



The Reading Medievalist

The Graduate Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Reading

Selected proceedings from the conference 'On the Edge', March 2015

University of Reading

Sedovic, K. 'Seeking the Sacred Within the Secular: A Study of the Aspremont-Kievraing Psalter's Chivalric and Heraldic Marginalia', Selected Proceedings from 'On the Edge', March 2015. *The Reading Medievalist*, vol. 3, edited by Mahood, H. (University of Reading, October 2016) pp.61-75

Seeking the Sacred Within the Secular: A Study of the Aspremont-Kievraing Psalter's Chivalric and Heraldic Marginalia

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MS. Douce 118, located in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and also known as the Aspremont-Kievraing Psalter, was created in Artois, France between 1290 and 1310 for Joffroy d'Aspremont and his wife, Isabelle de Kievraing. The Aspremont-Kievraing Psalter is the first volume of a 'hybrid text', a liminal manuscript type consisting of both the psalms and liturgical hours, typical of the late thirteenth century. This was a period in which the book of hours began to outpace the psalter in terms of popularity among the laity, both aristocrats and commoners. The Aspremont-Kievraing Psalter's corresponding book of hours is rendered as a separate volume; MS. Felton 2, located at the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne, and most recently been studied by Margaret Manion.² Eric G. Millar, Keeper of Manuscripts at the British Museum from 1944-1947 discovered the connection between MS. Douce 118 and MS. Felton 2 in 1926. In addition to the fact that the Psalter and Book of Hours were clearly decorated by the same workshop, and possibly even the same illuminator, the Aspremont-Kievraing Psalter and Hours are of the same dimensions (22.8 by 15 centimeters), contain matching frontispieces with large historiated initials, and today exhibit similar fifteenth-century French bindings. The large size of each volume (182 and 139 folios, respectively) led Margaret Manion to posit that although the two manuscripts were almost certainly commissioned simultaneously, they were probably never bound as one complete text, and were instead originally utilised as two separate books.

Known jointly as the Aspremont-Kievraing Psalter-Hours, together these two manuscripts provide a rare glimpse of French aristocratic religious devotion at the turn of the fourteenth century. This was a transitional period in both medieval and manuscript history, characterised by an increase in individual devotion, and a shift in preferred devotional text, heralded by the rise in production of books of hours, and the gradual decline of the psalter, which until the mid-thirteenth century held pride of place as the most popular lay devotional book.³

Both the Aspremont-Kievraing Psalter and Book of Hours are characterised by imaginative and elaborate marginalia, images of chivalry, fantasy, and piety that fill the margins of every folio. Illustrations of patrons Joffroy and Isabelle at prayer are juxtaposed with animals from medieval bestiaries, local and

¹ Katherine Sedovic is a third-year PhD student in the Department of the History of Art and Architecture at Trinity College Dublin.

² Manion, M. 'The Aspremont-Kievraing Hours' in *The Felton Illuminated Manuscripts in the National Gallery of Victoria*. (Melbourne. 2005) p.106.

³ Manion. 'The Aspremont-Kievraing Hours'. p.109.

universal saints, and Aspremont and Kievraing family heraldry, the Aspremont *gueules à la croix d'argent* and the Kievraing *chef bandé de gueules et d'argent*.⁴ The identity of the master illuminator of the Aspremont-Kievraing Psalter-Hours is known through the inclusion of a signature on folio 142r (figure 1) of the Psalter. 'Nicolaus' refers to himself via a self-portrait in the upper margin, in which he depicts himself waving a banner with the message: 'Nicolaus me fecit qui illuminat librum', connoting his authorship of and pride in this specific marginal image, as well as the Psalter's marginalia in general.⁵



Figure 1: f.142r. Nicolaus, the illuminator, holds a banner reading 'Nicolaus me fecit qui illuminat librum.'

Although Margaret Manion has completed an in-depth study of the marginalia within the Aspremont-Kievraing Book of Hours, a thorough study of the Psalter's marginalia has yet to be undertaken. By focusing on the marginal images within the Aspremont-Kievraing Psalter, I will aim to elucidate the various themes illustrated therein, arguing that the marginalia of this hybrid manuscript functioned on several levels. The marginalia acted not only as an entertaining diversion from the text, but also as a record of family events and achievements, an exemplar of both wealth and piety, an illustration of medieval gender roles, and an aid to devotion in and of itself. The multiplicity of ways in which Joffroy and Isabelle would likely have engaged with their psalter's marginal imagery speaks to the multivalency and complexity at the heart of reading as a medieval activity, in addition to the changes in lay devotional practices that took place during the late thirteenth century. In both of these areas, it can be argued that the overarching theme was of the marriage of the sacred and the secular, illustrating the complex interrelations that existed between two seemingly dichotomous aspects of medieval life, a trope repeatedly addressed through the Psalter's marginalia.

⁴ Silver cross on a red background; diagonal gold and silver bars on a red background.

Millar, E. *Livre d'heures exécuté pour Joffroy d'Aspremont et pour sa femme Isabelle de Kievraing*. (Paris. 1925) p.6.

⁵ 'Nicolaus made me, an illuminated book.'

The marginalia of the Aspremont-Kievraing Psalter can be divided into four distinct categories: images of the patrons, Joffroy and Isabelle; images of chivalry and heraldry; imagery derived from the medieval bestiary; and depictions of grotesques and hybrids.⁶ It should be noted, however, that these categories of marginalia are modern art historical constructions, used merely as a means of categorisation. They are not, therefore, reflective of the varied ways in which medieval people would likely have viewed and conceptualized marginalia. These four seemingly dichotomous categories are, however, linked through their shared goal of illuminating the manner in which the Aspremont-Kievraing Psalter's marginalia creates a visual marriage of the sacred and secular. This paper will focus on the second category: the portrayal and role of chivalry and heraldry within the Psalter's marginalia.

Joffroy d'Aspremont and Isabelle de Kievraing were both members of the Lorraine nobility, related through marriage to the politically powerful Bar family. Isabelle's sister was Marguerite de Bar, abbess of the Benedictine monastery of St. Maur in Verdun from 1288-1318.⁷ Isabelle came from a noble Hainault family, and was the daughter of Nicholas de Kievraing and Julienne de Loos. She is believed to have married Joffroy prior to 1285, when the couple is recorded attending the *Tournoi de Chauvenci*, a tournament that Joffroy participated in, and which is likely alluded to in the Psalter's marginalia. Joffroy became Lord of Aspremont *circa* 1280, and was made Lord of Kievraing, Isabelle's familial lands, upon his marriage.⁸ His joint-lordship is signified throughout the Psalter's marginalia by the repeated depiction of both families' coats of arms, the Aspremont *gueules à la croix d'argent*, a silver or white cross on a red background, and the Kievraing *chef bandé de gueules et d'argent*, diagonal gold and silver bars on a red background, which often appear together, as in the image of a woman, probably Isabelle, holding both Aspremont and Kievraing heraldic standards (figure 2).⁹

⁷ Morgan, N. and Stocks, B. *The Medieval Imagination: Illuminated Manuscripts from Cambridge, Australia, and New Zealand*. (South Yarra. 2008) p.142.

See also: Speedy, J. *The Marginalia of the Aspremont Hours: A Discussion of the Marginalia of the Aspremont Hours and Comparison with the Aspremont Psalter, the Breviary of Marguerite de Bar, and the Kraus Hours*. (Melbourne. 1996).

⁸ Manion. 'The Aspremont-Kievraing Hours'. p.114.

⁹ Millar. *Livre d'heures exécuté pour Joffroy d'Aspremont et pour sa femme Isabelle de Kievraing*. p.6.



Figure 2: ff.29v-30r. Joffroy, wearing Aspremont heraldry, kneels in prayer, while Isabelle holds Aspremont and Kievraing family standards.

Joffroy and Isabelle had several children, although the exact number is unknown. Their son Gotbert married Marie de Bar, the sister of Renaud de Bar, the Bishop of Metz from 1303-1316, sometime after 1295, while their daughter Mahaut, possibly depicted in the margins of folios 25v (figure 3) and 85r, became a Franciscan nun at Valenciennes in 1333, after being widowed. The Kievraing family mausoleum was located at the Franciscan church at Valenciennes, which may provide an explanation as to why Mahaut chose to become a nun there.¹⁰



Figure 3: f.25v. A nun, possibly Joffroy and Isabelle's daughter, Mahaut, kneels while reading.

Joffroy, an avid knight and sportsman, is known to have died at the Battle of Courtrai in Flanders in 1302, perhaps shortly after the Psalter was completed.¹¹ Although Manion was previously of the opinion that the Psalter was created sometime between 1302-1310, after Joffroy's death, and therefore in commemoration

¹⁰ Manion. 'The Aspremont-Kievraing Hours'. pp.114, 116.

¹¹ Ibid. p.114.

of him, Manion now agrees with Nigel Morgan, who interprets Joffroy's constant presence throughout the Psalter as evidence that the manuscript was produced slightly earlier, between 1290-1302, while Joffroy was still alive.¹² Considering the Psalter's lively and unique marginal depictions of the couple, it does appear as though both Joffroy and Isabelle were on hand to supervise the Psalter's production, providing guidelines, if not specific instructions, for how they wished to be depicted. The cost of an elaborately illuminated manuscript such as the Aspremont-Kievraing Psalter could easily have cost a large portion of the patron's annual income, which lends credence to the theory that Joffroy and Isabelle would have wished to remain abreast of its production.¹³

According to Nigel Morgan, the Aspremont-Kievraing Psalter contains more depictions of its patrons than almost any other illuminated manuscript in existence.¹⁴ Morgan also notes that medieval perceptions of gendered societal roles are elucidated through the differing contexts, poses, and attire in which Joffroy and Isabelle are rendered.¹⁵ Throughout the Psalter, although Joffroy and Isabelle often appear on the same or adjacent folios, there are notable differences in how they are depicted, emphasising the dichotomy of gender and corresponding duties. Whereas Isabelle is usually shown conducting some form of devotion, whether kneeling before a *prie dieu* (figure 4), or receiving the sacrament from a bishop, Joffroy is always depicted wearing armour (figure 5), lending a knightly, masculine tone to even the most pious representation of him.



Figure 4: f.24v. Isabelle kneels before a *prie dieu*, and receives a blessing.

¹² Morgan, N. 'Gendered Devotions and Social Rituals: The Aspremont-Kievraing Psalter-'Hours' and the Image of the Patron in Late Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Century France' in *Melbourne Art Journal*, vol.6 (2003) p.5.

¹³ Backhouse, J. *The Luttrell Psalter* (London. 1989) pp.49, 52.

¹⁴ Morgan. 'Gendered Devotions'. p.5.

Manion. 'The Aspremont-Kievraing Hours'. p.108.

¹⁵ Morgan. 'Gendered Devotions'. p.5.



Figure 5: f.45r. Joffrey, garbed in armour and astride his heavily caparisoned horse, receives a blessing from God.



Figure 6: f.28r. Joffrey prepares to slay a dragon.

According to Judith Steinhoff, ‘The depiction of a knight taking communion suggests a vow of commitment not only to the community of Christians, but also to an order of knights’.¹⁶ This emphasis on medieval knights as members of both the secular and sacred worlds is evident within many of the marginal depictions of Joffroy. The most visually obvious of these images is the connection between Joffroy and Saint George, seen in the margins of folio 28r (figure 6). In this scene, a knight, garbed in Aspremont heraldry, raises his sword in preparation to slay a dragon. Was this knight intended as a representation of Saint George, symbolically sporting the Aspremont *gueules à la croix d’argent*? Or was the image designed as a depiction of Joffroy himself, likened to Saint George, and therefore referring to Joffroy’s Christian piety, as the knight is shown slaying a dragon, a beast often interpreted as a personification of Satan?¹⁷ Although Lilian Randall construes the knight as Saint George, a consideration of the corresponding text tends towards an identification of Joffroy.¹⁸ Psalm 22 speaks of having faith in and serving the Lord, actions that could be visually represented through Joffroy’s slaying of a dragon, a physical representation of the devil.¹⁹ Regardless of the knight’s identity, the religious connection remains, and is reinforced by more definitive depictions of Saint George later on in the Psalter, on folios 119v (figure 7) and 149v (figure 8), where George’s holy identity is confirmed by the inclusion of a halo.



Figure 7: f.119v. Saint George.



Figure 8: f.149v. Saint George

It is further interesting to note the similarity between the heraldry of Saint George and Joffroy d’Aspremont, as the latter’s is a direct inversion of the former’s. It is possible, therefore, that Joffroy might have felt a certain affinity for Saint George, due to the similarity between their coats of arms, as well as

¹⁶ Steinhoff, J. ‘Pregnant Pages: Marginalia in a Book of Hours’ in Hourihane, C. (ed.) *Between the Picture and the Word: Manuscript Studies from the Index of Christian Art*. (Princeton. 2005) p.182.

¹⁷ Nishimura, M. *Images in the Margins*. (Los Angeles. 2009) p.60.

¹⁸ Randall, L. *Images in the Margins of Gothic Manuscripts*. (Berkeley. 1966) p.206.

¹⁹ Ps. 22:22-30.

their shared identity as Christian knights, and even their names, which share a first syllable. The inclusion of Saint George in both referential and definitive forms therefore contributes to the Psalter's message of simultaneous chivalry and piety, two characteristics that define the overarching visual representation of Joffroy. Although Joffroy is not depicted taking communion, he does appear several times garbed in armour while receiving a holy blessing, often from Christ himself. This is yet another reference to the underlying connection between Christianity and chivalry. Taking Joffroy's commitment to chivalric tournaments into account, paired with his decision to commission such an elaborate pair of devotional texts, it seems reasonable to conclude that Joffroy aimed to present himself as a simultaneously devout Christian and devoted knight.

Although the violence of medieval knighthood may seem at odds with the pious subservience of Western religious teachings, in the late Middle Ages, chivalry and knighthood, despite their romantic, and therefore fantastic, tendencies were understood to be innately Christian concepts. As noted by Maurice Keen, religious teachings were an inherent part of chivalry, for 'without clerical learning in the background, chivalry could scarcely have progressed far beyond a kind of hereditary military professionalism, occasionally heroic but essentially crude.'²⁰ An even stronger argument for the connection between chivalry and Christianity is the idea that chivalry was a path to salvation. By taking up arms in the name of God, a medieval knight could ensure that his soul would be saved.²¹ It appears that Joffroy was cognisant of this belief, and that it motivated his desire to be portrayed as at once both pious and chivalric. There is not a single depiction of Joffroy in the Psalter in which he is not wearing his armour and identified by Aspremont and or Kievraing heraldic devices. At the same time, however, Joffroy is almost always shown in some position of piety. The mere fact that such concurrently chivalric and liturgical depictions of Joffroy are so prevalent serves to underline the inherent connection between late medieval chivalry and Christianity. Regardless of whether Joffroy or the illuminator chose to depict him thus, the end result is the same; Joffroy's pride in his family lineage, and at once both knightly and Christian identity, is unmistakable. A clear illustration of Joffroy's co-existing chivalric and Christian attributes can be found on folio 104r (figure 9), where he is shown garbed in armour and kneeling in supplication, holding a scroll with the words: '*je suis cortois je suis d'artois*', a phrase that clearly connotes Joffroy's pride in both his noble ancestry and Christian knighthood.²²

²⁰ Keen, M. *Chivalry*. (London. 2010) pp.6-7.

²¹ Ibid. pp.16-17.

²² Randall. *Images in the Margins of Gothic Manuscripts*. p.195.
'I am courteous, I am from Artois.'



Figure 9: f.104r. Joffroy, dressed in armor, kneels, holding a banner with the words '*je suis cortois je suis d'artois*'.

The Aspremont *gueules à la croix d'argent* and the Kievraing *chef bandé de gueules et d'argent* appear as symbols of the Aspremont-Kievraing family's identity in a variety of circumstances within the Psalter's marginalia. For example, a pair of duelling hybrids is depicted on folios 69v and 70r (figure 10), the leftmost wielding a Kievraing shield, and the right, one of Aspremont. Both are composed of human heads and animal bodies, raise swords above their heads, and are seen in profile, facing the gutter of the manuscript, creating a dynamic dialogue between the two folios. Considering that traditionally, psalters, unlike books of hours, were markedly non-narrative in their illustration, it is intriguing to note the conscious visual play, however brief, between the two folios.²³ This narrative choice speaks to the manuscript's identity as a hybrid text, characterised by its incorporation of aspects of both the traditional psalter and the newly fashionable book of hours.

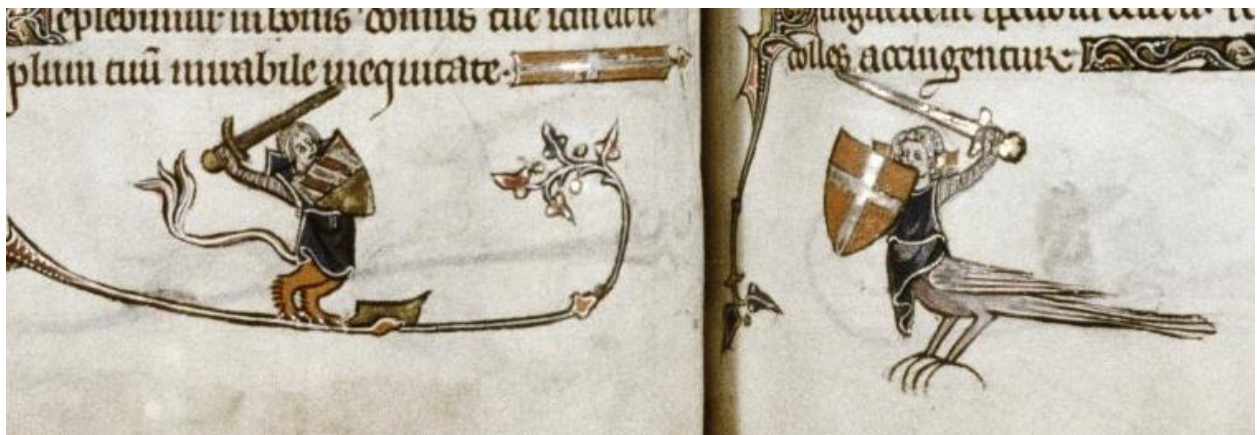


Figure 10: ff.69v-70r. Two hybrids, bearing Kievraing (left) and Aspremont (right) shields raise swords in preparation for a duel.

²³ Bennett, A. 'The Transformation of the Gothic Psalter' in Büttner, F. (ed.) *The Illuminated Psalter*. (Turnhout. 2004) pp.212-3.

The duelling hybrids on folios 69v and 70r also raise the question of why the patrons' coats of arms were paired with two such fantastical creatures: monstrosities which according to Michael Camille and Lucy Sandler, had a distinctly negative connotation for medieval audiences. Camille hypothesised that such hybrids were personifications of man's base nature, and evidential of what Francis Klingender termed the 'topsy-turvy' world of medieval marginalia.²⁴ If this is indeed true, and medieval audiences viewed marginal grotesques and hybrids in a negative manner, why would a familial device otherwise lauded throughout the manuscript, be satirised in this manner? One possible explanation invokes the hypothesised medieval fascination with social and cultural inversions, or the *monde renversé*, a possible effect of medieval marginalia that exemplifies the inverted nature of Hell and its earthly manifestations.²⁵ Such a theory invokes not only the medieval tropes of the sacred and the secular, but also those of good and evil, again exemplifying the central role of dichotomies within late medieval society and culture.



Figure 11: f.127r. Knights bearing the heraldry of Kievraing (left) and Châtillon (right) joust.

In addition to the frequent depictions of the Aspremont and Kievraing coats of arms, those of other, related families, appear as well, illustrating the role of heraldry as a form of sign language, a visual representation of family identity and lineage.²⁶ On folio 127r (figure 11), the rightmost knight bears the arms of Châtillon, a noble family that both Joffroy and Isabelle had ancestral links to, and whom Joffroy may have competed against in a tournament.²⁷ For example, it is likely that the constable of the Champagne, Gaucher de

²⁴ Klingender, F.D. *Animals in Art and Thought: To the End of the Middle Ages*. (London. 1971) p.417.

²⁵ Wentersdorf, K. 'The Symbolic Significance of *Figurae Scatologicae* in Gothic Manuscripts' in Davidson, C. and Wentersdorf, K. (eds.) *Word, Picture, and Spectacle: Papers*. (Kalamazoo. 1984) p.4.

²⁶ Keen. *Chivalry*. p.41.

²⁷ Manion. 'The Aspremont-Kievraing Hours'. p.142.

Châtillon, the first Count of Porcien, competed against the Kievraing and Bar families at the Bar-le-Duc tournament in 1294, held to celebrate the marriage of Henri de Bar and Eleanor of England.²⁸ The inclusion of related family crests can therefore be interpreted as subtle references to the noble and well-connected ancestry of the Aspremont-Kievraing family, serving to reinforce Joffroy and Isabelle’s high social status. The prestige and presentation of ownership was a key factor in the commissioning of manuscripts by the nobility.²⁹ In choosing to have their manuscript decorated with repeated depictions of their familial heraldry, Joffroy and Isabelle made a conscious decision to highlight their illustrious and well-connected social position as Lorraine nobility, while identifying their manuscript as both a devotional text and a valuable possession.³⁰



Figure 12: f.148r. Joffroy, with an Aspremont pennant and Kievraing shield, jousts.

Family connections were clearly a key feature throughout the lives of Joffroy and Isabelle, and by association, throughout their psalter. For example, Isabelle’s uncle, Louis de Loos, Count of Chiny, organised the Tournament of Chauvency in 1285, in which Joffroy famously took part, and which is ostensibly illustrated within the Psalter’s marginalia, as Joffroy appears time and again astride his caparisoned horse, sometimes in the act of jousting (figure 12).³¹ As exemplified by the contemporaneous poem ‘Les tournois de Chauvenci’ by the French *trouvère* Jacques Bretel, the Aspremont name was both well-known and respected in late thirteenth and early fourteenth-century Lorraine. Bretel’s complimentary, fawning tone renders the poem more as an ode to Joffroy and his noble lineage, than a factual account of the tournament. Bretel wrote:³²

²⁸ Morgan. qtd. in Manion. ‘The Aspremont-Kievraing Hours’. p.116.

²⁹ Randall. *Images in the Margins of Gothic Manuscripts*. p.9.

³⁰ Manion and Vines, V. *Medieval and Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts in Australian Collections*. (Melbourne. 1984) p.100.

Wirth, J. *Les marges à drôleries dans les manuscrits gothiques: 1250-1350*. (Genève. 2008) p.297.

³¹ Oliver, J. *Gothic Manuscript Illumination in the Diocese of Liège (c.1250 - c.1330)*. (Leuven. 1988) p.181.

³² Collin-Roset, S. *Ecriture et enluminure en Lorraine au Moyen Age: Catalogue de l'exposition "La plume et le parchemin"*. (Nancy. 1984) p.121.

Joffroy d'Aspremont came first,....
 He had neither cape or mantle
 He was all covered in fine silk
 So rich that I marvelled greatly.
 It was a vermillion silk with a silver cross on it.
 He looked like an angel
 Who had come fresh from paradise
 To go to the tournament.³³



Figure 13: f.116r. Joffroy jousts at the *Tournois de Chauvenci*. MS Douce 308, c.1300-25, Lorraine. Bodleian Library, Oxford.

The fourteenth-century manuscript that contains Bretel's poem, Bodleian Library, MS. Douce 308, contains a further depiction of Joffroy at the tournament.³⁴ On folio 116r (figure 13), Joffroy is shown jousting against the Sire de Sancerre while a crowd of spectators looks on.³⁵ As events whose participants were exclusively noble, tournaments served as displays of wealth and power. By appearing at a

³³ Bretel, J. trans. in Manion. 'The Aspremont-Kievraing Hours'. p.9.

Bretel. qtd. in Millar. *Livre d'heures exécuté pour Joffroy d'Aspremont et pour sa femme Isabelle de Kievraing*. p.7.

'Joifrois d'Aspremont vint premiers, ... / N'avoit chapel ni esclavine, / Tous fu couvert de soie fine / Si riche que trop me mervoil / Ca ce fu d'un samis vermeil / A ne crois d'argent desus. / Angles sambloit qui soit issus / De paradis nouvellement / Pour aler au tornoient.'

³⁴ Bodleian Library. MS. Douce 308.

³⁵ Morgan. 'Gendered Devotions'. p.6.

tournament, nobles proclaimed their high social status.³⁶ The description of Joffroy in Bretel's poem, as well as the illustrations of him in MS. Douce 308 and the Aspremont-Kievraing Psalter, add another layer to the cult of display at the heart of late medieval tournaments, creating both textual and visual accounts of a historic event.

Furthermore, despite their appearance, it is possible that marginal scenes of tournaments and jousts were not wholly secular in connotation. Rather, chivalric jousts and battles can also be seen to emphasise the Christian nature of knighthood, adding a spiritual dimension to seemingly superficial sporting scenes, and therefore touching upon the theme of religious strife. Howard Helsinger comments, 'the joust thus figures man's struggle with Satan, the Church's battle with Antichrist, and the conflict of just and unjust.'³⁷ The inherently Christian aspect of knighthood as seen in images of Joffroy therefore exemplifies the marriage of the sacred and the secular within the Psalter's marginalia, once again illustrating the intrinsic relationship in late medieval life between two seemingly dichotomous realms.

From the multiplicity of heraldic devices within the Aspremont-Kievraing Psalter, it can be surmised that heraldry served several purposes for Joffroy and Isabelle. To quote David Crouch, heraldry provided a 'pluralistic understanding of families', illuminating Joffroy and Isabelle's joint family connections, both ancestral and contemporary.³⁸ Heraldry also served as a medieval form of propaganda, advertising the noble and powerful lineage of the Aspremont and Kievraing families, and by extension, their connections to other illustrious families, such as those of de Bar and Châtillon. The visual placement of heraldic shields alongside those of other members of nobility and royalty, both past and present, could signal subtle messages of social and political affluence.³⁹ By choosing to have their Psalter illustrated with the heraldry of both their own and related families, Joffroy and Isabelle made clear their recognition of the importance of familial identity and pride within the upper echelons of late medieval, northern French society.

Searching for an overarching theme within the Aspremont-Kievraing Psalter's marginalia, the marriage of the sacred and the secular surfaces repeatedly. As noted by Lilian Randall, 'Just as the extensive domain of the Church entailed close involvement with secular affairs, religious art incorporated profane elements, often endowing them with symbolic overtones.'⁴⁰ Marginal images that at first glance appear overtly secular, such as duelling knights and familial heraldry, are found on closer examination to have moralising

³⁶ Keen. *Chivalry*. p.106.

³⁷ Helsinger, H. 'Images on the Beatus Page of Some Medieval Psalters' in *The Art Bulletin*, vol.53.2 (1971) p.174.

³⁸ Crouch, D. 'The Historian, Lineage, and Heraldry: 1050-1250' in Coss, P. and Keen, M. (eds.) *Heraldry, Pageantry, and Social Display in Medieval England*. (Woodbridge. 2002) p.34.

³⁹ Ailes, A. 'Heraldry in Medieval England: Symbols of Politics and Propaganda' in Coss, P. and Keen, M. (eds.) *Heraldry, Pageantry, and Social Display in Medieval England*. (Woodbridge. 2002) p.102.

⁴⁰ Randall. *Images in the Margins of Gothic Manuscripts*. p.4.

and even religious connotations. While the Psalter itself, as a hybrid text, bridges the gap between early and late medieval manuscript history, its marginalia similarly inhabits two seemingly opposed worlds, the secular and the sacred. The marriage of these two spheres results in a plurality of visual narratives, wherein each image can be interpreted in a variety of ways, all of which, however, are contingent upon medieval cultural and societal norms.⁴¹ There is no single explanation for any given marginal image. Rather, multiple, sometimes conflicting, connotations exist, which illuminate the surprising, albeit consistent, blurred line between the sacred and the secular, a trope that is found in medieval life in general, and in medieval visual culture in particular.⁴²

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⁴¹ Reinberg V. 'Prayer and the Book of Hours' in Wieck, R. and Poos, L. (eds.) *Time Sanctified: The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life*. (New York. 1988) p.127.

⁴² Nishimura. *Images in the Margins*. p.3.

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