FOUQUET, ST APOLLONIA, AND THE MOTIVES OF THE MINIATURIST'S ART:
A Reply to Graham Runnalls

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When I began my study of Fouquet's 'Martyrdom of St Apollonia', I knew, of course, that the famous image had long ago become something of an icon. In our profession, it has become an image of great power. It routinely appears in the texts we write; we decorate the walls of our offices with it. To a great extent, Fouquet's image serves as an object of veneration among scholars in much the same way that a religious icon serves the devout. It divides the community of the faithful from those few heretics who question the received and authorised meaning. In writing my article on Fouquet's image, I had meant to question what I thought were merely traditional views. But in reading the response of my friend, Graham Runnalls, I was struck by how I seem to have offended articles of deeply-held faith, not just intellectual opinion. The latter is subject to persuasion; the former regards persuasion as heresy and grows stronger by resistance.

Let us examine, in this regard, one of Professor Runnalls' most insistent points: he argues that the traditional view is almost certainly correct because Fouquet was, after all, a 'well-known *homme de théâtre*', who enjoyed a 'career as painter, stage-designer, and spectacle-organiser'. This clearly is a crucial point for Professor Runnalls, because he reiterates it at least six times in the course of his argument. He thus invokes Fouquet's 'known activities as a stage-designer' to support a number of points, perhaps the most important being that these activities led to his 'original decision to use his theatrical memories and experience' as the basis for his depiction of St Apollonia's martyrdom. Above all, this point thus allows Professor Runnalls to explain an otherwise puzzling feature of the illustration: why does Fouquet's represent the saint's martyrdom in a theatrical context instead of a more straightforwardly narrative context, as he did with other illustrations in the 'Suffrages' section of the Hours of Etienne Chevalier? If it can be established that Fouquet was 'an experienced man of the theatre' (as Professor Runnalls calls him), one does not have to ask such questions. The theatre has no particular meaning as a homiletic image; rather, the illustration merely expresses the artist's personal enthusiasm for the theatre and reflects his professional expertise as a 'theatrical designer'. It therefore follows that, as 'an experienced man of

the theatre', Fouquet 'provides an accurate portrait of what we know some mid-fifteenth-century French mystery-play theatres and performances looked like'. Fouquet's theatrical avocation accordingly seems more relevant than his painter's profession to a discussion of the image, and Professor Runnalls finds that plays rather than the iconography of prayer-books provide the essential keys to Fouquet's meaning. Finally, Professor Runnalls finds the notion of Fouquet's theatrical avocation so compelling that he offers it as the chief (indeed the only) reason for denying that Fouquet 'would have shared Isidore's hostile attitude to the theatre in general, and used that hostility as the theme of his miniature'. Professor Runnalls' faith in Fouquet as an *homme de théâtre* thus defines his point of view and thoroughly colours his judgement throughout his article.

But was Fouquet in fact a 'well-known *homme de théâtre*'? Is this characterisation well supported by credible evidence, or merely an expression of unexamined faith? Let us begin by inquiring *by whom* Fouquet is so 'well-known' as a 'theatre producer and stage designer'? The answer to this question, I fear, is somewhat sobering, for there is no evidence that Fouquet's contemporaries ever accused him of any theatrical interests whatsoever. Throughout his lifetime and immediately after, he was widely celebrated as a famous painter, 'an excellent master, especially of vivid portraiture', but never as a theatre producer or stage designer.[1] Only modern theatre and art historians have so characterised him. The modern fashion of referring to Fouquet specifically as an *homme de théâtre*, however, stems from no more ancient authorities than the art historian, Claude Schaefer (1971), and the theatre historian, Henri Rey-Flaud (1973). Schaefer, in his popular edition of The Hours of Etienne Chevalier, thus speculates that the medieval theatre was 'one of the most important influences on Fouquet' and then concludes his remarks by declaring him 'a man of the theater'. Two years later, Rey-Flaud's *Le Cercle magique* made Fouquet's famous image the foundation of his argument that almost all French medieval drama was performed in circular theatres, and in doing so, he enthusiastically embraces Schaefer's characterisation of the painter as an *homme de théâtre*.[2] Together, these two works seem to have popularised this characterisation of Fouquet, and one now frequently finds it echoed in various studies of the painter, as it is in Professor Runnalls' article.

At this point, we should ask whether this modern and popular conception of Fouquet's career rests upon a solid basis of evidence. Professor Runnalls certainly believes that the painter's career as 'an active stage designer' must rest upon a large body of evidence, because he tells us

that he was 'a well-known theatre producer and stage designer and is known to have taken part in the organisation of several contemporary Royal Entries'. One encounters similar references to Fouquet's rôle in organising contemporary Royal Entries almost everywhere, and it is therefore not surprising that Professor Runnalls invokes such pervasive opinions as if they reflected well-established fact. Elie Konigson, for instance, puts great importance upon an apparently extensive career in organising Royal Entries as the evidence for Fouquet's interest in the theatre:

> Si Fouquet a représenté le martyre de Sainte-Apolline dans un théâtre, alors que toutes les autres scènes de martyres du livre d'Heures sont inscrites dans des paysages et dans structures conventionnelles, c'est peut-être parce qu'il a assisté ou participé à un tel jeu. Nous savons que Fouquet a organisé des Entrées Royales à Tours, sa ville natale, et bien des peintres de son temps ont participé a telles cérémonies. Le document [i.e. 'The Martyrdom of St Apollonia'] a donc une valeur incontestable.[3]

It is very telling that none of these comments refer to direct evidence of Fouquet's involvement with conventional plays and *mystères*. Rather, *in the absence of such evidence*, they always attempt to prove that he must have been involved with conventional *mystères* because he designed *mystères mimés* for a number of Royal Entries.[4] The case for Fouquet's supposed 'theatrical career' rests entirely, then, on evidence drawn from the records of Fouquet's participation in designing Royal Entry pageantry for the city of Tours.

Very well, then, let us ask *which* Royal Entries Fouquet organised. Once again the answer to this important question is quite sobering. As a matter of fact, the city of Tours *only once* called upon Fouquet to design pageantry — *feinctes et Mistaires faiz en chaffaulx* — for a proposed Entry of Louis XI in 1461. However, when it was reported that *le roi n'y prend nul plaisir* in such ceremonies, *the town cancelled the proposed Royal Entry and the pageants were never actually constructed*.[5] The main piece of evidence for Fouquet's supposed career as a theatrical designer thus consists not of work on 'several Royal Entries' but only initial planning for a single Royal Entry which never actually took place.

The records of this event, moreover, offer very little comfort for those who may wish to argue that Tours turned to Fouquet in the first place because they wanted to employ an *homme de théâtre* to design *tableaux*

vivants for Louis XI's Royal Entry. Rather, the municipal corporation of Tours approached Fouquet in the first instance, it transpires, because they wanted him to design the elaborate ceremonial canopy which would be carried over the king as he rode through the city.[6] The commission for Royal Entry pageantry apparently came about as something of an afterthought. Only after Fouquet completed the canopy project did the municipal corporation then decide that the artist might also usefully be employed to design *chafaulx, mistères et farces* for the Royal Entry. It is true, however, that a second Royal Entry did occur in Tours during Fouquet's working lifetime. When the Portuguese King, Alfonso V, passed through Tours in 1476, the city decided to receive him in style. Naturally, they enlisted the town's foremost painter in their efforts. Did they warmly respond to his 'well-known career' as a 'man of the theatre' and ask him to design *mystères* for the event? They did not. Instead, they offered him twelve *livres tournois* to paint 'the inside of the canopy that the said town has had made for the King of Portugal'.[7] All the references we find in Bapst, Cohen, Schaefer, Rey-Flaud, Konigson, and others to Fouquet's supposed career as a theatrical designer are thus no more than wishful elaborations upon these two pieces of evidence.[8] The bricks of Fouquet's supposed theatrical career, alas, have been made with very little straw. These records, such as they are, lend no support at all to Fouquet's hypothetical career as a 'theatrical designer'; rather, they merely testify to Tours' high regard for an important local painter with royal connections.

One cannot overestimate the rôle that the fanciful (and, as we have seen, undocumentable) construction of a 'theatrical career' and consequent theatrical enthusiasms have had on the traditional Cohen/Rey-Flaud view which Professor Runnalls champions. It most dramatically affects, for example, his ability to consider even the possibility that Fouquet might have chosen a theatre as a negative homiletic image for the Book of Hours of Etienne Chevalier:

> He claims that Fouquet's painting depicts the world as a theatre, but not from the point of view of *un homme de théâtre*, of one who loves the theatre, but rather from the viewpoint of an Isidore, an Augustine, or a Hrabanus Maurus, one who regards the theatre as a sign of a sinful, fallen world that tests and torments the saints of the Lord … Kipling's arguments here do not convince me. Given Fouquet's career as painter, stage-designer, and spectacle-organiser, it seems implausible that he would have shared Isidore's hostile

attitude to the theatre in general, and used that hostility as the theme of his miniature.

But this objection will simply not do. Since it depends entirely upon a highly unsound biographical assumption that cannot be documented, it must necessarily be set aside. There is simply no reason to think that Fouquet's enthusiasm for the theatre was so strong that he could not design a negative image of the theatre should the religious context of his work make such an image useful. In fact, as we have seen, there is no reason to think that he felt any enthusiasm for the theatre whatsoever. There is plainly no more reason to believe that Fouquet felt a special affection for the theatre because he once was commissioned to devise pageantry for a Royal Entry than there is to believe that he felt a special affection for the mortuary trade because he once crafted a death mask for the funeral of Charles VII.

Professor Runnalls' defence of the traditional view initially seems to find firmer ground when he turns from this failed biographical approach and attempts to contextualise Fouquet's painting in terms of the history and practice of the French drama in the sixteenth century. Perhaps his strongest point of evidence, indeed, is his important rediscovery of a *Mystère de Sainte Apolline* among the titles of *mistaires* listed in the catalogue of a late-fifteenth-century bookseller of Tours, 'Fouquet's home town'.[9] As he points out, this document certainly establishes the existence of a play of St Apollonia in fifteenth-century France. It is rather more difficult, however, to establish whether Fouquet's painting has anything to do with that particular play. Professor Runnalls clearly seems to think so:

> Since the existence of a mystery play manuscript almost certainly attests to the performance of such a play, we can be reasonably sure that, during the second half of the fifteenth-century, a *Mystère de Sainte Apolline* had been performed in the Tours area, and that Fouquet, as an active stage-designer, would have known about it.

But here, I think, Professor Runnalls again presses his evidence far too hard and leaps to an unjustified conclusion. The presence of a text in a bookseller's stock does not necessarily mean that a performance of that text in the bookseller's neighbourhood. Booksellers, after all, specialise in transporting texts between suppliers and buyers, often over long distances.[10]

Professor Runnalls' own research demonstrates the difficulty of localising performances of the plays represented by the titles in the Tours bookseller's list. In his study, Professor Runnalls attempts to match the

titles of plays on the bookseller's list both with extant texts and recorded performances. He is thus able to identify texts for no less than 21 of the list's 52 *mistaires* and *moralitez*. More importantly, he is able to localise 20 of these plays, either by origin or documented performance. Of these, only one (*L'Omme Pecheur*) can be associated with the Tours area, and only six others can be associated with such neighbouring provinces as Touraine or Anjou.[11] If we take this sample as indicative of the whole 52 titles, then we must conclude that there is only a 1-in-20 chance that the *Mystère de Sainte Apolline* had been performed in Tours, and about a 3-in-10 chance that it had been performed in a neighbouring province. Those are not very good odds. Further, since the bookseller's list apparently dates from the 1490s (hence about 35 years after the date of Fouquet's painting), we cannot even be sure that the play text in question had even been written, let alone performed, at the time Fouquet was working on the Hours of Etienne Chevalier. And even if we could undoubtedly place a performance of the play in question in Tours at a relevant time, we certainly could not depend upon Fouquet being drawn to it because 'he was an active stage designer'.

We are on surer ground, I believe, when we approach 'The Martyrdom of St Apollonia' from the point of view of Fouquet's well-established career as a miniaturist. Fouquet was an eminent and dedicated painter of miniatures in texts of various kinds. Further, in pursuit of his miniaturist's craft, his work frequently involved him in attempts to visualise textual description. As a consequence, I believe that responses to Fouquet's work as an illustrator of texts must first look to the textual contexts of his work. In the first instance, of course, the Hours of Etienne Chevalier provides an essential context: how does his painting of 'The Martyrdom of St Apollonia' serve the homiletic and religious agenda of such a Book of Hours? It will not do to suggest that Fouquet was merely carried away by some personal enthusiasm in painting his image. Whatever else it is or does, the theatre which Fouquet has painted into the text must serve the obvious religious purposes of the Book of Hours. I, for one, will have great difficulty accepting any explanation of Fouquet's image which does not demonstrate that contextual purpose.

In order to assist us in responding to the book's religious and homiletic agenda, I believe further that it is no less important to ascertain the specific text or texts that Fouquet used in constructing his theatrical image if we can. Despite his energetic arguments to the contrary, I believe that the texts I suggest are correct and that Professor Runnalls is mistaken in a

number of cases of both fact and interpretation. The 'Roman' narrative of St Apollonia's martyrdom remains the most probable narrative source of Fouquet's illustration (and much more probable a source than a presumed dramatic version), and Isidore of Seville's discussion of the Roman stage almost certainly provides the textual context for Fouquet's image of the theatre. Let us briefly examine Professor Runnalls' specific objections to these proposals.

I do not think, first of all, that many will agree with Professor Runnalls that the *Golden Legend* version of St Apollonia's martyrdom suits the miniature as well as any other version.[12] To begin with, there is the matter of the king whom Fouquet shows in the act of presiding in person over St Apollonia's torture. Professor Runnalls seems to think that his identity is the main problem, but the crucial point here is his mere existence. In the *Golden Legend* version, as I point out in my article, *no king whatsoever* is present; rather, 'a man named Divinus' directs the saint's torment. Who, then, is the king in the miniature? Secondly, the miniature shows St Apollonia suffering a very different dental torture than the one specified in the *Golden Legend* version. The miniature shows her teeth being dragged out by a huge set of forceps; in the *Golden Legend*, as Professor Runnalls himself admits, 'the executioners beat out all her teeth'. It is therefore pointless to dismiss this difference merely by saying that 'this does not constitute "mob action"' (in point of fact, the mob action is more characteristic of the analogous version in Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*). If Fouquet is merely following the *Golden Legend* version, why does he not show the torturers 'beating' out the saint's teeth? Finally, most readers will wonder at Professor Runnalls' difficulty in discerning 'whether we see a young fair-haired girl or a white-haired old woman' in Fouquet's rendering of St Apollonia, 'even after staring for some time at a blown-up reproduction of the original'. I can only think that he must have been victimised by an extremely poor reproduction. In the original, her hair is illumined in gold ink, a feature of the illustration that is readily apparent in the Schaefer-Sterling edition.[13] All the reproductions I have seen accurately reflect not only the golden colour of Apollonia's hair but also the contrasting snowy-white beard of Julian the Apostate, whom Fouquet depicts as an old man. Fouquet's Apollonia is, therefore, unquestionably a young maiden, not the old woman of the *Golden Legend* version.[14]

I similarly do not think many will agree with Professor Runnalls that the 'primary source text' for Fouquet's illustration was the Latin prayer, *Beata Apolonia*, with its mention of a number of *tyranni* who inflict

torture upon the saint with *maleis ferreis*. Of course the prayer is 'relevant' to the illustration. It would be extremely surprising were it not. But the prayer alone is clearly not the 'source' for so much as a single detail of Fouquet's picture. In point of fact, *all* narrative versions of the St Apollonia legend make use of multiple tormentors, and all but the *Golden Legend* version make use of metal forceps as the instrument of the saint's martyrdom. Both are, after all, iconographical details essential to Apollonia's identity. In common with many other saints, Apollonia's torture is a type of Christ's scourging before his Crucifixion. Because she patiently endures the assaults of many tormentors as did Christ before her, she enacts an *imitatio Christi*. At the same time, a pair of metal forceps defines the distinctive form of her suffering; they are as distinctive to her as is the wheel to St Catherine or the tower to St Barbara. Throughout the later Middle Ages, St Apollonia thus appears in innumerable paintings and votive images bearing in her hand a huge pair of tongs as her distinctive emblem.[15] If anything, then, the prayer merely invokes two of the most elementary features of St Apollonia's visual iconography. It is extremely unlikely that Fouquet, whose many paintings of saints made him an expert in their visual iconography, would have gained any inspiration whatsoever from this prayer. Rather, one must still ask which of the various narrative versions of the Apollonia tale best accounts for the most distinctive details in Fouquet's painting. That version, I submit, is the *Acta* of St Apollonia of Rome.

Before continuing, I must admit at this point a small failure in scholarship, although it turns out to be something of a *felix culpa*, I believe. I have belatedly discovered that I am not the first to suggest that the *Acta* of the Roman Apollonia is the most likely narrative source for Fouquet's miniature. As far as I can now tell, mine is now the third independent discovery of this probable source. Probably Raymond Lebègue was the first to realise the importance of the Roman legend as long ago as 1926.[16] And of course, I should have spotted Nicholas Davis' independent discovery of the same source text in a footnote to an article that I make much use of in my original article.[17] That three very different people should make the same discovery independently, however, strikes me as very important evidence of the persuasiveness of the case for the Roman Apollonia as the source text for Fouquet's miniature.

From Professor Runnalls' point of view, of course, no narrative text seems persuasive as the source for the miniature because he is convinced that Fouquet is recording a recent performance of a mystery play on the life

of St Apollonia, even though no such text now exists and no such performance can be documented. He therefore must necessarily argue his case from what he takes to be the typical pattern of a medieval French saint's play: 'Anyone familiar with medieval French mystery plays, and especially with those dramatising the life and martyrdom of a saint, will know that they all follow a very similar pattern'. The difficulty, as I see it, is that the typical pattern (as Professor Runnalls describes it) of a French medieval saint's *mystère* is indistinguishable from either a narrative saint's legend, the standard visual iconography of the saints, or both. Most medieval saints' plays, after all, dramatise narrative sources. He thinks, for example, the 'sequence of tortures' in the typical medieval saint's play to be particularly theatrical ('though it is a matter of degree than kind'). But exactly the same sequences of torture scenes appear in saints' narratives, and these are often deliciously elaborated. One cannot, therefore, say that St Apollonia's torment in Fouquet's miniature must derive from a play rather than a narrative merely because it is graphically portrayed. Professor Runnalls also imagines that St Apollonia's *eculeus* (the usual term in French saint's narratives, incidentally, is *eculée* or *eculeo*) must be a particularly theatrical stage property, but, alas, that instrument of torture also frequently appears in narrative saint's legends (the legend of St Vincent in the *Golden Legend*, for instance). That the *eculeus* also appears in dramatised versions of these legends is therefore not surprising.

The very 'features' of Fouquet's miniature that Professor Runnalls thinks most 'theatrical', in fact, derive more obviously from visual iconography than from theatrical tradition. Take the long pincers, which are being used by the torturers in Fouquet's miniature, for example. Although Professor Runnalls judges this to be a theatrical *topos* (because 'for a stage-manager, they would be highly attractive'), he is simply wrong. As we have seen, this instrument, usually depicted in an exaggeratedly large size, is part of the standard visual iconography of St Apollonia, which divers versions of the Apollonia legend — whether in narrative, dramatic, or painted form — have frequently adopted. Certainly fools appear frequently on French medieval stages, as Professor Runnalls points out, but these characters are not exclusively — or even primarily — theatrical characters. One of the most ubiquitous figures of the late Middle Ages, they appear as iconographical symbols in visual artworks, as characters in narratives, and as figures in dramatic works. In this respect, I recommend once again the work of my colleague, V.A. Kolve, who is demonstrating the iconographical importance of fools as emblems of spiritual folly in the

arsenal of the medieval miniaturist. In particular, as Kolve points out, their presence in medieval miniatures is often best explained in terms of those 'God-denying fools' of Vulgate Psalm 52 who say in their hearts 'there is no God', especially when they are paired with kings or emperors.[18] We therefore do not need to invent a fanciful career as a 'theatrical designer' for Fouquet in order to explain the presence of these 'features' in Fouquet's image. Rather, because the artist encountered them on a daily basis in his miniaturist's work, they necessarily formed an essential part of the basic iconographical equipment of his painter's craft.

Professor Runnalls' case is equally unpersuasive with respect to the structure of the theatre that Fouquet represents in his celebrated miniature. I will limit my response to two main points. First, even though the theatre which Fouquet illustrates consists of only a semicircle of scaffolds, he defends the mistaken views of Cohen and Rey-Flaud that Fouquet must have meant to depict a completely circular structure. Similarly, he also accepts the view of Cohen and Rey-Flaud that the man holding the book must be the *meneur de jeu*, although I think it much more likely that Fouquet means him to represent the author or orator who, Isidore imagines, reads the lines while the actors merely mime the action. Let us briefly examine these points.

The traditional view — and especially the views of Henri Rey-Flaud, whom Professor Runnalls frequently cites with approval — regards circular theatres as the normal form of medieval theatrical structure. At times, Professor Runnalls seems uncomfortable with this view, as when he cites Konigson's view, with apparent sympathy, that circular theatres were only 'one of many forms of medieval theatrical space', but in the main he supports Rey-Flaud's view.[19] For historians of the Rey-Flaud school, Fouquet's illustration thus serves not as a painting, but a 'document' of the greatest importance, not because it actually shows such a circular theatre, but *because it can be interpreted as if* it showed such a theatre. Indeed, Rey-Flaud begins his famous 'reconstruction' by attempting to deal with the fact that the arcs formed by the line of scaffolds and the wattle fence do not in fact appear to be circular. He thus enters into elaborate geometrical calculations in order to prove that they have been 'deformed by perspective' and must be circular after all *despite their appearance*. Similarly, it has always been necessary to assume the existence of another 'invisible' semicircle of scaffolds to complete the hypothetical circle that the traditional view demands. Once Fouquet's illustration has been interpreted in this way, then information from available play texts can likewise be

interpreted to produce circular theatres as well. In fact, information from play texts and even from the occasional *procès verbal* is at best ambiguous on the precise disposition of scaffolds. As Rey-Flaud himself points out,

> les textes que nous possédons, relatifs aux représentations de mystères, font mention à chaque instant des 'échafauds' qui devront être dressés à cette occasion. Malheureusement, ces mêmes textes restent muets sur des points sans doute si bien connus des contemporains qu'il était inutile de les préciser: la disposition et la destination de ces 'échafauds'.[20]

In these circumstances, the 'evidence' drawn from the Fouquet illustration is of crucial importance to the traditional view, because when 'properly' interpreted, it seems to provide visual evidence for a configuration that cannot be convincingly established from textual evidence alone.

The most important impediments to this view, of course, are the Cailleau paintings of the Valenciennes platform stage because they not only show an arrangement of stage scaffolds that are arranged in a straight line rather than in a circle, but they purport to represent a real production of a real play. Ironically, they were also produced by a man who was in fact both an artist and a well-known *homme de théâtre*. Rey-Flaud thus finds it necessary to demonize the Cailleau paintings in order to support his theory of the 'normal' circularity of medieval theatrical structures. In citing his own objections to the Cailleau paintings, Professor Runnalls in fact is mainly citing Rey-Flaud, whom he finds 'convincing' on this point: they were painted in 1577, some thirty years after the production of the play in 1547; the structures look baroque more than medieval; even the date of the text is too late to be considered medieval.[21] While acknowledging the problematic features of the Cailleau paintings, I must admit that I find Rey-Flaud's utter dismissal of them as rather unconvincing. While Cailleau's memory may well have dimmed in the matter of detail over thirty years, would he be likely to misrepresent entirely such a prominent feature of the stage as the linear arrangement of the scaffolds? And if, as Professor Runnalls points out, the date of the Valenciennes performance (1547) 'is already late for anything that can be called medieval' how can he then recommend to us a mystery plays on the life of St Christopher (1541) as a 'typical' example of a medieval French saint's play?

As a matter of fact, I consider the Cailleau drawings as of very little importance to my argument about Fouquet's attempt to represent a Roman stage in his picture. In depicting a linear stage, however, they show that

other configurations than circular were clearly imaginable, meaningful, and even practical. Most importantly, I never claim (as Professor Runnalls misrepresents me as saying) that there ever was such a thing as a 'typical medieval linear stage'. Quite to the contrary, my original article actually argues that 'the size and shape of a medieval theatre is often a matter of custom-fitting rather than convention; the theatre is built to suit the play rather than the play designed to fit into the theatre. Different theatrical designers may use similar scenic materials, but they arrange them in distinctively different patterns that can only suit their individual plays'. From my point of view, Cailleau's linear stage-arrangement represents one possible pole while the circular stage arrangement defined in the *Castle of Perseverance* drawing represents an opposite pole of possibility. In sum, my own views in this respect differ remarkably little from those of Elie Konigson: the fifteenth century knew many forms of stage-arrangement. It is the 'traditional' view, with its insistence on typically circular stage configurations, not mine, that is the more rigid.

The chief point that I make about the Valenciennes plan is that, in a way fundamentally similar to the Fouquet illustration, its linear stage plan reflects a significant *iconographical* idea: the arrangement of scaffolds in both cases represent a tropological model of the world that diagrams the relationship between this world, Heaven, and Hell. In both cases, I would say, the model is a linear one because 'our world' exists *between* Heaven and Hell; it separates Heaven *from* Hell, but it also connects Heaven *to* Hell. According to this linear model, our world serves as the middle ground where God and the Devil contend for mastery. In this respect, whether the line of scaffolds is straight or curved is ultimately not the point of primary importance. In either case, they are arranged in a linear manner. Rather, the crucial point is that the line of scaffolds both in Fouquet's painting and in the Valenciennes grouping is a conceptually complete one: iconographically, nothing exists either further leftwards (or stage right) of heaven or further rightwards (or stage left) of Hell. For a painter like Fouquet who was engaged in an illustration for a Book of Hours, this iconographical completeness of his image is especially important. We see all there is of the theatre that Fouquet has designed for this illustration. This iconographical evidence, therefore, further leads me to conclude that all those efforts to extend the Fouquet arrangement into a complete circle of scaffolds must be mistaken. I cannot understand why this point seems 'perverse' to Professor Runnalls.

Perhaps the weakest point in Professor Runnalls' argument is also one of the most important and definitive in this debate: the identification of the prominent figure who holds an open book in one hand while gesturing with a baton held in the other. I propose that Fouquet means this figure to represents Isidore's poet-narrator while Professor Runnalls defends the traditional view's identification of this figure as a *meneur de jeu*. For the first time in this dispute, however, we seem for once to agree on some important evidence relevant to this disputed identification. To my main identification of the character with Isidore's poet-narrator, he agrees that 'it is not possible to disprove this'. Moreover, I had pointed out in my article the evidentiary weakness of the traditional view: there is no clear documentary evidence to support the notion that the *meneur de jeu* fulfilled such an onstage function as illustrated in Fouquet's miniature. The documentary *meneur de jeu*, I explain, 'may perhaps on occasion have been found delivering a prologue, but otherwise he serves generally as a behind-the-scenes figure, something like a modern director or stage manager'. Curiously, Professor Runnalls readily admits this characterisation of the documentary evidence: 'it is true', he says, 'that there is no explicit evidence that the medieval *meneur de jeu*, as this individual is traditionally assumed to be, ever appeared on stage'. Why, then does he continue to champion the traditional view? Because, he says, 'there is no evidence that they did not'.

This simply will not do. It is, after all, an elementary rule of logic that one cannot validly derive a positive conclusion from negative propositions. Professor Runnalls simply cannot argue that the book-holding figure shown in a commanding position on stage must represent a *meneur de jeu* because 'there is no evidence that they did not' appear on stage. Moreover, I would argue this figure so dominates Fouquet's composition that he must be a very important character indeed. His rôle seems so important, indeed, that if he is meant to be a 'real' figure drawn from the 'real' medieval stage, he ought to have left clear and abundant documentary references to the onstage functions illustrated in Fouquet's miniature by the book-holding figure.[22] Since we cannot find any clear references in the documentary evidence to such a dominating onstage function, we must necessarily accept the only valid conclusion that negative evidence can produce — a negative one. Since there is no clear documentary evidence that the *meneur de jeu* ever appeared on stage in the fashion represented by Fouquet, then it follows that the book-holding figure simply cannot represent a *meneur de jeu*.

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Ultimately, then, the traditional view fails because it simply cannot explain the most important features of Fouquet's celebrated miniature. It assumes, first of all, that a hypothetical and unverifiable 'career' as a 'theatrical designer' is a more relevant guide to the illustration than is Fouquet's well-established career as a painter. From this point of view, it cannot explain how the depiction of a 'real' theatre would suit the religious agenda of a Book of Hours. Instead, it assumes without evidence that the painter must have felt a special enthusiasm for the theatre that would presumably have overridden such concerns. He cannot demonstrate that the characters and situation depicted in the image derive more convincingly from specifically theatrical sources than from narrative and iconographical sources; indeed, in some cases (e.g. St Apollonia's metal forceps) iconographical and narrative sources provide better explanations than do theatrical ones. Attempts to analyse Fouquet's theatre as if it were a circle similarly founder on the fact that Fouquet chooses to depict a theatre that is conceptually complete as a semicircle. Finally and most tellingly, the traditional view simply cannot explain the presence of the book-holding figure. The documentary evidence will simply not support the traditional description of this character as a *meneur de jeu*, and the traditional view has no other explanation to offer.

My own view, to the contrary, is firmly rooted in Fouquet's verifiable career as a painter — particularly as an illustrator of texts — a career for which he was widely celebrated in his own time. It provides ready and convincing explanations for all the features that the 'traditional view' cannot account for. Because it takes this point of view, it can thus view the miniature in terms of the religious context of the Hours of Etienne Chevalier. Its understanding of the theatre as a negative homiletic image in this context is in fact a familiar religious and iconographical commonplace. It identifies two texts which Fouquet probably used as the basis of his illustration in association with a common stock of iconographical materials. One, a Roman version of the St Apollonia legend, explains the presence of most of the characters represented in the miniature. In envisioning the martyrdom of a Roman maiden under the personal supervision of the Emperor, Julian the Apostate, Fouquet chose to set his narrative in a Roman theatre, the better to make a familiar homiletic point about how the *spectacula* of saints appear to the sight of the Lord. For the specific configuration of the Roman theatre, he naturally turned to Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae*, which 'served the Middle Ages as a basic book' — a work of 'binding authority' — according to E.R. Curtius.[23] From that

source, he took both the configuration of the theatre and the figure of the poet-orator who read the text of a tragedy while the actors mimed their parts accordingly. The entire composition is thus readily and convincingly explicable according to the methods and motives of the miniaturist's art. No other are necessary. In the end, as far as we can judge, Fouquet pursued only one significant career — that of a painter — and we shall have to judge his work accordingly.

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NOTES

1. For the appreciative comments about Fouquet by the Italian sculptor and architect, Filarete (c. 1462), by the Florentine humanist, Francesco Florio (c. 1478), and by Vasari, see Nicole Reynaud *Jean Fouquet* (Éditions de la réunion des musées nationaux, Paris, 1981) 9. For Jean Lemaire des Belges's characterisation of Fouquet as the equal of Simon Marmion, Jan van Eyck, Hugo van de Goes, and Rogier van der Weyden, see *La Plainte du désiré* (Droz, Paris, 1932) 71–2. His position as painter to the King, as well as his ability to attract commissions from such powerful and influential courtiers as Etienne Chevalier, Guillaume Jouvenal des Ursins, and de Rouchechouarat demonstrate his high standing as an artist.

2. Claude Schaefer 'Preface' to *The Hours of Etienne Chevalier* (George Braziller, New York, 1971) 21–2; Henri Rey-Flaud *Le Cercle magique: essai sur le théâtre en rond à la fin du Moyen Age* (Gallimard, Paris, 1973) 113.

3. *L'Espace théâtral médiéval* (CNRS, Paris, 1975) 180–1.

4. Germain Bapst was the first to suppose that Fouquet's work on the 1461 Tours Royal Entry somehow establishes a connection between Fouquet's 'Martyrdom of St Apollonia' and his professional career:

   La reproduction d'un Mystère par Jehan Fouquet a d'autant plus d intérêt est évidemment prise sur le vif; *car il fut chargé, en 1461, de monter les Mystères qui devaient être joués à l'entrée de Louis X1 à Tours*

   Essai sur l'histoire du theatre (Hachette, Paris, 1893) 30 (my italics). Indeed, he repeats this point several times throughout his book, becoming ever more expansive with each repetition (e.g. 60–2, 88). Finally, we find ourselves reading that Fouquet not only took charge of the pageants in 1461, but also that Fouquet must have worked on *toutes les décorations des entrées de*

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souverains (88 note 2, 310). Curiously, in each case he supports his opinions by citing an article by François C.L. Grandmaison (see note 5 below), which only mentions Fouquet's work for the 1461 Tours Royal Entry. Cohen, in all the editions of his authoritative *Histoire de la mise en scène dans le théâtre religieux français du Moyen-Age* from 1906 through 1951, is content merely to repeat Bapst's opinions and documentation, and in this way he so popularised this point of view that later scholars take it as a point of well-established faith.

5. François C.L. Grandmaison *Documents inédits pour servir à l'histoire des arts en Touraine* (Mémoires de la Société archaeologique de Touraine *20*: 1870) 11–12. This article comprises the single piece of evidence which underpins all discussions of Fouquet's 'theatrical career'. Bapst *Essai sur l'histoire du théatre* 30, 61–2, 88, 310, first made use of Grandmaison's article, and most later writers — e.g. Gustave Cohen *Histoire de la mise en scène dans le théâtre religieux français du Moyen-Age* (Honoré Champion, Paris, 1926) 127 — merely repeat the Grandmaison citation and echo Bapst's conclusions. Claude Schaefer ('Preface', *Hours of Etienne Chevalier* 22, 124 note 19) thus typically directs his readers to the Grandmaison article in order to establish that 'a document even exists which proves Fouquet's active participation in a theatrical representation' ('Preface', *Hours of Etienne Chevalier* 22, 124 note 19). See also: Nicole Reynaud *Jean Fouquet* (Éditions de la réunion des musées nationaux, Paris, 1981) 4, which apparently makes some direct use of Grandmaison's article; Nicole Decugis and Suzanne Reymond *Le Décor de théatre en France du Moyen Age à 1925* (Compagnie Française des Arts Graphiques, Paris, 1953) 28, which takes its information at third-hand from Cohen; and J. Melet-Sanson *Fouquet* (Henri Scrépel, Paris, 1977) 24, where the information in question derives rather distantly from some intermediary source. Few of these writers mention that the Royal Entry in question was in fact cancelled. Sometimes, indeed, references to Fouquet's activities in this Royal Entry become so dissociated from their ultimate source in Grandmaison's article that they entirely falsify the record. Claude Schaefer thus recently informs us that in 1461 'Fouquet was entrusted with making plans for scaffolds and other works for the performance of a mystery play for Louis XI's entry into Paris'! — *The Dictionary of Art* edited Jan Turner (Grove's Dictionaries, London, 1996) *11* 352.

6. In a meeting on 17 August 1461, the municipal corporation of Tours asked Fouquet for advice on the decoration of the *poêle* beneath which Louis XI would enter the town. It was not until a subsequent meeting, on 25 September 1461, that the matter of Royal Entry pageantry was raised and Fouquet again

asked to undertake the project. Grandmaison does not refer to the first of these documents in his article. It was described and analysed instead by Paul Viollet 'Jehan Foucquet et quelques-uns de ses contemporains' *Gazette des beaux-artes 23* (1867) 97–113. Grandmaison's article comprises the records of a meeting of the Tours municipal corporation on 31 October 1461, when the council appropriated money to pay Fouquet for his efforts even though the Entry pageantry had been cancelled. Grandmaison, in fact, had first published this document in *Revue des sociétes savantes des départments publiée sous les auspices du Ministre de l'Instruction Publique*, *series 4*, *4* (1866) 502–3, before republishing the same document, with commentary this time, in the source described above in note 4. Thus those who have relied solely upon the Grandmaison article have missed an important part of the story.

7. The more complete discussion of Fouquet's commission to paint *le dedens du poille que ladicte ville a fait fiare pour le roi de Porturgal* is to be found in Viollet 'Jean Foucquet' 110–11, but Grandmaison, *Documents inédits* 13, also quotes the relevant document.

8. Claude Schaefer dates the Hours of Etienne Chevalier to the years 1452–6 ('Preface' 17–8). If he is correct, then even this single, aborted event would have taken place at least five years *after* Fouquet painted his illustration of 'The Martyrdom of St Apollonia'.

9. Graham Runnalls 'The Catalogue of the Tours Bookseller and Late Medieval French Drama' *Le Moyen Français 11* (1982) 112–28, and 'The Catalogue of the Tours Bookseller and Antoine Vérard' *Pluteus 2* (1984) 163–74.

10. If Professor Runnalls is correct in thinking that the bookseller in question was Jean Sessin, and that Sessin worked as an agent for Antoine Vérard in Paris, he has in fact demonstrated precisely the transportation of books between dealers that makes the performances of plays on the bookseller's list difficult to localise (Runnalls 'Antoine Vérard' 164–6). In this respect, it is worth remembering that Vérard customarily plied his trade over large distances, even personally appearing at the court of Henry VII to sell books to that English king. On this point, see John Macfarlane *Antoine Vérard* (Chiswick Press, London, 1900) 70.

11. Runnalls 'Late Medieval French Drama' 116–25. Professor Runnalls assigns two of the plays on the bookseller's list to the Tours area, but one of these is the *Mystère de Saincte Apoline* which he assigns to Tours on the sole 'authority' of Fouquet's painting.

12. In referring to the 'Golden Legend version' of St Apollonia's martyrdom, both Professor Runnalls and I are standing upon somewhat shifting ground. What we both mean, of course, is that version of the St Apollonia legend that usually appears in modern editions (see Professor Runnalls' note 14). In Fouquet's time, however, in the text of the Legenda Aurea, the legend of the Roman Apollonia appears either in place of or beside the legend of the Alexandrian maid. See, for example, 'Jacob de Voragine' Historiae plurimorum sanctorum (John de Westfalia, Louvain, 1485) fols. 24ᵛ–25ʳ. It would be especially useful to know, therefore, which version of the Legenda Aurea that Fouquet used. Might it have featured the Roman legend instead of the 'standard' Alexandrian one?

13. The Hours of Etienne Chevalier plate 45. Leslie Abend Callahan's comments on this point are rather more typical: 'St Apollonia, as she is represented by Fouquet, is a beautiful young woman with long, golden hair': 'The Torture of Saint Apollonia: Deconstructing Fouquet's Martyrdom Stage' Studies in Iconography 16 (1994) 119.

14. I do not fully understand Professor Runnalls' complaint (in his note 13) that 'few scholars who have used the Fouquet miniature as a source of information about medieval theatres have spent much time on the question of its exact narrative source, and it is far from certain that they have all assumed that it is the Golden Legend version'. If he means, at least in part, that not many scholars have thought that characters in Fouquet's miniature were somehow related to the Golden Legend version of St Apollonia's tale, he is mistaken. Consider the following, merely representative, sample: Bapst Essai sur l'histoire de théâtre 31; Richard Southern The Medieval Theatre in the Round (Faber & Faber, London: 2nd edition 1957) 98, 106, and plate 3; William L. Tribby 'The Medieval Prompter: A Reinterpretation' Theatre Survey 5 (1964) 75–6; Sterling and Schaefer Hours of Etienne Chevalier, commentary to plate 45; Elie Konigson L'Espace théâtral médiéval 178–80; Clifford Davidson Drama and Art: An Introduction to the Use of Evidence from the Visual Arts for the Study of Early Drama (Early Drama, Art, and Music Monograph Series 1: Medieval Institute, Kalamazoo, 1977) 5. This list includes many of the most influential commentators on the St Apollonia miniature (e.g. Bapst, Southern, Sterling and Schaefer, Konigson). Some of these, moreover (e.g. Tribby, Sterling and Schaefer) are considerably circumstantial in their attempts to match the details of the Golden Legend tale to those of the miniature. Even those who limit themselves to brief comments often assume that the miniature's relationship to the Golden Legend version of the tale is so obvious and so well

established that there seems very little further to say on the subject. Consider, for example, Richard Southern's comment in this respect: 'it is greatly to be regretted that Fortune has not left to us a script of the play in which this scene took place (save that we suppose the king or emperor in question to be Decius)': *Medieval Theatre in the Round* 98. If Professor Runnalls means that modern scholars have simply taken the *Golden Legend* version for granted as an important source because they were not, in the main, aware of other possible versions that might be more relevant to the miniature, then I would probably agree. But then, that is one of the main points of my original article.

15. Walther Bruck *Das Martyrium Der Heiligen Apollonia und Seine Darstellung in der Bildenden Kunst* (Verlag von Hermann Meusser, Berlin, 1915) *passim*. See also Callahan 'Torture of Saint Apollonia' 134 note 5 on this point.

16. In his review of Cohen's *Livre de conduite*, in *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France 33* (1926) 448. He assumes, however, that the Roman legend must be the source of the play which he imagines, after Cohen, that Fouquet is merely recording. Rey-Flaud (*Cercle magique* 52–3) judges this insight to be *très juste*. I am indebted to my friend, Graham Runnalls, for calling this reference to my attention.

17. 'In the version (of the Apollonia legend) that perhaps corresponds most closely with Fouquet's miniature, Apollonia's daily torments are supervised by the emperor himself — in this case the "Apostate Julian"'. He then cites exactly the same Roman version of the Apollonia legend that I also have been urging as the source of Fouquet's miniature: Davis '*Spectacula Christiana*: A Roman Christian Template for Medieval Drama' *Medieval English Theatre 9* (1987) 151 note 41.

18. For a general introduction to this topic, see V.A. Kolve 'God-Denying Fools and the Medieval "Religion of Love"' *Studies in the Age of Chaucer 19* (1997) 3-59, especially 3–33. In a longer, forthcoming work, Kolve will demonstrate that the fool in Fouquet's miniature specifically derives from this iconographical tradition.

19. Professor Runnalls repeatedly cites Rey-Flaud with approval throughout his article, but see especially his comments at note 29 of his article. I refer to Rey-Flaud's 'reconstruction' in *Le Cercle magique* 129–36 as 'extravagant' because even Rey-Flaud himself later revoked part of it, albeit silently. Compare the heroic proportions of this original calculations with those in *Pour une dramaturgie du Moyen Age* (Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1980) 28–9. On this point, see my original article, note 7, and Jonathan Beck 'Sainte-Apolline: L'image d'un spectacle, le spectacle d'une image' in *Spectacle &*

Image in Renaissance Europe edited André Lascombes (Brill, Leiden, 1993) 232–44.

20. *Le cercle magique* 65.

21. Rey-Flaud *Le cercle magique* 198–208 and *Pour une dramaturgie du Moyen Age* 41–2.

22. I might also add that Cailleau's illustration of the *meneur de jeu* adds its slight weight on the 'offstage' side of this debate. As William Tydeman observes, Cailleau portrays the *meneur de jeu* of the Valenciennes play 'off-stage, as a lone figure': *The Theatre in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge UP, 1978) 214–5.

23. *European Literature in the Latin Medieval Ages* translated by Willard R. Trask (Pantheon, New York, 1953) 23, 450, 455, 496–7.