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## Naar aanleiding van ... / Apropos of ...

### **Een mystieke bestseller. De *Spiegel der volcomenheit* en het literaire belang van de franciscaner observantie**

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Naar aanleiding van: Anna Dlabáčová, *Literatuur en observantie. De 'Spiegel der volcomenheit' van Hendrik Herp en de dynamiek van laatmiddeleeuwse tekstverspreiding*. Hilversum: Verloren, 2014 (Middeleeuwse Studies en Bronnen 149). 368 p., ill., ISBN 978-90-8704-418-3, prijs: € 35,-.

De *Spiegel der volcomenheit* van Hendrik Herp (ca. 1410-1477) waar het in het hier besproken boek om draait, is een leidraad voor een goed christelijk leven en een inwijding in de mystiek. De *Spiegel* bestaat uit twee delen, waarvan het eerste deel, de *XII Stervinghen* over het *sterven* of afbreken van de eigen wil, in voorbereiding op de mystieke opgang, ook apart heeft gecirculeerd. Het tweede deel gaat over de opklimming naar en de vereniging met God. De vereniging met God was volgens Herp niet voorbehouden aan kloosterlingen; het werk is (ook) voor leken bedoeld. Herp schreef het werk op vraag van een vrome vrouw (zijn *in christo gheminde dochter*), maar naderhand vond het zijn weg naar een breed publiek van – gelet op de overgeleverde handschriften en gedrukte exemplaren – voornamelijk kloosterlingen.

Het proefschrift van Anna Dlabáčová vormt een pleidooi voor twee zaken: dat het werk van Hendrik Herp de aandacht en waardering krijgt die het verdient en dat een tegenwicht wordt geboden aan de tendens om alle (volkstalige) religieuze literatuur uit de late middeleeuwen toe te schrijven aan de invloed en kringen van de moderne devotie. Waar deze tendens door sommige onderzoekers wordt tegengesproken door het benadrukken van de rol van leken, zoals in de Groningse onderzoeksprojecten 'Holy Writ and Lay Readers' (2009-2013) en 'Cities of Readers' (2015-2019), wijst Dlabáčová op de rol van een

andere religieuze hervormingsbeweging, namelijk de franciscaner observantie. Deze beweging is tot nu toe eigenlijk nauwelijks als literaire speler van betekenis benaderd. Hierin ligt mijns inziens de grootste verdienste van dit proefschrift.

In hoofdstuk I geeft Dlabáčová een overzicht van het leven en de loopbaan van de auteur Hendrik Herp en de inhoud van de *Spiegel der volcomenheit*. Herp schreef met zijn *Spiegel* een 'mystieke bestseller' met een indrukwekkend *Nachleben*: het werk werd vertaald in het Latijn en in diverse volkstalen, zoals het Frans, het Italiaans, het Portugees en het Hoogduits. Dlabáčová's benadering in de rest van het boek is een combinatie van een chronologische studie van opeenvolgende receptiekringen en een analyse van distributiekringen, dat wil zeggen netwerken van (religieuze) gemeenschappen en personen waarin de tekst aantoonbaar werd verspreid. Aangezien de meeste handschriften met de *Spiegel* niet nauwkeurig te dateren zijn en de datering bovendien vlak bij elkaar liggen, is een onderscheid naar opeenvolgende fasen niet goed mogelijk. Dlabáčová's oplossing om de handschriften dan via de distributiekringen te benaderen is het recept voor een dynamische geschiedenis van de mobiliteit van de tekst, die soms wel wat opsommerig aandoet: van elk handschrift worden de *Mitüberlieferung* beschreven (de teksten die in het handschrift zijn mee gekopieerd, maar Dlabáčová betreft hierbij ook de collecties waarin die handschriften functioneerden), de parallelverlevering (andere handschriften met die teksten) en de ruimere context (de gemeenschap waarin de tekst is afgeschreven en de contacten van die gemeenschap). Deze benadering levert heel wat gegevens en verbanden op, die Dlabáčová niet altijd uitwerkt (of: niet hoeft of wenst uit te werken), maar die vragen om vervolgstudies. Ik noem een terloops vermelde tekst met de titel *Vanden geesteliken staet*, die nog niet is bestudeerd (p. 102), het gebruik van de naam *Ihesus* of het monogram *Ihs*, geïntroduceerd door

franciscaner observanten, en de relaties en uitwisseling van boeken tussen kartuizers in de vijftiende eeuw. Deze voorbeelden van braakliggende terreinen komen uit hoofdstuk II, waarin de vroegste handschriften van de *Spiegel* worden besproken. Die eerste handschriften tonen de netwerken waarin de *Spiegel* en gerelateerde teksten werden verspreid, namelijk van minderbroeders-observanten (via een handschrift van de Maastrichtse tertianen die zich aansloten bij het Kapittel van Zeperen) en kartuizers (via een handschrift uit het Amsterdamse kartuizerklooster). Een van de handschriften is echter overduidelijk door een leek besteld. De auteur Herp, die een prediker was en een lekenpubliek op het oog had, roerde blijkbaar ook dit netwerk aan.

Enigszins verwarrend gaat Dlabáčová in hoofdstuk III van de behandeling van de vroegste handschriften over op de verschillende distributiekringen, terwijl in hoofdstuk II toch ook al sprake was van distributiekringen van minderbroeders-observanten en kartuizers. De verwarring heeft te maken met de definiëring van 'distributiekring', want het eigen netwerk van Herp (het ontstaansmilieu) wordt in de gebruikte terminologie niet als zodanig aangemerkt. Hoofdstuk III behandelt de rol van de minderbroeders-observanten zelf in de verspreiding van het werk, die onder meer in conventen van tertiariësen plaats had. In dit hoofdstuk wordt dus eigenlijk de in hoofdstuk II uitgezette distributiekring (of ontstaansmilieu) uitgewerkt. In hoofdstuk IV komen vervolgens de handschriften aan bod die verspreid werden in ruimere kringen van hervormingsgezinde gemeenschappen die regelobservantie nastreefden. Men denke voornamelijk aan regularissen en regulieren van het Kapittel van Windesheim, maar ook aan observante gemeenschappen zoals die van de dominicanessen in Neurenberg. Grote aandacht is er voor de bibliotheekcollecties van vrouwenconventen zoals het Sint-Agathaconvent in Amersfoort, Nazareth in Geldern, Maaseik en Diepenveen, waarin de *Spiegel* voorkwam. Met een oog voor detail beschrijft Dlabáčová overeenkomsten in collecties en vaker voorkomende teksten in diverse *Spiegel*-handschriften, zoals een gebed en een exemplaar over een minderbroeder-observant. Opmerkelijk en mooi geanalyseerd is de grote invloed van mystieke teksten in de vijftiende-eeuwse

conventen waar de observantie werd doorgevoerd, maar ook in het leven van vrome leken; Dlabáčová spreekt in navolging van Thom Mertens van een vijftiende-eeuwse 'mystieke cultuur'.

In hoofdstuk V komt de gedrukte traditie van de *Spiegel* aan bod. Samen met het eerste deel van hoofdstuk I is dit hoofdstuk het meest 'historisch', dat wil zeggen dat de context van de teksten en boeken hier het meest gaat leven. We zien in deze hoofdstukken mensen met elkaar werken, leven en ruziën, en waar het vooral om gaat, boeken uitwisselen. Dlabáčová beschrijft hoe commerciële drukkers zich gingen toeleggen op het drukken van religieuze, zelfs mystieke teksten en hoe de werelden van markt en religie zich mengden: de Antwerpse minderbroeders-observanten stapten vermoedelijk zelf met de *Spiegel*-tekst naar de weduwe van de drukker Roland van den Dorpe. In veel vroegere studies over tekstoverlevering werden individuele handschriften en hun gebruikers beschreven en beperkten de auteurs zich voor de gedrukte traditie tot edities en hun producenten (of behandelden die helemaal niet). Edities kennen echter natuurlijk ook verschillende overgeleverde exemplaren, die evenals handschriften als individuele objecten moeten worden behandeld. Hoewel Dlabáčová dit onderschrijft (p. 263) en de werelden van handschrift en druk samen in één boek behandelt, heeft ze geschreven en gedrukte exemplaren niet *geïntegreerd* behandeld in de hoofdstukken over de overleveringsgeschiedenis of, in haar terminologie, distributiekringen. Zij koos ervoor de gedrukte exemplaren in een apart hoofdstuk te behandelen, wellicht ook omdat de gedrukte exemplaren niet zo duidelijk aan namen van eigenaren zijn te verbinden. Overigens stelt zij deze problematiek pas in de overgang naar het laatste hoofdstuk (VI) aan de orde; dit verwachtte de lezer toch eigenlijk in de inleiding al.

In hoofdstuk VI behandelt Dlabáčová de *materie*le overlevering van de *Spiegel*, dat wil zeggen de wijze waarop de tekst in een handschrift of druk wordt gepresenteerd en de invloed daarvan op het gebruik en de toe-eigening door de lezer. Aan de hand van enkele voorbeeldhandschriften behandelt zij de specifieke betekenis die de *Spiegel* krijgt te midden van andere teksten in

die codices, zoals de mystieke betekenis van de *Spiegel* in twee handschriften met werk van Ruusbroec en andere mystieke teksten (Brussel, KB, IV 37 en Utrecht, MCC, Warmond 92 A 10). Wat jammer is, is dat in dit hoofdstuk de karakteristieken van de lezers en distributiekringen uit de eerdere hoofdstukken niet stelselmatig terugkomen. De analyse van distributiekringen en materiële aspecten lijken door deze wijze van presentatie twee onafhankelijke invalshoeken. Waar de auteur in de hoofdstukken III en IV wel de plooibaarheid van de *Spiegel*-tekst laat zien – de selectie van tekstgedeelten die pasten bij de *Mitüberlieferung* en de betreffende distributiekring – laat zij in hoofdstuk VI de behandelde handschriften meer voor zichzelf dan voor hun distributiekring spreken. In de inleiding werd aangekondigd dat in dit hoofdstuk de ontwikkeling van de *Spiegel* op een metaniveau wordt geschetst, en hoewel dat gebeurt, gaat dat enigszins ten koste van het evenwicht.

Hoofdstuk VI bevat tabellen met materiële gegevens over de handschriften en met de *Mitüberlieferung* van andere teksten. Wat in het boek ontbreekt, is een systematisch overzicht van alle handschriften met essentiële gegevens over ontstaan en provenance in combinatie met die basale materiële gegevens. Zo'n overzicht had als bijlage of al eerder, in de hoofdstukken II-IV, in een tabel per distributiekring kunnen worden gegeven. Dit overzicht had tijdens het lezen van het boek als geheugensteun en naslagwerk kunnen functioneren. Nu moet de lezer het overzicht zelf bij elkaar sprokkelen. Hoofdstuk II bijvoorbeeld behandelt drie handschriften uit het decennium na het ontstaan van de tekst, maar slechts twee van die drie worden op p. 81 met hun siglum geïntroduceerd; het derde moet in de voetnoten worden gezocht. Vervolgens moet de lezer tot hoofdstuk VI wachten om de handschriften in tabellen terug te vinden.

Zoals gezegd is de grootste verdienste van dit proefschrift de bijdrage aan een genuanceerdere visie op de Middelnederlandse religieuze literatuur. De minutieuze ontrafeling van handschriftenbestanden en de *Mitüberlieferung* in de individuele handschriften, hoe opsommerig soms ook, dienen het tweede doel dat Dlabáčová met haar boek heeft: aantonen dat de Moderne Devotie niet de enige leverancier is van religieuze lite-

ratuur in de volkstaal. De overheersende franciscaanse elementen in het tekstenbestand van de bibliotheek van het regularissenklooster Nazareth in Geldern, bijvoorbeeld, werden eerder toegeschreven aan de invloed van de tertiariissen binnen de Moderne Devotie, waartoe ook Nazareth behoorde. Dlabáčová betoogt daarentegen dat de orde-overstijgende invloed van de franciscaner observantie moet worden aangewezen als de oorzaak van dat franciscaanse zwaartepunt (p. 191). Het eerste doel van dit boek, Herp de bekendheid geven die hij verdient, is uiteraard in hoofdstuk I al bereikt.

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### Female spiritual authority

VERONICA O'MARA

Apropos of: Veerle Fraeters & Imke de Gier (eds), *Mulieres religiosae: Shaping Female Spiritual Authority in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2014 (Europa sacra 12). xx + 314 p., ISBN 978-2-503-54912-5, price: € 90,-.

It is always a pleasure to review a book where it is clear from the outset that it will contain material of great interest. In the present instance not only is this an engaging collection of essays, but it also addresses some issues not usually encountered in studies of religious writing. This is particularly the case with the essays in the early modern period. The volume opens with 'Introduction: Shaping Female Spiritual Authority in Europe from the High Middle Ages to the Early Modern Period' by the editors, Veerle Fraeters and Imke de Gier. This introduction contains a useful summary of the essays in the volume as well as a thoughtful contextual analysis of the forces that influenced the writing and spiritual agency of *mulieres religiosae*. This means that readers of the volume are given a sound grounding in the material that follows; for instance, in their reference to the accusation of heresy levelled at Marguerite Porete they remind (or inform) readers of the case of Alijt Bake, a prioress from Ghent, who was banned from writing about her religious ex-

periences a century later. Indeed, the first eight pages provide a free-standing brief overview of the marked developments from the thirteenth century onwards in female spiritual authority in the Middle Ages, which would make very useful introductory reading for anyone new to the area. Put simply: whereas in the pre-1300 period there is an emphasis on the individual (whether it be the visionary, mystic or ecstatic), in post-1300 times there is a shift to spiritual authority being reflected through the community, an argument that may have its flaws but is a useful starting point. Above all, Fraeters and De Gier wisely note that the essays are going to avoid the usual hackneyed comparison of female and male spirituality; 'one that is affective rather than cerebral; figurative and vernacular rather than discursive and Latin; visionary and sensual rather than contemplative or speculative' (p. 4), in favour of a more nuanced discussion based on recent research. It is clear from the bibliographies accompanying each essay that virtually all of them are securely based on careful archival and manuscript research, something that encourages the reader to give credence to the authors from the beginning.

The twelve essays that follow in chronological progression from the sainted Elisabeth von Schönau in the twelfth century to the female choristers in the hospitals of the Venetian Republic in the eighteenth century range throughout Europe with some emphasis on the Low Countries and Germany. This is understandable because it reflects the editors' own interests and additionally there is nowhere more important for the study of female spirituality than the Dutch and Germanic regions in the Middle Ages. Not surprisingly for such a varied collection, the essays differ widely in terms of approach, specificity — and length. In an ideal world all editors would keep a tight rein over their contributors to ensure a uniformity of purpose and product but, as seasoned editors know only too well, such cohesiveness is often difficult to achieve in practice, especially when the contributions began, as they did here, as conference papers.

Although a chronological approach is the obvious way to order such essays, there is one case where some good might have been served by removing a contribution from its chronological

position and placing it at the beginning of the collection. This is Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker's essay, 'The Soft Face of Power: Jeanne de Valois and Female Authority in the Middle Ages', which is very much a series of authoritative statements on the way in which women — especially those over forty — yielded power, rather than a focused analysis of Jeanne de Valois who only appears at the beginning and end of the essay. It might have been better to have allocated more space to Mulder-Bakker, a very senior scholar in the field, to allow her to have integrated the general and the specific somewhat more, or conversely, to have encouraged her to focus solely on Jeanne de Valois. A similar space constraint is evident in Eva Lindqvist Sandgren's essay, 'Book Illumination in the Bridgettine Abbey of Vadstena', though it is better handled here, even if the topic of authority is only marginal. Sandgren manages to provide a concise overview of scribal activity at Vadstena Abbey while at the same time she succeeds in presenting the main facts about Vadstena's most well-known female scribe, Christina Hansdotter Brask. In the essay following Mulder-Bakker's, another contributor, Kathleen M. Smith, attempts a range of similar *ex cathedra* statements, this time about the context of the late fourteenth-century/early fifteenth-century English mystic, Julian of Norwich. Unfortunately, there are too many sweeping generalities in this essay. While scholars of medieval England realize the importance of the Lollard/anti-Lollard debate surrounding Archbishop Arundel's 1409 prohibition against unregulated biblical translation, the simplification of this to 'even owning documents in English was potentially a cause for persecution' (p. 169) is a *reductio ad absurdum*. Likewise, the stress on the modern 'use' of Julian of Norwich's 'All shall be well' mantra leads the author into irrelevant comments about Julian and the tourist industry in Norwich. This essay would have been better had it just concentrated on its stated subject matter, 'Language and Authority in Julian of Norwich's *Showings*', where the author has some points of relevance to make.

Other essays succeed to greater effect in focusing on a single female authority. These are María Eugenia Góngora, 'Elisabeth von Schönau and the Story of St Ursula: Visionary Author-

ity and the Cult of the Saints'; Viktória Hedvig Deák, 'Beguines in Hungary? The Case of St Margareta of Hungary (1242-71): A Mystic without a Voice'; Piroska Nagy, 'Sharing Charismatic Authority by Body and Emotions: The Marvellous Life of Lukardis von Oberweimar (c. 1262-1309)'; and Imke de Gier, 'Text as Authority: Marguerite Porete's *Mirouer des simples ames*'. The essays by Deák and Nagy are devoted respectively to the *vitae* of a Dominican and a Cistercian nun, with very contrasting afterlives. Whereas the royal Margit is of fundamental importance to the development in medieval Hungary of 'a new kind of authority emerging from mystical experience' (p. 105), Lukardis von Oberweimar's *vita*, 'written in quite bad Latin by an unknown friar or monk' (p. 119) and replete with examples of Lukardis's Christ-like suffering, was not a success story after her death, even if in her life-time she had been 'the spiritual celebrity of her community' (p. 124). Conversely, Marguerite Porete's particular brand of radical theology was a long-term success story, albeit that it led to her execution in 1310. In her careful textual analysis De Gier demonstrates the ways in which Christocentric female authority normally manifested itself and how Porete differed from the mainstream in making the text itself 'the locus of authority' (p. 147). A similar acumen for nice theological distinctions is obvious in Elisabeth von Schönau. Góngora demonstrates how, in her visionary work written after 1156, *Liber revelationum Elisabeth de sacro exercitu virginum Coloniensium*, Elisabeth subtly attempts to bridge the distance between the historical irreconcilable aspects of the cult of St Ursula and the Church's need to validate the importance of hagiography.

Two essays with a wide remit are those by Andrea Worm, "'You shall all live together in harmony and spiritual unity": Images of Abbesses and Female Religious Communities in the Empire' and Sylvie Duval, '*Mulieres religiosae* and *Sorores clausae*: The Dominican Observant Movement and the Diffusion of Strict Enclosure in Italy from the Thirteenth to the Sixteenth Century'. Worm discusses, with the aid of much illustration, various iconographic developments in female religious self-representation in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. In this lengthy essay of almost fifty pages she demonstrates the

impact of Church reform in the second half of the twelfth century with its emphasis on the ideal monastic community rather than the single powerful abbess of the earlier period (seen, for example, in the eleventh-century Uta and Hilda codices). Buttressed by finely argued archival evidence, Duval provides a wide-ranging analysis of the intermingled issues of enclosure and Observance in Italy. Her accomplished preamble to her main narrative could be taken as a very useful introduction to the whole issue of Observance in medieval Europe. Throughout she manages to balance the general with the specific through a skilful analysis of recruitment patterns in chapter lists from 1403, 1413, 1425, 1436, and 1456 from the convent of San Domenico in Pisa. One emerges from this essay with a good understanding of the ways in which powerful families, keen to have their daughters placed in strictly enclosed orders with good reputations, thereby managed to control recruitment in Observant communities. The arguments are supported by helpful graphs, although these are rendered in black and white, when they should have been in colour.

A focus on community effort in the literary or musical achievements of women is uppermost in the last three essays: Mathilde van Dijk, 'Female Leadership and Authority in the Sisterbook of Diepenveen'; Ping-Yuan Wang, 'Neither *ex officio* nor *ex gratia*: The Brussels Visitandines' Discourses of Authority and the Collective Self, 1668-99', and Caroline Giron-Panel, '*Piae virgines choristae*: Musicians for the Greater Glory of God and the Venetian Republic'. Van Dijk concentrates on Salome Sticken (c. 1369-1449), the first prioress of Diepenveen, in her analysis of the qualities of female leadership – obedience, humility, charity – promulgated in the sisterbook, while Wang discusses the phenomenon of letter-writing among the Visitandines in terms of how they engaged in public self-fashioning two centuries later. As with many essays in this volume where one often gets two or even three for the price of one, Van Dijk's serves not only to introduce us to Diepenveen, one of the few female communities of the famous Chapter of Windesheim, but also to slip in a concise introduction to the *Devotio moderna*, what she calls 'a tale of invention and reinvention' (p. 248). Finally, Panel's focus is totally different from all the rest – on the teaching

of vocal and instrumental music in the four hospitals of the Venetian Republic where orphaned or abandoned girls could choose to become a 'pious mother or an accomplished nun' (p. 288). Even if this does not quite conform to the theme of 'authority', it is nevertheless a refreshingly interesting essay on which to finish the collection.

The whole is rounded off with an index which is perfectly serviceable, albeit with a few oddities (for instance, Oberweimar occurs under three different headings). Yet, these are minor matters. Anyone who has slaved over an index for a mixed collection of essays such as this one will know only too well the toll it takes; he or she will also appreciate how easy it is for outsiders to catch infelicities in a collection when it is too late – a case of seeing the mote in someone else's eye and not seeing the beam in one's own. Quite simply, the editors have done their best both with the index and the essays. Even if more thought might have gone into some individual essays or the emphasis adjusted in others, taken as a whole, this collection contains much of interest. While one might wonder why certain high-ranking authoritative women such as Hildegard von Bingen or Caterina da Siena are not included, one can understand why the editors did not wish such figures to overshadow the discussion. In this way they are better able to demonstrate the multiple ways in which religious women either demonstrated authority individually or communally. (Although one could quarrel somewhat with the rigid distinction between changes pre- and post-1300, which serves as the basis of the whole book and so downplays the presence of very individualistic authoritative figures such as Birgitta of Sweden in the post-1300 period, this is not the place to do so.) In terms of their avowed thesis the editors and the contributors to the volume, from which this reviewer has learnt much, should feel justifiably proud of themselves for a job very well done.

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## **A fifteenth-century treasure trove of Middle Dutch religious songs**

PIETER MANNAERTS

Apropos of: Thom Mertens & Dieuwke E. van der Poel (eds), *Het liederenhandschrift Berlijn 190. Hs. Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz germ. oct. 190*. Hilversum: Verloren, 2013 (Middeleeuwse Verzamelhandschriften uit de Nederlanden, 12). 725 p., ill., ISBN 978-90-870-4387-2, price: € 59,-.

Leiden, August 1821. August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben receives a manuscript, a gift for his rich collection. His appreciation of its content appears from the fact that Hoffmann von Fallersleben published a large selection of songs from the manuscript in his *Horae Belgicae X* (58).<sup>1</sup> In the later history of Middle Dutch song, Hoffmann von Fallersleben would be considered as the modern discoverer of a manuscript that contains the largest collection of Middle Dutch religious songs of the fifteenth century.

Hilversum, 2013. Despite Hoffmann's enthusiasm, it took more than another 150 years before the manuscript was published in its entirety, a task which has now been accomplished by Thom Mertens and Dieuwke van der Poel. The present edition of the manuscript, currently preserved at the Berlin Staatsbibliothek as 'germ. oct. 190' (henceforth 'Berlin 190'), opens with an elaborate introduction (p. 11–118) which discusses the date, origin, and provenance of the manuscript. The editors give a succinct overview of the research to date, a detailed physical description of the manuscript, and an overview of its contents. The introduction is followed by an explanation of the editorial principles guiding the publication of text and music (p. 119–151), and the edition proper (p. 153–690). The book concludes with a list of 47 manuscript sources, a bibliography, and registers of Middle Dutch and Latin incipits, tune indications ('wijsaanduidingen'), refrains, and cited texts (p. 691–725).

<sup>1</sup> August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben, *Niederländische geistliche Lieder des XV. Jahrhunderts*. Hannover: Carl Rümpler, 1854 (Horae Belgicae 10).

The edition of Berlin 190 appears in the series *Middeleeuwse verzamelhandschriften uit de Nederlanden* (Medieval miscellanies in the Netherlands), which currently consists of thirteen volumes. The most recent, the edition of the ‘Gruuthuse’ manuscript by Herman Brinkman (the series editor) and Ike De Loos, was published in June 2015. Berlin 190 was selected for edition in the series because it is one of the most important sources of late medieval sacred songs in the context of the Modern Devotion in the Low Countries, including 53 unica (p. 109). Sized 16x11 cm, it consists of 186 leaves with 237 texts in Middle Dutch and Latin, the majority with music notation. It was presumably compiled in the region of Utrecht around 1480, in a female convent associated with the Modern Devotion. The manuscript is of special literary and musical interest because it contains items of both Middle Dutch and Latin repertoires, plus a number of short Latin expressions interpolated at a later date.

The volume under review is without any doubt a very valuable publication. The introduction pays attention to material aspects as well as the contents of the codex, which are both scrupulously described. The edition strikes an excellent balance between its attention to philological detail and the practical use of the book for study and performance. The following paragraphs take a closer look at the editorial policy and the contribution of the introductory study of the manuscript.

As the editors state explicitly (p. 127), they aim to reconcile the editorial principles of both literary and musicological traditions. Literary editions frequently publish the text ‘as is’. This is generally not the case in musicological editions, which are often less strictly diplomatic, in that they allow for emendations in the transcription.

Balancing between traditions of literary and musicological scholarship incited the editors to make a number of choices. For example, to musicologists the use of manuscript abbreviations such as ‘HsWeONB SN12875’ may seem fairly laborious, and they will wonder why the model of the RISM-sigla (*Répertoire international de sources musicales*) was not adopted, given that it is much more compact and easier to read (the same source would then be referred to as ‘A-Wn SN12875’). Furthermore, for musicologists

it may be surprising to see such a large project published in Dutch. Obviously, there is no reason why scholarship in any discipline should not use Dutch as an academic language, and from the perspective of literary history it makes undoubtedly good sense. On the other hand, it is a decision which restricts the impact of the study largely to a Dutch-speaking readership, especially because an English summary of the results is not included, unlike some of the other volumes of the series (2, 3, 6, 8, 9, and 11).

The necessity of clarifying the editorial policy in dealing with the transcription of the music appears even more significant once the variety of music notation types is taken into account: Hufnagel (or so-called ‘Gothic’) neumes for the chants, and semi-mensural (five subtypes, 17) and mensural (in four songs) notations for both monophony and polyphony. The use of various notations mirrors the variation of forms, styles and genres in the manuscript. The monophonic songs contain virelai and ballade forms, and contrafacts of Middle Dutch Gruuthuse (cf. *infra*) and Middle German *Minnelieder* (no. 49, *Ave pulcherrima regina* is a contrafact of *So vro steynt bloemen an der vesten*). The polyphonic styles vary between archaic organum (using parallel fifths as in no. 235 or note-against-note-counterpoint as in no. 61), the Notre Dame-style of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (e.g. no. 22, *Regi psallens*), and polyphony leaning towards the music of the fourteenth-century *Ars Nova*.

The analysis of the writing hands adds fascinating insights into this notational variety. The editors conclude that the largest part of the manuscript was written by one hand, which very likely wrote both text (text hand 1) and music (music hand a). Similarly, most of the additions were written by one other hand as well (text hand 2 and music hand c); while other hands have added a few isolated items. Even more remarkable is the conclusion that one hand (a+1) mastered various forms of music notation, i.e. Hufnagel neumes – which are not rhythmic – and various kinds of semi-mensural notation. The other music hands have added three songs in white mensural notation. As an illustration of the notation types used, the edition contains a number of facsimile samples (p. 128–133); a complete



set of digital images is available on the website of the Dutch Song Database (Nederlandse Liederenbank).<sup>2</sup>

The result is a hybrid edition of the music containing no emendations, but providing proposed corrections that are easily traceable; only rhythmical mistakes are silently corrected. For example, in the monophonic songs that were written in semi-mensural notation, the rhythm is corrected when it is not systematic or clear in the source (p. 134-136). Songs in Gothic or Hufnagel notation are rendered in stemless noteheads.

The polyphonic songs are published in score, whereas the two or three individual voices are written in succession in the manuscript. In some cases, ambiguities arise in the voice-leading of the polyphonic songs in semi-mensural notation, designed for singers with limited experience and education. The clefs that were used are a *c* clef and *f* dots. These are not specifically octave-related, which sometimes proved to be problematic for the editors; any differentiation between a start in unison or in octave, for example, depends on the voice leading of the piece (p. 133).

The polyphonic songs in semi-mensural notation are given a double transcription: a diplomatic transcription on five-line staves, in score with modern clefs, and a critical one, in which the pieces are fully transcribed in modern notation, including emendations. Again, a number of problematic issues challenged the editors. The notation of song no. 43, a hymn to St Barbara *Digne colat ecclesia* for two voices, is considered 'entirely corrupt' (p. 137). Because 'a transcription did not seem relevant' (p. 268), a facsimile of folios 30r-v is given instead, together with the transcription from a concordant source (Brussels, Royal Library, II 270). A different solution to a similar problem is encountered in another two-part song, no. 102 *Dies est leticie in aula regali*, the Easter contrafact of the famous Christmas song *Dies est leticie in ortu regali*. The Easter version has been diplomatically transcribed without emendations; the editors refer to the Christmas version earlier in the manuscript (no. 4) for a critical transcription.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.liederenbank.nl> (accessed 4 October 2015).

As mentioned earlier, the edition is preceded by an ample introduction of over 100 pages. To demonstrate the relevance of publishing the source integrally, it overviews the status of both literary and musicological research to date. The editors point out that in recent decades both musicological and literary studies have considered the manuscript not so much as a collection, but rather, even after more than a century of research, as a source of individual songs (p. 63-65). Songs no. 133/199<sup>3</sup> (*Ay lieve Jhesus mijn troest alleen*) and no. 149/194<sup>4</sup> (*Sijt vrolic, het is geworden dach*) have received some attention because they are contrafacts of two songs from the Gruuthuse manuscript (II.90 *Du haens mijn hertze, vrouwe mijn* and III.1.8. *Die mint ende hem sijn hope ontgaet*). The first thus enabled Ike de Loos to support her (and Van Biezen's) interpretation of the elusive Gruuthuse notation as a type of accentual notation ('heffingennotatie').<sup>5</sup> Similarly, the literary attention for the songs has been limited: the study of the Latin songs, for example, has basically been restricted to the question of the plausibility of the authorship of Thomas a Kempis (p. 65-68).

The introduction offers a number of suggestions and findings on the genesis, authorship, origin, and use of the codex. It explains that the manuscript is composed of two sections; an original core (A), consisting of 150 Middle Dutch and Latin songs, which was later expanded with

<sup>3</sup> No. 133 contains only the first stanza; no. 199 has a longer version of three stanzas.

<sup>4</sup> No. 149 contains only the first stanza; no. 194 has a longer version of five stanzas.

<sup>5</sup> Jan Van Biezen, 'The Music Notation of the Gruuthuse Manuscript and Related Notations', in: *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis* 22 (1972), 231-251; Jan Van Biezen, 'Die Gruuthuse-Notation: Eine Erwiderung auf die Kritik von Cornelis Lindenburg', in: *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis* 23 (1973), 75-78; Jan Van Biezen & Kees Vellekoop, 'Aspects of Stroke Notation in the Gruuthuse Manuscript and Other Sources', in: *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis* 34 (1984), 3-25; Ike De Loos, 'Het Gruuthuse-liedboek en de muziek van zijn tijd', in: Frank Willaert (ed.), *Het Gruuthuse-handschrift in woord en klank. Nieuwe inzichten, nieuwe vragen. KANTL-colloquium 30 november 2007*. Ghent: Koninklijke Academie voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde, 2010, 113-147.

an addition of some 40 songs, mainly in Middle Dutch (B). Section A in its turn consists of subsections A1, with mainly songs in Latin with music notation, and A2, a collection of Middle Dutch contrafacts and a separate fascicle of music notation.

The authorship and dating question is addressed in some detail, even though the songs in the codex remain largely anonymous, as is to be expected. Ascriptions appear to Bernard of Clairvaux, Johannes Brugman, Thomas a Kempis, and Suster Bertken (sister Berta Jacobs, d. 1514). Section A2 on the religious contrafacts of secular Middle Dutch songs includes two 'firsts': the earliest song ascribed to Suster Bertken, which was most likely copied during her lifetime, and the earliest rhetorician's song ('rederijkerslied'); furthermore, there are the two Gruuthuse contrafacts, and two songs are ascribed to Johannes Brugman. The references to the authors Suster Bertken and the Franciscan Willem van Amersfoort also provide the argument for dating the codex after 1480. That the codex's location of origin was Holland, or the region of Utrecht, can be derived from its linguistic idiom. Liturgical features point to a convent of canonesses probably related to the Modern Devotion, possibly attached to the Chapters of Windesheim or Sion.

The introductory study also aims to answer the question of the use of the manuscript. Taking as their starting point the Latin chants, which are more extensively discussed because they have not received much attention previously (p. 29–41), the editors suggest that these embellishments of the liturgy (Kyrie and Sanctus tropes, Benedictus verses, and a Christmas lesson, all in section A1) were not composed by nuns, but used and written down by them. They might have been sung during Mass and office, suffrages and processions, or perhaps during work as well. Even though the book is not a choirbook, these chants were written down in a series. This leads the editors to hypothesize that the manuscript could be a so-called 'winter part', referring to the division in winter and summer parts which is typically found in liturgical chant books such as antiphoners, but which is much less common in Middle Dutch song books (an example is the late fifteenth-century 'Deventer' songbook, HsBeSPK

185). Berlin 190, then, would constitute a similar winter part containing songs for the period from Advent to Easter. The summer part must be considered lost in this case (p. 14). The manuscript indeed contains many Christmas-related songs, such as songs about the shepherds, songs portraying Mary and Joseph as ordinary folks, close to the people, or songs that show Mary as a mediatrix. Even though the winter part hypothesis does not offer any direct support for the use of the manuscript for a convent of canonesses, it certainly does not contradict it.

Both the introduction and the edition offer a wealth of suggestions for further study of individual songs, such as the correlation between form, style and the occasion for which the songs are intended – forms such as virelai and virelai-ballade, and the use of polyphony were reserved for use in the Christmas songs only. Similarly, a closer study of intertextuality in the songs may find a good starting point in no. 89, *Regina celi, quam pulchra es*, which is packed with both textual and musical quotations of and references to other chants.

In conclusion, the present edition is a very valuable one, taking into account the demands of both philology and musicology, scrupulously describing and studying all the relevant aspects in the introduction and applying both methodologies in the edition. It strikes a good balance between attention to both philological aspects, respect for the source and its ease of use for both scholars and performers. The Acknowledgments (p. 7–9) indeed make clear the large extent to which the present edition is the result of the interdisciplinary collaboration within the Seminar for late medieval sacred song in the Low Countries (Werkgroep voor het laatmiddeleeuws geestelijk lied in de Lage Landen), which was established in 2002 and consisted of scholars in musicology, Middle Dutch and Latin studies, religious history, and palaeography. The present edition is the successful result of this multi-faceted collaboration. May it inspire many others in the future.

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