

Between *iubilus* and *canticum*:
The role of Music in the Meditation of the *Devotio moderna*



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[= Sigla HH⁶ in the Medingen Database]

A central aspect of late medieval spiritual life in the Low Countries is the extensive meditation in communities of the Modern Devotion, a new religious movement risen in the Netherlands at the end of the 14th century. On the basis of the *Rosetum exercitiorum spiritualium* of Johannes Mauburnus, the most important treatise on meditation in the late Middle Ages, and some passages from the Medingen prayerbooks, I will describe some aspects of the role of music during those meditations. Being the vital condition for an emotional meditation and the approved medicine against a lazy spirit, music represents the mystical element of an ascetic exercise. Pure ascetics just had to be avoided by singing, to get the kingdom of God closer to earth, even if mystical unification with God for most members of the *Devotio moderna* could be reached only after death.

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