

# The Beckers Connection

## *Some Thoughts on the Latin Books of Hours in the Soeterbeeck Collection*

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Given that this special issue of *Queeste* is entirely devoted to research on historical libraries, it may be worthwhile to pay some attention to the Soeterbeeck Collection, the largest historical book collection preserved at Nijmegen University Library.<sup>1</sup> The collection consists of what remained of the old part of the library of the convent of Soeterbeeck, near Ravenstein, when the last remaining canonesses regular moved to a nursing home for elderly religious in 1997. It comprises almost fifty late-medieval manuscripts, more than thirty manuscript fragments (excluding those still attached to other books), and circa six hundred books from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> About 150 of these books are liturgical in nature; the rest is overwhelmingly devotional. In its present shape, the collection clearly betrays the influence of historical circumstances, which have been affecting it from the convent's foundation in 1448 to the present day. It has shrunk as a result of at least one fire, repeated looting and theft, and continuous destruction and reuse by the sisters. However, it has expanded as well, not only by regular means such as gift-giving and purchase, but also because of Soeterbeeck's amalgamation with two other communities, each of which brought some of their books with them.<sup>3</sup> Because of this convoluted history, the Soeterbeeck Collection provides a unique opportunity for research into the ways historical book collections function and develop.

This article presents some examples taken from the Soeterbeeck Collection of the possibilities as well as the challenges of studying old books in the context of the collection they are or were originally part of. Its methodological background is formed by an approach to historical libraries which could be characterised as the archaeology of a book collection. Although it is not possible to fully implement this approach in this article, it should be briefly described.<sup>4</sup> A historical book collection could be regarded as an archaeological site, in which the books represent individual digs. Like an excavation, a used book is layered, in the sense that it consists of elements which have succeeded each other in time and space, from the book's original text and decoration

**1** I warmly thank Hans Kienhorst and Renée Gabriël, both of Radboud University Nijmegen, for their generous help in the preparation of this article.

**2** The manuscripts and fragments have been catalogued by Kienhorst (2005b; 2009). An inventory of the entire Soeterbeeck Collection, prepared by Diana Denissen, Anouk Geurts and Gaby Kloosman, is available at the website of the collection, <<http://www.extern.ubn.ru.nl/soeterbeeck/sign.php>>.

**3** On the history of Soeterbeeck and its library, see Frenken 1931–1932 and Peijnenburg 1982a and 1982b. The two convents which amalgamated with Soeterbeeck were Sint-Annenborch and Mariëndaal (see below).

**4** The archaeological approach to historical book collections is currently being developed by the present author as part of a doctoral research project at Radboud University Nijmegen, entitled *Books for the Divine Office: A Contextual Analysis* (2012–2016). A somewhat outdated description is provided by Oosterman (2011), but a more up-to-date discussion will appear in a forthcoming article by Kienhorst.

to later annotations and other textual or material traces of use that appear in them, including those of restoration and reuse. In a library like that of Soeterbeeck, many of whose old books continued to be used in one way or another for centuries, reliable traces of use such as notes in the same hand are likely to appear in more than one book, thereby representing a stratigraphic unit which potentially connects a large part of the collection. By describing units like these, the stratification and interconnectedness of an entire collection become visible. These connections between books are, in turn, part of a more elaborate network which also includes the persons who left the traces and the circumstances in which they did so. Describing and analysing these intricate relationships is to consider books as part of a larger context. Many of the issues raised by this diachronic and contextual approach to the Soeterbeeck Collection will therefore be relevant to the field of library research in general. This is the reason why, although most of the books in the Soeterbeeck Collection as well as the overwhelming majority of the traces of use that appear in them are post-medieval, they still seem pertinent to the study of medieval libraries.

### The Latin Books of Hours in the Soeterbeeck Collection, with Special Reference to IV 47

The kinds of questions the Soeterbeeck Collection evokes as well as its stratification and interconnectedness are excellently illustrated by the Latin books of hours.<sup>5</sup> In its present state, the collection includes seven Latin *horaria*: five late-medieval manuscripts (IV 46–50 (Hs 456–460)) and two printed books (III 146 and IV 136).<sup>6</sup> There are also four manuscript fragments which might once have been part of complete books of hours.<sup>7</sup>

5 The collection also includes two books of hours in Dutch: V 163 (Leonardus Marius, *Kerkelijke Getyden Van De Hoogwaardige Moeder Gods*. t'Antwerpen: By P.M., 1651) and V 240 (Arnoldus ab Ischa, *De seven getyden van Onse L. Vrouwe*. T'Antwerpen: By Hieronymus Verdussen, 1720). V 69, a copy of Ludovicus Jacobi's translation of *Het leven van P. Balthazar Alvarez* (T'Antwerpen: By Guiliam Lesteens, 1639), includes parchment fragments from a copy of Geert Grote's translation reused as patch-liners (cf. Kienhorst 2009, 110–111; Van Wijk 1940, 50, 153, 158). For completeness' sake it should also be mentioned that Soeterbeeck's old library included at least two more books of hours (one being a combination of a printed book and a manuscript and the other a printed book), whose language is unknown. These came into possession of the sisters Theresia and Emilia Smits van Oyen at the end of the nineteenth century and were sold at auction on 14 December 1904, after Theresia's death (BNM, Cat. 250, p. 7, nos. 68–69; Frenken 1931–1932, 288). Both were sold to J.G. Roering Warmolts of Amsterdam (BNM, Cat. 250, facing p. 6), but their current location is unknown.

6 For brief descriptions of these books and their contents, see the appendix. Soeterbeeck's late-medieval manuscripts were given additional signatures when they were transferred to Nijmegen University Library (Hs 446–491), but for the sake of clarity and continuity the main text will henceforth only refer to them by the signatures they had at Soeterbeeck Priory. The community stored its old books in three adjacent cases (numbered III, IV and V), distinct from the modern books, and the signatures reflect this distribution. The threefold arrangement must have been implemented between 1954 and 1958, first because the signatures which reflect it also appear on books from the library of the convent of Mariëndaal (e.g., IV 17 (Hs 451) and IV 72 (Hs 463)), which amalgamated with Soeterbeeck in 1954 (Peijnenburg 1982b, 67), and second because a copy of provisional library regulations dated 1958 makes mention of it (no. 537 in the archives of Soeterbeeck currently preserved at the Erfgoedcentrum Nederlands Kloosterleven, inventoried by Van Gils (2009)). For a concordance of the Soeterbeeck signatures with the Nijmegen signatures, see Kienhorst 2009, 117–119.

7 IV 85 (Hs 476), which includes part of the Office of the Dead (noted), IV 91 (Hs 482), which includes the Office

The Latin books of hours are connected to several other books in the collection in an interesting way, as one of them bears traces of use by Arnoldus Beckers, canon regular of the convent of Gaesdonck (near Goch) and rector of Soeterbeek from 1772 to 1810.<sup>8</sup> Because he wrote his name in various books of the collection, Beckers' hand can be easily identified, and even a cursory examination shows that it appears in many more books.<sup>9</sup> His notes, in other words, represent an extensive stratigraphic unit, which reveals that he was involved with Soeterbeek's library on at least three levels. First, he expanded it slightly by writing or contributing to some books himself.<sup>10</sup> Second, he appears to have taken part in managing the convent's book collection, assigning some books to individual sisters and to himself, and writing in others that they belonged to the convent of Soeterbeek in general.<sup>11</sup> Third, and perhaps most interestingly, he was also concerned with the contents of some of the books, identifying texts in the margins, translating or paraphrasing Latin passages and implementing textual changes.<sup>12</sup> Beckers' unit also extends to one of the books of hours mentioned above; traces of use that seem to be indicative of activities on the second and third levels appear in IV 47.

IV 47 is a book of hours dated to circa 1525–1530 and decorated by the Brethren of the Common Life in 's-Hertogenbosch. Its provenance is revealed by its contents, for it includes, as a later insertion, the profession formula of Sister Francisca de Loe (ff. 13–14), who lived in the convent of Onze Lieve Vrouwe in de Hage in Helmond circa 1540.<sup>13</sup> When the Guelderian field marshal Maarten van Rossum threatened to attack this convent in 1543, its buildings were burned down to prevent him from using them

of the Dead as well as the daily commemoration and a litany, IV 94 (Hs 484), which includes part of the Office of the Dead and the Hours of the Virgin (cf. n. 28), and Hs Fr 24, which includes part of the Penitential Psalms.

**8** Peijnenburg 1982b, 45–51; Van Dijk 1984a; 1984b.

**9** Beckers wrote down his name in IV 6 (Hs 447), IV 7 (Hs 448), IV 55, IV 63 and IV 102. The archives also include several records signed by him (e.g., nos. 3 and 183).

**10** IV 55, IV 58 and Mater 5, which are entirely in Beckers' hand, and IV 10b, to which he contributed. He also wrote and contributed to a number of documents kept in the archives; most conspicuous among those being two versions of a chronicle of the convent's history (nos. 4 (pp. 1–18) and 45 (pp. 1–30)). Beckers' scribal activities appear to have been of particular importance to the community of Soeterbeek. In his continuation of one of Beckers' chronicles (archives no. 4, pp. 19–36), Rector Henricus de Bruijn (1842–1844) mentions, upon reporting Beckers' death, that *Zijn Eenu. heeft / onze Gemeente vele geschriften / nagelaten, en was daarin onver/moeijd werkzaam* ('his reverence left many writings to our community, in which he was tirelessly engaged', p. 19b), and in a list of rectors appended to a seventeenth-century copy of the convent's statutes, Prioress Maria Verhoeven (1840–1853) writes that he served the convent well, *besonde door syne schijfte Voor de koor* ('especially by his writings for the choir', archives no. 92, f. 51v). A list of rectors in a nineteenth-century memorial book, finally, says that he *heeft vele geschreven* ('wrote many things', archives of the canonesses regular of Windesheim no. 117, p. 24).

**11** Sisters to which Beckers is known to have assigned books are Prioress Theresia Heijnen (IV 55 and V 208), Joanna Francisca Lips (III 114, III 116 and IV 64), Constantia van Soelen (III 110, III 111 and III 135) and lay sister Barbara Teunissen (III 150). Books which he assigned to himself include IV 63 and IV 102. He also left his ownership mark in several books that are currently part of the library of the convent of Sint Aegten in Sint Agatha: A-0706 and B-3361, B-3362, B-3364 (1), B-3364 (2), B-3365, B-3367, B-3369 (1), B-3369 (2) and B3369 (3). He assigned III 12, III 13, IV 8, IV 38, IV 58, IV 103, V 159 and Sint Agatha, Library Convent Sint Aegten, A-0925 and C-0707 to the convent of Soeterbeek in general.

**12** Textual emendation of this kind is explicitly associated with the rector in the statutes referred to above, which state that *Geen suster en mach corrigeren de / boecken sonder oorlooff des bichtua/ders noch veranderen bij haer seluen* ('no sister can correct or adapt the books of her own accord, without the confessor's permission', archives no. 92, f. 18r; cf. Frenken 1931–1932, 230).

**13** Kienhorst 2005b, 76–77.

as an operating base, and the sisters moved to the convent of Sint-Annenborch in Rosmalen. During the Eighty Years' War, this community took refuge in a Beghards' convent in 's-Hertogenbosch, where it fell apart in 1613. Seven of the remaining sisters moved to Soeterbeek and took several books with them, one of which seems to have been IV 47.<sup>14</sup> Besides the tell-tale profession formula, the book contains a liturgical calendar (ff. 11r-12v), the Hours of the Virgin with a large collection of commemorations of saints (ff. 15r-67v), the Seven Penitential Psalms with the Litany of the Saints (ff. 68r-82r), the Office of the Dead (ff. 83r-111r), the daily commemoration of the dead (ff. 111r-114r), and a fragment of the Commendation of the Dead (f. 114r-v).<sup>15</sup> The text corresponds to the Use of the Congregation of Windesheim, whose liturgy the Chapter of Venlo, to which both Onze Lieve Vrouwe in de Hage and Soeterbeek belonged, is likely to have used.<sup>16</sup>

The part of IV 47 which seems to show traces of Beckers' second level of involvement, his management of Soeterbeek's library, is the binding, made of brown leather over cardboard and decorated with a blind-tooled frame. It is clearly not medieval, which raises the question when the book was rebound. Its plainness makes it difficult to date the present binding with any degree of precision, but the book's context provides safer footing. A *terminus post quem* is provided by marginal notes in Beckers' hand, which appear at several points in the book. Some of these notes have been partly cut off. Since this must have happened when the book was rebound, the re-binding must date from after 1772. In that year, Beckers became rector of Soeterbeek and would first have been able to add his notes. Turning to the *terminus ante quem*, the rebinding cannot have happened long after Beckers' death in 1810, because the convent was closed down and its possessions confiscated by the Napoleonic government in 1812. This year marked the beginning of an extended period of great difficulties for the community of Soeterbeek, during the first years of which the sisters were scattered and mostly lived with their families. They already returned to their convent in 1813-1814, but were not permitted to take in new novices and continued to live in great poverty until this ban was lifted by William II in 1840.<sup>17</sup> It is unlikely that the sisters had IV 47 rebound during this period, and there are reasons to believe that it did not happen long afterwards. On the second flyleaf at the front of the book there is a note saying that it was meant *tot gebriek Voor Sr. Maria Magdalena Verhoeven*. This note, in

<sup>14</sup> Van Dijk 2012, 231; Van Hoeck 1936-1937, 170-176.

<sup>15</sup> On the contents of books of hours from the Lower Rhine area, see Gorissen 1968, 65.

<sup>16</sup> On the liturgy of the Chapter of Venlo, see Van Zitteren 2009, 21-22. IV 47 can be identified as corresponding to the Use of Windesheim on the basis of the criteria for attributing the Office of the Dead and the Hours of the Virgin provided by Gorissen (1968, 75, 104). All but one of the other Latin books of hours in the Soeterbeek Collection follow the Windesheim Use as well, and the textual variants which they contain are not mentioned by Gorissen as being distinctive. The only major difference is that Gorissen presents Matins according to the Windesheim Use as containing three lessons (1968, 104), whereas the medieval manuscripts all have nine; the six additional lessons were added to both printed books at a later stage. The only book of hours which did not originally follow the Use of Windesheim is III 146, which was produced at Venice and adhered to the Use of Rome (according to the criteria provided by Gorissen (1968, 72)). This book was manually adapted to the Use of Windesheim at a later stage.

<sup>17</sup> Peijnenburg 1982a, 52-53; 1982b, 54-55. The financial difficulties which the community suffered during this period are emphasised by Rector De Bruijn, who wrote that *wij heb/ben ons toen in alles veel moeten / bezuinigen* ('we had to cut back a lot on everything then', archives no. 4, p. 23a, emphasis original).

Verhoeven's own hand, is dated to 1840.<sup>18</sup> This seems to indicate that Verhoeven came into possession of the manuscript in this year, which is also when she was elected prioress.<sup>19</sup> The book contains several more notes in Verhoeven's hand, however, such as the page numbers 1-57 in the corners of ff. 15r-43r. Contrary to what happened to Beckers' notes, none of these numbers have been cut off, and some of them have been written remarkably close to the text, all of which indicates that they were added *after* the pages had been cut. Assuming that the book was paginated circa 1840 (the date of the ownership note), the rebinding is likely to have taken place between 1772 and circa 1840.<sup>20</sup> It may have happened around the time when the book passed to Verhoeven, but the long period of hardship which preceded her election, during a stage in Beckers' rectorate after he had left his notes in the book, is more likely. The conclusion that IV 47 was rebound in Beckers' time must remain tentative until more solid evidence is found. If true, however, it is likely that Beckers, being rector, was involved. Bringing circumstantial evidence to bear on the binding of IV 47, then, reveals the possibility that Beckers' management of the library was not restricted to adding ownership and library notes, but may have had a material aspect as well. To put it in archaeological terms, a contextual approach to the book's rebinding reveals that it probably belongs to Beckers' stratigraphic unit, significantly widening its scope.

### Textual Emendations in the Books of Hours in the Soeterbeek Collection

The above discussion of the binding of IV 47 referred to notes in Beckers' hand and these provide an excellent opportunity for considering his connection with this book on the third level, that of the text. Beckers' notes, which are entirely restricted to the Hours of the Virgin, are mostly self-explanatory. They include the addition of a suffrage to St Anthony and the expansion of texts only given in abbreviated form by the scribe, probably for ease of use.<sup>21</sup> However, the significance of the texts which appear in the lower margin of f. 23r and in the outer margin of f. 26v (see Table 1) is not immediately apparent; it is not clear from the book itself where they fit in or why they

**18** 'For the use of Sister Maria Magdalena Verhoeven.' Given that Beckers added ownership notes to books for several sisters (cf. n. 11), the possibility should be considered that the ownership note in IV 47 was not written by Verhoeven herself but by someone else. The diocesan archives in 's-Hertogenbosch, however, preserve a letter in the same hand, dated to 12 January 1843 and signed by Verhoeven (not inventoried), proving that the ownership note in IV 47 is indeed her own.

**19** Sluijters, Elemans & Neijenhuis 1982, 185. Verhoeven had already owned other books before she became prioress, for in all other books in the collection containing her ownership notes (III 146, one of the printed books of hours mentioned above, IV 39, IV 43, IV 44 and V 57), the attribution is modified by the statement that it is only to last *soo lang alst de / Overste belieft* ('for as long as the prioress allows it', V 57, front flyleaf, recto). This means that she obtained these books prior to her own election, and that it is likely that she came into possession of IV 47 afterwards.

**20** In any event, the notes cannot have been added any later than 1853, the year Verhoeven died (Sluijters, Elemans & Neijenhuis 1982, 185). This means that the rebinding of IV 47 definitely took place between 1772 and 1853.

**21** The new suffrage, added to those already present (the Holy Cross, St Augustine, St Gertrude and All Saints), appears in the lower margins of ff. 35v-38r. The expansions occur in the outer margins of f. 36r (versicle of the suffrage to All Saints at Lauds and Vespers), 40r (doxology of the responsory at Prime), 43r (versicle at Terce), 45r (versicle at Sext), 46v (versicle at None), 49v (doxology of the responsory at Vespers).

are there. A comparison of manuscript IV 47 with the other books of hours containing all or part of the Hours of the Virgin (III 146, IV 46, IV 48, fragment IV 94 and IV 136) makes clear that they must be replacement texts for the blessings before the fifth and seventh lessons at Matins, even though the original texts have not been deleted. In IV 46, a different hand (with less knowledge of Latin) added the same texts as Beckers did in IV 47. However, rather than placing them in the margins, this person wrote them on small pieces of paper with which he or she had first covered the original readings, leaving no room for uncertainty. In this way, IV 46 elucidates the nature of Beckers' stratigraphic unit in IV 47.

The ramifications of these and other textual emendations appearing in the Hours of the Virgin will be considered in greater detail below. Here it should be noted, however, that the fact that Beckers added replacement texts in this book is in itself noteworthy, as it widens the scope of his stratigraphic unit in very much the same way as does the binding. As was mentioned above, Beckers made textual emendations to several books in the collection, but the notes which belong to this category are most prominent in Soeterbeeck's antiphonals and otherwise have only been identified in liturgical books.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, existing descriptions of Beckers' editorial activities only mention his involvement with this genre.<sup>23</sup> The fact, however, that Beckers made similar emendations to the Hours of the Virgin in IV 47, a book of hours, shows that his interests were broader and that he also occupied himself with one text in at least one paraliturgical book.<sup>24</sup> As such, IV 47 sheds new light on Beckers' textual activities, modifying our understanding of the liturgical aspect of his unit.

Returning to the textual emendations just touched upon, it should be noted that the presence in IV 47 and IV 46 of replacement texts for the blessings before two of the lessons at Matins contrasts with IV 48 and fragment IV 94, which already had the replacement text originally.<sup>25</sup> The fact that the original texts of these two manuscripts did not need replacing makes it tempting to suppose that Beckers and the person responsible for the changes in IV 46 intended to bring the text in their books in accordance with the other Books of Hours. Indeed, this hypothesis appears to be supported by the fact that, like IV 47, IV 46 was decorated by the Brethren of the Common Life

<sup>22</sup> When it comes to antiphonals, Beckers' notes are most prominent in IV 6 (Hs 447), IV 7 (Hs 448), IV 25 (Hs 454) and Leeuwarden, Tresoar, PBF 6168 hs and Tilburg, University Library, KHS [28], two antiphonals that have been alienated from Soeterbeeck's library. They also appear in IV 8, IV 15 (Hs 449) and IV 22 (Hs 453), though far less prominently. Beckers seems to have attempted to adapt these books to the Roman Use of his days. His hand has also been identified in IV 52 (Hs 462), a liturgical miscellany, IV 53, the remnants of a printed copy of the Roman Missal (Antverpiæ: Ex Officina Petri & Ioannis Bellerorum ac Gerardi Wolsschati, 1619), IV 60 (Antverpiæ: Ex Typographia Plantiniana Balthazaris Moreti, 1696) and IV 65 (Antverpiæ: Ex Architypographia Plantiniana, 1757), two copies of the Roman Diurnal, and Utrecht, Rijksmuseum Het Catharijneconvent, ABM h61, a fifteenth-century gradual also alienated from the collection.

<sup>23</sup> Oosterman 2011, 80; Van Dijk 1984b, 249; 2000, 68; 2012, 229.

<sup>24</sup> In fact, just like Beckers' hand only appears in a specific part (the Hours of the Virgin) of a single book of hours (IV 47), he only adapted a certain number of the convent's antiphonals. A comparison of his activities in the two kinds of books seems to be called for.

<sup>25</sup> In the two printed books of hours these texts (with the revised reading) were added later (on the third page of a bifolium added between pp. 16-17 and the first page of a bifolium added between pp. 22-23 in III 146 and on the recto of the second and third pages added at the back of the book in IV 136). Originally, these books only included three lessons for Matins in the Hours of the Virgin (cf. n. 16).



in 's-Hertogenbosch and therefore seems to have a Helmond provenance, whereas IV 48 was decorated by the canons regular of the convent of Mariënhege in Woensel and may have been produced for Soeterbeeck.<sup>26</sup> The provenance of IV 94 is unknown, but the parallel between the text and the provenance of the other books has led to the conjecture that the changes to the blessings in IV 46 and IV 47 were part of a larger project to adapt these books of hours to a 'Soeterbeeck-norm'.<sup>27</sup> Plausible as this sounds, closer study of the various changes which were made to the Hours of the Virgin in all books containing them shows that this cannot have been the case. The bewildering number of adaptations and replacements means that it is impossible to conclude that the text of Hours of the Virgin in IV 46 and IV 47 was systematically adapted to that of IV 48.

Space permits only one example to demonstrate that IV 48 was not the source for all changes in IV 46 and IV 47, although there are many more. The first *in seculum* in the sixth verse of Psalm 148, which is used as the first half of the fifth psalm at Lauds (see Table 2), was changed (apparently by one and the same person, though not by Beckers) to *in eternum* in IV 47, IV 48 and IV 136. This did not happen, however, in III 146, which already had the new reading originally, or in IV 46, which simply retains the old reading.<sup>28</sup> In this case, IV 48 clearly did not represent the norm to which IV 46 and IV 47 were adapted. Because the text of IV 46 was not changed at all, whether intentionally or through an inadvertent omission, the result is textual disparity rather than unity. This example shows, then, that, contrary to what appeared to be the case on the basis of the blessings at Matins, the hypothesis of an adaptation to a dominant Soeterbeeck-norm is not tenable, or at least that it does not explain all textual adaptations which appear in these books.

All books with the Hours of the Virgin, including the printed ones, contain numerous changes which must have been intended to bring the text in line with one or more other books in the collection. As was demonstrated above, however, not all of these changes can be explained by means of a single overriding principle. The first and most straightforward reason for this is that there are several conflicting layers of change. Emendations were made by various persons, in several stages and in all possible directions. This means that, even though it is usually possible to identify likely directions or even possible sources for individual adaptations or small groups, it is very difficult to formulate, on the basis of this information, any solid principles which apply on a more general level.<sup>29</sup> Not a single of the surviving copies of the Hours of the

<sup>26</sup> Kienhorst 2005b, 74–75, 78–79; Van Dijk 2012, 229. From 1452 to 1744, Soeterbeeck's rectors were all canons regular from Mariënhege, and it is very likely that they provided the sisters with books from their scriptorium.

<sup>27</sup> Oosterman 2011, 77–78.

<sup>28</sup> This psalm does not occur in IV 94, which only includes the fourth to ninth lessons at Matins and associated texts (ff. 15v–18r) as far as the Hours of the Virgin are concerned. It is likely that these texts were meant to supplement a copy of the Hours which (like III 146 and IV 136) only included three lessons, either in the part of IV 94 that is now lost or in another volume. No such manuscript survives in the Soeterbeeck Collection.

<sup>29</sup> E.g., most of the changes to IV 48 and IV 136 appear in the original text of III 146, but not all of them (cf. n. 30). When the original text of IV 47 deviates from that of the other manuscripts and IV 136, it is sometimes emended, but it is occasionally also left as is. In the latter case it always corresponds to changes made to IV 136, but IV 136 also contains several other changes. Statements like these could be multiplied, but a systematic analysis of these internal connections is not possible within this article.

Virgin in the Soeterbeeck Collection served as the mother copy for all or even most emendations appearing in them. The second reason why it is impossible to find a single explanation for all changes to the Hours of the Virgin is that there are replacements which do not appear in the original text of any of the surviving books, which means that at least one of the sources of some emendations is now lost.<sup>30</sup> The surviving sources simply do not provide the information that is necessary to explain the motivations behind or even identify the sources for all emendations.

### The Use of the Books of Hours in the Soeterbeeck Collection

An important topic that is closely related to the textual emendations to the Hours of the Virgin discussed above is the way in which the books of hours in the Soeterbeeck Collection were actually used. The adaptations, which must be attempts at textual unity, seem to indicate some kind of communal use. In itself, this is hardly surprising, as late-medieval convents often recited the Hours of the Virgin communally in choir, and this will have been the case at Soeterbeeck as well.<sup>31</sup> The question is, however, what position the Hours of the Virgin occupied in relation to the principal form of communal prayer, the canonical office. The two main investigators of Soeterbeeck's history, Adrianus Frenken and Jan Peijnenburg, both argue that, after a large fire had destroyed the sisters' oldest, probably Windesheim, breviaries in 1539, the community temporarily replaced the canonical office with the Hours of the Virgin, probably expanding it with the *proprium sanctorum* of the Congregation of Windesheim. They claim that this situation lasted until 1906, when a new version of the statutes dictated that the sisters were to use the Roman Breviary with the proper of saints of their Order, that is of the canons regular of the Lateran, which had officially been adopted by the Congregation of Windesheim in 1731.<sup>32</sup>

It is necessary to examine Frenken and Peijnenburg's reconstruction of events in some detail, for the proper understanding of Soeterbeeck's (para)liturgical books and their traces of use depends on its validity. Already upon superficial examination the hypothesis that the sisters did not say the canonical office for the entire period from 1539 to 1906 is met with at least two significant difficulties. First, there is the presence of more than a hundred books for the canonical office in the Soeterbeeck Collection and the many traces of use that they contain, which continue at least into the nineteenth century. Although these traces do not constitute absolute proof, the likeli-

<sup>30</sup> E.g., the collect at Lauds in IV 136 (f. d6r), where *futura* [...] *leticia* was changed to *eterna* [...] *leticia*, whereas all other books except III 146 retain *futura*. III 146 at first had a completely different collect here, but the replacement text has *aeterna* (facing p. 52). Another example is the psalm antiphon at Vespers in IV 47 (f. 49v), where *innupta virgo* was changed to *intacta virgo*, whereas all other books except for III 146 retain *innupta*. III 146 originally had an entirely different antiphon here, but the replacement text has *intacta* (p. 111).

<sup>31</sup> Harper 2001, 133. The seventeenth-century copy of the statutes of Soeterbeeck explicitly prescribes that both the Hours of the Virgin and the Office of the Dead be said in choir (archives no. 92, ff. 20v, 23v; cf. Frenken 1931-1932, 232, 236).

<sup>32</sup> Frenken 1931-1932, 197, n. 2; Peijnenburg 1982b, 56. For the relevant passage in the 1906 statutes, see archives no. 105, pp. 43-44.



est interpretation by far is that the books they appear in were used *liturgically*, and any other interpretation would need to explain what other kind of use the traces do indicate.<sup>33</sup> Second, historical sources indicate that, for much of its history, Soeterbeeck was spiritually flourishing despite its material difficulties and that the choir sisters, with whom the community's liturgical duties primarily rested, were usually supported by a moderate number of servants and auxiliary sisters of several classes.<sup>34</sup> These circumstances suggest that the choir sisters were both able and disposed to say more than just the Hours of the Virgin. It would seem that for much of the period between 1539 and 1906 they did not only have access to the material that was needed for reciting the canonical office but that they are likely to have done so as well.

Appearances being against the hypothesis that the canonical office was completely replaced by the Hours of the Virgin for almost four hundred years, it is necessary to turn to a careful examination of the historical documents on which it is based. Most of the information provided there turns out to be indecisive. The first source referred to by Frenken and Peijnenburg is the report of a visitation of Soeterbeeck by Michael Ophovius, bishop of 's-Hertogenbosch, on 22 October 1627, in which the community reportedly is said to pray the Hours of the Virgin.<sup>35</sup> However, neither historian provides the actual text of this report.<sup>36</sup> Because its current whereabouts are unknown, it is impossible to determine whether it simply mentions the Hours or the Virgin or if its phrasing actually rules out the possibility that the sisters also said the canonical office.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Particularly indicative of actual liturgical use is the frequent addition, in various hands, of an identification of the psalm tone that is to be used in, for example, antiphonal IV 7, as this implies that it was used to sing from over an extended period of time.

<sup>34</sup> The auxiliary sisters at Soeterbeeck included converse sisters and donates, the difference between whom is that the latter did not take the religious vows and were not encloistered. The convent also housed lay servants and so-called commensals, who are probably to be identified with the inhabitants of the boarding school which the community is known to have run in the seventeenth century (Frenken 1931-1932, 185-190). On the convent's spiritual and financial state from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, see Frenken 1931-1932, 194-202 and Peijnenburg 1982a, 35-40, 46-47.

<sup>35</sup> Frenken 1931-1932, 201; Peijnenburg 1982b, 56.

<sup>36</sup> The visitation documents that Frenken (1931-1932) does present contain several interesting references to liturgical practices at Soeterbeeck, but none of these are conclusive. For example, after having visited the convent on 8 May 1613, bishop Masius ordained that *allen religieusen sullen vervolligen allen die Getijden van den Godsdienste* ('all religious should pray all Hours of the Faith in their entirety', Frenken 1931-1932, 271). It is tempting to identify the Hours prescribed by the Faith with the canonical office, and to argue that Masius' ordination means that in 1613 not all (choir) sisters faithfully prayed the full round, but from this it cannot be concluded that the canonical office was not recited at all. Another example is provided by the words of sister Maria Kamphuys, known to have been precentrix in 1632 (Frenken 1931-1932, 296), on the occasion of bishop Zoelsius' visitation of 25 July 1615: *rogat quatenus Patri detur socius, ne aliquando Sacro careant et Officio; dicit posse ordinari, ut Parvae Horae singulis diebus decantentur* ('she asks how long the socius be given to the rector, so that they [the sisters] may not at some time be deprived of Holy Mass and the Office; she says that it can be arranged that the *Parvae Horae* be sung on all days', Frenken 1931-1932, 272). The meaning of these words is unclear. Did the rector indeed pray the Office together with the sisters, as seems to be implied? Are the *Parvae Horae* the Little Hours (*horae minores*, Prime, Terce, Sext and None) of the canonical office, or, which seems more likely, are they the Little Office (*officium parvum*) of the Virgin, or other paraliturgical Hours? Whatever the case, it seems improbable that the word *Officium*, used in connection with Mass and without further specification, refers to such a paraliturgical office, and, although it is not absolutely certain, the text would therefore seem to indicate that in 1615, at least, the sisters were saying the canonical office.

<sup>37</sup> According to Jef van Gils, archivist of the diocese of 's-Hertogenbosch, the visitation report is not to be found in the diocesan archives (personal communication), and it is not part of the archives of Soeterbeeck preserved at

The second source are two versions of a chronicle of Soeterbeeck by Rector Beckers, in which he describes the fire of 1539 and adds that *de Religieuse [...] haare Roomse bevrienen [...] hebben ver/loren; waar uijt claerlijk blijkt, / dat zij voor eerst voor deezen brand de Romeinse getijden hebben ge/leesen*.<sup>38</sup> Given that the first edition of the Roman Breviary was only published in 1568, Beckers' source is definitely wrong in calling the sisters' breviaries Roman rather than Windesheim.<sup>39</sup> His report is nonetheless important because its phrasing seems to imply that the situation before the fire contrasted not only with the situation directly afterwards but also with that in Beckers' own days. However, because he does not say what office the sisters prayed after the fire, it is not clear which contrast Beckers wants to stress: the one between the supposed adherence to the Roman Use prior to 1539 versus the observance of another Use, presumably that of Windesheim, at a later date, or the one between the canonical office and the Hours of the Virgin, which is Frenken and Peijnenburg's reading. Beckers' statement, therefore, is not of much use in determining the situation after the fire.

The twentieth-century sources are equally unhelpful. The second of two continuations of one of Beckers' chronicles reads, in an unidentified but modern hand, that *Van 1906 af baden de Zusters / weer het Romeinsch brevier / volgens de oude Instelling; haar / proprium is sedert dien tijd dat / van St. Jan v. Lateranen*.<sup>40</sup> The use of *Romeinsch* here implies that the former ordinance to which the sisters are said to have returned in 1906 must postdate 1568. However, even if the twentieth-century chronicler was merely perpetuating the mistake in Beckers' source and intended to refer to the situation prior to the fire of 1539, the text still does not mention what the sisters had been praying before 1906. The same is true for a decree issued by the Congregation of the Affairs of Religious in 1913, in which Soeterbeeck's use of the Roman Breviary with the proper of St John Lateran was ratified. A certified copy of this decree, preserved in the archives of Soeterbeeck, only stipulates *Ut [...] pergere liceat [...] sororibus de Deursen et de Ravenstein in recitatione divini Officii Canonorum regularium St Joannis Lateranensis*.<sup>41</sup> This does not reveal anything about what they had been doing before they started reciting this Office in 1906.

The sources of Frenken and Peijnenburg's hypothesis which remain to be discussed are the convent's statutes. As a source of information on actual practice, these texts should, of course, be approached with care, for they are highly formulaic, part of a fixed textual tradition and prescriptive rather than descriptive.<sup>42</sup> Even so, the statutes are indicative of what was at various times perceived to be the ideal which the community of Soeterbeeck should seek to attain, and for this reason it may be useful to

the Erfgoedcentrum (Van Gils 2009).

<sup>38</sup> 'The sisters lost their Roman Breviaries, which clearly indicates that they had originally, before this fire, been reciting the Roman office' (archives no. 4, p. 2b). The other, probably earlier, version of the chronicle has an almost identical text, which also mentions *de getijden van t Rooms officie* ('the hours according to the Roman office', no. 45, p. 5).

<sup>39</sup> On the Roman Breviary, see Harper 2001, 155–161.

<sup>40</sup> 'From 1906 onwards the Sisters have been praying the Roman Breviary again, according to the former ordinance. Their *proprium* has since been that of St John Lateran' (archives no. 4, p. 37a).

<sup>41</sup> 'That the sisters of Deursen and Ravenstein can continue the recital of the Divine Office of the canons regular of St John Lateran' (archives no. 86).

<sup>42</sup> On the textual tradition of which the statutes of Soeterbeeck are part, see Van Dijk 1982b.

discuss them. It has already been mentioned that the 1906 statutes prescribe the use of the Roman Breviary, and the same is true for a revised version dated 1929.<sup>43</sup> An older version of the statutes, probably issued in the middle of the nineteenth century, is equally clear, as it states that the choir sisters should *dagelijks, volgens / de fundatie van hunne godshuizen, en / om hunne previlegie in de plaats van de / Canonike getijden, de getijden van onze lieve / vrouw in het Latijn lezen*.<sup>44</sup> The explicitness of this regulation means that the sisters most likely did substitute the Hours of the Virgin for the canonical office between circa 1850 and 1906. Although this clears up the phrasing of the continuation of Beckers' chronicle, it still does not reveal anything about the preceding period. The nineteenth-century statutes, however, relied heavily on a still earlier version, the oldest surviving copy of which is dated to the seventeenth century. These statutes state, at the beginning of the chapter on the choir office:

Aensiende dat ootmoedich fundament, / ende priuilegie der susteren ende haere / Godtshuijse, soo sullen de susteren die te / choor gaen, dagelijckx ten gesetten tijden / deuotelijck naer Cloosters maniere, onser / Lieuer vrouwe getijden te choor lesen / int latijn, voor die canonick-lijcke getijden, / om hen mede te gelijcken de gewoonte / der heijliger kercke[.]<sup>45</sup>

Frenken, who edited this version of the statutes, interprets this text to mean that the sisters were to recite the Hours of the Virgin *instead of* the canonical office and therefore dates these statutes to after 1539.<sup>46</sup> Although this is possible, *voor* could in this case also mean *prior to*, in which case the sisters are instructed to say each of the Hours of the Virgin before the corresponding hour of the canonical office.<sup>47</sup> The nineteenth-century text is irrelevant here, for it merely reveals how *voor* in the older text was rendered in the middle of the nineteenth century, not what it meant originally. The wording of the above-quoted passage from the oldest statutes is ambivalent, and cannot be considered solid evidence that the sisters were supposed to restrict themselves

<sup>43</sup> Archives no. 112, p. 29.

<sup>44</sup> 'Daily, according to the foundation of their convent and because of their privilege, say the Hours of the Virgin in Latin instead of the canonical hours' (archives no. 98, pp. 30-31, cf. no. 100, p. 49). For the reasons for dating these statutes to circa 1850, see Van Dijk 1982b, 76-78.

<sup>45</sup> 'With an eye to the humble foundation and the privilege of the sisters and their convent, the choir sisters should daily, at fixed times and after the manner of a monastery, say the Hours of the Virgin in choir and in Latin *voor* the canonical hours, in order that they conform to the use of Holy Church' (archives no. 92, ff. 19v-20r, cf. Frenken 1931-1932, 232). On humility as the foundation of the Windesheim spirituality, see Scheepsma 1997, 131 and Van Dijk 2012, 228.

<sup>46</sup> Frenken 1931-1932, 232 n. 1.

<sup>47</sup> This is the most appropriate place to note that in the convent's foundation charter, dated 1454, John of Heinsberg, prince-bishop of Liège, stipulates that the sisters are held in *exordio assumpti / habitus horas beate virginis alta voce Ac deinde horas canonicas donec ad illas decantandum sese congruenter abilitauerint indies legere* ('in the beginning, when just having taken the habit, to daily read, in a loud voice, the Hours of the Blessed Virgin Mary and afterwards the canonical hours, until they will have enabled themselves to sing them harmoniously', archives no. 62). This text is open to several interpretations. Ludovicus van Miert (1921) takes it to mean that the sisters were to pray the Hours of the Virgin until they had mastered the canonical office, which they should start singing as soon as they were able to (149). It is also possible, however, to read the text as saying that the sisters should start by reading the Hours of the Virgin and the canonical office in succession and later switch to singing them both, which would correspond with the interpretation of the statutes as saying that the Hours of the Virgin should be said prior to the canonical office. Van Miert's explanation seems more natural, however, and although it is not known when the oldest statutes were originally composed, it would still seem that the texts are too far apart in time for the possible correspondence to be decisive.

to the Hours of the Virgin for the entire period between 1539 and the middle of the nineteenth century.

In fact, the remainder of the chapter on the choir office in the oldest version of the statutes provides an important argument *against* Frenken and Peijnenburg's interpretation. It consists of fairly elaborate and detailed instructions for the rituals to be observed in choir which not only seem to be more applicable to the canonical office than to the Hours of the Virgin, but also refer to various elements that are common in the canonical office but do not appear in the Hours of the Virgin at all. Mention is made, for example, of the use of the Athanasian Creed at Prime on Sundays, as well as of instances when a homily on the Gospel is read at Matins, neither of which ever happens during the Hours of the Virgin.<sup>48</sup> Granted, the sisters could simply have said the Creed by heart. Also, if it is true that the Hours of the Virgin were combined with the Windesheim or Lateran proper of saints, Gospel homilies could have been imported into Matins to replace the Marian texts whenever they occurred in the books from which the *proprium* was taken. However, the stopgap nature of these solutions only serves to highlight the practical difficulties of combining the Hours of the Virgin with texts intended for use in the canonical office. Soeterbeeck's library is known to have included a fairly large number of (almost exclusively seventeenth and eighteenth-century) copies of the proper of saints of Windesheim and St John Lateran, but it would be far easier to use these books in combination with (Roman) breviaries than with books of hours.<sup>49</sup> In short, far from supporting Frenken and Peijnenburg's reading of events, the oldest surviving statutes actually provide evidence that at the time they were drawn up the sisters of Soeterbeeck were supposed to recite the full canonical office. Unless it is assumed that the community had reason to ignore them, these directions would seem to argue against the extended monopoly of the Hours of the Virgin.

At present, then, it seems safe to conclude that the Hours of the Virgin did not completely replace the Divine Office for the entire period between 1539 and 1906. The most likely scenario is that the fire temporarily prevented the sisters from reciting the full canonical office, but that they resumed doing so as soon as circumstances allowed and the convent had been resupplied with books. The switch to the Hours of the Virgin that is evidenced by the nineteenth-century statutes may have been the result of the convent's confiscation by the Napoleonic government in 1812 and the ensuing period of hardship and poverty. The statutes of 1906 show that the sisters rea-

<sup>48</sup> Archives no. 92, ff. 23r, 25r, cf. Frenken 1931-1932, 235, 237. The text actually refers to days *datmen h. Euan/gelie leesde* ('on which the Holy Gospel is read'). It is almost certain that the allusion is not to full Gospel readings at Matins, as the only instances of those in secular-based Uses like that of Windesheim are the genealogies from Matthew 1 and Luke 3, which are added after the ninth lesson on Christmas Day and Epiphany respectively. Instead, the reference is probably to homilies on the Gospel of the day, as these are prefaced by the first verse of the pericope to which they pertain. Homilies like these are read during the third nocturn on nearly every Sunday and feast of nine lessons and up (Hughes 2004, 61-62). On the use of the Athanasian Creed in the canonical office, see Harper 2001, 98.

<sup>49</sup> Surviving copies of the Windesheim *Officia Propria Sanctorum* are IV 40-41 (1699), IV 42 (1731), IV 63-64 (1753), IV 67 (1672), IV 68 (1731), IV 126-127 (1652) and archives nos. 252-253 (1753). Surviving Lateran copies are IV 125 (1635) and archives no. 254 (1893). Although these do not include Matins, it should be mentioned that the Soeterbeeck Collection also includes seven *Horae Diurnae Breviarii Romani*: IV 57 (1883), IV 60 (1696), IV 61-62 (1749), IV 65-66 (1757) and IV 70 (1844).

adopted the canonical office around the beginning of the twentieth century, if not earlier. This means that, judged from the state they are in, Soeterbeeck's books of hours may have been important resources in the sisters' spiritual lives, but that they probably remained, for most of their existence, decidedly supplemental to the books for the canonical office.

## Conclusion

Despite lingering uncertainties, the study of the books of hours in the Soeterbeeck Collection and the textual emendations that appear in them has not been an exercise in futility. Not only has it revealed that the scope of Arnoldus Beckers' stratigraphic unit was probably wider than originally thought, the discussion of these books also throws into bold relief three defining characteristics of the Soeterbeeck Collection which have a wider significance as well.<sup>50</sup> First, the traces of use demonstrate that these old books continued to be actively used for a very long time.<sup>51</sup> This should be kept in mind, for it means that a book like manuscript IV 47, which was still in active use in the middle of the nineteenth century, is as much a nineteenth-century book as it is a medieval one. Younger layers in old books are ignored at the scholar's peril. Second, the traces of use emphasise that the sisters' library was never a static, unchanging entity, and that the Soeterbeeck Collection in its present state reflects but one of the many stages in its development. The make-up of individual books and the library as a whole changed continuously, with books being added and disappearing again in various ways. The fact that the traces of use in the surviving books of hours hint at copies which no longer survive should once more alert scholars to the fact that their source material is not necessarily representative of the situation at any given time in the past. When drawing conclusions, therefore, it is necessary to be aware of the possibility that they may be based on misleading or insufficient evidence. Third, the fact that the printed books of hours have been shown to include exactly the same type

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Oosterman 2011, 75, where similar observations are made in light of the archaeology of a book collection.  
<sup>51</sup> Apparently it was only in the twentieth century that the sisters of Soeterbeeck came to regard their old books as historical objects worthy to be preserved but unfit to be used for their original purpose. This reevaluation and its date are evident from the fact that several manuscripts which have lost their original bindings have been primitively rebound in conservation bindings clearly dating from the twentieth century (Schrijen 2005, 43). Additionally, the provisional library regulations from 1958, mentioned above in relation to the books' rearrangement (cf. n. 6), explicitly exclude the old books from those which can be freely taken from the shelves (archives no. 537). These efforts at preservation are clearly the final step in a series of changes of meaning, demonstrated by the traces of use, which the books have undergone. From brand new objects of use they slowly became outdated, still considered useful for their contents but also in need of textual revision and material restoration. Judging from the fact that many books have been restored with fragments of other books (cf. Kienhorst 2009), the next step was for the books to be valued only for their material properties, fit to be cut up and written on or reused as preservation material for books still maintained for their contents. Those books, however, which managed to escape complete destruction, by reuse or otherwise, have arrived at yet another stage and gotten a new lease on life, reidentified as pieces of heritage worthy of study, restoration and preservation, at first in separate book cases in the convent's own library, later in the vaults of a university library. Ultimately, then, the traces of use appearing in a historical collection uncover the various stages of the ideational transformation which these books underwent in the minds of the people who used them; their evolution in meaning all the way, in this case, from objects of use into museum pieces.

of textual emendations as the manuscripts, frequently even identical ones, means that manuscripts and printed books were used side by side for a long time, without any fundamental distinction. The material itself suggests, therefore, that the anachronistic and artificial division between manuscript and print should be abandoned when studying historical libraries like the Soeterbeeck Collection. In short, the books of hours change the aspect of the collection as a whole, not only emphasising once more that what is left is no longer representative of what used to be there, but also offering potential evidence for shifting to a different, and perhaps more reliable, conception of what the library used to be like.

The stratification and interconnectedness of books in the Soeterbeeck Collection are far more complex than can be conveyed in the space of a single article, and it has only been possible here to discuss a small number of the most straightforward examples from a small group of books. Hopefully, however, this discussion has at least had the effect of thoroughly driving home the fact that a diachronic and contextual approach to old books can provide valuable information. Often, too much of a historical library is lost to answer all questions surrounding it, even where the survival of too many books prohibits an exhaustive analysis. The uncertainty this limitation causes is potentially fruitful, however, as it stresses the necessity of making use of all available sources of information and highlights the importance of studying books from a library in relation to one another.

#### Appendix: Brief Descriptions of the Latin Books of Hours in the Soeterbeeck Collection<sup>52</sup>

*III 146: Beatæ Mariæ Virginis Officium (Venetiis: Apud Jo. Baptistam Pasquali, 1740)*<sup>53</sup>  
Ownership mark by Maria Verhoeven of Soeterbeeck (first front flyleaf, recto).

Contents (excluding preliminaries):

- pp. 1–135: Hours of the Virgin
- pp. 136–211: Office of the Dead
- pp. 212–231: Gradual Psalms
- pp. 232–265: Seven Penitential Psalms, with the Litany of the Saints
- pp. 266–303: hymns throughout the liturgical year
- pp. 304–319: Office of the Holy Sacrament, with sequence *Lauda Sion*
- pp. 320–335: Hours of the Cross, with *Stabat Mater* and other prayers
- pp. 336–345: Hours of the Holy Spirit
- pp. 346–398: various spiritual exercises and prayers
- pp. 399–421: psalms at Vespers and Compline
- pp. 422–425: Litany of the Virgin
- pp. 426–427: responsory of St Anthony of Padua

<sup>52</sup> The manuscript descriptions are based on Kienhorst 2005b, 74–83.

<sup>53</sup> The address to the reader reveals that this book was not printed with movable type, but fully engraved. The illustrations were produced by Marco Pitteri on the basis of drawings by Giovanni Battista Piazzetta, whereas the text was engraved by Angela Baroni (f. A1r–v). Cf. Pedrocco 1983, 201.



*IV 46 (Hs 456)*

Paper. Circa 1543-1544 (on the basis of watermarks). Decorated by the Brethren of the Common Life in 's-Hertogenbosch. Probably produced for Onze Lieve Vrouwe in de Hage in Helmond. Ownership mark by Augustina of Soeterbeeck (front pastedown).

Contents:

- ff. 1r-69v: Hours of the Virgin, with commemorations of the saints and throughout the liturgical year
- ff. 69v-80v: Seven Penitential Psalms, with the Litany of the Saints
- ff. 80v-97v: Office of the Dead
- ff. 97v-125v: prayers to be said upon the death of a sister, starting with the Commendation of the Dead
- f. 125v: hymn *Conditor alme siderum* (incomplete)

*IV 47 (Hs 457)*

Parchment. Circa 1525-1530. Decorated by the Brethren of the Common Life in 's-Hertogenbosch. Probably produced for Onze Lieve Vrouwe in de Hage in Helmond. Profession formula of Francisca de Loe of Helmond (ff. 13v-14r) and ownership mark by Maria Verhoeven of Soeterbeeck (second front flyleaf, recto).

Contents:

- ff. 1r-12v: calendar
- ff. 13r-14v: profession formula of Francisca de Loe (later addition)
- ff. 15r-67v: Hours of the Virgin, with commemorations of the saints
- ff. 68r-82r: Seven Penitential Psalms, with the Litany of the Saints
- f. 82v: blank
- ff. 83r-111r: Office of the Dead
- ff. 111r-114r: lessons for the daily commemoration of the dead
- f. 114r-v: Commendation of the Dead (incomplete)

*IV 48 (Hs 458)*

Paper. Sixteenth century. Possibly decorated by the canons regular of Mariënhage in Woensel.

Contents:

- ff. 1r-51v: Hours of the Virgin
- ff. 52r-58v: Seven Penitential Psalms

*IV 49 (Hs 459)*

Paper. Sixteenth century. Probably decorated by the canons regular of Mariënhage in Woensel.

Contents:

- ff. 1r-20v: Seven Penitential Psalms, with the Litany of the Saints
- ff. 20v-22r: hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus*
- ff. 22r-23v: Fifteen Gradual Psalms
- ff. 24r-70v: Office of the Dead (incomplete)

*IV 50 (Hs 460)*

Paper and parchment. Sixteenth century.

Contents:

- ff. 1r-11v: Seven Penitential Psalms, with the Litany of the Saints (incomplete)
- ff. 11v-35r: Office of the Dead (incomplete)

*IV 136*

A composite book, printed circa 1500 by the canons regular of Den Hem, near Schoonhoven, and consisting of three textually more or less self-contained production units: 1) ff. b5-p8 (ff. a1-b4, presumably including a calendar and the beginning of the Hours of the Cross, have been lost); 2) ff. a.1-d.3 (f. d.4 has been lost); 3) ff. A1-E8 (of which f. C8 has been lost). As is evident from the survey below, unit 1 contains what can be considered the core texts of a book of hours, whereas the other units are supplementary in nature.<sup>54</sup> Ownership marks by Maria van Aer and Teresia vander Meiren of Soeterbeeck (front pastedown).

Contents:

- ff. b5r-b8v: Hours of the Cross (incomplete)
- ff. c1r-f2v: Hours of the Virgin
- ff. f3r-g6v: Seven Penitential Psalms, with the Litany of the Saints
- ff. g7r-k6v: Office of the Dead
- ff. k7r-k8v: brief Commendation of the Dead
- ff. l1r-p8v: miscellaneous prayers and commemorations
- ff. a.1r-d.3v: prayers to be said upon the death of a sister, starting with the Commendation of the Dead (incomplete)
- ff. A1r-B4v: Hours of Eternal Wisdom
- ff. C1r-C7v: Hours of the Holy Spirit (incomplete)

<sup>54</sup> In the decades around 1500, the canons regular of Den Hem produced numerous editions of each of the abovementioned units, which survive in various combinations as well as separately, or both. When discussing the Schoonhoven books of hours, the relative independence of each of these units should be taken into account more than has been done so far, and those books which contain more than one unit should not unquestioningly be regarded as copies of a single, homogeneous edition but as essentially composite volumes. This situation, however, makes identifying and dating the editions to which the units that make up IV 136 belong rather complicated, and the complexity is only aggravated by the absence in that volume of several key pages. Unit 1 of IV 136 appears to be a fragment of a copy of ff. [a1]-p8 of ILC (*Incunabula Printed in the Low Countries*) 1222. This edition is dated to 1500 in a colophon at the end of unit 2 (f. d3r), but because IV 136 combines a copy of unit 1 of ILC 1222 with a copy of a different edition of unit 2 (of which the page which might have included a colophon, f. d.4, is missing), it is doubtful whether this date can be applied to unit 1 at all. This means that the date of ff. b5-p8 of IV 136 remains uncertain. It has not been possible to identify unit 2 of IV 136. As has been pointed out, it does not correspond with unit 2 in ILC 1222, and comparing it with the corresponding unit in ILC 1250 or NK (Nijhoff & Kronenberg) 1122, or with NK 594, which consists of unit 2 only, reveals that it is not a copy of any of these editions either. Unit 3 of IV 136 seems to be a copy of ff. A1-E8 of NK 1122, whose date is uncertain for the same reason as that of ILC 1222. NK 1122 is made up of unit 3 and 2 in that order, and it is dated to 1506 in a colophon at the end of unit 2 (f. d4r). However, unit 3 in this edition also appears in combination with another edition of unit 2, not only in IV 136 but also in ILC A64 and NK 3197, where it is combined with NK 594. On the basis of the soundness of its type, Robert Proctor judged ILC A64 in London, British Library, IA. 48719 to be older than the copy of ILC 1121 to which it is attached (1905, 199), and this edition, which consists of unit 1 only, is dated to 1503 by its colophon (f. p8v). It is highly uncertain, therefore, if the date of unit 2 of NK 1122, 1506, applies to unit 3 as well. More research on these editions is needed before IV 136 or any other copy can be identified and dated with precision.

ff. D1r-E3r: Hours of the Sorrow of the Virgin  
 ff. E3v-E8v: Rosary of the Virgin

Table 1 The blessings before the fifth and seventh lessons at Matins.

	<i>IV 46 (scribe)</i>	<i>IV 46 (slips of paper)</i>	<i>IV 47 (scribe)</i>	<i>IV 47 (Beckers)</i>	<i>IV 48 (scribe)</i>	<i>IV 94 (scribe)</i>
blessing before the fifth lesson	[illegible] (f. 8r12-13)	Stellae Maria Maria \se/ cure <b>nobis</b> / piisma nobis (f. 8r12-13)	Iube. <b>Maria</b> que / peperit <b>christum</b> pro nobis postulet <b>ipsum</b> . / <i>Amen</i> . (f. 23r13-15)	Stella Maria Maris / succurre Pijsima / nobis. (f. 23r, lower margin)	Iube <i>domine</i> benedicere / Stella maria maris succurre pijssi/ma nobis (f. 9v5-6)	Iube Stella maria maris. succur/ re pijssima nobis. (f. 16r10-11)
blessing before the seventh lesson	Iube <i>domine</i> . <b>CH</b> [illegible] (f. 11r5-6)	Jesus Maria filius sit nobis clemens / et propicius (f. 11r5-6)	Iube <i>domna</i> . <b>CHR</b> isti portatrix sit nobis / semper auxiliatrix <i>Amen</i> . (f. 26v4-5)	[J]esus / [M]ariae / [fi]lius / [si]t nobis / [cl]emens / [et p]ropitius (f. 26v, outer margin)	Iube <i>domine</i> benedicere Ihesus marie / [fi]lius sit nobis clemens et propicius / <i>Amen</i> (f. 12v16-18)	Iube. / Ihesus marie filius. sit nobis cle/ mens et propicius. (f. 17r5-7)

Table 2 Psalm 148.6, used as part of the fifth psalm at Lauds.

<i>III 146 (engraved text)</i>	<i>IV 46 (scribe)</i>	<i>IV 47 (scribe)</i>	<i>IV 47 (emendation)</i>	<i>IV 48 (scribe)</i>	<i>IV 48 (emendation)</i>	<i>IV 136 (printed text)</i>	<i>IV 136 (emendation)</i>
Státuit ea in aetérnum et in sae/ culum saeculi: (p. 45, ll. 9-10)	Statuit ea in <i>seculum</i> et in <i>seculum</i> / seculi (f. 16r4-5)	Sta/tuit ea in <i>seculum</i> et in <i>seculum</i> seculi: (f. 32r15-16)	Sta/tuit ea in <i>seculum</i> \eternum/ et in <i>seculum</i> seculi: (f. 32r15-16)	Sta/tuit ea in <i>seculum</i> et in <i>seculum</i> seculi (f. 18v13-14)	Sta/tuit ea in <i>seculum</i> \eternum/ et in <i>seculum</i> seculi (f. 18v13-14)	Statuit ea in <i>seculum</i> et in / <i>seculum</i> seculi: (f. d4r4-5)	Statuit ea in <i>seculum</i> \eternum/ et in / <i>seculum</i> seculi: (f. d4r4-5)

### Samenvatting

De Latijnse getijdenboeken in de Collectie Soeterbeeck (Nijmegen, Universiteitsbibliotheek) illustreren de mogelijkheden van een stratigrafische en contextuele benadering van historische boekcollecties. De gebruikssporen van rector Arnoldus Beckers (1772-1810) in handschrift IV 47 (Hs 457) laten bijvoorbeeld zien dat hij niet alleen de liturgische handschriften van het klooster Soeterbeeck inhoudelijk aanpaste, maar zich ook bezighield met paraliturgica. Door het contextualiseren van de band wordt bovendien aannemelijk gemaakt dat zijn betrokkenheid bij de boeken ook materiële aspecten betrof. Vergelijkend onderzoek van de tekst van het Maria-officie in de getijdenboeken toont bovendien aan dat de wijzigingen daarin niet gericht waren

op het aanpassen van de boeken aan een ‘Soeterbeecknorm’, maar het resultaat zijn van verschillende, onverenigbare fasen van aanpassing. De boeken bevestigen dat het voor een juist begrip van een historische bibliotheek als de Collectie Soeterbeeck nodig is een diachrone benadering te hanteren, waarin bovendien het onderscheid tussen handschrift en druk wordt losgelaten.

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Sint Agatha, Erfgoedcentrum Nederlands Kloosterleven, archives of Soeterbeeck Priory<sup>55</sup>

3 memorial book, mainly by Rector Arnoldus Beckers (1772–1810)

4 ‘Beschrijving Van het Oud en Nieuw Klooster Soeterbeeck’, mainly by Rectors Arnoldus Beckers (1772–1810) and Henricus de Bruijn (1842–1844)

45 chronicle of the history of Soeterbeeck by Rector Arnoldus Beckers (1772–1810)

62 charter in which John of Heinsberg, prince-bishop of Liège, permits Soeterbeeck to adopt the Rule of St Augustine (16 February 1454)

86 records pertaining to decrees of the Congregation of the Affairs of Religious on Soeterbeeck’s canonical status, its enclôsterment and vows, and the Divine Office (1909–1923)

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