A portrayal of the 1549 Joyous Entry of Prince Philip of Spain into Antwerp, or is it?
mid 1550s: Anon

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Content

Introduction

This painting is held in a private collection. The owner has created a website www.oldmasterdetective.com dedicated to the painting which he describes as '*A unique, mysterious, unrecognised, unidentified painting*'[i] in the hope that someone will identify the subject matter, artistic attribution and provenance. For clarity and transparency, I have not received, nor claimed, any part of the reward that is offered on the painting's website.

I would like to thank the historians Professor Susan Doran and Dr Josephine Wilkinson and art historians Professor Stijn Bussels who has studied the event of 1549 and is author of the book *Spectacle, Rhetoric and Power: The Triumphal Entry of Prince Philip of Spain into Antwerp,* and the leading expert on the work of Pieter Brueghel the Elder, Professor Manfred Sellink, for taking the time to consider my analysis and for the extremely helpful and enlightening observations regarding the possible authorship and subject matter portrayed. I am eternally grateful for their help and advice.

The provenance has been researched by another and will not form any part of this analysis.

Technical

The painting has been examined by Tager Stonor and Richardson (TSR) using infra-red reflectography (IRR). The panel measures 99 x 46 cm. It has been reframed and including the frame the dimensions are 111 x 58 cm.

Originally painted on wood panel, the painting has been sliced very thinly and is mounted on blockboard. Since blockboard was not invented until 1902 this establishes that the slicing of the painting was undertaken during the 20th century.[ii] Unfortunately the remaining wood is so thin it has proved impossible to date the panel using dendrochronology. TSR suggest the type of wood used for the panel might be Baltic oak. If it proves to be of a different species, this may assist in the identification of a specific workshop.

Looking at the painting, the anomalies in perspective and the strangely fat central column suggest this central area may have undergone considerable manipulation at some point in its life.

The IRR examination shows certain anomalies under the visible paint surface. As the painting is now, it is made up of two boards each measuring 21 cm.[iii] There is a clear line seen at the left of the painting running vertically which denotes a join of one of the boards.[iv] A further vertical line is seen dividing the painting down the centre in both the panel and in the surface paint layers. While this may be a join of the original boards, it is

possible the painting has been created from two separate panels. The IRR reports states this central part may have been 'extensively restored'.

The presence of certain visual anomalies in the painting raises questions as to whether this was originally once two separate panels formed from two outer wings of a triptych that at some point underwent some significant conservation, or restoration, or even manipulation, into what now appears as a single painting. The alternative is that the painting was a single much larger panel, which had the central part of the painting removed for an unknown reason, and the two remaining outer pieces were then joined together to form what we see today. If this is proved to be the case, then this painting has undergone at least two significant alterations since it was first created. The first being the splitting down the centre and re-joining possibly in the 16th century, and the second being mounted on to blockboard, which would have happened in the 20th century.[v]

The IRR examination has revealed a considerable amount of changes in the under-drawing. The placing and omission of certain figures and various aspects of landscape seen in the preparatory sketching directly on to the primed surface confirms this is an original piece.

The amount of changes to certain characters in the foreground to ensure that they are placed lower than the central dominant figure wearing red stockings, suggests that social hierarchy is relevant. The lowering of the positions of the women and the cleric is clearly done because of the requirement to determine the central figure as the person of senior rank. The significance of the octagon in which the central figure stands is discussed in a separate section as its inclusion within the floor pattern is clearly of importance.

Was the splitting of the painting and re-joining it down the central axis necessary for propaganda purposes or made because the work of art had been damaged? If so, was the remaining scene considered to be of such significance that they had to be preserved, or has the re-jigging of the narrative been done for the more prosaic reason of financial gain? In either case, this may explain why two panels of two separate elements of the same work of art were joined to create this painting. The first conservator has clearly saved as much of the work as possible by joining two boards of the same piece that carried elements of architecture, landscape, and floor tiles as well as important participants of a specific event. If so this poses further questions. When was this initial change of image undertaken and why was the event, or events, so important that a visual record had to be preserved?

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Understanding the Renaissance mind

When undertaking a study of both history and art history, it is essential to understand the way people thought. Prior to the Black Death of 1348, the Church was the

centre of people's lives and the focus for everyone was to ensure that when they died they spent as little time as possible in purgatory. Needless to say, this led to the sale of indulgences by senior members of the Catholic clergy to those who could afford them, which in turn led to corruption eventually leading to the Reformation. Erasmus had hoped that a reformed Church could be brought about from within, but history informs us that it was Luther that brought about the great change in religious doctrine.

Historians give a general date of 1350 being the start of the Renaissance, basically because it was when Europe was recovering from the ravages of the plague that had reduced the European population by an average of 25% many began to question the teachings of the Church. The actual exploration of classical texts had begun much earlier, thanks to the discovery of various classical texts in the Swiss monastery at St Gallen, and thinkers such as Dante and Petrarch writing in the 13th and 14th centuries influenced writers and philosophers right up to The Enlightenment in the mid 17th century; some would say they continue to influence to this day.

Dante proposed that for war to be avoided there was a requirement for a universal monarchy. Dante's fourth book of the *Convito* is as follows:

> "*In order to prevent wars and to remove the cause of them through all the earth . . . there must of necessity by Monarchy, that is to say one sole principality; and there must be one Prince, who, possessing all, and not being able to desire more, holds the kings content within the limits of the kingdoms, so that peace may be between them . . . and in this love … men can live happily, which is the end for which man was born.*"[vi]

During the ninth century, Europe had become re-united under the first Emperor Charlemagne having fractured into a series of smaller, warring states after the fall of the Roman empire. Any subsequent emperor was crowned by the sitting Pope, and while the Holy Father was the head of the spiritual Christian empire, his subordinate, the emperor, ruled the temporal one. It was this concept of empire that became the centre of policy for Charlemagne's 16th century namesake Charles V.

The influence of the study of these early Renaissance texts becomes more apparent at the beginning of the 15th century, as life across Europe returned to relative normality after the ravages of the Black Death. Other scholars had begun to create a concept for a new education for the ruling classes based on history, moral philosophy, rhetoric, grammar and poetry. This new education was based on the studies of the classical texts of Cicero, Catullus, Tacitus, Livy, Virgil, Ovid, Homer, Thucydides – the list is very long. Among other subjects, Virgil wrote of a golden age that would return under the aegis of the virgin goddess Astraea and this concept of a new Golden Age, together with Dante's concept of a universal monarchy became central to imperial strategy.

These thinkers of the late middle ages were all Italian and this humanist thinking did not reach northern Europe until Emperor Frederick III (1415-1493), the first Hapsburg emperor and Pope Pius II (1405 – 1464), who had spent time at the imperial court long before he became pope. Prior to this, the intellectual focus of the lands north of the Alps was not on translating the Latin and Greek texts of the classical authors, but focused on the interpretations of the Old and New Testaments.

In Florence, the centre of the Italian Renaissance, during the early 15th century, the philosophers Marsilius Ficino (1433-1499) and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494) wrote extensively on humanism, Neoplatonism, Neo-Pythagoreanism and explored the Judaic Kabbalah, mathematics, natural philosophy and metaphysics.

An explanation of Neo-Pythagoreanism is best described by this entry in the Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy:

> *"Neo-Pythagoreanism is a term used by modern scholars to refer to the revival of Pythagorean philosophy and way of life in the first century bc. It coincides with the redevelopment of Platonic thought known as Middle Platonism. Neo-Pythagoreans elaborated a mathematical metaphysics in which the highest level of being was occupied by a transcendent principle, equated with 'the One' or 'the Monad' and regarded as the source of all reality. Neo-Pythagorean anthropology reaffirmed the ancient Pythagorean belief in the immortality of the soul. Although Neo-Pythagoreanism is often indistinguishable from Middle Platonism, it is characterized by a tendency to see Pythagoras as the father of all true philosophers, including Plato. In the third century A.D. Neo-Pythagoreanism was absorbed into Neoplatonism."[vii]*

Ficino is considered to be the most influential of the Neoplatonists and introduced the concept of the occult into his philosophy based on his study of the original Greek texts known as the Hermetic books, into Latin. Ficino believed that although these 'books' were pagan, "*they partook of absolute truth through divine revelation*".[viii] Their writings are considered to have formed the key part of Neoplatonic thinking, which led to the influential writings of Henricus Cornelius Agrippa (1486-1535) and the Italian Giordano Bruno (1548-1600). In England the most notable explorer of this element of humanist learning was John Dee (1527-1609). In the 20th century Dame Frances Yates (1899-1981) wrote extensively on this aspect of Renaissance philosophy. The study of metaphysics is not something that is taken into account by many of those studying the visual arts. Bruno and Dee were both mathematicians, as was Pythagoras. The concept of Neoplatonism is key to the humanist.

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The ducal succession from the House of Burgundy to the House of Hapsburg and their use of pomp & ceremony to support their right to rule

The duchy of Burgundy had been established in 842 A.D. and because of the lack of a male heir in 1363, passed by marriage into the French House of Valois when Philip the Bold (1342 – 1404) married Margaret of Dampierre (1350 – 1405) heiress to the counties of Artois and Flanders, the Duchy of Brabant and the Free Duchy of Burgundy. Philip was the fourth and youngest son of John II of France (aka John the Good) who ruled France from 1350 – 1364, in other words during the Black Death when the population of France was thought to have been reduced by fifty percent![ix] The House of Valois were to hold the duchy until 1477.

With the death of Charles the Bold in January, 1477, the Burgundian male line came to an end. Charles's daughter, Mary (1457-1482) was heiress to the domains held by the Dukes of Burgundy in the Low Countries, the free County of Burgundy and various areas of France. Her titles were Duchess of Brabant, Limburg, Lothier, Luxemburg and Guelders; Margravine of Namur; Countess Palatine of Burgundy; Countess of Artois, Flanders, Charolais, Hainaut, Holland, Zeeland and Zutphen. In other words she was the major marital prize of Europe.

On Mary's succession, there was an attempt to ally the duchy of Burgundy with France through a possible marriage to the son of Louis XI, the future Charles VIII of France. The French terms for this betrothal were not acceptable and in August of 1477 Mary was married to Maximilian, Archduke of Austria (1459-1519) and son of Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III (1415-1493), thus combining the Hapsburg domains with those of Burgundy. Appendix A shows the family tree up to this point.

The wealth of the Burgundian domain came mainly from industry and trade and from medieval times, the guilds, confraternities and civic authorities had used display from medieval times as a means of showing their status and subsequent dukes used triumphal processions, known as Joyous Entries, to show themselves to the people and to mark the granting of liberties or specific rights to cities. The first Joyous Entry of 1356 was when the ruling Duchess of Brabant, Joanna (1322-1406) granted a charter of liberties, known as the *Bjilde Intrede*, to the burghers of the Duchy of Brabant. The duchess has only recently come into the title and was, at the time, married to Wenceslaus, Duke of Luxembourg (1337-1383). The charter granted six specific privileges to the church, towns and certain nobles of the duchy, and in return the duke & duchess undertook to ensure the indivisibility of the duchy, impose taxes without the consent of their people, or likewise wage war or make treaties without such consent. There were various rituals and as in the 1356 event, often a granting of liberties and privileges in exchange for promises to protect the cities and surrounding lands, as well as the trading privileges without imposing unfair taxes.

There were various Joyous Entries during the 15th century and when Maximilian I married Mary of Austria in 1477, the following year the couple made a Joyous Entry into Antwerp. There have been various other Joyous Entries into the various cities of the Netherlands throughout the centuries and the very last one was a Joyous Entry in 2013 in honour of the new Belgian king and his queen.

When it came to portraying the might and power of the Hapsburgs, Maximilian I took full advantage of the latest technology – printing. Deep in the Albertina Museum, Vienna are two versions of a procession of the Hapsburg imperial family emulating the triumphal processions of the Roman emperors. The invention of the printing press enabled the emperor to maximise the potential of imagery to reinforce the status, wealth and power of the Hapsburg family. One of the versions is 40 metres long and was created from a series of woodcuts. This use of mass production enabled the civic authorities and those able to afford this huge print of a single event to demonstrate their loyalty.[x]

The museum also houses a much shorter version that is hand-drawn and hand-coloured. This was produced for the imperial family and shows a massive carriage

containing the emperor and is family. The future emperors, Ferdinand and Charles V, are clearly seen. The artist for this piece is unknown and it has only been exhibited a few times in the centuries since the 1518 procession. While the creation of the 40 metre long woodcut was clearly intended for display in public places, or the official houses of guilds and confraternities, the coloured hand drawn version was for the eyes of the imperial family only.

A later woodcut printed version exists in the English Royal Collection (ref no RCIN830118). Created in 1522, Albrecht Dürer produced a two metre version of this triumphal procession which was sold to the public. Dürer's annual stipend from the city of Nuremburg (paid on the emperor's instructions) ceased on the emperor's death and in a letter to the chaplain of the Elector of Saxony, one George Spalatin, we learn the following:

> "*the Council will no longer pay me the 100 florins, which I was to have received every year of my life from the town taxes and which was yearly paid to me during his Majesty's life-time. So I am to be deprived of it in my old age and to see the long time, trouble and labour all lost which I spent for his Imperial Majesty. As I am losing my sight and freedom of hand my affairs do not look well.*"[xi]

Dürer clearly created and marketed this print in order to compensate for his loss of the generous civic annuity of 100 florins.

These examples demonstrate the power of print for marketing purposes and how the emperor was aware of the importance of keeping his subjects aware of the presence of those ruling the empire. The use of this relatively new technology has ensured we have a visual record of this special occasion, plus we also have the first sight of the emperor's offspring, albeit it not very flattering or accurate portraits of them.

What is apparent in the imperial hand drawn and coloured version is that both Charles and his brother Ferdinand are both blonde haired, like their grandfather. Their father had the soubriquets of both Philip the Handsome and Philip the Fair. Admittedly 'the Fair' can also mean handsome, but it could have also referred to the colour of his hair. His wife, Juana of Castile, was also blonde as seen in this portrait by Juan de Flandres (1460-1519) of 1500 and now in the Kunsthoristsches Museum, Vienna (Inv No GG_3873).

Considering the cost and longevity of a building, it is not surprising that after Margaret of Austria's husband, the Duke of Savoy (1480 – 1504), died, she used architecture as a memorial as well as glorifying her family's reputation to the people of Savoy.[xii] As Regent of the Netherlands, Margaret (1480 – 1530) was a great patron of the arts and surrounded by the best work by the major artists, Charles could not fail to absorb the cultural influences of Margaret's court. When Charles V came to the imperial throne in 1519, artists, sculptors and architects continued to be employed by the emperor and members of the imperial family to beautify and modernise the palaces, and to create paintings, tapestries, sculptures and objects d'art. The greatest artists of the day were employed to design tapestries, paint religious and secular images, design new buildings and decorate old ones.

The 15th century dukes of Burgundy had set the bar high, using artists such as Jan van Eyck, Campin, van der Weyden and many other talented artists to promote and record the Hapsburg wealth and power. The family status was not an issue, but maintaining their position was, and they recognised this was brought about by the mutual understanding of the roles of the populace and the roles of the nobles. In order for the prosperity of the Low Countries to continue, merchants paid taxes and in return the dukes, counts, margraves and electors would protect the lands using the taxes to raise armies, if necessary, but also to maintain a court that was of sufficient splendour to intimidate any would be ambitious enemy. The rulers would undertake a 'Joyous Entry' and process into the chosen towns and municipalities with pomp and ceremony. The merchant guilds and confraternities were in competition to put on a superb show to impress both the ruler and other aristocrats, all dressed in magnificent fashions made out of silks and velvets, fine wools and linens imported by many of these merchants, to ensure that everyone knew just how magnificent they were. After the performances of the various tableaux vivants celebrating the guilds and merchant groups, there would be a renewal or granting of privileges in exchange for the civic authorities undertaking to continue collecting taxes on behalf of the ruler.

By the mid sixteenth century, the cities of Bruges, Ghent and Antwerp had also become centres of artistic and literary excellence as these trading centres had grown rich and their inhabitants were eager to spend their money on the luxurious items such as tapestries, books with engravings of places far away. Many of the courts of Europe emulated the concept of the Netherlandish tradition of Joyous Entries. In in addition to the commercial elements, Antwerp was the financial centre of Europe.

The church of Onze-Lieve-Vrouwekerk, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, was an example of the dazzling riches given to the church by individuals such as the founder of the Order of the Golden Fleece, Philip the Good who had commissioned a series of eight Gideon tapestries; the set of twelve tapestries commemorating Emperor Charles V's campaign in Tunis commissioned by his sister and regent of the Netherlands, Mary of Hungary in 1546. The church hosted chapter meetings of the Order of the Golden Fleece on various occasions so there would have also been banners and armorial devices of the twenty four members of the Order, and of course, stained glass commemorating a particular event. The church sustained considerable iconoclastic damage in 1566 during the various religious riots as more people embraced the Protestant Reformation.

Another church, also dedicated to the Virgin Mary, but this time in Bruges, is where the tomb of the last Valois duke, Charles the Bold, and his daughter Mary, remain. Both tombs are gilded and that of Charles shows him sleeping his eternal sleep dressed in his robes of the Order of the Golden Fleece, but it is in Brussels cathedral where the early Hapsburgs have been immortalised in fragile stained glass.

As an example of the celebration of all things Hapsburg in the Netherlands, their use of stained glass in the Hapsburg chapel, The Chapel of the Miraculous Sacrament, in the church of St Michael and St Gulda in Brussels, stands as testimony to their unshakeable belief of their divine right to rule. Originally all the windows were commissioned from Bernard van Orley, but he died in January 1542 after only completing

one window. After his death all the other windows were designed and completed by Michael Coxcie who had been apprenticed to van Orley.[xiii] Some of the original Coxcie vidumus survive, but in some instances the originals were copied in the 17th century and are how we know about the window of Charles V which was destroyed in 1793.[xiv]

In the Bibliotèque Royale de Belgique/Koninklijke Bibliotheck van Belgiè, there is a detailed sketch of Philip II and his first wife, Maria Manuela of Portugal, by that prodigious artist, anon. This is the only surviving evidence of this window, but we know from the research undertaken by Floris Prims (published in 1941) that Philip II had commissioned three stained glass windows for the central choir of the Onze-Lieve-Vrouwekerk, Antwerp, on 3rd March 1556 after a chapter meeting of the Order of the Golden Fleece had been held in the chapter house. The left window depicted his then wife, Mary I of England kneeling facing the central window which had images of Sts Paul and Andrew, and to the right, Philip II knelt facing the two saints.

In 1549 Charles V was Duke of Burgundy as well as Holy Roman Emperor. Charles was keen for to introduce his son as heir to the city of Antwerp. He was also keen that much of the Spanish court fashions and traditions should be introduced into the Burgundian court. As it was, while Philip had quietly become Duke of Milan in 1540, but this was not made public until July 1554 when Philip married Mary I of England. It was not until 1556 that Philip took the title of Duke of Burgundy after the abdication of his father on 16th January of that year. The imposition of Spanish ideas and rules regarding religion and traditions did not find much favour with the Netherlanders, and Philip's harsh treatment of those who rebelled led directly to the Eighty Years' War.

Due to the complexity of ruling the vast empire, Charles V had appointed his sister, Margaret of Austria Regent of the Netherlands and she remained so until her death in 1530. She was followed by Charles's daughter, Mary of Hungary (1505-1558), who became regent in 1531. Mary of Hungary had the 'help' of Charles's secretary of state, Bishop Granvelle (1517-1586) but the two often clashed.[xv] Granvelle is discussed in more detail later.

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The Painting

Description

This is an image of a secular scene seen from a slightly elevated position. It consists of three separate areas; the foreground has a noble clad in green knee-length surcoat and red stockings who appears to be welcoming a figure, dressed in red, into a floorspace defined by brown tiles marking out an octagon. There are three further octagons defined in the floor tiles.

To the right of the two main figures dominating the space to the left of the centre line, stands a cleric holding a scroll next to three women. To the left of the two central figures we see three men. One wears a beard; one is clean-shaven and appears to be dressed as a clerk or cleric and the third is tucked behind them and wears a red cap. The

third individual in this group looks directly out of the picture at us suggesting this may be a self-portrait of the artist.

Immediately behind the red architectural structure featuring two arches and three pillars, are two scenes depicting separate groups of figures. In the left hand arch, immediately behind the balcony, a cleric has his hand on the shoulder of a clean-shaven individual that appears to be dressed in cloth of silver. Filling a similar space on the right are four men, two of whom wear red caps, one is a cleric and from his dress, the fourth appears to be a member of the aristocracy. The cleric is clean-shaven and the other three men are all bearded in some way or another. The aristocrat has a full beard, whereas the two men with red caps have neatly trimmed moustaches and bearded chins

The distant scenes visible in both arches are two landscapes. One contains a far distant view of what may be a river estuary or a coastline with a series of classical ruins in the middle ground of this scene. A figure dressed in red can be seen entering an opening in what appears to be an incomplete triumphal arch with further buildings of classical design behind this one. The right hand image shows an odd rocky outcrop topped with a classical ruin. Below the outcrop is a large building which sits on the edge of a river immediately below the outcrop. This river does not appear in a logical place if this scene is a continuation of that in the left hand arch. There is further building on top of the fantastical rock formation and appears to be an amphitheatre.

An analysis of the Image as it is now

The architectural features are disturbing to the eye and the central column is clumsy and out of proportion. Unable to put my finger on exactly why the cramped way the niche focused on the fat central column requires an examination of where the vanishing point, or points, lie.

Fig 1 establishes that there was no central vanishing point because all the lines do not come together in a logical way.[xvi] Neither is there a sophisticated programme of multiple vanishing points as devised by Jan van Eyck in many of his works, such as the Ghent Altarpiece painted in the 1430s.


Figure 1 Lines establishing vanishing point(s)

Drawing a clear central line along the same line seen in the infra-red image divides the painting into two equal halves. What appears to be a mish mash now begins to have some logic (points A, B, and C). However, when further lines are taken from other aspects of the structure the perspective becomes very confusing and any logic disappears out of the window (Fig 1).

What has now become apparent is there are three obvious vanishing points - A, B & C, as shown in the thick red, green and blue lines along the blue line of the central axis. (Fig 2) These coalesce along the exact same vertical axis where the two columns are seen pushed together where the central line is demarcated in the IRR report.

Looking at the image in infra-red, the odd differences in the two horizons and the mishmash of sight lines in the current image become increasingly obvious. What is beginning to form appears to

be a process of 'restoration'. The red, green and blue lines coalesce down the centre of the middle column, which shows the two columns merged together in the infra-red image. (Fig. 2)

If the image is split in two down the central line and then pulled apart the lines of perspective meet in a more logical way as seen in Fig. 3. In addition, the anomalies across the horizon levels vanish and the landscapes begin to make more sense, plus the bay feels very much less cramped. This line is demarcated in yellow in Fig. 3.

While the crossing points on the image below may not be completely at a single point, that may be due to 'pilot error'. The horizons now look as if the landscape is part of a well thought out artistic scheme, and the whole image feels less frenetic. [xvii]

That the side arches are clipped at the top could be a result of the framing or may well have been trimmed during one of the two known restorations.
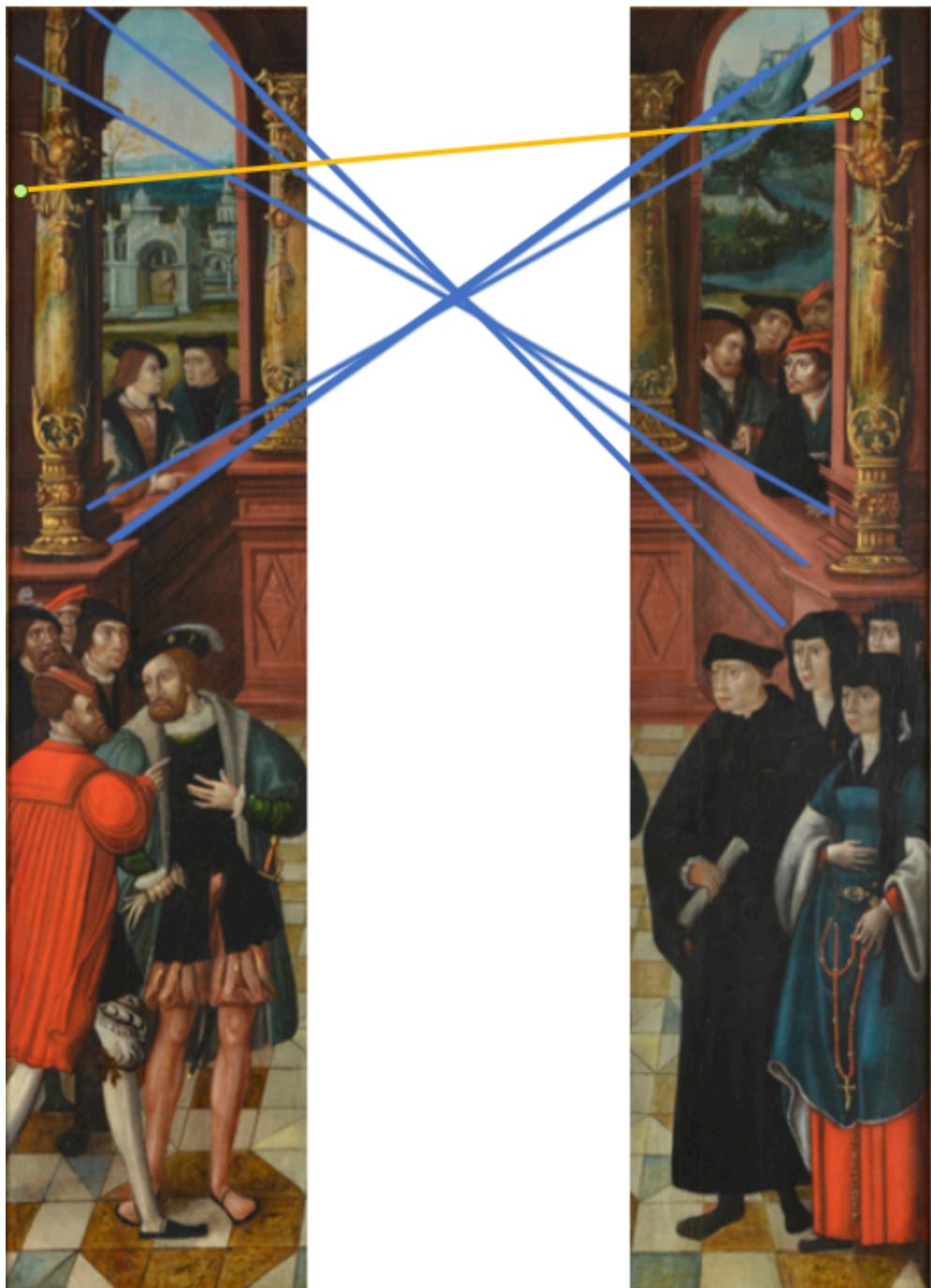
Figure 3 the image divided showing a more logical single central vanishing point

The infra-red report revealed that the cleric holding the scroll has been heavily restored and the paints used to restore this area may be different from those originally used, but in the absence of any Raman spectrometry analysis it is impossible to identify the pigments in this area. TRS go further and suggest that the hand and scroll is not original because the dark appearance of this area may be a later applied pigment. If the painting had been split down the central axis at some point to remove a central image, then this would explain the applied pigment and possibly even the scroll. A full analysis using

Raman would provide data on the pigments used and be a possible way of dating the painting before and after the changes were made.

The columns

Figure 4 Christ among the Elders 1513; Bernard Van Orley (1487-1541). NGA, Australia.

Bernard van Orley uses a similar shape in his painting of *Christ Among the Elders*, now in Australia (Fig. 4).

In van Orley's painting, the columns are constructed from a smooth white stone, decorated with gold. The bottom plinths are taller than the ones, and the very bottom moulding is as decorative as that seen in the later image. It is difficult to tell whether or not the Christ Child is positioned in an octagon. However, we now have a tenuous link between the image and the van Orley workshop.

Closer of inspection of the under-drawing shows these are two separate columns with two separate bases and tops, and two separate regimes of decorative detail. The resulting column is fat and ungainly compared to the under-drawing and the other two side columns.

The infra-red report also suggested that the surface decorations of these columns were possibly painted at a later date.

Figure 5 Detail from TSR IRR Analysis showing 2 columns

What is framed by the two arches?

The landscapes

What is immediately apparent is the top section horizon is not compatible across the scenes framed by the two arches. The yellow line in Fig 6 demonstrates how the horizon showing the sea with mountains beyond is very much lower than the rocky structure and the townscape as defined by the red horizontal line.

Figure 6 showing the differences between the two horizons seen in the two archways.

The triumphal arch seen in the landscape framed by the left hand arched opening is similar to those seen in many of the paintings by Memling, Patinir, Bernard van Orley, Quentin Massys and others. However, the horizon of this scene does not match up to the scene in the right hand arch which is of a rocky outcrop above a town which stands on a river.

The use of triumphal arches promoted power, wealth and status by linking the living ruler with the Roman emperors. The use of these arches in the celebrations of various Joyous Entries was a deliberate piece of propaganda first used by Maximilian I as seen in the woodcuts and hand-drawn work in the Albertina Museum, Vienna and Durer's engraving of 1522. In the fifteenth century, Andrea Mantegna (1431-1506) had composed the *Triumph of Caesar* for the Gonzaga family, Dukes of Mantua, and this massive work now hangs in Hampton Court Palace.

By drawing horizontal lines across the two arches, one in red and one in yellow, it becomes obvious there is a large disparity between the two separate horizons. This is not only odd, it is bizarre. But as is seen in Figure 3, by separating the panel down the central axis and creating a space between the two arches, the horizon and the perspective have begun to make more sense.

Figure 7 Coeke van Aelst: detail from Nuremberg altar wing.

The right hand arch contains a scene that is a virtually identical to that on a panel now in Nuremberg painted by Pieter Coeke Van Aelst. In this work, the rocky outcrop forms the background of *The Repentant Sinners of Nineveh*. That panel is one of two that once formed the wings of an altarpiece. The same aspects of the life of Job are also present in Coeke van Aelst's *Resurrection* altarpiece now in the Kunsthalle Karlsruhe. While the outer images of the Karlsruhe altarpiece no longer exist, because of the existence of the two wings now in Nuremberg, Maryan Ainsworth is of the opinion that the missing scenes on the Karlsruhe altarpiece represented *Job sitting beneath the Pumpkin Vine* and *The Repentant Sinners of Nineveh*.[xviii]

The concept of a rocky outcrop with an aperture first appears in the work of Joachim Patinir (1480-1524) as seen in his painting of St Jerome (c1516-17), now in the Prado (Fig. 7). As has been established in Heyder's study of the reuse of workshop patterns among the medieval and early modern illuminators, the repeating images such as this one seen in the Kunsthalle Karlsruhe *Resurrection* altarpiece suggests that the re-use of workshop patterns was not confined to the illuminators of this period. Patinir was a pioneering Antwerp landscape artist and had close connections with Jan Mertens van Dornicke and van Orley. Coeke van Aelst was married to van Dornicke's daughter, Anna, thus we have evidence of the close connections between these artists.

Figure 8 St Jerome in the Desert 1515-1519; Joachim Patinir (1480-1524). Museo del Prado, Spain.

The artist has referenced the Patinir rocky outcrop in shape and form, but added what appears to be a ruined amphitheatre to the summit. After becoming a

Master, many northern artists were making trips to Italy to sketch the architectural vestiges of the Roman empire.

In the landscape seen through the left hand arch we have a view of a classical architecture that is not fully logical. In the far distance we can see a stretch of water in front of a range of hills. In the centre of this little scene is a tiered building and in front of that one again, is an arched gateway and two lower archways. A figure in red can be seen within the arched gateway. Perhaps he is dressed in red as an artistic nuance to balance the red caps of the two men in the other arch.

These two separate scenes form an intriguing element of the painting. While on initial examination they appear disjointed, it is possible they are a reference to a journey made by the artist where he experienced classical ruins.

This motif may not have to have just one layer of meaning and the painting, as a whole, is beginning to appear to be a narrative carrying references concerning the individuals in the foreground. A sixteenth century patron may well have recognised this amphitheatre as a reference to the theatre of memory. Guilio Camillo (1480-1544) wrote a treatise titled *L'idea del Theatro* wherein he describes an imaginary theatre as an ideal architectural structure where all human knowledge was archived on seven levels divided into forty nine areas made up of seven steps, with a stage that would only ever be occupied by a single individual, being supported on the seven pillars of wisdom of King Solomon.
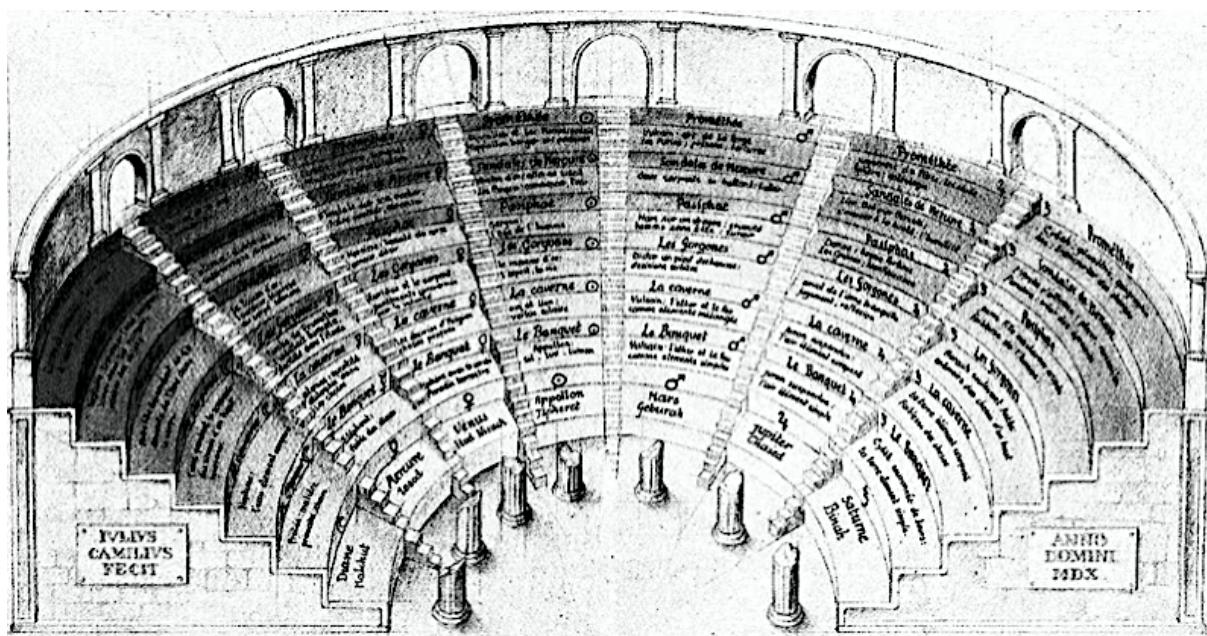
Figure 9 Camillo's Theatre of Memory. Image source: http://socks-studio.com/2019/03/03/spatializing-knowledge-giulio-camillos-theatre-of-memory-1519-1544/

The polymath Camillo was the 16th century successor to those earlier writers Ficiono, della Mirandola and others. In his treatise he states

"*By the ancients thus it was custom that those same philosophers who taught and showed to dear disciples profound doctrines, having clearly declared them, would*

cover them with fables, so that the covers they made would keep the doctrines hidden: so that they would not be profaned".

Much later in the sixteenth century Giordano Bruni (1548-1600) describes a similar method as the Method of Loci in his *de Umbris Idearum*. It is also referred to as the Memory Palace system and as way of memorising ideas, tracts of texts, lists with many items, individual words. In fact, anything that required data storage within the brain. While Camillo describes it as a theatre, Bruno makes the system personal by having the user retrace their journey through an imagined architectural structure. Both writers were bringing an ancient technique from the past to a modern audience.

This type of memory system was used by classical orators such as the Roman senator, Cicero, and during the middle ages this was developed by the Church for the memorisation of sermons as well as for meditations on the various sins and virtues of humanity.

By the use of this visual reference to an amphitheatre it appears we are being asked to remember a series of events, the individuals involved, and the people who were vital to those events happening.

Other Hidden Symbolism

In both the Christian Bible and Jewish Kaballah clear spiritual meanings are attributed to numbers for symbolic and specific reasons. The use of geometric shapes depicted in the floors of many altarpieces either as octagons, triangles, rectangles or in the case of the number 8, eight pointed stars, have a clear meaning. For an example of the use of the eight pointed star as a significant symbol one has to look no further than the emblem of the Order of the Knights of St John founded at the time of the crusades and still extant as the emblem of the organisation today.

Octagons do not appear in every altarpiece. I am unaware of any research done regarding the inclusion of octagons and this opens up an opportunity for further research. Whether a commissioning patron had to be of a suitable rank, as in Memling's *Donne Triptych* (National Gallery London) created for a member of the English aristocracy close to Edward IV, or a member of an order of chivalry is one possibility. As far as I have been able to ascertain, octagons do not appear in works commissioned by any of the merchant classes. This raises the question of whether the artist had to have attained the level of master to be in possession of arcane knowledge regarding specific symbols. As far as I have ascertained, the use of octagon shapes is a purely Northern European trope. More research is required to prove this hypothesis.

My initial research into the use of octagonal shapes by Flemish masters in various altarpieces dating back to the 1430s, appears to demonstrate that octagons are used to denote characters that are beyond the perfection of nature as defined by, Ficino, della Mirandolo, Agrippa and the learned Rabbis of the Judaic Kabbalah. In the appendix of paintings studied, those portrayed seated within octagons, or being contained within a scene that has octagons or eight pointed starts portrayed within the floor tiles, have

miraculous, religious attributes or in the case of emperors and kings have been divinely appointed by God and are therefore beyond the realms of natural perfection (as defined in both the Judaic and Christian Kabbalah by the number seven), and can therefore be defined by the symbolism of the number eight, being the number of 'miraculous perfection'.

The octagon appears 'hidden in plain sight' in the works of various artists from Jan van Eyck right through to this painting, but only in certain contexts. I have not made a study of every Flemish or northern European Renaissance master, but there are a sufficient number of works to demonstrate that the octagon was a motif deliberately used for certain circumstances and these are shown in table form in the appendix.

In the image being discussed, the main figure stands fair and square in the centre of the octagon and appears to be inviting the figure dressed in red to join him. By examining many altarpieces, retables and illuminated manuscripts, it became apparent that the octagon had to have a symbolic meaning from the early 15th century onwards. This use coincides with the increased interest in the Jewish Kabbalah during the 13th century and onwards. In 1486, the Italian philosopher, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494), wrote *An Oration on the Dignity of Man* containing 900 theses on natural philosophy, magic, philosophy and religion. Mirandola's text fell foul of the Church authorities with Pope Innocent VIII declaring it a heretical book in 1487. Mandola's book was finally published in 1496 and influenced many philosophers and theologists such as Guilio Camillo, Henricus Cornelius Agrippa (1486-1535) and towards the end of the 16th century, both Giordano Bruno and John Dee (1527-1608/9).

The number eight is considered a very special number in both Jewish and Christian numerology. In chapter 2 of Agrippa's second book of Celestial Magic, he quotes Serverius Boethius "… *that all things which were first made by the nature of things in its first Age, seem to be formed by the proportion of numbers, for this was the principal pattern in the mind of the Creator.*[xix]

Agrippa continues to extol the virtues of numbers for natural and supernatural things. In the Book III he gives examples in the natural world. "*There is one God and one world, one sun of the one world, also one phoenix in the world, one king amongst bees, one leader amongst herds of cattle ….. and cranes follow one, and many other animals follow unity.*"[xx]

Agrippa discusses all the other single digit numbers of 1-9 and certain compound numbers past the number ten. He tells us that the number three is an uncompounded and holy number of perfection and extremely powerful, giving examples of how from the Roman writers used three. For the purposes of Christianity, the most important use of three is as God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost as seen in the grisaille rendition of God the Father holding his Son (the dead Christ) and the Holy Spirit

referenced by the dove standing on Christ's lifeless shoulder in the grisaille painting of the outer wing of Campin's Altarpiece (Fig 10).

This is the earliest sighting of an octagon is in the plinth showing God the Father holding his Son, in the 1410 *Trinity of the Broken Body* by Robert Campin now in the Städel, Frankfurt am Main, Germany. (Fig 10)

For a less obvious, but equally meaningful visual statement a triangle, having three sides, is often seen in floor tiles and could have been included as a subtle reminder of the Divine Trinity and thus a prompt for meditation.

The same applies to the number four, in that a rectangle has four sides. Agrippa cites the oath of the Pythagorean's: "*I with pure mind by th' number fur do swear . . .*", and goes on to list the importance of four e.g. four kinds of divine furies, Ezekiel's seeing four beasts by the river Chobar, the four corners of the earth, the four Gospels, the four horses of the Apocalypse, the four elements – earth fire, wind and water.[xxixxii]

By drawing a diagonal line from corner to corner of a rectangle you produce two triangles (already discussed), but you also create five lines. In works on natural philosophy we are told there are five senses, five fingers, five wandering planets in the heavens, and in religious symbolism, there are the five wounds of Christ.[xxiii] Five is also halfway to the 'universal number' of ten.

Figure 10 The Trinity of the Broken Body 1410: Robert Campin: Stadel, Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

In relation to Holy numbers, the number seven is discussed by Agrippa at length, with observations that the seventh daughter of the seventh daughter has special psychic powers; that there are seven penitential psalms, seven sorrows of the Virgin, seven deadly sins and seven virtues. Agrippa is at pains to describe that the number seven is the most potent of all numbers. After all, God rested on the seventh day having created the world and all upon it

When it comes to the number eight, we are introduced to the more arcane elements of Agrippa's work. He tells us that the Pythagoreans call this number the number of justice and fullness, citing the fact it is divisible by one, two and four. Orpheus swore by eight deities whenever he beseeched the justice of the gods and as a musician, the Greek poet and musician wrote eight sea songs. It should also be noted that there are eight musical notes in an octave. Agrippa tells us there were only eight spheres visible in the heavens, which was the perceived wisdom of the time.

When it comes to religious significance, in the Jewish tradition boys are circumcised on the eighth day after birth. In Christianity, there are eight blessings that Jesus gave in his Sermon on the Mount; King David was the eighth son of Jesse from whom Christ was descended and that the number itself signifies eternity, which is why, if you turn the figure 8 ninety degrees it becomes the symbol for infinity, which was introduced into mathematics in 1655.

In Judaic teachings the number seven is the symbol of perfection achievable in nature while the number eight goes beyond, representing those things that are beyond the natural order of perfection i.e. the supernatural and miraculous.[xxiv]

The concept of eight being a miraculous number also explains the use of eight pointed stars in the carpet in the Virgin with four Angels by Quentin Massys (1465/6-1530) now in London's National Gallery.[xxv]

Not only is there an eight pointed star in the carpet, which is itself a rectangle, but the dais on which the Virgin's throne is set is octagonal, with a further octagonal inset of coloured tiles seen on either side of the carpet which is made up of light stone coloured rectangles set on their sides to form diamond shapes, and triangles of a darker stone in a similar fashion to that seen in our painting that has white, blue and brown tiles.

In Coeke van Aelst's painting of The Last Supper now in Belvoir Castle, the table

Figure 11 Virgin with four angels. 1479. Quentin Massys (1465/6 – 1530). NPG London.

where Christ and the Apostles sit is surrounded by octagons as part of the floor tile pattern. Judas is included within the octagons encircling the table because at this point in the story he has yet to betray Jesus.

Another feature of this painting is the figure seated on the left, gazing out at us. This is the sort of pose an artist used to include a self-portrait within a painting.

Figure 12 The Last Supper, Pieter Coeke van Aelst (1502 – 1550), Belvoir Castle, England.

In 1585 an engraving was made of Coeke van Aelst's Last Supper by Hendrick Goltius, but the engraver did not include the octagons.[xxvi] The reason for the omission is not obvious and so remains a matter of conjecture.

The Last Supper was a popular subject and it is known that Coeke van Aelst created many versions. Perhaps it was one of these, without octagons, that was the model for the engraving. In which case, why did Coeke van Aelst include them in the Belvoir Castle version?[xxvii] Goltius has made several changes such as omitting various details such as the stained glass in the upper sections of the windows and the carvings in the roundels. He has also changed the expression of the individual looking out of the image. The puzzle of the omitted floor tiles is yet to be solved and would require an examination of all forty one versions of this painting to see if the inclusion of the octagonal times is a feature in all or just some versions.

It becomes apparent that the use of the octagonal tile is used only for certain commissions. It is clearly a motif used by many artists, but only in certain

Figure 13 Engraving of a version of The Last Supper by Coeke van Aelst , by Henricus Goltius (1558-1617)

circumstances. Hans Memling uses it in the Donne Triptych of 1478 commissioned by Sir John Donne who was very closely allied to the English King Edward IV, seen here (Figure 14) kneeling before the Virgin Mary.[xxviii] Edward VI's sister Margaret was married to the Duke of Burgundy and therefore this close alliance is probably how Donne was able to commission the altarpiece from Memling. The saints portrayed in the outer wings are also standing on octagons. Since saints are individuals who are recognised as having an exceptional closeness to God through their moral perfection, they fulfil the definition of the number eight and are therefore permitted to stand on octagons, but it is difficult to see how John Donne fulfils the necessary social criteria.

Figure 14 Donne Triptych. 1478. Hans Memling (1430 - 1494), National Gallery, London

However, the lack of octagons in the Goltius engraving raises the question of the level of education of the artists. Was there a higher level of symbolism, with symbols such as these only taught to those who were became masters in a guild, or had been initiated into the mysteries of a confraternity?

In Memling's St John's altarpiece now in the National Gallery, the central panel, often referred to as the Mystic Marriage of St Catherine shows the Virgin and Child seated on a throne that sits on a carpet. Saints Catherine and Barbara are seated at the Virgin's feet and St John the Baptist and St John the Evangelist stand either side of the Virgin's throne. All are enclosed within an encircling set of octagonal floor tiles. However, the carpet on which the Virgin and Child are placed has clearly visible octagons that have eight pointed stars in their centres.

Figure 15 St John's Altarpiece. 1479. Hans Memling (1430 - 1494), National Gallery, London.

The outer wings show the kneeling donors and their patron saints, but the visible floor tiles where the donors are kneeling are rectangular and we are unable to see the floor where the saints stand (detail left).

This suggests that the use of the octagons may be specific to the saints, but not to the donors. We cannot see what floor tiles on which the saints depicted in the outer wing are standing, but these are very clear on the internal central panel.

The two interior scenes of the outer wing are of the beheading of St John the Baptist on the left hand wing.

Figure 16 Outer wings of St John's Altarpiece, 1479. Hans Memling (1430 - 1494), National Gallery, London

Figure 17 Inside of Memling's St John's Altarpiece showing images on the outer wings. National Gallery, London

In the right hand panel Memling has depicted St John's vision while he was exiled on the island of Patmos. In the background we see the coming of the four horses of the Apocalypse and the ensuing chaos, while there is an inset surrounded by a rainbow to separate it from the rest of the picture, that shows what is happening in heaven. Memling's use of the rainbow is a seen again, but this time in circular form surrounding the seated figure of God, while a lamb stands on its hind legs with the forelegs on the thigh of the Holy Father. The use of the circular rainbow suggests eternity and the words from Revelations Chapter 1 v8. *"ego sum Alpha et Omega principium et finis dicit Dominus Deus qui est et qui erat et qui venturus est Omnipotens"xxix* which translates as (according to the St James's Bible) 'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, says the Lord, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.' Even the numbers of the chapter and

the verse are significant. Luther was yet to write his 95 theses and the Reformation was a long way off in 1479 when this triptych was painted therefore Memling would have only known the Vulgate reference. The visual references to a circle being a geometric shape that has no beginning and no end represents Christ, 'who is, was and is to come'; the number four is represented with the four horses causing chaos.

What is more, the verse is the eighth in the first chapter of the Book of Revelations in all versions of the modern Bible from the medieval Vulgate version up to the modern day. In view of the special significance of the number eight, even for those not aware of the significance of numbers in Judaism, that cannot be a coincidence.

Figure 18 Outer wings of the triptych of Janne Crabe. Image ©Hugo Maertens/Musea Brugge

Memling's triptych of Jan Crabbe was dismembered in the 18th century. The central panel is of the Crucifixion and now belongs to the Museo Civici, Vincenza. The two outer wings are owned by the Groeningemuseum, Bruges, and the interior of these are shown with the patrons with their respective saints. The central panel shows the Abbot, Jan Crabbe, kneeling at the foot of the cross, and the left hand wing contains a portrait that has been identified as Anna Willemzoon.

The outside of the two outer wings have what appear to be statues of the Archangel Gabriel appearing to the Virgin Mary, who appears in the right hand outer panel. Both 'statues' are mounted on octagonal plinths.

Clearly, those individuals depicted standing within octagons, or other references to the symbolic power of eight, are intended to be viewed as somehow elevated and superior to those standing around them. This is in addition to the more obvious tradition of showing them as being taller or otherwise more prominent than others in a picture. In the painting we are considering, simply by his presence within the prominent octagon, the character in the green surcoat and red stockings is clearly intended to be the person of highest rank and esteem on which the observer should focus attention and around whom the narrative is apparently built.

The individual in red is stepping towards the man in green, thus is becoming equally significant as him, but because he is not of similar stature he has yet to reach the same elevation as his older companion.

The man in green and the man in red.
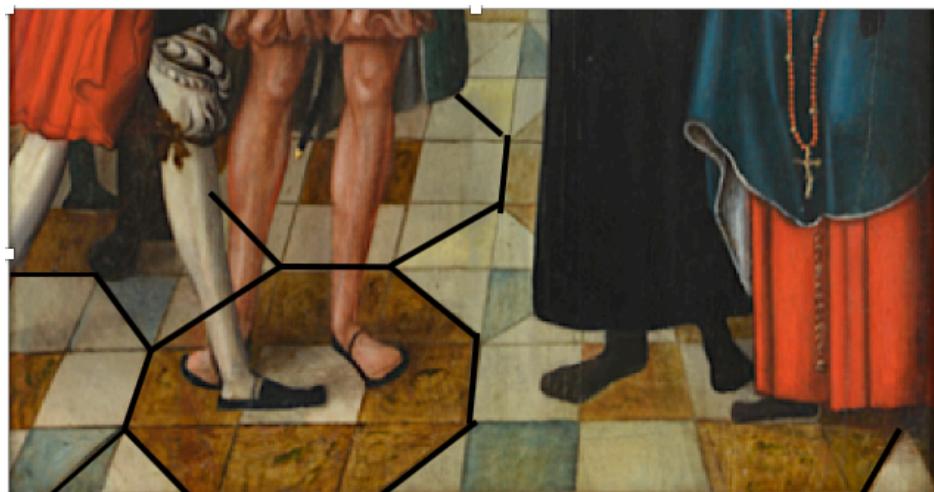
Figure 19 Octagons outlined in black

The two dominating figures stand just left of centre in the foreground. The grandly dressed bearded man holds a glove in his left hand, with his right hand placed on his heart. This character stands squarely in the centre of a brown octagonal shape with a lighter stone coloured rectangular centre. He looks directly at the other bearded man, dressed in red, who is stepping into the octagon occupied by the former.[xxx]

In the floor immediately behind the man wearing the greenish coat is another octagonal shape. The man in red is stepping from another similarly coloured octagonal shape to the left. One element of this latter octagon is coloured pale blue, but the geometric shape is quite clear. It is difficult to see whether the man in red is stepping with his right leg, or his left. In the under-drawing is appears to be the right, but even this is not that clear. The under-drawing also shows no clear design consideration to include octagons either.

What the under-drawing reveals is that the figure dressed in red has been lowered during the painting process. This suggests it was lowered because it was a question of status. If, as has been suggested, the figure in green is Francis I of France with the man in red being the emperor, then why was the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, placed lower than a king? In the hierarchy of aristocratic titles an emperor ranks higher than a king. In addition, the figure in green is splendidly dressed and dominates the scene. If this were a portrayal of the 1529 Treaty of Cambrai, then it is very odd as it suggests that it is a satirical piece and while allegory and metaphor abounded in secular imagery, satire was not usual until Pieter Breughel the Elder painted his scenes of everyday life later in the 16th century.

The figure in red has a very clear Hapsburg jaw and appears much younger. This appears to be the emperor's son, Prince Philip of Spain, who in 1540 had been 'quietly' appointed the Duke of Milan by his father.

While the red gowns worn by members of the Order of the Golden Fleece were depicted as being floor length in the portraits of the various statutes, it appears this is defining that this individual is both a member of the Order of the Golden Fleece and another chivalric order.[xxxi] Prince Philip had been a member of the Order of the Golden Fleece since the year of his birth, 1527. He had been invested as a Knight of the Order of the Garter in 1554, the year of his marriage to Mary I of England. The same year Charles V renounced the thrones of Naples and Sicily in favour of Philip. As a result, his son would be of equal rank to his future bride, whom he married on 25th July 1554. A king ranks lower than an emperor which is why the under-drawing has been changed depicting Philip at a height slightly lower than his father, Charles V. The under-drawing also shows there have also been considerable changes to the figures on the right to lower the positions of their heads on the original panel so they are below that of the emperor.

An examination of the early portraits of Charles V show very different features to the dark beard and hair flecked with grey famously portrayed by Titian. Titian had been summoned to Augsburg in 1548 to paint an equestrian portrait of the emperor after his victory at the Battle of Mulberg and all his paintings depict the emperor with dark hair streaked with grey. This could be due to pigment degradation and/or varnish discoloration, or the emperor's hair darkening with the passage of time, or a combination of both. The early portraits show the emperor with hair that has reddish tints.

More often than not, Charles V is portrayed wearing the collar of the Order of the Golden Fleece and it is one of the elements that art historians look for. In this painting, the emperor has his hand on his heart, being a well-known symbol of love and loyalty and such a gesture would have obscured the gold emblem of the golden fleece.

The features of both Charles V and his son, Philip, would have been created from workbook sketches as neither man would have sat for a painting of this nature and it is very apparent from the early portraits of the emperor by van Orley, Joos van Cleeve and others that Charles V had dark blonde hair and beard as seen here.

Charles V, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and therefore a ruler by divine right, is welcoming his son and heir, Prince Philip, into the realms of miraculous perfection of an anointed king, as demonstrated by the prince stepping from the less obvious pale octagon he occupied as his father's heir, into the obvious brown one being that of a ruler. In order for Prince Philip to be of equal rank when he married Mary of England in 1554, Charles V appointed his son King of Naples and Sicily in September of that year.

The middle and foreground narratives.

The minor characters

The foreground of the left-hand arch shows two clean-shaven men in conversation, one a cleric and the other clearly a member of the nobility. The painted texture of the sleeves of the noble suggests these are made of cloth of silver, in which case this is a member of a royal family. The cleric is identifiable by his garb and his cornered hat. In both cases we are not given any visual clues as to their identities.

The absence of a beard in the images of the clerics is explained because of their vow of chastity, a beard being a statement of male vigour.

The right hand arch gives us four men, three with beards and another clean-shaven cleric. Two have red caps as if members of a guild and they have very clearly rendered features. Unlike the richly dressed individual, their facial hair is trimmed while his is a full beard. This man wears a green coat with what appears to be black fur or fabric lining and his black cap has what appears to be a white feather attached to it. He is gesturing to a man in front of him who is wearing a red cap, and whose robe is the reverse of the full bearded individual. Whether they are members of a confraternity or this is the use of a visual colour reference to balance the scene, is speculation, and would require further research. The arm with the gesturing hand is garbed in a terracotta robe and the same colour garment can be seen at the neck of the listening man. Immediately behind these two men is another wearing a red cap and another cleric. The two red capped men are echoed by a third seen diagonally opposite in another group of individuals who stand next to the figure in red. The under-drawing shows that a fifth figure was planned in the right hand arch, but never painted.

The trio of figures to the left of the central figure in red contains the other man with the red cap. He looks out of the picture directly at the viewer. The two soberly dressed figures, one bearded and the other clean-shaven, wear black caps as if they are administrators of some sort, but may also be men of the cloth. We can just see their feet, but they do not occupy the same tiles as the two more regal figures.

Unlike the main cleric just to the right of the centre line, here the man with the beard appears to be dressed in black and brown and there is a curious white squiggle that may be a feather on his cap. His companion's robe appears brown with black, and his cap is untrimmed. What is difficult to know is whether these are deliberate reversals of colours of robes used in a similar way to balance the colours in this vignette as those reversed robes of green and black seen worn by the two individuals in the right hand arch. It is possible these robes are uniforms of city officials, or members of either a confraternity or a guild.

The Three Women

The faces of these three women are all similar. They are clearly not portraits, but caricatures. Whether this reflects the attitude towards women at the time, or because the artist had no templates to work from is not clear. Perhaps it is a bit of both. What is obvious is the woman we see dressed in blue with a red underskirt. The rosary with its crucifix is prominent declaring her piety.

Only the heads of two women behind her are visible; it is as if all three, by their facial similarities are either related, or were considered peripheral to the actual event taking place. Perhaps there was no existing sketches of the individuals concerned, but were included because of their relationship to the emperor and his son.

Charles V had married Isabella of Portugal in 1526 and gave birth to Prince Philip on 21st May 1527, daughter Maria on 21st June the following year and Joanna on 25th June 1535. Empress Isabella died aged thirty-five on 1st May 1539.

If this is a portrait of dynastic intentions of Charles V, then perhaps the three women represent first the mother of the imperial children, Isabella, placed to the rear because she is dead, then Maria who married her double first cousin, Arch Duke Maximillian, son of her father's brother Ferdinand in 1548 and Joanna who would go on to marry John Manuel, Prince of Portugal, in 1552.

On the other hand, while Isabella remains, the other two may represent first the widowed Margaret of Austria (1480-1530), Princess of Asturias and Duchess of Savoy by her two marriages, who had governed the Low Countries as regent from 1507 until her death in 1530 as regent first for her father, HRE Maximilian I and then for her nephew Charles V. Margaret died in 1530.

The woman standing at the front and slightly lower than the cleric might have been placed thus because of her gender, but they appear to make a pair, which suggests she could be the widowed Mary of Hungary, sister of the Charles V, who succeeded Margaret of Austria as Regent of the Low Countries on her aunt's death in 1530 until her resignation in 1555. There is a diptych (c1510) in the Museum of Fine Arts, Ghent, depicting Mary at her devotions painted by that prolific artist, Anon. Since Mary is not dressed as a widow, this painting can be assumed to be before she married Louis II of Hungary (1506-1526) who was killed at the Battle of Mohács. Unlike her aunt Margaret, who used her femininity as a useful and successful tool when governing the Low Countries, Mary's personality was rigid and unforgiving, and she was noted for having a sharp tongue with a penchant for making cynical comments. Mary had been Regent of Austria for her brother Ferdinand in the intervening years between her husband's death in 1526 and her taking on the regency in 1530. She worked to get her brother Ferdinand elected King of Hungary since she and King Louis II had not had children to inherit the title. Clearly Charles V and his brother, Ferdinand, saw their sister as a capable person to leave in charge of their territories. What the two women had in common was their love of learning, their talents as politicians, plus they were both great patrons of the arts.

Fig 20 Mary at her devotions, c1510. Anon. Museum of Ghent.

As an aside, whoever the artist of this diptych was, they were using the concept of placing the Virgin on an octagonal dais.

The Cleric.

While he stands slightly higher than the woman next to him, whom I believe is Mary of Hungary, his head is slightly lower than Charles V, but his feet are on the same level as the Emperor as if telling us that he recognises his status being less than the figure in green, but his placement is still of major importance. Despite Antoine de Granvelle allegedly being an advisor to the Regent Mary, the two clashed often as he did not like being subordinate to a woman.[xxxii] The under-drawings show this figure was originally sketched as wearing a benign expression, but like the majority of these faces, it is a caricature. The most likely candidates for the cleric are Nicholas Perronet de Granvelle (1486-1550) or his son Antoine (1517-1586).

Nicholas Perronet trained as a lawyer and rose to prominence in the administration of Charles V, replacing Cardinal Mercurino Gattinara (1465-1530) as the emperor's chancellor when Gattinara died. Initially, Gattinara had served Margaret of Austria and became chancellor to the newly elected nineteen year old Emperor in 1519. While his predecessor had counselled the young emperor to make peace with England and especially France, Gattinara's focus and influence was to mould Charles's policy into creating a universal empire under the jurisdiction of the Holy Roman Hapsburg Emperor as can been seen in this quote from a letter written by Gattinara to the young emperor on his succession.

> *"Sire, God has been very merciful to you: he has raised you above all the Kings and princes of Christendom to a power such as no sovereign has enjoyed since your ancestor Charles the Great* [Charlemagne] *He has set you on the way towards a world monarchy, towards the uniting of all Christendom under a single shepherd* [i.e. Christ]*"*

Gattinara's intention was that if all lands came under a universal rule, the new Holy Roman Emperor would be the epitome of Dante's definition of monarchy and the world would be a better place. Created a cardinal in 1529, Gattinara died in the June of the following year. His ambitions for Charles V to were to be continued under the auspices of his successor.
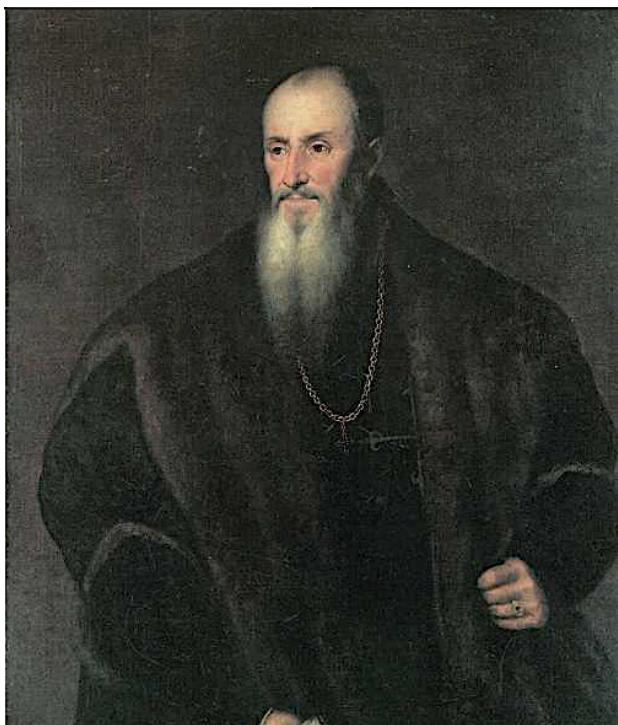
Figure 21 Nicholas de Perronet (1486-1550). Titian. Musée de Temps, Besançon.

Rising from relatively modest beginnings, the Perronet family came to be one of the most influential and richest in the region of Franche Comté. Nicolas de Perronet trained as a lawyer and rose through the ranks of the imperial administration eventually to become chancellor to the emperor.

His eldest son Antoine trained as a lawyer at Padua and studied divinity at Louvain. Having entered the Church, at the age of twenty three he was made bishop of Arras in 1540 and it was in this capacity he attended various imperial diets, and the opening meetings as the imperial representative at the Council of Trent in 1543. Thus the emperor had the benefit of a loyal and talented father and son team, highly skilled in the art of negotiation and diplomacy. Antoine became archbishop of Malines in 1560 and in 1561 he received the cardinal's *galero.*

Nicolas de Perronet died in 1550 and Antoine stepped seamlessly into his father's shoes as Charles V's secretary of state. In 1552 he drew up the Treaty of Passau and in 1553, together with the imperial ambassador to the English court, Simon Renard, negotiated the marriage between Prince Philip of Spain, now heir to the Spanish kingdom and all its overseas territories, and his cousin, Mary I of England, thus returning the emperor's desire to bring England back into the Catholic fold.

After the abdication of Charles V, Antoine became advisor to the new King Philip II of Spain, who appointed him prime minister and advisor to Margaret of Parma (1522-1586), who had been appointed Regent of the Netherlands. Margaret was Philip's half-sister, being the illegitimate daughter of Charles V and Johanna Maria van der Gheynst.

Figure 22 Antoine Perronet de Granvelle (1517-1598). 1561. William Key (c1515-c1568). Royal Museums of Fine Art, Belgium.

Antoine was one of the Spanish commissioners that negotiated the Peace of Cateau Cambrésis of 1559 and had a successful career as both diplomat and churchman.

However, for our purposes what is relevant is that both father and son were collectors of art and friends with various artistic and literary worthies. Titian painted Nicolas towards the end of his life and this portrait now hangs in the Musée de Temps, Besançon (Figure 21). Unfortunately, in the low resolution image it is not possible to see what hangs from the chain around his neck that might identify a particular confraternity or other body.

Antoine had his portrait painted when he was appointed a cardinal in 1561 and his choice of portraitist was the artist William Key (Figure 22). Traditionally a man of the cloth would not wear a beard, but the cardinal seems to have eschewed this detail. This painting is now in the collection of the Royal Museums of Fine Art. The cardinal's expression is not dissimilar to that seen in the under-drawing of the cleric in the foreground of your painting. Key had been apprenticed to Pieter Coeke van Aelst and become a member of the Guild of St Luke in Antwerp in 1540, making a very good living as a portrait painter.

Figure 23 The Ambassadors. 1530. Hans Holbein the Younger (1497 - 1543), National Gallery, London

Unlike either the man in green or the man in red, the cleric holds a scroll that has an oval seal as if it is pertinent to the event taking place before us. The stance of the cleric is reminiscent of Holbein's portrayal of the French ambassador Georges de Selves, Bishop of Lavaur, in the 1533 painting, *The Ambassadors,* that hangs in the National Gallery, London. Instead of a scroll, the cleric de Selves holds a pair of gloves and like our cleric, he is dressed in the robes of a bishop.

As our painting is now, the cleric is centre stage and the scroll in our painting takes on considerable significance if you consider the number of successful negotiations undertaken by both members of the de Perronet family in the service of Emperor Charles V, yet the TSR scientific report states it was not part of the original painting and added later, but how much later is not known. The cleric now becomes the focus of the painting as he is standing above the prince, who is seen walking towards both his father and the cleric.

Figure 24 Cleric detail

In Holbein's painting the artist has portrayed the Cosmati pavement in the Jerusalem chapel of Westminster Abbey, and therefore this floor is relevant to an English audience. Unlike our painting, Holbein's 'Ambassadors' has been given much attention and there are books explaining all the symbols.

Like father like son, the de Granvelle men were patrons of the arts and amassed a large collection of books and works of art.[xxxiii]

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The Painting as it is and how it may have been

Because of the extensive 'restoration' it becomes problematic identifying exactly what is being portrayed. However, I do not believe it is the Ladies' Peace of 1529, neither is it the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis of 1559.

The Ladies' Peace was not long lasting, being breached by Francis I within a matter of years and was concluded prior when Prince Philip was only two years old.

According to our painting's website it has been suggested that the central figure is the French king because he is 'imprisoned' by the octagon. However, this suggestion gives no consideration of the philosophy of the period, nor does it take account of why octagons are included in various paintings and altarpieces of Flemish art created since the early 15th century.

Figure 25 The Peace of Cateau Cambrésis. 16th century French School

The military exchanges between France and the Holy Roman Empire of sixty years were not settled until the Peace of Cateau-Cambrêsis of 3rd April, 1559 when there was a magnificent painting commissioned to celebrate the signing of this treaty that now hangs in the Palazzo Publico, Siena (Figure 25).

Even though this anonymous French artist shows Henry II of France embracing Philip II of Spain, in reality the treaty was signed by their ambassadors on their behalf because neither king was present.

As our painting is now: 1549 The Joyous Entry of Prince Philip of Spain into Antwerp

In 1520 the young, newly elected nineteen year old Emperor Charles V had been presented to the people of Antwerp having succeeded his grandfather, Maximilian I who had died in January 1519. The position of Holy Roman Emperor was granted by election and in 1519 the two opposing candidates to Charles were Francis I of France and Henry VIII of England. Francis I was the only serious candidate coming from the French House of Valois, albeit a cadet branch. Henry VIII was the second generation of Tudor kings, whose ancestors were of dubious legitimacy and in addition his father had wrested the English throne in battle from the Plantagenet King Richard III. Henry VIII was therefore never a serious contender for consideration by the electing authorities. The various electors confirmed Charles, king of the Romans, as Emperor.

In 1549 Charles V introduced his son to other cities within the Duchy of Brabant as the future Duke (who was also Margrave of Antwerp). In the introduction to *the Inauguration Charter*, prof Bussels notes that there are various elements that are specific to this particular event and that legal historians have overlooked,[xxxiv] for example that Philip has come specifically to show himself to the people of the Low Countries, that the people of Brabant especially will welcome him as their future ruler.

The oath sworn by Philip on the day after the actual entry to the city was as follows:

"*We Philip … swear that, upon our accession to the throne, we will respect and protect the rights of the Holy Church and also of the city of Antwerp and the margravate of the Holy Roman Empire; in particular their statues and privileges, and liberties and all of their rights and their old and modern traditions, as well as the privileges of our glorious entry, conceded and grated by us to the said states of Brabant, all of this without reservations. And that we will prevent all violations of these, be they major or minor. And that we will fulfil all obligations that a good and lawful monarch has to his city of Antwerp, to the margrave of the Holy Roman Empire, and to the good subjects, inhabitants of this city. So help us God and all his saints.*"[xxxv]

In addition to introducing Prince Philip as heir to the Duchy of Brabant, this event is where Charles V announced to the world that his son would inherit the Hapsburg empire in its entirety. Charles' brother Ferdinand already held the title King of the Romans, which was the traditional title held by the next emperor elect. Ferdinand was, to say the least, a little peeved that his older brother intended to pass the whole of the Hapsburg empire to his twenty two year old son and thus by-pass him and his son, Maximilian. The negotiations between the two brothers resulted in Ferdinand and his heirs being the rulers of the traditional Austrian Hapsburg lands and Prince Philip the heir to Spain and all the overseas Spanish territories after Charles V died or abdicated.

An expression of paternal love of his son is expressed on the face of Charles V and demonstrated by his hand being placed over his heart. His other hand holds his glove(s) – an emblem of nobility.

We have the official record of this spectacular event that had been organised by Cornelius Grapheus (1482 -1559) who published the official report in 1550, *Triumphe van Antwerpen*. Clearly, the possibility of making some money out of such a book was to be confined to the organisers and city administrators because. One week after the event, on 19th September 1549 the city authorities issued an injunction banning any of the artisans who had provided decorative elements from cashing in on the success of the event. The injunction translates as follows:

> *"The Lord and the city forbid everybody, painters, sculptors, printers and others, to reproduce or try to depict, to paint, to carve, to print or have printed by anyone, any part of the tableaux vivants, spectacles, triumphal arches or other suchlike, nor to publish or disseminate any description or inscriptions."[xxxvi]*

The resulting official report was published by Pieter Coeke van Aelst (1502 – 1550) in Dutch, Latin and French. Grapheus gives Coeke van Aelst the recognition of being the designer for the twenty four illustrations of the report and states that the reader should realise that the figures shown are in the proper scale to each image, which varies from image to image.

Apart from the commercial opportunity of sole publishing rights, what is evident is that Grapheus and his illustrator were at pains for the maximum number of readers to be able to experience the magnificent event through text and examination of the various images.

A low ranking member of the Spanish party observed the awfulness of weather and believed it was a warning from the Almighty because the magnificent display of wealth seen in the various tableaux smacked of hubris – one of the seven deadly sins. Calvete de Estrella, another Spanish courtier, described the events of the day, but totally fails to mention the rain.[xxxvii] The official report of 1550 mentions the weather as a factor and that not all the decorations were fully finished.

Grapheus's descriptions of the individual triumphal arches are described as if they had they been fully finished, in addition to giving the statistics of cost and number of workmen employed. As part of Professor Stijn Bussel's study of the 1549 Entry, he examines various tableaux vivants and the allegories depicted on the various triumphal arches.

At one particular tableau containing visual allegories of Gratitude, Gaiety, Happiness and Joy, the performers sang the following in Latin

> *"Let us, oh let us be cheerful, let us sing a sweet song. Oh let us be joyful, let us by joyful time and again. Far away far away from here, all grief and mourning. Very beautiful joys are brought to us by the glorious presence of our beloved Prince."[xxxviii]*

Grapheus includes a description of the emperor's reaction to this in the Latin version of the report. *"Vidimus ipsum CAESAREM, ad laetos huous modi gestus, gratissimamque, canentium ac instrumenta pulsinatium symphoian attentum subsistere suaviterque arridere."* Thankfully Professor Bussel has a translation:

"We saw that the emperor himself became very silent and smiled kindly witnessing such lively gestures and the remarkably pleasant harmony of singers and players of instruments."[xxxix]

The description of the look and gestures made by the emperor who, in the painting is only aware of his son, suggests a paternal love for his people as well as his son and heir. His expression could also be that described by Grapheus.

As the finale to the day there was a firework display in the *Grote Markt* and Grapheus describes the fear of the audience that the surrounding buildings would catch fire. This aspect is ignored by the Spanish reporter, de Estrella, who marvelled at the staging of the whole event.

Another unusual aspect of the Grapheus report is his address to Philip's heir, the four year old Don Carlos, Prince of the Asturias (1545-1568). Clearly written with a view to the continuation of the Hapsburg's remaining in power, Grapheus describes to the young prince how Charles V's roots lay in the Low Countries, and of the emperor's hope that Prince Philip would become as loved by the people as his father.

Therefore, what is going on in the scene in the right hand arch? We can discount the two individuals with red hats as they are clearly guild members and very particularly have clear features with more detail than any of the others. The under-drawing reveals another figure that was never painted. The two other figures, the bearded man and the cleric appear to be in discussion.

Considering the emperor's desire to make Prince Philip heir to the entire empire, this could be interpreted as his brother Ferdinand, King of the Romans, in negotiation with a representative of Charles V's administration regarding his being side-lined by the announcement that Prince Philip would inherit the whole Hapsburg empire. The eventual outcome of these negotiations was that on the death of the emperor, the empire would be divided into two, with Ferdinand taking the title of Holy Roman Emperor, which he did on the abdication of Charles V in 1556, and Prince Philip inheriting the throne of Spain and all the overseas territories held by Spain under the papal bull of 1493 and the Treaties of Tordesillas of 1494 and Zaragoza of 1529.

Looking at the image of the dialogue between the two figures behind the balcony seen in the left hand arch, their position outside the main event tells us that while important enough to be included in a separate scene, they are not so important to be included in the foreground. There are two possible interpretations for this scene. The first being Grapheus telling the Don Carlos, Prince of the Asturias, of all the hopes his grandfather has for him when he inherits. Artistic licence being taken since don Carlos was only four years old in 1549.

Figure 26 Archduke Maximilian, later HRE Maximilian II. 1544. William Scrots (?). Vienna.

An alternative candidate for the clean-shaven individual is Ferdinand's son, Archduke Maximilian (1527-1576) who was painted by William Scrots (?) c1544. (Fig 26) Maximilian married his first cousin, Charles V's daughter Maria, in 1548. The cleric is explaining that Maximilian will inherit the European Hapsburg lands.

That there is more than one possible interpretation demonstrates the skill of narrative by the artist, especially since there was an official restriction on portraying anything to do with various tableaux or decorations. Therefore any reference to the 1549 Entry of Prince Philip into Antwerp would have to be subtle and nuanced.

But this does not explain the prominent display of the garter seen worn on the knee of the Spanish prince; nor the fat central column and cramped architectural bay that jars the eye because of the various anomalies within the points of perspective.

What the painting possibly depicted originally : The Marriage of July 1554 between Philip II & Mary I of England

The marriage ceremony between Philip II of Spain and his cousin, Mary I of England took place in July 1554. Just as there is no visible collar of the Order of the Golden Fleece around the neck of Charles V because he has his hand on his heart where the fleece would normally hang, the garter may be a subtle reference to Philip of Spain being made a Knight of the Order of the Garter on the occasion of his marriage to Mary I of England. In 1554, with the marriage to his cousin Mary, the widowed Philip could add king of England *uxore juris* to his growing list of titles, but it should be noted that throughout the negotiated marriage treaty Philip is referred to as a prince.[xl]

That Philip is stepping into the same octagon as his father now makes more sense since with this marriage, as well as heir to the Spanish throne and all Spanish overseas territories, Philip became king of three nations, these being England(as uxore juris this claim would cease if Mary predeceased him) then Naples and Sicily in September 1554 by virtue of his father bestowing them on him in order for Philip to be of equal rank as his bride. Therefore the prince is elevated to the divine status of king.

By splitting the image in two and thanks to the wonders of technology making a gap (Fig. 3), the wider aspect not only resolves the problem of the cramped perspective and slims the central column by making it two, but also the level of the horizon of the landscapes where the rocky outcrop echoes Coeke van Aelst's reference to the Repentant Sinners of Nineveh in the Karlsruhe altar wing and the Resurrection altarpieces referred to earlier. This missing scene may well have been a visual reference of the 1553 restitution of the Catholic faith in England.

Under Mary's brother, Edward VI, England had embraced Protestantism and become in the eyes of all Catholics, a pariah state. With the marriage between Philip and Mary, England returns to the Catholic Church. In the right hand scene in the middle distance, instead of a city on the banks of the river there appears to be a large ecclesiastical building such as a cathedral – a possible reference to both the marriage and the return of the English to the true faith. The group of buildings seen further up this river appears to be a town or city. In the sixteenth century Westminster Abbey was situated downstream from the City of London and both the Abbey and the City sit on the River Thames. Even during the reign of Protestant Edward VI, Antwerp was an important trading centre for the English therefore it would not be difficult for an artist to gain a description of London and Westminster Abbey in order to render a stylised portrayal.

When Mary died childless in 1558, the lack of a Spanish heir to the English throne being produced from this union, meant the ambitions of both the living and dead Granvelle advisors to the emperor, and the emperor himself, for re-uniting England with the Church and for creating a universal monarchy, came to naught. Therefore, rather than the original panel celebrating a marriage, that scene appears to have been removed and the two outer scenes spliced.

As to when this may have occurred, it is possible the central panel was removed in the late 1550s as there is sufficient subtlety in the remaining visual references for this painting to remain as a record of the successful career of de Granvelle as secretary of state and chancellor to Charles V and for the image to be interpreted solely as the Joyous Entry of Philip and his father, Charles V, into Antwerp in 1549.

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Analysis of the remaining knot of figures to the left of the Charles V & Prince Philip

Of three male figures on the left foreground that includes the red capped, clean shaven individual who looks directly at us, the two soberly dressed can have two interpretations depending on which event the viewer thinks this painting represents. The one constant is the man in the red cap. As in the painting and engraving of Coeke van Aelst's Last Supper, the frontal pose is deliberate and this character is telling us he is the artist, but who he is we do not know.

For the other two, if one reads this as a portrayal of the Joyous Event of 1549, then the clean-shaven man could represent Cornelius Grapheus who organised the whole event. Why he is clean-shaven is unknown. The other could be the mayor of Antwerp, the elected representative of the city.

On the other hand, if the original painting represented the marriage of Philip and Mary in 1554, then the two main negotiators for this were Antoine de Perronet de Granvelle and Simon Renard who was the imperial ambassador at the English court. In which case the clean shaven man in black would represent the celibate bishop de Granvelle and the other being Renard.

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Final thoughts

Having established the three central crossing points of perspective on the central vertical axis aligning with the joining of the two columns in the under-drawing, and the disparity between the two horizons of the landscape seen in the far distance through the arches, this panel may originally have been two separate parts of a single panel painting. Equally, they may have been outside wings of an altarpiece that have been joined together to make a single panel painting, but I am not of that opinion as these two panels would have been only some 22 cms or so wide, with a central scene of less than double because account has to be made for a frame for these two individual scenes. The top of the painting also appears to have been reduced and thus the proportions for a triptych are ungainly.

I believe this was originally conceived as a single panel and the artist has composed a scene that originally told of both the ambition of both Emperor Charles V and that of his previous loyal chancellor(s) and his current secretary of state, Cardinal de Granvelle, to bring England back into the Catholic fold. It is probable the artist was working from workshop templates hence the lack of recognisable portraits. After the death of Mary I, the same artist may have been asked to adapt this panel to remove any reference to the marriage because no heir was born. If so, the subtle use of markers, such as the garter worn on Philip's leg would be have been seen as a mere fashion statement rather than a visual reference to his elevation to the English Order of the Garter in 1554.

It could be possible to prove or disprove this hypothesis because of the extensive records of correspondence kept by both Nicholas and Antoine de Perronet de Granvelle now kept at the Bibliotéque Municipale de Besançon, but I will leave this for others to research. From the various surviving documents we know that Emperor Rudolph II bought the late Cardinal Granvelle's art collection from the executors, therefore the inventories of Rudolph's collection gives another possibility for those wishing to pursue the possibility this panel came from the de Granvelle collection.

With the use of the amphitheatre in the far distance on top of that fantastical rocky outcrop we are reminded of Camillo's theatre of memory and therefore have to consider this image to be a visual diary of a specific event.

Whatever the case, the ambiguity of the rendition of the majority of faces makes either interpretation as to the events portrayed possible.

There are certain elements that suggests whoever composed this scene either had access to the atelier of Pieter Coeke van Aelst, or by someone who had access to workshop reference workbooks. There has been recent research suggesting that workshops co-operated and shared workbooks rather than being in intense competition with each other.

Coeke van Aelst worked with Cornelius Grapheus publishing Grapheus's book on the Joyous Entry of 1549 in Dutch, Latin and French. The more curious handling of the rocky outcrop, with its amphitheatre, the use of the octagon and partial octagon under the feet of the three imperial women, the use of caricature for the peripheral characters and the way the painting is clearly divided into three separate planes shows the artist had a detailed knowledge of the various early works by van Orley, Patinir and Coeke van Aelst.

The cleric stands central to the action, but not so obvious to be immediately recognisable, therefore he cannot be accused of committing the sin of hubris. We learn of the love of Charles V for his son from the way the emperor holds his hand on his heart, which could also mean a desired ambition has come about. We see the negotiations undertaken to resolve the complications of the emperor's desire to make his son the heir to the whole of the Holy Roman empire. Antoine de Perronet de Granvelle was not made Cardinal until 1561, therefore like Georges de Selves, Bishop of Lavaur in Holbein's painting, *The Ambassadors*, Bishop de Granvelle would have worn black robes as per the cleric in this painting.

Equally, had the missing section still been intact, then the scene in the mid-ground right hand arch of the several individuals engaged in conversation could represent those involved negotiating the second marriage of Prince Philip in 1554, being Simon Renard negotiating with the English Ambassadors and others, but admittedly this is speculative. De Granvelle was a central figure in these negotiations, and saw the marriage as a culmination of his family ambition to reunite England to the Catholic fold, and another step in the formation of a universal monarchy. Equally, with the removal of the central scene, that scene could be read as Ferdinand being angry that his brother was passing him over and making Philip his heir in 1549 and the subsequent negotiations to resolve that problem.

The marriage negotiations culminated in the re-uniting of England with the Catholic Church, as well as the Hapsburg empire, being a major step forward in the ambition of Emperor Charles V's, and that of the de Granvelle's, of creating a universal monarchy, but due to a lack of a male heir, these ambitions came to naught when Mary I died childless on 17th November 1558.

The scene in the left hand arch as the painting is now, could be a discussion between the future king of Spain, Philip's son the four year old Don Carlos, Prince of the Asturia (1545 – 1568) – hence his lack of beard, but identifiable because of the silver tissue fabric only worn by royalty. One interpretation could be the cleric is explaining the ramifications of his future inheritance. Likewise, had the marriage produced a male heir that survived to adulthood, it could be that the cleric is explaining the precedence Don Carlos would have over this child.

What is relevant is that a cleric is seen as being active in some capacity in all of these vignettes. Therefore, while the initial focus of the scene appears to be the two characters in red and green, on deeper examination the more prevalent character is the cleric, leading me to consider that it has to be a representation of de Granvelle.

As to the attribution of an artist, the hatching and under-drawing as well as the handling of the paint requires more research to establish whether or not this this was the work of Coeke van Aelst, but since he died in 1550 and Philip II married Princess Mary in 1554, then he is clearly not the creator of this work.

Coeke van Aelst's then apprentice Pieter Breughel (1525 – 1569), and future husband of Coeke van Aelst's daughter, became a Master of the Guild of St Luke in 1551 before undertaking a two year trip to Italy. It was in Rome where he was able to study the various ancient ruins of the Roman empire that feature in the left hand landscape. The fantastical way the outcrop in the right hand arch hints at the various fantastical elements seen in his later work.

Til-Holger Borchert describes how Pieter Breugel the Elder was much influenced by Simon Bening, who draws the figure into his illuminations by having a figure with their back to the reader. When painting landscapes, another trope of Bening's is the use of a single tree and we see from the under-drawing that one was planned for the landscape with classical ruins, but never executed. Like Bening, this artist has used a series of horizontal planes that recede into the distance.[xli]

Could this be the earliest surviving work of Pieter Breughel the Elder painted as a celebration of the various successful negotiations undertaken by Bishop Antoine Perronet de Granvelle, and his father Nicolas before him, during the reign of Charles V? Considering the sophistication of execution Breughel displayed from the beginning of his career, it is unlikely.

Considering the elements that echo much of Coeke van Aelst's work, it suggests the artist was someone who had access to all the surviving workbooks of the Coeke van Aelst workshop, but who will remain forever anonymous.

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M. V Taylor.
24th July 2020.
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Appendix : Works of Art Examined 1400 – 1550

Artist	Item	Name	Patron	Date	Octagon floor tiles or plinth & similar symbols	Museum	Notes
Robert Campin (c1375 - 1444) & Workshop	Panel	Trinity of the Broken Body	Unknown	1410	Octagonal plinth	Städel, Frankfurt am Main, Germany	Painted on grisaille. 1 of 3 panels of a dismembered retable
	Triptych	2 panels of St Clare & St William	Unknown	1420	-ditto-	Pardo Madrid	Painted en grisaille outer wings of a triptych.
	Triptych	The 2 Thieves with the Empty Cross, Entombment & Resurrection	Unknown	1415	None.	Courtauld Institute, London.	Horizon goes across all three panels
	Triptych	Merode Altarpiece	Unknown	1425-1428	Octagonal tiles in first row of tiles centre panel only	Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.	
	Panel	Annunciation (similar to centre panel of Merode a/piece		1430	-ditto-	Musée Royaux des Beaux Arts, Brussels.	
	Panel	Annunciation		1430	None	Prado, Madrid	Italian in style
	Panel	Virgin & Child in an interior		C1435	None	National Gallery, London	

Artist	Item	Name	Patron	Date	Octagon floor tiles or plinth & similar symbols	Museum	Notes
	2 outer wings	Werl Triptych	Henriech von Werl d1436	1438	None. Central panel is missing.	Prado.	Horizons in the 2 panels are compatible
Follower of Robert Campin	Triptych	Virgin & Child with saints		1444-1460	Hortus Conclusus	National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.	Walls & plants only.
Jan van Eyck (1390 - 1441)	Complex altarpiece	Ghent Altarpiece	Jocodus Widjt & wife Lisbette Borluut	1431	Octagonal base to Fountain of Life, but no floor tiles in exterior panels where donors are seen. However, Sts John the Baptist & John the Evangelist en grisaille are standing on octagonal plinths with names carved on front.	St Bravo Cathedral, Ghent	
	Panel	Virgin & Child		1435	Difficult to see online.		Virgin & Child on throne, with carpet underneath. Inside a church.

Artist	Item	Name	Patron	Date	Octagon floor tiles or plinth & similar symbols	Museum	Notes
Van Eyck cont.	Panel	Annunciation	Chartreuse de Champol, Abbey, Dijon?	1435	None	National Gallery of Art, Washington DC	Complex floor tiles with scenes from Old Testament & astrological signs. Monastery destroyed in French Revolution. Former burial place of Dukes of Burgundy.
	Panel	Virgin & Child with Chancellor Rolin	Rolin	1435	8 ptd stars within octagonal floor tiles	Louvre, Paris	A single line of the 8ptd stars within octagonal tiles splits the painting in 2.
	Panel	Madonna & Child with Canon Joris van der Paele	Canon Joris van der Paele	1436	8 pointed star in woven pattern on carpet	Groeningemuseum, Bruges	
	Small Panel	Lucca Madonna		1436	None.	Städel, Frankfurt am Main, Germany	A Madonna Lactans. Gets its name from the 18th century owner.
	Small Panel	Madonna & Child		1437-1439	None	Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, Germany	

Artist	Item	Name	Patron	Date	Octagon floor tiles or plinth & similar symbols	Museum	Notes
Van Eyck cont.	Panel	Virgin & Child with Saints & Donor		1441	8 pointed stars in carpet under Virgin's throne	Frick Collection, New York	Horizon carries across the panel either side of throne
	Panel	The Fountain of Grace	Unknown	1440-1450 Poss finished after Van Eyck's death.	Complex floor tile iconography of 8 pointed stars made up of triangles & rectangles set within an octagon. Octagonal fountain of life	Prado, Madrid.	Already in Spain in 15th c. Donated to Monastery of El Parral, Segovia by Henrique IV.
After Jan van Eyck	Triptych	Peter Wijts with Madonna & Child	Pieter Wijts	1615-1650	Madonna stands inside floor tiles that are of 8 pointed stars	Groeningemuseum, Bruges	Donor clearly a member of nobility
Rogier van der Weyden (1400 – 1464)		Christ appearing to his Mother		1430		Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, Germany	
	Panel	Exhumation of St Hubert		1437-1440	Pale blue& white octagonal floor tiles	National Gallery London	Octagonal tiles = saint.

Artist	Item	Name	Patron	Date	Octagon floor tiles or plinth & similar symbols	Museum	Notes
Van der Weyden cont	Panel	St Luke Painting the Virgin		1435-40	Octagonal tile between St & Virgin	Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts USA	
	Triptych	Annunciation		1440	8 pointed star in central panel & rectangles & triangles	Sabauda Gallery, Turin	Horizon carries through all the panels when open
	Panel	Virgin & Child		1435-1438	None.	Prado, Madrid.	Known as the Duran Virgin
	Triptych	Nativity	Pierre Bladelin	1445-1450	Octagonal floor tiles in panel with left panel showing Emperor Augustus consulting the Tiburtine Sibyl. Hapsburg eagle can be seen in the stained glass of the window of this panel.	Gemäldgalerie, Berlin	Pierre Bladelin dressed in black kneels outside the stable in the central panel.
	Triptych	St Columba A/piece. Adoration of Magi		1455	Octagonal floor tiles in lft/hnd wing = Annunciation	Bayerische Staatsgemaldesammlungen, Munich. Originally from St Columba's Church, Cologne.	The point of conception = the relevance of the miraculous.

Artist	Item	Name	Patron	Date	Octagon floor tiles or plinth & similar symbols	Museum	Notes
Van der Weden + workshop	Triptych	Nativity	Unknown, Does Bladelina a/piece = template?	1459 or later	Virgin sits on octagonal plinth	Metropolitan Museum, New York	Magi same in central & rt/hnd wing. Virgin & Child = octagonal reference.
Dieric Bouts (1415 - 1475)	Triptych	Life of the Virgin		1445	Triangles & rectangles only	Prado, Madrid	Horizon mounts gently through arches 2 - 4
	Panel	Last Supper		1464-67	Tiles set forming patter with 8 diamond shapes. Also in form of cross using 4.	St Peter's church, Louvain.	Numerological Christian Kaballah symbols obvious in floor tile patterns.
Hans Memling (1440 - 1490)	Panel	Presentation at Temple		1463	None	National Gallery of Art, Washington	Rectangular tiles & Romanesque architecture.
	Panel	Virgin & Child with 2 musical angels		1465-70	Rectangles & triangles. No octagons	Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City	Previosly attr to workshop of Memling; prior to this Van der Weyden
	Triptych	? Crucifixion. Now dismembered & panels scattered	Jan Crabbe	1467-70	Outer wings = Gabriel & Mary on octagonal dais	2 versions: Vicenza, Berlin, & The Morgan, NY. See Met publication on this piece.	Gabriel & Virgin stand on octagonal plinths on exterior or wings.

Artist	Item	Name	Patron	Date	Octagon floor tiles or plinth & similar symbols	Museum	Notes
	Triptych	Adoration of Magi		1470	Octagonal tiles in rt hand wing in presentation.	Prado. There is a clear reference to the work of van der Weyden St Columba altarpiece.	The floor under Joseph appears to be in shadow & he stands apart from the scene.
		Adoration of Virgin & Child + St Antony & donor		1472	Octagons	Ottawa	Identification of donor unknown at present
	Triptych	Adoration of Magi		1479	8 pointed stars in rt hand wing depicting Presentation at Temple. Rose window has 8 pts	Museo del Prado, Spain	Joseph is excluded from the group and circumcision, stands on square tiles. Virgin on octagonal.
	Triptych	Triptych of Jan Floriens (a		1479	Octagonal tiles in presentation	Stedelijke Museu Brugge, Sint Janshospital. Floriens was a member of this monastic community.	Joseph excluded from circumcision group. Virgin on octagonal.
	Triptych	St John's Altarpiece	Religious order	1479	Octagonal Tiles present	Memling Museum, Bruges. AKA Mystic Marriage of St Catherine.	
	Single Panel	Mystic Marriage of St Catherine	Unknown	1480s	None: Set in a garden	Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.	Outer wings show beheading of John the Baptist & scene from Revelations.

Artist	Item	Name	Patron	Date	Octagon floor tiles or plinth & similar symbols	Museum	Notes
Memling cont.	Single Panel	The Virgin of Jacques Floreins	Jacques Floreins	1490s	Octagonal tiles in carpet under the throne where Virgin & Child are seated	Louvre, Paris.	
	Triptych	Triptych Adoration of the Magi		1490s			
Anon	Panel copy after R van der W	Christ appearing to his Mother	Unknown	c1496		Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York	Artist & patron unknown. ?Attr. to both Michel Sittow & Juan de Flandres
Bernard van Orley (1487 – 1541)	Panel	Christ among the Elders			Difficult to see tiles under the 12 year old Christ Child.	National Gallery of Art, Australia	The columns are almost identical to the 3 seen in Oxford visible surface/4 in underdrawings.
Quintin Massys (1465/6 – 1530)		Virgin & Child with 4 Angels			Octagonal dais, 8 pointed star on carpet	National Gallery, London	Loaded with elements of No 8.

End Notes

[i] www.oldmasterdetective.com

[ii] Oxford English Dictionary online entry.

[iii] TSR Report p 11. There appears to be some confusion as to what the painting actually measures widthways when it is out of its frame. The website gives the measurements as 99 x 46cms ex frame.

[iv] TSR Report p 11.

[v] TSR give the date as 1540 on p 1 of their report.

[vi] Yates: *Astrea: The Imperial theme in the Sixteenth Century p9.*

[vii] Schibli, Hermann S.. Neo-Pythagoreanism, 1998, doi:10.4324/9780415249126-A074-1. Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Taylor and Francis, https://www.rep.routledge.com/articles/thematic/neo-pythagoreanism/v-1.

[viii] P98. Bartlett: The Civilisation of the Italian Renaissance; A Source Book.

[ix] Recent research into excavated plague pits in and around London for the HS2 line has demonstrated that previous estimates had not taken into account the unrecorded deaths of ordinary people.

[x] http://sosa2.uni-graz.at/sosa/druckschriften/triumphzug/index.html

[xi] https://www.rct.uk/collection/830118/the-triumphal-cart-of-the-emperor-maximilian

[xii] Margaret of Austria & Brou: Hapsburg Patronage in Savoy; Deanna Macdonald MA thesis 1997; p1.

[xiii] See Melin Reintjens paper "The Hapsburg Windows of Brussels Cathedral" for more information on the stained glass in the cathedral.

[xiv] Reintjens; "The Hapsburg Windows of Brussels Cathedral",

[xv] This is not the place to indulge in a long explanation of the status of women. However, Agrippa's views on women were way ahead of his time and got him into a lot of trouble. See his *Declamatio de nobilitated et praecellantia foemenei sexus* (Declamation on the Nobility and Pre-eminence of the Female Sex); translated & edited by Albert Rabil Jr; the University of Chicago Press, Ltd., London;

[xvi] As devised by Brunelleschi and Pierro della Francesco in the early 15th century to create a more realistic image, and in use by the Flemish painters since the mid 15th century

[xvii] The sight lines have been created in Word for the purposes of this analysis.

[xviii] Pp65-67 Image scanned from the exhibition catalogue *Grand Designs: Pieter Coeke van Aelst & Renaissance Tapestries*

[xix] Henricus Agrippa; Three books of Occult Philosophy or Magic (Complete and Uncensored), p121.

[xx] Agrippa, p123.

[xxi] Pythagoreans were members of a 6th century BC school of philosophy based on the metaphysical beliefs of the philosopher, Pythagoras.

[xxii] Agrippa pp130 – 133.

[xxiii] Agrippa pp.134-5.

[xxiv] Rabbi Eliezer Posner; www.chabad.org What is the Spiritual Significance of the Number Eight?

[xxv] National Gallery, London. Ref NG6282

[xxvi] Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Accession No 51.501.4434

xxvii Another of Coeke van Aelst's paintings of The Last Supper, now in the Louvre, also contains octagons.

xxviii National Gallery, London. Ref NG 6275.1

xxix Vulgate Online Bible.

xxx I am quoting the word from the entry on the www.oldmasterdetective.com.

xxxi Illuminating the Renaissance; 2003: Thomas Kren & Scott McKendrick p405.

xxxii Philip had instructed his aunt to listen to de Granvelle and take his advice on all things, which she objected to and because of the clash of personalities between de Granvelle and her, she eventually retired from the regency.

xxxiii Trevor-Roper, Hugh; *Princes and Artists, Patronage and Ideology at Four Habsburg Courts 1517–1633*, Thames & Hudson, London, revised edition 1991.

xxxiv Bussels; Spectacle, Rhetoric & Power: The Triumphal Entry of Prince Philip of Spain into Antwerp

xxxv Ibid p80.

xxxvi Ibid p40.

xxxvii Ibid p47.

xxxviii Ibid p51.

xxxix Ibid.

xl David Loades; Mary Tudor; p42   .

xli *Breugel: The Hand of the Master*. Essays in Context. Essay: Pieter Breugel the Elder & Flemish Book Illumination; Til-Holger Borchert. pps96-108.

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