ENTRE STABILITÉ ET ITINÉRANCE
Livres et culture des ordres mendiants

xiiif-xve siècle

Sous la direction de
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### Books in Women’s Hands: Liturgy, Learning and the Libraries of Dominican Nuns in Westphalia

Jeffrey F. Hamburger, Eva Schlotheuber

The religious practices and intellectual skills of Dominican nuns in the late Middle Ages are generally not very well known. In contrast to their appreciation of the highly educated Dominican friars, most scholars tend to disregard the intellectual formation and learning of the nuns as presumably negligible. The impressive gradual writing work by the sisters of the convent of Paradies near Soest, however, once more raise the basic question of the educational background of Dominican nuns in the late medieval period. This question is difficult to answer, particularly for the fourteenth century. On the one hand, sources from within convents, that is, manuscripts written by the women themselves, such as convent diaries, collections of letters, etc., are much scarcer than in the fifteenth century. On the other hand, the women’s education depended on several factors: the stance of the order or the province, on the supervision of the local Dominican friars, and the social status of the families whose daughters convened at the nunnery. We therefore begin with the historical context of the two Westphalian convents, St. Marien in Lemgo and Paradies near Soest, as well as the normative foundations of the women’s education and training. After that, with the help of the library catalogue of the Dominican nuns in Lemgo, this paper proceeds to a discussion of the intellectual horizons of women in Westphalia in the second half of the fourteenth century.

#### The Dominican Nuns in Lemgo and Soest

The Dominican convent of Paradies near Soest was founded in 1252 when the wealthy and powerful Hanseatic city of Soest had already become the most important economic and cultural center of the northern part of Westphalia. About ten years later, in 1265, a second community of Dominican


nums1 was first established in Landle near Minden. The two houses remained the only converts of the Dominican nuns in the later Province of Saxony until the end of the fifteenth century. The driving force behind this new foundation were the Dominican prior from Minden, Johannes Sapientia, and the Dominican friar Otto of Hoya2. Due to long and exhausting conflicts with the heirs of the founders, the nuns decided to relocate the convent in the city, Lemu to the church of St Mary. The rather difficult translocation of the nunnery from Landle to Lemu in 1306 was forced and supported by the famous Dominican friar, Meister Eckhart, provincial vicar of Saxony at that time (1303-1310)3, and the prior of the Dominican friars in Minden, Johannes von dem Busche (de Busco). Those two men were obviously deeply engaged with the fortunes of the nunneries and may have been representatives of a certain political direction within the order4. Johannes von dem Busche who later became prior in Soest (1310)5 was a special promoter of the nuns of St Marien / Lemu and Paradies / Soest. In 1311 he succeeded Eckhart von Hochheim as provincial vicar of Saxony6. The connection of the family of von dem Busche to the convent remained intact for the next two centuries, as several of its members later lived in St. Marien. The move to Lemu initiated a process of regularity for the Dominicans Bibles, Simon I von der Lippe endowed them with the aures patronatus over all three parish churches of Lemu (St. Johannes, St. Nicolai, and St. Marien). No new churches, chapels, or even altars could be established without the nun’s approval. As such, the Dominican nuns were the decisive power in Lemu’s ecclesiastical life. As in Paradies near Soest, the convent provided a place for the daughters of the high and the lower nobility as well as of the patrician families who had become rich through overseas trades. Influential Dominicans were involved in the establishment of the two nunneries in Westfalia. The second ‘foudrot’ of Paradies was the learned Albertus Magnus who approved the admission of the two converts into the monastic order and performed the clothing ceremony (einnestuette) of the


7. Paulus von Löe, Statistikhe über die Ordensprovinz Saxonia, Leipzig, 1910 (Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte des Dominikanerordens in Deutschland, 4) p. 16.


10. The legend «De institutione Paradi et humili ingressu sororum» was recorded about 1325 as the beginning of the Kopulow consequently a book with the copies of the convent’s charters, Staatsarchiv Münster, Ma. VII n. 6107, Er I; «De institutione Paradii et humili ingresso sororum» (1523), ed. Johannes S. Seibertz, in Quellen der Westfälischen Geschichte, vol. 1, Arns- burg, 1857, p. 4-13. For the critical appreciation of the founder’s legend, see Norbert Fickemar, «Albertus von Othaven von Susan. Gründungsgeschichte des Dominikanerklosters Paradies (Urfaunung), in Westfälische Quellen im Bild, Alfred Brack, ed., n. 8, 180, p. 10, 180. 15.

11. Staatsarchiv Münster, Ma. VII n. 6107, fol. 3r. 3s. Seibertz, De institutione, p. 8.

12. Westfälisches UB, vol. 7, Die Urkunden des Kölnerischen Westfalen 1200-1300, ed. Staatsarchiv München, Regensburg, 1901-1908, n. 2058, p. 967-968: «sub cura, regimento et magistro prioris provincialis Theonelius». O. Deckel, «Die Stellung der Predigerorden». As early as 1255, the General Chapter had agreed to incorporating Paradies into the order, and Pope Alexander had agreed to permit them to live according to the statutes of the Dominicans. (see infra instituta dictorum Fratrum ordinis Praedicantium); Westfälisches UB, vol. 11 n. 551, p. 253. See Simon Tugwell, «Were the Magdeburg friars really turned into Dominicans in 1278? in Archivium Fratrum Praedicatorum 75 (2005), p. 79-79, here Appendix 2 (Beccarivas’s general commission). The term coro temporos capsicum was not connected with this act in 1287; the administration over temporal affairs henceforth lay with the members of the town council of Suset (Serset Ratsherren) as representatives (Paradies-Heren); see M. Wolf, Kirchen, p. 855.


the order: not only was Johannes von dem Busche prior of Minden and Soest before being elected as provincial vicar, Johannes von Melinburg (1336-1340), magister Theologie in Paris in 1335, was also the head of the Minden friars before he assumed responsibility during which time he continued to support the nuns in Lengo. In 1316 the provincial chapter was held in Minden and the convent was home to influential chroniclers such as Heinrich of Herford and Hermann of Lerbecke.15

Particularly for women’s convents, the second half of the fourteenth century is generally considered to be a period of decline in monastic discipline and learning. The assumption is that the communities had been depleted and did not regain their previous size after the middle century, which diminished the educational level as well as the intensity of religious life. The decline is usually attributed to the nuns’ accumulation of private property and the easing of enclosure. The gradual paradias (Düsseldorf D 12) clearly indicates that the nuns had private property; an inscription states that sister Hadewych of Lydenschied and sister Elizabeth paid for the choir book from their own expenses: “Hoc libro cupravertur soror Hadewych de Ludenschiede et soror Elizabet solida in expensis propriis et soror Elizabeth Rath24 scriptum. Harum animae requiescat in pace. Amen.”16

For sure, abolition of private property and observance of enclosure were the most important demands of monastic reformers in the fifteenth century. Scholarly research thus assumes the observers’ critique. However, by establishing a contrast to the old way of life, the monastic reformers tried particularly to establish the new religious ideal of interiority: physical as well as subjective, devotional discipline, and, above all, a fundamentally new educational ideal.17 By denouncing the old educational traditions of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries as a slack of educations, the monastic reformers painted a biased picture of the decline of religious life. Following this, scholars have for the most part assumed that in the fourteenth century, Dominican nuns no longer had a sufficient command of Latin and were therefore excluded from learned educational traditions.18

**Normative Regulations for the Education of the Dominican Nuns**

Scholarly skepticism regarding the educational theology of religious women is supported by the fact that the order’s normative regulations virtually exclude any learned theological education of religious women in a more narrow sense. In his Summa quaestionum ordinariae, the influential Papal Magister Henry of Ghent († 1293) concluded that women were not permitted education in theological sciences, not even if they expressly demanded so, because “courteous sunt ad scindium mulieres.” In the same vein, Henry of Ghent’s Responsa (fundamental applied also to the religious, the Dominican nuns, because according to canonical law ordained nuns were considered lay people as well. With regard to the education of the Dominican nuns, the superior general, Humbert de Romans, in his Constitutione iurisdictione arrives at the same conclusion: given that comprehensive knowledge of theological and dogmatic principles were necessary for preaching, they were not to be taught to the women. Four reasons were given: 1) women’s lack of intellectual capability (defectus sensut), 2) their subordinate position under the supervision of Dominican friars (conditio subjectionis), 3) the dissipation they would provoke were they to preach (ad luxuriam), and 4) the importance of their serving as a reminder of the stupidity of the first woman (in membrum stultitiae praeceps mulieris) – meaning Eve’s momentous mistake.20 This ‘integration’, or rather ‘subordination’, of the women in the religious culture of learned knowledge has led to an image of religious women in normative sources (which were written by superiors of the order) as being without any qualifications intellectually. Neither the rules nor their interpretations, the constrictiae, hint at a particular education of the future nuns or at a demand for competence in Latin. In practice, however, the restrictive stance of the

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17. Elizabeth Rathus probably belonged to a family named Rothus; Aleydis Rothus and her daughter were among those who first entered the community as the founder generation; Staatsarchiv Münster, Ms. VII N° 6107, f. 2r; see also N. Eickermann, «Heinrich von Osthoven aus Seest», p. 11.

18. Düsseldorfer D 12, t. 12c.


20. M.-L. Ehrenshwindtner, Die Bildung der Dominikanerinnen; for the discussion of this approach, see E. Schlothauer, „Bücher und Bildungen“, p. 241-262.


institutional church towards the women made little sense. Of course they had to have knowledge of Latin for their service. In addition, their religious vocation posed a sizable challenge to the intellectual comprehension of their own way of life, especially regarding the observance of enclosure. This was also known to the superior general, Humbert de Romans. Outside of the order’s discourse, with a different audience, that is, addressing the future nuns and their families, he stressed that the girls should preferably study Latin at home before their entry into the convent. Then they could easily receive profound instruction in exegesis, just like the learned Eustochium and Paulina. The religious women’s competence in languages and their literary scope can thus not be deduced only from the normative sources, but also have to be critically assessed and worked up concretely from historical tradition.

THE LIBRARY CATALOGUE OF THE DOMINICAN NUNS OF ST. MARIN

Because we know only very little about the time before the great monastic reform of the fifteenth century, the survival of the library catalogue of the Dominican nuns at Lemgo represents a real stroke of luck [Fig. 1]. The catalogue was written at the end of the fourteenth century and was folded in a soft binding made from a monastic document dated 1386. The catalogue of books encompasses sixty-five titles in about seventy to seventy-five volumes and is headed by the title: ‘The library of the nuns of Lemgo includes those books that are here recorded as follows, with the exception of those that are necessary for religious service in the choir.’ (Liberator sororum in Lemogo libros continet hic conscriptus / his exceptis quo chorus habet necessarios pro divino officio peragenos.) The books were ordered according to size, and the book collection was almost completely in Latin; the few volumes in vernacular are listed at the very back under the soft binding before the school texts.

The large-scale manuscripts in modus maior (thus probably in folio form) were bible texts, the Moralia of Gregory the Great, the Historia Scholastica of Petrus Comestor, as well as a collection of sermons in two volumes with a winter and a summer part. The manuscript of the gospels that technically would have belonged here was missing because it was needed in the convent school: ‘librum unam aliam evangelia continentem quem habet scola.’ This is one of the few specific hints pointing to the nuns’ education in the convent’s own school. The modus minor included two martyrlogies, the biographies of the church fathers and Dominican friars, probably by Gerard of Frachet (Vita patrum, Vita fratum), the Collationes patrum of John Cassian, and two interpretations of the Augustinian rule, namely by Humbert de Romans and Hugh of Saint Victor; the latter bound together with the Decalogue by Henricus de Primaria. It also included a Speculum virginum, a text that, as Jeffrey Hamburger has determined, was among those quoted by the nuns of Paradies. Quite a few of the manuscripts that were stored in the modus minorum on the desk had been private property before they entered into the library’s possession. Sister Richeldis had owned De praeparatione cordis by Hugh of St. Cher (O.Cist., 13th century) or Hugh of St. Cher (OP, c. 1263), and a Ps.-Bonaventura, De perfectione virtutum. Goste von Wierberek had owned a work on the perfection of the virtues, and Adelheid von Letelen, Bonaventure’s Brevissequum. This was also the place of three medical manuscripts, one in hard cover, and two medical collections in soft bindings. A Liber medicinalis from St. Marian in a similar soft binding, assembled from innumerable sheets of various dates, has also survived. Parts of it were written in the fourteenth century, possibly going back to one of the two collections of medical recipes. The predominantly Latin recipes listed here indicate the exact apothecaries’ weight and pharmaceutical abbreviations—many of them referring to the plague that


25. Staatsarchiv Detmold, L 110 B, Nr. 18. A critical edition of the library catalogue by Eva Schlotheuber will be part of the publication Jeffrey Hamburger is preparing on the graduates of Paradies bei Soest.

26. The poenae scolares of the Dominican convent at Lemgo are also mentioned in a document dated August 15, 1323, according to which they are permitted 20 chickens on seven days during Lent, as well as an extra portion of eggs on Easter; Lippische Bezirks, ed. Otto Preuß / August Fallmann, Lemgo 1863, vol. 2, Nr. 689, p. 107.

27. Ibid.


wreaked havoc in Lengo in 1530. It ends with the entry saying: «scito quod nullus amor est medicabils herbis»—but know that there is no medicine against love».

After her death, Margarete Budde had a book donated to the library, the incipit of which names Frater Ambrosius. Margarete Budde is documented to have been in the convent in 1366, and she may have owned a copy of the bible, because Frater Ambrosius is the beginning of a letter by Hieronymus Paulinus that generally preceded bible manuscripts. An addition at the end of the page lists the chess book, called Schachkofferbuch – Ludus scaccorum of the Dominican, Jacobus de Cessolis, which had entered the library from the ownership of Helungen Buse (13). This sort of artistic recording of estates was popular among the nobility to which Helungen belonged (13). Her brother, the knight Konrad, was among the major patrons of the community and had donated in their church an altar to St. Catherine in 1383. The biological sisters Gost and Elisabeth of Wiriborn had owned a work that was ascribed to the great Dominican scholar, Albertus Magnus. Librum de virtutibus animalium, arborum, herbarum et specierum (about 1290), dealing with the virtues of plants, stones, and animals (13). Among the smallest books with a hard cover (modulis minima in ossibus ligatus) were additional volumes originating as private property. Richeldis had given the work De doctrina cordis by Hugh of St. Cher to the library (13), and a Mariarel, probably by the Dominican Richard of St. Laurent (+ c. 1250), had once belonged to the Dominican prior, Johannes Sapiens. With this volume, the women’s library also retained part of its own history, as Johannes Sapiens had once facilitated the establishment of the nun’s community in Lגדhe near Minden.

The next section lists the soft-bound volumes, many of which had also entered the library as the nun’s private property. Gertrud von Huckenhksen, for instance, who died in 1374 and belonged to a respected Lengo family, had owned a Tabula exemplorum, an alphabetically ordered collection of examples in Latin. The work contained genuinely funny examples, particularly under the keyword De Dylabibus diabolis, and was apparently directed at a learned audience (13). Wilburg von dem Busche (13) had owned a book designated as Lapidarium. A further Lapidarium is mentioned in the incipit, with makes it possible to verify it as the Liber de gemmis of Marob of Renne († 1123), quite difficult reading. Some vernacular volumes (Libro de trinitate, Librum thomisticum de confessione item duos libros theutonicos) were stored here among the books in soft bindings just before the school books (13). The provision made within the convent apparently corresponded to this demanding scholarly profile. Part of the «learning for beginners» was the popular Doctrinale of Alexander of Villeneuve (altem Doctrinale glossatum) (13). This small soft-bound volume from the fourteenth century has survived until today (13). As specified in the library catalogue, the Doctrinale is furnished with interlinear glosses. In addition, this manuscript contains several sample letters in Latin addressed to high- and lower-ranking clerics and laypeople. The volume was not written by the nuns themselves, but emerged obviously in a learned school context and was therefore probably given to the nuns by the friars.

Much more demanding than Alexander of Villeneuve, however, was the Enigmata Simplicis written by Caecilus Firmanus Syphosis, a riddle book from Late Antiquity that was used as a school book in the Middle Ages (13). Probably also used for teaching was the Pseudo-Boethius De doctrina scholastica which was bound together in Lengo with the real Boethius’ De consolatione Philosophiae. The title, Epygum terras glossatum, refers to the metrical didactic poem by Theodulos, an author from the tenth or eleventh century of whom we only know this fictive name (13). His 344 Leonian hexameters in the style of bucolic poetry were also mainly used for educational purposes on high level.

Overall, the Dominican nuns of St. Marien in Lengo are also remarkable for their interest in practical literature. They shared their scientific interests with the great Dominican scholar, Albertus

30. Staatsarchiv Detmold, I, 110, N° 19, f. 22v.
31. C. Halm, «Klosterleben in Mittelalter», p. 211. Her sister, Elisabeth Budde, also lived as a nun in St Marien, Lengo.
32. In the middle of the 14th c., the noble family, Bose, lived in a residence called Horn and was quite powerful. They were knights of the landburd but also held strong connections to the city of Lengo. In the 14th c., Helungen Bose lived in the convent; C. Halm, «Klosterleben in Mittelalter», p. 212-213.
34. See Isabelle Douclet, Le Liber de virtutibus herbarum, legumin and animalium (Liber aggregatuum): Un texte a succés attribué à Albert le Grand, Florence, 2007 (Micrologus Library, 22).
35. A manuscript of De doctrina cordis, belonging to the library of Paradis (Soest) is today ULB Düsseldorf, Ms. B 56 (14th c.).
36. Gertrud von Huckenhksen was the daughter of the mayor of Lengo Johann von Huckenhksen (1352-1354). The family was personally and economically deeply involved with the convent. C. Halm, «Klosterleben in Mittelalter», p. 206-208.
38. At least three members of the family von dem Busche lived in St. Marien in the 14th century, see C. Halm, «Klosterleben in Mittelalter», p. 202-205. A nun named Wilburg von Busche was in the year 1374 subpriorissima and from 1384-1389 priorissima of the convent.
39. Staatsarchiv Detmold, L 110 B, N° 18, f. 6v.
40. Ibid. f. 7r.
41. Ibid. f. 6v.
Magnus. This tendency recedes in the fifteenth century in favor of devotional literature. Apart from the medical and scientific books, they also owned legal literature. They probably needed the important statutes of the provincial chapter in Mainz from 1310 (librum de statu domini Petri archiepiscopi Maguntinensis), which archbishop Peter of Aspet (1306-1320) had issued, to administer adequately their extensive parish rights, their ius patronatus. The books that they had written themselves or the literature that had been copied for them were made functional for library use by the women of St. Marien in Lemo themselves. To this effect, the office of the librarian also included a small bookbinding workshop, the furnishings of which were later added under the title He sont pertinentia ad officium librariae. «These things belong to the office of the library».

The schoolbooks in Latin and the literary possessions of the individual nuns suggest a good command of Latin and the impressively broad intellectual horizon of the Westphalian Dominican nuns in the second half of the fourteenth century—a period that scholarship considers to be one of decay and religious decline. The composition of their library’s holdings, particularly the scientific and medical works, thus seems to be going into a distinctly different direction than the book collections we know from the reformed convents at the end of the fifteenth century. Although we are unable to locate this learned knowledge in the order’s normative sources, we can recover it, as «applied» knowledge, from the surviving manuscripts. Examples of this are the magnificent graduands written by the Dominican nuns of Paradies, in which the extensive Latin commentary in the scrolls reveals a deep knowledge of the learned theological tradition. The choir service was the center of their religious life, and the liturgy regulated the rhythm of the day. The liturgical songs were important not only for the nuns, they also had a strong impact on the lay people. When in 1306 the Dominican nuns moved from their former site to St. Marien in Lemo, all the people of the city received and accompanied them to their new church. One of the nuns, Alheisid, began to sing the antiphon de St. Nicolas, O Christi pietas, with a voice so sonorous and sweet that all the people were deeply moved. A longtime listener to her was so impressed that he spontaneously gave her his silver knife, the only thing he had at hand at this moment. The significance of the liturgical chant, not only to the nuns, but also to their lay families, is something one can hardly overestimate.

Latin Learning and Liturgical Performance at Paradies bei Soest

For Paradies bei Soest, the four liturgical books listed in Krümmer’s Handschriftenerheber des Mittelalters—an early fourteenth-century antiphonary in two parts (Düsseldorf D 7 and D 9) and two graduals from the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries (Düsseldorf D 11 and D 12), all of them elaborately illuminated—can now be supplemented by a mid-fourteenth-century gradual in Dortmund (Archiv der Propsteikirche B 6), without illumination, written for the Dominican friars in Dortmund, and fragments of another illuminated gradual, very closely related to D 11 in Düsseldorf, divided between the Staatliche Graphische Sammlung in Munich and Harvard’s Houghton Library (Munich Inv.-Nr. 18703 and Houghton Library Typ. 1905), most likely made for the nuns’ own use, to judge by its similarity to the gradual D 11. Three graduals produced for in-house use over the course of about half a century represent a very active production that cannot simply be explained by the desire to keep up with either fashion or liturgical innovations, to which the manuscripts bear witness. These liturgical codices, which at Paradies would have been kept apart in the sacristy (just as they were at Lemo, as indicated by its library catalogue), can only be added a fourteenth-century copy of Hugh of St. Cher (OP, † 1263) De doctrina cordis (ULB Düsseldorf, Ms. B 56) and the Kopiatiuch, a collection of charters organized by property holdings (Staatsarchiv Münster, Ms. VII N. 6107).

At first blush, the library’s scant surviving holdings provide little to build on. The two sources, however—on the one hand, the library catalogue from Lemo, on the other hand, the set of liturgical books from Paradies—complement one another in unexpected ways. Whereas the catalogue provides valuable hard information about what the nuns of Lemo read, it tells us little about how they read. For this, however, we can turn to the exceptional late fourteenth-century graduals from Paradies, whose pages are covered with integral inscriptions that provide a running commentary on the images that accompany virtually every feast. In the extent of their built-in verbal and visual commentary, the manuscripts from Paradies are without parallel among extant liturgical codices. They therefore present an unexpected opportunity to see a group of Dominicans nuns, several of whom identify themselves by name in colophons, inscriptions, images and initials, putting their Latin learning to work. The colophon of the gradual in Dortmund informs us that it was written, notated and decorated by Elisabeth von Lünen, who族ue librum scripsit, notavit et cumburo complevit. (Fig. 2) Elisabeth also inserted herself into the margins of the gradual D 11 in the form of miniature commemorative portraits identified by her initials, E.L. (Fig. 3). The daughter of a Bürgermeister of Soest, she can tentatively be identified as the mastermind behind the project and, indeed, the entire scriptorium over the course of about half a century. Small inscriptions, reminiscent of micrography, do not simply elaborate the profuse illustration, they form part of its fabric. Indeed, the illustrations, which, for the most part, are tiny, yet packed with detail, prove reminiscent of the inscribed embroideries that were a specialty of many monastic houses in northern Germany over the course of this entire period.

Before providing a detailed analysis of the inscriptions most closely related to the history of the Dominican order and Dominican sources, some general comments are needed. As might be expected, the overwhelming majority of the inscriptions, of which there are hundreds in the gradual D 11 alone, stem from Scripture. Of these, the majority come from the New Testament and the Psalms, although other books of Jewish Scripture are also represented. Reflecting the nuns’ special devotion to the saint, the corpus of writings attributed to John the Evangelist (his Gospel, Epistles and the Apocalypse), receives...
special emphasis. In fact, the images and inscriptions, in addition to providing something akin to a mass commentary along the lines of what one finds in Beleth, Sicardus of Cremona, or William Duran-
dus, also transform every feast into a celebration of the Evangelist and thereby the entire book into a kind of libellus in honor of the saint. It is in the context of this devotion that many of the more unusual textual sources surface. In addition to the expected Dominican authorities, among them Jacobus da Voragine, Dietrich of Apolda, and Humbert of Romans, we find a generous number of quotations from Patristic, Carolingian and twelfth-century monastic sources, including, inter alia, Augustine, Gregory, Pseudo-Chrysostom, Pseudo-Dionysius, Ergugena, Alcuin, Peter Damian, Rupert of Deutz, Gerthol of Reichenberg, the Speculum virginum, and Bernard of Clairvaux. With their concatenations of in-
scribed authorities, the images and inscriptions on individual pages take on the character of centos or miniature florilegia, some of which focus on such rarified topics familiar to Dominican theologians as the dedication of the soul.

Closely related in iconography to an initial in Düsseldorf illustrating the feast of St. John at the Latin Gate, but illustrating instead a sequence in honor of John the Evangelist, the single leaf in Munich from the fragmentary late fourteenth-century gradual will have to serve, pars pro toto, as an indicator of the verbal and visual density of the material from Paradise. [Fig. 4] Framing the text, the sequence «Ver-
bau dei deo natum» in honor of John the Evangelist, unfurled speech scrolls on the recto successively present quotations from the Epistles of the Pseudo-Dionysius (lower right), Bernard of Clairvaux’s Sermons on the Song of Songs (lower margin), the sermons of Peter Damian (lower margin), and Erigena’s Homily on John (outer margin), then, on the verso, an unidentified passage attributed to In-
ocent III (upper margin), another quotation from Erigena (outer margin), and, lastly, an excerpt from the Speculum virginum (lower margin), attributed to Bede. Supplementing these snippets are a large number of other inscriptions in the initials, not only the large letter depicting the eagle of John flying out of the rota in medio rote to suck at the breast of the divinity, but all of the smaller initials as well.

In pulling these sources together in celebration of John the Evangelist, it is quite likely that the nun, rather than relying directly on the primary sources, instead used a libellus of Latin writings in honor of John the Evangelist of a type that can be shown to have circulated in Dominican convents of the
they in fact owned a copy of the Speculum virginum, why do they attribute the passage from this classic of twelfth-century monasticism, which continued to be copied well into the fifteenth century, to Bede? Each quotation provides a philological puzzle of its own.

Systematic analysis of specifically Dominican material in the gradual D 11 confirms the need to proceed with caution. This paper provides five examples, beginning with the most straightforward, the incorporation of material from the Legenda auroe into the illustration of the mass for Epiphany. [Fig. 5] In light of the popularity of the Golden Legend, it would be easy to discount its specific relevance to a discussion of the Dominican aspects of the gradual were it not that its use in the manuscript appears to be without parallel, indicating an especially close adherence to Jacobus' text. Instead of showing simply the Adoration of Magi (upper left compartment), which, in illuminated manuscripts, constituted a universal custom, the gradual from Paradies follows the Golden Legend in comparing the first epiphany with three others: the Baptism (upper right), the Marriage at Cana (lower left), and the Feeding of the Five Thousand (lower right)55. The twelve wine jars from Cana form a vertical line along the right edge of initial56. The inscriptions, all written in silver, in turn parallel the names for each

55. Jacopo da Varagine, Legenda aurea. Edizione critica, 2 vol., G. P. Magagnoli ed, Florence, 1998 (Millennium Medievale, 6, Testi 3), vol. 1, p. 131-132 (XIV:1-13). For the English translation, see James von Voragine, The Golden Legend. Readings on the Saints, W. G. Ryan ed., Princeton, 1993, vol. 1, p. 78-79: "On the feast day of the Lord’s epiphany four miracles are commemorated, and therefore the day has four different names. On this day the Magi adored Christ, John baptized him, he changed water into wine, and he fed five thousand men with five loaves. When Jesus was thirteen days old, the Magi, led by a star, came to him; therefore the day is called Epiphany, from επί, which mean above, and phainō, meaning an appearing, because then a star appeared from above, or the star, appearing from above, showed the Magi that Christ was the true God. On the same day, twenty-nine days later, he had entered his thirteenth year (he was then twenty-nine years and thirteen days old) and, as Luke says, was beginning his thirteenth year; as Bede has it, and the Roman church affirms, he was already thirty years old. Then, I say, he was baptized in the Jordan, and therefore the day is called Theophany, from Θεός, meaning God, and phainō, apparition. The whole Trinity appeared on that day, the Father by voice, the Son in the flesh, the Spirit as a dove. On the same day one year later, when he was thirty or thirty-one years plus thirteen days old, he changed water into wine; so the day is called Bethany, from bath, house, because by working the miracle in a house he appeared as true God. Still another year thereafter, when he was thirty-one or thirty-two, he fed the five thousand men with five loaves, as Bede says and as we hear in the hymns that is sung in many churches and begins Illudnam altissimo. So the day is called Phainophagy, from phageō, which means a mouthful to eat... Four appearances, then, happened on this day, the third and the second through the Father’s voice, in the Jordan; the third in the changing of water into wine at the wedding feast; the fourth in the multiplication of the loaves in the desert.

of these events supplied by Jacobus: Epiphania, for the Epiphany, meophania (in lieu of theophania), for the Baptism, bethphania, for the Marriage at Cana, and, finally, phagiphania, for the Feeding of the Five Thousand. Despite these parallels, however, one cannot say for certain whether the Golden Legend served as the nuns’ source. Sicardus of Cremona, whom Jacobus probably used as his source, employs the same vocabulary. In light of the strong resemblance of the entire cycle of illustrations to a mass commentary of the sort Sicardus provides, it is difficult to decide which author ultimately served as the nuns’ point of departure?

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57. J. Hamburger, «Penance in Paradise».

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The second example comes right at the beginning of the book. Among the most unusual features of the gradual is that it contains sequences not only at the end, but also at the beginning. No less unusual is the fact that most of these sequences are illustrated. Prior to the sequences at the beginning of the manuscript, one finds a few prefatory texts. Of those, the first to be illustrated is a response for the third nocturn of the Common of Virgins, also used for the Saturday office of the Virgin Mary. [Fig. 6] Its inclusion here appears to reflect a special veneration to the Virgin, not unexpected in the Dominican order. The rubric, however, «quae aliqua induit», «how anyone is invested» (literally, put on, referring usually to the putting on of a garment, which in this case would be the monastic habit), suggests that the reason for singling out this particular text so prominently at the front of the manuscript is that it would have been performed on the occasion of a new member of the community being consecrated. The adoption of the habit was a standard part of such ceremonies.

The unusual iconography of the initial supports such an interpretation. The initial depicts, at the top, Christ and the Virgin Mary, both half-length, engaged in a dialogue made up of passages from John's
Gospel («Nemo uniat ad patrem nisi per me», Jn. 14:6; «ego uis, ueritas et uita», Jn. 14:6). Christ, shown frontal, points with his right hand to the Virgin Mary, who bares her breast in an image of intercourse that also refers to the mystery of the Incarnation. Below, in the Annunciation, a devil with a graphing hook attempts to interfere with the Incarnation. Although the kneeling woman does not clearly bear a halo, she can be identified as the Virgin Mary by virtue of the prominent red and green wings behind the figure to her right, who therefore must be identified as the archangel Gabriel. At the upper left, John the Evangelist, ever present, declares: «He gave them power to be made the sons of God» (John 1:12), a passage that here applies directly to women taking vows at the moment they become members of the convent’s community. As the first excerpt from John’s Gospel in a manuscript filled with such excerpts, the passage is significant as a statement of the doctrine of dedication that informs the treatment and use of John throughout, underscoring programmatic intent. The Dominicans were apparently the first to adopt the practice of reciting John 1:1-14 at the end of the mass, where it was said soto voce by the celebrant. Uterly in keeping with the doctrine of heavenly reward and epiphanial air elaboration in the image are the inscriptions found in the margin: «through thy reward exceeding great» (cf. Genesis 15:1); «come ye to him and be enlightened» (Psalm 33:6); and «after her virgins shall be brought to the king» (Psalm 44:15). Having likened the nun’s marriage to Christ to Mary receiving the annunciation, the image proceeds to liken her ultimate reward in heaven to Mary’s elevation to Christ side in the kingdom of heaven. Immediately to the right of the initial, a half-length figure of Dominic holds a scroll reading: «Here- ditario iure relinquo caritatem, humiliatatem, castitatem, paupertatem». From words put into Dominic’s mouth, this testament represents one of the founder’s most famous statements, best known from the Legenda aurea, which includes an account of Dominic’s will and testament: «when at last the term of his earthly pilgrimage drew near, Saint Dominic being at the time in Bologna fell seriously ill. The imminent dissolution of his body was shown to him in a vision in which he saw a youth of surpassing beauty, who said to him: “Come, my beloved, come to joy, come!” He therefore called together the twelve friars of the priory at Bologna, and, so as not to leave them orphaned and without a heritage, gave them his testament. He said: “These are the things I bequeath to you in rightfull possession, as my sons and heirs: charity, keep humility, possess poverty”»86. By placing a reference to this famous incident, which marked the formal founding of the Dominican Order, immediately adjacent to the image of Christ and the Virgin, the initial literally aligns its founder with the holy figures and suggests that Dominic participates in their sanctity.

Despite having been written in the late thirteenth century, the version of Dominic’s life in the Legenda aurea is relatively late. Prior lives included the Libellus de principiis ordinis praedicatorum, written by Jordan of Saxony ca. 1233-1234, Peter Ferrand’s Vita, written between 1227 and 1242 for use in the liturgy, and a revision of Ferrand’s Vita commissioned from Constantine of Orvieto, who also wrote an office in honor of the saint86a. Both works, the office and the Constantini legenda sancti Dominici, were approved at the general chapter held in 1248. Only with Humbert of Romans’ Legenda major, undertaken in 1254 and approved repeatedly in 1254, 1255, and 1256, did the Order arrive at what was to become the definitive version of its founder’s biography. In light of this continuous process of revision, it can prove very difficult to determine the precise text from which a particular episode in Dominic’s life may have been drawn. At Paradies, however, some greater precision proves possible.

containing, at the upper left, the Madonna of Mercy sheltering Dominican friars and nuns⁴⁶, at the upper right, Christ with supplicants, and, at the lower level, John and Dominic. Dominic is shown with the red hair and beard that, based on early accounts, were held to be among his defining physical features⁴⁸. Dominating the initial, however, and defining its central axis are three articles of the Dominican habit: the tunic, at the top, the black capuce at the center, and, below, the white scapular⁴⁹. Providing the horizontal axis are words from Dietrich of Apolda’s Acta ampliora: «Ordinem tamen

del Centro italiano di studi sul basso medioevo - Academia Tuderiana e del Centro di studi sulla spiritualità medievale, 18) p. 567-631.


matri mee commisi; Usis uidere ordinem tuum". Given that Dietrich of Apolda’s life of Dominic is quoted elsewhere on the same page, the image as a whole may well refer to the following passage in the *Acta Apollonii*, which further identifies Mary as the Madmona of Mercy: "Hic est Maria virginis designatus est habitus Prædictorum Ordinis. Hic est habitus speciosus, fulvus rigore pænitentis, candidus vigore pudicitiae, tanica pulchritudin talaris vestis nuptialis, stola sacerdotis, indumentum honestatis clericalis, donatus, non ab angelis, sed dignatione elementi Virginis matris." The wording indicates that Dietrich must have served as the source, although a similar account occurs in Cecilia’s *Miracula 7*, of which Dietrich received a copy in 1288 and made extensive use. A further quotation from Dietrich occurs in the lower compartment in the form of the words *expolens* by Dominic: *Hoc desidero domine meus*. John, identified as elsewhere in the manuscript, by the golden eagle on his chest, uses words from the scriptures attributed to him: *Exsto uigilas et confirma cetera* (Ap. 3:2).

The fourth example is provided by the sequence for the feasts of Dominic, *In caelesti hierarchia* (O 11, p. 592). [Fig. 8] In this case, more interesting than the inscriptions are the images that accompany them. The omnipresent John the Evangelist appears at the bottom of the image, holding a quotation from the Apocalypse (5:2), *Odi angelum fortiori predicantem uce magna.* At the top, also half-length, Dominic once again appears as his pendant, with the same, albeit abbreviated, quotation from Humber of Romans employed previously: *quiramina habete, humilitatem seruatet*. Below John appears successively Peter Martyr, with a dagger in his head, Thomas Aquinas, holding a book, and, last, in the lower left corner of the page, two Dominicans, the first identified as Jordan of


74. See the sources cited in nn. 61-64.
Saxony (ca. 1380-1373) (Jordans)75, the second, as Raymond of Penafort (c. 1175-1275), Master of the Dominican Order from 1238-1240 (Remundus)76. Elsewhere, as part of the decoration for the feast of Corpus Christi, the gradual contains a pair of verses paraphrased by Aquinas as part of his hymn, Pange Lingua: «Rex sedet in cæsis/ cinctus turba duodecim/Se tenet in manibus/ se citat ipse cubus».


tion of the feast. Added to the portable liturgical exemplar of the Dominicans (London, British Library, Add. Ms. 23935, f. 12v-13r, dated ca. 1326-1362, in a supplement dated ca. 1370, its presence in the gradual provides an approximate terminus ante quem for the manuscript, which can in any case be placed no earlier than ca. 1380 on art-historical grounds. The illustration of the initial provides the earliest extant depiction of Christ speaking to Thomas from the cross. Whether this detail further depends on Tocco’s life of the scholastic saint once again proves a complicated philological problem.


80. See Susan Marti, "Sisters in the Margin.


82. William of Tocco, Vetus sancti Thome de Aquino, ch. 34, lines 12-13, D. M. Prümmer, O.P. ed.; Fontes Vetus S. Thomae Aquinatis, Notitiae historicarum et criticarum illustrativae, Toulouse, 1911, p. 126, newly edited in Storia sancti Thome de Aquino de

Unfurling from the right arm of the cross (as seen from Christ’s perspective), a scroll makes visible the savior’s words: "Bene scriptisti me, thoma; Quam ergo mercedem de labore tua accipies.

To which Thomas replies: "Non alienum nisi te ipsum." According to Simon Tugwell, the source whose wording seems to be the closest to the Paradies gradual is the shorter version of Bernard Gui’s legend, which postdates Tocco’s, in which Christ says to the saint: "Bene scriptisti me, Thoma, quam ergo recipies pro tuo labore mercedem," and Thomas replies "Domine non alienum mercedem recipiam nisi

Guillaume de Tocco (1323). Édition critique, introduction et notes, C. Le Brun-Gouanvic ed., Toronto, 1996 (Studies and Texts 127), p. 162. For the story’s circulation in various contexts, including hymns, see Edmund Colledge, "The Legend of St. Thomas Aquinas," in St. Thomas Aquinas 1274-1974, p. 13-28, here p. 22-25. For the story’s circulation in various contexts, including hymns, see A. Ian Doyle, "A Prayer Attributed to St. Thomas Aquinas," Dominican Studies 1 (1948), p. 231-232, Edmund Colledge, "The Legend of St. Thomas Aquinas," in St. Thomas Aquinas 1274-1974, p. 13-28, here p. 22-25. Tocco’s life appears to have been circulated in Germany only quite late, i.e., in the fifteenth century, at least as indicated by theBrun-Gouanvic’s list of manuscripts, p. 61-67, the majority of which are of German origin. Of these, however, all but two (Frankfurt, Stadtbibliothek, Prad. 60, f. 209r-238r, and Nuremberg, Stadtbibliothek, Cent. III 69, f. 27r-58r) come from Benedictine houses and not a single copy, regardless of affiliation with an order, comes from a female house. For the infrequent German translation of William of Tocco’s life of Aquinas, see Werner Willimans-Krapp, "Kultpflege und literarische Überlieferung," p. 156-157.
teipsumus. The legend, including the exchange between Christ and Aquinas, was also incorporated into the liturgy for the saint; in the portable copy of the exemplar of the Dominican liturgy (London, British Library, Add. Ms. 23935, f. 18r), the fifth lesson for Matins concludes: «Bene scriptisti de me, Thoma, quam ergo recipies pro tuo labore mercedem? Et respondit Thomas, Domine non aliun mercedem recipiam quam te ipsum.» The vision of the speaking crucifix, but with slightly different wording yet again, also occurs among the occasional additions to the Golden Legend, a source used by the nuns at Paradies, although of an extent copies that include it is relatively small. Evidence of local interest in the life and legends of Thomas Aquinas comes from a manuscript from the library of the Dominican friars at Soest (Soest, Stadtbibliothek, Ms. 36, f. 224r-234v), compiled by Jacob of Soest, who preached at Paradies in the early decades of the fifteenth century. The library at Lengo also appears to have included some version of Thomas's life. Further evidence of Jacob's interest in Aquinas comes from Soest, Stadtbibliothek, Ms. 29, in which he assembled various reports on Aquinas' canonization and the translation of his relics to Toulouse.

The feast in honor of Aquinas feast closes on the following folio with the verse, «Quasi uas auri solidum ornatum omni lapide preciosos» (Eccles. 50:10), which is embellished with a bust-length figure of the apostle Paul, surrounded by filigree perwork and holding a scroll reading «Qui compatitur et corregnat». [Fig. 11] The alliterative phrase appears to echo a passage in Stephen Langton's life of another Thomas, Thomas a Becket, where it is said of the martyr: «Quia testante Apostolu, qui non compatitur non corregat». The apparent borrowing from Langton raises a critical question that affects the consideration of sources, to what extent can we imagine the nuns of Paradies not only relying on primary sources or, in the case of the patristic texts they applied to John the Evangelist, specialized florilegia, but also, as appears to be the case here, simply on memory. The

83. Priemmer, *Fontes viri s. Thomas Aquinatis,* p. 189. In correspondence, Simon Tugwell kindly noted that Vatican Library, Ms. Vat. lat. 1218, f. 157r, supplies the same text, other than «non aliun mercedem nisi te ipsum recipiam». He also indicates that in the longer version (as found in Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. 818, f. 120v), Christ says «Thoma bene scriptisti de me, quam ergo recipies pro tuo labore mercedem, to which Thomas replies «Domine nihil nisi te».

84. For this information, thanks to Simon Tugwell, who notes that the same wording occurs in Toulouse, Bibl. Mun., Ms. 82, f. 222v as part of a supplement to a Dominican lectionary.

85. For a list of these liederzeugen, see Barbara Freith, *Studien zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der lateinischen Legenden aurea,* Brussels, 1991 (Subsidia Hagiographica, 72, 493 (728 & 730). Excerpts from the Legenda also circulated in various collections (although there appears to be no evidence that the life and miracles of Thomas were among them); see Marie Anne Pole de Boulainville, «Présence de la Légende dorée dans les recueils d’Exemples. Citations, textes et réécritures», in *De la Sainteté à l’hagiographie. Genèse et usage de la Légende dorée,* B. Freith and F. Morenzoni, Geneva 2001 (Publications romanes et françaises 229), p. 147-171.

86. Bernd Michael, *Die mittelhochdeutsche Handschrift der Wissenschaftlichen Stadtbibliothek Soest,* Wiesbaden, 1990, p. 225, where it is noted that although the bulk of the parchment book dates ca. 1420, the facsimile on paper containing the life was written ca. 1400 and only later larded in, presumably by Jacob of Soest himself, given that this manner of compilation has been shown to be typical of him; see Everardus Overgaauw, «Die Autographen des Dominikanertheologen Jakob von Soest (c. 1360 bis c. 1440),, *Scriptorium* 60 (2006), pp. 60-79.
