A Companion to Mysticism and Devotion in Northern Germany in the Late Middle Ages

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A Companion to Mysticism and Devotion in Northern Germany in the Late Middle Ages

Edited by

Elizabeth Andersen, Henrike Lähnemann and Anne Simon

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In memoriam Timothy McFarland
1936–2013
University College London

A wonderful friend and inspiring colleague
to whose encouragement we owe a great deal

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

RELIGIOUS SONG AND DEVOTIONAL CULTURE IN NORTHERN GERMANY

Ulrike Hascher-Burger

The late medieval era exhibits a rich variety of relationships between music and devotion. These relationships range from singing songs during meditation, meditation occurring within sacred plays, and harp-playing as a spiritual metaphor for meditations on Christ; prayer books containing musical notation and pictures of angels making music (Illustration 9); musical meditation during the liturgy; and much more. The common denominator is the diverse presence of music within devotion, with sacred song being particularly closely linked to spiritual contemplation. The inclusion of sacred song in devotion ensured its integration into the liturgy on the one hand, and its presence in all aspects of daily life on the other, forming a bridge between *Profanum* and *Sacrum*.

When studying the precise forms of interaction between song and mysticism, we encounter a fundamental difficulty with classification. On the one hand, sources describe how women, in particular, sang or heard new, unknown songs while in a state of visionary ecstasy.[1] Whether this refers to actual songs remains uncertain since it may simply allude to the "new song" as a biblical topos (Apoc 5:8–9, but also to Ps 33, 40, 144 → Bärsch), especially as such references occur within the context of heavenly visions. On the other hand, there is a corpus of mystical songs that contain no indication of a visionary origin. These are far more likely to have been composed and, to a certain extent, set to pre-existing tunes, for they are connected to a few famous names from the world of mysticism: the chants of the Benedictine abbess and prophetess Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179),[2] the strophic poems of the mystic Hadewijch of Brabant (13th century; → Fraeters), and six cantilenas that were ascribed

[1] Several examples of visionary singing are cited in Fuhrmann, *Herz und Stimme* (2004), 292–317.

[2] Ritscher, *Kritischer Bericht zu Hildegard von Bingen: Lieder* (1969). Whether Hildegard is best regarded as a mystic or a prophetess cf. Burger, "Hildegard von Bingen" (2001).

for many years to the Dominican monk Johannes Tauler (approximately 1300–1361).[3]

Textually transmitted music cannot be directly linked to mystical experience; in order to describe the role played by music in religious experience in late-medieval northern Germany, we must turn to the devotional culture as expressed in songbooks, private prayer, and church service.[4] Together with chants from the liturgy, the most important musical genre in the sphere of private piety was sacred song, with "song" understood as a lyrical composition that may be given a musical context through the addition of notation, melodic references, or notes in the source text. Augustine advocated alternating sacred song with spiritual contemplation during the manual labour required by monastic life.[5] In monastic circles, spiritual songs could be performed outwardly or inwardly; biblical and mystical models exist for both methods. Voiced, audible performance was the model available to everyone, including lay people, whereas singing songs with the inner voice and hearing them with the inner ear require a state of mind akin to that demanded by mystical experience. The common factor in both modes of performance is the *meditatio*; sacred song had a fixed place in this form of private contemplation, cultivated primarily in monastic circles, but essential for any spiritual growth.

Song and Meditation in the Late Medieval Era: Devotio moderna

In the late Middle Ages, private devotion gained considerable importance not only in monastic, but also in semi-religious and even lay circles. Stemming from a more personalized view of religious life, this devotion emphasized individual emotion and spiritual fulfilment, and led monastic orders and the laity to develop the spiritual skills required to win eternal

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[3] Ruh, "Tauler-Cantilenen". See also Tauler VEL1565 in *Dutch Songs Online* (liederenbank.nl).

[4] For terminological questions see the introduction and also Hamm, "Gott berühren," 111–115.

[5] Augustine, *De opere monachorum*, cap. XVII.20, ed. Zycha, *CSEL* 41, 564–565: "cantica uero diuina cantare etiam manibus operantes facile possunt et ipsum laborem tamquam diuino celeumate consolari. [...] quid ergo inpedit seruum dei manibus operantem in lege domini meditari et psallere domini altissimi?." "As a matter of fact, persons who are engaged in manual labor can easily sing divine canticles and lighten the labor itself, at the divine call, as it were. [...] What, therefore, hinders the servant of God from meditating on the law of God and from singing to the name of the Lord most high while he performs manual labor [...]?" translated by Muldowney, in *Augustine: The Work of Monks* (2002), 363.

life.[6] Spiritual exercises called *meditatio* or *exercitium* formed the framework of private contemplation. The first known definition of this term from within the circles of the *Devotio moderna* comes from the Deventer theologian and Brother of the Common Life, Gerard Zerbolt van Zutphen (1367–1398):

> Meditacio vero dicitur qua ea que legisti vel audisti, studiosa ruminacione in corde tuo diligenter pertractas, et per ea affectum tuum circa aliquod certum inflammas vel illuminas intellectum. (*De spiritualibus ascensionibus*, ed. Legrand, ch. XLV, 284.)
>
> Meditation means to ponder in your heart in studious rumination those things you have read or heard, and through this you will ignite your feelings about a specific matter and you will also enlighten your intellect.

Thus, *meditatio* serves to excite the *affectus* or emotion, which, with the aim of illuminating reason, should ultimately lead to a fervent prayer. In the 15th century, private meditation was systematically developed within the circles of the *Devotio moderna* and organized into weekly schedules.[7] According to a prescribed cycle, its followers were instructed to meditate twice a day—morning and evening—on the Four Last Things (Death, Judgement, Heaven, Hell), the lives of Jesus, Mary, and the saints, and other subjects.[8]

Closely bound up with meditation was the singing of sacred songs that were thematically related to the meditation.[9] The most detailed late-medieval manual for meditation is that of Johannes Mauburnus (1460–1501), canon at the Windesheim monastery Agnietenberg near Zwolle and later abbot of the monastery Livry near Paris.[10] For the benefit of his novices he composed meditations on different themes, divided into scales (*scale*), steps (*gradus*), and limbs (*membra*). In combination with the texts, he used a total of seven religious songs,[11] whose introductory

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[6] For a brief overview see Hascher-Burger and Joldersma, "Introduction".

[7] Kock, "Lektüre und Meditation".

[8] Hascher-Burger, *Singen für die Seligkeit*, 83–106.

[9] Hascher-Burger, *Singen für die Seligkeit*; Hascher-Burger, *Gesungene Innigkeit*; Hascher-Burger & Joldersma, "Introduction".

[10] Mauburnus' *Rosetum exercitiorum spiritualium* was published five times between 1494 and 1620. The most well-known edition was published in Paris in 1510. There is currently no modern edition. For information on it see Hascher-Burger, "Music and Meditation", with secondary literature.

[11] His *Chiropsalterium* (hand Psalter) has also become well known. This is an instruction on meditation presented in the shape of a hand. This hand served as a mnemonic device during meditation, and includes descriptions of biblical musical instruments. Benz, *Meditation, Musik und Tanz* (1976) gives a detailed description of the hand Psalter.

rubrics provide a precise commentary on their function, also supplied by Mauburnus. They give specific information about the role of music in meditation; building a bridge between songbooks, which provide no precise directions about meditation; and narrative sources concerning meditation in daily life, which do not mention actual songs.[12]

According to Mauburnus, songs are able to stir up the mind. To achieve this, they have to be sung repeatedly:

> Preparatorii et laudatorii hymni in sanctos ante et post communionem pro inflammandis animis frequentandi: cantandi sub nota Dies est leticie, … (*Rosetum* 1510, fol. 138r).
>
> [Here follow] some preparatory and laudatory hymns for the saints, before and after Holy Communion, which are to be sung repeatedly to stir up the mind. They should be sung to the melody of *Dies est leticie*.

Besides stirring up emotion, music has another, related function. It helps the person meditating to overcome spiritual sloth when he or she feels no inclination to meditate, is too lazy for spiritual exercises, or has difficulty arousing the requisite emotions. Mauburnus writes:

> Verum quoniam non semper homo aptus est meditationi: Ideo subiecimus singulis gradibus nostre scale rithmicos versus subnota: et modo Pange lingua vel Crux fidelis modulandos. Ut cum meditari piguerit: versiculi hi in corde vel in ore suauiter modulentur. (*Rosetum* 1510, fol. 99v.)
>
> Since a person may not always be able to meditate, we have added some rhythmic verses to the different steps of our stairs, which should be sung to the melodies of *Pange lingua* or *Crux fidelis*. Thus these little verses can be sung sweetly in the heart or in the mouth when you are feeling too sluggish to meditate.

Music was intended to awaken the proper and desired *affectio*, the emotion that, based on the text or reading (*lectio*), should result from the *meditatio* and be directed into effective prayer to God (*oratio*). Awareness that music affected the emotions was not new, stemming as it did from Antiquity. The idea entered into the treatises and ideas of the *Devotio moderna* through writings such as St Augustine's *De opere monachorum* (ed. Zycha, *CSEL* 41, 529–596)[13] and the *Etymologiae* of Isidor of Seville (*Etymologiae liber* III, XVII: *De musica*). The music manuscripts of the *Devotio moderna* reveal connections with the practice of daily meditation

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[12] For information about the *Rosetum* and the seven songs written by Mauburnus see Hascher-Burger, "Music and Meditation".

[13] See Hascher-Burger, *Gesungene Innigkeit*, 135–137.

in both content and codicological features: a considerable number of song texts make concrete references to meditation;[14] daily schedules for spiritual exercises point to song during meditation;[15] and some song collections were organized on the basis of meditation programs.[16]

In the 15th century, monastic reform was carried out in northern Germany in the spirit of the Windesheim Congregation. It resulted in the spiritual and musical practices of the *Devotio moderna* becoming far more influential in northern German monasteries. The impact of a new inwardness, for example, is demonstrated by the fact that liturgical duties were carried out more strictly and song texts circulated which aimed to stir emotions conducive to meditation and prayer. Both Latin and Low German sacred songs were collected in thematically organized songbooks and widely circulated among convents in particular.[17] The parallelism of Latin and vernacular transmission in these songbooks is a distinguishing feature of the bilingual devotional culture typical of the late Middle Ages, in which the vernacular increasingly became the carrier of mystical desire.[18]

Songbooks from Northern Germany

Under the influence of the *Devotio moderna*, the 15th century saw a resurgence of the sacred song, demonstrated by a dramatic increase in song production across the Low Countries and northern Germany. Sacred songs were widely disseminated in an area stretching from Brussels to Rostock in small, unassuming little books intended for personal use, particularly in private devotional exercises. However, one cannot assume a tradition of identical song texts; much more characteristic are the numerous variant versions and adaptations in both language and music. The song tradition was maintained in the first instance through active customization

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[14] Hascher-Burger, *Gesungene Innigkeit*, S. 127–141.

[15] For example the exercitia of Cornelis van Vianen from the house of Brothers of the Common Life at Harderwijk, see Post, *Modern Devotion*, 399–402 and Hascher-Burger, *Gesungene Innigkeit*, 124–127 (on music).

[16] Two examples are Zwolle, Historisch Centrum Overijssel, coll. Emmanuelshuizen, cat. VI (Hascher-Burger, *Singen für die Seligkeit*) and Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Ltk. 2085 (Obbema, *Die gheestelijcke melody*).

[17] Joldersma, "Vernacular Religious Song".

[18] Ruh, *Geschichte der abendländischen Mystik*, I, 17.

of the songs for the singer/reader's own context and only in exceptional instances through identical copies.[19]

By the late 15th and early 16th centuries a few song manuscripts had achieved particular prominence among female communities in the region of the Lower Rhine and Lower Saxony:[20] the "Liederbuch der Anna von Köln" ("Anna of Cologne"), probably written around 1500 in a female community in the region of the Lower Rhine;[21] the "Ebstorfer Liederbuch" ("Ebstorf"), written 1490–1520 in the Benedictine convent of Ebstorf near Uelzen;[22] and the "Wienhäuser Liederbuch" ("Wienhausen") from the Cistercian convent of Wienhausen near Celle, written at the beginning of the 16th century,[23] are all preserved today in their original form. The "Liederbuch der Catherina Tirs" ("Catherina Tirs") from the Augustinian convent of Niesing near Münster (1588)[24] and the "Werdener Liederhandschrift" ("Werden"), possibly written in the Augustinian nunnery of Marienberg in Helmstedt in the first half of the 16th century,[25] have only come down to us in copies. Three of these collections contain at least some music notation

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[19] Anne-Dore Harzer's precisely edited reworking of the Christmas song *In dulci iubilo* is a clear example of this. See Harzer, *In dulci iubilo*, 24–132.

[20] A geographical network scheme of Lower Rhenish and Lower Saxon songbooks is shown in Koldau, "Weibliche Kulturräume", 174.

[21] Staatsbibliothek in Berlin—Preussischer Kulturbesitz, germ. oct. 280. 177 Folia, contains sacred songs in Latin and Low German with additions made after 1524 (27v–29v). Dating according to Janota, "Werdener Liederhandschrift" (1999), 886: around 1540. More recent literature: Tervooren, *Van der Masen*, 167–168 and 171–175; Koldau, "Weibliche Kulturräume". *Liederbuch der Anna von Köln*, ed. Salmen et al. (1954). 82 sacred songs, 24 of which with Gothic choral notation for one and two voices, some also with mensural elements. Anna's identity is unknown as is the origin of the songbook. Salmen and Koepp argue that it was probably written in the Low Rhenian area. For a discussion of how to define the regional borders along Rhine and Maas see Tervooren, *Van der Masen*, chapter 1, with maps.

[22] Ebstorf, Klosterarchiv, VI.17. 62 folia, 13 sacred songs in Low German and four secular without notations, two songs with melodic indications, proverbs, text extracts, a prayer, and a miracle story. Many Unica, only a few songs are also known from other sources, edited by Schröder (1889). Giermann and Härtel, *Handschriften des Klosters Ebstorf* (1994). Holtorf, "Ebstorfer Liederbuch" (1980), dates it between 1490 and 1502. Hascher-Burger, *Verborgene Klänge*, 33f. Janota, "Werdener Liederhandschrift", 886: not likely before 1520.

[23] Wienhausen, Klosterarchiv, 9. 40 Folia, 64 Latin and Low German songs, of which 18 are notated, written after 1500, possibly in the first or even second decade of the 16th century, cf. Roolfs, "Wienhäuser Liederbuch", 264 and Mattern, *Zisterzienserinnen*, 250–258. Critical edition Alpers (1948), facsimile Sievers, *Das Wienhäuser Liederbuch*. The songbook can also possibly be linked to the Cistercian convent in Derneburg, cf. Roolfs, "Wienhäuser Liederbuch," 257, 264.

[24] See the web presentation by Martina Bick, http://mugi.hfmt-hamburg.de/Liederbuch_Tirs/.

[25] See Jostes, "Werdener Liederhandschrift", Janota, "Werdener Liederhandschrift", 884; Sr. Marie Josepha (G.G. Wilbrink), *Das geistliche Lied der Devotio moderna.* Ch. VII, IX und

("Anna of Cologne", "Wienhausen", "Catherina Tirs"); the other two are text collections that include just a few indications of melody.

These manuscripts belong to the most important collections of sacred song in northern Germany and are generally thought to have originated in convents. However, sacred song culture should not be interpreted as a primarily female culture, as the origins of many songbooks from northern Germany have not yet been definitively identified. An increasing number of sacred song collections from male convents are becoming known, such as the "Gaesdoncker Liederzyklus" ("Gaesdonck") from *Domus Beatae Mariae*, the Windesheim monastery of Augustinian canons in Gaesdonck on the Lower Rhine.[26] Moreover, the phrase *pro scriptore* could indicate the first quire of the Wienhausen Songbook might also have been written in a male house.[27] Where the provenance of songbooks from northern Germany has been established, convents emerge as the primary places of origin. This differs from songbooks produced in the west of the Low Countries, where several are known to have originated in convents of the Sisters and Brethren of the Common Life.[28] Many songbooks demonstrate that in the late Middle Ages song, as a poetic and musical genre, was recorded more intensively than ever before in northern Germany.[29] The

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XIII. The manuscript contains 23 sacred songs without notation or any indications as to melody, three spiritual proverbs, and one didactic proverb.

[26] See Gaesdonck, Bibliothek des bischöflichen Gymnasiums Collegium Augustinianum, 37. 181 Folia, late-fifteenth century: Tervooren and Klug, "Ein neu entdeckter Adventszyklus", with an edition of the Low German songs; Tervooren, *Van der Masen*, 148, 164–166, with an overview of all the chants on 165; Burger, "Auf dem Wege ins himmlische Vaterland" (late 15th century). It forms part of a compendium of texts of a theological, philosophical and encyclopaedic nature which contain nine songs in Latin and Low German without notation on fol. 148r–151v. The collection is systematically organized as a cycle for the *adventus domini*. The Latin songs represent the *adventus Christi in carnem*, the time before the birth, and the vernacular texts the *adventus domini ad iudicium*, the coming of Christ for the Last Judgment at the end of time. See Burger, "Auf dem Wege ins himmlische Vaterland", 95).

[27] Roolfs, "Wienhäuser Liederbuch", 263.

[28] The "Deventer Liederbuch" (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin—Preussischer Kulturbesitz, germ. oct. 185) is from the Lamme van Diese-Convent in Deventer, a house for the Sisters of the Common Life (Wilbrink, *Das geistliche Lied*, with numerous transcribed song texts). The manuscript Zwolle, Historisch Centrum Overijssel/Gemeentelijke Archiefdienst, coll. Emmanuelshuizen, cat. VI, is from the house of Brothers of the Common Life in Zwolle (Hascher-Burger, *Singen für die Seligkeit*, with a facsimile and edited version).

[29] The variety of sacred songbooks around the Lower Rhine area and indications as to their networking can be found in Tervooren, *Van der Masen*, ch. 5: Die Lyrik des Raums. Further songbooks containing a mixture of sacred and secular content include, for example, the Rostock Songbook (post-1445), which contains one Low German and four Latin sacred songs (full digital edition on rostocker-liederbuch.de). See Kornrumpf, "Ave pulcherrima regina: zur Verbreitung und Herkunft der Melodie einer Marien-Cantio im

collections were probably written during the monastic reform and overlap markedly with one another in both their contents and the distribution of the song material, as well as bearing a striking resemblance to the ideas of the Dutch *Devotio moderna*.[30]

Songbooks and Rapiaria

Several songbooks bear a striking resemblance to *rapiaria* in their collection and juxtaposition of individual texts and in their codicological and palaeographical structure. The term *rapiarium* was used by adherents of the *Devotio moderna* to denote the small books they compiled themselves as the textual basis for their personal meditational exercises. Often several hands contributed to the production of a *rapiarium*, or collection of texts, of various types and lengths, that were "snatched together". *Rapiaria* may contain extracts from the Bible and writings of the Church Fathers, prayers, sermon extracts, and sacred songs. Fragments from older palimpsests or stores of older paper and parchment were commonly used to make these private books, which were intended for everyday use.[31] This type of book demonstrates particularly clearly how texts of a mystical culture, including songs, could function as thematically ordered material for meditation. Viewing the songbooks as *rapiaria* explains the striking mixture of disparate text types that is peculiar to some of them: inserted between songs are prayers, edifying legends, proverbs, and passages from the Bible. As these text types are thematically related to either the preceding or the following song, the result is a series of thematic blocks which served as the basis for individual meditative exercises.

The composition of the Ebstorf and Wienhausen songbooks exhibits several of the typical characteristics of a *rapiarium*. Both manuscripts are small and written by several hands. A few pages have been cut out or

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Rostocker Liederbuch" (2000). For the broad transmission of the Cantiones that have been ascribed to Thomas à Kempis over the centuries see Hascher-Burger, 'Schrieb Thomas à Kempis Lieder?' and Kornrumpf, 'Das Cantica Corpus in Pohls Opera Omnia'. Using the song *In dulci iubilo* as an example, Anne-Dore Harzer traces a network of transmission. See Harzer, *In dulci iubilo*, 24–134.

30 Cf. a general concordance of the songs from "Anna of Cologne", "Deventer", "Catherina Tirs", "Werden" and "Wienhausen" in Koldau, "Weibliche Kulturräume", 181.

31 Cf. Roolfs, "Wienhäuser Liederbuch", 255. However, the devotional manuscripts Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 1296 HelmSt and Cod. Guelf. 1140 HelmSt also share these characteristics of a *rapiarium*. On these manuscripts see Hascher-Burger and Kruse, "Medien devoter Sammelkultur".

inserted later. The composition of the texts is diverse: songs (here in the form of poems or prayers), with or without notation, but often without any indication as to the tune, occur alongside legends, indulgences, morally edifying *puncta*, and extracts from letters. In the "Ebstorf Songbook", it is clear individual entries are arranged according to their contents. The collection begins with an extract from St. John's Gospel (Jo 1:1–14), in a Low German translation (fol. 6r), that ends with a prayer of thanksgiving. This is followed by the Marian song *Maria zart von eddeler art* ("Gentle Mary, of noble birth") consisting of nine verses without notation (fol. 9r). A story about Mary that culminates in an indulgence follows (fol. 15v). Together, these elements form a block around the theme of Christmas and Marian worship.[32] Adjoining this section is one centred on *Jesusminne* ("love of Christ") and *Kreuzesminne* ("love of the Cross"). After two songs (*Lave zederbom du hoghelavede holt*, "Dear cedar-tree, you highly praised wood", fol. 16v; and *Nu lave herken lave*, "Now praise, dear heart, praise", fol. 20v) follow a few short prose proverbs in the form of *puncta* for a meditation about inner peace (*Holt di ersten in vrede so machstu ander lude vredesammich maken*, "First of all, be peaceful yourself, then you will make other people peaceful", fol. 22r–23r). In these examples it is, above all, the composition of the manuscript that demonstrates the closeness to meditation. It is possible, however, to discern an interaction between sacred song and mystical culture at the level of the individual song texts.

Mysticism and Asceticism in Song Texts

The northern German sacred songbooks typically contain songs with themes taken from mysticism: songs about *Jesusminne* ("love of Christ"), *Kreuzesminne* ("love of the Cross"), bridal mysticism, Passion mysticism, or penance. These songs are written in Latin or Low German, although phrases from the language of mysticism occur particularly often in the vernacular song texts. Asceticism as a spur to spiritual development, rather than mysticism, forms the basis of the song texts. The use of mystical terminology emphasizes the desire for unity with God, but not as a withdrawal from the world. Rather, the focus is on development in accordance with monastic virtues; on an *imitatio Christi* in obedience, chastity

[32] Ebstorf, Klosterarchiv, Hs. VI 17, fol. 6r–16v.

and contemplation. The ultimate aim of these virtues is union with the heavenly bridegroom after death.

The first fourteen vernacular songs in Hölscher's copy of the "Songbook of Catherina Tirs" are about Christmas[33] and seamlessly interweave Christmas miracles, heavenly music, and *Christusminne* ("love of Christ"). The first song, *Gode solle gy leven* ("You should love God"), which is only known from this source, uses the events at Christmas to provide a brief summary of monastic virtues in order to guide active, regular meditation on them.[34] A hymn of praise to Mary, Mother of God, and to the birth of her Son becomes a reason to meditate on this holy event at all hours (*overdencket to allen uren*). This contemplation appeals to the classic monastic virtues, the goals of a specifically female spirituality (verse 2): a chaste and pure heart (*Reine wes van herten*) and the courage to abjure worldly desires. As motivation, the length of eternity (*dat ewich is so lanck*, verse 1) is contrasted to the brevity of human life (*dencket an dyt korte leven, dat bolde mot vergaen*, verse 2). The addressee and role model of the supplicant is Mary, and the final verse particularly emphasizes the mediating role of the Mother of God: the Son was sent by His heavenly Father to the Mother for the salvation of poor sinners (*To Marien is gekomen des hemelschen vaders sone uns armen sunders to frommen*, verse 5).

Didactic songs with a dialogic structure are characteristic for the devotional culture of the late medieval era as well as particularly easy to remember; such structures are also found in texts from the *Devotio moderna*. One well-known example is the *liber interne consolationis* ("Book of internal consolation") of the *Imitatio Christi* by Thomas à Kempis, in which thoughts about following Christ inwardly are unfolded in a dialogue between the Lord and His servant.[35] There had been a continuous tradition of writing religious texts in the form of a dialogue between Christ and the soul from Augustine onwards.[36] The biblical Song of Songs,[37] which is structured in the same dialogic manner, served as a model for meditation in several respects.[38] A clear demonstration of this is provided by the meditation on the Cross, *Heff vp dyn cruce* ("Lift up your cross"), from the

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[33] In the original these are preceded by 17 songs in Latin and a mixture of Latin and German. http://mugi.hfmt-hamburg.de/Liederbuch_Tirs (directory E).

[34] Hölscher, *Niederdeutsche geistliche Lieder und Sprüche* (1854), V.

[35] Pohl, *Thomas à Kempis*, Vol. 2 (1904), 139–263.

[36] Largier, "Inner Senses—Outer Senses", 4.

[37] Largier, "Inner Senses—Outer Senses", 4.

[38] For more about the Song of Songs as a model for the inner space during meditation cf. Diener, "Entering the bedchamber of your soul", 344–345.

Wienhausen Songbook, fol. 16r (Appendix 11a).[39] It is also transmitted in the "Anna of Cologne", fol. 59v; "Catherina Tirs", Nr. 45; "Werden", Nr. 23; "Deventer", p. 36; and other sources.[40] The meditation belongs to a group of dialogic poems between Jesus, the bridegroom (*dominus*), and the soul, His bride (*anima*).[41] This particular song is a sacred *minne* dialogue from the Netherlands that may have originated in northern German.[42] The only source to record it with a melody is the Wienhausen Songbook; the Deventer Songbook merely refers to another otherwise unknown tune (*dit is die wyse In nyden byn ic dicke bedroeft*, "This is the tune 'I am often distressed by envy' ").[43] Over 18 stanzas the song relates a dialogue between the soul and Christ. The soul as the bride of Christ longs for her union with the heavenly bridegroom, but He tells her that, to be united with her beloved, she must take up her cross herself. In reply she pleads with Him that she is too young and too weak and that the cross is too heavy for her (Stanza 2). She is terrified of this burden. Christ responds to the expression of her desire for heaven (couched in mystical language: the only allusion to mystical union rather than a hard-won ascetic union) by referring to both the Song of Songs and the liturgical antiphon *Nigra sum sed formosa* ("I am black but comely", Ct. 1:4; *Ik byn brun unde suverlick*, verse 13) in His assertion that the way to heaven is only through suffering (Stanzas 7 and 15). The structure of this song follows the classic composition of similar dialogues in the context of meditation that were inspired by the Song of Songs, with its "stressing [of] moments of desire and distance, familiarity and alienation, joy and melancholy, deprivation and fruition."[44]

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[39] The two other crucifixion meditations in 'Wienhausen' are transmitted without a melody. These are "O du eddele sedderenbom" (fol. 35r, see also Honemann, "Kreuzesmeditation") and "Boge dyne strengen telgen" (fol. 24v).

[40] The database *Dutch Songs Online* lists 16 examples that are combined with various tunes. Except for the melodies in the Wienhausen and Deventer Songbooks the dialogue is set, amongst others, to the tunes of Latin hymns: *Christe qui lux es et dies* and *Conditor alme siderum*. Cf. also Mertens, "Kreuztragende Minne", 378, Low German and Dutch examples.

[41] Mertens, "Kreuztragende Minne", 376–379. Another dialogue from this group ('Die innige Seele') other than the one entitled 'the fervent soul' is analysed in Honemann, "Die 'Kreuztragende Minne'." See also Mertens, "Kreuztragende Minne", 377: 3.

[42] Wilbrink, *Das geistliche Lied der Devotio moderna. Ein Spiegel niederländisch-deutscher Beziehungen* (1930), 109.

[43] Cf. *Dutch Songs Online*.

[44] Largier, "Inner Senses—Outer Senses", 10.

Song texts that focus on asceticism are typical for songs composed in the spirit of the *Devotio moderna*.[45] Gerard Zerbolt van Zutphen (1367–1398), one of the earliest and most important theologians of the *Devotio moderna*, wrote in his treatise *De spiritualibus ascensionibus* ("The Spiritual Ascent") that the first steps of spiritual development demand hard work and dedication. While mystical union with God is a spontaneous gift from God that cannot be achieved through practice, it is not essentially separate from the ascetic exercises, which, according to Zerbolt, can pave the long and arduous way to being ready for this union.[46] Normally, union with God can only be reached after death and only very exceptionally in this life; but it is nevertheless possible to draw closer to this aim throughout one's whole life. One way to draw nearer to God is through singing.

Songbooks and Prayer Books

It should not be assumed that every song collection may be seen as a songbook in the modern sense, that is, that the songs collected in it would definitely have been sung audibly. Caution is advised, particularly with song collections that have no musical notation. The transition from prayer book to sacred songbook is fluid and a clear separation of the two is often not possible.[47] A well-known example is *Die Gheestelijcke Melody* ("The Spiritual Melody"), one of the two meditational cycles contained in a collection of Middle Dutch poems from the end of the 15th century, which has been transmitted both as a songbook with notation and as a prayer book without notation.[48] The same indistinct boundaries can be observed

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[45] Hascher-Burger, "Music and Meditation", 362–363.

[46] Gerrits, *Inter timorem et spem*, 264–269. Hascher-Burger, *Singen für die Seligkeit*, 85–91.

[47] Sacred songs without notation are found as prayers in a prayer book from the Chorfrauenstift Steterburg in Lower Saxony, Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 1140 Helmst. For the inventory of books from this Augustinian foundation see Kruse and Schnabel, "Bücher in Bewegung".

[48] Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek, LTK 2058; Den Haag, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 75 H 42; Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, ms. nova series 12875. There is currently no modern edition of those manuscripts without notation. A facsimile edition of the Leiden manuscript in Obbema, *Die gheestelijcke melody Ms Leiden, University Library, Ltk. 2085* (1975). An extract from *Die Gheestelijcke Melody* without notation is in the private ownership of Herman Mulder, diplomatically edited in Mulder, "Gebedenboek", 166–171. For more on *Die Gheestelijcke Melody* see Hascher-Burger, *Singen für die Seligkeit*, 119–124; Joldersma, "Vernacular Religious Song", 381–383.

in the Ebstorf Songbook. Its songs are not notated, the tune being indicated for only two songs, and most songs end with the typical conclusion for a prayer, *Amen*. Taking into account its palaeographic structure and contents, which compare to those of the *rapiaria*, it is questionable whether it can be described as a song manuscript. This is particularly true for the uniquely transmitted songs, as they lack any clear criteria for a definition as song such as music notation or a melody indication. The manuscript displays more characteristics of a monastic devotional book, thus emphasizing the closeness of sacred song to prayer and meditation.

The "Songbook of Anna of Cologne" is also difficult to classify definitively as a songbook. The colophon on fol. 1r characterizes the manuscript as a prayer book:[49] *Dit beth boek hoert toe anna van collen der et fynt eer et verloeren w*[*ort*] *der sterft ouc wall eer hey kranck wort* ("This prayer book belongs to Anna of Cologne; whoever finds it before it was lost [i.e. steals it], will probably die before he was ill [i.e. will meet a violent end].").[50] Indeed, only 22 songs are written with tunes for either one or two voices; and only four indicate the tune to which they should be sung. In total, 37 songs are described as *carmen*, but the majority show neither notation nor any indication as to their tune.[51] It is possible that the term *carmen*, often translated in this manuscript as song, may merely refer to a metrical poem without any implication of a sung performance.[52] Up until now little has been known about the manner in which songs are embedded into meditational processes. They could be sung aloud or prayed in silence. Valuable information is provided by a corpus of source texts containing prayers, songs and meditations for private worship: the devotional manuscripts from the convent of Medingen and the other Lüneburg convents.

Devotional Manuscripts from Medingen with Musical Notation

More than 30 manuscripts from Medingen have been found; 24 contain musical notation for liturgical chants and numerous sacred songs in both Latin and Low German (→ Lähnemann). In addition, several prayer books

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[49] The complete decoding of this note is from Koldau, "Weibliche Kulturräume", 187 n. 39.

[50] Colophon quoted following Koldau, "Weibliche Kulturräume", 171 n. 1.

[51] Exceptions are four Latin Christmas hymns, of which three are monophonic and one is notated for two voices.

[52] The term 'carmen' is probably used with this meaning in Johannes Mauburnus' *Rosetum exercitiorum spiritualium*, Hascher-Burger, "Music and Meditation", 351.

containing musical notation, albeit to a lesser extent and with a more modest programme of illumination, have also been preserved from other convents and houses of Canonesses in Lower Saxony, including Ebstorf,[53] Wienhausen,[54] Gandersheim,[55] and Steterburg.[56] Only a few chants and songs are written out in full, as usually only the *incipit* is recorded. The majority of the chants are written using Gothic choral notation without lines (→ Mattern). Some are written out incompletely and therefore cannot be sung unless the tune is already known.[57] Each of the devotional manuscripts is unique with regard to its notation. Even when certain passages correspond, the proportion of chants that have notation is particular to each copy and apparently adjusted for the personal needs of the user.[58] There is a close connection between meditation and notation without lines. In this case, there are repeated instructions for a style of performance typical for the meditative context: "singing in the heart" and "singing with the devotion of the heart".

One of the Medingen prayer books now in Gotha contains the Christmas song *Louet sistu iesu crist* ("Praise to you, o Jesus Christ") four times, with notation.[59] On fol. 26r, the first verse is written out in full and notated. It is introduced by the rubric: "Sing here with all the devotion of your heart and say: *Praise to you, o Jesus Christ*".[60] The instruction "sing here" indicates that the song is embedded in the surrounding text, which is a step-by-step Christmas meditation that alternates prayers and songs with the re-creation, in the meditating imagination, of the events in the stable.[61]

In the context of a *meditatio* for Easter Sunday, an introductory rubric to the Easter hymn *Crist is upstande* ("Christ is Risen") urges that it be sung from the heart with great joy. Easter Day should be celebrated as the wedding day of the soul with her risen bridegroom in her bedchamber (Appendix 11b).[62] The song *Crist is upstande* occurs as part of a trilogy,

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53 Ebstorf, Klosterarchiv, Hs. IV 18. Hascher-Burger, *Verborgene Klänge*, 24–25.

54 Wienhausen, Klosterarchiv, Hs. 51. Hascher-Burger, *Verborgene Klänge*, 121.

55 Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 1299.2 Helmst.

56 Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 1353 Helmst.

57 For information about the notation in the Medingen devotional manuscripts see Hascher-Burger, "Notation, Devotion und Emotion".

58 Cf. Hascher-Burger, "Notation, Devotion und Emotion", 41.

59 Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek, Memb. II 84. Hascher-Burger, *Verborgene Klänge*, 71.

60 Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek, Memb. II 84, fol. 26r: "Dar tho singhe du myt ghanser andacht dynes herten vnde secghe: *Louet sistu, iesu crist*".

61 Andersen, *Das Kind sehen*.

62 Trier, Bistumsarchiv, 528, fol. 110v. Hascher-Burger, *Verborgene Klänge*, 89.

the first two chants of which are derived from the Latin Easter liturgy.[63] However, in the prayer book, the liturgical context is less important than a personal visualization by the person seeing herself as the bride of Christ—one of the most popular mystical images among nuns. The way nuns experienced God developed along different lines to that of monks. For nuns, the appropriate manner of reaching God was that of the virgin waiting for her bridegroom and devoting herself to Him in meditation and prayer.[64] The reference to the bridal bed may be regarded as an additional commentary on the context of meditation, as, according to Bernard of Clairvaux, in his work *On the Song of Songs*, the bridal chamber is the ultimate metaphor for "the mystery of divine contemplation" (II, 3) when the person meditating receives her bridegroom in the bedchamber of her soul.[65] Thus, the devotional book describes how the soul sings from the heart with great joy in the innermost room, in the expectation of the embraces of her bridegroom. Liturgy, song, and mystical experience as the bride of Christ are inextricably intertwined.

Another Medingen prayer book indicates the parallel performance of liturgy and contemplation: "When the choir sings 'Hallelujah' as they leave the church, say with inward celebration: 'O dearest treasure, noble vessel of balm, beloved 'Hallelujah!'" (Appendix 11c).[66] Here the meditating person speaks the beginning of a vernacular song in inner celebration at the same time as the audible liturgical celebration by the choir. However, the meaning of the situation reaches beyond mere parallelism. In the command *Dic in mentali iubilo* ("Say in inner jubilation") the unspeakable joy of mystical transport resonates, welling up wordlessly in the soul in order to praise God adequately.[67] The terminology is reminiscent of mystical transport, even if this is not *de facto* achieved. This becomes clear from the way in which the meditation continues, as it leads to an Easter song—notated without lines—that is to be sung with the heart and the mouth.

The rubric of a song honouring the apostle Thomas in another devotional manuscript refers exclusively to spiritual listening and singing in the heart: "Therefore, o true daughter of Blessed Thomas, exult and rejoice in the joy of your heart, as if you were to hear spiritually this sweet song;

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63 *Hec est dies quam fecit dominus*: Introit to the first mass on Easter Sunday. *Surrexit dominus de sepulchro*: an antiphon that is sung throughout the Easter period.

64 Cf. Schlotheuber, "Die gelehrten Bräute Christi", 54–56.

65 Diener, "Entering the bedchamber of your soul", 343–344.

66 Hascher-Burger, *Verborgene Klänge*, 98–99.

67 Fuhrmann, *Herz und Stimme*, 101–117.

sing it in your heart".[68] Here, spiritual hearing is added to singing with the heart as a further inner activity. Both occur within the context of contemplation and both are indispensable to expressing the delight of the heart in reaching the desired elation.[69]

Singing with the Heart—Singing with the Mouth

Emotional involvement was indispensable for meditation and, therefore, for developing piety. Against the background of yearning for and seeking unification with God, early Christianity had developed a theory that opposed the physical or outer senses with the emotional inner senses.[70] These involve far more than a purely metaphorical correspondence to the physical senses: "They constitute and construct a specific reality of the mind. They form a new and previously unknown life of the soul, and they are . . . intrinsically linked to the experience and exploration of emotional arousal in medieval spirituality."[71] What was generally impossible to accomplish with the physical senses, namely a mystical *unio*, was the very thing the soul strove for on the path of spiritual development with the help of the inner senses. The affective state of mind for prayer and meditation therefore relied on the inner senses. Addressing them more intensively during prayer and meditation opens up the necessary area of emotion. This process led to an affective approach which complemented a primarily intellectual method of interpretation. This was the preferred style of the faithful within the circles of the *Devotio moderna* and beyond. Within the realm of music, the complementarity of inner and outer senses extends also to the reception of sound, resulting in inner hearing and outer hearing.

In the late medieval era, Jean Gerson's treatise *De Canticordo* was particularly widely disseminated. It depicts singing with the heart as a necessary aid in rising up to God, in opposition to singing with the mouth,[72] and points out the important differences between the different types of

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[68] Hamburg, SUB, cod. in scrin. 208, fol. 253r: "Ergo, o propria filia beati Thome, exulta et letare in leticia cordis tui quasi spiritualiter audias hoc dulce canticum, canta illud in corde tuo etc." Hascher-Burger, *Verborgene Klänge*, 73.

[69] For more on "Singing in the heart" in songbooks see Joldersma, "Vernacular Religious Song", 381–383.

[70] Cf. Largier, "Inner Senses—Outer Senses", especially 4–5 and 9–10.

[71] Quotation in Largier, "Inner Senses—Outer Senses", 5.

[72] This tractate has been researched, edited and translated into modern French by Fabre, *La doctrine*. Fabre, *La doctrine*, 13 who declares the "Chant du coeur" (song of the

singing, which themselves correspond to specific differences between Paul's injunction to put aside the "old man" and renew the spirit of the heart (Eph 4:22): Singing with the mouth belongs to the "old man"; singing with the heart to the "new man".[73] Music for several voices is an expression of singing with the mouth, as only audible singing offers the possibility of coordinating the voices. In contrast, singing with the heart is an intimate and hidden activity by each individual, to whom God alone has access.

Within this context, singing with the heart and with the mouth may be seen as two forms of liturgical singing practice: singing with the mouth is the audible singing of the choir during the liturgy; singing with the heart is the inaudible singing of the individual during contemplation. It seems, however, that neither way of singing was strictly separated from the other in the practice of meditation. In his manual for meditation, the *Rosetum exercitiorum spiritualium* ("Rosary of spiritual exercises"), Johannes Mauburnus calls the inaudible singing with the heart an alternative to a voiced performance with the mouth. Both types of singing should be applied when there is a lack of motivation to meditate. By contrast, the Medingen prayer book mentions both in simultaneous performance (Appendix 11c), demonstrating a broad spectrum of musical practice directed towards achieving union with God.

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A lively interaction between liturgy and music has been documented from the time of the early Church.[74] By the late-medieval era it had been developed in such a way that contemplation no longer involved liturgical chants alone, but included sacred songs in both Latin and the vernacular. This development was closely linked with the flowering of private meditation in, above all, cloistered circles, meditation that may often be observed in northern Germany under the influence of the Windesheim Reform. It expresses itself on several levels: the first is codicological and concerns characteristic source types such as the *rapiarium*, which may contain not just textual extracts but also songs. The second level concerns the textual structure of songs; for example, the characteristic dialogic songs, which

heart) to be a means of ascent to God. Cf also the explanations of inner jubilation in Fuhrmann, *Herz und Stimme*, 101–117 and 286–317.

[73] Fabre, *La doctrine*, 22, a tabular overview of the differences between singing with the heart and singing with the mouth.

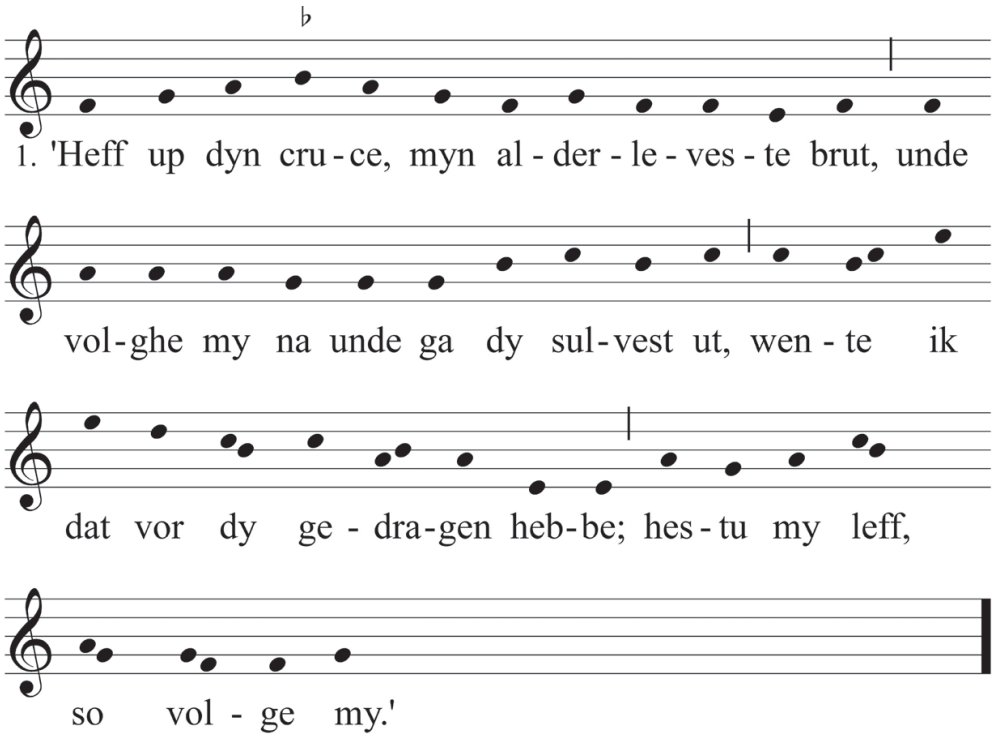
[74] Cornet, "Arnhem Mystical Sermons", 555.

present the complex relationship between the soul and her bridegroom Christ in the tradition of the Song of Songs and related theological tracts. The third level manifests itself in late-medieval prayer and devotional books, in particular those from Medingen, which contain liturgical chants and sacred songs with notation for meditation, as well as prayers and texts written for meditation. In music, late-medieval mystical and devotional culture met. Singing with the heart offered the opportunity of approaching the *unio* with God individually, while communal singing made the faithful part of a devotional culture that extended beyond individual experience and transcended convent walls.

Textual Appendix
Religious Song and Devotional Culture in Northern Germany

11a) *Dialogue between God and the Soul from the* Wienhäuser Liederbuch

Wienhausen, Klosterarchiv, HS 9, fol. 16r. The "Dialogue between God and the Soul" in the Wienhausen Songbook is edited by Alpers, *Wienhäuser Liederbuch* (1948), No. 19. It is also transmitted in five more Low German manuscripts, one Dutch and one High German manuscript, and a Dutch print. In the dialogue, God encourages the flagging soul to follow Him. The version of the *Liederbuch der Catharina Tirs* is edited by Hölscher, *Niederdeutsche Geistliche Lieder und Sprüche* (1854), V. A digitalized edition is available on the website of the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg (http://mugi.hfmt-hamburg.de/Liederbuch_Tirs).



1. *Dominus:*
"Heff up dyn cruce, myn
alderleveste brut,
unde volghe my na unde ga dy
sulvest ut,
wente ik dat vor dy gedragen hebbe;
hestu my leff, so volge my."

1. *Lord:*
"Lift up your cross, my dearest
bride,
and follow me and go forth
yourself,
since I have carried it for you;
if you love me, follow me."

2. *Anima:*
'O Jhesus, myn alderleveste here,
ik byn noch junck unde alto dore.
ik hebbe dy leff, dat is jummer war,
men dyn cruce is my alto swar.'

3. *Dominus:*
"Ik was ok iunck do ik dat droch.
klaghe nicht, du bist old enoch;
wener du bist olt unde kolt,
so enhestu des cruces neyne gewolt."

4. *Anima:*
'We mach lyden dut gedwangh?
der dage is vel, dat jar is langh;
ik byn des cruces ungewonen.
o schone myn, alderleveste schon.'

5. *Dominus:*
"Wo bistu aldus sere vorlegen?
du most noch striden alse eyn degen.
se, ik wil castigen dyn jungen liff,
du werst my anders alto stiff."

6. *Anima:*
'O here wat du wult dat mot wesen,
des cruces mach ik nicht genesen.
mot dat syn unde schal ik dat dragen,
so mot ik kranken unde vorsagen.'

7. *Dominus:*
"Wultu in den roßen baden,
so mostu erst in den doren waden.
su an dyn cruce unde dat myn,
wu ungelick swar dat se syn."

8. *Anima:*
'Men list doch in der hilgen scrifft:
dyn jock si sote, dyn borden lichte;
wo bistu my so rechte hart,
myn alderleveste brodegam zart?'

2. *Soul:*
'O Jesus, my dearest Lord,
I am still young and too foolish.
You are dear to me, this is ever true
but your cross is too heavy for me.'

3. *Lord:*
"I myself was young when I carried it;
do not complain, you are old enough;
when you are old and cold,
you will not be able to master the cross."

4. *Soul:*
'Who can suffer this strain?
Many are the days, the year is long;
I am not used to the cross.
O spare me, my lovely dear.'

5. *Lord:*
"How are you so sluggish?
You have to strive like a champion.
Look, I will castigate your young body,
otherwise you are getting too stiff"

6. *Soul:*
'Lord, what you want has to happen,
I cannot relieve myself of the cross.
If it needs be and I have to carry it;
then I have to flag and fail.'

7. *Lord:*
"If you want to bathe in roses,
you will have to wade through thorns.
Look at your cross and at mine,
how different their weight is."

8. *Soul:*
'One can read in Holy Scripture,
that your yoke is sweet, your burden light;
why are you so hard on me,
my dearest gentle bridegroom?'

9. *Dominus:*
"Ungewonheyt beswaret den mot;
lyd unde swich, id wert noch wol gut.
myn cruce is eyn kostlik pant;
wen ik dat gan, de is myn frunt."

10. *Anima:*
'Dem frunde gistu kleyne rast,
my gruet vor der swaren last;
ik sorge, ik enkunnes mogen herden.
O sote Jhesu, wat rades schal myner werden?'

11. *Dominus:*
"Dat hymmelrike lyt gewalt.
du byst noch van leve alto kolt.
heddestu my leff, dat worde noch gud,
wente de leve maket alle dingh sote."

12. *Anima:*
'O here, giff my der leve brant!
myn krancheyt is dy wolbekant.
lestu my up my selvest stan,
so westu wol, ik mot vorgan.'

13. *Dominus:*
"Ik byn brun unde suverlick,
ik byn sote unde lefflick,
ik geve hir arbeyt unde rast;
betrue my, so stestu vast."

14. *Anima:*
'O here, ifft id jummer wesen mach,
dynes cruces neme ik gerne vor drach.
men wultu dat hebben unde mot dat syn,
so sche dyn wylle unde nicht de myn.'

9. *Lord:*
"Anything unusual weighs heavy on the mind;
suffer and be quiet, it will turn out well.
My cross is a costly bond;
he to whom I grant it, will be my friend."

10. *Soul:*
'To your friend you give little respite,
I am apprehensive about the heavy burden;
I fear I might not be able to sustain it.
O sweet Jesus, what help will come to me?'

11. *Lord:*
"The heavenly kingdom suffers aggression.
You are still too cold in your love.
If you had love, all would end well,
since love makes everything sweet."

12. *Soul:*
'O Lord, give me the fire of love!
My weakness is well known to you.
If you leave me to my own devices,
you know full well, I will perish.'

13. *Lord:*
"I am brown and comely,
I am sweet and lovely,
I give here labour and rest;
trust me, then you will be steadfast."

14. *Soul:*
'O Lord, if it could be done in any way,
I would gladly forgo your cross.
But if you want to and it need be,
then your will should prevail and not mine.'

15. *Dominus:*
"To dem hymmelrike is eyn wech alleyne,
dat is des cruces unde anders neyn.
alle dyn wolvart unde dyn heyl
lyd an dem cruce, nu kus eyn deyl."

15. *Lord:*
"There is only one way to heaven,
which is the one of the cross and no other.
All your well-being and your salvation
lies in the cross, greet it with a kiss!"

16. *Anima:*
'Scholde ik dyn hulde unde dyn rike vorlesen,
verhundert cruce wolde ik darvor utkesen.
here, giff my macht unde litsamheyt
unde crucege my wol, id sy my leff edder leyd.'

16. *Soul:*
'Should I lose your grace and your kingdom,
I would rather choose four hundred crosses.
Lord, give me strength and endurance
and crucify me, whether I like it or not.'

17. *Dominus:*
"Alse dy dat cruce to herten geyt,
so denke, wat ik dy hebbe bereyt;
my sulves geve ik dy to lone
unde myt den engelen de ewigen cronen.'

17. *Lord:*
"If you take the cross to heart,
consider what I have prepared for you;
I will give myself to you as reward
and with the angels the eternal crown."

18. *Anima:*
'O myn alderleveste zele!
Myn god, myn leff unde der werlde heyl!
su an dat gut, dat Jhesus is,
des hymmelrikes bystu wys.'
Amen.

18. *Soul:*
'O my dearest soul!
My God, my beloved and the world's salvation! Behold the good which is Jesus,
then you are assured of heaven.'
Amen

11b) *Singing and Embracing the Bridegroom in a Low German Prayer Book*

The description of the encounter of the devout soul as bride with Christ is transmitted in several of the Medingen Prayer Books; *Ein niederdeutsches Gebetbuch*, ed. Mante (1960), 144, checked against the manuscript Trier, Bistumsarchiv, Hs. 528, fol. 110v.

Wan de brut kumpt vor dat bedde eres brudeghammes vnde sut ene stande mit vte-reckeden armen, se lefliken to entfanghende, so singhet se mit groter vroude eres herten dat sute brut-leet:

When the bride comes before the bed of her bridegroom and sees Him standing there with His arms spread wide to embrace her lovingly, she sings this sweet bridal song with great joy in her heart:

Hec est dies quam fecit Dominus!
Exultemus et letemur in ea!
Surrexit dominus de sepulchro,
qui pro nobis pependit in ligno.
Crist is vpstande!

This is the day the Lord made!
Let us rejoice and be happy in it!
The Lord is risen from the grave,
he who for us hung on the cross.
Christ is risen!

11c) *Rhyming Prayer for the Hallelujah in the Mass at Easter*

The prayer expresses the speaker's jubilation at Easter and places her amidst the choir of angels. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Lat. liturg. f. 4, fol. 37r–38r. Printed in Lipphardt, *Die liturgische Funktion deutscher Kirchenlieder* (1972) 183, checked against the parallel manuscript Landesbibliothek Hannover, Ms. I 75.

Dum chorus exultando canit iocundum 'alleluja', dic in mentali iubilo:

When the choir sings "Hallelujah" as they leave the church, say with inward jubilation:

O du dure schat,
eddele balsem vat,
herteleve 'alleluia'!

O dearest treasure,
noble vessel of balm,
beloved "Hallelujah"!

Vth dy is alle gnade vnde soticheyt vloten, alle blisscop vnde alle vroude is in dy besloten, wente du bist vter hilghen dreualdicheyt sproten vnde se is suluen an dy besloten.

All grace and sweetness has flowed from you and all delight and joy are contained in you, for you have sprung from the goodness of the Holy Trinity, and the Trinity itself is contained in you.

Din lof kan nement grunden, dik kan vul louen nen tuncghe, in deme throne der gotheyt wordeste erst ghevunden, dar dik de hemmelschen seyden sotelken klunghen vnde de hilghen enghele so vroliken sunghen, dar vmme singhe ik mit herten vnde mit munde in desser vroliken stunde:

No one can fathom your praise; no tongue can fully praise you, you were found first of all in the throne of the Godhead, where the heavenly stringed instruments sounded sweetly for you and the holy angels sang with such joy; therefore I sing with heart and mouth at this joyful hour:

"Alleluja cum alleluja"
Dat is de alder soteste sangh
vnd alles hemeles seyden clangh.

"Alleluia with Alleluia".
This the sweetest song of all and
the sound of all the heavenly strings!

Alleluja nova laus et iocunda
Paschalis iubilei ardenti amore cantabitur
et bonus ac misericors deus dulciter in ea laudabitur,
Alleluja

Hallelujah, the new and joyful praise hymn of the Easter celebration is being sung with burning love, sweetly praising the good and merciful Lord,
Halleluja.