellor – are included in the *danse*. According to A. Corvisier, 'La représentation de la société dans les danses des morts du XVe au XVIIIe siècle', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 16 (1969), pp. 489-539, at pp. 494, 516, the rank of constable was popularised by Bertrand du Guesclin (c.1320-80; constable of France 1370-80), the famous Breton hero of the Hundred Years War.

<sup>127</sup> Allmand, *Lancastrian Normandy*, p. 17; Laidlaw, 'Alain Chartier', p. 43. Bernard's immediate predecessor Charles d'Albret (twice constable through Armagnac support, 1402-11 and 1413-15) had been replaced in 1411-13 by the pro-Burgundian Waleran III of Luxembourg, count of St Pol, until the latter was driven from Paris in a pro-Armagnac insurrection: see Shirley, *Journal*, pp. 57, n. 3, 59, 61, 95.

<sup>128</sup> Charles of Lorraine had earlier taken the Burgundian side against Louis of Orléans and he became Constable with Burgundian support. After the murder of John the Fearless, the ambitions of Philip the Good apparently caused him to change his allegiance.

<sup>129</sup> Richemont had been captured at Agincourt but released in 1420 to help persuade his brother John, duke of Brittany, to sign the Treaty of Troyes. Richemont's natural allegiance was pro-English; his widowed mother Joan of Navarre had remarried King Henry IV in 1402, which made Bedford his stepbrother. The French 'comte de Richemont' was an old but empty English title to which the dukes of Brittany still laid claim; the actual earldom of Richmond was held by Bedford from 1414. For the constables of France and Richemont in particular, see Shirley, *Journal*, esp. pp. 185-86 (n. 1), 253 (n. 1), 302 (n. 2), 324-25, 330; Beaune, *Journal*, p. 503.

<sup>130</sup> Corvisier, 'Représentation de la société', p. 507, did note the anomaly of placing the knight before the bishop but explained this away as an inconvenient consequence of the strict hierarchical sequence and lack of symmetry between clerical and lay characters, adding that in the fifteenth century many bishops were of humble birth; the absence of the duke apparently did not strike him as curious.

<sup>131</sup> Champion, *Danse Macabre*, fol. a.iiii.

<sup>132</sup> Other dukes of this turbulent period included John V, duke of Brittany (1389-1442), who was an Anglo-Burgundian ally in 1423 although in 1426 he repudiated the treaty concluded at Amiens for a short-lived alliance with the dauphin (see also n. 129 above), and the duke of Alençon, who fought with Joan of Arc but subsequently abandoned Charles VII for the English cause. See Allmand, *Lancastrian Normandy*, pp. 27, 31; Beaune, *Journal*, pp. 491-92.

<sup>133</sup> An accompanying text explained the commission: 'Lovis dorleans ajeul du / roy lovis dovziesme'. The wall-painting was destroyed c.1779. Cosacchi, *Makabertanz*, pp. 698-99, mistakenly followed Dufour in dating this painting to 1427 and attributing it to the painter Colart de Laon. See also Le Bot, 'L'art macabre', p. 287; M. Camille, *The Master of Death: The Lifeless Art of Pierre Remiet, Illuminator* (New Haven/London, 1996), pp. 198, 200 and fig. 143. There is a second version of the drawing in Paris (BnF, Estampes, PE 1, rés., fol. 1r).

<sup>134</sup> There is always the possibility of in-jokes, e.g. amongst the artists painting the mural, but such private cryptoportraits are usually impossible for later generations to identify.

<sup>135</sup> The pun is in the word 'piliatus': in classical Latin, *pileatus* meant to be given a cap of liberty (*pileum*), which is here contrasted with Death compelling the cardinal. I am grateful to Fr. Jerome Bertram OSB for this explanation.

<sup>136</sup> Beaufort was the illegitimate (although subsequently legitimised) second son of John of Gaunt and his mistress Katherine Swynford, and thus of royal blood as half-uncle of King Henry V; he had made a brilliant church and political career. For the Bourgeois' descriptions of Beaufort's visits to Paris in 1427, 1429 and 1431, see Shirley, *Journal*, pp. 212-13, 238, 242, 269, 271 and n. 1: Beaufort offended the bishop of Paris by consecrating Henry VI himself at the 1431 coronation ceremony in Notre-Dame.

<sup>137</sup> After Jerusalem was lost in 1187, the seat of the patriarch had been moved to Acre (until its fall in 1291) and then to Cyprus (until 1374).

<sup>138</sup> For example, Jean de La Rochetaillee (briefly bishop of Paris in 1421-23) was also patriarch of Constantinople and Denis du Moulin (appointed bishop of Paris in 1439) was patriarch of Antioch. See Beaune, *Journal*, pp. 470-71.

<sup>139</sup> Corvisier, 'Représentation de la société', p. 494.

<sup>140</sup> Information on the chapter of Notre-Dame and the bishops of Paris, with a list of bishops – elected, confirmed, or otherwise – between 1384 and 1472, can be found in Beaune, *Journal*, pp. 470-71.

<sup>141</sup> Tuetey, *Journal*, p. 357, item 796; Beaune, *Journal*, p. 401 and n. 7. The Bourgeois added that Du Moulin had fifty court cases with other ecclesiastical institutions in his diocese pending in parliament at this time.

<sup>142</sup> The coat of arms bearing the greatest resemblance to the knight's heraldic tabard is that of the family of Aumont in Picardy and Guernsey (the same as the dukes of Villequier-Aumont), which is *argent a chevron gules with four martlets in chief three in base*; the heraldry may have been adapted for a cadet branch. I am grateful to Dr Kristiane Lemé-Hébuterne and her colleague for this information, and to Philip Lankester for the English terminology.

<sup>143</sup> The first four lines of *le mort's* stanza to the pope are addressed to the reader; the first three lines of the stanza to the Carthusian address the preceding merchant instead; the first three lines of the stanza for the monk appear to be directed at the sergeant before him; the first one and a half lines of the stanza for the friar contain a final thought for the labourer; and the first four lines of the stanza by the first *mort* to the hermit are directed at the preceding clerk. In Marchant's 1486 edition the first two lines of *le mort's* stanza to the Carthusian, in which he still addresses the merchant, were amended to fit the interpolated character of the *homme d'armes*, for whom the remaining third line about there being nothing left to conquer is more apt than for the merchant.

<sup>144</sup> Susie Nash, personal communication in advance of her article 'Claus Sluter's 'Well of Moses' for the Chartreuse de Champmol Reconsidered: Part III', *Burlington Magazine*, 150 (2008), pp. 724-41, esp. 735-41.

<sup>145</sup> On the way back from Saint-Denis, Bedford had the King of France's sword carried before him as Regent, which elicited further murmuring; the Parisians would have preferred the duke of Burgundy in that role. See Beaune, *Journal*, pp. 195-96; Shirley, *Journal*, pp. 182-83.

<sup>146</sup> Tradition has it that Joan of Arc banished the dauphin's fears about his legitimate birthright; he had been conceived at a time when Queen Isabeau was believed to have had an affair with her brother-in-law Louis. However, M. Warner, *Joan of Arc: The Image of Female Heroism* (1981, repr. London, 1987), pp. 72-75, points out that it was Henry V's supporters who questioned the dauphin's legitimacy; officially Charles was disowned by his parents in 1420 because of the murder of John the Fearless.

<sup>147</sup> Nash, 'No equal in any land', pp. 26-27.

<sup>148</sup> Vander Linden, *Itinéraires*, pp. 37-43; the last sojourn was only interrupted by a visit to Noyon on 13-17 November.

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<sup>149</sup> Thompson, *Paris and its People*, pp. 127-28 and 130.

<sup>150</sup> These belong to a late-medieval tradition in which the adult population used snow sculptures to depict well-known characters from the bible and popular culture, but also political allegories. See Vaughan, *Philip the Good*, p. 67; R. Muchembled, *Culture populaire et culture des élites dans la France moderne (XVe-XVIIIe siècles). Essai* (Paris, 1978), pp. 161-65, which cites the full town record on pp. 161-62; G. Besnier, 'Quelques notes sur Arras et Jeanne d'Arc', *Revue du Nord*, 40 (1958), pp. 51-62. H. Pley, *De sneeuwpoppen van 1511. Stadscultuur in de late middeleeuwen* (Amsterdam 1988), p. 17, cites an earlier example at Tournai in 1422, where a snow sculpture of a lion herding a flock of sheep was interpreted by the population as a king guarding his subjects' welfare.

<sup>151</sup> Muchembled, *Culture populaire*, p. 162. Here *le* Mort probably means *la* Mort: *le* is a feminine article in Picardian. The use of 'manouvrier' without a definite article is curious, as is the order and choice of only secular characters in this brief description. I am grateful to Dr Jelle Koopmans for his comments on this intriguing text.

<sup>152</sup> Wijsman, 'Danse Macabre'. The manuscript is recorded in the inventory of Philip the Good's library made after his death on 15 June 1467, while the ducal accounts for 1449 list a payment to the Douai painter Nicaise de Cambray for enacting the play with his companions before the duke. See Clark, *Dance of Death*, p. 92.