

Representations of Wind by Rogier van der Weyden

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Flemish painter Rogier van der Weyden (c. 1399/1400–64) was one of the most influential artists in northern Europe in the late 15th century.¹ Rogier’s inventiveness was multifaceted,² and one of his many innovations was the depiction of Jesus’ loincloth fluttering wildly in the wind at the Crucifixion,

Rogier’s visual concept for the wind-fluttering cloth was most actively developed in the *Seven Sacraments Altarpiece* preserved at the Royal Museum of Antwerp.³ The ideological impetus for this concept is found in the Renaissance, specifically in the retrospective tendency to hearken back to the early Christian Era and identify “*pneuma* (Ancient Greek for “breath”),” which refers to the

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- 1 Catherine Reynolds, “Self-Portrait and Signature in the Brussels ‘Justice Scenes’: Rogier van der Weyden’s Fame and the Status of Painting,” in Lorne Campbell, Jan Van der Stock, Catherine Reynolds and Lieve Watteuw, eds., *Rogier van der Weyden in Context* (Leuven: Peeters, 2012), 78–91. Papers presented at the Seventeenth Symposium for the Study of Underdrawings and Technology in Painting held in Leuven, 22–24 October 2009. For recent monographic exhibitions on Rogier, see Stephan Kemperdick and Jochen Sander Bastian, eds., *Der Meister von Flémalle und Rogier van der Weyden* (Frankfurt am Main: Städel Museum, 2008). Exhibition catalog; Lorne Campbell and Jan van der Stock, eds., *Rogier van der Weyden 1400–1464, Maître des Passions* (Leuven: M Museum, 2009). Exhibition catalog; Véronique Bücken and Griet Steyaert, eds., *L’héritage de Rogier van der Weyden: la peinture à Bruxelles 1450–1520* (Bruxelles: Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, 2013). Exhibition catalog.
 - 2 Erwin Panofsky (1892–1968), quoting a maxim by Max J. Friedländer (1867–1958), describes Rogier as an “inventor.” Erwin Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting. Its Origins and Character* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1953), 248; Max J. Friedländer, *Von Eyck bis Bruegel: Studien zur Geschichte der niederländischen Malerei* (Berlin: J. Bard, 1921), 8.
 - 3 For the iconological consideration and the bibliography, see Hitomi Motohashi, “The Study on the Seven Sacraments Altarpiece by Rogier van der Weyden (written in Japanese)” (PhD diss., Rikkyo University, 2014); Idem, “The Study on the Programs of the Seven Sacraments Altarpiece and the Seven Sacraments Tapestry on Display in the Chapels (written in Japanese),” *The Kajima Foundation for the Arts annual report: separate volume* (The Kajima Foundation, 2016): 111–19.

natural winds, as the etymological origin of “*spiritus*” (spirit), which brings divine intention in the sacraments.⁴

The abovementioned depiction of the wind-fluttering loincloth in the crucifixion scenes appeared at about the same time. This was an important turning point in the genealogy of the representation of such loincloths in early Netherlandish painting, and its influence was far-reaching, extending even to Germany and Italy.

In this paper, we first explore the antecedents of the windswept cloths in the *Seven Sacraments Altarpiece* both in Rogier’s early works and in the two paths taken by his progenitors in the early Netherlandish painting school.⁵ Additionally, we trace the ways in which such antecedents led to Rogier. Then, by examining the wind-fluttering cloth of the *Seven Sacraments Altarpiece* more closely and turning to the crucifixion loincloth representations of the same period, we discuss Rogier’s importance in the representation of wind by touching on variations found in the late 15th and 16th centuries.

1. The movement of windswept cloth seen in *Descent from the Cross*

Rogier was sometimes called the “Painter of Passion” owing to the sense of tragedy in his work, which was expressed by the rigid movements, stiff expressions, and flowing tears of the people surrounding the body.⁶ Such qualities are observed in his early masterpiece, *Descent from the Cross* [Fig. 1]. The swollen and transparent tears on the faces of those who witnessed Jesus’ death, his descent from the cross, and the image of the Virgin fainting from lamentation made an indelible impression on those who saw them on the panel; this can be inferred from the descriptions and reproductions of this work from the same period.⁷ However, if one compares the work to the Triptych of the Rising of the Cross (1610, Cathedral of Our Lady of Antwerp) by 17th-century Baroque master Pieter Paul Rubens (1577–1640), one may notice a key difference: in the latter, the expression of passion is complemented by details (such as leaves and a horse’s mane) showing

4 Barbara Baert, *Pneuma and the Visual Arts in the Middle Ages and Early Modernity*, Art&Religion 5 (Leuven: Peeters, 2016), 17–33.

5 The two genealogies refer to the Flémalle style and the Eyck style. Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, 303–08.

6 For example, the phrase of “Maître des Passions” was used at the exhibition in Leuven in 2009.

7 Around 1548, it came into the possession of Mary of Hungary (1505–58, reigned: 1531–55), Governor of the Netherlands, and was placed in her palace in Binche, Hainaut. Vicente Alvarez (1st quarter of 16th century-1573?), an attendant of Prince Philip (later Philip II of Spain, reigned: 1556-98), reported having seen it. See Elisabeth Dhanens, *Rogier van der Weyden. Revisie van de documenten* (Brussels: Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België, 1995), 22, 79, and 129.

the wind's movement.⁸ Nevertheless, Rogier was one of the first early modern painters to use the movement of windswept cloth as a narrative effect.

In the panel of *Descent from the Cross*, Rogier makes conscious use of the wind-fluttering cloth's movement in two ways. One is the fluttering end-cloth of the headband of the person who lowers the body. Two striped flows with thick lines flanked by thinner lines run along the edges of the cloth, showing the movement of the cloth's reverse side and folds more clearly [Fig. 2].

The combination of curves with rising and falling edges echoes the shape of the bandit's headband in *Wicked Thief* on the left wing of the *Triptych of Descent from the Cross* [Fig. 4] after the work by Robert Campin (c. 1375/79–1444) (Rogier's mentor) and its copy drawing [Fig. 5]. Thürlemann points to a connection between this work and the fresco *Nude Dancer* (c. 1470, Villa della Gallina, Arcetri near Florence) by the Italian painter Antonio del Pollaiuolo (1431/32–98), who studied the ancient expression of pathos in movement, or *pathosformel*.⁹ However, in Pollaiuolo's work, the human figure's movement across the space creates a wind that causes the cloth to flap; conversely, in the depiction of the bandit, who is still and bound in his execution instruments, it is the wind blowing in the air that causes the cloth in his headband to flap.

In Rogier's work, the cross, which is depicted as small enough to fit into the shallow boxy space, seems to symbolize the one standing in the air on the hill of Golgotha. However, the fluttering cloth of the figure with a headband casts a slight shade on the nearby wall against which its edge touches; this creates an ambiguity that makes it impossible to decide whether it is a symbolic image or a representation of reality.

The second way in which Rogier uses the movement of wind-fluttering cloth is seen in John the Evangelist's fluttering cloak as he swiftly approaches the fainting Virgin [Fig. 3]. On the hem of the curving cloak, box folds overlap with irregular ones that look very similar to each other. As in Pollaiuolo's work, this fluttering cloak depicts the air currents caused by John's rapid movement over the ground. It is similar to the cloak worn by John as he runs toward the Virgin in the *Crucifixion Triptych* [Fig. 6] in Vienna (which will be addressed later) and that of the Archangel Gabriel who appears to the Virgin in the *Annunciation* on the left wing of the *Columba Triptych* [Fig. 7].¹⁰ The

8 This remark reminds us of Riegl's reaction to Italian Baroque art as he asks, "Why does that storm that flutters the robes not also move the leaves of the trees nearby?" Alois Riegl, *Die Entstehung der Barockkunst in Rom* (Vienna: Anton Schroll, 1908), 3.

9 Felix Thürlemann, *Robert Campin. A monographic study with critical catalogue* (Munich: Prestel), 177.

10 For the *Columba Triptych*, see De Vos, *Rogier*, 276–84. The *Annunciation* on the left wing is related to the preceding one by the Rogier's workshop (c. 1438–40, Louvre), but the heavy fabric worn by Gabriel in the Louvre's work seems unlikely to show the effects of wind through any kind of motion.

fluttering cloak was intended to introduce a narrative time sequence into the painting.

Conversely, the curve of the cloak subtly echoes the decorative tracery's shape at the corners of the niche-like space. In addition, to creating a narrative dimension through its fluttering in the open air, the cloth contributes to the form's pure ornamental nature. The tracery does likewise to the visual, although previous studies have pointed out that the form is based on that of a crossbow, which is underlined by the order from the archer's guild.¹¹ Ornamental tracteries combine multiple arcs and are frequently found in Rogier's works, acting like membranes that give shape to the wind while selectively allowing it to blow through. The acanthus pattern, which was also developed in Gothic naturalism, is based on leaves fluttering in the wind [Fig. 8], and Rogier refines these figures for use in heraldic ornaments for the Croÿ as well [Fig. 9]. It is clear that, in these works, the artist was highly conscious of the wind.

2. Two paths in the early Netherlandish painting school: translucent cloth and fluttered one

Rogier was not the first to consciously use this type of cloth movement. The two main currents in the Early Netherlandish painting school (which are said to have been consolidated in Rogier's work) are represented by the abovementioned Campin and Jan van Eyck (c.1390/99–1441). Although these painters share the same quality of realism in their depictions of the cloth's texture and the shapes of the folds, artists in Jan van Eyck's lineage did not often depict cloth blown by the wind. Jesus' loincloth is not as well fluttering in the *Crucifixion*¹² on the left wing of the *New York Diptych* [Fig. 10], in the *Crucifixion* [Fig. 11]¹³ in Berlin which is thought to have been inspired by Jan's work, or on the Crucifixion page in the *Turin-Milan Hours* [Fig. 12].¹⁴ As seen in these works, Jesus' loincloth at the Crucifixion is translucent and little fluttering.¹⁵

11 Jan van der Stock, "De Rugerio Pictore, Of Roger the Painter," in Campbell, *Rogier van der Weyden*, 20.

12 The Metropolitan Museum of Art dates the work to around 1440–41, but this is not uniformly accepted. It is also likely that the panels originally constituted the doors of an altarpiece rather than just a diptych, and an inscription with a biblical phrase written in Central Dutch was recently discovered on the frame. "The Crucifixion; The Last Judgment, Jan van Eyck, Netherlandish," accepted April 19, 2023, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/436282?ft=Jan+van+Eyck&offset=0&rpp=40&pos=1>.

13 There is no doubt that it was produced by someone in the circle of Van Eyck, but there is disagreement as to its attribution. Stephan Kemperdick and Friso Lammerste, eds., *The Road to Van Eyck* (Rotterdam: Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, 2012), 290–92. Exhibition catalog.

14 Koichi Motoki attributes the work to the master H, who supposedly executed it based on Jan's original design. Koichi Motoki, *Van Eyck* (written in Japanese), *The Great Masters of Western Painting 12* (Tokyo: Shogakukan, 2007), 20.

15 For a discussion of Jesus's translucent loincloth, see Leo Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance*

By contrast, the intricate patterns created by the unraveling of the loincloth and its being rolled up by the wind belong to Campin's lineage. In another *Crucifixion* in Berlin [Fig. 13], the wind-fluttered loincloth looks translucent, which shows that the two lineages merged mainly in the southern Netherlands. In fact, the depiction of wind-fluttering loincloth became prominent in the 1440s in Rogier's work and in the work of others active at around the same time.¹⁶

Representations of the translucent loincloth are also found in the 14th century. In the work by the workshop of Jean de Beaumetz (active: 1361–96) [Fig. 14], the translucent rolls of loincloth are somewhat unraveled, giving the impression that they are floating and have little materiality. The fabric's semi-transparency, which allows to see through while somewhat blocking the viewer's gaze, is similar to the membrane-like effect of the tracery ornament mentioned above.¹⁷

The depiction of cloths blown by the wind can be seen in the Campanian lineage, especially in the angels' robes. For example, in the *Entombment Triptych* [Fig. 15] preserved in the Courtauld Institute Galleries, the angels carry the Arma Christi — the instruments of Christ's Passion symbolizing his victory — wrapped in clothes. They form large folds together with those of the angels' robe.¹⁸ In this work, however, Christ's loincloth is translucent.

Art and in Modern Oblivion, 2nd, rev. and expanded ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 91–94 and 135–38.

16 In this paper, we assert that it was in the *Seven Sacraments Altarpiece* that Rogier consciously expressed the invisible wind of divine will which angels brought to the sacramental rituals by wrapping what invisible with cloth, and that this new innovation was adopted in the crucifixion paintings of the same period. However, the dating in previous studies of those crucifixion paintings and the *Seven Sacraments Altarpiece* does not necessarily conform to this hypothesis. For example, Kemperdick states that the *Abegg Altarpiece*, which is closely related to the *Berlin Crucifixion*, is nearly two years older than the *Seven Sacraments Altarpiece*. Stephan Kemperdick, "Rogier van der Weyden's Workshop around 1440," in Campbell, *Rogier van der Weyden in Context*, 56–77.

17 De Vos, *Rogier*, 139–44. The gilt ground of the similar example in the Louvre, which once adorned the Chartreuse Abbey in Chammol outside Dijon, does not show such botanical patterns. De Vos does not refer to the transparency of the loincloth, whereas he discusses the representation of the crucifixion with a worshipper kneeling just at the foot of the cross as a precedent example that expresses the spiritual and physical proximity to the life of Jesus. This proximity is common to the Devotio Moderna movement and resonates with the emotional sympathy that runs through all of Rogier's works.

18 Thürlemann discusses the roles of angels who display the instruments of the Passion in the air, and his discussion includes the angels standing on the ground. He also refers to the coloring of the angels in the Nativity of Dijon. Thürlemann, *Robert Campin*, 35–36 and 48–49. The coloring of the angels' attire in the *Seven Sacraments Altarpiece* also follows that of these works and their variations. Scientific studies done by the Courtauld Institute have found discrepancies in the way the two angels in the air are painted, and this indicates that they might have come from the hands of different artists. Such practice was common at

In Dijon's *Nativity* [Fig. 16], the three angels on the left wear cloaks fastened around their necks over ordinary inner garments. The two types of garments (inner garments and cloaks) are of the same color, and woven together to form the folds at the hems, which adds a glamorous touch to the joy of the Nativity. In contrast, the white-clothed angel in the center holds a large rectangular cloth; this white cloth held by the windswept angel is often identified as a wrapping for the Infant (who is lying on the ground) and simultaneously linked to the shroud of Christ. Such cloths held by angels were intended for wrapping things and, in several cases, used in that way.¹⁹

3. The *Seven Sacraments Altarpiece*

Building on the abovementioned tradition, in the *Seven Sacraments Altarpiece* in Antwerp [Fig. 17],²⁰ Rogier makes a depiction of cloth that suggests it is not specifically intended for wrapping anything or might be intended for wrapping something invisible. In this altarpiece, scenes from each of the seven sacramental rites are arranged and contained in a cathedral, where they extend from the left aisle (as it proceeds through the sanctuary) to the right aisle, with the crucifixion symbolically superimposed on the nave, which should be in the open air. In front of each angel floats an inscription strip containing either words from the Scripture or commentaries related to the sacrament. The inscription's strips ripple and swirl, as if responding to the inflection of the voice, indicating speech transmitted through the air.

Without exception, each of the seven angels depicted here has a flat cloth of the same color as the robe that it wears, and in combination the cloth and robe create a complex pattern of folds that would not appear on the hem of the robe alone. For example, the white-robed angel in the foreground above the Sacrament of Baptism has a piece of cloth draped over his left arm, the outside length of which hangs straight down, showing its reverse side and forming an irregular triangle or fan shape at the hem, whereas the length hanging inside the arm encircles the angel,

the busy Campin workshop. Caroline Villers and Robert Bruce-Gardner, "The Entombment Triptych in the Courtauld Institute Galleries," in *Robert Campin. New Directions in Scholarship*, eds. Susan Foister and Susie Nash (London: Brepols, 1996), 27–35, esp. 31–32.

19 Shigeko Araki, "A Narrative found in the Nativity by Robert Campin (Study Notes) (written in Japanese)," *Journal of the Institute of Christian Culture, Seisen University* 14 (2006): 39–50.

20 For basic information and references on the work, see the information from the Museum of Antwerpen KMSKA. "The Seven Sacraments. Rogier van der Weyden," accessed Jan. 15, 2022. <https://kmska.be/en/masterpiece/seven-sacraments>. For the technical reports, Griet Steyaert, "'The Seven Sacraments.' Some technical aspects observed during the Restoration"; Lorne Campbell, "The Seven Sacraments,"; Marie Postec, "Technical Reconstructions based on 'The Seven Sacraments' by Rogier van der Weyden; an Experimental Approach," in Campbell, *Rogier van der Weyden in Context*, 118–57. Also see above note 3.

extending behind the figure and appearing again in front, where it springs up with the same twisting folds.

The angel in the yellow dress floating above the ritual scene of Confirmation also has a cloth hanging over his left arm (which is however hidden by the right arm). Its outer length drapes down in large wavy folds while the inner length circles behind the angel, creating petal-like folds that are continuous with the hem of the dress, making it look as if they wrap around the angel a second time. With regard to the angel in the red dress above the Confession, one end of the cloth hangs downward while the other end flows along the body, springing up at the end as if tied to the hem of the dress, which is draping down.

The cloth held over the left arm of the moss-green-clad angel in the Eucharist has two arcs facing each other (i.e., one arc from the cloth and the other of a hem): the length hanging on the outside makes a downward arc and then curls up, whereas that on the inside encircles the figure and makes an upward arc (i.e., the hem makes the upward arc). The coloring is not as glamorous as that of other angels' folds due to the subdued tones; however, the wind-bent foliage on the borders of the triple arches of the opening (which connects the choir space to the ambulatory corridors on either side) evokes the wind blowing through the nave.

The angels in the right aisle begin with the red-purple angel in the Ordination, who has a cloth draped over the right arm rather than the left one. The outside length of the cloth held by the angel in blue in the Marriage hangs down, while the inside length encircles the figure and joins the robe's hem. For the angel above the Extreme Unction, the hem of the black robe rises in intricate box folds. The cloth held by the angel hangs from the right arm, its outer length hanging down behind the figure, while the inner length encircles the figure and terminates at the back.

It is as if the angels have brought an invisible wind wrapped in cloth, enabling them to bring wind and words to each ritual. However, the loincloth of the Crucifixion in the same painting is neatly wrapped, so that it will not come undone.

In addition to the cloths' movements, the inscription strips are rippled by the breath of the speech. The following phrase from the baptism inscription is particularly important with regard to wind and breath (*pneuma*): "All who have been baptized in water and in the spirit have indeed been raised by the death of Christ. (O[mn]es in aqua [et] pneu[m]ate baptizati In morte Chr[ist]i v[er]e su[n]t renati. Ad Ro[m]a[nos] vi c[apitul]o)," from *Romans*, Chapter 6. It is noteworthy that the Greek variant *pneumate* is used for the word "spirit" here [Fig. 18].²¹

With regard to the theme of the Seven Sacraments depicted by Rogier, Susan Koslow and

21 Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, 472, 283–n. 2.

Hitomi Motohashi suggest that it may have been inspired by *Exsultate Deo*, the decree referring to the Seven Sacraments issued by Pope Eugenius IV (1383–1447, reigned: 1431–47) at the Council of Florence in 1439.²² Regarding baptism, the decree quotes John 3:5, as follows: “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit” (where the Latin word *spiritus* is used for “spirit”). As Bart has shown, the Hebrew word for wind (*ruach*) was translated as *pneuma* in Greek and *spiritus* in Latin; *spiritus* came to mean “spirit,” although it originally meant “breath,” in addition to air or wind. Concerning the word “spirit,” *spiritus* is used in the decree of 1439 and *pneumate* in Rogier’s painting of 1440–45, as if the usage had developed in reverse chronological order.

In the *Cantate Domino* of 1442, another decree chronologically linking the decree of 1439 and the painting of 1440–45, a certain value was placed on the sacraments and rites of the Old Testament era by recognizing them as a “prefiguration” of the Seven Sacraments of the Church in the New Testament era.²³ This emphasis on the Old Testament also resonates with Renaissance studies of antiquity. It is highly likely that Jean Chevrot (c. 1395–1460), the Bishop of Tournai, regarded as the commissioner of Rogier’s triptych, sympathized with the emphasis on the original Scriptures and had instructed Rogier to use *pneumate* for *spiritus* on the inscription. Rogier understood the meaning and suggested that the *pneuma* (wind) was implied in the work in the form of the fluttering cloth animated by the wind.

Chevrot was trusted by Philip III, Duke of Burgundy (The Good, 1396–1467, reigned: 1419–67). In 1436, he was appointed Bishop of Tournai through the political intervention of the Pope, who had supported the Duke of Burgundy against the will of the King of France. After his appointment, Chevrot served as a confidential attendant, as shown on the dedication page of the *Chronicle of Hainaut* (c. 1447, the Royal Library of Belgium, Brussels, ms. 9242, fol. 1), where he wears red robes and accompanies Philip the Good, who stands in fashionable black robes under the canopy. The series of councils would soon begin, and it is likely that Chevrot had heard about the contents of the decree emphasizing the Seven Sacraments from his hometown colleague and deacon Quentin Ménard (1382–1462), who had attended the Council of Florence.²⁴ At the same time, in addition to commissioning the altarpiece, Chevrot ordered the creation of a tapestry of the Seven Sacraments for the church in Poligny, his birthplace, where veneration for the Seven Sacraments was widespread.

22 Susan Koslow, “The Chevrot Altarpiece: its sources, meaning and significance” (PhD diss., New York University, 1972); Motohashi, “The Study on the Seven Sacraments,” 39–40, 52–55 and 176–186.

23 Motohashi, “The Study on the Seven Sacraments Altarpiece,” 144–46.

24 Koslow, “The Chevrot Altarpiece,” 87; Motohashi, “The Study on the Seven Sacraments Altarpiece,” 52.

The Seven Sacraments of the Church and those of the Old Testament were juxtaposed in a typological manner on the tapestry,²⁵ which was commissioned at the same time as the altarpiece. The reason why the term “New Testament” was not used in the related documents is that all sacraments but Baptism and Eucharist lacked clear basis in the New Testament and were considered to have been instituted by the Church, as was later the case with Lutheranism. Nevertheless, these elements suggest that, in the 1440s, Chevrot was particularly interested in the Seven Sacraments.

Few examples of the Seven Sacraments of the Church have been depicted along with those of the Old Testament. The ceiling and wall paintings by Roberto di Oderisio (c. 1320–82) [Fig. 19] are rare examples from the 14th century; however, the Old Testament scenes are not on the chapel’s ceiling but on the wall that connects with the ceiling.²⁶

The Glasgow fragment of the tapestry of the *Seven Sacraments* depicts a scene that seems to be an Ordination, where an open book on the altar contains the following words—those of a song that was chanted at the time of Consecration or Ordination: “Send me your breath, and I will create, and renew the face of the earth. Amen.” The word *spiritus* is translated by Motohashi as “breath”—a translation that previous studies have opted for rather than “spirit”.²⁷

Only a few fragment copies of the tapestry have survived.²⁸ Of these, the one in the Burrell Collection in Glasgow (with the Ordination theme) was probably placed in the center of the work. The surfaces on either side were divided into upper and lower levels, with the Seven Sacraments of the Church — as recognised in the 15th century — on the lower level and the corresponding Seven Sacraments of the Old Testament on the upper level. This arrangement seems to have been made with an awareness of the typology theory that regarded the *Old Testament* as the prefiguration of the *New Testament*.

4. Soaring loincloth

As mentioned, in the *Seven Sacraments Altarpiece*, Rogier demonstrates an understanding of

25 Motohashi, “The Study on the Programs,” 111–22.

26 Ann Eljenholm Nichols, *Seeable Signs: The Iconography of the Seven Sacraments, 1350–1544* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1997), 19–23 et passim. For the paintings by Roberto di Oderisio, see Paolo Vitolo, *La chiesa della Regina: L’Incoronata di Napoli, Giovanna I d’Angiò e Roberto di Oderisio* (Rome: Viella, 2008), 68–71.

27 William Wells, “The Seven Sacraments Tapestry: A New Discovery,” *The Burlington Magazine* 101, no. 672 (1959): 97–103 and 105; Motohashi, “The Study on the Programs,” 113–14.

28 The fragments of the tapestries are separately preserved in three collections: the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; the Victoria and Albert Museum in London; and the Burrell Collection in Glasgow. The opinions differ on whether these fragments once constituted one piece. Motohashi, “The Study on the Programs,” 98–134.

the theoretical relationship between the sacraments, the crucifixion, and *pneuma*; in his painterly way, he expresses the breath (or wind) implied in the work by making the pieces of cloth that carry it flutter. In the same painting, Jesus' loincloth is neatly wrapped around his waist; however, in the abovementioned *Crucifixion* in Vienna²⁹ painted around the same time, the loincloth's ends are blown by the wind and form a unique fan shape similar to that made by the folds of the angel hovering about the *Confession* scene, which shows both sides of the cloth. The angels are depicted only as silhouettes high up in the sky, and the shapes of their robes indicate that they do not have any pieces of cloth. Here, the loincloth likely indicates that the angels brought a cloth that the wind wrapped around the body in an expression of divine will. When the angels have fulfilled their roles, they become a single color — dark blue — and blend into the air. This same coloring of the entire body, as if the angels were returning to the air after fulfilling their roles, is also seen in the angels at each apex of the arches in *Miraflores Triptych* (1442–43, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie), although these angels have no cloth.

The shapes of the fluttering loincloth give the painting a flamboyant appearance and can be viewed as an image of triumph, as Christ's death gives birth to the church and triggers the missionary to begin their work. Such figurative devices soon spread, appearing in various panel paintings and manuscript decorations, including the *Crucifixion* [Fig. 20] by Fray Carlos (born in Flandres and active in Lisboa, Evora in 1517–35/40), who was trained in Brugge or Ghent.

The loincloths painted by Rogier and painters from his circle can be divided into four types. The first is the kind tightly wrapped around the waist, as seen in Antwerp's *Seven Sacraments Altarpiece*. The second is a fusion of semi — transparent cloth (as already noted in the works of the Eyckian followers) diagonally draped over the body, as in the abovementioned *Crucifixion* in Berlin.

The third is a type of loincloth that crosses diagonally across the front of the waist, crosses again at the back, and flips upward at both ends, as seen in the Vienna *Crucifixion* and the *Abegg Triptych* (c. 1445, Abegg-Stiftung, Riggisberg near Berne). By contrast, in Prado's *Crucifixion* (c. 1510) by a follower of Rogier van der Weyden, the diagonal direction is reversed. In the 16th century, variations increased. In one, the direction of the wind blowing toward the depth is indicated by the oblique placement of the cross, so that it stands diagonal to the picture plane. In *Descent from the Cross* by Dirk Bouts the elder (c. 1415 — 75) [Fig. 21], the white cloth that wraps the dead body — rather than the loincloth — flutters broadly.

The fourth type of loincloth is tightly wrapped but partially unraveled and flutters either to the

29 De Vos, *Rogier*, 234–37.

left or the right. Philadelphia's *Crucifixion* [Fig. 22], in which the loincloth flips up on both sides but is wrapped more tightly, may belong to this type. Others of this type are tied at the front and flipped up at the back, while others are both tied and flipped up at the back. Although these do not necessarily show Rogier's direct influence, they gave rise to numerous variations — a process of transmission that continued through later generations.

Conclusions

In Campin's *Burial Triptych*, the garments of the lamenting angels flapping in the wind heighten the tragic atmosphere of the Crucifixion scene and make the swell of emotion that followed Jesus's death visible in a decorative way. His death is also a rupture in time, the point when the mission begins, and it leads to an iconography of triumph. Rogier mastered the various representations of cloth fluttering in the wind in Campin's workshop, to which he then belonged.

The independent Rogier made conscious use of this technique in his *Seven Sacraments Altarpiece*, in which he depicted windswept cloth to express his understanding (taken from his client, Jean Chevrot) that the spirit that brought the divine will to the Seven Sacraments was originally *pneuma*, the breath of God. This figurative device was applied to the Crucifixion and produced many variations, at the same time, it became an expression of the divine will as well as of the wind in nature.

The decorative patterns created with the fluttering cloth were often designed to resemble natural phenomena, such as waves on the surface of water; leaves fluttering in the wind; trees floundering in a storm; and the bending, twisting, and curving of the branches and stems of plants and trees. If we compare the patterns depicted in Rogier's fluttering fabrics with those of the carved frames and decorative traceries of his major scenes, we find an interesting correspondence: they share the natural energy of their origins and are transformed into forms that fulfill a required function. On the one hand, the ornamental patterns serve as a prelude to the main scene; on the other hand, they are a means of enhancing the tragicomic manifestation of the events. The translucent fabrics and laces used in the works by Jan van Eyck or painters from his circle also symbolize elective grace through aesthetic forms; these decorative motifs were conceived for religious, artistic, and compositional purposes.

Thus, as a Renaissance painter, Rogier returned to the original Greek word for *spiritus* (*pneuma*, meaning "breath") and created a way to selectively capture the wind in realistic figures.

[Fig. 1] Rogier van der Weyden, *Descent from the Cross*, c. 1430–35, oil on wood (oak), 204.5 x 261.5 cm, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.

- [Fig. 2] Detail of Fig. 1, the fluttering end-cloth of the headband.
- [Fig. 3] Detail of Fig. 1, John the Evangelist's fluttering cloak.
- [Fig. 4] Robert Campin (copy after), *Wicked Thief*, on the left wing of the *Triptych of Descent from the Cross*, c. 1448–65, oil on wood (oak), 59.9 x 26.5 cm, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.
- [Fig. 5] Robert Campin (copy after), *Wicked Thief*, c. 1420–30, a drawing with silver point, prepared gray paper, 27.5 x 14.2 cm, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, MA.
- [Fig. 6] Rogier van der Weyden, *Crucifixion Triptych*, c. 1443–45, oil on wood (oak), 69 x 96 cm (central panel), 101 x 35 cm (each wing), Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.
- [Fig. 7] Rogier van der Weyden, *Annunciation*; the left wing of *St. Columba Altarpiece*, c. 1450–56, oil on wood (oak), 139.4 x 72.9 cm, Alte Pinakothek, Munich.
- [Fig. 8] Rogier van der Weyden, Ornaments of Arch, a detail of *The Virgin and Child enthroned in a Niche*, c. 1425–30, oil on wood (oak), Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid.
- [Fig. 9] Rogier van der Weyden, *Coat of Arms of the Croÿ*, the reverse side of the *Portrait of Philip de Croÿ* (c. 1435–1511), c. 1460, oil on wood (oak), 49 x 30 cm, Royal Museum of Antwerpen (KMSKA).
- [Fig. 10] Jan van Eyck and his workshop, *Crucifixion*, the left wing of the *New York Diptych*, c. 1440–41, oil on canvas (transferred from wood), 56.5 x 19.7 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
- [Fig. 11] Jan van Eyck (workshop), *Crucifixion*, c. 1430, oil on canvas (transferred from wood), 44.1 x 30.2 cm, Gemäldegalerie, SMB, Berlin.
- [Fig. 12] Master H, *Crucifixion*, *Turin-Milan Hours*, fol. 48v. c. 1440–50, book illumination on vellum, 26.4 x 20.3 cm, Museo Civico, Turin.
- [Fig. 13] Rogier van der Weyden, *Crucifixion*, c. 1425–30, oil on wood (oak), 79 x 49.2 cm, Gemäldegalerie, SMB, Berlin.
- [Fig. 14] Jean de Beaumetz and his workshop, *Crucifixion with three Maries, St. John and a Carrhusian Monk*, c. 1390–95, Tempera, canvas on wood (oak), 56.5 x 45.5 cm, Museum of art, Cleveland.
- [Fig. 15] Robert Campin, *Triptych of Entombment*, c. 1406–10, tempera on wood (oak), 65.2 x 53.6 cm (central panel), 64.9 x 26.8 cm (each wing), Courtauld Institute Galleries, London.
- [Fig. 16] Robert Campin, *Nativity*, c. 1426, oil on wood, 85.7 x 72 cm, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon.
- [Fig. 17] Rogier van der Weyden, *Seven Sacraments Altarpiece*, c. 1440–45, oil on wood (oak), 200 x 97 cm (central part), 119 x 63 cm (each wing part), Royal Museum of Antwerpen (KMSKA).
- [Fig. 18] Rogier van der Weyden, *Baptism, Seven Sacraments Altarpiece*, (Detail), c. 1440–45, oil on wood (oak), Royal Museum of Antwerpen (KMSKA).
- [Fig. 19] Roberto di Oderisio, *Seven Sacraments*, c. 1360, ceiling, fresco, La chiesa di Santa Maria Incoronata, Napoli.
- [Fig. 20] Frey Carlos (?), *Crucifixion*, c. 1500, oil on wood (oak), 121 x 62.2 cm, Groeningemuseum, Bruges.
- [Fig. 21] Dieric Bouts the Elder, *Descent from the Cross*, the central panel of the *Passion Altarpiece*, c. 1455, oil on wood (oak), 191 x 145 cm, Museo de la Capilla Real, Granada.
- [Fig. 22] Rogier van der Weyden, *Crucifixion Diptych*, c. 1463–64, oil on wood (oak), 180.3 x 92.6 cm (left), 180.3 x 92.3 cm (right), John G. Johnson Collection, Museum of Art, Philadelphia.

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