PENNY HOWELL JOLLY

Rogier van der Weyden's Escorial and Philadelphia *Crucifixions* and their relation to Fra Angelico at San Marco*

I Introduction

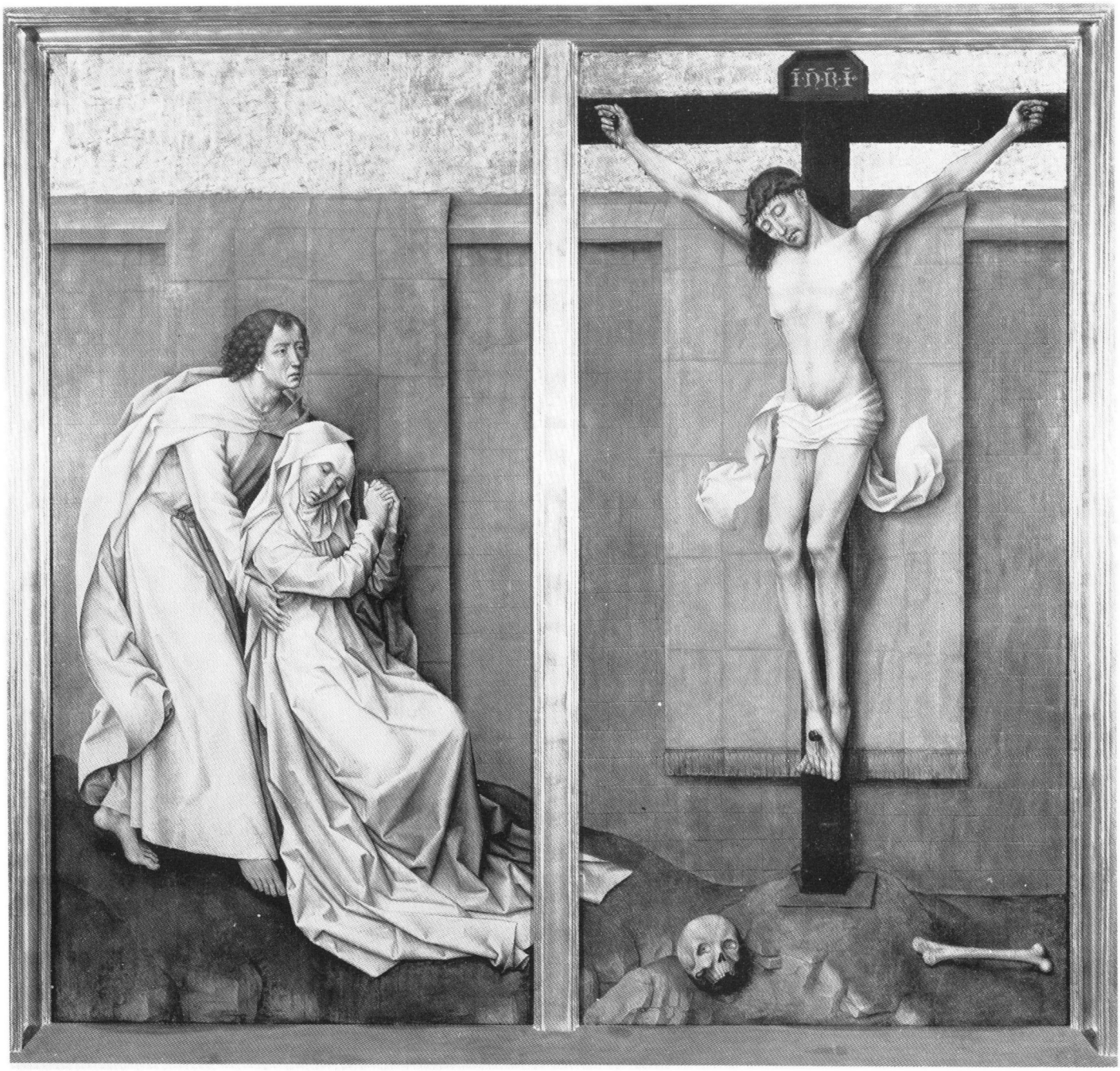
The two large paintings of the *Crucifixion with the Virgin Mary and St. John* in the Johnson Collection, Philadelphia (Fig. 1)[1] and in the Nuevos Museo in the Monastery of the Escorial (Fig. 2)[2] have long been noted within Rogier van der Weyden's *oeuvre* because of their exceptional coloration and the austere simplicity of their compositions. First, Rogier has reduced the often crowded scene of the Crucifixion to three figures in a stark setting. John and Mary stand on a rocky ground in a shallow space before a cut stone wall. While the skull and bone in the Philadelphia diptych imply that the desolate setting is the actual place of the Crucifixion, Mt. Golgotha, even these are omitted in the Escorial version. Secondly, Rogier's usually vivid palette has been replaced by soft pastels and expanses of yellow ochre and grey which are juxtaposed with flat areas of red and gold. The draperies of Mary and John are a very pale blue and a pale rose, and the skin of Christ's lifeless body is ashen. The wall behind them is a soft grey, and the ground a yellow ochre. In contrast to these grisaille-like figures and settings, however, the Philadelphia diptych includes two brilliant red cloths which hang on the wall below a gold sky. In the Escorial panel this gold sky has been eliminated, and the red cloth enlarged and projected forward above Christ's head. In both versions, details of the narrative are suppressed, creating a quiet, timeless image which invites the viewer's contemplation.

While scholars have noted the unusual palette and compositions of the works, a common reason for the remarkably similar treatment of these two works has not been explored. In addition, it is notable that, while the unusual form of the two works shows clearly that these two *Crucifixions* are exceptional within Rogier's oeuvre and are at least visually related to each other, on the basis of style, scholars correctly date them five to ten years apart. The Philadelphia diptych is now generally dated between 1450 and 1455, while the Escorial panel is generally considered a late work and has been dated by Panofsky about 1462.[3] It is the intention of this study to discuss the reasons for the exceptional treatment of the two works, their sources, and their date.

II Earlier Theories

In earlier literature scholars have offered several explanations for Rogier's unusual choice of coloration and composition. Because of the lack of decorative detail in the setting and the grisaille-like coloration of the figures, it was long ago suggested that Rogier was imitating sculpture.[4]

Indeed, during his career, particularly during his early career, Rogier repeatedly

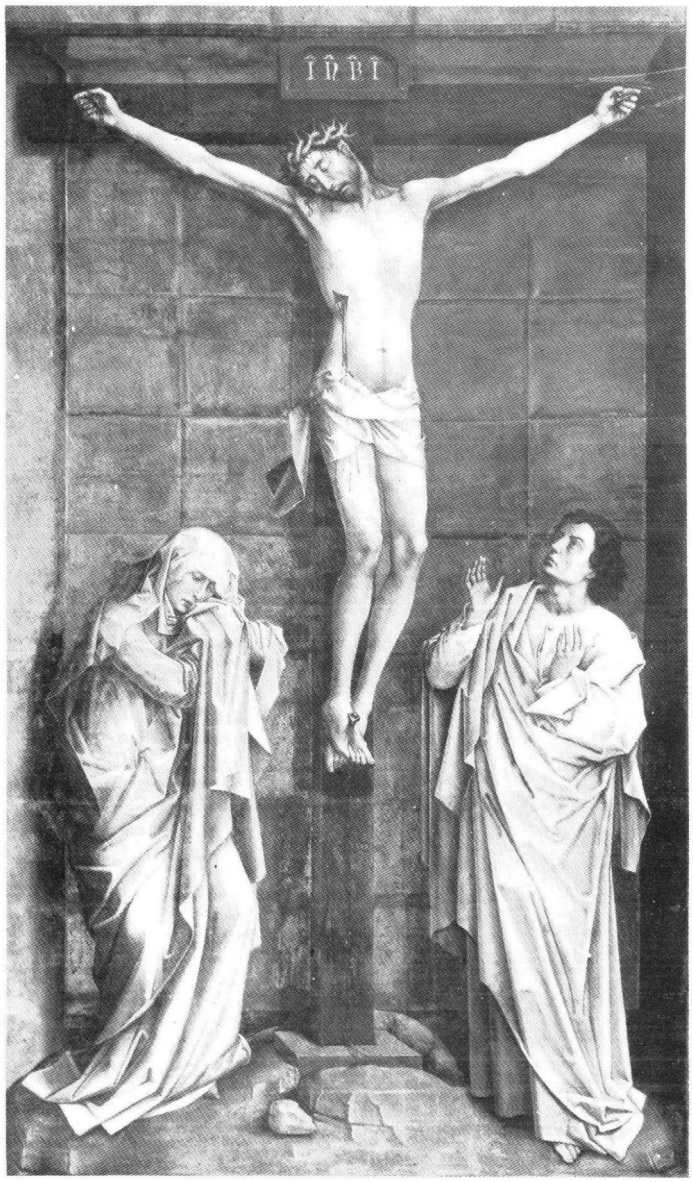


1

demonstrated an interest in painting figures in relation to a sculptural setting. For instance, in his *Descent from the Cross* (Madrid, The Prado) the fully polychromed figures are viewed as though behind stone tracery, so that they stand illusionistically within an architectural niche. Similarly, Rogier executed three versions of the *Virgin and Child* (Lugano, Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection; Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum; and Madrid, The Prado) which show Mary and Christ either seated or standing within fictive carved-stone niches. Finally, in the Virgin Mary Triptych (two versions extant, one now divided between Granada, Capilla Real and New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art; the other in Berlin-Dahlem, Staatlichen Museen) and the John the Baptist Triptych (Berlin-Dahlem, Staatlichen Museen) the main figures are enframed by architectural portals, of which the 'sculpted' archivolts further elaborate the iconographic

1
Rogier van der Weyden, *Crucifixion*. Philadelphia, John G. Johnson Collection (photo: John G. Johnson Collection, Philadelphia)

2
Rogier van der Weyden, *Crucifixion*. The Escorial, Nuevos Museo (photo: Foto Mas)

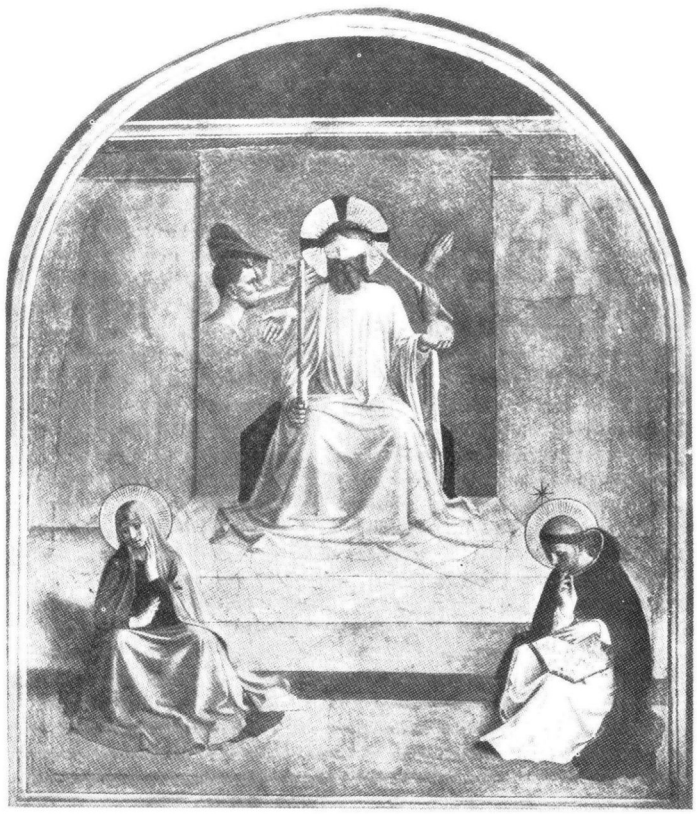


2

program expressed by the main scenes.[5] It should be noted, however, that while in all these examples the main figures are fully polychromed, the surrounding architectural niches and any figures which are an actual part of the niche are painted in grisaille, presumably because they are made of stone.

Thus it appears that in all of these works Rogier is making a distinction between the smaller stone statues in the architecture painted in grisaille, and the central, fully polychromed figures standing within the niches.

This is important to realize, because sculpture was routinely polychromed in the fifteenth century in Northern Europe. Art historians, then, have been confronted with a problem. Did Rogier, in a *trompe l'oeil* fashion, actually mean to paint groups of polychromed sculpture juxtaposed with unpolychromed stone carvings, or, had he some other motive in mind for painting 'real' flesh and blood figures standing in architectural settings?[6] In any case, it must be realized that the Philadelphia and Escorial panels differ from these paintings in two important respects. First, the figures are neither richly colored nor a pure grisaille – in deference to this they have been termed 'demi-grisaile'[7] – and second, they are not enclosed by architectural niches or portals. Even Panofsky's publication of a miniature depicting a contemporary church interior, which includes



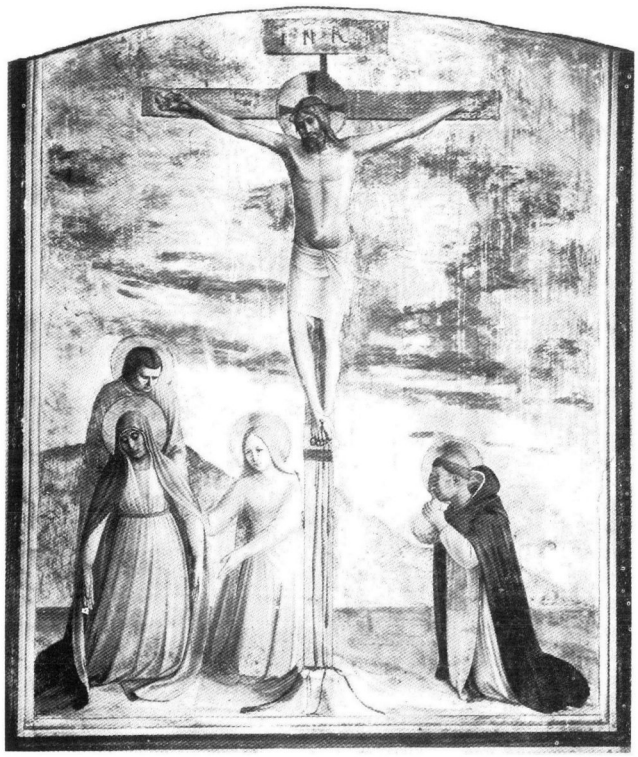
3

3
Fra Angelico, *Mocking of Christ*. Florence, San Marco (photo: Gabinetto Fotografico, Sopr. Gallerie, Firenze)

4
Fra Angelico, *Crucifixion*. Florence, San Marco (photo: Gabinetto Fotografico, Sopr. Gallerie, Firenze)

a polychromed sculptural grouping of Christ on the cross with Mary and John set before a cloth hanging on the back wall of the apse, did not lead him to suppose that Rogier was actually imitating sculpture in his Prado and Philadelphia paintings.[8]

In specific reference to the Philadelphia diptych, some art historians have contended that because it is painted in demi-grisaille it was originally a set of shutters from the exterior of a polyptych, and therefore conformed with the newly established tradition of painting grisaille or demi-grisaille figures on the outer parts of an altarpiece.[9] In this regard, Rogier's Philadelphia diptych could be compared to Jan van Eyck's demi-grisaille *Annunciation* on the exterior of the Ghent Altarpiece, which similarly makes use of subdued coloration, presumably in deference to its placement. However Panofsky has rightly rejected the identification of the Philadelphia diptych with the exterior shutters of some lost altarpiece on the basis of the high quality of execution of the diptych, which would be unique among the consistently unremarkable shop productions used by Rogier for the exterior parts of shutters, and because the extensive use of gold on the exterior of an altarpiece would be unusual.[10]
To this should be added the neglected but parallel problem of the Escorial *Crucifixion*: those who believe the Philadelphia diptych to have been exterior shutters ought logically to suppose that the Escorial panel was likewise from the exterior of a now lost polyptych.
One further suggestion has been made regarding Rogier's coloration, which I believe to be the one of greatest importance. With regard to the Escorial panel, Martin Davies has suggested that, because of its original location in the Carthusian monastery of Scheut, Mary and John's robes were 'designed to accord with Carthusian taste.'[11] Whether or not this reasoning might apply to the Philadelphia diptych has never been discussed, nor, to my knowledge, even suggested.



4

Yet it is clear that the two works must be considered together if a satisfactory explanation for their exceptional form is to be discovered.

III Rogier's Sources

A series of paintings does exist which I believe was the source for Rogier's two *Crucifixions*. They provide not only the visual stimulus for Rogier's works, but also furnish a clue to the reason behind Rogier's unusual choice of palette and composition. These are the frescoes done by Fra Angelico and his shop during the 1440's in the monastic buildings at San Marco, Florence. Three of the frescoes located within the dormitory area are particularly significant here. The first is the scene of the *Mocking of Christ* (Fig. 3), located in cell seven.[12] A blindfolded Christ is shown dressed in white and seated as a mock king on a bright red throne. Behind Him on a stone wall hangs a green cloth. Against the cloth are shown emblems of His mocking, representing the hands which hit and beat Him with sticks, and men who spat at Him. Below this image of the mocked Christ are seated the Virgin Mary and St. Dominic, symmetrically placed to either side. The Virgin's cloak is a pale lavendar, while her undergarment is of a slightly darker lavendar. St. Dominic is in his usual black and white Dominican habit. Like the other frescoes at San Marco, the coloration is subdued, for a large part of the fresco is in the warm yellow ochre stone color of San Marco itself, and many of the remaining colors in the *Mocking* are pastels. Thus the green of the hanging cloth, and particularly the brilliant red of Christ's seat, focus the viewer's attention on the figure of Christ. This technique is also seen in the fresco of the *Enthroned Virgin and Child with Saints* in cell eleven, done by an assistant of Fra Angelico.[13] There the red throne and green cloth of the *Mocking of Christ* are transformed into a bright red cloth hanging behind and projecting over the enthroned Virgin and Child, silhouetting them in an otherwise neutrally colored composition. The composition and color scheme of the Philadelphia *Crucifixion* may have been influenced by a third fresco by an assistant of Fra Angelico, that of the *Crucifixion with Saints* (Fig. 4) in cell forty-

three.[14] There a rocky landscape and an asymmetrically sloping hill similarly rise to the left behind the figure of John the Evangelist supporting the swooning Virgin. The non-specific, barren landscape creates a feeling of timelessness in the work.

Thus I believe that the comparable qualities among these works by the two masters are numerous. Both artists have suppressed elements which would indicate a narrative, seeking instead images without implication of time or place. In works by each, the isolation of the scene is created by the use of a high stone wall, a relatively plain floor area, and the simple placement of the figures with a minimal number of distracting elements. Both Rogier and Fra Angelico use large expanses of neutral colors and delicately modelled draperies in pale roses and lavendars, which contrast with flat areas of more intense colors. Rogier in particular heightens the emotionalism of his desolate scenes by enlarging the size of the cloths and making them a brilliant red in color, red being the color associated with the Passion. In addition, his Netherlandish love of realistic detail causes him to meticulously depict each fold of the cloths, which further intensifies the immediacy of the scenes.[15] Yet both artists, in all these works, create a pervading sense of quiet and contemplation which is transmitted to the viewer himself.

Could Rogier have seen these works by the great Tuscan master?

That Rogier van der Weyden travelled to Rome in 1450, the year of the Jubilee, is now generally accepted.[16] The original source for this information is Bartolomeo Fazio, an Italian historian and a contemporary of Rogier. Writing a book, *De Viris Illustribus*, in about 1456, Fazio includes in his biography of Gentile da Fabriano the following statement:[17]

It is said of Gentile that when the famous painter Rogier of Gaul (Rogier van der Weyden) ... had visited in the Jubilee year this same church of John the Baptist (St. John the Lateran in Rome) and had looked at this picture, he was taken with admiration and inquired after its author, and heaping praise on him preferred him to the other Italian painters.

Unfortunately the frescoes by Gentile which Rogier admired are now lost. However, other evidence for Rogier's trip does exist, the most persuasive of which is provided by Rogier's *Entombment* in the Uffizi, Florence.[18] Karl Jähnig long ago wrote on the relationship between it and Fra Angelico's predella panel of the *Pietà* in Munich.[19] That Rogier was inspired by the Florentine work is clear: the subject matter – the mourning over the body of Christ as it is about to be placed in the tomb – is Tuscan, and the treatment of the scene, with the rectangular opening of the cave, the fan-like trees, and the figural arrangement, echoes closely Fra Angelico's own particular handling.[20]

What is of importance for us to establish here, however, is where Rogier would have been in Italy when he saw this predella panel. It is now accepted that the Munich panel is part of the predella to the San Marco Altarpiece, done by Fra Angelico for the high altar of the church at San Marco and probably completed and installed by the 1443 consecration of that church by Pope Eugenius IV.[21] Thus I would suggest that Rogier, either before or after his pilgrimage to Rome, stopped at Florence and visited the church of San Marco. Fra Angelico's assistants were still at work in the adjacent monastery in 1450, and it would have been then that Rogier saw several of the frescoes within the monastery itself. That the 1450 trip would serve as a *terminus post quem* for the Philadelphia and Escorial *Crucifixions* is consistent with the dating now generally ascribed to them.

The other question for which I believe the San Marco frescoes may hold an answer is why Rogier painted only these two particular *Crucifixions* in the style used by Fra Angelico for the frescoes at San Marco. Fra Angelico there clearly

adapted his usually more decorative and colorful style to the contemplative nature of the monastic dormitory, echoing the quiet simplicity of Michelozzo's architecture. The style of those frescoes is unique within Fra Angelico's oeuvre, and was in response to a specific spiritual and physical environment. Rogier's two *Crucifixions* are also unique within his *oeuvre,* and I would suggest are also in response to a monastic setting.

IV Rogier's Relations with Carthusian Monasteries

It should be remembered that the Escorial *Crucifixion,* the later of these two versions, was almost certainly originally located at the Carthusian monastery near Brussels at Scheut. While no documents exist concerning the original commission for the panel, the 1574 inventory of Philip II's gifts to the Escorial notes that it came from the Brussels Charterhouse.[22] Furthermore, Rogier's ties with the Charterhouse at Scheut are documented. He gave them money in May of 1462, and, at an unknown date, gave them paintings.[23] It has usually been supposed that the Escorial version was included among these unspecified paintings. It is known that Rogier had close ties, and indeed older ties, with another Charterhouse, that at Hérinnes. The Charterhouse at Hérinnes was, in fact, the motherhouse to that one at Scheut, for Scheut was not founded until 1454 when seven brothers from Hérinnes went there. Rogier's only son Corneille had entered the Charterhouse at Hérinnes as a novitiate in about 1449, and was invested probably in 1450. He remained a brother there until his death in 1473.[24] As might be expected after hearing of Rogier's generous donations to the daughterhouse at Scheut, he also made gifts to the earlier establishment at Hérinnes. We know from a contemporary chronicle written by one of the Carthusian monks at Hérinnes that Rogier gave one hundred *petros* to the monastery after his son Corneille was invested and sixty *libros* for the construction of a new brewery; he bequeathed in his will one hundred *coronas* to the monastery; upon the death of his wife one-third of his total goods were to go to the establishment, unless his son died first, in which case only one-quarter of the estate was promised; and he donated a *tabulam,* or panel, which was placed in the chapel of St. Catherine. This was the chapel of the Prior of the Charterhouse, and the account also tells us that Rogier had the statue of St. Catherine contained therein painted.[25] While it is uncertain whether or not this *tabulam* in the St. Catherine chapel would be identical with the Philadelphia diptych, which is more accurately two panels, it would not be inappropriate to suppose that Rogier donated to Hérinnes, the Charterhouse in which his son was invested, the Philadelphia diptych. In fact, one detail in the Philadelphia version, which is absent from the Escorial panel, might be in reference to the investiture ceremony of the Carthusian monks, the very ceremony in which Rogier's son Corneille took part when he was invested as a Carthusian monk in about 1450.

The detail to which I refer is that of the swooning Virgin Mary. The motif of the swooning Virgin in Crucifixion images is not an unusual detail, for as Schiller notes, the motif is used frequently in Western art from the second half of the thirteenth century on.[26] However, within Rogier's *oeuvre* and in a closely related work, the motif seems specifically to be indicative of the *co-passio* of the Virgin Mary, for it is juxtaposed with the dead Christ. Von Simson explored this motif in Rogier's most famous work, the *Descent from the Cross* (Madrid, Prado).[27] There the physical posture of the already unconscious Virgin Mary echoes closely that of the dead Christ as he is brought down from the cross. Von Simson relates Mary's pose to the writings of several theologians, most significantly to Rogier's famous contemporary and the best known Carthusian of the mid-fifteenth century, Denys the Carthusian. Recognizing the great suffering which Mary underwent while she waited by the Cross, Denys stresses the im-

portance for Salvation of Mary's compassion, or *co-passio,* which existed alongside Christ's Passion. In this role he calls her the *Salvatrix Mundi.* This parallel to Christ's Passion is again expressed visually in the Edelheer Altarpiece in Louvain, painted by a follower of Rogier in 1443.[28] While the interior central panel of the Edelheer Altarpiece is a careful copy of Rogier's Prado *Descent* and therefore includes the same figure of the swooning Virgin, the now damaged exterior reinforces and repeats Denys the Carthusian's theme of the parallel Passions of Mary and Christ: on one shutter is seen the dead Christ supported by God the Father, and on the other is a mirror image of the Virgin supported by John. Perhaps one reason why Denys the Carthusian was particularly interested in the *co-passio* of the Virgin Mary was because the Carthusians viewed their own sacrifice upon entry into their Order as an additional parallel to Christ's sacrifice on the Cross and also to Mary's below the Cross. This third sacrifice is even reenacted during the Carthusians' investiture ceremony: the novitiate symbolically lies prostrate on the floor during the investiture mass, in union with both the sacrifice of Christ and the compassion of the Virgin. He then rises, keeping his hood over his head during the induction and for three days thereafter, during which time he is also silent, thus symbolically recalling Christ's entombment. On the third day he is resurrected, so to speak, as a Carthusian brother.[29] Thus I believe that the Philadelphia *Crucifixion,* with its juxtaposition of these first two sacrifices, can be seen in particular relation to the sacrifice of the novitiate upon admittance to the Carthusian Order.

Rogier appears also to have modified his choice of color and the complexity of his compositions in both his *Crucifixions* in order to conform to the milieu of this order of contemplative monks. The quietly withdrawn lifestyle of the Carthusian monks, who never ventured out into the open, but remained within the monastery, spending most of their time isolated within their private garden and cell complexes, is echoed by Rogier's compositions. Although in the traditional Carthusian monastery each monk had a private garden off his cell, it was enclosed by a wall. This desire for isolation is noticeable even at the communal church services, for the stalls in Carthusian churches have divisions raised between them.[30] As Braunfels has stated, 'the Carthusians pursued their lives in an area defined, not to say enclosed, by architecture.'[31] How appropriate that Rogier has cut off the background of both the Philadelphia diptych and the Escorial panel by a simple, stone wall. Architecture and internal furnishings of Carthusian monasteries were to remain simple. According to the *Consuetudines* compiled in 1127 or 1128 by Guigo I, prior of the Grande Chartreuse from 1110 to 1136, there was to be no gold or silver ornamentation within the church other than the chalice and the fistula.[32] Indeed, besides outlawing such furnishings as hangings, carpets, and tiles, the *Consuetudines* even proscribed paintings and 'curious' sculptures in the earliest Carthusian establishments. In the early 14th century, Dom Boso, prior of the Grande Chartreuse, wrote to Pope Clement V describing the Carthusians and their use of simple crucifixes in a 'solemn and eminent place, as well as over each altar... They avoid expensive curiosities in painting and sculpture, and variety of solemn and wonderful buildings not consonant with the roughness of the solitary life.'[33] While by the 15th and 16th centuries paintings with gold and sculptures were more and more common in the Charterhouses, in the year 1503 carpets and hangings were still forbidden.[34] Carthusians further reflect the austerity of their lifestyle and their architectural setting through their simple white habits. Characteristically they wear a white scapular which hangs down before and behind and which is joined at the sides by bands. The almost white garments of Mary and John in the two works by Rogier, while not examples of actual Carthusian habits, are probably so colored

in deference to the white habits which would have been worn by the monks at Hérinnes and Scheut.[35]

It is possible that the history of Rogier's two *Crucifixions* can be reconstructed in this manner. Corneille entered the Carthusian monastery at Hérinnes in about 1449, and a year later was invested as a Carthusian monk. At just about this same time, either before or after the investiture, Rogier travelled to Rome and Florence for the Jubilee year. Upon his return, Rogier is known to have made gifts to the monastery at Hérinnes, including – it is supposed here – the Philadelphia diptych. While this diptych was not an actual reenactment of his own son's investiture, by illustrating the double passions of Christ and Mary, Rogier thereby intimated at the parallel sacrifice made by each novitiate who devoted himself to the Carthusian rule. As he worked to accord the style of the diptych to the austerity of his son's chosen order, Rogier would still have had fresh in his mind the simple but effective frescoes done by Fra Angelico for the monastery at San Marco. Thus the Philadelphia diptych would date shortly after Rogier's 1450 trip. With regard to the Escorial version, possibly sometime after 1454, when the daughterhouse at Scheut was founded by members of the Hérinnes monastery, these monks either requested or Rogier volunteered to paint an image similar to that one at the motherhouse. While this work was not actually painted until the late 1450's or early 1460's, Rogier only slightly modified the form of the earlier work. Specifically, he deleted from the Escorial version the reference to the investiture ceremony which had special significance for his son's entry into the Order.

Unfortunately, the known provenance of the Philadelphia work can neither confirm nor deny this theory. The diptych was first recorded in 1867 when it was sold by Monsieur le Mis de Salamanca at his house in Paris.[36] Records do exist of the art works owned by the monastery at Hérinnes, but these again cannot confirm or deny its presence there. The monastery, along with one hundred and sixty-one other ecclesiastical establishements, was suppressed by Emperor Joseph II in 1783, and its works of art were sold. Two inventories of the contents of the monastery survive.[37] The first, which is undated, was undertaken by J.B. Rosquaille and J. Colmant, and includes one hundred and thirty-two paintings, but lists virtually no information about them. The second one dates from the time of the suppression, and includes only one hundred and eleven paintings. Although artists' names are noted for only two works, for about one half of the paintings locations, dimensions, and subjects are included. While the Philadelphia diptych does not seem to be included among the described works, this would not necessarily exclude the diptych from the monastery's possessions.[38] Not only is this inventory known to be incomplete, but on three earlier occasions of sporadic suppression, in 1566, 1577, and 1580, the monks temporarily removed their more precious objects from the monastery.[39] Thus it would not be uncalled for to suggest that when the suppression of Joseph II was ordered, certain of the possessions were removed for what was hoped to be temporary safekeeping. This may at least in part account for the fact that the 1783 inventory includes twenty-one paintings fewer than the previous one.

It is enlightening to the artistic personality of Rogier van der Weyden to be able to explore another aspect of the effect of his trip to Italy upon him. It is particularly interesting to see the kind of art which struck a responsive chord in Rogier. When Rogier saw Fra Angelico's imposing San Marco Altarpiece, it was not the new Albertian techniques of painting and perspective, demonstrated particularly in the central panel, which most impressed him, but rather the tiny predella panel with the moving scene of Christ's entombment. In the same way, when Rogier returned from Florence it was apparently not the new painting style of

Masaccio, Fra Filippo Lippi and Domenico Veneziano to which he turned, but rather the quietly monumental scenes in the monastery of San Marco. Intended for contemplation by the Dominican monks there they were remembered by Rogier when he created his own magnificent *Crucifixions* now in Philadelphia and the Escorial.

NOTES

* This paper was originally presented in a shorter form at the Annual Meeting of the College Art Association of America in Chicago in February of 1976. I am indebted to Charles I. Minott for his encouragement and scholarly assistance with the paper at that time. N.B. A bibliography of frequently cited sources, cited by abbreviation of the author's name in the notes, appears at the end of this article.

[1] Oil on panel; *Christ on the Cross,* 1.803x0.926 m.; *Virgin and St. John,* 1.803x0.923 m.. See *John G. Johnson Collection: Catalogue of Flemish and Dutch Paintings,* Philadelphia, 1972, 94f., #334 and 335 for a lengthy bibliography. To this should be added Coekelberghs, 1970. A color reproduction is found in R. Tovell, *The Flémalle Enigma,* Toronto, 1955, opposite p. 36. E.P. Richardson, 'Rogier van der Weyden's Cambrai Altar,' *Art Quarterly,* II, 1939, 57ff., had proposed the identification of this diptych with the well-documented Cambrai Altarpiece painted by Rogier between 1455 and 1459, but this has since been shown by Panofsky to be erroneous. See Panofsky, 285[3]. It has been supposed, because of the marked asymmetry, that a third panel, perhaps with the figure of Mary Magdalene or a donor on it, has been lost. The strongest evidence in favor of this is a drawing of the 'Crucifixion with Saints,' now in the Cabinet des Dessins, Louvre, inv. no. 20645, published in F. Lugt, *Inventaire général des dessins des Écoles du Nord,* Paris, 1968, VIII, #15, pl. 9. Certainly not from Rogier's own hand, but perhaps reflecting a work from his shop, the drawing shows the figures of John and Mary to the left of the cross, in a pose very similar to that in the Philadelphia diptych, and a symmetrically balancing figure of the Magdalene to the right of the cross. In opposition to this hypothesis regarding an additional figure it should be noted that the ground beginning immediately to the left of the cross in the Philadelphia diptych, unlike that in the drawing, slopes upward throughout both panels of the composition, raising the figures of Mary and John to a height which compensates for the lack of figures on the opposite side. The figure of Christ clearly is turned towards Mary and John, which helps to unify the two panels, as does the extension of the tip of Mary's robe into the right-hand panel. Most importantly, as H. Marceau pointed out to Panofsky, 285[2], the cloths of honor are placed closer to the hinged, inner edges of the panels than they are to the outer edges, leaving wider strips of wall visible at the extreme right and left. Thus the work appears to be complete as a diptych. It is strange, however, that the horizontal courses of cut stone in the wall do not correspond accurately from one panel to the other.

[2] Oil on panel, 3.25 × 1.92 m.; severely damaged. See the entry and references in Davies, 211. A color reproduction is published in *The Escorial: The Royal Palace at la Granja de San Ildefonso,* New York, 1967, 67. I have not seen the original panel.

[3] With regard to the dating of the Philadelphia diptych, there has been some difference of opinion, which actually would serve to increase rather than decrease the time gap between the two versions. Schulz, 100, in her excellent article, dates it in the same period as the Columba Altarpiece, i.e., between 1450 and 1456/58. Other opinions on dating are listed in *John G. Johnson Collection: Catalogue of Flemish and Dutch Paintings,* 94f. With regard to the Escorial panel, Friedländer, II, 1967, 65, erroneously believing the monastery at Scheut to have been founded in 1450, simply gave 1450 as a *terminus post quem.* On the founding of Scheut, actually in 1454, and on the relation of the Escorial panel to it, see below, p. 119 G. Hulin de Loo, 'Weyden (Rogier de la Pasture, alias Van Der)', *Biographie Nationale de Belgique,* Brussels, XXVII, 1938, 238 dates it in Rogier's last period, 1456–1464; J. Lassaigne, *Flemish Painting,* n.p., 1957, I, 93, as in Rogier's last phase; and Panofsky, 288, as about 1462.

[4] E.g., M. Vaughan, 'Rogier van der Weyden in America,' *International Studio,* XC, 1928, 43f. and M.J. Friedländer, 'The Pictures of Rogier van der Weyden in America,' *Art in America,* IX, 1921, 66, both in reference to the Philadelphia *Crucifixion*; P. Rolland, *Les Primitifs tournaisiens; peintres, et sculpteurs,* Brussels, 1932, 96 notes the sculptural quality of both the Philadelphia and Escorial versions; K. Arndt, 'Rogier van der Weyden,' *Meilensteine europ. Kunst,* 1965, 219f. and 432, n. 9, refers to both works and deals most extensively with the problem. The old theory that Rogier had early training in Tournai as a sculptor, which would for some writers explain his dependence upon sculptural forms in his paintings, is, as Arndt notes, unsubstantiated.

[5] These are illustrated in Friedländer, II, 1967, pls. 6, 16, 14, 137, lf., and 4 respectively.

[6] The 'other motive' most frequently mentioned by art historians is that Rogier isolated his figures in an architectural setting in order to heighten the emotional impact of the scene. On this compli-

cated problem, which cannot be dealt with at length here, see P. Philippot, 'Les grisailles et les 'degrés de réalité' de l'image dans la peinture flamande des XV[e] et XVI[e] siècles,' *Bulletin des Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique*, IV, 1966, 225ff.; D. Coekelberghs, 'Les grisailles de Van Eyck,' *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, s. 6, LXXI, 1968, 79ff.; Coekelberghs, 1970; K. Birkmeyer, 'The Arch Motif in Netherlandish Painting of the Fifteenth Century,' *Art Bulletin*, XLIII, 1961, 1ff. and 99ff. and 'Notes on the Two Earliest Paintings by Rogier van der Weyden,' *Art Bulletin*, XLIV, 1962, 329ff.; and J. Ward, 'A New Attribution for the *Madonna Enthroned* in the Thyssen Bornemisza Collection,' *Art Bulletin*, L, 1968, 354ff. Coekelberghs connects the popularity of grisaille painting in the early 15th century with the desire for a *trompe l'oeil* effect. He notes the difference between using perspectival techniques to create a scene which is convincingly three-dimensional, and a true *trompe l'oeil* painting where the viewer reacts to the surface of the painting as though it actually were three-dimensional. For Coekelberghs, Jan van Eyck's Lugano *Annunciation* diptych is a prime example of the latter.

[7] Both the Philadelphia and Escorial versions include rich colors – the red cloths, gold sky, and brown cross – along with subdued tones, but there is no use of true grisaille. Coekelberghs, 1970, 27, calls the two works 'demi-grisaille' and compares them to the demi-grisaille exterior of the Ghent Altarpiece. He cites two later works by successors of Rogier which he says are both in the demi-grisaille technique and are combined with red backgrounds: the Ambierle Altarpiece (illustrated in Friedländer, II, 1967, pl. 117) and a retable of the Virgin in the Musée Communal, Brussels. Philippot, 231f., deals briefly with the use of demi-grisaille in Flanders and Germany in the fifteenth century.

[8] Panofsky, 285 and 285[4]. The miniature, of the consecration of a bishop, is from Haarlem, Teyler Stichting, Ms. 77, produced between 1451 and 1456, and is illustrated in Panofsky as text illustration 58.

[9] Among those who believe the Philadelphia diptych to be the exterior wings of a polyptych are A. Valentiner, in a privately published catalogue of the Johnson Collection, II: *Flemish and Dutch Paintings*, 1913, 13; Friedländer, 1921, 66 and II, 1967, 63; Fierens-Gevaert and P. Fierens, *Histoire de la peinture flamande des origines à la fin du XV[e] siècle*, Paris, II, 1927, 48; and most recently Coekelberghs, 1970, 28. To my knowledge, no one has even suggested such a role for the Escorial *Crucifixion*. J.K. Grant, in 'Mrs. Collis P. Huntington's Collection,' *Connoisseur*, XX, 1908, 4, suggested that the Philadelphia diptych was part of an organ case, but I know of no evidence to support this. Since Panofsky's discussion of Rogier in his *Early Netherlandish Painting*, many writers now refer to the Philadelphia work as a diptych rather than as shutters. See for example S. Blum, *Early Netherlandish Triptychs*, Berkeley, 1969, 56; Arndt, 219ff.; Lassaigne, I, 93f. On the problem of the rise of grisaille in general see M. Teasdale-Smith, 'The Use of Grisaille as a Lenten Observance,' *Marsyas*, VIII, 1959, 43ff.; S. Sulzberger, 'Notes sur la grisaille,' *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, s. 6, LIX, 1962, 119f.; D. de Menil and J.P. Marandel, *Gray is the color: an exhibition of grisaille painting, XIII–XX[th] centuries*, catalogue of an exhibit at the Institute for the Arts, Rice University, Houston, Texas, 1973–1974; and the literature mentioned above in n. 6.

[10] Panofsky, 285[2]. However, one should note Coekelberghs' description of an altarpiece from Louvain commissioned from Jean Van Molenbeke by Gertrude Van Goetsenhoven, and to be completed by Easter of 1434: 'les revers devaient représenter des personnages sur fond vermillon strié d'or et entourés de bordures noires striées d'argent.' Coekelberghs, 1970, n. 14.

[11] Davies, 211. See below for more information regarding the original location of the Escorial panel.

[12] 1.95 × 1.59 m. Strips along all four edges have been repainted, and the fresco may originally have been rectangular. See Pope-Hennessy, 207. A color reproduction is in L. Berti, *L'Angelico a San Marco*, 'Forma e Colore,' no. 13, Florence, n.d., pl. 13. With regard to the date of the frescoes, the monastery was not given to the Dominicans until 1436, and the buildings were in terrible condition. Rebuilding was begun, and in 1443 forty-four cells were structurally sound. On this basis, Pope-Hennessy, 209 dates the commencement of decoration to about 1443. Fra Angelico left for Rome in 1446 or 1447, and so the cells he did were probably completed by then. This fresco is among those usually assigned to Fra Angelico's own hand, and so most likely predates 1446/1447.

[13] 1.89 × 1.59 m. The saint to the right is sometimes identified as St. Thomas Aquinas rather than Dominic. This fresco is extensively damaged and restored. See Pope-Hennessy, 207, where he suggests that this was painted by an assistant to Fra Angelico. A color reproduction can be found in Berti, pl. 17.

[14] By an assistant of Fra Angelico. See Pope-Hennessy, 209. The draperies of Sts. John and Mary Magdalene and of the Virgin are pale rose, peach, blue and lavendar, while St. Dominic is in his usual black and white. A color reproduction can be found in Berti, pl. 30.

[15] Regarding the use of red as the liturgical color during the feasts of Christ's Passion, the Finding and the Elevation of the Cross, practices already established by the time of Innocent III (1198–1216), see J. Braun, *Die liturgische Gewandung*, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1907, 728–760. Rogier elsewhere uses red in association with the Passion; e.g., in his *Lamentation* which is the central panel of the Miraflores Triptych in Berlin. There the Virgin Mary holds the dead Christ on her lap and wears red rather than her traditional

blue robe. See Panofsky, 261. With regard to the fold lines on the cloths, this author does not see special significance in their inclusion. Rogier frequently paints such carefully depicted folds: they appear in the stiff headdresses of ladies in a number of his portraits (e.g., those in Washington, D.C., London, and Berlin), in cloths of honor (e.g., in the Vienna *Standing Virgin and Child*, the Boston *St. Luke Painting the Virgin*, and the *Nativity* in Granada), and in the draperies around beds (*Annunciations* in Paris and in Munich). Panofsky, 285, refers to the folded cloths as 'cloths of honor.' This is an appropriate title, although the iconographical function here may go beyond an implication of triumph and royal divinity usually associated with them. R. Goffen, when discussing symbolism of cloths of honor, suggests a further association between curtains or veils and the sacrificial offering of the Eucharist. See her 'Icon and Vision: Giovanni Bellini's Half-Length Madonnas,' *Art Bulletin*, LVII (1975), 497f. The silhouetting of Christ's lifeless body against the red cloth may thus have sacramental significance.

[16] While a number of works were initially associated with the trip to Italy because of their Italian patrons – e.g., the *d'Este Portrait* (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art), the Sforza Triptych (Brussels, Musée des Beaux-Arts), and the Medici *Madonna* (Frankfurt, Staedelsches Kunstinstitut) – it now appears that the first two paintings and possibly the third were commissioned in the North. See E. Kantorowicz, 'The Este Portrait by Roger van der Weyden,' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, III, 1939–1940, 165ff.; G. Mulazzani, 'Observations on the Sforza Triptych in the Brussels Museum,' *Burlington Magazine*, CXIII, 1971, 252f.; and M.G. Lanckoronska, 'Die Medici-Madonna des Rogier van der Weyden,' *Wallraf-Richartz Jahrbuch*, XXXI, 1969, 25ff. The fact that Rogier took the trip is confirmed through the notable Italian influence in several of his works after 1450. A summary of the literature dealing with many of these works is found in Schulz, n. 35, n. 51 (on the Medici *Madonna*), and n. 63 and 64 (on the Uffizi *Entombment*). Two additions to this literature are the Lanckoronska article cited above, and E. Knauer, 'A Cubiculo Augustorum. Bemerkungen zur Rogier van der Weydens Bladelin-Altar,' *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, XXXIII, 1970, 332ff.

[17] Translation, with my own interpolations, from M. Baxandall, 'A Fifteenth-Century Manuscript of the *De Viris Illustribus*,' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XXVII, 1964, 100. The Latin text, fols. 40f., also taken from Baxandall, 101, is as follows:
'De hoc uiro ferunt cum rogerius gallicus insignis pictor. de quo post dicemus iobelei anno in ipsum iohannis baptistae templum accessisset. eamque picturam contemplatus esset. admiratione operis captum auctore requisito. cum multa laude cumulatum caeteris italicis pictoribus anteposuisse'.
The frescoes which Rogier saw are now destroyed. Bartolomeo Fazio was a contemporary of Rogier who wrote at the court at Naples during the height of its admiration for Flemish art. For more on Fazio, see Baxandall, 90ff.

[18] Wood; 1.10 × 0.96 m. See Davies, 212, pl. 77f. and Panofsky, fig. 331. See Schulz, n. 63 regarding the possible identification of this work with one in the Medici villa at Careggi in 1482, as well as E.K.J. Reznicek, 'Enkele gegevens uit de Vijftiende Eeuw over de Vlaamse Schilderkunst in Florence,' *Miscellanea Jozef Duverger*, Ghent, 1968, I, 85, n. 4. The description written by Cyriacus d'Ancona on July 8, 1449 of an altarpiece in Lionello d'Este's collection in Ferrara, quoted in Schulz, n. 63, precludes the identification of the Uffizi panel with the central one of that triptych.

[19] 0.38 × 0.46 m. Illustrated in Pope-Hennessy, pl. 65. K. Jähnig, 'Die Beweinung Christi vor dem Grabe von Rogier van der Weyden,' *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst*, LIII, 1918, 171ff., was the first to note the relationship between these two works. See also Panofsky, 273ff. and Davies, 20.

[20] Panofsky, 273, specifically notes the rectangular cave opening of carved masonry and the peculiar fan-shaped tree type used by Fra Angelico and included in Rogier's work. In addition, the similarity of the cross-shaped arrangements of the main figures in the two works is notable.

[21] Pope-Hennessy, 200f.; exhibition catalogue of the *Mostra delle opere di Fra Angelico*, Città del Vaticano, 1955, # 39, catalogue entry by U. Baldini. The altarpiece is now divided: the main panel and two predella panels are in the Museo di San Marco, Florence; four predella panels are in Munich; and one each is in the National Gallery, Washington, D.C., the National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, and the Louvre, Paris. The central panel of the altarpiece, with its *Sacra Conversazione*, may be a source for Rogier's Medici *Madonna* in Frankfurt. While the *Sacra Conversazione* composition is well known in the North in the 1430's – and in particular a composition by Rogier's teacher Campin, known through a drawing in the Louvre (Panofsky, fig. 231), with its similar canopy above the Virgin and Child, may well be a source for Rogier – there are particular Italianate features present in the Frankfurt example. Panofsky, 275 already noted the disposition of the heads of the five standing figures into a triangle rather than a straight line. In addition, Rogier's inclusion of a stepped stone platform which stands in a flowery field is reminescent of several works by Fra Angelico and his shop; most notable are another of the predella panels of the San Marco Altarpiece – the *Sts. Cosmas and Damian before Lycias* (Munich, Alte Pinakothek; Pope-Hennessy, pl. 60) – and the *Sacra Conversazione* of the Annalena Altarpiece (Florence, Museo di San Marco; Pope-Hennessy, pl. 96). The former is particularly interesting because we can be almost certain that Rogier saw it, and besides the platform and the flowery field, it includes a standing figure with his thumbs hooked over his belt. St. Peter in the Medici *Madonna* also stands with a thumb hooked over his belt, in a pose virtually unique in the work of both Rogier

and Campin (a figure in *Augustus and the Tiburtine Sibyl* from the Bladelin Altarpiece by Rogier is perhaps the only other example). On the uncertain dating and whereabouts of the Annalena Altarpiece, see Pope-Hennessy, 211f. One must further note that the shape of the Medici *Madonna* is circular at the top, a feature which is otherwise absent from Rogier's work and only rarely seen in other early Flemish paintings, but is common in Italy and in Fra Angelico's *oeuvre*. I thank Mary Banks Breckenridge Kocher for this last observation.

[22] 'Una tabla grande en que está pintado Christo Nuestro Señor en la cruz, con Nuestra Señora y sant Juan, de mano de Masse Rugier, que estaua en el Bosque de Segouia, que tiene treze pies de alto y ocho de ancho estaua en la cartuja de Brussellas.' From Madrid, Arch. Patr. Nac., *Archivo del Monasterio de San Lorenzo, C. 57, n° 1, 1571–1574. Entrega Primera, inf. 6°, leg. 9°, doc. n° 78, V, 12–16 avril 1574*, 198, as quoted in J. Folie, 'Les Oeuvres authentifiées des primitifs flamands,' *Institut Royal du Patrimoine Artistique, Bulletin*, VI, 1963, 210.

[23] For the former gift, see Davies, 189, S.V. '1462 (May).' The latter, an undated reference to money and paintings from Scheut's *Obituary*, reads as follows: 'Anniversarium magistri Rogerii de Pascua, pictoris, ac consortis ejus, dedit semel tam in pecuniis quam picturis valoris circa xx libras grotas Brabantiae,' as quoted in Folie, 210, n.2. See in addition the comments regarding the possibility of dating this text before 1460 in Davies, 189, S.V. '1462 (May).'

[24] On Corneille's career at Hérinnes, see P. Landelin-Hoffmans, *Un Rogier van der Weyden inconnu*, Enghien, 1948, 18f. and 52.

[25] The *Chronicle* was written by Dom Arnold Beeltsens, a fellow Carthusian at Hérinnes with Corneille van der Weyden. He writes: 'Magister Rogerius de Pascua post professionem Cornelii fratris nostri filii sui dedit domui centum petros. Item ad constructionem novi braxatorii LX libros. Et in testamento suo reliquit in promptis pecuniis centum coronas. Insuper contulit tabulam positam in capella beatae Katarinae. Et fecit depingi ymaginem ejus. Praeterea reliquit domui post mortem uxoris suae tertiam partem bonorum suorum immobilium et tertiam partem domorum Bruxellae situatarum, si et in quantum frater noster Cornelius diutius viveret quam mater. Si autem ante mater moritur frater, contulit omnium praedictorum tantum quartam partem, sed semper post mortem matris. *Post cujus mortem recepimus centum septuaginta florenos renenses* (this last phrase is added in a different hand)'. From A. Beeltsens and J. Ammonius, *Chronique de la chartreuse de la Chapelle à Hérinnes-lez-Enghien*, ed. E. Lamalle, Louvain, 1932, Append. V, 228, as quoted in Landelin-Hoffmans, 23. On the chapel of St. Catherine, see Landelin-Hoffmans, 38.

[26] G. Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, trans. J. Seligman, Greenwich, Connecticut, 1971, II, 152f. and 156.

[27] O. von Simson, '*Compassio* and *Co-redemptio* in Roger van der Weyden's *Descent from the Cross*,' *Art Bulletin*, XXXV, 1953, 9ff.

[28] See von Simson, 15 and Blum, 49ff.

[29] On the Carthusian investiture ceremony, see Landelin-Hoffmans, 57ff.

[30] A. King, *Liturgies of the Religious Orders*, London, 1955, 11. For additional information on the liturgy and traditions of the Carthusian order see M. Heimbucher, *Die Orden und Kongregationen der Katholischen Kirche*, Paderborn, 1896, I, 251ff. and W. Braunfels, *Monasteries of Western Europe: the Architecture of the Orders*, trans. A. Laing, Princeton, 1972, 111ff.

[31] Branfels, 115.

[32] King, 11.

[33] King, 9, as quoted from Bodley ms. 549, ff. 25–85, which is a fourteenth century manuscript written in an English hand.

[34] King, 14. The well known Chartreuse de Champmol, founded in 1385 by Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, contained sculptures by Claus Sluter as well as many paintings. In the church itself were several altarpieces, including the high altarpiece by Melchior Broederlam and Jacques de Baerze (Dijon, Musée de la Ville) and the *Life of St. Denis* (Paris, Louvre) by Jean Malouel and Henri de Bellechose. In addition, Philip wished each cell to have a private devotional piece, and these perhaps included Simone Martini's now dismembered polyptych of *The Passion of Christ* (now in Paris, Berlin, and Antwerp); Malouel's *Grande Pietà ronde* (Paris, Louvre); Jan van Eyck's *Annunciation* (Washington, D.C., National Gallery); a late fourteenth century triptych of the *Trinity* (Berlin); and two paintings entitled *Crucifixion with a Carthusian Monk* (Collection of H. Chalandon and New York, G. Wildenstein) which C. Sterling has attributed to Jean de Beaumetz and a collaborator. Regarding the artistic milieu at the Chartreuse de Champmol, see Braunfels, 120 and C. Sterling, 'Oeuvres retrouvées de Jean de Beaumetz, peintre de Philippe le Hardi,' *Bulletin des Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique*, IV, 1955, 57ff.

[35] Many fifteenth century paintings illustrate Carthusian habits. Besides several of the works from the Champmol Charterhouse listed in n. 34, see Jan van Eyck's (?) *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints* (New York, Frick), Petrus Christus' *Exeter Madonna* (Berlin-Dahlem, Gemäldegalerie) and his *Portrait of a Carthusian* (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art), and the wonderful miniature 'Entering the Grande Chartreuse' on f. 97 of the *Belles Heures* (New York, Cloisters) by the Limbourg Brothers.

[36] See *John G. Johnson Collection: Catalogue of Flemish and Dutch Paintings*, 94.

[37] See Landelin-Hoffmans, 4ff. on the two inventories. One is in the Archives of the city of Enghien and is an undated manuscript headed *Inventaire des meubles et effets quelconques... (illegible) du monastère et église des chartreux d'Hérinnes-lez-Enghien, fait par Jean-Baptiste Rosquaille et Joseph Colmant, tous deux hommes de fief faisant fonction de notaire au pays de Hainau, commencé sous la direction de Monsieur le Conseiller avocat de sa Majesté* and signed *A. Pepin*. The other, located in the Ecclesiastical Archives of Brabant in Brussels, is manuscript N° 20430/8, entitled *Inventaire des tableaux, meubles, livres ...trouvés à la chartreuse d'Hérinnes supprimée... 1783*. Unfortunately I have been unable to consult either inventory and so rely primarily upon the account given in Landelin-Hoffmans' text.

[38] Although I have not yet examined this inventory, C. Wyffels of the Archives générals du Royaume in Brussels informed me in a letter of May 22, 1975 that the very small amount of descriptive information included in the inventory does not appear to describe a large fifteenth century diptych of the *Crucifixion*.

[39] Landelin-Hoffmans, 6.

FREQUENTLY CITED SOURCES

Coekelberghs, D., 'Les grisailles et le trompe-l'oeil dans l'oeuvre de Van Eyck et de Roger Van der Weyden,' *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'art offerts au professeur Jacques Lavalleye*, Louvain, 1970, 21ff.
Davies, M., *Rogier van der Weyden*, London, 1972.
Friedländer, M.J., *Early Netherlandish Painting*, II: *Rogier van der Weyden and the Master of Flémalle*, trans. H. Norden, New York, 1967.
Panofsky, E., *Early Netherlandish Painting*, 2 vols., Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1953.
Pope-Hennessy, J., *Fra Angelico* 2nd edition, Ithaca, New York, 1974.