



DUKE PHILIP THE GOOD

## The Funeral of Duke Philip the Good

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The whole history of the house of Burgundy is like an epic of overweening and heroic pride, which takes the form of bravura and ambition with Philippe le Hardi, of hatred and envy with Jean sans Peur, of the lust of vengeance and fondness for display with Philip the Good, of foolhardy temerity and obstinacy with Charles the Bold.<sup>1</sup>

So WROTE Johan Huizinga in summarizing the legacy of Valois Burgundy. Indeed the Burgundian state does appear chimerical, fleeting across the complex tapestry of late medieval political and dynastic arrangements in Western Europe. In scarcely a century, Burgundy's rulers had attained a respect and power that placed them on equal footing with the monarchs of England and France, so that diplomatic settlements between the two could not be made without considering the interests of "the Grand Duke of the West." Further, Burgundy's Valois dukes are credited with having initiated and sponsored a chivalric revival, which though in a large sense anticlimactic, nevertheless produced a vast cultural flowering encompassing literature, etiquette, and ceremony.

Yet the Valois dukes fell far short of attaining many of their ambitions. Though fond of recalling as precedents both the ancient Burgundian kingdom and early medieval Lotharingia, they were unable to secure royal status for themselves, in spite of several attempts by both Philip the Good and Charles. In more practical terms, the Burgundian state failed to make significant progress toward effective administrative centralization. Until its end the polity was fundamentally held together through various dynastic loyalties and concessions of local privilege.

But such shortcomings did little to deter the dukes' ongoing quest for supreme recognition. Though perhaps they ultimately remained "over-mighty magnates," the dukes maintained their commitment to winning awe and admiration both

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among their subjects and among their peers across the continent. The long reign and good fortune of Philip the Good allowed him the greatest number of opportunities for gaining prestige, which he pursued with vigor and imagination. Never able to bring himself to appear at the French court in attendance upon Charles VII, Philip regarded himself as a man born to be king and manifested a clear sense of this mission. Among his greatest desires was his wish to recover the Holy Land, an end to which he repeatedly made vows. In the context of the late Middle Ages, this might be a rhetorical expression of devotion (though certainly given a greater sense of urgency after the fall of Constantinople). In any event, it was a vow most often associated with kings. Creating the Order of the Golden Fleece was another of Philip's attempts to acquire monarchical trappings. As was the case with other orders instituted by sovereigns, knights of the Golden Fleece were allowed membership in no other order; like its royal counterparts, it had regular chapters and a fixed number of members, all sworn to defend the Church and True Faith as well as their secular master. Allied with these ambitions was the creation of a highly formalized and elaborate series of rituals and celebrations designed to express the sovereignty and puissance of the duke. As Huizinga observed, even his meals "were ceremonies of a dignity that was almost liturgic."<sup>2</sup> Perhaps most memorable were the lavish tournaments and banquets which the dukes sponsored as part of their unflagging self-promotion. Unsurpassed in Philip's reign was the sumptuous Feast of the Pheasant, held at Lille in February 1454. Along with gargantuan repasts and the customary tilts and tourneys, this fête featured performances by trained exotic beasts, along with musical and theatrical pieces inspired by sacramental, chivalric, and classical motifs (Hercules being among the more prominent ones). In the midst of these festivities, Philip and his leading courtiers renewed their vows to go on Crusade.<sup>3</sup>

Philip was among the first rulers to appoint official court historians. Although these writers may justifiably be cited for having transformed their accounts into "a species of encomium," we may still accept something of their testimonies about ducal ceremonies.<sup>4</sup> It should be remembered that these events were primarily public, not private, functions. At the Feast of the Pheasant, for instance, there was a public gallery.<sup>5</sup> Not only did the duke wish to impress all his subjects with his wealth and power, he wanted them to feel truly involved with the ceremonies and to have a sense of direct personal contact with himself and his leading retainers. These staged spectacles must have impressed their observers. The dukes spread accounts of these splendid ceremonies not only throughout the Burgundian realm but the West at large by travellers, messengers, and other lesser folk who happened to be eyewitnesses. This is certainly the case with John Paston's account of the wedding ceremonies of Charles the Bold at Bruges in 1468. Though char-



acteristically spare of words, Paston leaves little doubt of his awe at the great opulence on display.<sup>6</sup>

Various occasions afforded the opportunity for these exhibitions of ducal power and munificence: christenings, weddings, and grand *entrees*, among others. But while all of these ceremonies were exactingly regulated and performed, few occasions offered as much potential for symbolic expression as a ducal funeral. Abundantly documented, the obsequies given for Philip the Good expressed not only the usual Burgundian aspirations towards sovereignty and fullness of power, but also reflected both communal and individual attitudes towards death. This second theme appears not only in the dynamics of the public ritual and ceremonies, ceremonies, but also in the preparation and execution of Philip's interment.

THOUGH a relatively new field, the study of public ritual has proved itself to be a compelling avenue for the investigation of social interaction, particularly between elites and subordinate classes. Prominent studies by Richard Trexler and Edward Muir have focused on the urban context of Renaissance Italy, but scholars have also revealed the significance of public ritual for Northern Europe. Although there is not a substantial literature specifically concerned with funerals themselves, Ralph Giesey's *The Royal Funeral Ceremony in Renaissance France* is a testament to both exacting and highly imaginative scholarship and is useful for points of comparison.<sup>7</sup> Published in 1960, this enduring study holds, in part, that French royal funerary ritual evolved out of a combination of adherence to established precedent as well as circumstantial innovation; it was not simply the reflection of a conscious, humanistic attempt to mimic Imperial Roman funerals.

While undoubtedly influenced by French traditions, Burgundian ducal funerals were not mere duplicates. A crucial difference is the conspicuous lack of an effigy in Burgundian funerals.<sup>8</sup> Also, Burgundian funerals did not adhere to the model established by the funeral of Philip the Bold, the first Valois duke. As we shall see, the funeral of Philip the Good differed quite substantially from that of his grandfather.

As Giesey has ably proved, French funerals retained many of the same basic traditions out of reverence for a metaphysical sense that the incorporeal dignity of the king of France never dies. Although notable innovations were introduced over time, a fundamental commitment to this idea lingered, perhaps exemplified most vividly in the use of the effigy. Burgundian funerals did adopt a sense of this notion to a small degree. But owing to both the novelty of the Burgundian state and the relatively personal character of Burgundian rulership, these ducal funerals were more freely adaptable to the designs of the deceased or those planning the ceremony. In other words, they more easily reflected personal expressions of self-



esteem, power, succession, or religious attitudes towards death.

For comparative purposes, it is instructive to consider briefly the funeral of Philip the Bold, who died in 1404 at Hal.<sup>9</sup> After the duke's death on 27 April the corpse was embalmed and the entrails buried at the church of Notre Dame at Hal. The heart was sent to Paris to be buried alongside Philip's royal ancestors at St. Denis. The remains, dressed in the habit of a Carthusian monk, were placed in an enormous lead coffin. On 1 May the body, along with a sizeable cortege, left Hal for Dijon, roughly 250 miles to the south. Owing to the decision to bury Philip in the Charterhouse he had established at Dijon, his funeral served a curious dual purpose. The procession functioned as a sort of final "ducal progress" over a large part of the realm. Accompanied by sixty official *pleurants* or mourners, the cortege included Philip's sons, John the Fearless and Anthony, with two counts and six leading Flemish nobles. Leading members of Philip's household and administration as well as sixteen chaplains also escorted the company.

The procession took a circuitous way, making stops in the important cities of Courtrai, Lille, and Douai, resting at the last town for a full ten days. On 28 May it reached the abbey of St. Seine where it remained over two weeks. Finally, the cortege reached Dijon, where it was greeted by 100 burgesses and 100 poor men all dressed in black, along with all the clergy of Dijon. At last, on 16 June 1404, Philip was buried in the choir at the Charterhouse.

These detours and delays did not result simply from the typical logistical problems involved in overland travel in the Middle Ages. One reason for the lengthy stop-overs was to permit citizens of these cities one final chance to honor their deceased duke. Another explanation is that in each place the local clergy were expected to turn out to offer prayers on behalf of Philip's soul. With this in mind, a merchant in Bruges was asked to supply cloths from Lucca to be presented to the twelve churches where the duke's body would rest en route from Hal to Dijon.<sup>10</sup>

Another important bit of business needed to be addressed while Philip's cortege made its long rest at St. Seine: the disbanding of Philip's household staff. By this time, John the Fearless had made his way from Paris to attend to this task. One might say that, by then, John had essentially taken charge. Although the funeral was not "officially" completed until Philip's internment, his household, one of the most immediately tangible vestiges of his authority, was already dissolved well before the burial. Thus when the cortege arrived at Dijon, it lacked two important components: the household and the successor of the deceased, both of which were of prime importance in the obsequies of Philip's grandson, sixty-three years later. In comparison to this latter ceremony, the final stage of Philip the Bold's funeral seems almost pitifully lacking in dignity. Although the two funerals



shared some fundamental similarities, as we shall see, the funeral of Philip the Good was far more elaborate and formalized, as well as much more expressive of ducal dignity and several other significant implications, which from all appearances were totally absent from the *cours funèbre* of his grandfather in 1404.

AT NINE o'clock in the evening on Monday, 15 June 1467, Duke Philip the Good of Burgundy died at Bruges after a brief congestive illness.<sup>11</sup> He was seventy. The next evening the corpse was embalmed, and the heart and entrails were removed and "enshrined in another vessel."<sup>12</sup> The body then was displayed in the chapel of the ducal palace at Bruges, where during the next four days the citizens of the commune could pay respects and express their sorrow for the deceased. The following Sunday, 21 June, the funerary services officially commenced. These proceedings can be described with a surprising amount of detail, owing to the number of existing contemporary accounts. The funeral was recorded not only by Chastellain, the official court historian, but also by other chroniclers, including Du Clerq, De Waurin, and De Haynin. The most detailed account is given in an anonymous fifteenth-century manuscript, discovered only in the nineteenth century.<sup>13</sup>

Although death came upon Philip unexpectedly, he had made a few specific arrangements in preparation. Foremost, he requested that he be buried along with his father and grandfather at the Charterhouse at Dijon. The bulk of the arrangements, however, were planned and executed by the Count of Charolais, the future Duke Charles the Bold. As it turned out, Philip's principal wish was not fulfilled immediately. Indeed, the funeral ceremony itself may have reflected Charles's intentions more than Philip's. Nevertheless, it was incumbent upon Charles to provide a funeral befitting Philip's rank and dignity. The directives Charles gave fully complied with this aim.

It was decided to hold the funeral in Bruges. This immediately raises an interesting question. Dijon long had functioned as the ducal capital, and with the establishment of the Charterhouse, the dukes also had their own necropolis there, often described as "the St. Denis of Burgundy." Why then did Charles hold the funeral and initially inter his father's remains in Bruges? Richard Vaughan suggests that the Valois dukes ultimately "failed to win the confidence or secure the cooperation" of the wealthy urban oligarchies of the Low Countries.<sup>14</sup>

This is not to say that they did not try. From the time of Philip the Bold, the dukes made special efforts to impress the Flemish cities with their wealth and generosity, with special banquets and other festivities. This was particularly so for Bruges, which in the 1440s and 1450s had emerged as a rival to Brussels as the dukes' northern capital. But Bruges also had been troublesome in the past. A



violent rebellion there in 1437 nearly cost Philip his life; after suppressing it the following year, he took steps to ensure that his settlement with the town would be remembered permanently. In addition to heavy fines and proscriptions, the duke also demanded the observance of several curious rituals.<sup>15</sup> Ordering all the city's fortifications to be dismantled, Philip built a chapel on the site of the gate that had been closed before him. In this chapel a perpetual daily mass would be given on behalf of the souls of those killed. Every 22nd of May, the anniversary of the outbreak of the revolt, the civic authorities were obliged to celebrate a special mass in the Church of St. Donation, the same church where thirty years later Philip was buried temporarily. The connection of Philip's burial to these past events is perhaps somewhat remote, but there can be no doubt of Philip's desire to impress his power on the citizens of Bruges. Significantly, shortly after his accession, Charles the Bold faced a new series of problems with the Flemish cities of Ghent and Liège. Certainly we cannot credit Charles with anticipating these problems and trying to make a ceremonial show of power in Bruges. But perhaps Charles found it convenient to hold the funeral there, not only because it was the place where his father had died, but also because Philip had previously taken such elaborate steps to provide the city with permanent reminders of his power; thus, the ducal legacy there made it an appropriate setting for celebrating of Philip's dignity.

Charles's next concern was to properly outfit the mourners in Philip's funeral procession. Although the men of Bruges and the men of the Franc of Bruges who marched in the procession outfitted themselves at their own expense, Charles had to provide mourning clothes for his father's household and officers, as well as for his own.<sup>16</sup> These gowns were strictly regulated in cut and quality to reflect the status of the wearer. All nobles wore long robes that touched the ground, whereas the minor officers and all others of common extraction wore knee-length robes with short hoods.<sup>17</sup>

The hierarchy of the household and other officers was defined by the price of the mourning cloth prescribed for each class of retainer. Chaplains wore cloth worth fifty sous per measure; judiciary officers, forty sous; squires of the household, thirty sous; other military officers, twenty sous; and petty officers donned robes worth only twelve sous per measure.<sup>18</sup>

Similarly, the Church of St. Donation had to be decorated suitably with cloths of mourning. The nave and the choir of the church were covered with a variety of black cloths. On top of a primary layer of very coarse fabric, possibly goatskin, secondary layers of black velvet and damask were fastened. Stiff buckram cloth formed a high backdrop circling the apse of the church. All of the cloths inside the church, as well as the gowns and the torches held by some of the mourners,



were decked with blazons bearing the arms of Duke Philip. Two large ones adorned the grand altar, and eight of them hung from the catafalque. All told, perhaps as many as 2,000 of these badges of various sizes decorated the church, in addition to those affixed to gowns and torches.<sup>19</sup>

Another vital component of the atmosphere of mourning were the fourteen hundred candles filling every conceivable nook and cranny of the church, as well as its chandeliers.<sup>20</sup> During the course of the ceremonies, the heat they generated grew so intense that the stained-glass windows had to be pierced to lighten the air.<sup>21</sup>

The centerpiece of the church's funerary decor appears to have been the catafalque, essentially a lattice-work "chapel," under which was placed the coffin. The catafalque itself was built atop a small platform or stage equipped with a bier to hold the coffin. At each corner of the catafalque burned four very large candles.<sup>22</sup>

In spite of the great attention to detail inside the church, the key to the funeral was the ceremonial procession to the church, for this was where the symbolic expressions of the duke's personal dignity and prestige were manifested. Generally speaking, after the thirteenth century, a solemn procession of mourners became the central symbolic image of death and funerals.<sup>23</sup> Previously, the focus of the ceremony had been the entombment, when the body was laid in the sarcophagus and the priests pronounced absolution. With a greater emphasis placed on the mourners, the question of precedence became much more significant and delicate: the procession not only incorporated the mourners, but also demonstrated their hierarchical relationship to the deceased.

On Sunday, 21 June, twenty thousand spectators, many of them dressed in black, gathered to view the procession of Philip's body from the ducal palace to the church of St. Donation. While many stood in open windows to watch, most lined the streets along which passed the cortege. These onlookers were held back on either side of the street by a line of 1,600 torchbearers, who filled the entire length of the funeral route.<sup>24</sup> Charles provided 400 of these men, dressed in black at his expense. The other 1,200 were furnished by the city and guilds of Bruges as well as the Franc. Dressed at the expense of their respective organizations, these men wore black robes emblazoned with the arms of the city or the Franc, depending on the status of the wearer.

The cortege proceeded within this double line of torchbearers. While many funerals of this time began with a procession of the poor followed by the clergy, the poor were not included in this ceremony. Rather, the parochial clergy of Bruges, along with the city's mendicant orders, began the march. Twenty-two notable abbots, "crossed and mitred, each according to his estate," accompanied



them.<sup>25</sup>

Next came the magistrates of Bruges and the Franc, followed by all the officers of the ducal court and the men of Philip's household. Because the grandeur of the deceased was measured by the size and sumptuousness of his retinue, it was imperative that this part of the procession be regulated with exacting precision. The household possessed no power of public administration, since its members served their seigneur personally. Yet their prestige and power were great, and their personal bond with the king or lord made them his most loyal subjects. As the men of the court and household left the ducal palace and filed into the courtyard, they met Jacques de Montmartin, a squire appointed to the special office of master of ceremonies. Montmartin called out to them, assigning their positions in the procession.<sup>26</sup> Two by two they advanced. First came the valets and other domestic attendants: wine stewards, bread stewards, servants from the fruit pantry, spicery, and other "squires of the kitchen."<sup>27</sup> Next came the petty clerks, the comptrollers, and the higher-ranking gentlemen valets from the four main domestic offices: the cup-bearers, the pantlers, the meat-cutters, and the squires of the stable. These were followed by surgeons and physicians, secretaries, councillors, fiscal officers, chamberlains, and butlers. Preceded by ducal ushers carrying their staffs, the twelve grand chamberlains of the Order of the Golden Fleece, along with Philip's chancellor, completed this stage of the procession.

Another ecclesiastical delegation formed the next stage of the procession: the bishops of Cambrai and Salisbury, along with the bishop of Tournai and his suffragan.<sup>28</sup> As a testament to the high rank of the deceased, these four princes of the church dressed in pontifical garb, though it is not known whether permission for donning these vestments had been secured from the local papal legate.

Following the bishops and immediately preceding Philip's coffin paraded a military detachment. Such contingents usually were crucial components of French royal funerals as well; as Giesey notes, great military officers often played a very important symbolic role.<sup>29</sup> Whereas household officers normally were identified with the particular ruler they served, military officers more explicitly expressed the symbolic continuity of power, since they were not necessarily replaced by the successor to the deceased. Although Philip's military establishment did not have an equivalent to the Four Grand Marshals of France who served as pall-bearers to that monarch, twelve high-ranking officers of the guard, followed by two sergeants-at-arms carrying maces, marched in double ranks.<sup>30</sup>

At last came the remains of Duke Philip himself, placed in a closed leaden coffin weighing more than 240 pounds.<sup>31</sup> A cloth of gold measuring thirty-two ells and lined with black satin covered the coffin. Running the full length of the cloth



was a cross of white velvet. Twelve Archers of the Guard carried the coffin, but these men were scarcely visible because the pall of gold cloth stretched across the coffin, with the ends held by sixteen grand barons. Cluttering this scene even further, a canopy of golden cloth mounted on four large pikes was borne aloft by four great Burgundian noblemen: the counts of Joigny, Bouquain, and Blancquehain, and the seigneur de Chastelguion. Directly behind the coffin and walking alone was Meriadez, the Master of the Horse.<sup>32</sup> This officer, the principal director of the funeral, carried the ducal sword of his late master in its richly ornate sheath, pointed down towards the ground.

Two facets of this segment of the procession have particular significance: the use of a canopy and of an official sword of state. Canopies or baldachins, such as the one carried over Philip's corpse, appeared in France beginning in the late fourteenth century, although a canopy had been used in 1322 for the funeral of Philip V. These majestic symbols specifically functioned to herald the formal entries of living kings.<sup>33</sup> It is certainly tempting to regard this symbol as a testament of Philip the Good's lifelong aspirations toward royal majesty. Significantly, on at least one other occasion this emblem served to honor Philip. At the memorable Feast of the Pheasant in 1454, Philip sat at the cross table beneath a canopy of golden material with velvet trimmings, decorated with ducal crests.<sup>34</sup>

In France a long tradition of bearing the sword before the ruler continued to be practiced. A Constable displayed the sword as a symbol of military might at the coronation and at triumphal processions.<sup>35</sup> However, owing to repeated vacancies of the office of Constable, the privilege of bearing the Sword of France reverted by default to the Master of the Horse, whose prerogative it thenceforth became. The Sword eventually became associated specifically with royal funerals. For example, the Duke of Bedford had it borne before him as a symbol of his regency over France at the funeral of Charles VI in 1422, thus implying that he wanted the emblems of majesty usually reserved for "the undying king" transferred to his own person.<sup>36</sup> Although Philip customarily ordered that his sword not be carried before him while travelling through France, it obviously was considered imperative to use this symbol of sovereign dignity and power during an occasion as important as the duke's funeral. As we shall see, the sword also played an important role in the ceremonies inside the church.

**THE FINAL** two segments of the cortege followed Philip's coffin. First came the six "Grand Mourners." Consisting of Philip's next-of-kin, these included, among others, the new Duke Charles as well as Charles de Bourbon and one of Philip's bastards. All wore long black robes with short hoods. Following them came all the officers who had comprised the staff of Charles as Count of Charolais.



Also clothed in black, they too walked in pairs, though in no particular order.<sup>37</sup>

When the coffin arrived at the church, it was placed on a trestle under the catafalque. The pall-bearers took their places in sequence, while Meriadez, still holding the ducal sword, sat at the foot of the coffin, behind the grand altar. The men-at-arms and heralds stood around the catafalque, while the prelates, barons, chamberlains, and higher officers took their places in the choir, where no one else was admitted; sergeants-at-arms and heralds guarded the entry. Meanwhile, Charles had walked alone to the oratory; his five relatives then followed and seated themselves next to him.<sup>38</sup> Vespers and vigils of death for Philip lasted over four hours.<sup>39</sup> At eight o'clock in the evening, Charles and the rest of the procession left for the ducal palace, following the same order taken earlier that day. A wake was maintained through the night by the heralds and officers-at-arms; the sword, unattended, also held a vigil of its own.

The next morning, two of the bishops celebrated early masses. Charles arrived at nine, accompanied as on the previous day.<sup>40</sup> The bishop of Tournai then performed the requiem mass. With the abbots as deacons, Charles and Philip's five other relatives received communion. The bishop gave a eulogy oration and exhorted the people to pray for Philip's soul. The final act in the drama then was performed.

Philip's coffin was lowered into a vault which had been dug in front of the altar.<sup>41</sup> The Master of the Horse raised the ducal sword and then lowered it until the point touched the ground. At this moment the chamberlains and the sergeants-at-arms approached the grave; the chamberlains tossed their batons of office into the grave, and then the sergeants did the same with their staffs. The coffin was covered with sturdy wooden planks and then the pall. This done, Meriadez placed the sword on the cloth but at that same instant, Roichequin, Charles's Master of the Horse, picked up the sword, pointed it upward and brought it before the new duke. With this act completed, Charles and the others returned to the ducal palace in the same order which had been followed since the beginning of the funeral, with the exception that his officers took the places of Philip's, marching three by three, rather than in pairs. Philip's officers moved to the rear of the procession and walked without any specified order, because, as the anonymous chronicler remarks, their offices ended when the body of the duke was interred.<sup>42</sup>

This final ritual certainly was the most symbolically laden of the entire ceremony. The presentation of Philip's sword to Charles became the central act in both the departure of the old duke and the accession of the new one. As mentioned, in the French context the sword was perceived as an impersonal objectification of princely power which served to demonstrate the continuity of rulership and the ongoing vitality of the king until the moment he was placed in



the grave. By the sixteenth century, this notion had been articulated so clearly in France that the king's body not only was not exposed during the funeral, but his successor was not even present. The Sword of France and the effigy of the king were all that was necessary to convey the continuity of rule and the undying nature of the king.

Philip's body was not exposed during the funeral ceremonies, nor was an effigy used. The transfer of the sword was the chief expression of an objective continuity of rulership, but this belief was also conveyed by the official disbanding of Philip's household, which, as in the case of French royal funerals, did not take place until the moment the batons and staffs of office were thrown into the grave.

But the Burgundian attitude towards the funeral ceremony also displayed a much more subjective, personal expression of rulership and transfer of power: Charles, Philip's heir, was present and a key figure in the ceremony. This was necessary because Charles's accession to the duchy of Burgundy was accomplished by ordinary laws of inheritance from father to son.<sup>43</sup> French royal succession, in contrast, was based on a constitutional directive based on an assortment of principles going far back into the Middle Ages, with the essential implication that the kingdom could not simply pass like property from the deceased to his heir. In Burgundy, Charles had to be present to effect the sense of personal inheritance, whereas in France, because of its ancient sovereignty and constitutional precedents, royal funerals were more free to rely and build upon a metaphysical, symbolic translation of power and sovereign authority. All of their regal pretensions aside, the Burgundian dukes established their rule over territories through personal initiative and action, through dynastic marriage alliances, and through outright conquest. Burgundian rule was personal rule, and the dukes were aware of this. Whatever constitutional claims they advanced were entirely novel. The Dukes of Burgundy needed and wanted to re-affirm in the minds of their subjects this personal sense of rulership. Funerals and other elaborately staged spectacles exposed their desire to make their subjects identify with the person of each particular duke.<sup>44</sup>

IT IS VERY difficult to ascertain what sort of impression these proceedings made on the minds of the common people who witnessed them. All of the chroniclers save one pass over this issue, speaking mainly of the great solemnity of the occasion and how it was observed with universal silence.<sup>45</sup> But commenting on the scene in the streets of Bruges immediately following the completion of the service, Chastellain describes men, women, and children filling the streets and expressing open grief and lamentation.<sup>46</sup> Some of the mourners even wept loudly and cried out to their deceased Seigneur, "Are you truly dead?" Because of his



position as official court historian, we may be tempted to regard Chastellain's testimony as panegyric embellishment. But drawing from what Huizinga has taught us concerning open, collective displays of anguish in the later Middle Ages, such a scene is not entirely unlikely. Although those who arranged the funeral intended to create a great sense of solemnity, those closest to Philip certainly would have appreciated such widespread veneration of the deceased duke. We might even suspect that a lack of open lamentation would have been seen as an offense to the memory of Philip and to Charles. Thus, it is possible that the public response in fact mixed solemnity with a more open expression of grief, however much Chastellain may have stylized it.

Philip's burial requests also merit a brief examination. From them we may gain a sense of his own attitude toward death. As previously mentioned, he wished his body to be buried alongside his father and grandfather at the Charterhouse in Dijon.<sup>47</sup> Although Charles did not fulfill this request until 1473, Philip's body did eventually rest alongside his predecessors. This seems to indicate that Philip wished to derive the benefit of prayers on his behalf from the monks whose establishment his grandfather had founded. But his request also indicated a wish to promote dynastic continuity; by adding his remains to the necropolis at Dijon, Philip enhanced its status as an official memorial shrine for Valois Burgundy—as Vaughan would have it, “the St. Denis of the Burgundian dukes.” Also, we may look at this request as a simple expression of filial piety: to be buried alongside his grandfather and father would honor the memory of their persons. We may recall Philip's lifelong devotion to his father's memory. After the murder of John the Fearless in 1419, Philip spent the rest of his life almost exclusively dressed in black.<sup>48</sup>

Philip's heart and entrails remained buried in front of the altar in the Church of St. Donation at Bruges, until the destruction of the church by revolutionaries in 1791. Although we are given no testimony as such, we may assume Philip requested the separate burial of his heart, body, and entrails. After Philip the Fair of France bullied Pope Boniface VIII into withdrawing the bull *Detestandae feritatis*, separate burial of these organs became quite common, although the practice could be traced back to the Salian emperors of the eleventh century.<sup>49</sup> It also should be recalled that Philip the Bold had been interred in this manner; his entrails were buried at the place of death at Hal, his heart at St. Denis, and his body at Dijon. Whether or not Philip the Good specifically asked that his body be buried at St. Donation is not known. But considering the elaborate, perpetual masses he established in Bruges in 1438, it may be hypothesized that Philip thought this church would be a suitable shrine where prayers on his behalf could be offered in perpetuity. Thus it seems that Philip would indeed have requested separate burial



for his heart and body, if not also his entrails. Such a request would reflect a common materialistic and individualistic tendency among late medieval princes to multiply prayers for their salvation and ensure the solace of interment among loved ones.<sup>50</sup>

THE FUNERAL of Philip the Good encapsulates the legacy and aspirations of the Valois dukes of Burgundy. Typically pompous, ornate, and highly ceremonial, it also was innovative enough to capture one of the essential dichotomies of Burgundian rulership: continued, symbolic, autonomous succession, as well as personal, dynastic inheritance without a genuine constitutional basis. Most of all, it epitomized the never-realized dream of truly regal status. Nevertheless, this ceremony did convey effectively the dignity of a ruler of a state which for a time was indeed both sovereign and very powerful.

#### ENDNOTES

1. Johan Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages* (New York: Doubleday, 1954), 27.
2. *Ibid.*, 42.
3. For details see Otto von Cartellieri, *The Court of Burgundy* (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1929), 139-52.
4. Gordon Kipling, *The Triumph of Honor* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 1977), 19.
5. Richard Vaughan, *Valois Burgundy* (London: Allen Lane, 1975), 176.
6. Norman Davis, ed., *The Paston Letters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 164-67. Paston says of Charles's court, "of lords, ladies, and gentlewomen, knights, squires and gentlemen, I heard never of none like to it save King Arthur's court."
7. Richard Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (New York: Academic Press, 1980); Edward Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); Mervyn James, "Ritual, Drama and the Social Body in the Late Medieval English Town," *Past and Present* 98 (1983): 3-29; Ralph Giesey, *The Royal Funeral Ceremony in Renaissance France* (Geneva: Librairie E. Droz, 1960).
8. Colette Beaune, "Mourir noblement à la fin du Moyen Age," in *La Mort au Moyen Age* (Strasbourg: Société Savante d'Alsace, 1977), 125-44. Beaune offers no proof for her claim that Philip the Bold had an effigy. Giesey argues quite convincingly that the representation referred to in Monstrelet's account was simply a decorated coffin. Giesey, *Royal Funeral Ceremony*, 87.
9. A detailed account of Philip the Bold's funeral can be found in Dom Urbain Plancher, *Histoire Générale et Particulière de Bourgogne* (Dijon: Antoine de Fay, 1748), 3:200-204.
10. Richard Vaughan, *John the Fearless* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1966), 1.



11. See L. Lemaire, "La Mort de Philippe le Bon," *Annals du Nord* 1 (1910): 321-26. Lemaire reprints the contemporary account by the burgher Poly Bulland.
12. See E. Lory, *Les obsèques de Philippe le Bon* (Dijon: Memoires de la Commission des antiquites du departement de la Cote d'Or, 1869), 6 for details.
13. The MS was transcribed and edited by E. Lory (see note 12 above).
14. Vaughan, *Valois Burgundy*, 69.
15. Richard Vaughan, *Philip the Good* (New York: Bames and Noble, 1970), 91.
16. The Franc was Bruges's rural hinterland.
17. Georges Chastellain, *Oeuvres*, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove, (Brussels: Académie royale de Belgique, 1863-66), 5: 232. Lory, *Les obsèques*, 24.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid. This is the estimate given by the anonymous chronicler. It is not known why he should have attempted to count all the blazons.
20. Lory, *Les obsèques*, 11.
21. Jehan De Waurin, *Receuil des Chroniques et Anchiennes*, ed. Sir William Hardy (London: Rolls Series, 1891), 5:536-39.
22. Lory, *Les obsèques*, 27.
23. Philippe Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death* (New York: Knopf, 1981), 166.
24. There are some discrepancies between the chroniclers concerning numbers here. Du Clerq and De Waurin give 1600. Omitting any mention of men furnished by the guilds, the anonymous chronicler gives only 600.
25. Possibly the mendicants were viewed as substitutes for the poor, though the sources do not openly state as much.
26. Lory, *Les obsèques*, 30.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid., 28.
29. Giesey, *Royal Funeral Ceremony*, 64.
30. Lory, *Les obsèques*, 31.
31. Ibid., and De Waurin, *Receuil des Chroniques*, 5:538. See also Jacques Du Clerq, *Mémoires*, ed. J.A. Buchon (Paris: Librairie Verdrière, 1827), 142.
32. Literally, "le premier escuier d'escuerie"—"first squire of the stable."
33. Elizabeth A.R. Brown, "The Ceremonial of Royal Succession in Capetian France: The Funeral of Philip V," *Speculum* (1980) 55:266-97. Brown sees the innovative use of the



canopy at the funeral of Philip V as evidence of "the continuing deep-rooted belief in the vitality of the monarch's unburied corpse." *Ibid.*, 288. The canopy was first used in the West as a symbol of majesty at the coronation of Richard the Lion-Hearted.

34. Cartellieri, *Court of Burgundy*, 142.

35. Giesey, *Royal Funeral Ceremony*, 68.

36. *Ibid.*, 45.

37. Lory, *Les obsèques*, 32.

38. *Ibid.*

39. "Four fat hours," according to the anonymous chronicler, Lory, *Les obsèques*, 33.

40. *Ibid.*, 34.

41. *Ibid.* The anonymous chronicler says that there was a separate coffin for the heart and entrails, but does not mention how or with what ceremony it was placed in the vault.

42. *Ibid.*, 36.

43. Giesey, *Royal Funeral Ceremony*, 137.

44. Lory, *Les obsèques*, 36.

45. *Ibid.*, 12, 29. De Waurin, *Receuil des Chroniques*, 5:538.

46. Chastellain, *Oeuvres*, 5:232.

47. Unfortunately Philip's graves at Dijon and Bruges were both destroyed during the French Revolution; see Lory's commentary, *Les obsèques*, 16. Nothing remains of either the tombs or their contents.

48. Huizinga, *Waning of the Middle Ages*, 271.

49. Giesey, *Royal Funeral Ceremony*, 19.

50. This argument is borrowed from Brown, "Ceremonial at Royal Succession," 275, who reaches the same conclusion concerning the burial of Philip V of France.