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978-1-107-60544-2 - Rethinking the Renaissance: Burgundian Arts Across Europe

Marina Belozerskaya

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Rethinking the Renaissance

BURGUNDIAN ARTS ACROSS EUROPE

In this study, Marina Belozerskaya reassesses the common perception of the Renaissance as an Italian-based phenomenon and reestablishes the importance of the Burgundian court as a cultural and artistic trend setter in fifteenth-century Europe. The Burgundian dukes embodied prevalent contemporary values: magnificence in appearance, ceremony, and surroundings; chivalry inspired by Greco-Roman antiquity; power manifested through ingenious ensembles of luxury arts. Their splendid deployment of goldwork, tapestries, manuscripts, music, and multimedia pageants elevated the dukes beyond their titular status to rival kings. The potency of this “Burgundian mode” fostered a pan-European demand for its constituent arts and their creators. Rulers of England, Germany, Spain, and even Italy eagerly acquired Burgundian artworks in multiple media. This interdisciplinary study of the Burgundian arts as internationally recognized markers of refinement and power offers a historiographical reappraisal of the Renaissance and provides a new paradigm for further inquiry into the pluralism and cosmopolitanism of the period.

Marina Belozerskaya is a scholar of early modern European art. She is the author, most recently, of *To Wake the Dead: A Renaissance Merchant and the Birth of Archaeology* (2009) and *The Medici Giraffe and Other Tales of Exotic Animals and Power* (2006).



Europe 1260-1510 showing the main towns in Western Europe

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To each eye the outlines of a given civilization probably present a different picture; and when we discuss a civilization that, as mother of our own, still influences us, the individual judgment and feeling of both writer and reader must come into play at every moment. On the vast ocean upon which we venture, the possible ways and directions are many; and the same studies that have served for this work might easily, in other hands, not only receive a wholly different treatment and interpretation, but might also lead to essentially different conclusions. In fact, the subject is so important that it still calls for fresh investigation, and may be studied with advantage from the most varied points of view.

Jacob Burckhardt, *Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860)

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I. Presentation miniature in Jean Wauquelin, *Roman de Girard de Roussillon*, 1450s. Master of Girard de Rousillon. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 2549, fol. 6.



II. Presentation miniature in Quintus Curtius and Vasco da Lucena, *Les faiz du grant Alexandre*, Loysset Liédet, ca. 1468–79. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale Ms. f.22.547, fol. 1.



III. "Philip the Good at the Siege of Mussy l'Evêque," in *Advis directif pour faire passage d'Outremer*, 1455. Jean Miélot. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. 9087, fol. 152v.



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V. *Trojan War tapestry, "Andromache and Priam Urging Hector Not to Go to War,"* Tournai, late fifteenth century. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 1939 (39.74). Photograph © 1992 The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

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VI. *Trojan War* tapestry, “Siege of Troy,” Zamora Cathedral, Spain. Copyright IRPA-KIK, Brussels.



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X. Saltcellar and poison detector, West German or Burgundian, ca. 1400. Vienna, Schatzkammer des Deutschen Ordens (Museum of the Teutonic Order), Inv. no. 76.



XI. Reliquary of Charles the Bold, Gérard Loyet, 1466–7. Liège, St. Lambert's Cathedral.
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XII. *Three Coronations* tapestry, Netherlandish, fifteenth century. Sens, Cathedral Museum. Cl. Musées de Sens, J. P. Elie.

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XIV. Coronet of Margaret of York, ca. 1468. Aachen Cathedral. Domkapitel Aachen (Foto Pit Siebigs).

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XV. Tomb of Juan II of Castile and Isabella of Portugal, Gil de Siloe, 1489–93. Burgos, Cartuja de Miraflores, Capilla Mayor. Scala/Art Resource, New York.