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'O Alre Soetste Moeder': Words of Worship in a Textual Examination of The Middle-Dutch Book of Hours AB 2000 D 23 KL

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‘O Alre Soetste Moeder’: Words of Worship in a Textual Examination of The
Middle-Dutch Book of Hours AB 2000 D 23 KL



Image of AB 2000 D 23 KL taken at the Atheneumbibliotheek Deventer

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Abstract

This thesis examines the textual complexities of Middle-Dutch books of hours, focusing on the text variation of the Long Hours of the Cross in the Deventer manuscript AB 2000 23 KL. In this manuscript, the Long Hours of the Cross is extended by an interwoven Marian devotion. The study explores how this variation would have affected the medieval reading experience, particularly when compared to a text that omits the Marian elements. It features a holistic analysis of the manuscript combined with a diplomatic edition of the texts analysed. It draws on the theoretical framework of close textual analysis and codicology. Additionally, a theoretical framework concerning the editing of Middle-Dutch manuscripts has been included to account for the editorial choices. The Marian devotion is identified as a variation of the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin, and its inclusion is argued to enhance the reader's compassionate engagement compared to the translation by Geert Grote which lacks these Marian elements. This thesis contributes to the Pages of Prayer Project, aligning with the growing trend of close textual examination. By providing an edition of the variant of the Long Hours of the Cross, the research facilitates future comparison with other manuscripts and printed materials.

Keywords: Book of Hours, Middle-Dutch, Geert Grote, Modern Devotion, Long Hours of the Cross, Seven Sorrows of the Virgin

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Introduction

“No one can claim understanding of the late Middle Ages who has not read a Book of Hours in bed.”¹ - Christopher de Hamel, author of *Meeting with Remarkable Manuscripts*

The book of hours is a historically significant genre that attracted not only a wide readership in the medieval period, but remains a subject of scholarly interest and admiration today. This devotional book emerged from the needs of the laypeople into a type of manuscript that has now been widely recognised as the medieval bestseller. Expert in Dutch Studies R. van Dijk notes that between 800 to 2,000 examples survived.² Frits van Oostrom claims, with fair certainty, that original numbers must have been in the ten-thousands.³ Although exact figures from the Middle Ages remain unknown, it is clear that the book of hours was immensely popular. Roger Wieck asserts that, ‘from the mid-thirteenth to the mid-sixteenth century, more books of hours were commissioned and produced, bought and sold, bequeathed and inherited, printed and reprinted than any other text, including the Bible.’⁴

While the physical setting may be of lesser concern, the quote above emphasises the essential role of *reading* the genre of prayer books to gain a glimpse into medieval life. This sentiment resonates deeply with the research presented in this thesis. Manuscripts offer some tangible evidence and a tether to the medieval past. Yet, the medieval past, particularly in the realm of religious texts, is often preserved in Latin sources. For those not well-versed in Latin, then and now, reading and reciting these texts did not ensure a full understanding of what was written. The language barrier acted as a veil between the divine and the devout person. The emergence of vernacular texts, most notably the book of hours, greatly facilitated a more personal faith, allowing the reader to engage more intimately with the spiritual text in front of them.

As one of the earliest and successful regions to widely introduce vernacular books of hours, the Low Countries pioneered mainly through the translation efforts of Geert Grote who translated some of the texts as part of the *Devotio Moderna*.⁵

¹ De Hamel, Christopher. *Meetings with Remarkable Manuscripts: Twelve Journeys into the Medieval World*. Penguin, 2019.

² R.Th.M. van Dijk, ‘Het getijdenboek van Geert Grote: terugblik en vooruitzicht’, in *Ons Geestelijk Erf*, 64, (1990), p. 161

³ F.P. van Oostrom, *Wereld in Woorden. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur 1300-1400*, Bert Bakker, Amsterdam 2013, accessed via DBNL, p. 492

⁴ Roger S. Wieck, ‘Prayer For The People: The Book of Hours’, in *A History of Prayer*, (Leiden, Brill, 2008), p. 398

⁵ Wieck, ‘Prayer For The People’, p. 391

Over time, the translations became manifold and a myriad of text variations developed. One of these variations, the Long Hours of the Cross interwoven with the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin, will be studied more closely in this thesis.

For an extended period, the book of hours has been widely researched in an art historical manner and was primarily considered as a vessel for medieval art and illuminations.⁶ Notably, much remains to be discovered through the close study of the genre's textual content. The examination of texts and considerations of variation gained significant momentum with the advent of Digital Heritage research.

The new ways of engaging with manuscripts through computational methods such as TEI headings to identify entities, also open up a whole new world of looking at the text, which has for a long time been overlooked. Previously, books of hours were believed to have little textual variation.⁷ The recent research interest in text segmentation and circulation of the Middle-Dutch Hours have given rise to the understanding that text variants might be more prolific than initially thought.

A project that aims to address this research gap is the Pages of Prayer project. The project, based at Leiden University, aims to combine various research interests in an interdisciplinary way. On their webpage their research intention has been stated as follows.

It aims to chart the entire ecosystem of Dutch-language prayer books – including manuscripts, printed books, texts, images, producers, owners, patrons, places, devotions, and the interconnections between all of these aspects – over a long period of time by combining network analysis with qualitative analysis to reach meaningful interpretations of the data.⁸

This thesis will tie in with the Pages of Prayer Project and aligns itself with the ongoing trend of close textual examination. The project works with a collection of more than 380 manuscripts of which one of them will be discussed in this thesis. This thesis strives to inspire insights into the historical and textual complexities of the Middle-Dutch book of hours.

The aim of this thesis is to closely analyse the vernacular book of hours in its context and discuss how the, until recently unacknowledged, variation in the Long Hours of the Cross in the Deventer manuscript AB 2000 23 KL would have affected the reading experience of the

⁶ An example of an arthistorical perspective is the inventarisatie project of the Alexander Willem Byvanck Genootschap established by Anne S. Korteweg in 1986.

⁷ Helen C. Wüstefeld and Anne S. Korteweg, *Sleutel tot licht: getijdenboeken in de Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica*, (Amsterdam: In de Pelikaan, 2009), vol. 2, p. 30

⁸ Leiden University, 'Pages of Prayer: The Ecosystem of Vernacular Prayer Books in the Late Medieval Low Countries, c. 1380-1550', <<https://bit.ly/3yQcWCY>> (12 August 2024)

medieval reader compared to a text that omits the Marian Devotion. This will be accomplished through a close examination of the codicological and textual features of the manuscript. Furthermore, this thesis will provide an edition of the variant which facilitates future comparisons with terminal witnesses in other manuscripts and printed books. While the analysis forms the core of this study, the study also seeks to weave together the broader narrative of the book of hours. The story of the book of hours emerges fully when its diverse elements are brought together in harmony. The thesis will make use of a codicological and textual analysis framework to do so. Through this interdisciplinary approach this thesis aims to avoid isolating the paratextual elements from the discussion.

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is structured with an increasing granularity to gradually explore the intricacies of the books of hours. Part One explores the broader context of the genre's emergence and its translation and afterlife in the vernacular. Subjects such as the increasing popularity of Marian devotion that led to the popularity of the Hours of the Virgin, as well as the growing interest for a more private form of prayer, will be touched upon. The translation into the vernacular could not be discussed without acknowledging its pioneer Geert Grote and his influence on the religious landscape on the Low Countries in the Late Medieval period.

This is then followed by an examination of textual variations in Middle-Dutch books of hours. It will discuss the quest for the "original" book of hours by Geert Grote and present an example that might come close to this aspiration and will serve as counterpart to the Deventer manuscript in the comparative analysis. A study on the modular method of book production as well as computational research into text segmentation of books of hours will be discussed as methodological foundation for further analysis. Through looking at fine grained levels of textual variety in the book,

In Part Two the focus narrows down to the Deventer Manuscript. This manuscript serves as the centrepiece and spark of this study as it contains the unexamined variation of the Long Hours of the Cross, which intriguingly interweaves Marian devotional prayer. This prayer will then be closely analysed through textual comparison and analysis, using all the established, and some new, information to form a comprehensive view of the alteration of devotional reading practice through the existence of the compassionate prayer.

Part Three Features the editorial note and culminates in the presentation of the text itself in an edition.

There are some final considerations that have to be kept in mind. For the sake of brevity, the base manuscript will from now on be referred to as the Deventer Manuscript, referring explicitly to the book of hours with shelfmark 2000 D 23 KL. Throughout the thesis, transcriptions are used in accordance with the editorial guidelines outlined in the editorial notes. And finally, although this thesis is written for a generally educated, but most importantly, interested audience, some previous knowledge of the Middle Dutch language is advised to grasp the full extent of the content of the edition.

Part I

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The Book of Hours in Context

*'When you hold a medieval manuscript, what lies in front of you is not only a text, but also a collection of human stories.'*⁹
Mary Wellesley – Hidden Hands

⁹ Mary Wellesley, *Hidden Hands: the Lives of Manuscripts and Their Makers* (New York: Riverrun, 2022), p. 3

The Genesis of the Book of Hours

To study a medieval manuscript, particularly a book of hours, is to engage with a multifaceted artifact that transcends its textual content. Each page and prayer reflects not only part of the spiritual life of its owner but also the cultural and artistic milieu in which it was created. These manuscripts encapsulate a wealth of human stories—of faith, devotion, and artistry—offering a unique insight into the spiritual and social dynamics of medieval society.

A book of hours is shaped by all the people who have touched it literally, by putting the ink on parchment, gilding the pages and binding the quires into volumes, or metaphorically by composing, translating and arranging the texts. Therefore, the genre offers a vivid portrait of the religious and cultural landscape of the Low Countries in the middle ages.

This chapter will dive into the genre and explore the context in which it came to be and evolved. It will highlight the impact of Geert Grote himself, and the Modern Devotion, in the creation of the vernacular book of hours. The reform that came with the Modern Devotion significantly influenced the religious landscape of the Low Countries and surrounding areas, transforming the content and production of the book of hours significantly. Yet, more subtle changes in religious interests, such as the popularity of Marian devotion and private prayer, predate and underly this movement. The main purpose of this chapter is to create a historical foundation to underly the further analysis and description of the Deventer manuscript.

The Significance of the Book

A book of hours is primarily composed of liturgical elements such as a calendar, offices, psalms, hymns and litanies. Despite its liturgical content, these books were not directly overseen by church authorities and are hence often called paraliturgical.¹⁰ Significantly, owners had the freedom to personalise their books of hours to some extent, selecting prayers, psalms, and decorative elements according to their preferences. This autonomy from ecclesiastical control, combined with the possibility to tailor the book's content, led to a remarkable diversity within the genre, making each book of hours a unique creation.

Notably, a book of hours became more than a religious text; it was a prized possession, a cherished gift, and a means for individuals to express their most personal sentiments.¹¹ Through its prayers, people voiced their hopes for a good life, the forgiveness of sins, and the

¹⁰ Van Dijk, 'het getijdenboek van Geert Grote', p. 160

¹¹ Wustefeld and Korteweg. *Sleutel tot licht*, p. 26

redemption of departed souls in purgatory. The emphasis on the suffering of Christ was another pivotal theme in the book of hours that reflected in the personal lives of the reader. As Mertens notes, this focus reflected the contemporary mindset that suffering was an inherent part of the human condition, with Christ serving as the ultimate example. In this view, personal suffering was seen as insignificant compared to Christ's own trials, and when considered in the context of eternity, it was regarded as fleeting.¹² This perspective influenced how people perceived and accepted their own struggles, seeing them as part of a larger spiritual narrative connected to Christ's passion. It not only provided comfort in the face of personal suffering but also underscored the importance of adhering to religious practice. The book created a connection between the divine and the devotee. It guided them in the ultimate goal of reuniting with Christ in heaven, while helping them avoid the less desirable alternative of hell. Piously reading the hourly prayer cycles from your book of hours was considered a step in the right direction.

Visual guides

The frequent use of decorations and elaborate illustrations of these manuscripts played a significant role in enhancing their appeal. Initially, the book of hours was primarily reserved for the elite, who could afford to commission richly decorated manuscripts featuring lavish illuminations and intricate (religious) scenes. The illuminations blended devotional purpose with artistic expression and functioned both as devotional tool and as symbols of wealth and status. The descriptive term illumination is solely used for manuscripts who use gold in the ornamentation of its folios.

Artists specialised in creating the intricate works and decorations in books of hours. Among the most renowned are the Limbourg Brothers from Nijmegen, who illustrated one of the most famous books of hours: the *Les Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*.¹³ This manuscript stands out for its lavish and abundant illuminations, showcasing a level of opulence and detail that epitomised the richness of both manuscript illustration and its owner. While not all books of hours feature such extravagant embellishments, the use of gold and elaborate decoration was a widespread practice, including the Dutch context. Virginia Reinburg highlights that women were notably prominent as patrons, underscoring the books'

¹² Thom Mertens, *Boeken voor de eeuwigheid. Middelnederlands geestelijk proza*, (Amsterdam, Prometheus, 1993), p. 24

¹³ A digital facsimile is available at: <https://les-tres-riches-heures.chateaudechantilly.fr/>

appeal to both genders.¹⁴ As prized possessions they were often handled with great care and of great value, sometimes even portraying images of the patron reading a book or praying within the book itself. Designed as a personal prayer book meant to be re-read, the illustrations, with their captivating splendour, serve to enhance the reader's engagement with the text.

Within the covers the illustrations formed a visual narrative that extends from the page to the reader. Illustrations could foster a connection with the depicted scene and elicit the spiritual essence embedded in the portrayed images and subsequent text. Frequent illustrations preceding the start of an office not only enhance the aesthetic appeal. This is evident in the use of a Last Judgement image placed before the Penitential Psalms for example. The image served as a stark reminder of the readers sins and the consequences for their place in the afterlife, while the subsequent text offers the possibility of relief and redemption (see fig. 1) Through the use of well-placed illustrations, books of hours show a symbiotic relationship between the written word and the images.

Moreover, the illustrations function as navigational aids in finding the right office or part of text that was ought to be read.¹⁵ Other navigational aids are the rubricated or decorated initials at the beginning of new chapters or offices. Rubricated initials and opening words could be ornamented and gilded while the margins became the canvas for vines, flowers or geometrical penwork. In that way even unillustrated pages could become visual feasts for the reader. The illuminated Deventer Manuscript itself is a visual feast to behold.¹⁶

However, not all those who owned books of hours possessed the means to acquire such exquisitely illustrated or decorated manuscripts. More sober examples which featured rubrics only were also in circulation for those who couldn't afford the pricey illustrations.

Although there are many variations in the design and literary content of books of hours, these manuscripts can generally be characterised as being both practical and deeply devotional. Despite the differences in the elaboration and decoration between books commissioned by the ecclesiastical communes, the wealthy, and those owned by less affluent individuals, the core purpose of providing structured, accessible means for daily prayer and reflection remains consistent across all.

¹⁴ Virginia Reinburg, "For the Use of Women:" Women and Books of Hours', in *Early Modern Women*, vol. 4, 2009, p. 236.

¹⁵ Laura Sterponi, 'Reading and Meditation in the Middle Ages: Lectio Divina and Books of Hours', Text & talk 28, no. 5 (2008), p. 677

¹⁶ See the Manuscript Description for more information and images, pp. 25-32



Figure 1: AB 2000 D 23 KL, page-size miniature of The Last Judgment preceding the Penitential Psalms, fol. 140v-141r

From Breviary to Book of Hours

The roots of the book of hours can be traced back to the monastic tradition, where the breviary served as a comprehensive guide to the daily prayers and liturgical practices of monastic communities. From the thirteenth century on, literacy rates were rising among the laity and so was the request for devotional literature tailored to their needs.

In medieval times, life was deeply intertwined with religion, and Christianity permeated every aspect of existence. The structured rhythm of monastic life, centred around the Divine Office, was considered the epitome of Christian devotion, and laypeople aspired to partake in this spiritual discipline.¹⁷ The Divine Office, or Litany of the Hours, refers to the hourly sequence of prayers mandated by the medieval church for its ordained members.¹⁸ The

¹⁷ India Helleman and Thom Mertens, 'Die ghetieden van den love gods naar hs. Antwerpen, Museum Plantin-Moretus, M. 14.12 en Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Itk. 288', *Ons Geestelijk Erf*, 88, no. 1, 2017, p. 58

¹⁸ Wieck, 'Prayer For The People', p. 390

prayer cycles are contained in the breviary in a condensed format.

During each canonical hour, up to twelve psalms were recited, accompanied by antiphons, responses, versicles, hymns, and canticles alongside additional litanies and invocations. Each hour also required lessons from scripture, church fathers or hagiographies.¹⁹ The Divine Office is marked by its significant variation according to the liturgical calendar, different customary traditions across monasteries, dioceses, local communities and even knows seasonal differences.²⁰ The complexity of the Divine Office posed a challenge for laypeople. Unlike the monastic community, whose lifestyle afforded them the time and resource for deep study, lay individuals found themselves preoccupied with the demands of daily life, leaving little opportunity for intensive religious scholarship. Laypeople sought a more accessible form of the hourly prayer.

As devotional practices spread beyond the cloistered walls, the breviary was adapted to meet the spiritual needs of the laity, leading to the creation of a new codicological genre: the book of hours. The widespread veneration of the Virgin Mary played a crucial role in the creation of the book of hours, as Marian devotion became central to personal piety. The sought after simplicity was found in the text that had been added to the breviary and Psalter in her name, the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary or in short, Hours of the Virgin Mary.

These were not just an addition but became crucial in the genesis of the book of hours. Reinburg, for example, identifies the Virgin Hours as the ‘textual heart of the Laity’s books of hours.’²¹ Like the Divine Office, The Hours of the Virgin are structured around the eight canonical hours of the day. These hours—Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, Compline, and the longer night office, Matins—provided a rhythm of prayer that mirrored the daily cycle of monastic life. Initially, the Hours of the Virgin were incorporated into psalters or other liturgical books, but by the late thirteenth century, the Marian Office venerated its own genre especially made for the purpose of saying her Hours.²²

The immense popularity of the text can be attributed to the overall popularity of Marian devotion in the Middle Ages. Initially rooted in monastic practices around the twelfth century, this focus on Mary gradually spread to the Franciscan and Dominican orders in the

¹⁹ Reinburg, ‘Culture and Commerce’, p. 16

²⁰ R.Th.M van Dijk ‘Methodologische kanttekeningen bij het onderzoek van getijdenboeken’, in *Boeken voor de eeuwigheid. Middelnederlands geestelijk proza*, ed. Th. Mertens (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 1993), p. 212

²¹ Reinburg, ‘Culture and Commerce’, p. 17

²² Rachel Fulton Brown, ‘Mary in Medieval Prayer: The Hours of the Virgin’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Mary*, (ed.), (Oxford Academic, 2019), p. 341

upcoming two centuries. Over time, this Marian-centric meditation became increasingly prevalent among lay devotions.²³

Mary as entity has the unique position of both human and divine. Rubin Miri, in her research about the reception and portrayal of the Virgin Mary, states that ‘[T]he purity and powers attributed to her made her a patron apart, above humans, saints or angels.’²⁴ Despite her elevated status, Mary was perceived as an approachable and emphatic advocate for humanity. She became a frequently depicted figure and was deeply embedded in everyday medieval life. Miri explains that, ‘[T]he claims about Mary – as intercessor and protector, as redeemer and sufferer with Christ – were reinforced by the ubiquity of her images in churches and on street corners, in prayer books and on clothing.’²⁵ Her role as intercessor between Christ and the faithful made her an essential figure for daily devotion, offering motherly comfort and hope to those who sought her out.

Devoting prayers to Mary, through the recitation of the Marian office, the *Obsecro te* or the *O Intermerata* for example, was therefore an already existing and widespread practice long before the invention of the book of hours. Paradoxical for literary history, reciting the Marian office predates the text in ink by some two hundred years.²⁶ It settled in textual format with the creation of the book of hours. However, the text is far from fixed; much like other texts rooted in oral tradition, the Hours of the Virgin existed in many variations. There is no single canonical form of this prayer, with scribes often copying the versions available to them, sometimes modifying them by adding or omitting elements. These altered versions would then serve as the basis for subsequent copies, overall leading to a rich diversity in texts dedicated to Mary’s devotion.

In her research Rachel Fulton Brown highlights the grassroots nature of the Hours of the Virgin, stating that,

Far from a devotion that was enjoined by ecclesiastical authority upon an unwilling or reluctant clergy or laity, the Hours of the Virgin was a practice adopted, as it were, from the ground up, not as an obligation, but rather out of reverence for and wonder at Mary’s role in salvation.²⁷

²³ Carol M. Schuler, ‘The Seven Sorrows of the Virgin: Popular Culture and Cultic Imagery in Pre-Reformation Europe.’ *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art*, vol. 21 (1992), The Seven Sorrows, p. 9

²⁴ Miri Rubin, ‘Mary as Queen and Reformer’, in *Mother of God: A History of the Virgin*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 303

²⁵ Rubin, ‘Mary as Queen and Reformer’, p. 338-339

²⁶ Brown, *Mary in Medieval Prayer*, p. 341

²⁷ *Ibid.* p. 339

It is therefore unsurprising that, through its already existing tradition and its inclusion in the book of hours the Hours of the Virgin became almost standard practice. As Brown also asserts that, 'By the later Middle Ages, every man, woman, or child, cleric or lay, who could read would have known the Hours or 'Little Office' of the Virgin Mary.²⁸ This widespread familiarity underscores the profound impact of Marian devotion on medieval spiritual life, illustrating how deeply ingrained and cherished the practice became across several levels of society.

Alongside Marian devotion, a broader shift towards private, individualised prayer significantly fuelled the demand for the book of hours. For the average layperson their devotional practices relied more on the explanatory abilities of others rather than on their own understanding of the religious texts. Faith was traditionally mediated through the clergy who conducted the Mass and provided instruction on religious practices. This was often in Latin, the formal language of the church. A language only those individuals who were taught understood well enough to grasp the full complexities of exegesis and liturgical lessons off.

However, in the later middle ages, a shift occurred in the stance towards devotion. People began to believe that 'their eternal salvation depended on their personal relations to God as much or more than on their behaviour or on the intervention of clergy.'²⁹ This move towards more private devotion created a need for laypeople to engage more deeply with their faith within the privacy of their own homes, making the Book of Hours a key spiritual resource. The book of hours opened a whole new world of devotion to the laity, granting them greater autonomy in their faith. As Roger Wieck asserts that, 'Books of hours bestowed direct, democratic, and potentially uninterrupted access to God, the Virgin Mary and the Saints.'³⁰ The book of hours emerged as a product of both the devotion to Mary and the growing emphasis on personal faith, converging into a text that resonated widely with the laity.

The original language of the book of hours, briefly mentioned earlier, warrants further comments. Initially, the texts were written in Latin, reflecting the origin in the Catholic Church's liturgical traditions and their close connection to the breviary. However, as the late medieval period witnessed a shift towards more personal forms of devotion, the language use of devotional text shifted with it. Understandably so, if one could not comprehend the religious text in their glory neither could one incorporate them more intently. This linguistic

²⁸ Ibid. p. 338

²⁹ Giles Constable, 'From Church History to Religious Culture: The Study of Medieval Religious Life and Spirituality.' *European Religious Cultures: Essays Offered to Christopher Brooke on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday*, ed. by Miri Rubin, (University of London Press, 2020), p.9

³⁰ Wieck, 'Prayer for the People', p. 392

shift towards the vernacular gained particular momentum in the Low Countries where it was heavily influenced by the Modern devotion movement and its leading figure Geert Grote.

The Influence of Geert Grote on the Book of Hours

The book of hours in the low countries turned into a vernacular book of hours. Not all of them were, but it was the Low Countries, particularly through Geert Grote and his translation efforts, that spurred the genre into a non-Latin way.

Grote and his later followers recognised that for true spiritual engagement, the faithful needed to understand the words they were praying. As a result, the movement with Geert Grote as leading figure championed the translation of religious texts, most prominently the book of hours, into the vernacular language spoken by ordinary people. This movement not only democratised religious practice but also significantly expanded the reach and impact of the book of hours. By breaking down linguistic barriers, Geert Grote and the Modern Devotion played a pivotal role in the evolution of the book of hours in the context of the Low Countries, transforming it from a clerical tool and elite manuscript into a more widely cherished spiritual resource.

Geert Grote, born in 1340, emerged as a central figure in the religious landscape of the Medieval Low Countries. Orphaned at a young age due to the plague, he inherited his family's house in Deventer, which would later become the first residence for what would be known as the Sisters of Common Life. However, at that time, the reform movement had not yet acquired its formal name. Before embarking on his significant religious reforms, Grote completed his studies in France and initially served as a *clericus simplex*, a lower-ranking cleric within the Diocese of Utrecht.³¹

Grote's path took a transformative turn around 1374, when a severe illness left him on his deathbed. According to his biographers, his miraculous recovery marked a profound conversion and a complete change in his way of life.³² He outlined his new way of living in his handwritten *Conclusa en proposita non vota* (decisions and intentions, without vows), which expressed his desire to lead a sober, earnest, and inwardly focused life.³³

³¹ R.TH.M. van Dijk, 'Vroege moderne devotie' in *Geestelijke opklimming: Een gids voor de geestelijke weg uit de vroege Moderne Devotie*, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), p. 35

³² *Ibid.*, p. 35

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 35

After his conversion, Grote spent time with the Carthusians, known for their vibrant book culture, where numerous authors, translators, and scribes contributed to an impressive production of handwritten material for both personal use and sale.³⁴

Immersed in their extensive library, Grote developed a deep interest in the early Christian way of life. He would read about the lives of the Desert Fathers, the works of Augustine, the meditations of Bernard of Clairvaux, and the works of Heinrich Suso.³⁵ This greatly influenced his later religious teachings and reforms.

Master Geert likely absorbed the rich book culture of the Carthusians, and during the time were the Catholic church had imposed silence on him by issuing a preaching ban, he turned his attention to translating. His translation work would become massively significant for the development and accessibility of the book of hours. The translation into the vernacular breaks away from the exclusive use of Latin and thus making these works accessible to a broader audience.

Grote undertook the task of translating key religious texts, including one of the most popular at the time: the Hours of the Virgin. His translation of the Hours of the Virgin is fairly agreed upon among his biographers.³⁶ But there remains some debate on the question if he can also be attributed as translator of some of the other offices such as the Seven Penitential Psalms, with his own composition of the Litany, or the Office of the Dead. There is even less evidence that he has translated the Hour of the Holy Ghost or the Hour of the Cross, with only individual biographers claiming them as his translation.³⁷

It is important to note that not every vernacular book of hours can be fully credited to

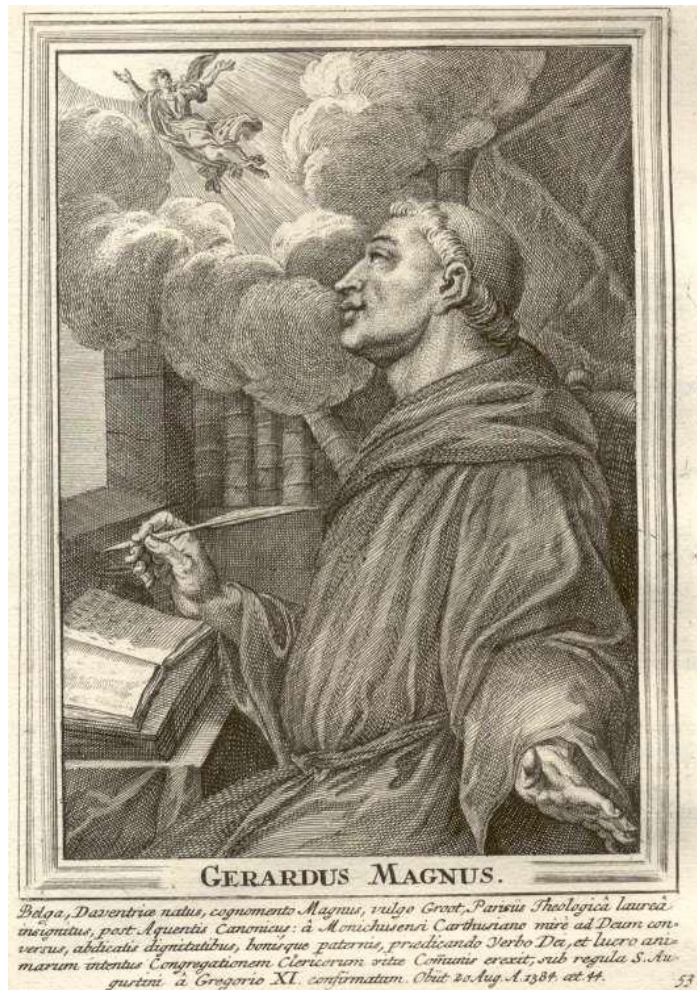


Figure 2: A rendering of Geert Grote (Gerardus Magnus) as writer in print, reminiscing about mystical, divine ideas while working on a manuscript.

³⁴ van Dijk, 'Vroege moderne devotie', p. 33

³⁵ Oostrom, *Wereld in Woorden*, p. 485

³⁶ Van Dijk, 'Het getijdenboek van Geert Grote', p. 161

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 161

Grote. While he played a significant role in translation work, many texts were translated by others, most of whom remain anonymous. Prayers, in particular, were often translated with greater freedom.

Moreover, Grote's translations were not merely linguistic conversions. Van Dijk closely considered the relationship of Grote towards the text and identifies him more as curator than as translator.³⁸ The texts were carefully crafted to retain the spiritual depth of the original texts while making them comprehensible through additional notes. By doing so, Grote helped to solidify the book of hours as a personal devotional tool, tailored to the linguistic abilities of a broader readership. This readership can be described as devout individuals with insufficient knowledge of Latin and no liturgical obligations.³⁹

His influence did not end with his death in 1384. During his lifetime he had already dedicated himself to finding suitable men who would devote themselves to copying books.⁴⁰ His way of life and his teachings laid the groundwork for the Modern Devotion, which continued to shape the religious environment of the Low Countries and beyond, including the book culture. The Modern Devotion emphasised inward piety, personal reflection and a more direct relationship with God. It emphasised that it was necessary to fully comprehend what one was reading and hearing if one wanted to lead a personally focused religious life and be able to follow in Christ's footsteps.⁴¹

With the Modern Devotion the focus shifted away from the official ecclesiastical system as the sole path to the divine. The followers, The Brothers and Sisters of the Common Life, though not clerics in the traditional sense, lived according to the communal model of the early Christians in semireligious communities. Notably without official vows as Geert Grote had understood them to be completely unnecessary.⁴² The sober, Christ-like lifestyle pursued by the followers of the Modern Devotion resonated deeply, finding eager acceptance among religious communities, clergy, and laypeople alike.⁴³ Over time, a growing circle of copyists, students and followers formed around the successors of Master Geert, continuing his literary

³⁸ Van Dijk, 'Het getijdenboek van Geert Grote', p. 173

³⁹ Youri Desplenter, 'Overgezet voor het gebed', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal en Letterkunde*, 122 (2006), p. 200

⁴⁰ van Dijk, 'Broeder Gerard Zerbolt van Zutphen' in *Geestelijke opklimming: Een gids voor de geestelijke weg uit de vroege Moderne Devotie*, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), p. 45

⁴¹ Wüstefeld and Korteweg, *Sleutel tot licht*, p. 39

⁴² Charles Caspers; Daniela Müller; Judith Keßler, 'In the Eyes of Others. The Modern Devotion in Germany and the Netherlands: Influencing and Appropriating', *Church History and Religious Culture*, Vol. 93, 4, (2013), p. 494

⁴³ Caspers; Müller and Keßler, 'In the Eyes of Others', p. 489

endeavours.⁴⁴ Through their continued diligent efforts, the vernacular book of hours spread widely, ensuring the dissemination of the text across various regions of the Low Countries and Germany thereby further embedding it in the daily spiritual practice of the faithful reader.

All in all, This chapter explored the genesis and use of the book of hours in its medieval context. As both a devotional guide and a cultural artifact, the book of hours serves as a window into the lives and beliefs of those who commissioned, crafted and cherished these texts. It embodies a rich tradition that spans from monastic prayer to becoming its own codicological genre, evolving alongside the changing contexts in which it existed. Initially serving as a more elite and clerical read, the book gradually transcended this readership to become a widely popular devotional text among various social strata.

Its availability in the vernacular marked a new era for readers who were not well-versed in Latin, further broadening its reach. The lasting influence of Geert Grote's translation and the continued efforts of the followers of the Modern Devotion are evident in the great readership of the book, sparking a wide range of further translations and variety of texts in the genre itself. The following chapter will delve deeper to the content within the covers of a vernacular book of hours. It will examine the textual elements and production contexts within the Low Countries that contributed to the wide variety of texts and the rich literary landscape surrounding the book of hours.

⁴⁴ van Dijk, 'broeder Gerard Zerbolt van Zutphen', p. 45

Variations in the Vernacular Book of Hours

While the book of hours enjoyed widespread popularity across Western Europe, the Low Countries had a notably early and popular vernacular engagement with the devotional text. The early adaptation of the vernacular version of the book of hours can be largely attributed to the efforts of Geert Grote, the translator and reformer whose Modern Devotion movement significantly increased the supply of vernacular devotional texts.⁴⁵

The increased supply of these vernacular texts not only made the genre more accessible to a broader audience but also influenced the content and production in the Low Countries. The texts found in Dutch books of hours reflect the spiritual ideals of the Modern devotion, resulting in variations that distinguish them from books of hours in other regions. One reason for this is that scribes could adapt texts to better align with local and spiritual insights. This was further compounded by the fluid nature of manuscript production and transmission, where elements, text and imagery alike, were subject to modifications and reinterpretations.

The semi-permeable boundaries of conventual life facilitated the exchange of texts and ideas among different religious communities. Monastics, semi-religious communities and laypeople shared books both within and beyond their own walls, contributing to the cross-fertilisation of devotional literature.⁴⁶ This exchange, coupled with advancements in manuscript production techniques, played a crucial role in the widespread dissemination of a multiplicity of texts. These factors combined created a vibrant literary landscape where the genre flourished. Despite varieties on a textual and aesthetic level, the book of hours maintained certain shared qualities across the Low Countries. This chapter will delve into these aspects, examining both the unique features and the common threads that defined the book of hours in the Low Countries.

The Compilation of the Book of Hours in the Low Countries

The contents of the book of hours are thematically organised, distinguishing it from its predecessors everchanging nature. Instead of focusing on the changing seasons, the genre reflects on various religious themes and entities that can be invoked and recited as expected or needed. For instance, the Hours of the Virgin prominently feature Mary as the central figure,

⁴⁵ Kathryn M. Rudy, 'Rubrics and Indulgences' in *Rubrics, Images and Indulgences in Late Medieval Netherlandish Manuscripts*, (Leiden: Brill, 2017), p. 8

⁴⁶ Rudy, 'Rubrics and Indulgences', p. 13

while the Hours of the Cross centre on Christ's passion. Thus, the book of hours serves as a collection of thematic texts that, while spiritually interconnected, each address elements of Christian devotion. The order of these thematised texts is not entirely fixed.

According to van Dijk, the core components required for a manuscript to be classified as a book of hours include the calendar, one or more Hours in varying orders, the Seven Penitential Psalm, the Litany of Saints, and the Office of the dead. Given the foundational importance of the Hours of the Virgin in defining the genre, it is reasonable to assert that this office is a crucial element and deserves particular attention.

The requirement of a manuscript to be called a book of hours are, according to van Dijk, the Calendar, one or more Hours in varying order, the seven penitential psalms, the litany of Saints and the Office of the Dead.⁴⁷ However, considering the significance of the Hours of the Virgin, one can assume that the Hour is also part of the essential lay-out.

Moreover, the vernacular book of hours knew some additional texts that are absent, or less common in other regions. While van Dijk mentions the Hour of the Holy Ghost, the Hour of Eternal Wisdom and the Hours of the Cross, both the long and short version, as specific text identifiers of the genre, one can consider the Hours of Eternal Wisdom as main marker.⁴⁸ Its authorship has been ascribed to Henricus Suso (1295 – 1366) and derives from the last chapter of his *Horologium Sapientiae*. This mystical and affective text has played a large part in Geert Grote's own spirituality according to A.G. Weiler.⁴⁹ It might have caused him to translate it and include it within the book of hours.

Hellemans and Mertens outline the primary components of what can be generally understood as a Middle-Dutch book of hours. These include the Calendar, followed by the offices of the Holy Virgin Mary, of the Holy Ghost, of the Holy Cross (short version), of the Eternal Wisdom, and of the Holy Cross (long version), followed by the Seven Penitential Psalms, the Litany of the Saints with thirty-two suffrages, and the Office of the Dead. This structure, while subject to variations in order and content, represents the core elements of the Book of Hours in the vernacular context.⁵⁰ Not only the order and content of the Offices themselves could vary, but also the inclusion of prayers enhances the variety of each individual manuscript.

Research remains inconclusive about the original composition of Grote's books of

⁴⁷ van Dijk, 'Het getijdenboek van Geert Grote', p. 160

⁴⁸ Van Dijk, 'methodologische kanttekeningen', p. 213

⁴⁹ Van Dijk, 'Het getijdenboek van Geert Grote', p. 166

⁵⁰ Hellemans and Mertens, 'Die ghetiden van den love gods', p. 60

hours. The quest to determine the exact original format is an ongoing and likely unattainable task. Scholars can only approximate the typical appearance and arrangement of the devotional book, given the wide range of identified, and larger still unidentified, compositions and their inherent variability in the genre.

However, to facilitate the comparison of texts and textual variations, it is essential to establish a standard reference point. For this purpose, this thesis adopts the edition based on the Hague manuscript 133 E 21 by N. van Wijk as the closest available approximation to Geert Grote's original translation. Van Wijk's edition provides a reliable foundation for analysis. In addition to the translation and prologues of the Hours of the Virgin, it includes the prologue to the Vigil, along with a number of glosses attributed to Grote.⁵¹ Moreover, its linguistic features suggest close alignment with the language of Geert Grote's original text.⁵² These features combined make it a likely candidate for an early version of the vernacular book of hours by Geert Grote.

Text Segmentation

Although a standard version for comparison has been established with van Wijk's edition, this does not diminish the value of other versions. Distinctive text variations provide valuable insights into the medieval reader and their context. These differences prompt the question of how such variations came to be. Kathryn Rudy mentions production as source of variability within manuscripts, noting that 'their composition always varied, both at the time of production and by force of an owner's interests and desires.'⁵³ The production process itself, including the roles of scribes and patrons, played a significant part in facilitating these variations.

While the amendment of texts by scribes has already been touched upon, the Low Countries prevalence for the so-called "modular method" also plays a role in the creation of the divergent genre. Books of hours, at least in the Low Countries, were made increasingly in smaller segments that could be brought together during binding. Kathryn Rudy coined the term modular method in her study of the production and reception of books of hours. She discovered that both the reading practice and the production had a particular quality in

⁵¹ N van Wijk, *Het getijdenboek van Geert Grote; naar het Haagse handschrift 133 E 21* (Leiden: Brill, 1940), p. 5

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 5

⁵³ Kathryn M. Rudy, 'The modular method' in *Piety in Pieces: How Medieval Readers Customized their Manuscripts*, (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2016), p 17

common. She notes that, ‘ they were both read and produced in units—that is, modularly.’⁵⁴

In practice, this meant that each individual component, whether text or illustration, was produced separately and later assembled during the binding process. For producers, this approach allowed them to create an array of individual elements and let customers select their preferred elements for inclusion.⁵⁵ The customer, on the other side, could personalise their book entirely on the available elements of the bookmaker. For the book of hours, this method resulted in a wide array of text and illustration combinations that reflect the individual preferences of medieval readers in the Low Countries.

Consequently, researcher can gain deeper insights into medieval devotional reading practices through the study of these diverse and personalised manuscripts. However, this endeavour is far from straightforward. For instance, the study by Hazem et al. pioneers in large-scale research on a corpus of books of hours and exemplifies the challenges involved in this field. It aims to test the use of several computational methods for the text segmentation and annotation of books of hours.⁵⁶ Despite advances in computational methods over the last years, the intricate nature of the Book of Hours presents significant difficulties.

Their study, which introduces the first large scale corpus of books of hours—comprising three hundred automatic and two manual transcriptions—proposes an annotation scheme specifically designed for the complex structure of these manuscripts. The paper found the state-of-the-art text segmentation approaches inadequate for the complexity of the text. In essence, while traditional manuscript production was a manual process, the book of hours’ intricate nature necessitates a similarly, manual study, for accurate analysis, at least at the time being.

Nonetheless, the study also presents compelling insight into the text segmentation of book of hours and identifies three levels of textual granularity. The core level representing the main Offices, the second level corresponding to the eight canonical hours of the day and the most detailed level encompassing the different prayer cycles and specific passages from various sources, including the Bible, Psalms, and non-biblical texts.⁵⁷ Therefore, the analysis of the Marian prayer within the Long Hours of the cross will focus on the second and third level of granularity.

All in all, this chapter revealed how the book of hours, with its thematic organization

⁵⁴ Rudy, ‘the Modular method’, p 17

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 24

⁵⁶ Amir Hazem, et al., ‘Books of Hours. The First Liturgical Data Set for Text Segmentation.’ *Proceedings of the Twelfth Language Resources and Evaluation Conference*, 2020, p. 776.

⁵⁷ Hazem, et al., ‘Books of Hours.’, p. 778-780

and flexible structure, was more than just a devotional tool; it was a reflection of the dynamic literary landscape of the time. It catered to the personalized needs of medieval readers in the context of the Low Countries. This personalisation, facilitated by the modular production method, allowed for a wide array of textual and artistic variations, reflecting individual devotional preferences and regional differences. The persistence of these variations underscores the rich diversity within the genre and highlights the complex interplay between text, production, and reader.

Furthermore, there are challenges associated with studying the book of hours, particularly the difficulties in establishing a definitive standard. Also, The findings from Hazem et al.'s research on text segmentation illustrate the complexity of the book of hours. And the different levels of granularity also mean different possible levels of variety.

The chapter set a solid foundation for further investigation into the book of hours, emphasizing both its historical significance and the intricate details of its composition. Having explored the genre and its variety in literary ways, it is now time to turn to Deventer Manuscript specifically. The next chapter will closely examine the manuscript in both its codicological as well as its textual sense as they are closely connected.

Part II

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The Manuscript

‘Parchment books and records teach you quickly that a manuscript is a sensual object: each has a certain smell, a certain feel, a certain look and sound, all derived in part from the distinctive origin, treatment, and history of the animal membranes that comprise them, and from the oily human fingers paging through them over the intervening centuries.’⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Bruce Holsinger, ‘Chapter two. Hair, Flesh, Sense’, in *On Parchment: Animals, Archives, and the Making of Culture from Herodotus to the Digital Age*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2023), p. 25

Manuscript Description

The following description is based on a thorough examination of both the physical manuscript as well as its digitally accessible version. This ensures a comprehensive analysis that leverages the strengths of both formats. The digital version allows for a detailed textual scrutiny, enabling the repeated examination of minute textual details without risking damage to the original artefact. It also facilitates the comparison of different sections of text and the identification of patterns or anomalies that might not be as easily discernible in the physical copy. Moreover, it is always readily available as long as your device has a solid network connection. Meanwhile, the original artefact offers invaluable insights into the physicality of the object. This includes the texture and thickness of the parchment, the quality of the ink, the craftsmanship of the illuminations, and the construction of the binding. Together, these perspectives provide a holistic understanding of the manuscript, combining the precision of digital analysis with the tactile and visual appreciation of the original material form.



Figure 3: AB 2000 D 23 KL, page featuring a gilded initial and marginal decoration with floral motive on fol. 105v.

While the manuscript will be discussed comprehensively, particular emphasis is placed on the extended version of the Long Hours of the Cross. The specific text within the Deventer manuscript will be closely examined and presented as an edition with textual analysis in this thesis. Although catalogue descriptions provide a systematic and concise account of a manuscript's physical structure, materials, contents, and other identifiable aspects, the editor's focus is on the textual significance of these features.⁵⁹ Therefore, this chapter not only analyses the manuscript's textual components but also highlights paratextual elements that may influence the text's significance, transmission and usage. This provides a comprehensive foundation to analyse and discuss the textual inclusion of a set of Marian prayers in the Long Hours of the Cross found in this manuscript.

Provenance

The manuscript is preserved in the Atheneumbibliotheek in Deventer, Gelderland. This institution, renowned as the oldest municipal library in the Netherlands, holds a significant position in the preservation and study of historical texts. The Atheneumbibliotheek's collection is distinguished not only because of its extensive array of richly decorated manuscripts, but also by its diverse holdings, which include grand atlases, vivid botanical works, and an archive of printed materials dating back to the earliest presses in Deventer.⁶⁰ Given its historical and cultural importance, it is an ideal repository for this particular book of hours. The library's connection to Geert Grote, who himself was born in the city, further underscores its relevance. It houses a substantial collection related to Grote and his movement, making the Atheneumbibliotheek a fitting home for this manuscript.

The catalogue of the AB dates the manuscript to approximately 1425-1450.⁶¹ This dating is likely based on the fact that the illumination is ascribed to the Master of the Gethsemane.⁶² This artist is renowned for his elegant and colourful floral motifs that adorn the borders.⁶³

⁵⁹ A. S. G. Edwards, 'Manuscript and Text in *A guide to Editing Middle English* ed. DJ Moffat and V. McCarren, (Michigan, University of Michigan Press, 1998), pp. 160-61

⁶⁰ Deventer, Atheneumbibliotheek, 2000 D 23 KL

⁶¹ Deventer, Atheneumbibliotheek, 2000 D 23 KL

⁶² Verhoeven and Folkerts, '*Deventer boekenstad*', p. 44

⁶³ Verhoeven and Folkerts, '*Deventer boekenstad*', p. 44

Notably, the manuscript contains no handwritten additions or corrections from its time of production. While the absence of such annotations contributes to the manuscript's pristine appearance, it also limits the insight researchers might gain into its history of use and reception. The only visible handwritten addition is a mark from a later owner, R. M. Binning, which appears on folios 1r and 197v. This mark indicates a more recent period of ownership, though it offers little information about the manuscript's earlier history or its reception during the medieval period.

Physical description

The manuscript is encased in a brownish-red Morocco leather binding, distinguished by its symmetrical rectangular decorations on both the front and rear boards. These are complemented by two brass clasps as can be seen in figure 4. The addition of these clasps is not merely decorative but functional. Parchment, unlike paper, has a natural tendency to expand and contract with changes in humidity, which can cause the book to push open. The clasps serve a vital role in keeping the book securely closed when not in use, thereby protecting the valuable text inside.⁶⁴ The spine displays five raised bands, indicating where the main binding threads would come together. Upon closer inspection, it is possible to count seven binding threads, particularly visible at the opening of the calendar and the empty front folio.

The manuscript is composed of II+197 folia, crafted from high-quality parchment. The dimensions of each page are 174x124 mm, with a written area of 92x59 mm.⁶⁵ Because the book was intended for daily use, the size reflects the practical considerations of medieval book design. The Middle Dutch text is arranged in a single column of 20 lines per full text page, executed in a Gothic script known as *litterae textualis*. The text is below top line and the ruling is done in ink. There seems to be just one hand in the manuscript. The manuscript's visual presentation is further enhanced by the use of coloured inks. Red and blue inks are employed in the rubrication process to differentiate and segment the text.



Figure 4: 2000 D 23 KL, brass clasps of the manuscript, sideview

⁶⁴ Digital manuscript in the classroom, Quill: glossary, <<https://digmanclass.universiteitleiden.nl/glossary/>> (12 August 2024)

⁶⁵ Atheneumbibliotheek catalogus, <

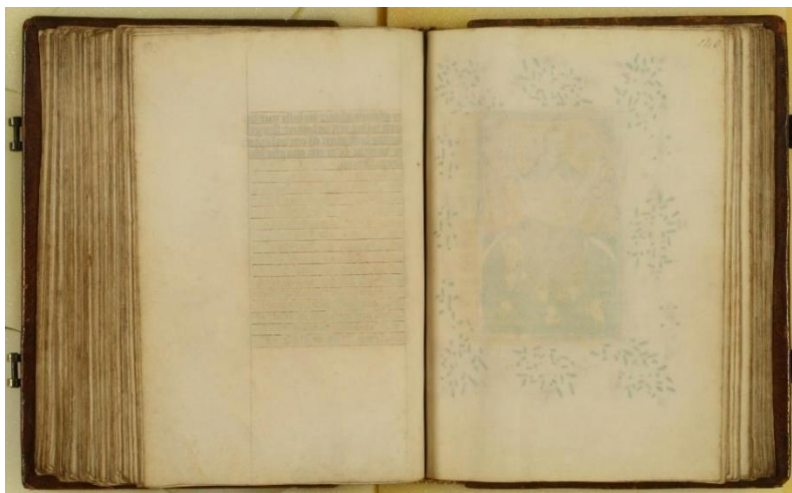


Figure 5: AB 2000 D 23
KL, blank opening due to
production process. Fol.
139v-140r

It has to be noted that blue is reserved exclusively for initials within the text and some of the Kalends in the calendar, while red is also used for headings and other significant text divisions. This careful use of colour not only adds aesthetic appeal but also aids the reader in navigating the text, making it easier to locate specific sections or prayers.

A noteworthy aspect of the manuscript's construction is the organization of the text. Each new text begins on the top recto of a fresh quire, regardless of the length of the preceding text. This practice sometimes left blank ruled parchment at the end of a text section such as the end of Offices. This indicates that the scribe compiled each section as a distinct packet before binding them together and is therefore evidence for the use of the modular method as proposed by Rudy in the previous chapter.

In most sections of the manuscript, the text flows seamlessly from one folio to the other. However, as illustrated in figure 5, there are instances where the scribe left blank spaces, particularly at the verso of a folio. The miniature has been added later on a separate singleton. This singleton, with its recto side blank, is an indication that the miniatures were added as distinct elements after the text was completed. This practice further supports the suggestion of modular construction of the manuscript, where different components—text, illumination, and binding—were produced and assembled in stages.

Content

What follows is a the content description of the Deventer Manuscript, which, while largely representative of a Middle-Dutch book of hours, contains several noteworthy elements. Elements that can be recognised by Iconclass numbers will be noted with their respective number between brackets. The manuscript opens with a calendar specific for the Diocese of Utrecht (fol. 1r-12v). The rubrication of each month not only lists the name of the month and

its number of days, but also provides the reader with solar and lunar information. For example, the month of June reads: ‘Junius hevet xxx daghen. Die mane xxx. Die dach is xviiij vren lanc. Die nacht vi vren. Die sonne gaet in teyken *n* cantro’ (June has thirty days, The moon thirty. the day is eighteen hours long. The night six hours. The sun goes in the sign of Cancer).⁶⁶ Following the calendar, the manuscript progresses through a series of Offices, which will be described in chronological order.

The Offices are structured with three levels of granularity: the Offices themselves, the canonical hours within each Office, and the individual elements within these hours. The smallest level of granularity refers to typical elements including opening and closing verses, psalms with antiphons, chapters (short readings), lessons (long readings), responsorial hymns, praises with antiphons, and orations (prayers). The division into these levels of granularity allows for a more nuanced understanding of the manuscript’s devotional content. This description will discuss the first level, the Offices themselves, and their accompanying illuminations and decorations.

The first Office is the Hours of the Virgin (fol. 13r-53v). Its opening page features a prominent historiated initial of the Madonna (fol. 13v). It depicts Mary holding Christ-child close to her bosom (11F41). They seem to be enshrined within the heavily gilded initial “O”. A whirlwind of floral decorations envelops the text block including gilded flowers, a decorative element that adorns the entire page and is a recurrent theme throughout the manuscript ornamentation of this book (see fig. 6). The extensive use of illumination throughout the manuscript strongly suggests that it was commissioned by a patron of considerable wealth. While the abundance of the detailed artwork, with its intricate floral designs and high-quality material, suggest a person of high standing, the use of only three full page-sized illustrations suggest that there were limits.

The Hour of the Eternal wisdom follows (55r-78v) is introduced by a full-page miniature of the “Salvator Mundi” (11D324). Christ bestowing a blessing with his right hand while holding a golden orb in his left. He is set off against a striking blue-and-gold backdrop (54v). As has been mentioned before, these hours are particularly characteristic of the vernacular book of hours.

Of particular interest within this manuscript is the Long Hours of the Cross (79r-108v). The Hour opens with Prologue B and is interwoven with a variety of the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin (G155b_G189c). This variation has been signalled in combination in at

⁶⁶ Atheneumbibliotheek, Deventer AB 2000 D 23 KL, fol. 6v

least two other manuscripts and in a printed version.⁶⁷ The Prayer has also been signalled in isolation.⁶⁸ Following are The Hours of the Holy Spirit on fol. 109r-133v, (G152). These contain elements from the Long Hours of the Holy Spirit (P001).

The subsequent texts are a range of prayers beginning with a prayer to Jesus Christ (133v-134v), requesting that He views the Devotee with Compassion (G100). Followed by a stand-alone prayer to Mary (134v-135v), (G058), and four consecutive communion prayers (135v-139r), (G068), (G049), (G111) and (G048). Books of hours were used both in church and at home, hence why the books could also include prayers recited by the altar or sung by the choir, such as the communion prayers.⁶⁹

The Seven Penitential psalms (141r-150v) of version A (G156) are preceded by a depiction of the Last Judgement (140v). Here, Christ is portrayed seated on a rainbow, displaying his stigmata, while angels sound their trumpets depicted against a golden backdrop. Below them, diminutive figures representing souls gaze up in supplication (11U1). This portrayal captures the solemnity and gravity of the last judgement. The image is a visual and thematic prelude to these psalms, which are traditionally recited as acts of penance. The Seven Penitential Psalms could also functioned as spiritual armour against sinning. It served as text for penance for the living and alleviated the duration of purgatory for the deceased.

The Litany of Saints, on fol. 150v-156v, (G157), is introduced by the third, and final, full-page miniature on fol. 157v, (11S16). Heaven is represented as Abraham's bosom, the blessed in his lap. Wieck explains the role of the Litanies in comparison to the Virgin as he states, 'If the Virgin was the person to whom one addressed the all-important petition for eternal salvation, it was from the saints that one sought more basic, or temporal, kinds of help.'⁷⁰

Finally, the manuscript culminates with the Long Office of the Dead (158r-197r), closing the devotional cycle with reflections on mortality and the afterlife (G158). Wieck denotes that the position of the hours is symbiotic to its content as he states, 'The Office of the Dead was in the back of every Book of Hours the way death itself was always at the back of the medieval mind.'⁷¹

⁶⁷ Herman Mulder and Jan Deschamps, *Inventaris van de Middelnederlandse handschriften van de Koninklijke Bibliotheek in België*, (Brussel, Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België, 2015), p. 27 & p. 41; The printed example considers Düsseldorf, ULB, PRTHEOL-1-282:INK

⁶⁸ Luc Indestege, *Een Diets Gebedenboek uit het begin der zestiende eeuw*, (Gent, Koninklijke vlaamse academie voor Taal-en letterkunde, 1961), p. 229-231

⁶⁹ Wieck, 'Prayer for the People', p. 409

⁷⁰ Wieck, 'Prayer for the People', p. 410

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p 412

In conclusion, this part tried to establish the codicological features as well as highlight the textual and illustrative contents of the Deventer Manuscript. It already captures the attention by its exterior, featuring the clasps and the dark red coloured binding. When looking within the covers a marvel of illuminated flower decorations and gilded initials point the way through and to the various Offices and other texts. The most notable of them the Long Hours of the Cross as it features a briefly mentioned, yet unexamined text combination of prayers for Mary's compassion in the conclusive part of the hourly prayer cycle. The following part of the thesis will delve into a more detailed analysis of this text combination both through comparative as well as textual analysis.



Figure 6: 2000 D 23 KL, Opening page of the Hours of the Blessed Virgin Mary, complete with historiated initial and floral border decorations attributed to the master of Gethsemane, fol. 13v.

Analysis of the Long Hours of the Cross

The presence of the Marian prayer interwoven within the Long Hours of the Cross in the Deventer manuscript presents a unique and compelling aspect that merits thorough examination. To reiterate, the aim of this thesis is to conduct a close analysis of the vernacular book of hours within its historical framework, particularly focusing on how the variation in the Long Hours of the Cross in the Deventer manuscript would have shaped the reading experience of the medieval reader, in contrast to a text that omits the Marian Devotion. While the historical framework has been established in the previous sections, the following comparison seeks to uncover the distinct reading experiences that each text would have provided by examining their different text structures.

The Long Hours of the Cross, derived from St. Bonaventure's *Officium de Passione Domini* (The Hours of the Passion)—are deeply rooted in the pivotal event of Christ's Passion. The Passion and crucifixion mark the pinnacle of suffering in Christ's life but also stand for the salvation of humanity. This event is central to the Christian tradition and celebrated during easter. Easter, being the most significant feast in medieval Christianity, served as the focal point around which the entire liturgical year revolved. The importance of this feast is further reflected in the organisation of the calendar, which was designed to accommodate the celebration of this moveable feast.

Structurally, the Long Hours of the Cross mirrors the format of the Hours of the Virgin. Both are organized around the eight canonical hours, meant to be recited at specific times throughout the day and night. This structure distinguishes the Long Hours of the Cross from its shorter counterpart. It incorporates a diverse range of psalms, lessons, canticles, verses and antiphons all with the thematic subject of the suffering and sacrifice of Christ.

However, in the Deventer manuscript, rather than being presented as an independent devotion, a prayer to Mary, identified as the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin, are interwoven with the Long Hours of the Cross. The prayer appears in the Oratio following the Collect, and marks the final words of each of the canonical hours, closing with the *Domine Exaudi* and *Benedictio*. The prayer is featured in the hours from Lauds until Compline. As the prayer only consists of seven sorrows, Matins, the first canonical hour in this cycle, does not feature the prayer.

The significance of this integration is further underscored by the fact that it is not an isolated occurrence. Mulder and Deschamps were the first to identify the inclusion of Marian devotions intertwined with the Long Hours of the Cross in two other manuscripts currently

housed in the Royal library in Brussels.⁷² This indicates that the practice, while unique, is not entirely unprecedented. To clarify what distinguishes this text, a comparison with a standard version will effectively emphasise its unique features.

The version that will be used for this comparison is the edition of the Middle- Dutch book of hours with shelfmark 133 E 21 provided by N. van Wijk which has been categorised as close relative to Geert Grote's original.⁷³ To facilitate text comparison, the two different editions have been put side by side in two columns. A close comparison is facilitated by Van Wijk's editorial style. His edition maintains fidelity to the original text, including the retention of its original punctuation.⁷⁴ This allows for a straightforward comparison between two minimally altered texts.

Notably, the text by van Wijk will be featured on the right hand side of the comparison. He did adapt his edition to some extent. This mainly concerns lexical, stylistic and syntactic variations and the use of bold font to denote rubrication.⁷⁵ To streamline the presentation, van Wijk's annotations about these topics have been omitted. The identification for the specific Hour has been added in accordance with the editing style of this thesis. As it is not crucial for the comparison, the notation of the folios has been left out.

What follows is a concise description of the manuscript 133 E 21, the considerations taken into account on why this has been used as the comparable standard text for a vernacular book of hours and the presentation of the text comparison of three different hours. A manuscript description of the Deventer book of hours has been presented in the previous section while the editorial notes can be found in the subsequent section. The evidence emerging from this comparison will then be utilised to underpin the analysis.

Geert Grote's Book of Hours: Manuscript 133 E 21

The manuscript is a one volume book of hours written on parchment, consisting of 203 folios in total and is kept in the National Library in 's-Gravenhage. The manuscript's production origins have been placed in the Zwolle region and the Agnetenberg.⁷⁶ The text is written in a Northeastern Dutch dialect. And, while the manuscript has been dated to around 1460, this is slightly contested by van Wijk, suggesting a later period.⁷⁷ The timeframe places its production concurrent with that of the Deventer Manuscript.

⁷² Mulder and Deschamps, *Inventaris van de Middelnederlandse handschriften* p. 27 & p. 41

⁷³ See discussion in *Variations in the Vernacular Book of Hours*, p. 21

⁷⁴ van Wijk, *Geert Grote*, p. 9

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 8

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 10

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 11

Structurally, it closely mirrors the assumed original by Grote. It opens with the Calendar of the diocese of Utrecht, followed by the Hours of the Virgin with the prologue and glosses which were attributed to his translation. What follows are the Hours of the Ghost, short Hours of the Cross, Hours of Eternal Wisdom, Long Hours of the Cross, the Seven Penitential Psalms, the Litany and the Office of the Dead the latter of which also includes a prologue. Furthermore, van Wijk identifies the philological qualities as being identifiable close to the original text by Grote.⁷⁸ Therefore, the manuscript has the standard composition of a vernacular book of hours and prologues and additional glosses. Both testifying that this is a well-qualified source to use as standard and compare the Long Hours of the Cross of the Deventer manuscript to.

Textual Juxtaposition and Rationale

The following part presents a side-by-side comparison of the final part of three specific Hours from the Long Hours of the Cross in the Deventer manuscript and the edition by van Wijk. The Hours that have been chosen are the Lauds, Sext and Compline.⁷⁹ These particular Hours have been chosen to provide a comprehensive analysis that captures the progression of the Office from its beginning to its conclusion. Lauds marks the start, setting the devotional tone, while Sext, positioned mid-cycle, is particularly significant as it includes the mention of the sword in the Oratio, a symbolic element that is frequently used in tradition of the sorrows of the Virgin. Compline, on the other hand, concludes the prayer, offering a full view of the spiritual journey. Together, these Hours provide a balanced and insightful comparison that highlights key thematic and structural elements of the texts.

⁷⁸ Van Wijk, Geert Grote, p. 5

⁷⁹ The remaining hours of the Hours of the Cross in the Deventer manuscript can be found in the Edition of this thesis.

DIE LAUDES

Collect.

HEer ihesu *christe* leuende gods
soon die te metten tijt om
der menschen salicheit woutste
gheuanghen worden verraden
gheslaghen bi dinen soeten kin-
nebacken *ende* bespoghen. Wi bid-
den di ghif ons versmadenisse
ende laster om die glorie dijns hei-
lighen naems blideliken te ont-
faen *ende* also te ghedenken een
stadighe memorie dijns lidens
op dat wi salichliken moghen
waerdich worden te comen totter
glorien dijnre verrisenisse. Die
leues *ende* regneerste mit gode den
vader in enicheit des heilighen
gheests een god ewelike sonder
eynde amen. **Oracio.**

O Alre heilichste moeder ende
maecht maria om dat anxtelike
versuchten daer dijn herte of be-
uede doe du vernaemste dat dijn
enighe soon *ihesus christus* vanden qua-
dien was gheuanghen ende ghe-
bonden *ende* mit verradenisse ge-
gheuen den swaren tormenten.
Helpe mi dat mijn herte van
minen sonden moet worden ver-
uaert *ende* beroert tot ghewari-
ghen rouwe op dat ic in die vre
mijnre doot totten toecoemst

DIE LAUDES

Collecte.

Here ihesu criste soen des leuendighen
gods die to mettentijt om der menschen
salicheit woldes gheuanghen werden .
verraden . gheslaghen bi dine kinnebacken
ende bespoghen . wi bidden di . ghif ons
versmadenisse ende laster om die glorie
dijns heilighen name blidelic to ontfaen .
ende also te ghedenken
mit stadigher memorie dijns lijdens op dat
wi salichliken moghen weerdich werden te
comen totter glorien dijnre verrisenisse. Die
leues ende regniers mit gode den vader in
enicheit des heilighen gheistes een god
ewelike sonder eynde. Amen. Here uerhoer
mijn ghebet . ende mijn roepen come to di.
Laet ons benedien den here God si
ghelouet. Alle ghelouighe sielen moten
rusten in vrede Amen.

des viants mi niet en dar ver-
uaren noch ouermids wroeghin-
ghe mijnre consciencien teghen
dat aenschijn des anxteliken rech-
ters en moet beuen. mer dat ic
sijn vriendelike aenschijn moet
bescouwen ende mit *hem* ontspre-
kelike *ende* sonder eynde verbliden.
amen. Heer hoer mijn ghebet
Ende mijn roepen come totti.
Benedien wi den heer. Gode
segghen wi danc. Alle ghelo-
uighe sielen moeten rusten in
vreden amen.

DIE SEXT

Collect.

HEer ihesu *Christe* des leuenden gods soon die dijn lieflike armen hebste wtgherect aenden cruce *ende* vijf wonden ontfangen in dinen edelen lichaem om te openbaren die goedertierenheit dijnre minnen den ghenen die totti comende sijn. Ghif ons om die glorie dijns naems hier in dijnre minnen also te bernen *ende* te vorderen op dat wi in dinen soeten armen ewelike moeten rusten. Die leues *ende* regneerste mit gode den vader in enicheit des heilighen gheests een god ewelike sonder eynde Amen.

O Alre minnentlicste **Oraci.**

moeder *ende* maghet maria om dat swaert des rouwen dat dijn herte doersneet doe du dinen alren edelsten soon naect saechste hanghen inden cruce mit naghelen doorboert mit sinen preciosen bloede bestort *ende* ouer al mit menighen wonden doerboert. Helpe mi dat mijn siele mitten swaerde des mededogens moet worden doorsteken *ende* mitten speer der godliker minnen doerwont also dat alle mijn bloedighe sonden driuen moeten wt mijnre herten op dat ic suuer

DIE SEXTE

Collecte.

Here ihesu criste soen **des** leuendighen godes die toe sexte tijt gheclommen bist an die galghe des cruces . in welken cruce dat di dorstede **onse** salicheit *ende* lietste **di** schenken asijn *ende* galle wi bidden di innichlic dattu onse herten onsteken wilste . *ende* dorsten wilte doen **den** kelc dijnre pine *ende* in di allene here ghecruyst altoes onse ghenuechte doet hebben. Die leues *ende* regniers mit gode den vader in enicheit des heilighen gheistes een god in ewicheiden Amen.
Here hoer mijn ghebet . *ende* mijn roepen come to di . Laet ons benedien den here .
God si ghelouet. Alle ghelouighe sielen moten rusten in vrede Amen

worde van sonden *ende* gheciert
mit godliken werken ende mit
minen ghedachten verheuen van
desen ellendighen dale totten
hemelschen goede op dat als die
leste dach coemt dat u daer mach
raken mit siel *ende* mit lijf amen.
Heer hoer mijn ghebet *ende* mijn
roepen come totti. Benedien wi
den heer Gode segghen wi danc.
Alle ghelouighe sielen moeten
rusten in vreden amen.

DIE COMPLETEET

Collect.

HEer ihesu criste des
leuenden gods soon wes swe-
te te compleet tijt ouermids druck
dijnre sielen wort uerwandelt in
roden bloede *ende* biste begrauen
mede *ende* vanden urouwen be-
screyt. Wil ons begrauen van al-
re ydelheit deser werelt ende ver-
re ons van allen quaden druck
ende ghif ons ghewaer vroechede
ende trect wtter hertheit ons herten
die tranen des goedertieren me-
dedoghens op dat als wi bescreyen
dijn wonden van die moeten ver-
dienen ghetroest te worden hier
ende inden hemelschen vaderlande.
Die leues *ende* regneerste mit go-
de den vader in enicheit des hei-
lighen gheests een god ewelike
sonder eynde. amen. **Oracio.**

O Waerde moeder *ende* maecht
maria om dat suchten *ende*
dat ontsprekelike wenen daer
dijn siel mede ghequellert wort
doestu dinen soon den enighen
troest dijnre sielen saechste be-
grauen. Heer dijn oghen der ont-
fermherticheit tot mi in desen el-
lendighen dale der tranen. O mijn
enich toerlaet *ende* wil mi tonen
ihesum dinen soon na deser ellen-

DIE COMPLETEET

Collect

Here ihesu criste soen des leuendighen gods
die ter lester vren des daghes rustedes in den
graue . ende van dijnre alre drouester moder
ende anderen wiuen wordes beweent ende
bescreyet wi bidden di ghif ons te
oueruloyen mit tranen dijns lidens
ende mit alre ynnicheit des herten
dijn screyen ende dijn liden altoes versch
mit bernender begheerten te houden. Die
leues ende regniers mit gode den vader in
enicheit des heilighen gheestes een god in
ewicheiden Amen. Here hoer mijn ghebet .
ende mijn ropen come to di . Laet ons
benedien den here Gode segghe wi danc.
Alle ghelouighe sielen moten rusten in
vrede. Amen

den op dat als wi van onser scoen-
heit worden gheworpen als een
vule krenghen *ende* begrauen. O
mijn toeueraet eer dat geschiet
ouermits hulpe dijnre verdien-
ten mitten heilighen sacrament
moet worden bewaert ende mit
een salich eynde van heen sceiden
ende ewelike mit hem regneren.
Die mitten vader *ende* mitten hei-
lighen gheest leuet *ende* regneert
een god ewelike sonder eynde.
Amen. Heer hoer mijn ghebet.
Ende mijn roepen come totti.
Benedien wi den heer. Gode
segghen wi danc. Alle gheloui-
ghe sielen moeten rusten in vre-
den. Amen.
Die soete name ons lieuen heren
ihesu *christi* moet sijn ghebenedijt
in ewicheit. Amen.

Comparative analysis

The comparative analysis of the Middle Dutch texts from the Lauds, Sext, and Compline of the Hours of the Cross reveals both differences and subtle similarities, shedding light on scribal practices, owner preference, and the devotional practices of the period. This analysis brings into focus the differences in how the Passion of Christ was presented to the medieval reader. Which role the devotion to Mary plays in this and how these differences might have shaped the devotional experience is further elaborated in the textual analysis of the prayer specifically. The various other components constituting the devotional architecture of each hour are notably elaborate. The structure guides and organises the reader's devotional experience, directing engagement through a series of responses to the Passion that alternate between liturgical, sensory, emotive, and penitential elements.

On a second level of granularity, concerning the structure of the Long Hours of the Cross, differences can be observed in the inclusion of the prologue B at the start of the Office in the Deventer manuscript, the inclusion of some additional hymns but most notably the recurring addition of the Marian prayer in the Oratio, and final part of each canonical hour.

The addition of the Prayer has not only structural implications, which are seamlessly interwoven nonetheless, but it changes the tone of the

content while the theme stays the same of the different hours. At the second level of granularity, focusing of the internal structure of the Long Hours of the Cross, several differences emerge from comparison. Notably, the Deventer manuscripts includes the prologue B at the beginning of the Office, which is absent from the more standard version. Most significantly, however, is the recurring inclusion of the Marian prayer in the Oratio. This structural difference is illustrated in the comparative table at the right.

The structure of the Lauds remains largely consistent, with both following a similar sequence of Psalms, Antiphons, Hymns, etc. When comparing and contrasting the texts of the Lauds, Sext and Compline it is evident that despite, lexical and syntactical

differences, the core thematic elements remain also consistent across the Hours.

Deventer Manuscript - Lauds	Manuscript 133 E 21 - Lauds
Psalm	Psalm
Antiphons	Antiphons
Hymns	Hymns
Capitulum	Capitulum
Verse	Verse
Benedictus Dominus	Benedictus Dominus
Antiphons	Antiphons
Collect	Collect
Oratio	

The Lauds in both texts focus on the suffering of Christ, particularly the initial betrayal and subsequent torments. The texts use phrases such as ‘gheuanghen worden verraden’ and ‘versmadenisse ende laster’ to evoke the humiliation Christ endured. Moreover the text of the collect as well as the structure of the hour are closely related, yet this is not the case in the subsequent hours.

In the Sext, both versions reflect on the spiritual significance of Christ’s wounds. However, Van Wijk’s version explicitly references the corresponding hour with the phrase ‘die toe sexte tijt gheclommen bist an die galghe des cruces’, whereas the Deventer manuscript omits this specific reference. Despite this omission in this hour, the Deventer manuscript does mention the corresponding hours in other sections, such as in the Lauds, where it refers to ‘die te metten tijt om der menschen salicheit woutste gheuanghen worden’. This is similarly done in Van Wijk’s edition. While the compline in the deventer example remains consistent, stating, ‘soon wes swete te compleet tijt’.

The Compline texts focus on Christ's death, burial, and the mourning of the Virgin Mary. Both versions vividly describe the sorrow of those present at Christ’s burial, and both use emotive language of flowing tears, yet with slightly different connotations. The Deventer manuscript mentions, ‘die tranen des goedertieren mededoghens’ (tears of your compassionate mercy), van Wijks edition only mentions ‘tranen dijns lidens’ (tears of your suffering). While the Deventer Manuscript introduces a layer of divine mercy, van Wijk’s example places more emphasis on the direct suffering of Christ.

Overall, while the thematic core of each hour remains consistent across both versions, the variations in detail and emphasis provide insight into the differing devotional focuses. A more directly event based retelling of the passion is present in the edition by van Wijk while the Deventer manuscript focuses more on the compassionate implications thereof.

The addition of the Marian prayer raises important questions about how it shifts the focus of the text. Does this inclusion merely add a layer of Marian devotion, or does it introduce new themes and symbols that alter the reader's experience and interpretation of the Hours? Exploring these possibilities will shed light on the deeper implications of this structural variation.

Integrating the Marian Prayer

First of all, the prayer to Mary should not be seen as an addition, but rather as an extension of the Hour of the Cross. This slight lexical change moves away from the notion that it is a loose fragment simply attached to the already existing text, but rather considers it as an integral part of the whole.

A structural consideration is that the hour in van Wijks' edition finishes with the same text combination as the one in the Deventer manuscript. These last few sentences are the *Domine Exaudi* and *Benedictio*, or blessing. The *Domine Exaudi* and *Benedictio* are a conventional closing formula used to mark the end of the hour.

Heer hoer mijn ghebet
Ende mijn roepen come totti.
Benedien wi den heer. Gode
segghen wi danc. Alle ghelo-
uighe sielen moeten rusten in
vreden amen.

This final blessing is not discarded or placed before but included at the end of the Marian prayer. By relocating the Benediction, the end of each prayer cycle has shifted in tandem with the text. This integration suggests that the Marian prayer is not an extraneous addition but rather a seamlessly interwoven component of the liturgical text. By retaining the blessing at the end, the manuscript maintains the structural and devotional continuity of the Long Hours of the Cross, demonstrating that the Marian prayer is incorporated without disrupting the established liturgical sequence.

That this was done deliberately can be justified by considering the production context. To accommodate the addition of rubrics, the scribe had to leave designated spaces blank. This process indicates careful consideration. The existence of the rubricated 'Oracio' shows that it had been considered as an integral part of the overall text. This implies either the existence of another copy of the text, which the scribe faithfully reproduced in this manuscript, or it required the artistic construction of a text with the Marian devotion. This follows the line of argument already proposed by Hülsmann in a different context. She proposes a scenario in which the divergent textual elements are, at one point, incorporated into the text which then

took on a life of its own.⁸⁰ The inclusion of the Marian prayer prolongs the Hours, creating a textual variety on the original, without disrupting the overall coherence of the text.

Thematically, the Marian prayer also fits seamlessly within the text tradition of the different Hours. The Marian prayer not only connects to the themes already embedded in each Hour but also infuses them with additional layers of meaning and readerly engagement.

In the Lauds, the addition of Marian prayer further deepens the reflection on the betrayal and torments by introducing Mary's sorrowful awareness of Christ's impending suffering. The prayer to Mary uses emotive language to make a point, such as 'dijn herte of beuede' (your heart trembled). Notably, the prayer's direction shifts halfway through. It shifts from a recounting of the Passion to a direct plea for Mary's intervention on behalf of the reader. The prayer urges Mary to look upon the reader and offer her aid in freeing them from their sins and granting forgiveness.

At the end of the Office, also the conclusion of Christ's earthly life is commemorated. It encompasses His inevitable death, burial, and the profound mourning that follows. The inclusion of the Marian prayer in this Hour ties Mary's grief directly to the finality of Christ's death, reflecting on her inconsolable sorrow as she witnesses her son's burial. However, in the Deventer manuscript, the addition of the Marian prayer shifts the focus from ending the day's days thematic prayer loop in sorrow to finding a "salich eynde" (blessed end), where Christ reigns with His Father and the Holy Ghost in heaven.

Textual Analysis of the Seven Sorrows

Moving from structure to style, it is important to analyse how the language and tone of each text contribute to its devotional impact, particularly in relation to the presence or absence of particular Marian devotion.

This variation of the Hours of the Cross could have been one of several candidates considered for inclusion in a book of hours, possibly more common than previously assumed. Yet, setting aside serendipity, the following section endeavours to explore beyond the notion of mere chance and propose a deliberate rationale for including the Marian prayer in the Long Hours of the Cross. As the owner of this manuscript might have specifically requested an extension of the Long Hours of the Cross. This opens up the discussion as to why such a request would be made and considers the impact on the reading experience. The extension of the prayer not only prolongs the hours textually but also introduces another key figure

⁸⁰ Hülsmann, Zoeksleutels, p. 185

thematically: Mary.

The prayer in question can be recognised as a variety of the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin Mary. The fixed number of components—seven—holds a significant mystical and symbolic value. This choice mirrors the importance of the number seven in Christian tradition, which is often associated with spiritual completeness and divine significance. For instance, the concept of the seven deadly sins and virtues, as well as the creation of the world in seven days. The devotion focuses on pivotal, familiar events from Christ's life that have been recontextualised into a Marian devotion by a shift of focus to highlight Mary's profound emotional response rather than the events themselves.⁸¹ This shift marks a significant transformation from an event-centred narrative to one that emphasises the more emotional and grieving experience of Mary.

The enumeration of Mary's sorrows is a distinguishing feature of the devotion that sets it apart from the Compassion devotion. While the Seven Sorrows explicitly lists and reflects on distinct events of suffering experienced by the Virgin Mary, the Compassion devotion does not provide such a detailed enumeration and is more generic.⁸² The sorrows depicted in the Deventer manuscript are directly tied to the Passion and crucifixion of Christ. For instance, the Lauds begin with Christ's capture and torment, while the Compline concludes with His removal from the cross. This representation offers a more condensed form of the sorrows. In contrast, the more traditional Seven Sorrows, as celebrated in the Low Countries, cover a broader time frame and include events such as the prophecy of Simeon, the flight into Egypt, the loss of Jesus in the Temple, Mary meeting Jesus on His way to the cross, and the crucifixion, deposition, and burial of Christ.⁸³

In the Sext, further evidence of the Seven Sorrows is found through the symbolism of the sword: "om dat swaert des rouwen dat dijn herte doersneet doe du dinen alren edelsten soon naect saechste hanghen inden cruce." This references the biblical verse from Luke 2:34–35, where Mary is prophesied to suffer as a sword pierces her soul: "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul too." Mary's anguish, symbolized by the sword, became a focal point of devotion, particularly in the Low Countries, where her pain was memorialized and venerated.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Schuler, 'The Seven Sorrows', p. 6-7.

⁸² Emily S. Thelen and Grantley McDonald, 'The Fest of the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin: Piety, Politics and Plainchat at the Burgundian-Habsburg Court.', in *Early Music History*, vol. 35, 2016, p. 277

⁸³ Thelen and McDonald, 'The Fest of the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin', p. 276

⁸⁴ Miri, 'Mary as Queen and Reformer', p. 315

According to Schuler, by the late thirteenth century, medieval affective writing on the Passion commonly presented two aspects of the Virgin. First, she is portrayed as an exemplar of compassionate response to Christ's suffering. Second, she is seen as a mediator who can evoke the reader's emotional engagement. In both capacities, Mary acts as a conduit, enabling the devotee to connect more deeply with Christ and His sufferings.⁸⁵

Mary is not the protagonist of the prayer; rather, she occupies a more supportive role. While she may seem like a passive observer, her presence as a witness to Christ's suffering is crucial. Miri notes that 'The Crucifixion seemed incomplete without Mary, and only Mary was sufficiently compelling to make the Crucifixion real.'⁸⁶ This can be followed by Brown explanation that elaborates, 'Just as the antiphons of the Virgin frame the psalms sung in praise of the Lord, so Mary, as the Mother of God, provided the frame through which the Son of God became visible to the world.'⁸⁷ In the context of the passion, she provides the frame of the devotee and viewer who is emotionally tied to Christ and strongly affected by his sorrow.

Implications of the Marian prayer

It has to be understood that medieval reading practices were deeply intertwined with spiritual and devotional life, particularly as evidenced by the use of books of hours. For adherents of the Modern Devotion, spiritual reading was not merely an activity but a central aspect of their meditation and personal reflection.⁸⁸ This underscores the era's understanding of reading as fundamentally different from contemporary approaches, with its greater emphasis on the spiritual and devotional dimensions.

Laura Sterponi captures this sentiment through a quote from a medieval source, noting, 'There are three kinds of spiritual exercise: namely, reading, meditation and prayer. These three are so interconnected that one cannot be of value without the other.'⁸⁹ This perspective reflects the widespread practice of *Lectio Divina*. *Lectio Divina*, or, "divine reading", was a method of reading sacred texts that involved a contemplative and meditative approach.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ Schuler, 'The Seven Sorrows of the Virgin', pp. 9-10

⁸⁶ Miri, 'Mary as Queen and Reformer', p. 338

⁸⁷ Brown, 'Mary in Medieval Prayer', p. 339

⁸⁸ John van Engen, 'Chapter eight. *Taking the Spiritual Offensive: Caring for the Self, Examining the Soul, Progressing in Virtue*', in *Sisters and Brothers of the Common Life: The Devotio Moderna and the World of the Later Middle Ages*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), p. 269.

⁸⁹ Laura Sterponi, 'Reading and Meditation in the Middle Ages: *Lectio Divina* and Books of Hours', *Text & talk* 28, no. 5 (2008), p. 671

⁹⁰ Thom Mertens, 'Boeken voor de eeuwigheid. Ter inleiding', p. 24

<https://www.dbnl.org/tekst/mert009boek01_01/mert009boek01_01_0001.php> (12 August 2024)

The extension of the prayer cycle might serve as a substitute for actual visual elements like illuminations or a full-page miniature as a form of meditation. The extension enhances the meditative and contemplative aspect of reading where a miniature to evoke the same feeling is lacking, potentially due to cost considerations. Miniatures were more expensive than expanding the textual content of the hours. And evidence suggests they were added individually within the manuscript, implying separate costs for each. This might point to a reader seeking the spiritually enriching experience but who is constrained by financial limitations regarding the procurement of miniatures for each Office.

The suffering of Christ held a significant thematic position at the time, and incorporating Mary, who first handedly witnessed the suffering, enhances the reader's immersion and emotional engagement into the scene further emphasised by the language.

Eliciting emotions is also evident from the very visual and emotional charged language. Words such as "anxtelike" (fearsome), "quadien" (evil), "enighe soon" (only son), and "swaren tormenten" (severe torments) evoke strong emotions in the reader. Therefore, the text is also closely aligned with Geert Grote's advocacy for using imagery to ignite spiritual fervour and awakening the soul.⁹¹

Besides focusing on the suffering, the progression of the prayer also allows for the possibility of redemption, which is also a central theme in the Passion narrative. Mary serves as an intercessor between Divine and devotee. With her direct connection to Jesus, having witnessed his suffering at the cross and his resurrection after three days, she plays a pivotal role even as bystander. Similarly, while the prayer initially centres on suffering, echoing the themes of the Collect, it uniquely appeals for assistance in overcoming ones sins. Phrases like, 'Helpe mi' explicitly address her, highlighting again, her role as an intercessor who aids in achieving reconciliation. This aspect is otherwise absent from the Collect and therefore not addressed in the edition of van Wijk's example.

Lastly, the resonance with the scene and viewpoint of Mary could extend beyond the text itself. Perhaps the reader felt an even deeper connection to Mary, as being the mother of Christ, and being a woman. The extended version in the Deventer Manuscript could hint at a more personal motivation for the owner, or compiler, of the text. This could potentially suggest a female perspective in the decision-making. However, this is more speculative as there is currently no additional evidence to substantiate this theory.

In conclusion, the inclusion of the Marian prayer and the variation in text

⁹¹ Wüstefeld and Korteweg, *Sleutel tot licht*, p. 39

segmentation in the Deventer manuscript reflect the compiler's intention to craft a cohesive and integrated prayer experience. The differences in text segmentation, such as the placement of the Marian prayer and the final Benediction, illustrate how subtle textual variations can significantly affect devotional focus. While the core content of the Hours remains consistent, the specific arrangement and phrasing in the Deventer manuscript highlight different aspects of the Passion narrative, subtly shifting the emphasis of devotion. A more compassionate and personal experience is found in the Deventer Manuscript while van Wijk's edition is more straightforward and centred on Christ's suffering without the added dimension of Marian compassion. The interpretative nuances of each text can be ascribed to the inclusion of the Marian Prayer.

It is a plea for Mary's compassion towards the reader, inviting a more empathetic engagement that draws the reader in and gives them a more active role. This approach not only deepens the connection between the scene, Mary and the reader's repentance, but also shifts the direction of the "Other." While the reader remains a passive observer in van Wijk's edition, they become an integral part of the Passion experience in the Deventer manuscript.

PART III

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From Quill to Keyboard

Editorial Note

The extended version of the Long Hours of the Cross has been edited with the intention of presenting a trustworthy and accurate transcription that stays as close to the original manuscript text as possible. The edition features solely the specific text combination of the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin in the Oratio and the Collect of the Long Hours of the Cross. The Office is therefore not transcribed in its entirety.

Editing a manuscript involves making and justifying numerous decisions. To guide these choices, the Dutch handbook, *Richtlijnen voor de uitgave van Middeleeuwse Verzamelhandschriften uit de Nederlanden*, by Thom Mertens, served as reference.⁹² This handbook provides well-considered guidelines that are fitting for the content and nature of the edition. The editor's goal is to preserve and present the document as a reliable historical source. The text is a remnant of the past and holds within it evidence of the historical period it was written in. Therefore, the editor strives to avoid altering the manuscript as much as possible, instead aiming to present a quite literal transcription preserving the text's orthography.

This edition contributes to the research aims of the Pages of Prayer project at Leiden University. Therefore, the aim is to present the text as faithfully as possible by using the diplomatic edition guidelines. A diplomatic edition sets the tone for future endeavours and can be considered as the necessary preparatory work for a future (critical) edition.⁹³ The emphasis is on supplying raw material rather than presenting finalised results. Therefore, this edition will not include any socio-historical or philological annotations.

Produced as a diplomatic edition to contribute to research, this work is aimed at an academic readership. Nevertheless, it welcomes students, professionals, and enthusiasts interested in the field of Dutch (book) history to engage with the text. Some prior knowledge of the Middle Dutch language is strongly advised to fully grasp the meaning of the content.

Given that the text is relatively brief and the manuscript is exceptionally neat and readable, the transcription process was quite straightforward. Because the work has been produced by a scribe, this formal book hand contributes to the text's clarity and legibility.

⁹² Thom Mertens, *Richtlijnen voor de uitgave van Middeleeuwse Verzamelhandschriften uit de Nederlanden*, (Uitgeverij Verloren, 1994),

⁹³ Mertens, *Richtlijnen*, p. 10

There are no supplementary handwritten notes or correction in the text, which minimises the need for additional editorial commentary and allows for a faithful representation of the original content. Nevertheless, some adjustments were made in the transition from quill strokes to keyboard. These adaptations are necessary to ensure that the resulting text is both accurate and practically readable, bridging the gap between the original manuscript and modern presentation.

In line with the guidelines, several elements of the original manuscript have been retained to preserve its authenticity. Capitalisation and punctuation have been faithfully replicated, maintaining the presentation of the original. Furthermore, the peculiarities of Middle Dutch grammar, such as the interchangeability of the letters *i/j* and *u/v*, have been retained without adaptation to modern conventions. This decision acknowledges the historical context of the text while the note ensures accessibility to contemporary readers. Linebreaks have neither been included nor removed and follow the original text as the scribe has inked it down. Additionally, the text is presented consecutively to faithfully replicate the manuscript's layout and structure. It should be noted that occasionally words do not adhere to the line breaks in the manuscript and a form of hyphenation is used to indicate that words are broken down across lines, this hyphenation is also included.

In addition to preserving elements of the original, certain alterations have been made to optimise clarity of certain elements that are not as easily transmitted. Abbreviations have been expanded in cursive script and rubrics are highlighted in bold. It has to be noted that capital strokes are also present in the text but that these have not been highlighted in bold in the edition. This decision was made to distinguish them from the full rubrics, as they do present a marked choice, but less marked than rubricated text. Therefore, they are just capitalised. Further details on the capital strokes are provided in the manuscript discussion of Part II.

To enhance clarity and facilitate future comparisons, each transcribed text segment is accompanied by its corresponding hour. The hours are given in full capitalisation in their Middle Dutch spelling as derived from the manuscript to nonetheless stay true to the historical source. The hour is given in bold above the top line of the text and separated from the main transcription by a blank line. Since each hourly prayer also spans multiple folios, a system of notation has been implemented to indicate when a text continues onto another folio. This involves enclosing the folio number and reference to verso and recto within straight lines (e.g. |90v|). For an overview of the folios, a detailed table is included for reference in the discussion on the Long Hours of the Cross in Part II.

Lastly, in terms of typography, the issue of larger initials has also been addressed. The larger initial at the beginning of the Prayer spans two lines; in the edition it has been included in the text flow and highlighted in bold, consistent with the other rubrics. Notably, while even larger initials can be found in other sections of the manuscript, they are absent from this section.

The Edition

What follows is the complete edition of the Collect and Oracio as it appears within the Long Hours of the Cross in Deventer AB 2000 D 23 KL. This edition provides a faithful transcription of the relevant passages. The editorial notes, which detail the methodology and principles guiding the transcription process, are located in a preceding section. These notes minutely outline the decision made regarding textual accuracy, formatting, and preservation of manuscript features. The choice to focus specifically on the Marian Prayer and exclude the entire text of the Long Hours of the Cross was made with careful considerations. Comprehensive transcriptions of the Long Hours of the Cross are already available and including the complete text in this edition would not only duplicate existing resources but also detract from the clarity and focus.

DIE LAUDES

|89v|

Collect.

HEer ihesu *christe* leuende gods
soon die te metten tijt om
der menschen salicheit woutste
gheuanghen worden verraden
gheslaghen bi dinen soeten kin-
nebacken *ende* bespoghen. Wi bid-
den di ghif ons versmadenisse
ende laster om die glorie dijns hei-
lighen naems blideliken te ont-
faen *ende* also te ghedenken een
stadighe memorie dijns lidens
op dat wi salichliken moghen
waerdich worden te comen totter
glorien dijnre verrisenisse. Die

|90r|

leues *ende* regneerste mit gode den

vader in enicheit des heilighen
gheests een god ewelike sonder
eynde amen. **Oracio.**

O Alre heilichste moeder ende
maecht maria om dat anxtelike
versuchten daer dijn herte of be-
uede doe du vernaemste dat dijn
enighe soon *ihesus christus* vanden qua-
dien was gheuanghen ende ghe-
bonden *ende* mit verradenisse ge-
gheuen den swaren tormenten.

Helpe mi dat mijn herte van
minen sonden moet worden ver-
uaert *ende* beroert tot ghewari-
ghen rouwe op dat ic in die vre
mijnre doot totten toecoemst
des viants mi niet en dar ver-
uaren noch ouermids wroeghin-
ghe mijnre consciencien teghen
| 90v |

dat aenschijn des anxteliken rech-
ters en moet beuen. mer dat ic
sijn vriendelike aenschijn moet
bescouwen ende mit *hem* ontspre-
kelike *ende* sonder eynde verbliden.
amen. Heer hoer mijn ghebet
Ende mijn roepen come totti.
Benedien wi den heer. Gode
segghen wi danc. Alle ghelo-
uighe sielen moeten rusten in
vreden amen.

DIE PRIJM

|92r|

Collect.

|92v|

HEer ihesu *christe* des leuenden
gods soon die om onsen
wille versmadeliken gheliken
enen moordenaer den bosen recht
ter biste ghepresenteert die wre-
de stemmen der grimmender io-
den leetstu herde goedertierlike
als een dat alre sachtmoedichste
lammekijn. Ghif ons om die
glorie dijns naems als wi staen
sellen voer die vierscaer dijns
gruweliken oordels dat wi dan
mit dijnre ghebenedider soeter
stemmen ende mit dinen vrien-
den moeten worden ghetroest.
Die leuens *ende* regneerste mit go-
de den vader in enicheit des hei-
lighen gheests een god ewelic
sonder eynde amen. **Oracio.**

O Alre soetste moeder ende

|93r|

maecht maria om dat swaer *ver-*
suchten *ende* die serighe tranen
daer du mede waerste bestort
doestu *ihesum christum* dinen lieuen
soon saechste presenteren voer
den valschen rechter *ende* sonder
ontfermen gheselen mit swaren
woorden verspreken *ende* laster-

like bespotten. Vercrijch mi *van*
dinen lieuen kinde sericheit *van*
minen sonden *ende* tranen van sa-
lighen rouwe *ende* helpe mi dat ic
vanden viant nimmermeer en
worde bespottet noch van sinen
swaren becoringhen ghegheselt
na sinen wille noch mit minen
sonden ghebrocht voer den beuen-
den rechter mer vercrijch mi dat
ic mi seluen oordelen moet in dit
leuen *ende* mit waerachtigher pe-
|93v|
nitencien mi gheselen moet amen.
Heer hoer mijn ghebet *ende* mijn
roepen come totti. Benedien wi
den heer God segghen wi danc.
Alle ghelouighe sielen moeten rus-
ten in vreden amen.

DIE TERCIE

[95r|

Collect.

HEer ihesu *christe* des leuenden
gods soon die daer biste

[95v|

een croen alle dijnre ghetrouwer
vrienden die onder die banier dijns
waerden cruce stridende sijn. Om
die glorie dijns heiligen naems
ghif ons seghe van onsen vian-
den *ende* alle die gheen die du ghe
teykent hebste mitten teyken dijns
presiosen bloets die verleen te co-
men totter ewigher cronen. Die
leues *ende* regneerste mit gode den
vader in enicheit des heilighen
gheests een god ewelike sonder
eynde amen. **Oracio.**

O Alre goedertierenste moeder
ende maghet maria om di swa-
re pijn ende anxt die dijn herte
doechde doe die ioden riepen cruus-
ten cruusten *ende* daer om dijn soon
ihesus *christus* wort ter doot veroer-
delt *ende* ten bitteren tormenten

[96r|

des crucen. Helpe mi inden groten
anxte daer mijn lichaem sel wor-
den ghepijnt mit siecten *ende* mijn
siel aen die een side sel sijn belegen
vanden vianden *ende* aen die *ander*
side vanden strenghen rechter.

Helpe mi daer maria dat die sentencie vander ewigher doot teghen mi niet en worde ghegheuen op dat ic niet ouergeleuert en worde te pinighen inden ewighen brande amen. Heer hoer mijn ghebet *ende* mijn roepen come totti. Benedien wi den heer Gode segghen wi danc. Alle gelouighe sielen moeten rusten in vreden Amen.

DIE SEXT

|98r|

Collect.

HEer ihesu *Christe* des leuenden
gods soon die dijn lieflike
armen hebste wtgherect aenden
cruce *ende* vijf wonden ontfangen
in dinen edelen lichaem om te
openbaren die goedertierenheit
dijnre minnen den ghenen die
totti comende sijn. Ghif ons om
die glorie dijns naems hier in
dijnre minnen also te bernen *ende*
te vorderen op dat wi in dinen
soeten armen ewelike moeten
rusten. Die leues *ende* regneerste
mit gode den vader in enicheit
des heilighen gheests een god
ewelike sonder eynde Amen.

O Alre minnentlicste **Oraci.**

moeder *ende* maghet ma-

|98v|

ria om dat swaert des rouwen dat
dijn herte doersneet doe du dinen
alren edelsten soon naect saech-
ste hanghen inden cruce mit
naghelen doorboert mit sinen
preciosen bloede bestort *ende* ouer
al mit menighen wonden doer-
boert. Helpe mi dat mijn siele
mitten swaerde des mededogens
moet worden doorsteken *ende*
mitten speer der godliker min-

nen doerwont also dat alle mijn
bloedighe sonden driuen moeten
wt mijnre herten op dat ic suuer
worde van sonden *ende* gheciert
mit godliken werken ende mit
minen ghedachten verheuen van
desen ellendighen dale totten
hemelschen goede op dat als die
leste dach coemt dat u daer mach
|99r|

raken mit siel *ende* mit lijf amen.
Heer hoer mijn ghebet *ende* mijn
roepen come totti. Benedien wi
den heer Gode segghen wi danc.
Alle ghelouighe sielen moeten
rusten in vreden amen.

NOEN

|100v|

HEer ihesu *christe* des **Collect.**
leuenden gods soon die te
noen tijt inden cruce mit wtge-
recten armen gode dinen vader
opgaueste dinen gheest *ende* mit-
ten slotel dijns doots dat para-
dijs oploecste. Wil ons verlenen
dattu in die vre ons doots onse
siel ontfermhertelike totti does-
te comen du die waerlike een
paradijs des leuens biste. die
leueste *ende* regneerste mit gode
den vader in enicheit des heili-

|101r|

ghen gheests een god ewelic son-
der eynde amen. **Oracio.**

O Alre edelste moeder ende
maghet maria om den
iammer *ende* torment daer dijn
gheest mede was beswaert doe
du stonste biden cruce *ende ihesum*
christum dinen lieuen soon in anxt
sijnre doot hoerste roepen mit
luder stemmen die lieue moeder
beuelende sinte ian ende sinen
gheest offerende sinen vader.
Helpe mi maria in die vre mijn-
re doot als mijn tonghe di niet
meer en sel moghen aenroepen
als dat ghesicht mijnre oghen
sel vergaen ende mijn oren do-

uen ende alle mijn sinnen ende
crachten sellen ontbreken dan
ghedenct o alre soetste moeder
|101v|

ende maghet maria dat ic nu
storte mijn ghebet voer die oren
uwer goedertierenheit *ende* wilt
mi helpen in die grote noot *ende*
wilt minen gheest dinen soon
beuelen op dat ic ouermids *hem*
mit uwer bedinghe ontgaen
moghe die ewighe pijn ende ge-
brocht moet worden totter rus-
ten des hemelschen vaderlants.
amen. Heer hoer mijn ghebet.
Ende mijn roepen comen totti.
Benedien wi den heer Gode
segghen wi danc. Alle gheloui-
ghe sielen moeten rusten in vre-
den amen.

DIE VESPER

[104v]

HEer ihesu *christe* des **Collect.**

leuenden gods soon der ewi-
gher salicheit salue *ende* soeticheit
die vanden cruce ghedaen ghe-
saluet wortste mit costeliker sal-
uen. Om die glorie dijns *naems*
so wil eenpaerliken printen in die
ghedachten mijns herten die ge-
denkenisse dijnre saligher *ende*
honichuloyender passien *ende* mit
dinen rosenden roden bloede wil
besprenghen die doorganclicheit
onser ghedachten. Die leues *ende*
regneerste mit gode den vader in
enicheit des heilighen gheests *een*
god ewelike sonder eynde amen.

O Alre reynste moeder **Oracio.**

ende maecht maria om dat
weenlike suchten *ende* screyen dat
[105r]

wt den gronde dijns herten spranc
ende di niet onthouden en conde
doe du als wi goedertierlike ge-
louen vielste mit ommehelsen
op dat dode lichaem dijns eenge-
boren soons doe hi vanden cruce
ghedaen was wies aenschijn te
voren soon *ende* claer was nv be-
uaen saechste mitter doot uer-
wen *ende* al gheswollen van seric-
heit der bitterre slaghen *ende* al

vol wonden ghewont. Help mi
dat ic die quetsinghe van minen
swaren sonden also moet helen
mit enen pleyster van ghewari-
ghen rouwe op dat ic als die tijt
sel comen dat mijn lichaem sel
verrotten *ende* veruulen dat mijn
siele dan ghecleet moet worden
mit onnoselheden ende verciert
|105v|

mit scamelheden op dat wi waer
dich moeten worden te cussen ende
te helsen dinen lieuen soon ihesum
christum. Die mitten vader *ende* mitten
heilighen gheest leuet ende reg-
neert een god ewelike sonder eyn-
de amen. Heer hoer mijn gebet
Ende mijn roepen come totti.
Benedien wi den heer Gode seg-
ghen wi danc. Alle ghelouighe
sielen moeten rusten in vreden
Amen.

DIE COMPLETEET

[107v]

HEer ihesu criste des **Collect.**

leuenden gods soon wes swe-
te te compleet tijt ouermids druck
dijnre sielen wort uerwandelt in
roden bloede *ende* biste begrauen
mede *ende* vanden urouwen be-
screyt. Wil ons begrauen van al-
re ydelheit deser werelt ende ver-
re ons van allen quaden druck
ende ghif ons ghewaer vroechede
ende trect wtter hertheit ons herten
die tranen des goedertieren me-

[108r]

dedoghens op dat als wi bescreyen
dijn wonden van die moeten ver-
dienen ghetroest te worden hier
ende inden hemelschen vaderlande.

Die leues *ende* regneerste mit go-
de den vader in enicheit des hei-
lighen gheests een god ewelike
sonder eynde. amen. **Oracio.**

O Waerde moeder *ende* maecht
maria om dat suchten *ende*
dat ontsprekelike wenen daer
dijn siel mede ghequellert wort
doestu dinen soon den enighen
troest dijnre sielen saechste be-
grauen. Heer dijn oghen der ont-
fermherticheit tot mi in desen el-
lendighen dale der tranen. O mijn
enich toeueraet *ende* wil mi tonen

ihesum dinen soon na deser ellen-
den op dat als wi van onser scoen-
|108v|

heit worden gheworpen als een
vule kringhe *ende* begrauen. O
mijn toeueraet eer dat geschiet
oueruids hulpe dijnre verdien-
ten mitten heilighen sacrament
moet worden bewaert ende mit
een salich eynde van heen sceiden
ende ewelike mit hem regneren.

Die mitten vader *ende* mitten hei-
lighen gheest leuet *ende* regneert
een god ewelike sonder eynde.

Amen. Heer hoer mijn ghebet.

Ende mijn roepen come totti.

Benedien wi den heer. Gode
segghen wi danc. Alle gheloui-
ghe sielen moeten rusten in vre-
den. Amen.

Die soete name ons lieuen heren
ihesu *christi* moet sijn ghebenedijt
in ewicheit. Amen.

Conclusion

This thesis set out to provide an analysis of the extension of the Long Hours the Cross with the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin Mary in the Deventer book of hours. The manuscript's unique and, until recently, unrecognised variation in the Long Hours of the Cross motivated a deeper investigation into these textual differences and their potential impact on the medieval reader.

To support this research the context of the manuscript and the genre of the book of hours has been explored in detail. This has been done through a close examination of the sociohistorical context as well as the codicological and textual features of the manuscript. Holding on to its aim of not only conducting the textual analysis, but also weaving together the broader narrative that shaped the genre into its textual formations.

There are numerous factors that contributed to the diversity and reception of texts within books of hours. Their paraliturgical nature from the outset allowed them to operate somewhat independently from the sometimes restrictive ecclesiastical system, granting them a unique space in the religious landscape. Moreover, this genre evolved from the grassroots level, shaped by the social and religious preferences of the laity. The book therefore co-evolved with the preference of its readers. Shifts in society, coupled with the growing popularity of Marian devotion and the increasing emphasis on personal, autonomous religious practices, were among the key elements influencing the book.

The Deventer Manuscript is one of many books of hours produced during this period, and it has survived the centuries in an almost pristine state. Its exterior is as captivating as its interior, with well-preserved inked pages that transport the reader back to medieval times. One can easily envision a medieval reader engaging with this book in the quiet hours of the night, turning to the Long Hours of the Cross and reflecting on Christ's suffering and Mary's sorrows. This desire to connect with, and understand, the experience of the medieval reader has been the spark that enlightened this research.

The comparative analysis conducted in this study facilitated a deeper understanding of the differences between this manuscript and a text that might come considerably close to Mast6er Geert's own creation. Variations within the prayers, either on a second or third level of granularity can denote a variation in creating the meditative reading space that the book of hours so inherently facilitated.

The extension of the text was not merely incidental, but rather a deliberate decision made by both the compiler and the owner of the manuscript. While their identities remain

unknown, the spiritual significance this text could evoke to the potential medieval reader are inherently facilitated by its use of language, the eliciting of emotions and the amplification of the themes relating to the Passion. The Long Hours of the Cross, with its focus on Christ's profound suffering, was complemented by the prayer to Mary, which offered a sense of hope, a light at the end of the tunnel for the devout reader. The Deventer manuscript offers a more compassionate and personal experience, drawing the reader into a deeper connection with the scene, Mary, and their own repentance.

The edition of the text serves to firmly establish its presence as textual variety within the larger genre of the book of hours. It transitions the text from its original quilled form on parchment onto the (digital) page. This not only preserves and acknowledges the existence of this text variety but also opens up new possibilities for its analysis and research in the digital realm. Given the growing interest in computational methods within the field of humanities. A digital edition of this text could lead to innovative research opportunities. Further research could encode the text in a machine-readable format, and employ text mining and natural language processing (NLP) tools to identify similar passages or entities in other manuscripts or printed material.

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