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*Henrike Lähnemann, Laura Godfrey,
Joseph McLaurin Leake, Gennifer Dorgan,
and Micah James Goodrich*

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JEAN DE VIGNAY'S *MIROIR HISTORIAL*

Hannah Weaver

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The Medingen Manuscripts at Harvard: MS Lat 395 and MS Lat 440

*Henrike Lähnemann, Laura Godfrey, Joseph McLaurin Leake,
Gennifer Dorgan, and Micah James Goodrich*

I N THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY, research into the provenance of manuscripts has taken on a new dimension. The “digital turn” of the major research libraries not only provides high-quality facsimile versions of manuscripts, but also enables cross-referencing of catalog entries and search facilities for long-overlooked nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholarly contributions. This makes it possible to reconstruct the wanderings of medieval manuscripts in a multidimensional way, relying on data from art history, codicology, musicology, and philology. Two prayer books from Medingen Abbey now held at Houghton Library, MS Lat 395 for Marian feasts (referred to as HHL1) and MS Lat 440 for Easter prayer (referred to as HHL2), provide fascinating case studies for this type of approach.¹

This article traces the provenance of these two codices to their scribes and authors, northern German Cistercian nuns in the late fifteenth century, and follows their wanderings through the centuries until their identification and purchase in the twenty-first century. This tale includes a large cast of characters who have all contributed to the history of these manuscripts: the enterprising eighteenth-century abbess Katharina von Stöteroggen, who sold the manuscripts; the nineteenth-century German poet and librarian Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben, who first catalogued HHL2; and the twentieth-century musicologist Walther Lipphardt, who reported it lost (and who gave HHL2 the original sigla “HO” in honor of Hoffmann von Fallersleben). Other actors in the drama are the sixteenth-century Duke Ernest I. of Brunswick-Lüneburg; the noble von Schenck family that owned HHL1; and a host of distinguished nineteenth and twentieth-century scholars who looked at various Medingen manuscripts, up to the American liturgist Father Chrysogonus Waddell of the Trappist monastery of

1 All manuscripts are referred to by sigla, which can be found on my website of the Medingen manuscripts (originally developed in Newcastle with the help of Andres Laubinger). The site is now hosted on the server of St Edmund Hall, Oxford, <<http://medingen.seh.ox.ac.uk>> (accessed November 22, 2018). A full bibliography for the manuscripts is also available on the same website.

Gethsemani, whose article on another Medingen prayer book provided the clue which finally led to the identification of HHL2.²

The article itself involves nearly as many parties. It is the product of a collaborative process in September 2014, when students from the University of Connecticut and I worked with the two Medingen manuscripts at Houghton Library.³ The first part of our coauthored contribution outlines the stages of manuscript production and distribution from the Medingen scriptorium; in the second part, four of the students, Gennifer Dorgan, Laura Godfrey, Micah James Goodrich, and Joseph McLaurin Leake, discuss specific aspects of the prayer books, ranging from the Easter illustration in HHL2 to the phenomenon of the bilingual literacy displayed in HHL1 and HHL2 to mapping the manuscripts' wanderings from Medingen to Harvard.

1. FROM MEDINGEN TO HARVARD: THE WANDERINGS OF TWO MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS

Henrike Lähnemann

Both of the Houghton manuscripts from Medingen are carefully written and illuminated late medieval parchment prayer books. Low German poems and phrases are inserted between the Latin meditations. This is a typical northern German arrangement that is also particularly characteristic of the female monastic houses sponsored by the Hanseatic city of Lüneburg. The Cistercian nuns at Medingen Abbey who wrote them were inspired by the devotional movement of the late fifteenth century, which resulted in the major structural and spiritual reform of the convent in 1479. This also caused

2 Chrysogonus Waddell, "The Vidi Aquam and the Easter Morning Procession: Pages from the Prayerbook of a Fifteenth-Century Cistercian Nun," *Liturgy O.C.S.O.* 21, no. 3 (1987): 3–56.

3 My thanks go to William P. Stoneman for the invitation, as well as Racha Kirakosian and Jeffrey Hamburger, who joined us with their students for the workshop on devotional manuscripts to contextualise these two prayer books, and to Fred Biggs who was a congenial host at the University of Connecticut and provided the organisation and transport for the students and myself to Harvard. Equally helpful were librarians at many institutions now holding Medingen manuscripts. These include Hans-Walter Stork, who organized the first exhibition of Medingen prayer books in 2007 at the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg, and his successor Monika E. Müller; Jochen Bepler† from the Dombibliothek Hildesheim and his successor Monika Suchan; Sue Steuer from the Institute for Cistercian Studies, who invited us to present on this research at a special session at Kalamazoo in May 2015, and Fr. Lawrence Morey, Archivist of the Abbey of Gethsemani; Martin Kauffmann at the Bodleian Library, Oxford. They generously granted permission to use scans and photographs from their collections. Special thanks go to Elizabeth Andersen and Julie Hotchin, who knowledgeably corrected my English, Beate Braun-Niehr, Caroline Walker Bynum, Ulrike Hascher-Burger, Nigel F. Palmer, Eva Schlotheuber, Simone Schultz-Balluff, and Anne Simon.

an unprecedented number of nuns working in the scriptorium to produce individual copies of prayer books, for which they collected Latin and Low German texts and composed new meditations. These compilations were illuminated with marginal drawings, musical notations, and colorful initials. Each of the manuscripts is unique, but all of them are linked by a common underlying liturgical structure and by a shared pool of quotations, hymns, and iconographic conventions. Taken together, they provide a fascinating insight into the highly developed devotional culture that flourished at Medingen before the Lutheran Reformation. The convent survived, and in fact is still active;⁴ however, this form of religious text production ceased in the sixteenth century. In subsequent centuries, the prayer books became sought-after antiquarian objects.⁵ As a result, many of the manuscripts were sold and those remaining are now scattered across the globe.

Production

Manuscript production began at Medingen in 1478, a year before the conventual reform, when the provost of Medingen, Tilemann of Bavenstedt, ordered new sets of books to guide the different aspects of conventual life: liturgy, communal reading, and private devotion. The large-sized liturgical volumes he commissioned in his home town of Hildesheim; for the table reading in the refectory and for the nuns' private devotions, he asked members of the convent to produce sample copies that the other nuns could use as a model. At the end of the Psalter (now Ms J 27, housed in the Dombibliothek Hildesheim [cited hereafter as HI2]), the scribe describes this important step in the reform process in rhyming hexameters followed by a brief prose postscript (see figure 1.1). In the text, key words are highlighted in red: the names of the convent (Medingen), the sponsoring city (Lüneburg), the order (Cistercian), the scribe (Elizabeth of Winsen), the provost (Tilemann of Bavenstedt), and the provost's aunt (Elizabeth of Bavenstedt), in whose honor he commissioned the book.⁶

4 For the current-day Protestant community, see <<http://www.kloster-medingen.de>> (accessed November 22, 2018). I would like to thank Abbess Kristin Püttmann, the convent of Medingen, and all of the northern German Protestant convents for their help with multiple aspects of my research. The convent archivist, Wolfgang Brandis, and the Klosterkammer Hannover provided support and images.

5 Henrike Lähnemann, "From Devotional Aids to Antiquarian Objects. The Prayer Books of Medingen," in *Reading Books and Prints as Cultural Objects*, ed. Evangelia Stead (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 33–54.

6 For more on the poem see Ulrike Hascher-Burger and Henrike Lähnemann, *Liturgie und Reform im Kloster Medingen. Edition und Untersuchung des Propst-Handbuchs Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Lat. liturg. e. 18, Spätmittelalter, Humanismus, Reformation 76* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2013), 1, 12.

Explicit explicuit. q̄ cordis ītīma p̄mūt.
 Scriptāto manu. toroq; corpis v̄lū.
 Vt dare parebit. odo q̄s n̄cta r̄imabit.
 Scripta cū florib; picturā sic sociam;
 Oīa h̄ fecit. ⁊ famula sola pegit.
 In **Meding** claustrō. **lūneborch** p̄e sitiato.
 Ordinis ut fateor. **Eisteriensis** ⁊ v̄roz.
 Sed si q̄rat; qd̄ nomē m̄ debetur.
 Oib; ⁊ cognita **de Winsen** sic vocata.
Elizabeth p̄o. de quo ⁊ gl̄a x̄po.
 Anno millesimo. q̄druplex c. addito tēno.
 Sexaginta trib; cū q̄nario sociānis.
 Corpis ī festo. x̄pi die veneranto.
 Liber exors; suoq; fine p̄vinct;
 Note leuauit cantrat eccl̄ia dei.
 Iubete v̄neabili d̄no p̄posito **Tylemāno**
de bauēstete ⁊ necessaria ministrādo
 ob amozē dilecte sue amite **Elizabeth**
de bauēstete ⁊ ad honozē dei q̄ ē sors
 corona ⁊ p̄mū oīm scōz. ⁊ retribuoz eque
 oīm bonoz Amē.

Figure 1.1. Elizabeth of Winsen. *Psalter*. Manuscript, 1478. Dedicatory Poem. Dombibliothek Hildesheim, Hildesheim, Germany. Ms. J 27, fol. 146v. © Dombibliothek Hildesheim.

Explicit expliciunt, que cordis intima promunt.
 Scriptando manu, totoque corporis usu.
 Ut clare patebit oculo quis cuncta rimabit:
 scripta cum floribus picturam sic sociamus.
 Omnia hec fecit et famula sola peregit
 in **Meding** clauistro, **Luneborch** prope situato.
 Ordinis ut fateor **Cisterciensis** et utor.
 Sed si queratur, quod nomen mihi debetur,
 omnibus et cognita **de Winsen** sic vocitata,
Elyzabeth proprio, de quo et gloria Christo.
 Anno milleno quadruplex centum addito deno,
 Sexaginta tribus cum quintario sociatus
 Corporis in festo Cristi die venerando
 Liber exorsus, suoque fine per[f]unctus
 “Ad te levavi” cantat ecclesia dei.

Iubente venerabili domino preposito **Tylemanno de Bavenstede**
 et necessaria ministrando ob amorem dilecte sue amite **Elyzabeth**
de Bavenstede et ad honorem dei, qui est sors, corona et premium
 omnium sanctorum, et retributor eque omnium bonorum. Amen

Here comes to an end what flows from my innermost heart,
 written by hand but involving the whole body.
 As is plainly visible to the eye which searches all:
 the written word is joined by flowers to make a picture.
 All this was done and completed by one single handmaiden
 in the monastery at **Medingen**, situated close to **Lüneburg**.
 I confess and hold to the **Cistercian** order.
 Should anybody ask which name I was given:
 as everybody knows, I am **from Winsen**,
 with the proper name **Elizabeth**, praise be to Christ!
 In 1478 (in the year thousand, four times one hundred plus ten,
 additionally sixty-three and five more),
 on the venerable feast of Corpus Christi,
 this book was commenced; and when it was finished,
 the Church of God sings “To you I have raised” (Advent Sunday).

This was done by order of the venerable provost, **Tilemann of**
Bavenstedt, who provided the means for the love of his dear aunt
Elizabeth of Bavenstedt and for the glory of God, who is the part,
 crown and prize of all saints and also the redeemer of all good
 things. Amen.

This elaborate rhetorical form of Latin hexameters provides a programmatic start for the text production of the following generation. The very specific sense of time and place, and the devotional nature of writing itself, is apparent in all the products of the Medingen scriptorium. In the prayer books, nearly all of the nuns added prayers that they composed (or at least modified), fusing Latin and Low German and interspersing the prose frequently with rhyming passages and poetic quotations. In the same year (1478), Elizabeth of Winsen's sister Winheid produced a model prayer book now held by the Dombibliothek Hildesheim, Ms J 29 (cited hereafter as HII). HII contains Latin meditations and Low German poems; it is highly decorated, with lavish use of color and marginal illumination. The model manuscripts produced by the Winsen sisters proved to be very successful and formative for communal book production; it seems that each nun subsequently produced her own set of devotional manuscripts, identifiable by a number of shared features.

That HII provided the model for future manuscript production is particularly evident in the Houghton Easter prayer book, HHL2. For both manuscripts, the Easter celebration forms the basic structure as highlighted in the rubrics. Both start their meditations with the Easter vigil, which Winheid's text describes as "most excellent, joyous and gold-flowing,"⁷ while in HHL2 it is the "most holy and glorious" (see figure 1.2 and figure 1.3 respectively).⁸

As is evident in these quotes, the phrasing is formally similar but has an individual inflection. The same rubric appears a second time in HHL2 with further superlatives added, referring to the Easter vigil as "most holy and excellent and honey-flowing and gold-flowing" (see figure 1.4).⁹

The double start with the Easter vigil seems to be occasioned by a second nun inserting new items into the stock of Easter meditations written by the first. Neither of them gives their name, but they have distinct features. "Hand 2" writes more in the formal style used by Elizabeth of Winsen, with elaborate initials, whereas "Hand 1" is less stylized but shows additional design features. Hand 1 also occasionally adds gold letters and musical notation. She also includes an elaborate Easter miniature in the style of the colorful model prayer book by Winheid of Winsen (see Laura Godfrey's contribution). Both nuns incorporate Low German in their textual medley, although Hand 1 does so only on fols. 212r–217r, an appendix with additional meditation on the theme of Easter (see Joseph McLaurin Leake's contribution), while Hand 2 includes a long Low German text at the beginning of the manuscript, fols. 15r–17v, a text which has been previously identified as "Mittelniederdeutsches Ostergedicht" (see Gennifer Dorgan's contribution). This Low German poem formed part of the model prayer book; however, the version in HHL2 contains significant variants that suggest it may have

7 "In excellentissima jocundissima et auriflua vigilia Pasche," HII, fol. 1v.

8 "In sacratissima et gloriosissima vigilia Pasche," HHL2, fol. 1v.

9 "In sacratissima et preclarissima et melliflua et auriflua pasche," HHL2, fol. 15r.



Figure 1.2. Winheid of Winsen. *Prayer-Book for Easter*. Manuscript, 1478.

Opening meditations for the vigil of Easter.

Dombibliothek Hildesheim, Hildesheim, Germany.

Ms. J 29, fol. 1v–2r. © Dombibliothek Hildesheim.

been written from memory rather than copied verbatim from the earlier manuscript. The Houghton manuscript thus seems to be a collaborative variation of the model provided by Winheid's prayer book.

“Primary Export”: Dissemination by the Nuns After 1479

It is clear from the selection of texts, the mode of production, and the layout of the two Houghton prayer books that they were produced in Medingen shortly after the 1479 reform. Although only HHL2 retains a contemporary binding, they both would have been bound in leather-covered wooden boards by the same workshop as the convent's other manuscripts, which share the tooling patterns and figuration with others from the workshop named after Medingen in the historical bookbinding database.¹⁰ It

¹⁰ Available online at <<https://www.hist-einband.de/>> (accessed December 17, 2018). Search (in “Recherche”) for “Medingen” in the workshop (*Werkstatt*) category and filter down to those entries for the Cistercian house “Medingen Zisterzienserinnenkloster” (workshop number EBDB w000842). See also Hascher-Burger and Lähnemann, 176.

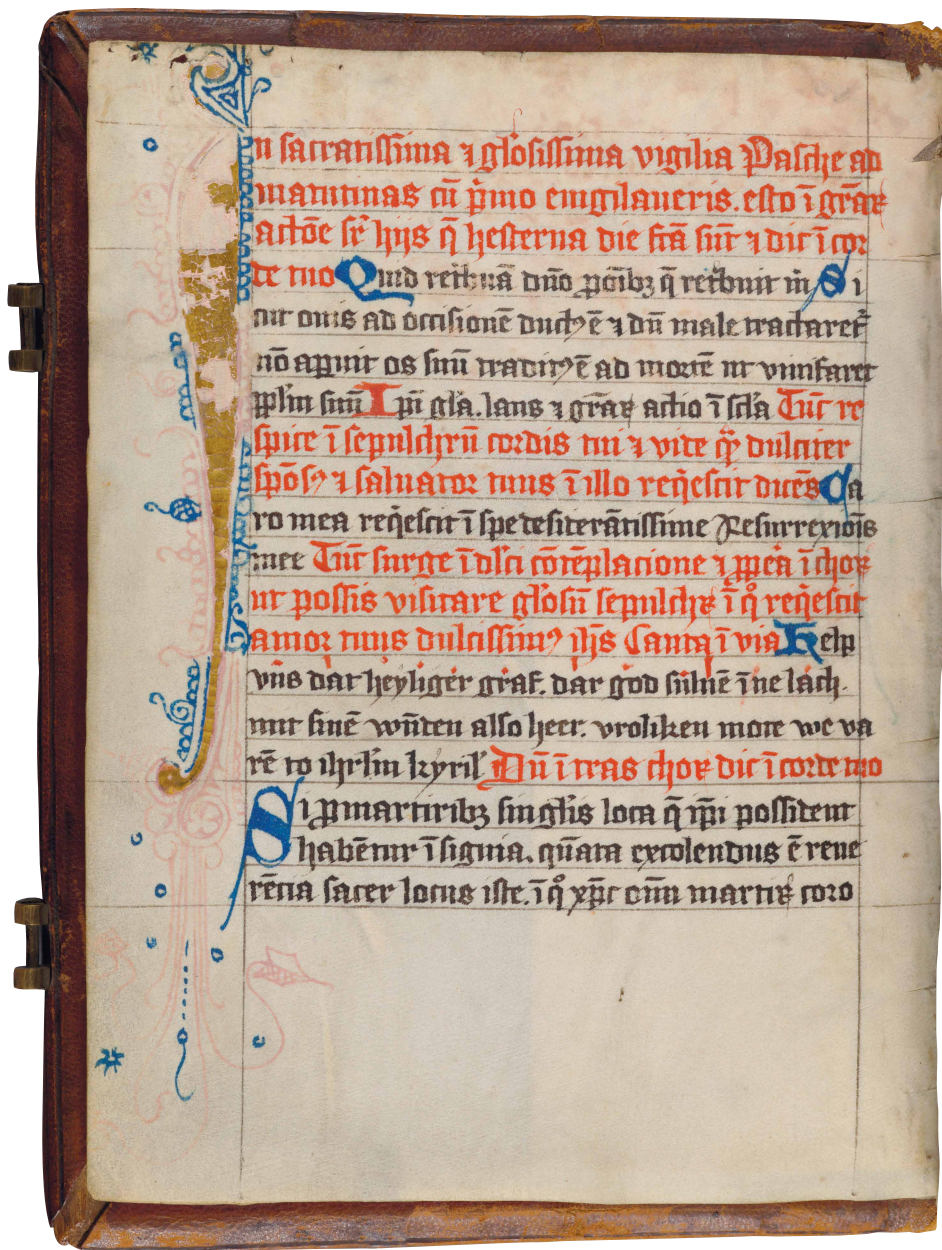


Figure 1.3. Kloster Medingen. *Prayer book for Easter*. Manuscript, circa 1480-1500.
Opening of the meditations for the Easter vigil by hand 1. 17 cm.
Houghton Library, Harvard University. MS Lat 440, fol. 1v.

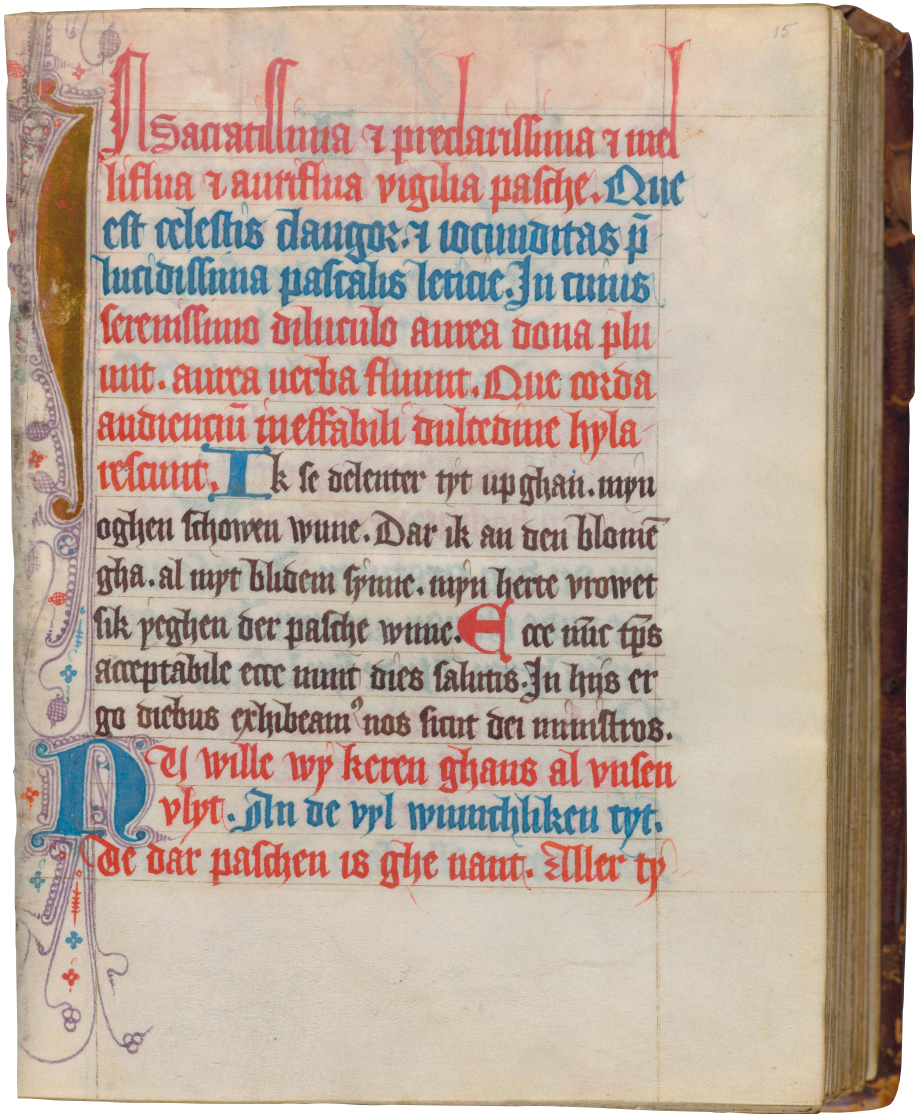


Figure 1.4. Kloster Medingen. Prayer book for Easter.
 Opening of the text for the vigil of Easter by hand 2.
 MS Lat 440. fol. 15r.

has yet to be determined whether this workshop was indeed based in Medingen, or whether manuscripts were sent in bulk to a professional in Lüneburg, who then bound them in the house style of Medingen. The pastedown in HHL2 comes from a small-scale parchment manuscript of Aristotle's *Topics* written in a small experienced hand of the fifteenth century with heavy interlinear and marginal annotations. This could have come from bookbinder's waste, but could also conceivably have been used as a textbook in a convent where the education of the nuns included mastering the seven liberal arts and written debate.

But when did the manuscripts leave the convent? The first wave of manuscript exports from Medingen began more or less simultaneously with the production of prayer books for the nuns' personal use, including copying them for their sisters and other female relatives in Lüneburg. Here, the full text of the prayers and meditations was translated into the vernacular, rendering them accessible to educated laywomen who would have been schooled in Low German (the lingua franca of Hanseatic trade). This practice may have commenced when the lay sisters within the convent, who required vernacular textual models, began participating in manuscript production. Indeed, a sampler booklet with the alphabet and basic prayers in Low German survives at the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen (Theol. 243, GT2).¹¹ But while the lay sisters copied their own manuscripts, mainly in a simplified form on paper and without illumination, the Low German prayer books written by the nuns for their relatives in Lüneburg are Medingen's most lavishly produced manuscripts. One clear example of a manuscript written for this form of "export" is the prayer book originally produced for Anna Töbing, née Elebeke, the wife of Lüneburg's mayor (Ms. Memb. II. 84 now at the Forschungsbibliothek Gotha and cited hereafter as GO), whose three sisters entered the convent in Medingen as *puellae coronatae* (novices) directly after the 1479 reform.¹²

Since the main language of both Houghton prayer books is Latin, it is likely that they were not part of this first phase of export of vernacular manuscripts, but rather were intended to be read in the convent by the nuns themselves. Shortly thereafter, with the Lutheran Reformation its accompanying threat of dissolution, a second phase of manuscript export began.

¹¹ Lähnemann, "Niederdeutsches Mustergebetbuch (sogenanntes ABC-Buch)," *Schatzhüterin. 200 Jahre Klosterkammer Hannover*, ed. Katja Lembke and Jens Reiche (Dresden: Sandstein, 2018), 335, no. 110, Exhibition Catalog; see also in the same volume, Lähnemann, "Handschriftenproduktion im Kloster. Das Beispiel Medingen," 182–187.

¹² Lähnemann, "Medinger Nonnen als Schreiberinnen zwischen Reform und Reformation," in *Rosenkränze und Seelengärten. Bildung und Frömmigkeit in niedersächsischen Frauenklöstern*, ed. Britta-Juliane Kruse (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz in Kommission, 2013), 37–42. GO is fully digitized at <<http://www.handschriftencensus.de/16262>> (accessed December 20 2018).

“Secondary Export”: The Reformation Redistribution After 1542

Duke Ernest I. of Brunswick-Lüneburg sought to convince the nuns to accept the Lutheran Reformation. In 1526, he sent a Low German version of Luther’s translation of the New Testament to the convent at Medingen;¹³ the abbess Elizabeth of Elvern burned it in the monastery’s brewery. She died soon after, but her successor, Margaret of Stöteroggen, daughter of Lüneburg’s mayor and the sister of an influential priest, was equally determined to fight for the convent’s right to make its own choices in spiritual matters. The dispute escalated in 1542 when the Duke began to tear down the walls of the enclosure; the abbess decamped to Hildesheim, in the closest Catholic region, taking a number of manuscripts with her. She eventually returned, and at length the nuns reached a compromise with the Duke, which granted them the right to retain many of their devotional practices. But the manuscripts did not return. The psalter (HI1) and the prayer book (HI2) written by the Winsen sisters in 1478 passed through several Catholic institutions of the diocese, eventually receiving a Hildesheim Cathedral Library shelf mark. Another of the removed manuscripts, now at the Stadtarchiv Hildesheim, Best. 52 Nr. 379 (cited hereafter as HI3), was returned to devotional use when it was passed on to English Benedictines who took up residence in the former monastery of Lamspringe. For a time, it shared the same shelf with the psalter that the Benedictines brought to Lamspringe from St Alban’s. Both the St Alban’s Psalter and the Medingen prayer book (HI3) were returned to Hildesheim when Lamspringe was dissolved in the secularization of the early nineteenth century, with the prayer book being placed in the Hildesheim city archive. Since most of the manuscripts that the abbess took to Hildesheim seem to have either remained or returned there, the two Houghton manuscripts presumably did not leave the convent until after these turbulent times had passed.

In 1556, thirty years after the first attempt to apply the Lutheran reforms to the abbey, the abbess and convent officially accepted the Protestant confession—but surprisingly little changed. One of the apostle prayer books, written in honor of Saints Peter and Paul, is now held in the National Art Library at London’s Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A). Known as Reid 38 (LO4), it shows a careful erasure of all phrases involving “intercession” and “merit,” thus conceding a major point of the theological debate, i.e., that redemption cannot be granted via the intercession of saints, nor on merit, but through faith alone.¹⁴ It is not clear whether the Houghton prayer books

13 Lähnemann, “Der Medinger ‘Nonnenkrieg’ aus der Perspektive der Klosterreform. Geistliche Selbstbehauptung 1479–1554,” in “1517–1545: The Northern Experience. Mysticism, Art and Devotion between the Late Medieval and Early Modern Periods,” ed. Kees Scheepers, special issue, *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 87, no. 1–2 (2016): 91–116.

14 Lähnemann, “*Saluta apostolum tuum*. Apostelverehrung in Kloster Medingen,” in *Weltbild und Lebenswirklichkeit in den Lüneburger Klöstern*, eds. Wolfgang Brandis and Hans-Walter Stork (Berlin: Lukas

remained in use after Reformation; both are untouched by alterations. The Easter prayer book HHL2 would not have required much modification to be dogmatically correct, while the Marian focus of HHL1 would have necessitated a number of changes. Overall, the women continued more or less undisturbed in their communal life, which included the Latin liturgy of the hours. They retained the Cistercian habit until 1605, and it was only under Catharina Priggen, abbess from 1681–1706, that the communal table and the liturgical commemoration of saints' days ceased.

The First Wave of Antiquarianism: “Deutsche Altertümer” in the Eighteenth Century

The next time the manuscripts left the abbey was not caused by a dramatic single event, but rather a gradual shift in attitude. During the Thirty Years' War, the abbey's precious objects (such as the medieval crozier and the manuscripts not in immediate use) were reportedly boxed up, presumably in the equally medieval *Stollentruhen*, large wooden chests brought into the convent as the equivalent of a dowry by the *puellae coronatae* entering the convent. These sturdy chests can still be seen in Lüneburg convents such as Ebstorf, among others (see figure 1.5).

When the war ended in 1648, the boxes were left untouched, perhaps because their content had become obsolete. The denominational frontiers had been demarcated clearly, with the Lüneburg convents on the Protestant side, and in the second half of the seventeenth century the confessional climate had become much more hostile toward the last remnants of medieval monastic life in the convent. It was in this atmosphere that the prayer books became collectors' items. The Low German Easter prayer book at the Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen, Theol. 242 (cited hereafter as GT1) has a gift note on the front page, fol. 1r, that reads “Ex liberali donatione A. Lever. Abbatissae Medingensis possidet Dan. Eberh. Baring A. 1722.” The date and the misspelling of the name of Abbess Anna of Laffert (d. September 17, 1721) point to a backdated entry by which the librarian Daniel Eberhard Baring recognized the provenance of the manuscript (or tried to make sure that ownership was not disputed). Baring, a librarian and tutor to the princes at the court of Hanover, collected books from the region and therefore might have been given the manuscript as an example of Low German writing. This supposedly “liberal donation” contrasts with the practices of Anna of Laffert's immediate successor, Catharine of Stöteroggen (abbess from 1722–1741). Abbess Catharine sold the monastery's manuscripts on a large scale, transforming the unused Catholic resource in the *Stollentruhen* to modern pious use.

These facts have come down to the twenty-first century thanks to the monumental documentation of the history of Medingen Abbey carried out by Johann Ludolf Lyßmann

Verlag, 2015), 41–64. On a Marian change in a Medingen prayer book, see Henrike Lähnemann, *Bilingual Devotion. The 1478 Easter Prayer-Book from Kloster Medingen Dombibliothek Hildesheim Ms J 29* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming).



Figure 1.5. *Stollentruhe* from Ebbsort, fifteenth century. Showing the apostles Peter and Paul above coat of arms. © Kloster Ebbsort.

(1685–1742), minister in Medingen and later *Superintendent* (Lutheran regional bishop) in Fallersleben. He spent years compiling archival evidence and manuscript extracts in the comprehensive and extensive volume *Historische Nachricht von dem Ursprunge, Anwachs und Schicksalen des im Lüneburgischen Herzogthum belegenen Closters Meding, dessen Pröbsten, Priorinnen und Abbatissinnen, auch fürnehmsten Gebräuchen und Lutherischen Predigern &c. nebst darzu gehörigen Urkunden und Anmerkungen*.¹⁵ His is a decidedly Protestant review of the history of the convent, with the “advent of the blessed Luther” and his equally glorified secular missionary, Duke Ernest I. of Brunswick-Lüneburg. Lyßmann notes that his contemporary, abbess Catharine of Stöteroggen, was:

¹⁵ *Historical account of the origin, development and later events of Medingen Abbey, situated in the Dukedom of Lüneburg, about its provosts, prioresses, abbesses, also about significant customs and its Lutheran ministers etc., including relevant charters with a commentary.* After Lyßmann’s death, an unknown collaborator continued the volume up until 1769 and it was published posthumously in 1772.

friendly and courteous to everyone. Even though she had a considerable talent for German and Latin and a solid grounding in Greek and Hebrew and was overall well versed in the liberal arts, she did not boast about it at all. During the time of her exceedingly distinguished presidency over the abbey, she acquired universal liking and respect. She boosted the income of the convent substantially by selling to its advantage a large number of superfluous precious objects that had been kept in boxes since the Thirty Years' War and turned the money into permanent funds. She served God with sincerity and set an example to all those in the convent in observing the monastic regulations as well as true divine service.¹⁶

This enterprising abbess came from the same patrician Lüneburg family as the abbess Margaret of Stöteroggen, who took a batch of the Medingen manuscripts from the convent during the Reformation period to safeguard the devotional heritage of her convent. For Margaret's Protestant successor, the dogmatic value of the medieval manuscript production had become dubious, rendering them unfit for "true divine service;" however, as the object of antiquarian interest, the manuscripts had acquired monetary value. They became pretty keepsakes and handy, pocket-sized gifts with a regional touch to be circulated among like-minded collectors. A note in the Easter prayer book housed in the Royal Library Copenhagen as Ms Thott 120-8° (K2) says that it was given to Olaus Heinrich Moller (1717–1792) by his "most beloved brother," Bernard Moller, in 1737, the year he went from Flensburg to Copenhagen as a tutor. Their father was Johannes Moller, the renowned biographer of northern Germany, and both sons seem to have collected anything of regional and historical interest.

The Houghton manuscripts most likely left Medingen and passed into private ownership during this period. While other manuscripts from Medingen were sold as a group, notably the five apostle prayer books now kept in the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg (Ms. in scrin. 206–210 [HH3–HH7]), all of which

16 "... gegen jedermann freundlich und holdselig. Ob sie gleich in der teutschen und lateinischen Sprache eine grosse Fertigkeit, und in der griechischen, auch hebräischen eine gute Kentniß, sich auch überhaupt in den schönen Wissenschaften wol umgesehen hatte: so war sie doch darauf nicht stolz. Die Zeit, welche sie dem Closter überaus rühmlich vorgestanden, erwarb sie sich allgemeine Liebe und Ehrfurcht. Sie vermehrte die Einkünfte des Closters dadurch beträchtlich, daß sie viel unnöthige kostbare Sachen, welche seit dem dreyßigjährigen Kriege in Kasten eingepackt gestanden, dem Closter zum Besten verkaufte, und das Geld zu Capitalien machte. Sie diente Gott mit redlichem Herzen, und führte die sämtliche Conventualinnen so wol zu Beobachtung der Closterordnungen, als des wahren Gottesdienstes an." *Historische Nachricht von dem Ursprunge, Anwachs und Schicksalen des im Lüneburgischen Herzogthum belegenen Closters Meding*. . . (Halle: Gebauer, 1772), 173.



Figure 1.6. Medingen prayer books in Hamburg Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg, Ms. in scrin. 206, 207, 208 and 210. © SUB Hamburg.

bear the ownership mark of Zacharias Conrad von Uffenbach (1683–1734),¹⁷ the two Houghton prayer books went their separate ways during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (see figure 1.6).

The Second Wave of Antiquarianism: “Deutsche Alterthümer” and European Collections in the Nineteenth Century

There was a second wave of antiquarianism in the nineteenth century, in which the manuscripts initially sold by the convent were passed on to other private owners or institutions, thus becoming part of the European knowledge exchange. As none of the Medingen manuscripts show any marks of having left the convent after Catharine of Stöteroggen’s tenure as abbess, she may have successfully auctioned off all the medieval prayer books still in the convent’s keeping. Alternatively, any manuscripts remaining in the abbey could have been destroyed in the fire that devastated most of the monastic

17 Hans-Walter Stork, “Handschriften des ehemaligen Zisterzienserinnenklosters Medingen zur Zeit der Klosterreform im 15. Jahrhundert und in nachreformatorischer Zeit,” in *Evangelisches Klosterleben. Studien zur Geschichte der evangelischen Klöster und Stifte in Niedersachsen*, ed. Hans Otte (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2013), 337–360.

buildings on January 30 and 31, 1781. Prioress Sophia Eleonora von Töbing, later abbess, is reported to have single-handedly (twice) saved the archive, accounts, and precious objects such as the abbess's crozier from the flames, but there is no record that she rescued any historic papers or books.¹⁸ But for Lyßmann's account, we would know very little about the pre-Reformation documents and history of Medingen. It therefore seems most fortunate that so many of the medieval manuscripts were among the "precious superfluous objects" dispersed in the first half of the eighteenth century, and that the prayer books took on a life of their own, independent of the convent from whence they originated.

Some Medingen manuscripts changed hands several times during the nineteenth century, notably those now housed in British institutions. None of the British collectors or institutions appears to have purchased manuscripts directly from the source (i.e., from abbess Catharine of Stöteroggen) in the early eighteenth century. Rather, the then-fashionable, prettily bound, and well-preserved continental illuminated parchment books were acquired at auctions in the UK. The number of German medieval manuscripts and objects in circulation at the time had increased dramatically due to the Napoleonic secularization of most German monastic foundations in the early nineteenth century—a fate the Lüneburg convents only narrowly escaped. In these sales, the materiality of the manuscript (rather than the devotional content) attracted buyers. For example, the apostle prayer book written by and for Barbara Vischkule in honor of St. Bartholomew (now housed at the V&A National Library of Art as MSL/1886/2629 [cited hereafter as LO2]) has an auction mark from the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition in 1857. That it was valued by the Victoria and Albert Museum mainly because of the fine tooling of the leather cover is clear from its inclusion in the 1894 catalog of *Bookbindings and Rubbings of Bindings in the Victoria and Albert Museum* by W. H. James Weale.¹⁹

The Marian prayer book acquired by Houghton Library in 2004 (HHL1), did not travel abroad as early as LO2, but spent at least part of the nineteenth century in the castle of Flechtingen, since the fourteenth century the seat of the noble von Schenck family in what is now Saxony-Anhalt. If the manuscript had been bought directly from Medingen during Catharine of Stöteroggen's tenure, the most likely candidate would have been the Prussian lieutenant Kersten Friedrich Schenck von Flechtingen (1685–1762).²⁰ However, his biography does not indicate that he had any notable interest in

18 Joachim Homeyer, *Kloster Medingen 1788–1988. 200 Jahre Neubau. Kleine Beiträge zum Jubiläum* (Uelzen: Becker, 1988), 7.

19 W. H. James Weale, *Bookbindings and Rubbings of Bindings in the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London: H. M. Stat, 1894), 35.

20 Ernst Heinrich Kneschke, ed., *Neues deutsches allgemeines Adels-Lexicon* (Leipzig: Freidrich Voigt, 1859), 4:50.

learning. The only member of the family who showed medievalist tendencies seems to have been Eduard von Schenck (1823–1897), a member of the German Reichstag who inherited the castle from his childless uncle. A lithograph from 1857, approximately when he would have come into his inheritance, shows the castle, with new battlements and other neo-Gothic features, picturesquely positioned in the middle of a moat (see figure 1.7). As pretty medieval manuscripts would have enhanced the aesthetics of the castle library, it is possible that HHLI reached the castle library via an intermediary collector.

Prompted by increasing antiquarianism in the nineteenth century (i.e., the quest for *germanische Althertümer*) in Germany, other Medingen manuscripts were discovered in private hands. However, the private library of the family von Schenck was apparently not examined. Excerpts from the Low German poetic interludes, interspersed into Latin meditations, were edited by one of the most notable Germanists of the nineteenth century, the librarian, poet, and medievalist Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben (1798–1874). Today he is chiefly known as the author of the German national anthem (itself a variation of a medieval song by Walther von der Vogelweide), but Hoffmann von Fallersleben was also a crucial figure in the medievalist revival of



Figure 1.7. Castle Flechtingen in 1857. Alexander Duncker, *Die Ländlichen Wohnsitze, Schlösser und Residenzen der Ritterschafilichen Grundbesitzer in der Preussischen Monarchie . . .*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Alexander Duncker, 1857–1858), 71.

the nineteenth century—and a passionate lifelong manuscript hunter. In his six-volume autobiography, *Mein Leben. Aufzeichnungen und Erinnerungen*, he relates how, during the early “gold rush” days of the discipline of Germanic studies, he stayed abreast of other, competing scholars also searching for medieval German literary fragments. Being from northern Germany, a fact he emphasized by appending “von Fallersleben” to his name,²¹ Hoffmann von Fallersleben had an advantage over the predominantly southern German manuscript collectors: he was familiar with Low German. After he was appointed librarian in Breslau, he maintained a close connection to the Kingdom of Hanover and repeatedly asked for manuscripts to be sent to him, a special form of “interlibrary loan.” In 1837, he requested the manuscript now called Ms. 75 (cited hereafter as HV1) from the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hannover. HV1 was later identified as another of the Latin-Low German Easter prayer books from Medingen; in fact, HV1 is the Medingen prayer book with the richest musical notation.²² A note of the loan was inserted into the manuscript by the Hanover librarian; this is the only record of the transaction, as Hoffmann von Fallersleben did not follow up his inspection of HV1 with a publication.

The loan of HV1 indicates that Hoffmann von Fallersleben was on the lookout for northern German literary material, although he did not undertake a systematic survey. For instance, when he identified some *Niederdeutsche Osterreime* (Low German verses), he described how he had found them in “a parchment manuscript from the fifteenth century, in private ownership in Hanover, 217 pages in octavo format.”²³ When Hoffmann von Fallersleben sent these texts for publication to a new periodical, *Germania. Vierteljahrsschrift für deutsche Alterthumskunde*, the editor Franz Pfeiffer added a footnote cross-referencing another Medingen manuscript, Winheid’s model prayer book (HI1): “Die Verse von hier bis Bl. 17a in etwas abweichender Fassung hat W. Müller aus einer Hildesheimer Hs. vom J. 1478 mitgetheilt in Haupts Zeitschrift 1, 546. 47” (see figure 1.8).²⁴ These lines from HI1 were published in the initial issue of the *Zeitschrift für deutsches Alterthum*, founded by the Germanist Moriz Haupt

21 Incidentally, Fallersleben is the parish near Wolfsburg where Lyßmann wrote his account of Medingen.

22 Ulrike Hascher-Burger, *Verborgene Klänge. Inventar der handschriftlich überlieferten Musik aus den Lüneburger Frauenklöstern bis ca. 1550*. (New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 2008), 77.

23 “Aus einer Pergamenthandschrift des 15. Jahrhunderts, 217 Blätter in Octav, im Privatbesitze zu Hannover.” Hoffmann von Fallersleben, “Niederdeutsche Osterreime,” *Germania, Vierteljahrsschrift für deutsche Alterthumskunde* 2 (1857): 167.

24 “The lines from the end of fol. 15r to fol. 17r were recorded in a slightly different version by W. Müller from a Hildesheim manuscript written in 1478. They were published in the first volume of Haupt’s journal, in 1841, on pages 546–547.” Ibid, 164n1.

NIEDERDEUTSCHE OSTERREIME.

MITGETHEILT

VON

HOFFMANN VON FALLERSLEBEN.

(15^a) JN sacratissima et preclarissima et melliflua et auriflua vigilia
pasche. Que est celestis clangor. et iocunditas preluclidissima pascalis
leticie. In cuius serenissimo diluculo aurea dona pluunt. aurea uerba fluunt.
Que corda audiencium ineffabili dulcedine hylaescunt.

Ik se de lenter tyt upghan.
myn oghen schowen wanne.
Dar ik an den blomen gha.
al myt blidem synne.
myn herte vrowet sik yeghen der pasche wanne.

Ecce nunc tempus acceptabile ecce nunc dies salutis. In hys ergo
diebus exhibeamus nos sicut dei ministros.

Nu wille wy keren ghans al vnsen vlyt. ¹⁾
An de vyl wnnichliken tyt.
De dar paschen is ghenant.
Aller ty-(15^b) de en ghulden bant.
Iunch vnd olt de vrowen sik.
We syn der vroude worden rik.
Swe nu hadde dusent tunghen.
De alle engelchen sang sūnghen.
De mochten nicht louen vullē en sam.
Dat vnse leue here in desser werdighen nacht hat beghan.
Unde noch alle yarlikes begheit.
To desser eddelen hochtit werdicheit.
We seet nū an den creaturen.
Dat se uan art vnde ok uan naturen.
Louen got vnsen heren.
Unde syn lof uormēren.
De sunne keret dar an eren vlit.
Wo se spele an desser leuen zoten hochtit.
Se is der paschen speleman. ²⁾

¹⁾ Die Verse von hier bis Bl. 17 a in etwas abweichender Fassung hat W. Müller aus
einer Hildesheimer Hs. vom J. 1478 mitgeteilt in *Haupts Zeitschrift* 1, 546. 47.

DER HERAUSGEBER.

²⁾ Vgl. Grimm *Myth.* 703.

Figure 1.8. Hoffmann von Fallersleben. "Niederdeutsche Osterreime." *Germania. Vierteljahrsschrift für deutsche Alterthumskunde* 2 (1857): 164. Widener Library, Harvard University.

(1808–1874), by Wilhelm Konrad Hermann Müller (1812–1890).²⁵ Like Hoffmann von Fallersleben, Müller was interested in regional history, coediting (with Georg Schambach) a collection of folk and fairy tales from Lower Saxony.²⁶

In 1879, Karl Bartsch (1832–1888), who founded the first university-level *Germanistische Institut* in Rostock, added further texts from HII²⁷ to the excerpts published by Wilhelm Müller for the fifth issue of the first journal specifically dedicated to Low German material.²⁸ It is significant that texts from Medingen prayer books star in the first issues of the three oldest scholarly periodicals for German Studies—Pfeiffer’s *Germania*, Haupt’s *Zeitschrift für deutsches Alterthum*, and the *Niederdeutsches Jahrbuch*—in the historical moment when *Germanistik* was emerging as a philological, as well as a patriotic, discipline. Here, the pioneering generation of Germanists, including librarians, school teachers, and scholars, takes an interest in the Medingen manuscripts (HHL2 among them), as part of the linguistic and literary heritage of the entire German nation.

German and International Scholarly Interest in the Twentieth Century

In the twentieth century, these initial explorations with their serendipitous cross-referencing were systematized into increasingly specialized disciplines for the study of medieval manuscripts. Codicology, linguistics, and musicology led the way. In the early twentieth century, Conrad Borchling set out to identify and map Middle Low German texts, combing through the records, catalogs, and shelves of libraries throughout the former Low German-speaking area, extending as far north as Copenhagen. In four large issues of the journal of the Göttingen Academy (1898, 1900, 1902, and 1913), he undertook a comprehensive survey of the field.²⁹ In the first of his travel accounts, he reports that Hoffmann von Fallersleben had described an elaborately decorated Latin Easter breviary with rhyming spiritual songs, but that its whereabouts were unknown. He records it as “*Hannover, Privatbesitz (wo?)*.”³⁰ Simultaneously, at the Prussian Academy, Gustav Roethe commenced the largest manuscript cataloguing project undertaken so far, enlisting hundreds of librarians world-wide to describe in detail any manuscript in their libraries containing German texts, the *Akademiebeschreibungen*.

25 Müller, “Osterlied,” *Zeitschrift für deutsches Alterthum* 1 (1841): 546–547.

26 *Niedersächsische Sagen und Märchen. Aus dem Munde des Volkes gesammelt und mit Anmerkungen und Abhandlungen herausgegeben* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1855).

27 These were based on notes given to Bartsch by the Hildesheim librarian.

28 Bartsch, “Mittelniederdeutsche Osterlieder,” *Jahrbuch des Vereins für niederdeutsche Sprachforschung* 8 (1880): 46–54.

29 Conrad Borchling, *Mittelniederdeutsche Handschriften*, 4 vols. in 3, *Nachrichten von der Königl. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen* (Göttingen: 1898–1914).

30 Borchling, 1:196.

Since the catalogers were paid by the page, these tend to be exhaustive, providing the most comprehensive record for many manuscripts to date.³¹ Neither of the two Houghton manuscripts was included in these activities, as only manuscripts held by public institutions were listed. Borchling's survey and the Prussian Academy manuscript descriptions were used for the first literary history of Middle Low German, published by Wolfgang Stammeler in 1925, in which he stressed the significance of the Low German language for German intellectual history.³² He considered all of the manuscripts discussed so far to be a group linked by common themes and prosodic features.

The label "Medingen" was first used by the musicologist Walther Lipphardt, who did more than anyone else in the twentieth century to establish the corpus of Medingen manuscripts. In 1971, Lipphardt completed a typescript catalog for the *Akademiebeschreibungen* of manuscripts featuring German hymns (*Zentraler Handschriftenkatalog des Deutschen Kirchenlieds*). In one of the extensive articles he produced on the basis of this catalog, he was the first to link the manuscript described by Hoffmann to this corpus.³³ At the same time, however, he severely obscured the character of the newly established group by misdating most of the material, as apparent in the catalog title, *Handschriften aus Medingen 1290–1550*. His misconceptions of a scriptorium spanning from the late thirteenth to the early sixteenth centuries were reinforced by a dating error made by linguist Axel Mante. Mante, who had otherwise impeccably edited the Easter part of the two entirely Low German Medingen prayer books (Ms. I 528 and Ms. I 529, T1 and T2, respectively) at the Bistumsarchiv Trier in 1960, mistook the idiosyncratic style of the nuns' untutored Low German writing for archaic language, and dated the dialect to the fourteenth century. Similarly, and based on the different stylistic qualities of the manuscript illuminations, the art historian Brigitte Uhde-Stahl was persuaded by Lipphardt's assumption that the manuscripts were products of a long-lasting scriptorium that produced occasional manuscripts from the late thirteenth to the early sixteenth century. As we now know, however, manuscript production was concentrated between 1478 and 1526, with the exception of a few manuscripts from the early fifteenth century. The myth of the manuscripts'

31 All existing *Akademiebeschreibungen* for Medingen manuscripts are listed under "Medinger Gebetbücher" in the *Handschriftencensus*, available online at <<http://www.handschriftencensus.de/werke/248>> (accessed December 17, 2018).

32 Stammeler, "Die Bedeutung der mittelniederdeutschen Literatur in der deutschen Geistesgeschichte," *Germanisch-Romanische Monatshefte* 13 (1925): 422–450.

33 Walther Lipphardt, "Niederdeutsche Reimgedichte und Lieder des 14. Jahrhunderts in den mittelalterlichen Orationalien der Zisterzienserinnen von Medingen und Wienhausen," *Niederdeutsches Jahrbuch* 95 (1972): 66–131.

dating was dispelled by catalogers who looked at the watermarks,³⁴ but by then it was too late: both the Catholic (*Gotteslob*) and Protestant (*Evangelische Gesangbuch*) hymn books listed Medingen as the thirteenth-century source for a number of hymns in their collections, such as *Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ* or *Wir wollen alle fröhlich sein*. Both of these hymns also appear in the Harvard manuscripts.

What happened to the manuscripts themselves in the twentieth century? As far as we know, the first Medingen manuscript to travel outside Europe reached Dom Edmond Obrecht (1825–1935), the abbot of the Trappist Abbey Gethsemani, Kentucky, in the early twentieth century (formerly KAL, cited hereafter as GE). The manuscript arrived by way of the Danish-born Chicago book dealer Jens Christian Bay (1871–1962). Obrecht himself documented this in a typewritten note he glued onto the parchment pastedown (which, incidentally, came from a recycled glossed Latin textbook similar to the pastedown found in HHL2, see figure 1.9).

The manuscript was in the Institute of Cistercian Studies at the University of Western Michigan when I encountered it and was, after HHL1, the second manuscript from the convent to be digitized.³⁵ GE presents the rare case of a manuscript going back to a monastic community after having been in private ownership. This led to an unusual publication: the Cistercian monk Father Chrysogonus Waddell (1930–2008) retained the manuscript after the death of the abbot and published a long article on it that is still the only modern theological discussion of the Medingen nuns' devotional writing.³⁶ The attention he paid to the dogma behind the devotional text would have delighted the nuns, who had argued in vain for a permanent Cistercian confessor. His article testifies to the astonishing wealth of theological and liturgical knowledge that went into the composition of the books. Despite, or, perhaps, because of his lack of interest in the German historical background of the fifteenth century, he did not see the devotion displayed in the meditations as something "medieval," but as a living document of faith.

In summary, we see that the manuscripts that found their way into public ownership in the nineteenth century stayed there, whereas those in private ownership became a part of institutional collections; their paths mirror the upheavals of German politics. This is especially true for HHL1, housed in the castle library at Flechtingen. The property of the von Schenck family was expropriated without compensation when the area fell under the Soviet Occupation Zone, and the library was partly sold and partly transferred to the *Bibliothek des Historischen Museums* in Magdeburg. HHL1, recognizable by the ownership mark *Schenck'sche Fidei-Kommiss-Bibliothek*, was kept

34 Gerard Achten, "De Gebedenboeken van de Cistercienserinnenkloosters Medingen en Wienhausen," *Miscellanea Neerlandica* 3 (1987): 173–188.

35 The URLs for all Medingen manuscripts digitized so far can be found under "Manuscripts" at <<http://medingen.seh.ox.ac.uk>>.

36 Waddell, 3–56.

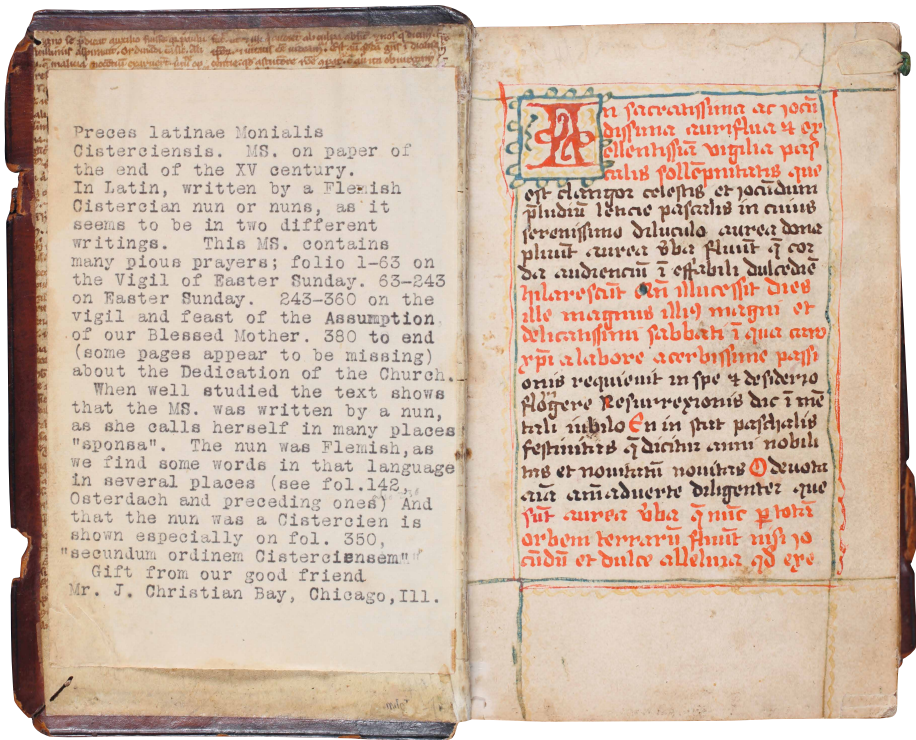


Figure 1.9. Kloster Medingen. *Prayer book for Easter*. Manuscript, circa 1500.
Note from Obrecht on pastedown of manuscript. The Abbey of Gethsemani, Kentucky.
Image courtesy of the Hill Museum and Monastic Library, Collegeville, Minnesota.

with the shelf mark Bi (for *Bibliothek des Kunstmuseums*) 105. This would change after reunification, bringing us to the twenty-first century.

The Formation of a Medingen Corpus in the Twenty-first Century

The first Medingen manuscript to change hands in the new millennium was the prayer book held in Magdeburg, which was given back to the Schenck family under the Equalization of Burdens Act (*"wurde in Erfüllung der Rückforderungsansprüche der Familie Schenck nach dem Bundesausgleichsgesetz im Jahr 2003 zurück übereignet."*) In 2004, 802 lots were sold as no. 377 by the Hamburg auction house Hauswedell & Nolte.³⁷ In 2006, Houghton Library purchased the Marian prayer book

37 Dr. Karlheiz Kärbling, librarian at the Kulturhistorisches Museum Magdeburg, email message to author, June 4, 2007.

now known as HHL1 with the Bayard Livingston and Kate Gray Kilgour fund, and soon digitized it, making it the first of the Medingen manuscripts to be available online. The rapid path from auction to digitization was due to a marked rise in interest in devotional text production and female monasticism around the turn of the century, evidenced by exhibitions such as *Das christliche Gebetbuch im Mittelalter* (1987), *Aderlaß und Seelentrost* (2003) and especially *Krone und Schleier* (2005, published in English as *Crown and Veil* and organized by Harvard professor Jeffrey Hamburger, among others). This was also a driving force toward the detailed cataloging of many octavo prayer books that, until then, had often been summarily described as “devotional.” In addition, this push led Gerard Achten, librarian at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Preußischer Kulturbesitz and organizer of the 1987 prayer book exhibition, to issue a programmatic article in which he stated that all twenty-two manuscripts from Medingen and Wienhausen included in Lipphardt’s updated catalog³⁸ were a product of the conventual reform, i.e., post-1478.³⁹ This observation turned the Medingen manuscripts into a coherent body of evidence of northern German female spirituality in the generations between the monastic reforms of the fifteenth century and the Protestant reformation of the sixteenth century.

Shortly before these large-scale exhibitions on female spirituality, I had started looking into the Medingen manuscripts to verify quotations used by the nuns in an unusual antependium they produced for Wichmannsburg, one of the parish churches under their patronage. The *Wichmannsburger Antependium* is a unique three-meter-wide piece of linen with a sewn-on patchwork of cloth and parchment text scrolls. After seeing the textile in the Museum August Kestner in Hanover and realizing that the Latin and Low German text snippets on it had not been identified, Burghart Wachinger, the main editor of the second edition of the *Verfasserlexikon*, a comprehensive dictionary of medieval German texts, invited me to write half a column for the final volume.⁴⁰ I then used a scholarship year at Oxford to turn this into an article for *Oxford German Studies*⁴¹ and to work on the two manuscripts from Medingen kept in the Bodleian Library. I became more and more fascinated by these complex texts, with their multilayered theological and visual references. On the basis of this experience and a recommendation by Nigel F. Palmer, who had commissioned the Oxford article, I was contacted by Hans-Walter Stork, then Keeper of Manuscripts

38 Lipphardt, “Medinger Gebetbücher (Medinger Lieder und Gedichte),” in *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1987), 6:275–280.

39 Achten, 188.

40 Lähnemann, “Wichmannsburger Antependium,” in *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon*, 2nd ed., vol. 11, *Nachträge und Korrekturen* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 2004): 1655–1656.

41 Lähnemann, “An dessen bom wil ik stighen. Die Ikonographie des Wichmannsburger Antependiums im Kontext der Medinger Handschriften,” *Oxford German Studies* 34 (2005): 19–46.

at the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg. Stork had identified a group of five prayer books dedicated to different apostles, all displaying similar features to the known Medingen manuscripts, among the as-yet-uncataloged octavo manuscripts in the Hamburg stacks. In 2007, Stork curated an exhibition around this discovery. The catalog, including a seminal article by Beate Braun-Niehr, is still forthcoming. From this point, the further identifications of Medingen manuscripts began to accelerate. For example, in January 2008, Katharina Georgi identified another apostle prayer book (the previously mentioned LO2 at the V&A) from a photograph in the Courtauld Institute while she was looking for illuminated prayer books for her dissertation.⁴² In 2008, Ulrike Hascher-Burger published a catalog of all manuscripts with musical notation from the Lüneburg convents as the basis for a performance project. This project then saw the production of a number of CDs by the ensemble *devotio moderna*, led by Ulrike Volkhardt. Since nearly all of the Medingen prayer books show at least some form of abbreviated musical notation, this produced a list of thirty-five fragments and manuscripts from Medingen,⁴³ with HHL1 as the latest addition.⁴⁴

At the same time, the Institute for Cistercian Studies started a digitization campaign to make the liturgical and codicological scholarship of Fr. Chrysogonus Waddell more accessible to the numerous scholars working on the collection deposited there from Gethsemani after both the book collecting Abbot and the musicological specialist Waddell had died. The newly accessible material included the back issues of the journal *Liturgy*, which was launched by Waddell after Vatican II, in 1966, as an unofficial liturgical bulletin. Waddell himself contributed a large number of the articles, among them the aforementioned theological discussion, in 1987, of GE, one of the Medingen Latin-Low German Easter prayer books. However, he did not go further into the provenance of the manuscript. This article came to my attention when I searched for the *Explicit* mentioned by Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben as the final Latin rhyme appears identically in the manuscript Fr. Chrysonogus Waddell quoted. After checking with Sue Steuer, the librarian of the Institute for Cistercian Studies in Kalamazoo, I realized that I had not chanced upon the lost Hoffmann manuscript, but upon another Easter prayer book from Medingen: GE. I published this finding and the quest that led to it in the local newspaper of the Medingen region, the *Uelzener Allgemeine Zeitung* (UAZ). The culture editor of the UAZ, Horst Hoffmann, turned my piece into a colorful article for the monthly supplement *Der Heidewanderer* in July of 2013 and allowed me

42 Katharina Georgi, *Illuminierte Gebetbücher aus dem Umkreis der Nürnberger Pleydenwurff-Wolgemit Werkstatt* (Petersberg: Imhof, 2013).

43 Hascher-Burger, *Verborgene Klänge*, 63–101.

44 *Ibid.*, 101.

reproduce it, open access, on my website.⁴⁵ There it was discovered by the cataloger for <<http://textmanuscripts.com>>, who was trying to identify an unknown prayer book that the auction house Les Enluminures had just acquired from an auction house in Brussels. Thus came about the identification for the lost manuscript described by Hoffmann, despite its somewhat misleading catalog description of the Brussels auction house as a “rustic but thoroughly charming Easter liturgy from Westphalia.”⁴⁶ When Houghton Library purchased it in 2014, again with the Bayard Livingston and Kate Gray Kilgour Fund, I had just been in contact with Bill Stoneman about the possibility of working on HHL1 with graduate students from the University of Connecticut, and he extended this invitation to include the newly acquired prayer book from Medingen. Following that project, when I presented our shared findings at Harvard in September of 2014, Laura Light from Les Enluminures was present in the audience. As a follow-up, she sent me photographs of a psalter to authenticate for an exhibition titled *Women and their Books*. This turned out to be another Medingen manuscript, written by the sixteenth-century choirmistress Margarete Hopes, the last nun to continue the tradition of psalter production begun by Elizabeth of Winsen in 1478.⁴⁷ This discovery coincided with Beate Braun-Niehr’s identification of yet another Medingen psalter at the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen known as the 8° Cod. Ms. theol. 217 Cim. (GT4). This manuscript had been purchased together with GT1, the prayer book given to Daniel Eberhard Baring in 1722 and the first of the manuscripts to leave Medingen as an antiquarian object. This twenty-first-century collaboration in identifying Medingen manuscripts returns me full circle to the beginning of this article and the impetus behind a coauthored article on these two prayer books in Harvard. Written by collaborating Cistercian nuns from Medingen in the generation after the reform of 1479, these two prayer books, after several hundred years of separation, now share the same shelf space thousands of miles from their communal origin.

FOLLOWING ARE FOUR TAKES ON THE MEDINGEN MANUSCRIPTS IN HARVARD by its first twenty-first century users, the University of Connecticut graduate students who participated in the workshop at Houghton Library in September 2014. Together they highlight the significance of these illuminated, late medieval, bilingual, devotional manuscripts. My thanks also go to the other participants in the course and the faculty in the medieval studies program, who helped shape these ideas in our discussions.

45 Lähnemann, “Von Medingen nach Michigan oder: die überraschenden Wanderungen mittelalterlicher Handschriften,” *Der Heidewanderer*, 6 July 2013, 105–108 (open access with an English translation on <<https://www.mod-langs.ox.ac.uk/laehnemann>> [accessed March 6, 2019]).

46 See the Devroe & Stubbe’s catalog, November 17, 2012, lot 1071.

47 Lähnemann, “The Materiality of Medieval Manuscripts,” *Oxford German Studies* 47 (2017): 19–46.

2. THE RESURRECTION MINIATURE IN MS LATIN 440

Laura Godfrey

When I first viewed the full-page Resurrection miniature in MS Latin 440 (HHL2), I was surprised to see such a large miniature, though its size was still consistent with the personal style of other Medingen illuminations (see figure 1.10). Since the nuns producing these manuscripts were less skilled in drawing and painting, the products of their work reveal innovative solutions to create images as well as a special attention to this particular liturgical scene. The Resurrection scene adheres to standard iconography of the Lüneburg convents at the end of the fifteenth century: Christ rising from the closed sarcophagus with two hunched watchmen and angels playing music at either side.⁴⁸

A few artifacts from Wienhausen, the convent that sent nuns to Medingen to help implement the reform in 1479, illustrate that the Resurrection scene functioned as models from which we may better understand the shared devotional culture among the Lüneburg houses (besides Medingen and Wienhausen, there are Ebstorf, Isenhagen, Lüne, and Walsrode). The first find when lifting the floorboards of the nuns' choir at Wienhausen in 1953 was a parchment leaf depicting the Resurrection of Christ, the closest analogue for the Medingen miniature in HHL2. The Wienhausen fragment is likely a piece for personal devotion, because any open space on the fragment is covered in added prayers, marking its intense and long-lasting use.

Horst Appuhn⁴⁹ notes that the Wienhausen fragment was created with care by someone untrained in manuscript illumination. As in Medingen, most manuscript illumination in Wienhausen was done by the nuns for prayer books for themselves or close relatives, drawing on a stock of decorated or historiated initials and vine or scroll work in the margins. The Wienhausen fragment contains all the elements of the Houghton miniature except the sun, the deer, and the three Marys. Only one angel is playing an instrument, and there are three guards, two of whom are sleeping. Christ is holding a standard, his hand is held in a gesture of blessing, and he is stepping out of the tomb with one foot. Although he wears a full robe, a diamond-shaped spot reveals his side wound. Overall, the fragment follows the iconographic tradition of Resurrection imagery at Medingen described by Uhde-Stahl. When the restorer supervising the lifting of the floorboards, Gertrud Irwahn, discovered this fragment,⁵⁰ it struck her immediately that the image resembled the image of the ceiling of the nuns' choir and the statue of the Resurrection (see figure 1.11).

48 Beate Uhde-Stahl, "Figürliche Buchmalereien in den spätmittelalterlichen Handschriften der Lüneburger Frauenklöster," *Niederdeutsche Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte* 17 (1978): 25–60.

49 Appuhn, *Kloster Wienhausen* (Wienhausen: Kloster Wienhausen, 1986), 52.

50 Appuhn, *Der Fund vom Nonnenchor* (Wienhausen: Kloster Wienhausen, 1973), 6.



Figure 1.10. Kloster Medingen. *Prayer book for Easter*. Resurrection scene. MS Lat 440. fol. 77r.

The approximately half life-size (106.5 cm high), thirteenth-century statue of Christ rising from the tomb still stands today at Wienhausen. Christ would have worn a crown, held a standard, and been flanked by two angels. Holes in Christ's hand and in the tomb reveal the places for the now-missing flagpole and angels; the convent has one flag and a pair of angel's wings as fragments of these objects.⁵¹ The statue depicts Christ emerging from the tomb, stepping on one of the three sleeping guards. His hand is held in blessing, and the other is positioned to hold the now-missing standard. As with the Wienhausen fragment, four of Christ's five wounds are visible. An oval-shaped opening is made in Christ's clothing to reveal the side wound, which is pierced, possibly to hold a vial with holy blood, which was Wienhausen's most sacred possession.

51 Babette Hartweg, "Drei gefaßte Holzskulpturen vom Ende des 13. Jahrhunderts im Kloster Wienhausen," *Zeitschrift für Kunsttechnologie und Konservierung* 2 (1988): 186–262.



Figure 1.11. Wienhausen. *Arisen Christ*. Oak, c. 1280–1290. © Kloster Wienhausen.

Additionally, the painted medallions on the ceiling of the nuns' choir at Wienhausen contain images of the life of Christ, including a Resurrection scene that is an almost exact copy of the Wienhausen statue. The ceiling's image contains similar elements of the other Resurrection images: risen Christ with one foot out of the tomb, Christ holding a banner in one hand and a blessing in the other, two angels playing instruments, sleeping guards. The medallion is surrounded by other scenes of Christ's life and Passion and other Biblical scenes. The location of this scene above the nuns' choir positioned it as a daily reminder of the Resurrection, reinforcing these particular iconographic elements into the minds of the nuns who created and influenced the production of manuscripts and other devotional materials at Wienhausen and Medingen.

Christ's banner on the ceiling includes the text "*Exurge gloria mea*," a psalm verse (Ps. 56:9) also regularly cited in the Medingen Easter prayer books in connection with the Resurrection. This is particularly pertinent in a prayer from the Oxford Easter prayer book that amplifies a supplication for church authority said at the end of the *Exsultet*. It includes specific Resurrection iconography and the specific Christian community in and around Medingen (OI, written after 1492 when the reform prioress had been made abbess, fol. 28r–28v):

O dulcissime Jesu, sponse virginum,
triumphator victoriosissime, pater
orphanorum, patria peregrinorum,
unica spes et consolacio nostra, rogo te
per ineffabile gaudium, quod cor tuum
mellifluum sensit in letissima hora
sacrosancte Resurrexionis tue celesti
patre te de sepulchro vocante ac dicente:
"Exurge gloria mea, exurge psalterium
et cythara" [Ps 56:9], ut Abbatissam
nostram, Prepositum et confessorem
nostrum, totamque congregacionem
nostram, locum istum et omnia ad
nos pertinencia, Civitatem Luneborch,
patrem, matrem, fratres et sorores, ac
omnes mihi in oracionem commissos
suscipias sub vexillam tue victoriosissime
Resurrexionis et devotissimum populum
astentem, tuo precioso sanguine
acquisitum, in hiis Paschalibus gaudiis
quiete temporum concessa conservare
digneris. Amen.

O sweetest Jesus, bridegroom of virgins,
most triumphant victor, father of
orphans, home of wanderers, our only
hope and comfort: I ask you by virtue
of the ineffable joy, which your honey-
flowing heart sensed in the most joyful
hour of your most holy Resurrection
when the heavenly father called you
from the grave and said: "Arise, o my
glory, arise psalter and harp", that you
may take our abbess, our provost and
confessor and our whole community,
this place and everything belonging to
us, the city of Lüneburg, father, mother,
brothers and sisters and everyone
for whom I am bound to pray, under
the banner of your most victorious
Resurrection, and that you might grant
to those most devout people standing
by, bought with your precious blood,
peaceable times during these Paschal
solemnities. Amen.

The adherence to and elaboration of this tradition in the HHL2 miniature reflects the devotional choices of the Medingen nun or nuns who produced the miniature. Indeed, the most prominent figure in the miniature is Christ emerging from the tomb. In his left hand, he holds a red standard with a golden cross, proclaiming victory over death, while his right hand is raised in a traditional gesture of blessing. He wears a crown integrated into a golden halo, the distinction made by the artist with a simple red line marking the crown's outline. Four of his wounds are visible, marked in gold and outlined in red.

On either side of Christ is an angel playing a musical instrument. On Christ's right, the angel is playing the *vielle*, and on the left, a lute. Facing the miniature is a greeting of the Easter day, "Advenisti, o letissima dies Paschalis!" (You have arrived, o most joyous Easter day!) on fol. 76v, remarking that Christ's Resurrection is celebrated in song by all creatures, thus making the deer's presence in the miniature appropriate. This celebration of the magnificent day of Easter continues in Low German meditations throughout the manuscript. As Joseph McLaurin Leake and Gennifer Dorgan point out in their contributions with regard to the *Advenisti* formula, these exultations demonstrate the nuns' appropriation of the liturgy into personal devotion, thus intensifying the nuns' and the readers' experience with this most holy of days.

At the bottom of the miniature, in front of the tomb, there are two soldiers in red paint and silver leaf, one asleep and the other kneeling in adoration. The sleeping guard is a conventional element of Resurrection depictions, suggesting Christ's victory over men as well as death; however, the kneeling, adoring guard is unusual for Medingen Resurrection images. The guard prominently displays the lance, suggesting a connection to the Holy Lance, the most holy relic among the German Imperial Regalia, which produced the side wound above it.

In blue robes, white veils, and halos, the three Marys—traditionally identified as Mary Magdalene, Mary Jacobe, and Mary Salome—enter from atop a hill, each carrying a golden vessel. This invokes the popular *Visitatio sepulchri* scene that developed from the *Quem queritis in sepulchro* liturgical trope in which these women approach the tomb to anoint the body of Christ. The dress of the first Mary, which is red inside and blue outside, is a reversal of Christ's coat in the miniature, which is red outside. The color red is associated with Christ in Easter plays (e.g., *Bordesholmer Marienklage*), and stems from the Old Testament reference to the Savior coming "with dyed garments from Bosra" (Is. 63:1). Red clothing continues to signify Christ's blood, e.g., with the gown of Mary, the mother of Christ, stained red from Christ's blood flowing down from the cross in the popular passion tract *Interrogatio Anselmi*.

The text of the folio preceding the miniature exclaims the joy of Easter morning, describing Christ as the rising sun that tops the miniature (see figure 1.12). The prayer, starting with the repeated exclamation "Advenisti!" (You have come!) is taken from the processional hymn *Cum rex glorie*, where it is the welcome cry of the forefathers held captive in limbo. It is preceded by the phrase "Illuxit dies" from another Easter sequence, the *Laudes salvatori*, where it marks Christ's Resurrection as the rise of the Easter sun and was thus particularly significant for devotional purposes during Easter. Throughout the Medingen devotional manuscripts, the "luminescence" this rubric invokes is present in gold initials, images of the sun, and exclamatory comparisons of



Figure 1.12. Kloster Medingen. *Prayer book for Easter*. Text preceding the Resurrection scene.
MS Lat 440. fol. 76v.

Christ to the rising sun.⁵² Continuing the praise of Easter day “cum magno tripudio, in mentis iubilo,” (with great trepidation, in the jubilation of the mind) the prayer following the “Illuxit dies” exclamation on fol. 76v begins with a large gold A, the right-hand stroke six lines high: “Advenisti O letissima Dies Paschalis” (You have arrived, o most joyful Easter Day). It is therefore appropriate to place the Resurrection image, with its sun and repeated gold leaf applications, where both the image and the “luminescent” prayer are simultaneously visible to the pious reader.

Preceding these two luminescent folios is the opening rubric for Easter morning, fol. 76r: “In splendissimo ortu deliciosissime rutilantissime et excellentissime Paschalis diei” (On the most splendid dawn of the sweetest and most rubescent and excellent Easter Day) (see figure 1.13). What follows is a description of Christ as the Easter sun, a common inclusion in Easter prayer books from the Lüneburg convents:

Ecce dies oritur, in cuius ortu aureo
sol verus oritur qui ultra non moritur.

Behold, the day rises in whose golden dawn
the true sun rises which will never die.

The capital *E* beginning this prayer depicts the rising Easter sun. It shines down on a man in secular dress who is holding a scroll with the popular *Leise*, sung during the Easter service in Medingen by the lay congregation: “Also heylich is desse dach dat en neyn man to vullen louen mach sunder de heylige go[des son],” (So holy is this day that no one can fully praise it except for the holy son of God,) which then continues, in the full versions from Medingen, “who broke into hell and bound the devil therein, *Kyrieleyson*.” The scroll’s insistent description of this day as one of the most holy days of the year marks Easter morning as a particularly important time for the Medingen nuns.

There are many Easter prayer books which could be used to provide analogues to these instances, but one in particular provides a close analogue to the Houghton Easter prayer book HHL2. An Easter prayer book for nuns, GE, at Gethsemani Abbey, Kentucky, made a similar journey to the USA from Germany. This prayer book contains text remarkably similar to that of HHL2, although its images are less detailed. The only major textual additions in GE are prayers that linger on the joyous exclamations of the rising Easter sun and morning. In GE’s fol. 62v, the rising sun precedes the popular exclamation “*Ecce dies oritur*,” in which Christ is compared to the rising sun. Unlike in HHL2, the sun in GE is drawn with eyes and part of a nose, suggesting the face of Christ and illustrating the lines below, which contain the same Latin rhyme (see figure 1.14).

52 Lähnemann, “Bilingual Devotion in Northern Germany: Prayer Books from the Lüneburg Convents,” in *A Companion to Mysticism and Devotion in Northern Germany in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. Elizabeth Andersen, Henrike Lähnemann, and Anne Simon (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 325.



Figure 1.13. Kloster Medingen. Prayer book for Easter. Text preceding the historiated initial with Easter sun and figure holding scroll with Leise. MS Lat 440. fol. 76v.

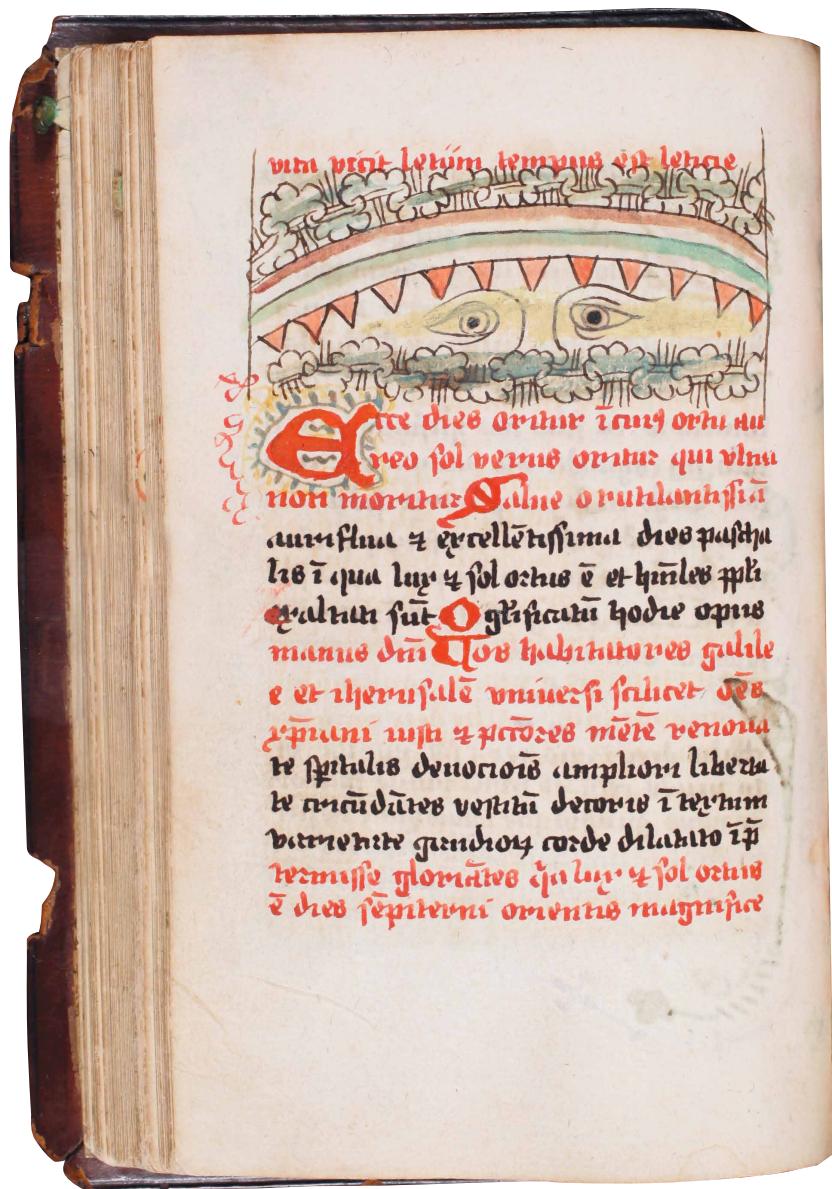


Figure 1.14. Kloster Medingen. Prayer book for Easter. Illustration of the rising sun. The Abbey of Gethsemani, Kentucky. fol. 262v. Image courtesy of the Hill Museum and Monastic Library, Collegeville, Minnesota.

The new day, symbolized by the rising Easter sun and the rising Christ, demonstrates the nuns' forward movement within the liturgical year and over the reform years. It is important to realize that these images and objects were significant to the nuns both as the physical things that they are and as the spiritual matters that they represent. Caroline Walker Bynum's recent work on the crowns at Wienhausen shows the physical, spiritual, and political importance of the nuns' devotional objects and images that correlates to this current study of Resurrection images.⁵³ The consistency of Resurrection depictions among the Lüneburg convents is just one of many instances that demonstrate the nuns' personal devotion. The Resurrection miniature in the Houghton Easter prayer book from Medingen and the shared rising suns of HHL2 and GE shed light on the devotional priorities of the Medingen nuns. Instead of focusing on the Passion, as many medieval devotional texts do, these prayer books show the importance of joyous celebration as a symbol of starting anew.

3. THE LATIN AND LOW GERMAN WRITING IN HHL2

Joseph McLaurin Leake

The following excerpt from the appendix written by Hand 1 on fols. 212r–217r in HHL2 shows the complex integration of Low German emphatic language into a mosaic Latin text punctuated by a large number of quotations from the Bible, the liturgy, and hymns, which are highlighted by colored initials and larger lettering.⁵⁴

In classic macaronic style, Latin and Middle Low German (MLG) are frequently intertwined at the phrasal level as the text moves in and out of the two languages (e.g., “*unde des avendes gheit me pro temporis deduxione by dat vur edder by den rock*” fol. 214r). Learned Latin and familiar vernacular are woven together and are neither semantically nor syntactically distinct from one another. This bilingual integration is complete, too, at the morphological level, as in “*de eddele juvenculus*” (fol. 212v), in which a MLG adjective modifies a Latin noun, with both words pointing to Jesus; another example is “*van beschouwinge divinitatis et humanitatis*,” in fol. 216v, where the Latin nouns are both dependent genitives of the MLG *beschouwinge*.

53 Caroline Walker Bynum, “Crowned with Many Crowns: Nuns and Their Statues in Late Medieval Wienhausen,” *Catholic Historical Review* 101, no. 1 (2015): 17–39.

54 Transcription principles for this and the following contribution are as follows: i/j and u/v are normalized, abbreviations are resolved, punctuation is added, Low German elements are marked by italics, and prefixes are joined with the main word. In the manuscript, certain quotations from the liturgy—single words or short phrases—are indicated by an enlarged and colored initial letter. In the transcription, I have indicated these short quotations by bolding them.

Frequently, the MLG does not explain the content but rather elucidates the significance of the Latin phrases. This is accomplished either by expanding upon the Latin (e.g., “Et preclarus: *He is ok so licht dat he vorluchtet dat ganse lovede land*” in fol. 214v), or by functioning as a guide for the proper emotional response to a preceding Latin passage (e.g., “Filius dei letus a morte surrexit: *Id is en grod vroude wan me secht, de strid is gewonnen*” (fol. 215r); or “Letus victor a morte surrexit . . . *Dit wordeken is mer wen hundert dusent dusent guldene wert*” (fol. 215v).

Regarding style, both the Latin and the MLG portions of the text utilize rhetorical devices and verbal flourishes, which add rhythm to the prose and turn it into a semi-poetic form. The alliteration in the MLG portions of the text are frequently similar to the legal phrases used in vernacular law, such as the “*Sachsenspiegel*,” but can also involve a kind of “punning,” e.g., “*So drucket he de brud al herde an syn benedyede herte*” (fol. 212v); other phrases constitute etymological wordplay, e.g. “*He is ok so licht dat he vorluchtet*” (fol. 214v). The Latin passages utilize literary ornamentations dependent upon word-endings more extensively than the passages in MLG, i.e., “polyptoton” (repetition of the same word with different endings), such as the repetition of “*deus*” in “*Tunc premium nostrum erit videre deum, vivere cum deo, esse cum deo, habere deum*” (fol. 214v); and “homeoteleuton” (repetition of the same ending attached to different words), such as the endings “-are” and “-tis” in “*visitare et consolare*” and “*divinitatis et humanitatis*”.

A rather exquisite use of homeoteleuton in MLG occurs in the simile of the birds flying to the fountain to drink, in which the diminutive suffix “-ken” is repeated five times: “*so schulle wy don also de vogelken: wan se gherne druncken, so vlegghen se uppe de lutteken putteken dede sint circa fontem, unde maket langhe lange helseken unde gripet de dropeken*” (fol. 215v). The repetition of the diminutive, in combination with the repetition “*langhe lange*” lends a playful and joyful quality to the sentence. As with the instances of alliterating phrases drawn from vernacular law, the MLG speaks to what was culturally and linguistically familiar to the nuns, even as it works in tandem with the learned and erudite language of Latin.

The appendix begins with a Latin-only hymnic variation of the *Salve dies*, marked as an Easter Day prayer, followed by two bilingual meditations on liturgical pieces. Most if not all of the Latin phrases, even those not flagged up as quotations, are taken from the Easter liturgy and then linked through the Low German amplification.

Meditation on the Easter Gradual

The first bilingual passage contains a meditation for use during the Easter Sunday mass, based on the Gradual (see figures 1.15 and 1.16):

“Haec dies quam fecit dominus, exsultemus et laetemur in ea, alleluia.”

The Gradual in turn derives from Psalm 117:24: “This is the day which the Lord made: let us be glad and rejoice in it.” The staffless musical notation for the last three words on fol. 212r shows the same simplified Gothic choral notation for the chant in Medingen that is noted in the Oxford Easter prayer book (O1) on fol. 97v, where it is introduced with the praise that this salutation of the gold-flowing and heavenly Easter day is impressed with the characters of love on the heart of the Risen Christ (“Post capitulum salutatio auriflua ac celestis diei que amo/ris karactere impressa est cordi Resurgentis”).

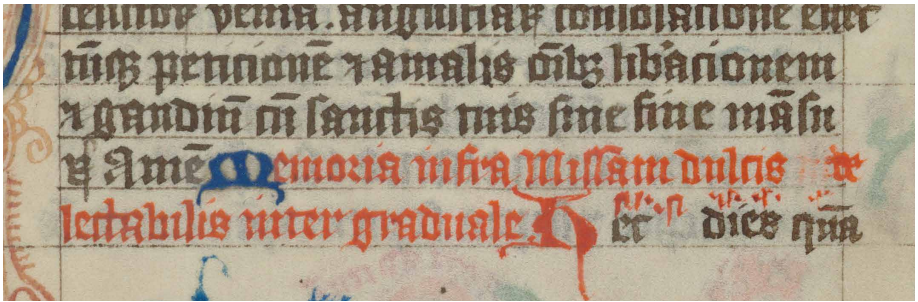


Figure 1.15. Kloster Medingen. *Prayer book for Easter*. Opening the appendix with musical notation of the incipit of the Gradual ‘Haec est dies.’ MS Lat 440. fol. 212r. Detail.



Figure 1.16. Kloster Medingen. *Prayer book for Easter*. Musical notation of the incipit of the Gradual ‘Haec Hec dies quam fecit dominus.’ Bodleian Library, University of Oxford. MS. Lat. Liturg. f. 4. fol. 97v. Detail.

On the following page, where the meditation proper begins, a marginal illustration shows the busts of David and John the Evangelist. Both hold scrolls with quotations from their biblical books that also refer to the meditation. David, with harp and crown, holds a verse from one of his psalms: “Constituite diem sollempnem in condenses” (Ps 117:27; Appoint a solemn day, with shady boughs, even to the horn of the altar). He is then answered by John the Evangelist, proclaiming “Beati qui ad cenam agni nuptiarum vocati sunt” (Rev. 19:9; Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb). The marriage of the lamb is a frequent topic among the meditation texts by the nuns. In the model prayer book H11, fols. 71v–72, a Low German song about King David is quoted. Here, David is the minstrel playing the harp for the dance with Christ as bridegroom, which gives special significance to the dance description in HHL2 (see figure 1.17).

**Memoria infra missam dulcis
delectabilis inter graduale**

Hec dies quam

[fol. 212v] “**Hec dies**”: *Id is en wyse in seculo, wan de groten vorsten ende vorstinnen dantzet, so hebben se sick to malen bequemelken unde tuchtighen; ens gat se vorwart, ene achterwort, valde decenter. Insimili luden desse noten, ghans gestliken.*⁵⁵

“**Hec dies**”: *So gheit de undotlike vrolike brudegham enen danz myt siner leven brud in den sal unde de eddele juvenculus ihesus trit suluen den rey vor unde singhet “Hec dies.” So gheyt dene leff an leves hand, des vrouwen sick alle de in reye sint.*

**The sweet, delectable meditation during
Mass, linked to the Gradual**

This is the day which . . .

“**This is the day**”: *It is a custom in the secular world, when the great princes and princesses dance, then they behave easily and capably; one moving forward, the other backward, very appropriately. Similarly these notes sound, completely spiritually.*

“**This is the day**”: *Thus the immortal, happy bridegroom walks a dance with his beloved bride in the hall, and the noble young man Jesus leads the dance and sings “This is the day.” Thus love goes hand in hand with love, which gladdens all who are in the dance.*

⁵⁵ The third letter and part of the second letter is erased or faded; it might have been changed to “gotliken.”



Figure 1.17. Kloster Medingen. *Prayer book for Easter*. Beginning of the meditation and the figures of David and John the Evangelist in the margin, both with scrolls. MS Lat 440. fol. 212v.

“Hec dies”: *So drucket he de brud al herde an syn benedyede herte unde wiset er den brudspeygel.*

“Dies”: *De vrolike brudegham is sulven de grote Pasche dach, unde cantamus: “Pascha nostrum immolatus est cristus.”⁵⁶ He is “extra septem”⁵⁷ et supra septem “quam fecit dominus” in leticia cordis sui totam festivam.*

“Exultemus”: *So schencket me uns upp dem reyen. So ghifft he drinken uth dem guldene brudbekerken syner vorwundeden syden unde secht: “Et letemur,” tu in me et ego in te in eternum Pascha celebrantes, wente ik hebbe dy wedder kreghen.*

In ea: *wen de lude ghedruncken hebbet unde syn guden hagen so springhet se hoghe upp unde singet lude. So luden ok dusse noten:*

In ea: *“In deme”—he konde nen gans word maken pre immensitate gaudiorum der syn herteken vul was, sed dixit*

“This is the day”: *Thus he presses the bride firmly to his blessed heart, and shows her the bridal mirror.*

“The day”: *The joyful bridegroom is himself the great Easter day, therefore we sing “Christ our Paschal lamb has been sacrificed.” He is “outside the seven” and above the seven “which the Lord made” in the happiness of his heart, completely festive.*

“Let us exult”: *Thus we are given drinks during the dance. Thus he lets us drink from the little golden bridal cup of his wounded side and says: “And let us rejoice,” you in me and I in you, celebrating Easter in eternity since I have reclaimed you.*

In it: *When the people have drunk and are well pleased, then they jump high and sing loudly. Then these notes sound thus:*

In it: *“In that”—he could not make a full phrase because of the immensity of joys of which his tender heart was full, but said:*

56 Communion for Easter Sunday; “Pascha nostrum immolatus est cristus” is from First Cor. 5:7.

57 Augustinus, Sermones 21, Sermo 159: “De Pascha, I.” Refers back to the “day” of the caption, i.e., Christ as the eighth day of the seven days of creation.

In ea: “*In eme*” unde leth dat dar by. So heuet den an de brud unde singhet to louen unde to eren erem alderleuesten brudeghamme, qui elegit eam et invitat omnes et dicit “Confitemini domino”⁵⁸ unde vormanet eme to deme ersten dat he alder levest hord unde secht “Pio” vel “Bonus.”

“Quid ultra debuit facere et non fecit?”⁵⁹ *dat is eme eghentliken van nature angeboren, dat he gotlik unde barmhertich is, wente synes loves unde siner gude unde barmherticheit in deme klenen wordeken nicht kan uthgedrucket werden; so singhet de brud vordan:* “Benignissimo optimo domino deo.” Et laudat sponsum suum immortalem omni laude dignissimum, quo inspirante, quo dante, quo regnante innovantur omnia, quoniam dominus ipse est fons vite bonus, quoniam in se atque per se iam sine fine misericordia eius.

Alleluia Alleluia Alleluia. *Dut is en dach boven alle dage.* Deo gracias. Alleluia.

In it: “*In it*” and left it like that. Then the bride starts and sings in praise and honor of her most-beloved bridegroom who chose her and invites all, and says “Praise the Lord” and reminds him in the first instance of what he likes to hear best, and says “to the pious” or “for he is good.”

“What more should he have done that he did not do?” *It is a property of his, inborn from nature, that he is godly and merciful, and his love and his goodness and mercy cannot be thoroughly expressed in this little word; therefore the bride sings on:* “To the most blessed, best Lord God.” And praises her immortal betrothed, most worthy of all praise, by whose inspiring, by whose giving, by whose reigning all things are made new, since the Lord himself is the good fountain of life, since in him and through him now without ending is his mercy.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. *That is a day above all days.* Thanks be to God. Alleluia.

Meditation after Compline

The second meditation is based on the processional antiphon which is noted with full Gothic choral notation in the appendix to the Oxford Easter prayer book (O1), fols. 286r–287v:

Hic est dies magnus et preclarus, in cuius lumine gradiendo tendimus ad immortalitatem, quo processit hodie Christus Jesus, fons misericordie, honore coronatus, gloria speciosus.

58 From Psalm 117:1. “Confitemini Domino, quoniam bonus, quoniam in saeculum misericordia eius (Praise the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endures forever).”

59 From the liturgy, based on Is. 5:4.

Hodie confractis portis infernorum filius dei letus victor a morte surrexit.
 Hodie intrabimus terram fluentem lac et mel.
 Ibi erit nobis hic dies festus atque sollemnis semper in presens habendus,
 alleluia, celebrandus semper.

Post completorium dulcis memoria

Hic est dies magnus: *Id is wol eyn wyse in der werlde, dat me den groten mechtighen heren unde eddelen vorsten plecht na tho luchtende, unde des avendes gheit me pro temporis deduxione by dat vur edder by den rock. Also in enem gelike tho secghende: "Wee is dusse herlike dach dar ma nv so vroliken van singhet?"*

Hic est dies magnus: *Vorwar dat is hute de grote here Pasche dach, hirumme per universum mundum so luchtet me na dem groten werdigen heren Pasche daghe. Veraciter enim hodie dominice Resurrexionis Paschalis sollempnitatis dies est. Nu an dessem benedyenden avende, quicum nescit occasum, so singe we de soten melodyen:*

Hic est dies magnus et preclarus: *Vor war so vaken alse desse benedyede dach ward began "in terra nostra" [Sg 2:12] so isset ok grot hochtyt in des vryen koninghes hove. Hirumme singe moghelken to love unde to eren [fol. 214v] tam potenti victori; dut wordeken is de Pasche dach.*

Hic est dies magnus: *Eyn grod grot grot dach. Celum et terram tartarumque complectitur*

A sweet meditation after Compline

This is a great day: *It is indeed a custom in the world that lights are lit after great, mighty lords and noble princes, and in the evening one goes to while away the time near the fire or the smoke. This is similar to saying: "Who is this magnificent day of which one now sings so joyfully?"*

This is a great day: *In truth, today is the great magnificent Easter day; therefore through the whole world one makes light after the great, worthy, magnificent Easter. Truly indeed today is the day of the Lord's resurrection of Easter solemnity. Now on this blessed evening, that does not know the sunset, we thus sing the sweet melody:*

This is a great and splendid day: *In truth, as often as this blessed day is held "in our land" there is also a great wedding in this noble king's court. Therefore sing fittingly to praise and honor for such a mighty conqueror; this little word is the "Easter day."*

This is a great day: *A great, great, great day. It enfolds heaven and earth and hell.*

Et preclarus: *He is ok so licht dat he vorluchtet dat ganse lovede land serenitate amenissimi vultus tui.*

“Lucerna est agnus” [Rev. 21:23] et **“templum non vidi in ea”** [Rev. 21:22], dicit beatus Johannes apostolus, “in cuius lumine gradiendo tendimus,” id est: gradatim tendimus, *we ylen cum adhuc per gradus.*

Wor hen? Dar hen: Ad immortalitatem.

Ubi dies “dies una melior super milia” [Ps 83:11], “ubi nullum erit malum, nullum latebit bonum” [Augustine, *De civitate dei* 23:30], ubi affugit dolor et tristitia atque spiritum hec priora transierunt.

Tunc premium nostrum erit videre deum, vivere cum deo, esse cum deo, habere deum.

Quo processit hodie Christus Jesus, fons misericordie: *Hebbe nen sorge; he is vor hen* [fol. 215r] *neghan unde heft dy den wech bereth.*

Sequamur et nos processit enim hodie fons misericordie: *Dyt is sin egene, egelke name. Dusses bornes kan nement uth grunden. Dar schulle we uns in sencken unde ganselken in beduken unde al unser sunde iammers unde versumenisse quit werden. Bene nobis.*

Honore coronatus gloria speciosus: *Mit dem rechten adel gloria resurrexionis, “valde speciosus”* [Sir. 43:12].

And splendid: *He is also so bright that he lightens the entire promised land by the loveliest serenity of your countenance.*

“The Lamb is the lamp,” and “I saw no temple therein,” says the blessed John, the Apostle, “in whose light we press onward,” that is: we advance, *we rush forward* step by step to this point.

Going where? Going there: toward immortality.

Where the day is “the one day better than a thousand,” “where there will be no evil, where no good will be hidden,” where grief and sadness depart and these earlier things will pass the spirit.

Then our reward will be to see God, to live with God, to be with God, to have God.

Where today Christ Jesus, the fountain of mercy, has gone forth. *Have no worries; he is gone before you, and has prepared the way for you.*

Let even us follow, for today the fountain of mercy has gone forth.” *This is his own, proper name. This fountain no one can fathom fully. Thus we must sink ourselves in it, and completely immerse ourselves, and become free from all our sin, misery and negligence. It is well for us.*

Crowned with honor, splendid in glory: *With proper nobility in the glory of resurrection, “very beautiful.”*

Hodie confractis portis infernorum:

“Quid ultra debuit facere et non fecit?”

*He heft dy de helle tobraken, he heft dy
upp genomen upp syne aslen unde heft di
sulven dar uth gedrogen.*

Filius dei letus a morte surrexit: *Id is*

*en grod vroude wan me secht, de strid
is gewonnen. Aver dut is en aver grot*

*vroude, nu me sing [fol. 215v] het unde
secht “Letus victor a morte surrexit”:*

“Quis potest capere capiat” [Mt 19:12].

*Dit wordeken is mer wen hundert dused
dused guldene wert.*

Hodie spes perhennis omnium visitare

et consolare dignatus est electos

suos dando illis spiritum sanctum in

remissionem peccatorum.

Perhennis: *De veer nodeken “Nis” de ghat*

in profundum et significant ineffabilem

misericordiam domini. Kunne we

nicht komen kan⁶⁰ to dem groten borne

divinitatis, so schulle wy don alse de

vogelken: wan se gherne druncken, so

vlegghen se uppe de lutteken putteken dede

sint circa fontem, unde maket langhe

lange helseken unde gripet de dropeken.

Today, after the gates of hell have been

broken: “What more should he have

*done that he did not do?” For you, he has
shattered hell, he has taken you up on his
shoulder, and himself carried you out of it.*

The son of God has risen joyfully from

death: *It is a great joy when one says, the
battle is won. But that is an even greater*

joy to sing now and say “The joyful victor

has risen from death”: “He who is able

to understand this, let him understand

it.” This short phrase is worth more than

*a hundred thousand thousand pieces of
gold.*

Today the everlasting hope of all has

condescended to visit and to console his

chosen ones, by giving to them the Holy

Spirit for the remission of sins.

Everlasting: *The four little musical notes*

for the syllable “nis” go down and signify

the indescribable mercy of the Lord.

If we cannot come to the great spring

of divinity, so we must do just like little

birds: when they would like to drink, they

then fly up to the small little pools which

are around the fountain and stretch their

little necks long, long and grab the little

drops.

For this interpretation of the musical line see the musical notation in O1, fol. 286r (see figure 1.18).

60 The repetition of the modal verb (*kunne . . . kan*) indicates a scribal error. Conceivably, *kan* could be a mistake for *dan* “then, thence,” influenced by having just written *kunne* above. Emending *kunne* to *wenne* “if” perhaps gives the best sense, however (the plural pronoun *we* can take the singular *kan* in Middle Low German), and this is the emendation followed in the translation.



Figure 1.18. Kloster Medingen. *Prayer book for Easter*. Musical line of 'Hic est dies' Bodleian Library, University of Oxford. MS. Lat. Liturg. f. 4. fol. 286r. Detail.

Sic et nos: *we schullen tovlucht hebben to dem putteken der vorwundenen minscheyt filii dei, dat is ydel barmherticheyt, unde scholt gripen in den snevelken unser begherin* [fol. 216r] *ghe quantam habemus opus; grot, grot, vele, vele schulle wy begeren.*

Quia hodie spes perhennis visitare et consolare⁶¹ dignatus est electos suos: *he enheft nemende uthgenamen neque iustum neque peccatorem. He ennimpt hute nicht nouwe wente id is grot, grot, grot hochtit.*

Thus it is even for us: *We must have recourse to the little pools of the wounded humanity of the son of God, that is complete mercy, and must grab in little beaks our desire as much as we have need: Great, great, much, much, we must desire.*

Because today the hope eternal has condescended to visit and to console his chosen ones. *He has excluded nobody, neither the just nor the sinner: He does not take away anything at all today since it is the great, great, great wedding.*

61 The manuscript reads "consalare."

Dando illis spiritum sanctum

[Acts 15:8]: *de eddelen gave* “in hoc cognoscimus” quid filius dei summus quem “de spiritu suo dedit nobis” [1 Jn 3:24] pignus. Ad quid: **In remissionem peccatorum** [Mt 26:28]: *des deyt uns aldermeyst behooff*, o bonitas indefessa, o clemencia invicta.

Hodie intrabimus “terram fluentem lac et mel” [Ex 3:8]: *Oho dat hort to der groten processien wan we alle tohope komen to dem groten pasche daghe*, tunc vestiemur et nos, tunc desiderium filii dei inplebitur.

“Postulavi patrem meum”: *Welk ruschent, welk drengent*, cum gaudium domini intrabimus, *in dat lovede lant, dat* [fol. 216v] *dar vlut van honnige unde van melk*, id est, delectabile est *van brukinghe unde van beschouwinge* divinitatis et humanitatis *des undotliken koninges*. *Oho wat wert dar denne!*

Ibi Ibi Ibi: “Tunc videbis et afflues” [Is 60:5] *so scholtu beschouwen den schonen speygel sancte civitatis unde de vorborghen ding* “nostre redempcionis”. *Eya were we dar* “in terra vivencium”!

“Hic dies”: noster amarusque sponsus Ihesus.

Festus atque sollempnis: *Eyn hochtich waraftich vrolick Pasche dach*.

Semper celebrandus: *Dar wel alle tyt syn* “Epulemur.” *Oho bene nobis karitati!*

By giving the Holy Spirit to them:

“We recognize in this” *the noble gift*, which the highest Son of God “from his own spirit gave of his spirit to us” as a pledge. To which: **For the remission of sins**: *This is of the highest importance for us*, o goodness untiring, o clemency unconquered.

Today we will enter “a land flowing [with] milk and honey”: *O! This belongs in the great procession when we all come together on the great Easter day*, then even we will be clothed, then our desire for the Son of God will be fulfilled.

“I have prayed to my father”: *what rushing, what pressing forward*, when we enter the joy of the Lord, *in that promised land which flows with honey and milk*, that is, it is delectable *in its partaking and viewing* of the divine and of human nature *of the immortal king*. *O! What will happen there!*

There, there, there: “Then you will see and abound”; *Thus you must look into the beautiful mirror of the holy city and the hidden things of our redemption*. *Ah, if we were there* “in the land of the living”!

“This day”: Jesus, our beloved bridegroom.

Festive and solemn: *A solemn, truly joyful Easter day*.

Always to be celebrated: *There will always be the* “Let us feast.” *O! How good for us is this charity!*

Semper in presens habendus: *Wat malk
in der hant hefft des vorghith he nicht.
Hirumme moghe we wol vaken singhen
“iocundum et festivum” Alleluia alleluia
alleluia, wente uns dar nummer nener
vroude enbreken schal Amen, fiat nobis!*

Ad istam gloriosissimam Diem perducatur
nos rex glorie, ipse auctor et consecrator
huius gau[fol. 217r]diosissime diei, ipse
agnus immolatus nostrum Pascha Jesus
Christus, filius dei vivi, qui cum patre et
spiritu sancto vivit et regnat per secula.
Amen.

**Always to be enjoyed in the present
time:** *What one has in the hand, one does
not forget; that is why we may well often
sing the “pleasant and festive” Alleluia,
alleluia, alleluia, since henceforth we
shall lack no joy, amen, may it be for us!*

To that most glorious day, may the king
of glory lead us—the very author and
consecrator of this most joyful day—the
very spotless lamb, our Easter, Jesus
Christ the son of the living God who
with the Father and Holy Spirit lives and
reigns forever. Amen.

4. THE NUNS’ INTERWOVEN LANGUAGE IN HHL1

Gennifer Dorgan

The bilingual nature of the Medingen nuns’ devotional life is revealed in their introduction of Middle Low German phrases into their Latin prayer books. The inclusion of the vernacular intensifies the intimacy of the reader’s experience with the divine. The Houghton prayer book for Marian feast days (HHL1), written in two hands, contains prayers for the Annunciation, Incarnation, Visitation, Assumption and Dedication of Mary. The marginal miniatures include two angels on fol. 67v (see figure 1.19).

One angel’s scroll contains a quote from the Song of Songs, which forms part of the Assumption liturgy. In fact, the entire Assumption section is woven together from various sources of devotional text, including Bible quotations, chant, and commentary. It also contains two of the manuscript’s three instances of bilingualism. The first of these passages begins:

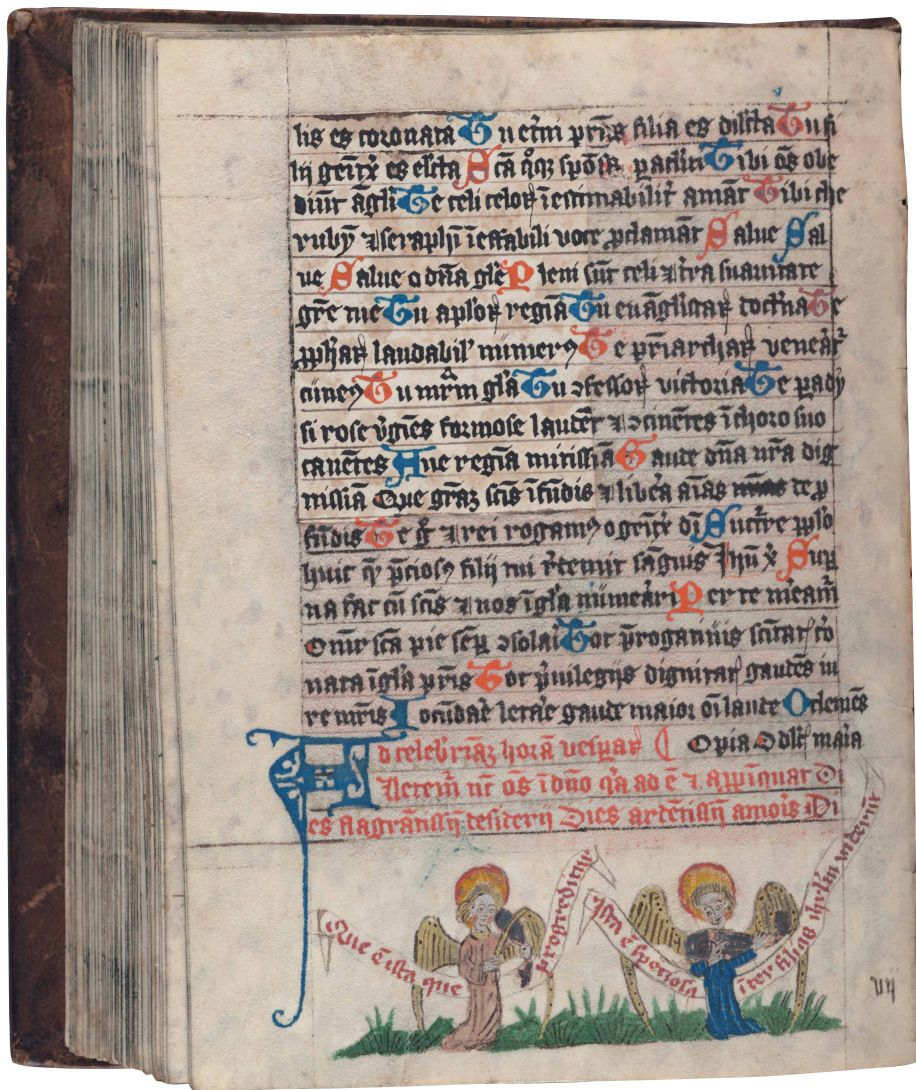


Figure 1.19. Kloster Medingen. Antiphons and prayers for Marian feasts. Manuscript, circa 1480–1500.
Two angels with quotes from the Song of Songs. 16 cm.
Houghton Library, Harvard University. MS Lat 395. fol. 67v.

Deinde saluta eam cum Responsorio:

“Salve Maria, gemma pudicitie”⁶²

Salve, o generosa virgo Maria,
quam hodie suscepit celi gloria
ex hac mundi miseria.

Eya, tu virgo principalis, que ob meritum
tue castitatis es nuncupata pudicitie
gemma, nobis prebens et relinquens
exemplum innocencie in hoc quod
primo optulisti domino gloriosissimi,
munus incorrupte virginitatis:

Rogo te propter honorem quem
habes de privilegio castitatis, ut tua
virginea castitas impleat omnem meam
neglienciam.

**Then salute her with the following
Responsory:**

“Hail Mary, jewel of chastity”

Hail, o magnanimous virgin Mary,
whom today the glory of heaven lifts up
out of the misery of this world.

Indeed, you foremost virgin, who
because of the worthiness of your
maidenhood is named the jewel of
chastity, granting and bequeathing to us
a model of integrity in that which first
you offered to the most glorious Lord,
the gift of untainted virginity:

I ask you on behalf of the honor that you
have from the privilege of chastity that
your virginal chastity may make up for
all my heedlessness.

This passage is constructed of various elements from the nuns’ textual surroundings. The first is the liturgy. In the monastery, time proceeded on an hourly basis by the celebration of the Divine Office and on a daily basis by the liturgical year, and the texts that formed part of devotional practices became deeply ingrained into the nuns’ means of expression. This excerpt contains the Assumption chant *Salve Maria gemma pudicitie*. Chants, usually written in red, are broken up and distributed through this passage, interspersed with commentary.

The commentary is the second element of the passages’ composition. Referencing the quoted liturgical material, it testifies to the nun’s Latin compositional skill in her ability to weave these sources together and elaborate on them. The commentary on the chant develops into the third element of the passages’ composition, prayer. This passage will, in fact, culminate in a prayer that involves the interlacing of Latin and Low German phrases. First, however, is another section of chant and commentary.

62 See Cantus Index, s.v. “602054.1” <<http://cantusindex.org>> (accessed February 20, 2019).

“De qua mundo illuxit sol iusticie”

Ave rutilans aurora, eterni luminis
prenuncia, de qua toto mundo illuxit
sol eternus vere iusticie. Obtine mihi
a summo opifice, a quo tu laureatus
es mirifice, ut cor meum illustretur
divine claritatis lumine.

“Salve pia mater cristianorum”

Salve piissima mater omnium
cristianorum, specialiter illorum que
propter tuum amorem, et dilecti
filii tui, spreverunt omnes terrenam
consolacionem quibus iam viluit et
sipida facta consolacio creaturarum;
et quia me in numerum conputo
illorum, ergo te nunc invoco, tota
intencione dicendo:

“Succurre filiis ad filium regem
angelorum”

Succurre mihi, o benignissima, in
omnibus angustiis anime et corporis,
inpendendo mihi solacium tue [fol.
67r] materne consolacionis; et in
hora mortis mee, subveni mihi tunc
cum filio tuo dilecto, et notam fac
mihi tempus et horam mortis mee;
annuncia mihi securitatem eterne vite.

“By which the sun of justice lights up the
world”

Hail reddening dawn, messenger
announcing the eternal light, by which the
eternal sun lit up all the world with true
justice. Obtain for me from the highest
creator, by whom you were wonderfully
crowned with laurel, that my heart may be
elucidated by the glow of divine clarity.

“Hail, pious mother of Christians”

Hail, most pious mother of all Christians,
particularly of those who, because of their
love for you, and of their affection for your
son, have spurned all worldly comfort,
for whom the solace by mere creatures
has become vile and dry; and because I
count myself in their number, therefore
I now invoke you, saying with complete
concentration,

“Help the children to the son of the king of
angels”

Help me, O kindest one, in all distresses
of soul and of body, extending to me the
solace of your maternal comfort; and in
the hour of my death, then descend to me
with your beloved son, and make known to
me the time and hour of my death; make
known to me security in eternal life.

The introduction of the first person here is significant to the nun's assimilation of liturgical material into private devotion. While the Assumption chant gives voice to all worshippers' devotion to the Virgin, the nun's prayers set forth a personal relationship with Mary, leading to an individual appeal for her help when the nun dies. This personal quality is intensified by the nun's specific references to her monastic life. In the final part of the passage, the increased personalization leads to a code-switch into the vernacular.

“Virgo solamen desolatorum”⁶³

O gloriosa et amabilis virgo que es
dulce solamen, desolatorum spes, et
benigna mater orphanorum, *help my
dat ik dorch de leve dyn unde dynes
leven kyndes hir konne wesen also
desolata et humano solacio destituta,
dat ik an myner drovicheyt mote
ghetrostet werden van dy unde van
dynen leven sone, tenera et delicata
consolacione illa que non datur nec
amittentibus et spernentibus alienam.*

“Succurre mihi”

*Also en truw momeke eren leven kynde
plecht in der stunde des bitteren tode,
unde wes den andechtich, dat ik dy
nu tanta mentis intencione hebbe
anropen, unde vorlath my nicht donec
videam speculum sancte trinitatis.
Amen.*

“Tempore vacante.”

“Virgin, comfort of the desolate”

O glorious and lovely virgin who is sweet
solace, hope of the forsaken, and kind
mother of orphans, *help me that I through
love of you and of your beloved child could
be here thus desolate and forsaken by
human solace, that I in my sadness might be
comforted by you and by your dear son, with
that tender and delicate solace which is not
given to anyone but to those who are lost
and despising other solace.*

“Help me”

*As a true mother tends to her beloved child
in the hour of bitter death, and recall then
that I have now called to you with all the
concentration of my mind, and do not
abandon me until I see the mirror of the
Holy Trinity. Amen.*

“When time is lacking”

In Latin, the nun prays to the Virgin to grant her chastity, comfort, and guidance in life as well as in death. Appealing to Mary as the “comfort of the desolate,” she emphasizes her status as an individual sufferer seeking the solace of faith. It is directly after this moment of acknowledgement that the bilingual section of the passage begins. The nun reinforces her plea for “solacium tue materne consolacionis” in Low German; here as elsewhere, her utterances employ a more limited vocabulary, the tradition of devotional writing in the vernacular being much less extensive. The linguistic intensity combines with a heightened sense of festiveness in the decoration: on the right hand-side of the two angels who play and sing in the margin of fol. 67v, there is a large golden initial, carefully protected from scratches by a piece of cloth (see figure 1.20). This initial opens a series of addresses to Mary, who is greeted with the same “*Advenisti!*” employed in HHL2 for greeting the Risen Christ on Easter day (see Joseph McLaurin Leake’s contribution).

63 See Cantus Index, s.v. “602054a”

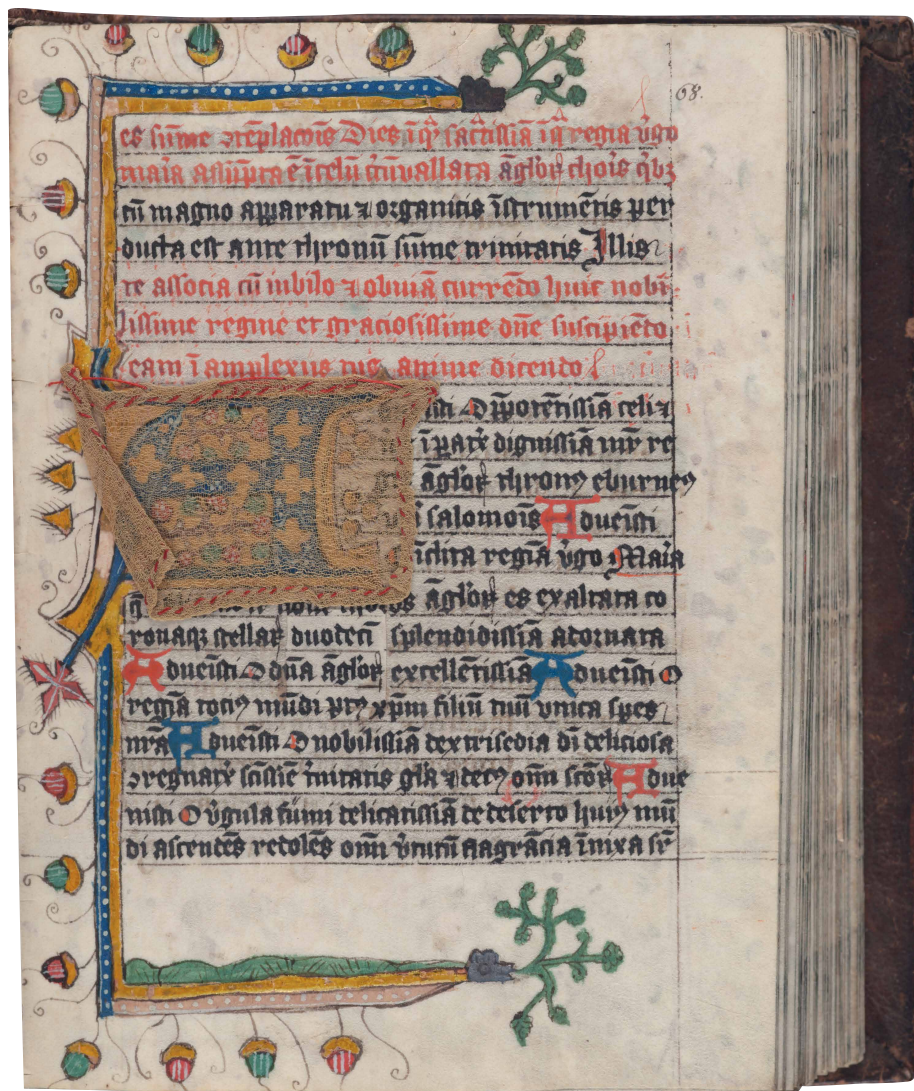


Figure 1.20. Kloster Medingen. *Antiphons and prayers for Marian feasts*. Initial A with sewn-in veil to protect the gold. MS Lat 395. fol. 68r.

The passages from HHLI weave the two languages together more tightly than the Low German Easter rhymes published by the Germanists of the nineteenth century. Rather than occurring at the level of complete sentences, the code-switching takes place at the level of inseparable phrases. It rather compares to the language of the letters from Lüne, such as the letter by the abbess of Medingen to her nieces in Lüne.⁶⁴ Latin phrases that surrounded the nuns in the convent are inserted in Latin. In the Low German of the lay society from which she came, the abbess applied the language of daily life that she and her niece would have learned as children and spoken with their relatives. In a community that thought, prayed, spoke, and listened in both languages, the alternation may best be understood as a matter of phrasing in one hybrid language that was used in the monastic community.

In similar ways, the bilingual prayer books from Medingen position the nuns as mediators between the Church and lay society. Linguistically and intellectually, the creator of the selected passage from HHLI lived between two different worlds. The passage from HHLI, which presents us with a nun moving with ease between Latin and German, reveals her comfort with her position in this liminal space. Well-educated enough in Latin to pastiche, and likely even compose, material in order to express sophisticated theological concepts and serve her devotional needs, she also utilizes her first language, the vernacular, to intensify her closeness to the divine. In drawing on the linguistic resources of both Latin and Low German, the nun assimilated the two in an integrated idiom with which she could best be understood in her own monastic community.

5. MAPPING THE MANUSCRIPT JOURNEY

Micah James Goodrich

Mapping is an indispensable tool for medievalists interested in manuscripts and their journeys. With the rise in digital humanities, there is various software available for mapping. For creating the maps now online at <<http://medingen.seh.ox.ac.uk>>, I used Google Maps, Google Fusion Tables, CartoDB, and eSpatial. In order to effectively use these platforms, I had to create an Excel spreadsheet with the data I wanted to project. For the purposes of this project, I needed to acquire the coordinates (latitude/longitude) for each current manuscript location. In the cases of tracking the journeys of the two Houghton manuscripts, I also created two individual spreadsheets with coordinates of all locations where the manuscript had been (see figure 1.21). Another

64 Eva Schlotheuber, "Intellectual Horizons: Letters from a Northern German Convent," in *A Companion to Mysticism and Devotion in Northern Germany in the Late Middle Ages*, eds. Elizabeth Andersen, Henrike Lähnemann, and Anne Simon (Leiden: Brill Academic, 2014), 343–372.

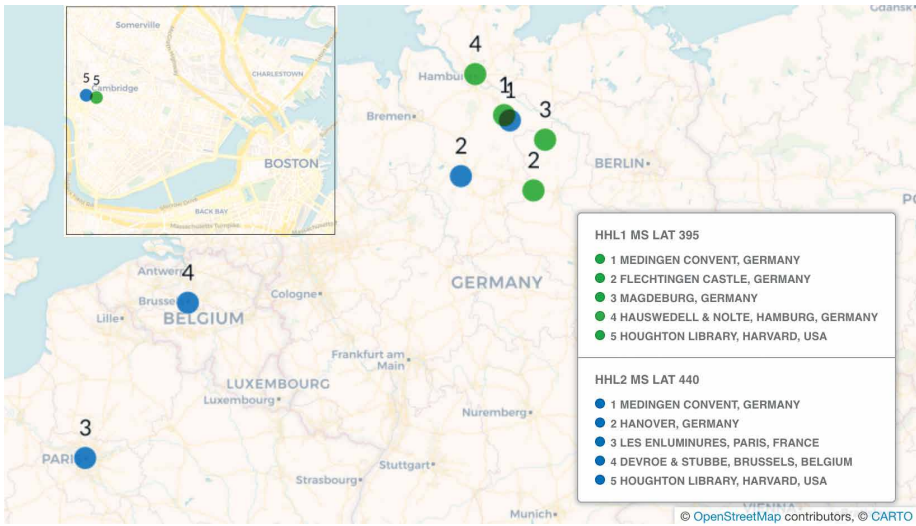


Figure 1.21. Map showing the journeys of HHL1 and HHL2. Created by Micah Goodrich.

new tool that has recently been launched and hosted at Harvard is WorldMap (<<http://worldmap.harvard.edu/>> [accessed March 6, 2019]). All of this software is open source, and in some cases, a paying option, with better analytic tools and mapping options, is available. In addition, advanced software requiring a registration payment, such as ESRI ArcGIS, IDRISI (Clark University), and GeoSoft (to name a few) is also available. In order to use any of these tools effectively, the researcher must have (at the minimum) the geographic coordinates of specific locations.

At the beginning of this project I set out to create a moving map. I envisioned a map that could show spatial progression over a simple timeline: This tool would be highly informative for manuscript transmission and dispersal, as the locations and dates associated with the journey of a manuscript often cover a wide range of time and space that is not necessarily intuitive. I attempted to use Histropedia, a new tool affiliated with Wikipedia (<<http://www.histropedia.com/>> [accessed March 6, 2019]). This program allows the user to input data from Wikipedia onto a movable timeline. While Histropedia is seemingly limited to the Wikipedia pages that it hosts, the concept could be applied to any set database of information, such as the Medingen manuscript database. Smaller projects could be conducted whereby a user captures screenshots of maps in image files (i.e., .jpg) and creates a YouTube video of a series of static images, yet the lack of interactivity in this model takes away from the potential for visualizing

the movement of these manuscripts across Europe and throughout the world. Another way of visualizing the geographic spread of manuscripts could be done through Google Maps and Google Fusion Tables. These tools require coordinates to generate points, but because these platforms are joined under Google Chrome, the user may export the data and maps to Google Earth to visualize the material on a 3-D spherical earth. While there are many options available for researchers, more work can be done in the humanities to create user-friendly mapping software for medievalists, who inevitably deal with gaps in the information of ownership of manuscripts.

Contributors

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