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# **Meditating the Unbearable in a Fifteenth-Century Netherlandish Manuscript Prayerbook with Printed Images**

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**Book Title:** Vernacular Books and Their Readers in the Early Age of Print (c. 1450–1600)

**Publisher:** Brill

**Publication Place:** Leiden, Boston

**Publication Date:** 2023-10-26

**Edition:** Series: Intersections, Volume: 85

**Type of Work:** Chapter | Final Publisher PDF

**Publisher DOI:** 10.1163/9789004520158\_013

**Permanent URL:** <http://pid.emory.edu/ark:/25593/wb7rb>

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Final published version:

<https://brill.com/edcollbook-oa/title/63067?language=en>

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*Accessed April 26, 2025 3:16 AM EDT*

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Anna Dlabáčová, Andrea van Leerda  
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# Vernacular Books and Their Readers in the Early Age of Print (c. 1450–1600)



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# Meditating the Unbearable in a Fifteenth-Century Netherlandish Manuscript Prayerbook with Printed Images

Walter S. Melion

## 1 The *Groenendaal Passion* as *Rapiarium*

Compiled in late fifteenth-century Brabant, Metropolitan Museum Album 2003.476, known as the *Groenendaal Passion*, is a customised manuscript prayerbook organised around first-state impressions of the *Grosse Passion*, a series of twelve prints designed, engraved, and published ca. 1480 by the master engraver-goldsmith Israhel van Meckenem, who was resident in Bocholt (North Rhine-Westphalia) [Figs. 11.1–11.20].<sup>1</sup> All twelve show evidence of plate tone, and the set as a whole is an early printing, exceptionally fine, probably acquired for the express purpose of illustrating the meditative spiritual exercises on the Passion of Christ that the series currently anchors [Figs. 11.4–11.15].<sup>2</sup> The book takes the form of a *rapiarium*, a collection of religious texts in Latin and Middle Dutch gathered from various sources in order to facilitate pious devotion and prayerful edification.<sup>3</sup> As a rubricated title on fol. 16r indicates,

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- 1 The moniker *Groenendaal Passion* was first applied by the auction house Sotheby's, London, in 2003, when it offered for sale the manuscript now known as Metropolitan Museum Album 2003.476. According to Sotheby's anonymously authored *Catalogue of Old Master, Modern, and Contemporary Prints* (London: 2003) 25, the manuscript contains traces of the coat-of-arms of the Fonteneys and Fonteyn families, from whom it passed to the family of the Prince de Croÿ sometime in the eighteenth century; also see Bambach C.C. – Barker E.E. – Plomp M.C. – Orenstein N. – Stein P. – Rippner S., “Recent Acquisitions: A Selection, 2003–2004”, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 62.2 (2004) 14.
  - 2 On Van Meckenem's *Grosse Passion*, see Riether A. – Metzger C., “Katalog”, in Riether, *Israhel van Meckenem (um 1440/45–1503): Kupferstiche – Der Münchner Bestand*, exh. cat., Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München (Munich: 2006) 211–225; on the early impressions pasted into the *Groendaal Passion*, see *Sotheby's Catalogue* 22. On Van Meckenem's strategic efforts to market prints exploitable for the production of manuscript prayerbooks, see Rudy K., *Image, Knife, and Gluepot: Early Assemblage in Manuscript and Print* (Cambridge, UK: 2019) 226–239, 293–294.
  - 3 On *rapiaria* and their close association with the meditative practices of the *devotio moderna*, see Hascher-Burger U. – Jodersma H., “Introduction: Music and the *Devotio Moderna*”, *Church History and Religious Culture* 88.3 (2008) 313–328, esp. 320, 323–324.



FIGURE 11.1 Articles 41 and 42 of the *Hondert artuculen der passien Iesu Christi* and Israhel van Meckenem, *Flagellation of Christ*, from the *Große Passion*, ca. 1480. Engraving, *Groenendaal Passion*, fols. 23v and 24r. Album: late fifteenth century; each folio ca. 260 × 204 mm  
NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 2003.476

it mainly consists of extensive excerpts from Heinrich Suso’s *Hondert artuculen der passien Iesu Christi*, a Middle Dutch translation of the *Hundred Meditations on the Passion of the Lord* that serves as Part III of his *Büchlein der ewigen Weisheit* (*Little Book of Eternal Wisdom*).<sup>4</sup> Amplified by texts perhaps borrowed

4 The *titulus* reads “Centum Articuli dominice passionis”. On Suso’s *Büchlein*, the second of his four German books compiled in the *Exemplar*, and its close relation to the *Horologium sapientiae*, the most widely circulated of his Latin mystical treatises, see Künzle P., o.p., *Heinrich Seuses Horologium Sapientiae: Erste kritische Ausgabe unter Benützung der Vorarbeiten von Dominikus Planzer o.p.*, Spicilegium Friburgense 23 (Freiburg Schweiz: 1977) 28–54. On early Dutch versions of Suso’s *Hundert Betrachtungen über das Leiden Jesu Christi*, and their transmission and popularity, see Meyboom H.U., “Suso’s *Honderd artikelen* in Nederland”, *Archief voor Nederlandsche kerkgeschiedenis* 1 (1885) 173–207; Parshall P., “A Dutch Manuscript of ca. 1480 from an Atelier in Bruges”, *Scriptorium* 23.2 (1969) 333–337; and Deschamps J., “De Middelnederlandse vertalingen en bewerkingen van de *Hundert Betrachtungen* und *Begehrungen* van Henricus Suso”, *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 63 (1989) 309–369.

from an assortment of Dutch manuscripts known as the *Secret Passion*,<sup>5</sup> from a Middle Dutch (partial) manuscript of the Pseudo-Bonaventure's *Meditationes vitae Christi*, and possibly also from incunabula such as *Dat liden ende die passie Ons Heren Jhesu Christi* (*Life and Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ*), *Tboeck vanden leven Jhesu Christi* (*Book on the Life of Jesus Christ*), and *Devote getijden van het leven Ons Heren* (*Devout Hours of the Life of Our Lord*), this extracted and augmented version of the *Hundred Articles* coalesces into an intensely affective indeed distressingly vivid account of the physical and spiritual suffering of Christ (fols. 14v–41v) [Fig. 11.1].<sup>6</sup> Most of the prints are embedded as

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- On dissemination of the *Honderd articulen*, with specific reference to the text's primary audience, Franciscan Tertiaries, both Regulars and Seculars, see Aelst J. van, *Vruchten van de Passie. De laatmiddeleeuwse passieliteratuur verkend aan de hand van Suso's Honderd artikelen* (Hilversum: 2011) 46–92, esp. 46–67; on Suso's portrayal of sanguinary cruelty in the Passion, *ibid.*, 68–77. On Suso's two conceptions of *bild* (image), respectively apophatic and cataphatic, as a transient stage in the process of mystical elevation and as a necessary instrument of mystical knowledge and instruction, see Falque I., "Daz man bild mit bilde us tribe': Imagery and Knowledge of God in Henry Suso's *Exemplar*", *Speculum* 92.2 (2017) 447–492, esp. 452–464.
- 5 On the sobriquet *Secret Passion*, used to refer to extra-scriptural Passion narratives such as the *Heimelike Passie*, the *Christi leiden in einer Vision geschaut*, and Heinrich of St. Gallen's *Die Extendit-manum-Passion*, see Marrow J.H., *Passion Iconography in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages and Early Renaissance*, *Ars Neerlandica* 1 (Kortrijk: 1979) 24, 259 n. 100; and Ampe A., "Naar een geschiedenis van de passie-beleving vanuit Marrow's *Passie-boek*", *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 58 (1984) 130–175, esp. 132–149. Marrow codified use of the term to cover a wider range of Passion narratives greatly amplified by apocryphal anecdotes not licensed by the Gospels; see Marrow, *Passion Iconography* 95–170. On the *Heimelike Passie*, also see Stracke D.A., "Een brokstuk uit de Passie des Heeren", *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 11 (1937) 121–190; and Ampe A., "Losse aantekeningen bij de 'Heimelike Passie'", *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 35 (1961) 186–214.
- 6 On these and other amplified *Lives of Christ*, see Goudriaan K., "Middle Dutch Meditative *Lives of Jesus* on the Early Printing Press: An Exploration of the Field", in *idem*, *Piety in Practice and Print: Essays on the Late Medieval Religious Landscape*, ed. A. Dlabáčová – A. Tervoort (Hilversum: 2016) 219–239; on the publics addressed by *Lives* of this type, see Dlabáčová A., "Drukken en publieksgroepen: productie en receptie van gedrukte Middelnederlandse meditatieve Levens van Jezus (ca. 1479–1540)", *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 79 (2008) 321–368. On *Dat liden ende die passie Ons Heren*, see De Bruin C.C., "Middeleeuwse Levens van Jezus als leidraad voor meditatie en contemplatie", *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* 58 (1983) 129–173, esp. 168; Moolenbroek J.J. van, "Dat liden ende die passie ons heren Jhesu Christi: een bestseller uit het fonds van Gheraert Leeu in vijftiende-eeuwse context", in Goudriaan K. et al. (eds.), *Een drukker zoekt publiek: Gheraert Leeu te Gouda 1477–1484* (Delft: 1993) 81–110; and *idem*, "De gevarieerde overlevering van een vijftiende-eeuws prozaverhaal over het lijden van Christus en de mirakelen na zijn dood", *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 68 (1994) 30–75. On *Tboeck vanden leven Jhesu Christi*, see Willeumier-Schalij J.M., "Grondpatronen voor Middelnederlandse Levens van Jezus in gebeden (Ludolphus van Saksen, Jordanus van Quedlinburg e.a.)", *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde* 93 (1977) 76–85; Deschamps J., "De 'Vita Christi' van Ludolf van Saksen in het Middelnederlands", in *Historia et spiritualitas cartusienis. Colloquii*

folios within this recension of Suso's Passion sequence ordered in conformity to the canonical hours, from Prime to Vespers, and written in dual columns beneath brief rubricated *tituli* numbered 1–100 to coincide with the respective *articulen* [Figs. 11.1 & 11.19], and surrounded by/annotated with marginal glosses in Latin.<sup>7</sup> Plate 1, *Christ Washing the Disciples' Feet and the Departure of Judas, with the Agony in the Garden and the Last Supper* (in the background), initiates the articles (fol. 15v) [Fig. 11.4]. Interspersed amongst them are plates 2–10, *Betrayal and Capture of Christ to Pietà and Lamentation over the Body of Christ* (fols. 18v, 20v, 24r, 26r, 28r, 30r, 32r, 34r, 39r) [Figs. 11.5–11.13]. Plate 11, *Resurrection, with the Harrowing of Hell and the Three Maries en route to the Tomb* (in the background), demarcates the manuscript's final section, which consists of exercises, mainly scriptural paraphrases interwoven with prayers suitable for Compline, focusing on events after the Deposition and Lamentation, especially the preparation of Christ's body for burial, the final parting of Mary and Jesus, the Entombment, and the Resurrection, Harrowing of Hell, and apparitions of the risen Christ (fol. 41r) [Fig. 11.14]. Plate 12, *Supper at Emmaus, with Christ and the Two Disciples on the Way to Emmaus and Christ and the Magdalene in the Garden* (in the background), marks the conclusion of the manuscript (fol. 44r) [Fig. 11.15]. Moreover, in the early sixteenth century, Latin texts were written on the versos of most of the prints. In all cases, the texts of the Middle Dutch articles as well as the Latin glosses and the inscriptions on the versos are closely coordinated to the Passion prints, even while elaborating upon them in ways to be discussed *infra*.

The Middle Dutch recension of the *Hundred Articles* is preceded by the book's other texts, written in Latin and included in the following order: a comprehensive list of monastic orders that follow the Rule of Saint Augustine, starting with the Canons Regular (rubricated) and including the Johannites, Alexians, Ruthenians, the Hospitallers of Saint James in Altopascio, the

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*quarti internationalis acta, Gandavi Antverpiae Brugis 16–19 Sept. 1982* (Destelbergen: 1983) 157–176; De Bruin, "Middelleeuwse Levens van Jesus" 146–152; Kok I., "A Rediscovered *Devote ghetiden* with Interesting Woodcuts (ca 1117)", *Quaerendo* 13 (1983) 167–190, esp. 171–172; Dlabáčová, "Drukken en publieksgroepen" 330–346, 357–361; and eadem, "Chatten met Scriptura: het leven van Jezus in een Antwerpse bestseller", *Boekenwereld* 33 (2017) 25–29. On the *Devote getijden van het leven Ons Heren*, see Kok, "A Rediscovered *Devote ghetiden*"; and Dlabáčová A., "Illustrated Incunabula as Material Objects: The Case of the *Devout Hours on the Life and Passion of Jesus Christ*", in Hofman R. – Caspers C. – Nissen P. – Dijk M. van – Oosterman J. (eds.), *Inwardness, Individualization, and Religious Agency in the Late Medieval Low Countries: Studies in the Devotio Moderna and its Contexts*, *Medieval Church Studies* 43 (Turnhout: 2020) 181–221.

7 Each *titulus* offers a brief Latin condensation of the material covered in the column of Dutch text below.



Canons Regular of the Valley of Scholars, etc., followed by lists of apostles and early Christian ‘canons’, canon-popes (up to the twelfth century), and other celebrated canons (fol. 2 verso ff); a liturgical calendar for the use of Canons and Canonesses Regular, including two clerics associated with the abbey of Groenendaal, *Johannus Leuwis conversus totus* (28 February) and *Johannis Ruysbroec primus prior, 1384* (2 December), founder of Groenendaal (fol. 3 recto ff); a passage from the *Speculum perfectionis* of Brother Leo (fol. 6r), which serves as preface to the sayings of the Twelve Masters of Paris (fol. 6v) and other masters, such as Saint Bernard and Albertus Magnus (fol. 7r); an opening admonition and a “Fine, Devout, Spiritual Epistle” (fol. 10r); a list of Suso’s hundred articles, in the condensed form of *tituli*, subdivided into the seven canonical hours, from Matins to Compline (fol. 10r); another calendar, this time consisting of ‘Churches, Relics, Indulgences, [and] Stational [Churches] of Rome’, organized according to Augustinian usage and once again making mention of *Johann Ruysbroec, primi prioris viridisvallis* (fol. 11 recto ff); and liturgical prayers commemorating the Last Supper and focusing on the eucharistic bread and wine (fol. 14r). These texts are followed by the amplified *Hundred Articles*, beginning on fol. 14v. The book ends, as mentioned above, with further spiritual exercises on the Passion, aligned with Compline. An appendix of Latin notes on bodily medicaments, written at a later date, serves as a kind of epilogue to the spiritual exercises that concern the health of the soul. In fact, the pharmacopia enumerates the ‘virtues of Cardoanis’ solely (stalks of artichokes or white thistles); variously prepared, this ingredient can be drunk to bring down fever, chewed to sweeten the breath, applied as an anointment to heal burns, etc.

The auction house Sotheby’s examined the manuscript before offering it to the Metropolitan Museum. Codicological analysis demonstrates that the Passion series was inserted into the original collation before binding.<sup>8</sup> Watermarks in the paper of several text pages can be identified as Briquet 1811 (Louvain, 1485–1498), and the original blind- and panel-stamped leather

8 *Sotheby’s Catalogue* 24: ‘46 leaves (last 2 blank, i.e., 32 leaves plus 14 prints), plus contemporary flyleaf, 261 × 187 mm, complete, collation: original flyleaf + i[6], ii[2 + 4] (2 prints added), iii[8 + 4] (4 prints added), iv[8 + 5] (5 prints added), v[6 + 3] (of 8 + 3, 2 further blanks cancelled at end, 3 prints added)’. As in the case of another folio-size manuscript prayerbook organized around Van Meckenem’s *Grosse Passion* – British Library, Sloane Ms. 3981 – the image sequence was the likely starting point of the *Groenendaal Passion*. The two manuscripts differ, however, in that BL Sloane Ms. 3981 primarily consists of the Hours of the Virgin, supplemented by excerpts from the Hours of the Cross, the Hours of the Holy Spirit, the Penitential Psalms, and the Vigil of the Dead, whereas Metropolitan Museum Album 2003.476 collocates Van Meckenem’s prints to Suso’s *Hondert articulen*. On BL Sloane Ms. 3981, see the trenchant discussion in Rudy, *Image, Knife, and Gluepot* 294–299.

binding resembles Bodleian Auct[arium]. 2.Q.3.33, a manuscript from a Belgian house of the Windesheim Congregation. The opening list of monastic orders that follow the Rule of Saint Augustine, with the Order of Canons Regular marked in red, along with the two calendar entries on Jan van Ruusbroec, founder of the Groenendaal Priory, and the death entry on Jan van Leeuwen, the so-called *goede kok* of Groenendaal (in calendar one), suggests that the volume may have belonged to that famous monastery.<sup>9</sup> Not only are the calendars and many of the listed names Augustinian, they are also adapted to Windesheim usage. No less significant, the manuscript is marked with the coat of arms of the Fonteneys and Fonteyns families (from whom it passed into the collection of the family of the Prince de Croy); they would have acquired it upon the suppression of Groenendaal in 1784 and the dispersal of its library. If the manuscript is indeed from Groenendaal, it may have been written by members of the scriptorium, such as Nycholaus Sybrand, Petrus van der Ee, Henry Heest, and/or Jan Haren, and bound by the house binders, Giles Pijns and/or Jan Peters (Kinderen). More than one scribe worked on the manuscript; although the hands are for the most part conformable, at least two, a tighter and a looser one, are discernible. The anonymous author of the entry in the *Sotheby's Catalogue* points out that the flyleaf (mis)attribution of the *Hundred Meditations* to 'Bonaventura', partly erased but still legible, lacks the honorific 'Sanctus', which might date portions of the manuscript to before his canonisation in 1482.<sup>10</sup>

Tacitly written in the voice of a spiritual adviser who admonishes and encourages an exercitant but also often makes common cause with him in meditating the corporeal and spiritual suffering of Christ, the *Groenendaal Passion* is agentic in form and function. It not only describes a set of spiritual exercises but purports to engage fully in their implementation. The book both offers a plan of action and activates that plan. To whom was this *machina* (apparatus) directed? Groenendaal was an Augustinian priory whose canons regular, bound by the Rule of Saint Augustine, had been affiliated with the confederation of Victorine monasteries since the mid-fourteenth century.<sup>11</sup> The Chapter of Groenendaal formally joined that of Windesheim in 1412. As it

9 On Van Leeuwen, a fervent follower of Jan van Ruusbroec, who laboured in the monastic kitchen and may have learned how to read and write at Groenendaal, see Warnar G., *Ruusbroec: Literature and Mysticism in the Fourteenth Century*, trans. D. Webb, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History 150 (Leiden: 2007) 211–219.

10 On these circumstances of production, see *ibid.* 23–25.

11 Ruusbroec and his confrère Vranke vanden Coundenberg received the habit of the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine on 10 March 1350, the former as prior, the latter as provost; see *ibid.* 185.



happens, a Middle Dutch translation of the Rule together with the commentary by Hugh of St. Victor was composed at Groenendaal around this time.<sup>12</sup> The Rule, in its “Regulations for a Monastery”, stipulates that devout reading be part of the monk’s daily activities:

Let them work from early morning till noon  
And take leisure for reading from noon till three,  
And at three o’clock return the books.<sup>13</sup>

And chapter 5, section 9 of the Rule proper enjoins the brother tasked with caring for and distributing the house’s books to perform his service responsibly ‘without grumbling’.<sup>14</sup> In the fourteenth century, the example of Jan van Leeuwen, who is said to have learned how to read and write at Groenendaal,<sup>15</sup> of the learned Willem Jordaens, who strove to balance his daily commitments to contemplative prayer and the ‘handiwork’ of ‘reading or writing’,<sup>16</sup> and of Jan van Dureghem (also known as Jan Spiegel), who continually meditated the Passion, reading, writing, and praying in his cell,<sup>17</sup> reveals the extent to which holy books were woven into the fabric of daily life at the Groenendaal Priory. The priests and lay brothers also encountered books at mealtimes: the “Regulations” command that ‘when seated at table, they are to be silent and listen to the reading’.<sup>18</sup> These books would have been scriptural or exegetical, but chapter 5, section 10 of the Rule casts a wider net, stating simply: ‘Books are to be requested at a definite hour each day; requests made at other times will be denied’.<sup>19</sup> As Geert Warnar puts it: ‘For most of Groenendaal’s clerics [...] contact with books was a daily activity’.

By the later fifteenth century, when the *Groenendaal Passion* was compiled, the house’s clerics and lay brothers were expected to be literate both in Dutch, on the model of their spiritual founder Jan van Ruusbroec, and in Latin, on the model of scriptural exegetes such as Willem Jordaens.<sup>20</sup> Within this commu-

12 Ibid. 210.

13 See Lawless G., OSA, *Augustine of Hippo and his Monastic Rule* (Oxford: 1987) 75.

14 Ibid. 97.

15 See note 9 *supra*.

16 See Warnar, *Ruusbroec* 238.

17 Ibid. 229.

18 See Lawless, *Augustine of Hippo and his Monastic Rule* 77.

19 Ibid. 97.

20 See Warnar, *Ruusbroec* 196: ‘Men such as Walter van Heyst, Hendrik Bondewijn, Johannes Fracijs, Willem Jordaens, and Johannes Stoever, who are recorded in the Groenendaal *obituarium* as having taken holy orders, were learned enough to understand the methods and techniques of exegetical commentary’.

nity, the *Groenendaal Passion*, written in Dutch and Latin, would have appealed both to novices receiving spiritual instruction and to full-fledged canons regular adept at spiritual exercises. The book would also have been seen as fully consistent with two aspects of meditative prayer endorsed and exemplified by Ruusbroec in such treatises as the *Spiritual Tabernacle*. First, as he here dwells with incredible specificity on the material construction and appurtenances of the Solomonic tabernacle before pivoting to consider the spiritual significance of its constituent parts, so the *Groenendaal Passion* describes the corporeal suffering of Christ in painstaking detail before reflecting upon its beneficial spiritual effects on the votary.<sup>21</sup> (As we shall see, this shift in emphasis from the corporeal to the spiritual is underscored in the *Groenendaal Passion* by the parallel shift from reading in Dutch to reading in Latin.) Second, as Ruusbroec acknowledges that the cruelties of the Passion, spiritually nourishing as they are, can yet be difficult to ingest, especially for newcomers to the spiritual life, so the *Groenendaal Passion* first delivers in large measure the bitterness of Christ's suffering, then circles back to temper this mordancy by affirming that the chief cause and effect of the Passion are the loving mercy of Christ.<sup>22</sup> Viewed in this light, the *Groenendaal Passion* perfectly matches the skills, interests, and preoccupations of the community housed at Groenendaal Priory.

## 2 Dual Meditative Modes

Written in dark brown ink by multiple hands, in what the Metropolitan Museum describes as a 'Netherlandish hybrid bookhand', the double-columns of text of the amplified recension of the *Hundred Articles* include short Latin headings in red, numbered 1–99, that itemize the hundred stages of the Passion at the top of the respective folios, in tandem with the subjects of the longer Dutch texts below.<sup>23</sup> Numerous short marginal glosses in Latin, excerpted from Ludolphus of Saxony's *Vita D.N. Iesu Christi*, reinforce the Dutch descriptions of episodes from the Passion, offering a condensed account of the fuller portrayal in the adjoining column of text [Figs. 11.1 & 11.19]. Here the Latin and Dutch are firmly coordinated. On fol. 21v, for example, next to the graphic description of how Christ was spat upon and slapped in the house of Caiaphas, the Latin reads:

21 On Ruusbroec's embrace of material specificity as a source of spiritual allegoresis, see *ibid.* 206.

22 On Ruusbroec's analogy of the Passion to myrrh, aromatic yet 'extremely bitter in flavour', see *ibid.* 208.

23 See Bambach et al, "Recent Acquisitions" 14.

Then they spit upon his face. [Whence Matthew] does not say [simply] that they spit, but rather, that they spit up, as if to say that they spit by hawking. [But] others struck his face with their palms [...] from which blows the man was more afflicted than by the blows to his neck, more than those to his head. For all senses are in the face, and there the tender members are easily injured.<sup>24</sup>

And on fol. 29v, next to the description of Christ shown to the people and condemned to die by the cross, the Latin tag, paraphrasing Psalm 21:7 and Isaiah 9:6, reads:

See, my soul, how that man was pressed down by all things and despised. Oh, do you see the spectacle? Behold the government upon his shoulder.<sup>25</sup>

A second sequence of Latin texts, far longer than the marginal tags, appears on the versos of several of the prints – *Christ Washing the Disciples' Feet* (fol. 15r), *Betrayal and Capture of Christ* (fol. 18r), *Christ Brought before Annas, with Denial of Peter and Mocking of Christ* (fol. 20r), *Flagellation of Christ in the Presence of Pilate, with Christ Brought before Herod* (fol. 24v), *Christ Crowned with Thorns, with Mocking of Christ* (fol. 26v), *Christ Carrying the Cross* (fol. 32v) – and on the recto of *Ecce Homo* [Figs. 11.9, 11.16, & 11.17]. Likewise excerpted from Ludolphus's *Vita Christi*, these texts markedly differ in content and tone from the Dutch. Written in a more cursive hand, in lighter brown ink, most likely in the (early) sixteenth century, they invite the reader-viewer to contemplate the pictorial images in a new light, that is, in a way different from that exemplified by the very detailed and, in their verbal imagery, insistently corporeal Dutch texts. One might best think of them as constitutive of a complementary mode, an alternative register, whereby to meditate the death of Christ. I shall presently have much more to say about this dual meditative mode. One of the prints, the *Ecce Homo*, incorporates a handwritten inscription in Latin that draws a parallel between what the Jews saw when Christ was shown on the podium and what the congregation sees (but also cannot see) when the priest displays the host during the consecration rite; just as the printed image

24 See Appendix 1. Cf. *Vita Jesu Christi e quatuor Evangeliiis et scriptoribus orthodoxis concinnata per Ludolphum de Saxonia ex ordine Cathusianorum*, ed. A.-C. Bolard – L.-M. Rigollot – J. Carnandet (Paris – Rome: 1865) 621.

25 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 29v: *Vide anima mea quomodo vir iste per omnia coarctatur et spernitur. O spectaculum vides ne? Ecce principatus eius super humerum eius*. Cf. *Vita Jesu Christi* 647.

depicts how Christ was beheld by the people, so the host, when it is elevated, is Christ himself, notionally visible in the fullness of his suffering humanity, even as his impassible divinity is withheld from human eyes [Fig. 11.9]. The inscription paraphrases Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 111<sup>a</sup> q.74–77, on the Eucharist:

For the sacrament of the altar is a memorial of the Lord's Passion, and Christ suffered according to [his] humanity, but he was impassible according to [his] divinity. Therefore the priest, there showing Christ, more properly says, 'Behold the man' than 'Behold God', although he was himself both man and God; but as he was a suffering man in that showing, so as God he lies hid.<sup>26</sup>

The *Ecce Homo* is thus an image of Christ as he appeared in the flesh to the Jews, and as he now appears to us sacramentally, again in the flesh, not as a mere image but as a living sacrifice, humanly passible and divinely transcendent. The manner in which the inscription highlights the paradoxical status of the print – more than simply picturing Christ, it bears witness to how he was seen then and should be seen now, as present rather than mediated through an image – testifies to the nuanced consideration of images that the *Groenendaal Passion* in its current form, compounded of Van Meckenem's prints and of texts written in Dutch and Latin, invites and cultivates.

Two further images were placed at the front of the manuscript: a Netherlandish woodcut of *Christ the Man of Sorrows*, ca. 1490–1500, appears on fol. 8v, facing *Saint Jerome Kneeling in Penitence before the Crucifix*, ca. 1470–1480, on fol. 9r [Figs. 11.2 & 11.3]. Unlike the Passion series, which is bound, both these prints are pasted in. Framed in black, as if draped in mourning, the *Man of Sorrows* contains three xylographic inscriptions in Dutch: above, a brief ejaculatory prayer ('Hail, most merciful man, Jesus'); within the pictorial field, 'Behold the Man', a call to set eyes on this image of Christ portrayed in the form he takes in Isaiah 53, a prophecy of the whole of the Passion; below, a prayer of supplication in verse.

26 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 28r, inscription on recto of *Ecce Homo*: *Quia enim sacramentum altaris memoriale est Domìnicae passionis et Christus est passus secundum humanitatem secundum divinitatem vero est impassibilis[.] Ideo sacerdos ostendens ibi christum congruentius dicit ecce homo quam ecce deus licet ipse et homo sit et deus[.] sed homo patens fuit in illa ostensione et Deus latens. Cf. Vita Jesu Christi 643.*

O Lord Jesus Christ, your Passion, cross, nails, and deathly spear, scourges, tears, red wounds, sweat, water, blood, and great pain must be a comfort to my soul in the utmost necessity.<sup>27</sup>

The *Man of Sorrows* is hand-coloured in brown, flesh colour, yellow, black, and red lake, which is used to portray his many bleeding wounds.<sup>28</sup> The Cologne School *Saint Jerome in Penitence* is a metalcut embellished with punched dots and hand-coloured in green, yellow, brown, orange, gold, and red lake.<sup>29</sup> Staring intently at the Holy Face, Jerome bares his chest, preparing to strike it with a stone, thereby striving to imitate the battered body of Christ. His creased sternum and sunken diaphragm resemble Christ's, and so, too, does his pale flesh colour – comprised by the natural colour of the unpainted paper. Together the two prints imply that Jerome perfectly conforms himself to Christ, abiding by the injunction to 'Behold the man', inscribed on the *Ecce Homo*; he beholds the Man of Sorrows *in effigie*, suffering with him by way of the effigy of Christ hanging dead from the cross, before which he earnestly kneels and prays. This exemplification of the *imitatio Christi* or, better, of the *imitatio imaginis Christi*, anticipates the argument of the "Fine, Devout, Spiritual Epistle" that immediately follows on fol. 10r.

The epistle introduces the preliminary list of the hundred articles that does double duty as a table of contents for the fuller treatment of these articles soon to follow. The votary, addressed as 'dearly beloved and cherished brother', is given a template for meditating upon Christ in the Passion, implicitly modeled on the metalcut exemplum of Saint Jerome kneeling before an effigy of the Crucified. If he is properly to fulfil his professed vocation and show himself obedient to the divine will (*naest alre professie ende gehoersamheit*), the canon must daily fashion for himself an interior image of Christ on the cross (*gecruyste beelt*) – literally, a 'crucified image', connately, a 'crucifix', and metonymically, 'Christ crucified' – which he shall set within his heart for at least a quarter-hour, mornings and evenings, training his eyes upon the Holy Face, more particularly upon the Savior's weeping, blood-stained eyes.<sup>30</sup> The term

27 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 8v: *O here ihesu christe dijn passie cruys nagelen ende doot-speer gheesselen tranen wonden root, sweet water bloet ende u pijn groot, moet mijnder zeeilen troost sijn ter lester noot.*

28 See Schreiber W.L., *Handbuch der Holz- und Metallschnitte des xv. Jahrhunderts* (3. Aufl.), 12 vols. (Stuttgart: 1969–1976) 2: nr. 908A; and *Sotheby's Catalogue* 22.

29 See Schreiber, *Handbuch* 4: nr. 2674; and *Sotheby's Catalogue* 22.

30 Although I focus on canons as the book's primary readers, novice brothers, as well as lay brothers, may also have had access to it. The latter group would have relied mainly if not exclusively on the texts in Dutch.

*gecruyste beelt* conveys the impression that this heartfelt image, if it is truly to be efficacious, must have a material presence similar to that of an actual effigy, comparable in this respect to the crucifix before which Jerome kneels and castigates himself. The visible traces of carving in both the woodcut *Man of Sorrows* and metalcut *Saint Jerome* provide further allusions to this requisite material effect, which then gives substance, by process of metonymic transference, to the body and flesh of Christ whose suffering the votary strives to experience. In the epistle, the ‘crucified image’/‘crucifix’ transforms seamlessly into a living image of Christ or into Christ himself, who responds to the votary by gazing back at him.

I adjure you with all my strength that you be pleased to [recite] mornings and evenings, for about a quarter hour, more or less, some verses most fitting, as the grace of God allots and allows. At which time you shall turn inward (*inkeren*) and set in your heart that crucified image/crucifix (*gecruyste beelt*) of our most dear Lord Jesus Christ. And you shall then train your inner eyes, with great humility and self-abnegation, on that head crowned and pierced with wounds, and on that marred, torn face hanging down to one side on his blessed shoulders, made like unto a leprous man. When you behold this image/effigy standing in your heart, think then how he trains his bloody, tear-stained eyes on you and speaks, lamenting and saying, ‘O my dear child, see what I suffer for you. I have chosen you for my bride; my joy is to be beside you. And thus be not content to cast me off, for to be parted from you is more bitter to me than this heavy passion and pain, than dying that miserable death’. These words and their like, you will fix in memory.<sup>31</sup>

Christ is as if brought to life by the heartfelt exercise of seeing him in the form of a *gecruyste beelt* while reciting select prayers.<sup>32</sup> The phrase ‘made like unto a leprous man’ (*gelijc gemaect eenen melaetsschen mensch*), a condensation of Isaiah 53:4 – ‘and we thought him as it were a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted’ – licenses the votary to amplify the image he conjures up, by seeing it as the fulfillment of the Isaian prophecy of the Passion. The epistle’s author adds that the truth of the speaking image we seem to hear has a fully sensory force, even if our ears do not actually hear what is spoken

31 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 10r: see Appendix 2.

32 Seen in conjunction with the *Ecce Homo* and *Saint Jerome*, the term *inkeren* may possibly embed a punning reference to *inkt* (ink), that is, to the two printed images that help the epistle’s reader to visualise Christ in the Passion.

(or, presumably, see what is visualised): ‘And then, evenings and mornings, think upon the Son of God’s suffering, and upon his presence speaking to you. And so it is, in truth, even if our external ears do not hear his voice.’<sup>33</sup> In conclusion, he avers that this speaking image is so efficacious that it will prove more beneficial to the exercitant than reading the Psalter or practising the discipline, that is, drawing blood with the scourge or fasting rigorously.<sup>34</sup> Engaging with the image of the Crucified, in other words, is more powerful, not only spiritually but also bodily, than communing with Christ by denying one’s appetite or lacerating one’s flesh.

The epistle, in its emphasis on efficacious image-making, responds to the book’s opening admonition, taken from the *Speculum perfectionis* by way of Hendrik Herp’s *Spiegel der volcomenheit*, which urges the votary to conceive of God as his intimate ‘secret friend’ who adorns his soul in the manner of a ‘skilled image-maker’ (*beeltmaker alsoe abel*) [Fig. 11.18].<sup>35</sup> God’s incomparable skill is discernible in the two kinds of image he has wrought: first, in the loving gift of his Son (who is the image of God) to his secret friends, whose souls he thereby ornaments; second, in gifting them with sorrows whereby they are given the opportunity to suffer with Christ and, having thus been converted themselves into likenesses of him, to become living warrants of God’s ability, as *beeltmaker*, to fashion multiple images of Christ in the Passion.

For these are the loving gifts of God, which he gives to his secret friends in order to ornament their souls. For never was there so skilled an image-maker, who with greater, more diligent care did draw after the lines of an image wrought after the perfection of the model from which

33 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 10r: *Ende dan des tsavons ende smorgens dencken van des soens gods lijden, ende u toe sprekende wesen. Ende het is alsoe oec inder waerheit, al en horen wi niet sijn stemme met onsen wtwendigen oren.*

34 *Ibid.*: see Appendix 3.

35 The term ‘secret friend’ ultimately derives from Jan van Ruusbroec’s *Vanden blinkenden steen*, in which there are three categories of mystical disciples – ‘faithful servants’ (first rung of the mystical ladder), followed by ‘secret friends’ (second, higher rung), and then finally ‘hidden sons’ (highest rung). See Ruusbroec Jan van, *Vanden blinkenden steen, Vanden vier becoringhen, Vanden kerstenen ghelove, Brieven*, ed. G. de Baere – Th. Mertens – H. Noë, trans. A. Lefevere, in *Jan van Ruusbroec, Opera omnia, vol. 10*, ed. De Baere, *Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis* (Turnhout: 1991) 126–136. The phrase ‘beeltmaker alsoe abel’ is a citation from chapter 11 of Hendrik Herp’s *Spiegel der volcomenheit*; see *Hendrik Herp O.F.M. Spiegel der volcomenheit. Deel 1: Inleiding. Deel 11: Tekst*, *Tekstuitgaven van Ons Geestelijk Erf 1–2* (Antwerp: 1931), 2:79, line 39. On this passage and its derivation from a Middle Dutch sermon by Johannes Tauler, see Dlabáčová A., ‘Tauler, Herp, and the Changing Layers of Mobility and Reception in the Low Countries (c. 1460–1560)’, *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 84.1 (2013) 120–152, esp. 125–126.



he makes it, than God almighty who from eternity, out of his immeasurable wisdom, did foresee and foreordain how he should bring his secret friends, by means of such [co-]suffering, to a perfected likeness of Jesus Christ.<sup>36</sup>

The process of suffering after the image of Christ brought forth and fixed firmly in the heart, as described in the epistle, derives from the *Speculum's* conception of God as the *beeltmaker* who supplies his votaries with the wherewithal to convert themselves into living images of the Son. The technical complexity of the process – consisting of an image of an image, more particularly, of lines diligently drawn after an image exactly mimetic of its model – speaks to the decidedly pictorial character of the divine image-making at issue. The opening admonition and the epistle also provide a joint rationale for the use of the printed images that anchor the fuller text of the *Hundred Articles* and the additional texts interpolated or appended to it.

The admonition also recalls and, I would venture to guess, is modeled on the prefatory statement that initiates the *Hundred Articles* in Heinrich Suso's *Büchlein von der ewigen Weisheit*. The *Articles* consist of meditations and prayers on the Passion, subdivided into the seven days of the weeks and the seven canonical hours. Suso explains that these brief meditative exercises were dictated to him by a preacher who received them by divine revelation 'at a time when he stood before a crucifix after Matins, and fervently complained to God that he could not well meditate on his torments'.<sup>37</sup> The *Articles* are therefore

36 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 6r: see Appendix 4. Cf. *Speculum perfectionis*, ed. Antonius Hemertius (Antwerp: Symon Coquus, 1547) fol. 69r: Cap. XIII. In fact, the passage closely follows Herp's characterisation of God as a *beeldemaker* of the human soul, in chapter 11 of the *Spiegel der volcomenheit*; see *Spiegel*, ed. Verschuere, 2: 79, lines 39–46: 'Want noeyt en was beeldemaker also abel, die mit so groter neemstighe sorchvoldicheit die trecken van een beelde arbeit te trecken na der volcomenheit des exemplaers, daer hijt na maket, als God almechtich van ewicheit wt sijnre onghemetenre wijsheit hevet voersien ende voer gheordiniert vanden verborghen vrienden, hoe Hise brengen solde mit sodanighen middel des lidens tot een volcomen ghelikenisse Cristi Ihesu'. The passage from the *Groenendaal Passion* also paraphrases chapter 49 of the *Spiegel*; see *ibid.* 2:315–317, lines 21–30. On Herp's conception of God as a *beeldemaker*, as it relates to the teachings of Tauler, see Dlabáčová, "Tauler, Herp, and the Changing Layers" 125–126. Whereas Herp argues that metaphorical images of this type must finally be jettisoned by the exercitant who progresses toward imageless union with God, the *Groenendaal Passion* fully embraces images as meditative instruments. On the three-part process whereby Herp, having furnished various meditative images, gradually strips them away from the faculties of memory and will, see *ibid.* 123–128.

37 See *Blessed Henry Suso's Little Book of Eternal Wisdom*, trans. R. Raby (London: 1866) 187. Cf. Heinrich Seuse, *Deutsche Schriften: Im Auftrag der Württembergischen Kommission*

said to originate from the action of looking intently at an image of Christ crucified, a counterpart to the *gecruyste beelt* invoked at the start of our manuscript. At the close of the *Hundred Articles*, after the exercises on the Passion of Mary, above all on her empathetic co-suffering with Christ, Suso recounts how the final section resulted from the author's encounter with a second sacred image, this time embroidered rather than sculpted. Hesitant and unsure how to finish the chapter appertaining to Mary, the author had left the last page of the manuscript blank, impeded by 'a state of spiritual dereliction'. Having besought Mary's help, he was visited in his chamber by a choir of angelic youths who 'had in their hands a picture, above all measure lovely, of our Blessed Lady [...] worked in cloth; her mantle red and purple, with damask embroidery, but the unfinished ground still 'white as snow'. One of the youths then takes a needle and thread and adds cross stitches to the 'forepart of the mantle', showing that 'it was given him [too] to complete the ground, the blank space, and the spiritual picture, which had so long been denied him'. Suso adds that this author's every spiritual exercise was based on images like these, sent by God 'in the way of some similitude' clearly 'manifested to him'.<sup>38</sup> The connection drawn in our manuscript between God the *beeltmaker* and the votary whose meditative exercises are inspired by a *gecruyste beelt*, perfectly aligns with Suso's emphasis on material images as spiritual instruments that facilitate meditation on the Passion of Christ and the Virgin's compassion.

### 3 Complementarities of Image and Text

Although Van Meckenem's Passion prints are situated condignly throughout the manuscript, in places where they correlate to the figurative imagery of the adjacent prayers, the nature of the Dutch and Latin texts – the ways in which they read the pictures and are variously anchored by them – differs considerably. Let us begin by looking briefly at some of the links between text and image. Take the *Flagellation* (fol. 24r), which depicts Christ, his body facing forward, bound to a column at his wrists and ankles, so tightly that his feet dangle in mid-air [Fig. 11.7]. This is how the Dutch text describes him (fol. 25r): '[...] and they turned our Lord around, with his holy face forward, and with his wounded back against the column, and bound his injured, bloody hands very high above his head, tightly with cutting cords. And they bound cutting

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*für Landesgeschichte*, ed. K. Bihlmeyer (Stuttgart: 1907; reprint ed., Frankfurt am Main: 1961) 314.

38 Suso's *Little Book of Eternal Wisdom* 201–202. Cf. Seuse, *Deutsche Schriften* 323–324.

cords [...] round his holy feet, so tightly against the column that he could not move, and only the tips of his holy feet grazed the floor'.<sup>39</sup> The verbal account, though it diverges slightly in saying that his toes barely touched the floor, agrees with the picture's emphasis on the fact that Christ had no place to rest his feet. The long Latin text written on the back of the print (fol. 24v) coordinates with the forward-facing pose of Christ, who is fully displayed to the viewer, as if addressing him. The Latin emphasises that Christ finds himself in this position as a direct consequence of our sinful condition; he has been made visible by reason of our contrition and exigent shame. The prayer is dialogic: 'I have come forth/been made visible (*ex[s]titi*) as a man abandoned by cause of your remorse and total perplexity'.<sup>40</sup> That Pilate stands at the front of a group of onlookers at left behind Christ, lays stress on our more privileged position vis-à-vis the Lord. The faded drops of red on the feet of Christ were perhaps added in response to the Dutch's text's particularising description of the blood that flowed over his ankles and feet.<sup>41</sup> The touches of gold applied to Pilate's turban and scepter, the helmets, headgear, swords, and daggers of the people around him, the cords, whips, and scourges, and the candle above the door, as also to Christ's hair and, in the background, to Herod's crown and cloth of honor, illustrate the notion that the sorrows of the Passion are spiritual adornments; as stated explicitly in the opening epistle, we become perfected by turning these accessories into objects of meditative devotion.

The *Carrying of the Cross* (fol. 32r) resembles the *Flagellation* in that Christ is shown face-forward, with no other figure looking directly at the Holy Face [Fig. 11.11]. (Just behind him, the stooped figure of Mary making the sign of the cross, her head inclined in parallel to her Son's, alone registers that she participates fully in his suffering.) Most of the henchmen are positioned behind Christ, and neither of the two men in front of him meets his gaze. The Dutch exercise answers to the print, stating that none of the soldiers could bare to look at the face of Christ, quite unlike the votary whose task it is to attend to the Holy Face (fol. 33r): 'Then could they not stand to see that merciful visage [...]. Ah, hold this sweet, tender countenance always before your external eyes, and on his account eschew every adornment of [your] head'.<sup>42</sup> As Van Meckenem

39 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 25r: see Appendix 5. Touches of red, perhaps added in response to the descriptive text, call attention to Christ's bloodied feet.

40 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 24v: *Ego homo perditus totius contritionis totius confusionis tuae causa extiti.*

41 *Ibid.*, fol. 25r: *Ons lieve here stont in sinen eigenen bloede overgoten tot over sijn enkel met menich dusent wonden verladen.*

42 *Ibid.*, fol. 33r: *Doen en consten si dat goedertieren gesicht niet gesien [...]. Och dit suete deerlijc aenschijn hout dit altijt voer van [wt]wendige oogen, ende laet om sinen wille alle cierheit*

portrays Jesus turning his face toward us, so the Dutch text insists that our face must ever be turned toward his. His eyes swivel round toward Simon of Cyrene but also toward the host of his tormentors processing behind the cross, and the Dutch coincides by declaring that even though ‘they handled him cruelly, he yet looked at them gently and kind-heartedly, as if to say, “O dear children, if you have no compassion for me, at least have compassion for yourselves”’.<sup>43</sup> By contrast, the compassion shown by Mary correlates to the Latin text written on the back of the print: referring to Thomas’s words in John 11:16 (‘Let us also go, that we may die with him’<sup>44</sup>) and Peter’s in John 13:37 (‘Why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thee’), none of which came to fruition, the Latin eulogizes Mary’s steadfast accompaniment of Jesus: ‘Let it suffice to bring these words to remembrance, so that the attentive eye of piety, feeling compassion for the groaning affections of so great a mother, may merit hereafter to be rewarded with the fruit of that pious love’.<sup>45</sup> The phrase ‘eye of piety’ refers both to the votary’s outer eyes that are encouraged attentively to study the print, and to his inner eyes that are expected meditatively to dwell on its particulars.

The *Betrayal and Capture of Christ* (fol. 18r) depicts Jesus offering no resistance to his captors, neither to Judas who kisses and embraces him nor to the soldiers who seize and bind him [Fig. 11.5]. Indeed, his head inclines toward Judas, and his eyes meet his gaze sidewise. The Latin, inscribed once again on the verso, corresponds to these features of the print (fol. 18r):

You made apparent, good Jesus, how ready your spirit was for the Passion. [...] and at the sign they received from him who was first in disgrace, you revealed yourself. For you turned not away from the kiss of the beast stained with blood, approaching to kiss [your] most holy mouth. You in

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*des hoefts*. Although *wendige* could be read, alternatively, as [*in*]wendige, i.e., “internal eyes”, the adjacency of the pictorial image causes the term to drift toward *wt* (outer) rather than *in* (inner).

43 Ibid., fol. 33r: [...] *daer hadden si hem so wreedelijc op onsen here mer hi sach so onnoselijc ende goedertierlijc op hen recht of hi seggen woude. O lieve kijnderen en hebdi geen ontfermherticht op mi, ontfermt toch u seiven.*

44 Throughout this essay, biblical citations are closely based on the Douay-Rheims translation of the Vulgate published by the English College at Douay in 1582 (New Testament) and 1609 (Old Testament): see *The Holy Bible, Translated from the Latin Vulgate and diligently compared with the Hebrew, Greek, and other editions in divers languages*, ed. R. Challoner (New York: 1941; reprint ed., Fitzwilliam, NH: 2013).

45 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 18r, inscription on verso of *Carrying of the Cross*: *Verum haec verba ex magnae pietatis affectu producta ita ad hoc memorasse sufficiat ut [ea] oculus pietatis attendens. Dum tantae matris gembundis affectibus compatitur, fructui pij amoris illius aliquando remunerari mereatur. Cf. Vita Jesu Christi 648.*

whose mouth no evil was found, sweetly brought yourself into close contact with that mouth abounding in malice.<sup>46</sup>

Christ, continues the Latin, was staging an image of his benignity, 'exhibiting all [such] things as might soften the pertinacity of [Judas]'.<sup>47</sup> The print centers on two antitheses: Christ again faces the viewer, whereas Judas is shown in profile, and his resignation contrasts not only with the violence of the soldiers but also with Peter's attack on Malchus. The Latin, picking up on these devices, directly addresses the reader, urging him not to react like Peter, to be neither enraged nor indignant:

But if he suffers, for whom, I ask, does he suffer? Why do you desire the sword? Why are you enraged. Why are you indignant. If like Peter you were to cut off someone's ear, if you were to raise your sword arm, if you were to cut off someone's foot, he himself would heal every [limb], raise up every person slain.<sup>48</sup>

The Dutch, likewise consonant with the print which shows Judas enfolding Christ in a tight embrace, declares that that he grasped him so fiercely in his arms that he could feel the Lord's heart beating heavily in his chest (fol. 19r). So, too, the swordsman seizing his arm, and the thug grasping his hair and raising his arm to strike a blow, are consistent with the characterisation of the henchmen as 'cruel wolves who took hold of the dear Lord with devilish fury and pulled him with great violence, some grasping his neck, some his beard, some his hair'.<sup>49</sup>

46 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 18r, inscription on verso of *Betrayal and Capture of Christ*: *Quam promptus bone ihesu spiritus tuus ad passionem fuerit evidenter ostendisti. [...] et signo quod acceperant a duce flagitij teipsum manifestasti. Nam accedentem ad osculum sanctissimi oris tui cruentiam bestiam aversatus non est. Se os in quo dolus inventus non est ori quod habundavit malitia dulciter applicuisti. Cf. Vita Jesu Christi 612.*

47 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 18r, inscription on verso of *Betrayal and Capture of Christ*: *Sed et hoc benignitatis tuae erat domine ut omnia illi exhiberes quae pravi cordis sui pertinaciam emollire potuissent. Cf. Vita Jesu Christi 612.*

48 *Groenendaal Passion*, inscription on verso of *Betrayal and Capture of Christ*: *Sine rogo patiatur qui pro te patitur? Quid optas gladium? Quid irasceres? Quid indignaris? Si instar petri cuiuslibet auriculam abscideris. Si ferro brachium tuleris. Si pedem truncaveris. Ipse restituet omnia qui etiam si quem occideris suscitabit.* This extended apostrophe distills and paraphrases the argument of *Vita Jesu Christi* 613–614.

49 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 17v: [...] *als die wreede wolven met duvelscer verwoetheit onsen lieven here so wreedelijc grepen, ende trocken met so groeter felheit. Sommege grepen hem metten halse. Die sommege metten baerde. Die sommege metten hare.*

The Latin text on the verso of *Christ before Annas, with the Denial of Peter and the Mocking of Christ* accords with the complex twisting stance of Jesus (fol. 20v): as soldiers haul him before Annas, he turns his head gently toward Peter, who enacts his threefold denial at left; at the same time, his left leg and knee project forward, more toward the viewer than Annas [Fig. 11.6]. The Latin tallies with both aspects of the print, calling upon the beholder to see how Jesus laid eyes kindly on Peter, even while his disciple repudiated him, and then calling upon Christ to look upon the votary as lovingly as he gazed at Peter when, soon after, he repented his betrayal:

See with what affectionate eyes, with how much mercy and efficacy he gazed at Peter denying him for the third time, at the moment when, having converted and returned to himself, he wept bitterly. Good Jesus, would that your sweet eye would gaze at me, I who at the voice of the wanton handmaid, namely, of the depraved works and passion of my flesh, have so often denied you.<sup>50</sup>

The Dutch text associated with *Pietà and Lamentation* (fol. 39r) supplies a rationale for the notably different presentation of Christ here, versus the prior print, *Christ Awaits Crucifixion* (fol. 34v), in which his face is wan and drawn, his limbs gaunt, his chest caved in, and his overall appearance deathly [Figs. 11.12 & 11.13]. In *Pietà and Lamentation*, on the contrary, he looks robust and muscular, even in death; his eyes and cheeks are no longer sunken, and his wounds appear discreetly visible rather than conspicuous. The Dutch elucidates these changes apropos the miracle wrought by Christ for the benefit of his followers who up to now were sore-oppressed:

When the worthy mother of God and the whole of this dear company were thus in great sorrow, then did our dear Lord purge his holy body of all its wounds, intending this miracle and solace for his honorable mother and cherished friends who were so disconsolate, that his holy body might show none other than the five holy wounds, in his hands, feet, and his hallowed right side, which he held open for us as a sign of victory [...]

50 Ibid., fol. 20v, inscription on verso of *Christ before Annas, with the Denial of Peter and the Mocking of Christ*: *Intuere quam pijs oculis quam misericorditer quam efficaciter tertio negantem respexit petrum quando ille conversus et in se reversus flevit amare. Utinam bone ihesu tuus me dulcis respiciat oculus qui totiens ad vocem ancill[a]e procacis. Carnis scilicet me[a]e pravis operibus affectibusque negavi. Cf. Vita Jesu Christi 626.*

O when they saw that holy body so beautiful and made whole, with no injuries displayed other than the five holy wounds, then were the worthy mother of God and the others very comforted.<sup>51</sup>

The Dutch also comments on the empathetic relation between Mary and Jesus, made apparent by the parallel tilt of their heads: in particular, it calls attention to the way in which she holds up her Son's lifeless head while staring intently into the Holy Face.<sup>52</sup>

The Dutch, more than the Latin, remarks upon specific details of the prints, such as the smooth surface of the bread held by Christ in *Supper at Emmaus* (fol. 44r) [Fig. 11.15]. The text observes that when he broke bread with his disciples, the pieces he blessed were so even that they looked as if cut by a knife.<sup>53</sup> And with regard to the *Pietà and Lamentation*, the text states that Christ's body was too long to lie wholly upon the Virgin's lap; she propped up his shoulders with one arm, whereas his limbs and legs lay upon the ground.<sup>54</sup>

In more general terms, the Dutch texts provide a *raison d'être*, *ex post facto*, for several distinctive structural features of Van Meckenem's print series. First, there is the graduated scale of the multiple episodes that appear in the fore-, middle-, and background of many of the images: the *Washing of the Disciples' Feet*, for instance, incorporates the Washing in the foreground, the Last Supper in the middle-ground, and the Agony in the Garden in the background [Fig. 11.4]. The Dutch dwells equally on all three events, but the order of presentation matches the gradually diminishing scale in the print, with the Washing coming first temporally and the Agony last. The art historical literature often points out that the Last Supper has been relegated to a less prominent place than the liturgically insignificant Washing, and that this poses a heuristic and hermeneutic challenge to the viewer, who must labour to grant the Last Supper its due. The Dutch normalises the print's configuration on temporal grounds, but in calling upon the votary scrupulously to visualise the various scenes, as a prelude to full if virtual participation in these events, it also assists him to move through the picture and to foreground each successive episode as he

51 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 40v; see Appendix 6.

52 *Ibid.*, fol. 42r: [...] *so hielt altijt maria sijn heylige hoeft tusscen haer meechedelike handen ende sach een paerlijc op sijn suete aensijn, ende custet so menichwerven, ende bestortet met haren heylige tranen.*

53 *Ibid.*, fol. 45r: [...] *ende bract so effen, of met enen messe gesneden hadde geweest.*

54 *Ibid.*, fol. 40r: [...] *ende met sijnen heylige scouderen op onser lieve vrouwen rechten arm, ende sijn doerwonden heylige leden als sijn heylige beene ende doerwonde voeten lagen op dat wit cleet.*



does so.<sup>55</sup> Wherever the scenes lie in the prints, the texts encourage the exercitant to bring them fully into view, moving them into the forefront of consciousness, so to speak.

Second, just as Van Meckenem includes both near and far views, so the Dutch texts explicitly acknowledge that meditation on the Passion involves shifting from a near to a far view and vice-versa. To cite a few examples: we are asked to keep vigil with Christ in the garden of Gethsemane, visualising his anxious, sweat- and blood-stained face, and then to discern, as did he, how Judas and the high-priest's henchmen entered the garden, approaching from a distance.<sup>56</sup> Having drawn near to Christ, in other words, we join him in seeing from a distance what approaches from afar. This process is consonant with the staged viewing experience offered by print's multiple foci: we see Christ's face, already anxious in the scene of Washing, from close by; then from farther off in the Last Supper, and still farther away in the Agony in the Garden. Farthest away is the approaching mob [Fig. 11.4]. By moving our eyes closer to the image, we can bring its smaller, more distant details into ever clearer focus. The texts facilitate this process by urging the votary to draw near to Christ, to gaze at his face, and feelingly to observe how he reacts to impending events: 'Consider, O my soul, how tired your bridegroom was when in the night he saw that light from afar and heard those people coming, armed and greatly clamorous'.<sup>57</sup>

The Latin texts occasionally do this as well, though less frequently than the Dutch. Written on the verso of *Washing of the Disciples' Feet*, the long inscription first positions the votary at the threshold of the image, where he too waits expectantly for the Lord to wash his feet: 'See and await, and last of all, offer him your feet to be cleansed, since he whom he has not washed will have no part in him'.<sup>58</sup> Then the votary is transported to Gethsemane where he accompanies Peter, James, and John, seeing Christ, who has withdrawn to pray, from a distance. But unlike them, he can and must situate himself closer, and, from this more privileged vantage point, bear witness to the showing forth by Christ of his passible, vulnerable humanity:

55 Ibid., fols. 14r–16v.

56 Ibid., fol. 17r.

57 Ibid.: *Denct o mijn siele hoe dijnen brudegom te moede was, doen hi inder nacht van verre sach dat licht, ende hoerde dat volc comen met groeten geruchte al gewapent.*

58 Ibid., fol. 30r, inscription on verso of *Washing of the Disciples' Feet*: *Specta et expecta et ultimo omnium tuos ei tuos pr[a]ebe pedes abluendos quoniam quem non laverit non habebit partem cum eo.*

And though he had taken Peter and the sons of Zebedee with him, he withdrew to a solitary place. If you will, see from a long way off how he gave himself over to our need. See how he to whom all things belong began to be afraid and to sink down sadly, saying, 'My spirit unto death'. And from this, my God, take pity on me, you who showed your humanity, in a certain manner seeming to forget that you are God.<sup>59</sup>

Another example of the close correlation between the Dutch texts and the prints occurs in relation to the *Carrying of the Cross* [Fig. 11.11]. As Mary stands behind Christ, sharing his burden spiritually, so the text asks us to imagine how he approached her and she him, while he moaned and sighed under the weight of the cross. At the moment they meet, she is heard to say: 'O my one and only son, ill-fated, desolate, disconsolate; your heavenly Father has abandoned you, your angels dare not help you, your apostles have fled, and I your poor mother cannot help you who abandon yourself to the most pressing necessity'.<sup>60</sup> Then Christ moves on, climbing to the summit of Golgotha, leaving Mary, John, and the holy women behind at the foot of the mountain, debarred by thronging mob.<sup>61</sup> This second episode correlates to the background scene in the print, which depicts Mary swooning amongst Christ's followers, at the base of a rocky escarpment. With regard to *Christ Awaits Crucifixion*, in which the crucifixion scene, seen from below, appears in background, just beyond the shadowy cliffside beside which Christ is seated, the Dutch describes how Mary reached the summit only after the cross had already been raised [Fig. 11.13]. We are to imagine her arrival, the bitter grief she felt when she first laid eyes on her crucified Son, and how she cast her gaze upward at Jesus, then downward at the mob who had robbed her of her Son.<sup>62</sup> The background scene allows for these meditative devices, inviting the viewer to climb up the mountainside (and up the

59 Ibid.: *Et licet assumpto petro et duobus filijs zebedei ad secreta secesserit, vel a longe. Intuere quomodo in se nostram transtulerit necessitate. Vide quomodo ille cuius sunt omnia pavere c[on]cipit et sedere tristis est inquiens anima mea usque ad mortem unde hoc deus meus. Ita compateris mihi exhibens hominem ut quodammodo videaris nescire quod deus es.*

60 Ibid., fol. 29r: *O mijn enich ellendich gelaten troesteloes sone, u hemelste vader laet u, u engelen ende dorven u niet helpen, u apostelen sijn nu van u gevloen, ic u arm moeder en can u niet helpen, ende gi laet u selven in die alder meeste noet.*

61 Ibid., fol. 31v: *Mer si en mocht bi hem niet comen, overmids die grote menichte des gewapende volcs, beide te voete ende te perde. Mer si bleef benede aenden voet des berchs met haren bedructen vriendekens iohannes, magdalena ende met haren twee susteren met groten moederliken drucke.*

62 Ibid., fol. 36r: *Si saget nederwaert ende scouwende daer die gene met onsprekeliken rouwe, die uwen scat u beroeft hadden ende also iammerlijc pijnden.*

image) and find Christ a second time, hanging on the cross, after having first seen him waiting in the foreground, his eyes fixed on the hole being drilled in the crossbeam.

Third, the Dutch texts, such as the lengthy passage adjacent to *Christ Washing the Disciples' Feet*, occasionally expound upon the multifold appearances of Christ in the prints, which often portray him two or three times in succession [Fig. 11.4]. Having itemized one set of torments they then compound it in quick and iterative succession with another episode, adjacent in space and time, which then concatenates breathlessly to a third, a fourth, a fifth (fols. 14v–16v). This profusion of episodes attests to the multiplicity and immensity of the Lord's suffering, and also speaks to his desire to suffer on behalf of humankind, as one of the prayers of supplication, spoken in the voice of Christ, affirms by imagining his body greatly manifolded:

O my heavenly Father, this is now my affliction, that the whole of the human race will not be saved. And then I wept for the death of the sinner, and for those who would make themselves unworthy of my suffering and bitter death. Were it possible to have as many bodies as there are stars in the sky, I would fain give them all up to the death I have suffered, rather than allowing even one sinner to remain lost on my account.<sup>63</sup>

The strength of the assertion becomes all the more evident later on, in one of the prayers attached to *Christ Awaits Crucifixion*, which instructs the votary to consider how Christ shed all his blood when one drop would have been sufficient to save the human race [Fig. 11.12].<sup>64</sup> The multiple Christs, seen from this perspective, are iterative warrants of the Saviour's love for his fellow men.

#### 4 *Affabulatio* and *Visieringh*

There are many other points of intersection between the Dutch and Latin exercises and the Passion prints they accompany, but it is also true that the nature of the relation between the prints and these texts, written as they are in various inks and hands, the Latin for the most part directly on the prints, the Dutch on the surrounding folios, is markedly different. The differences mainly turn

63 Ibid., fol. 16v; see Appendix 7.

64 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 38r: *Ons here hadde ons mogen verlossen met enen dropel bloets, mer sijn minne was soe groot dat hi niet eenen dropel bloets en woude behouden in allen sijnen lichaem hi en wout al wtstorten.*

on the kinds of amplification engendered by the mutual association between text and image; the texts elaborate upon the images, projecting layers of verbal imagery onto them. Whereas the Latin layers can best be designated *affabulationes* (narrative enhancements adapted from the exegetical tradition), to use a term codified by Geert Grote in *Tractatus quattuor generibus meditabilium*, the Dutch layers are narrative enhancements based on rhetorical conjecture only loosely connected to Scripture or the exegetical tradition.<sup>65</sup> For want of terminology as precise as Grote's, one might refer to them as *visieringhen*, a fifteenth- and sixteenth-century term that derives from *visieren* (in Latin, *speculari, contemplari, imaginari, excogitare*, respectively, 'to conjecture', 'view attentively or observe contemplatively', 'imagine', 'devise, contrive, invent').<sup>66</sup> *Visieren* also correlates to the Latin term *adinvenire* (to find out, devise).<sup>67</sup> It appears in the *Exposicie der Passien*, a fifteenth-century manuscript known in two copies, where *visieren* signifies the action of elaborating upon the Passion without scriptural or exegetical warrant.<sup>68</sup> To understand how these two systems of amplification operate, the key sources of both sets of texts should be kept in mind: whereas the Latin cites Ludolphus of Saxony's liturgical, exegetical treatise, *Vita Christi*,<sup>69</sup> the Dutch augments Suso's *Hundred Articles* by citing a congeries of manuscript sources known for their graphic accounts of the Passion, including Heinrich von St. Gallen's *Die Extendit-manum-Passion*, studied by Kurt Ruh,<sup>70</sup> the anonymous *Christi Leiden in einer Vision geschaut*,

65 On *affabulationes*, which are based on plausible conjecture licensed by Scripture, see Grootte G., *Il trattato "De quattuor generibus meditabilium"*, ed. I. Tolomio (Padua: 1975), l. 71–76, 274–282, 344–358, as discussed in Ampe, "Naar een geschieden van de Passie-beleving" 137–140. On the Dutch cognate *visieringhe* and the closely related term *versieringhe*, see Maldoets A. – Kiliaan C. – Steenhardt Q. – Hasselt A. van, *Thesaurus Theutonicae linguae. Schat der Neder-duytscher spraken* (Antwerp: Christopher Plantin, 1573) n.p.; Kiliaan Cornelis, *Etymologicum teutonicae linguae sive dictionarium Teutonico-latinum* (Antwerp: Jan Moretus, 1599) 625; and Verdam J. – Ebbinge Wubben C.H., *Middelnederlandsch handwoordenboek* ('s-Gravenhage: 1911; reprint ed., 1981) 689, 717.

66 On *visieren*, see Maldoets et al., *Thesaurus Theutonicae linguae*, n.p.; and Kiliaan, *Etymologicum teutonicae linguae* 625.

67 Ibid.

68 On this usage in the *Exposicie*, see note 81 *infra*. On the *Exposicie*, see Marrow, *Passion Iconography* 184–186.

69 On the *Vita Christi*, see Baier W., *Untersuchungen zu den Passionsbetrachtungen in der 'Vita Christ' des Ludolfs von Sachsen: Ein Quellenkritischer Beitrag zu Leben und Werk Ludolfs und zur Geschichte des Passionstheologie*, *Anaclecta Catusiana* 44, 3 vols. (Salzburg: 1977).

70 See Ruh K., *Der Passionstraktat des Heinrich von St. Gallen* (Thayngen: 1940); idem, "Studien über Heinrich von St. Gallen und den 'Extendit-manum'-Passions-tractat", *Zeitschrift für schweizerische Kirchengeschichte* 47 (1953) 210–230, 241–278; Hilg H. – Ruh K., "Heinrich von St. Gallen", in *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters, Verfasserlexikon*, III, 2/3 (Berlin: 1981) cols. 738–744; and Ampe, "Naar een geschiedenis van de Passie-beleving" 136–141.

studied by Ruh and Albert Ampe, s.J.,<sup>71</sup> and the diverse community of Passion manuscripts dubbed the *Secret Passion* by the art historian James Marrow (not to be confused with *Dit es de heimelike passie ons Heeren Ihesu Christi*, studied by Desiderius A. Stracke, s.J.).<sup>72</sup> Paraphrases from these Passion texts, collated with passages from Suso, greatly extend the sequence of meditative exercises attached to Van Meckenem's plates 1–10, from *Christ Washing the Disciples' Feet to Pietà and Lamentation* (fols. 14v–41v) [Figs. 11.4–11.13]. (The exercises associated with plates 11–12, the *Resurrection* and *Supper at Emmaus*, are mainly paraphrases from Scripture, from the Pseudo-Bonaventure's *Meditations on the Life of Christ*, and from incunabula such as the *Devote getijden van het leven Ons Heren*, which assimilates the life of Christ to the canonical hours [fols. 42r–45v].<sup>73</sup>)

The Dutch extracts from the *Secret Passion*, *Christi Leiden*, and *Extendit-manum-Passion* minutely focus on the bloody wounds of Christ, dissolving or, better, anatomising his body into its torn and shredded particulars. The Latin excerpts from Ludolphus's *Vita Christi* are incarnational in a more strictly theological sense: they anchor episodes from the Passion in the whole of the *verum corpus* and, implicitly, in the mind, heart, and spirit of Christ that inhere in this incarnate body. Inscribed, as we have seen, on the versos of the printed sheets, these extracts are modally distinct from the more aggregative Dutch texts. The Latin moderates the horrors of the Passion, constantly reminding the votary to consider the relation between the *vita mortalis* and *vita vitalis* (i.e., *spiritualis*) of Christ. By contrast, the Dutch externalises and exacerbates the bodily horrors of the Passion, harping on the hundreds of cuts, bruises, and wounds, administered violently and repetitively, that ultimately lead to the inhumane death of Christ. Van Meckenem's plates function as the common ground for both manners and modes of Passion meditation. Indeed, one might argue that the narrative coherence of these semi-liturgical, bi-modal meditative exercises derives from Van Meckenem's images, which depict the Passion as a series of scripturally-based events susceptible to the kinds of extra-scriptural elaboration on show in the Latin and Dutch texts.

71 See Ruh K., "De Heimelike Passie ons Heeren Jesu Christi", in *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters, Verfasserlexikon III*, 2/3, cols. 642–644; Ampe, "Losse aantekeningen"; and idem, "Naar een geschiedenis van de Passie-beleving" 136–143.

72 See note 5 *supra*.

73 On the *Meditationes vitae Christi*, see McNamer S., "The Origins of the *Meditationes vitae Christi*", *Speculum* 84.4 (2009) 905–955. On the *Getijden van het leven Ons Heren*, see note 6 *supra*.

The type of *affabulatio* found in the Latin insertions consists of the explicit use of typological allegory to characterise the Passion of Christ. The allegorical tropes, taken mainly from Isaiah and the Psalms, are applied to Christ so as to inspire the reader to reflect on how and why the Lord suffered on his behalf, and on how and why he should respond accordingly, amending himself bodily and spiritually by following the pattern set by his Saviour. For instance, the Latin text appended to Van Meckenem's *Washing of the Disciples' Feet* begins by referring to Christ the Lord as a shepherd come to save the perishing sheep of the House of Israel (fol. 15r) [Fig. 11.4]: 'At last you came, Lord, to the sheep of the House of Israel who perished, openly exalting the light of the divine Word for the illumination of the world, and announcing the kingdom of God to all who were attending your word'.<sup>74</sup> The passage is exegetical in that it comprises and condenses four prophetic texts, construing them as allusions to Christ:

Psalm 77:52: 'And he took away his own people as sheep: and guided them in the wilderness like a flock'.

Psalm 79:2: 'O thou that rulest Israel: thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep'.

Isaiah 40:11: 'He shall feed his flock like a shepherd. He shall gather together the lambs with his arm and shall take them up in his bosom, and he himself shall carry them that are young'.

Jeremiah 31:10: 'He that scattered Israel will gather him: and he will keep him as the shepherd doth his flock'.

This leads to a further application of an Old Testament prophecy to Christ, whose entire life is seen as a prelude to the Passion, at the threshold of which he is now poised. Blasphemed by his detractors who called him the son of Beelzebub and attempted to stone him, Jesus yet remained patient, 'having been made before them like unto a man neither hearing nor having reproaches in his mouth'.<sup>75</sup> This is a paraphrase of Psalm 37:15: 'And I became as a man that heareth not: and that hath no reproofs in his mouth'. It here serves to anticipate how peaceably and resignedly Jesus will respond to Judas and the mob when they come to capture him.

74 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 30r, inscription on verso of *Washing of the Disciples' Feet*: *Demum venisti Domine ad oves quae perierunt Domus Israel Divini verbi lampadem palam extollens ad illuminationem orbis terr[ae], et regnum Dei cunctis annuntians obtemperantibus verbo tuo*. Cf. *Vita Jesu Christi* 574–575.

75 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 30r, inscription on verso of *Washing of the Disciples' Feet*: [...] *et factus es coram eis sicut homo non audiens et non habens in ore suo redargationes*. Cf. *Vita Jesu Christi* 575.

Similarly, the Latin text appended to *Christ Crowned with Thorns* describes him in terms of the fourth Servant Song from Isaiah 52 and 53, embedding this prophecy of the Passion within a paraphrase of Matthew 27:28–29 and Mark 15:17, on the Crowning with Thorns and Mocking of Christ (fol. 26v) [Fig. 11.8]. The paraphrase reads:

He is clothed in royal purple, but in that is more despised than honored. He wields a scepter but his reverend head is struck by the same. Their knees bent down to the earth before him, they acclaim him king and repeatedly leap up to spit at his gracious cheeks. With their palms they strike his jaws and dishonor his honorable neck. Behold, my soul: who is that who enters, who advances crowned, having the likeness of a king and yet filled full with the shame of a contemptible slave? But that self-same crown is a torment to him, and wounds his beauteous [brow] with a thousand pricks.<sup>76</sup>

The passages from Isaiah, patently distilled in the catachresis of king and slave, are read by Ludolphus in the *Vita Christi* as an oracle of this episode from the Passion. For the canon aware of this citation and its scriptural sources, the clear implication to be drawn is that Christ was fully cognizant of the relation between his present circumstances and the prophecy they body forth.

*Affabulationes* of this sort were sanctioned by luminaries such as Geert Grote, founder of the Brethren of the Common Life and enthusiastic proponent of the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine. In *De quattuor generibus meditabilium*, he writes that everything that may be conjectured, examined, or incontestably proved by reference to the Old Testament is most necessary to meditation, and that Christ and his actions may fully be discerned therein through the application of tropological and anagogical allegory; conversely, when Christ and his actions are interpreted spiritually, one can see through them to the plethora of Old Testament prophecies they fulfil. Allegorical

76 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 26v, inscription on verso of *Christ Crowned with Thorns*: *Regali purpura induitur sed plus in ea despicitur quam honoraetur. Sceptrum in manu gestat sed eoipso reverendum caput eius feritur. Adorant coram ipso positus genibus in terra et regem conclamant et continuo ad conspuendum amabiles eius genas subsiliunt. Maxillas palmis concutiunt et honorabile collum exhonorant. Attende anima mea quis est iste qui ingreditur habens imaginem quasi regis et nihilominus servi despectissimi confusione repletus est coronatus incedit. Sed ipsa eius corona cruciatus est illi et mille puncturis speciosum [caput] eius verticem divulgnerat.* Adapted from *Vita Jesu Christi* 642–643, this paraphrase elaborates upon Isaiah 52:13–14 and 53:3ff: ‘Behold my servant shall understand: he shall be exalted and extolled, and shall be exceeding high. As many have been astonished at thee, so shall his visage be inglorious among men and his form among the sons of men, etc.’



exegesis furnishes the key link between the Old and New Testaments when they are meditated in tandem; this is where *affabulatio* comes into play, as an image-based exegetical practice that amplifies the Gospels by layering upon them the figurative imagery of the prophets. *Affabulatio* is the defining feature of Grote's fourth category of meditative praxis:

But in the fourth order, many things are imagined and devised [...] according to and in support of the humbleness of our self, not so that such things are believed to exist, but because it is helpful to our feeble fantasy thus to imagine [them], and because [this] nourishes our slight mind more forcefully and fittingly and leads more firmly to the love of Christ.<sup>77</sup>

The Latin inscriptions added to Van Meckenem's Passion prints comply with this conception of licit scriptural fabulation.

Contrariwise, the Dutch paraphrases added to the extracts from the *Hundred Articles* elaborate upon the Passion in ways that contravene Grote's rule of allegory and system of covenantal analogy, as explicated by Marrow for the visual arts of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, and by Ampe for Middle-Dutch Passion treatises of the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.<sup>78</sup> They convert the repertory of Passion prophecies into Passion imagery so concrete and graphically descriptive that it seems to operate more in the realm of the real than the allegorical, of visceral fact rather than of figurative exegesis. This type of fabulation dwells upon every blow and every humiliation, counting every species of wound and numbering them. The *Revelations* of Saint Bridget is repeatedly cited as the chief source of the precise numbers of tormentors and outrages enumerated: he was struck 60 times in the neck, 30 times on the mouth, spat upon 20 times in his face, and thrown 5 times to the ground and yanked up again in the garden of Gethsemane; blood flowed from his mouth 33 times at the Crowning with Thorns, his stomach, back, and ribs were pummeled 35 times, and his tormentors scowled at him viciously

77 Groote, *De quattuor generibus meditabilium*, ed. Tolomio, l. 71–76: *In quarto autem ordine multa secundum et ad nostrae parvitas adminiculum imaginata et ficta modo inferius annotando assumuntur, non quod talia esse creduntur, sed quia sic imaginari iuvat nostrum imbecillum phantasiam, quia hoc et mentem parvulam lacte Christi fortius et aptius nutrit et ad Christi amorem reducit tenacius.* On this passage, see Ampe, "Naar een geschiedenis van de Passie-beleving" 138–139.

78 See note 5 *supra*.

80 times.<sup>79</sup> The interior suffering of Christ is seen to originate from his exterior suffering, and both categories of tribulation are characterised as expressive of his superhuman love of sinful humankind:

Consider how the foul stinking spittle of the Jews made his tender heart fearful and faint when they spat at his graceful face and into his sweet mouth [...]. And as if he were [truly] a transgressor, he became [truly] fearful [...]. Whereupon his eyes were broken and caked with rheum from his bloody tears and the stinking spew of the loathsome ruffians. There were you, dear Lord, mocked, spat upon, defied, reviled, libeled, cursed, threatened, reproached, censured, defamed, blamed, humiliated [...]. And the more you were debased and defamed for my salvation's sake, the more you loved me, and so the more I hold you dear.<sup>80</sup>

Fabulation of this kind, as Marrow has demonstrated, literalises the prophetic imagery of Psalm 21 (the Good Friday Psalm), Wisdom 2:12–20, Isaiah 52:13–53:12, and Zechariah 12, by cataloguing in excruciating detail every injury inflicted on Christ, from cuts and bruises to stains and defilements. As documented by Ampe, certain commentators were resistant to this usage, claiming that it transgressed the bounds of exegetical propriety; the anonymous author of the *Exposicie der Passien*, for instance, contests the *visieringhen* characteristic of such exercises, mainly because they purport to be verifiably true rather than allegorically amplified, to be factual rather than fabricated. With reference to the two nail-studded boards that are said to have been hung before and behind Christ to pierce his shins and calves as he trudged to Calvary, the *Exposicie* asseverates:

It is thus to be feared that these two boards said to have hung from his garment are a willful lie. For the evangelists write nothing about them, nor does any teacher, nor anyone else, upon which to base a foundation of truth. But one reads [about them] only in a little book called *Die verholten passie* [i.e., *Die heimelike passie*], which was revealed, as they say, to a

79 See, for example, with respect to the number of Christ's persecutors at Gethsemane, *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 17v: *Sinte Birgitta vraechde onsen here ofter oec vele waren wtge-seynt om hem te vangen. Ons here antwoerde. Dochter gi selt weten datter gewapender mannen waren, cccc [= 400], ende cc [= 200] voetgangers. xxx [= 30], scutters, lx [= 60] mannen die vakelen droegen, ende l [= 50] die lanternen droegen.*

80 *Ibid.*, fol. 21v: see Appendix 8.

spiritual person. But therein stand many things that bear the likeness of truth. I fear that they greatly err who devise (*visieren*) such things for the sake of manufacturing compunction and devotion in the hearts of men, for the Passion of Christ is great enough in itself, and has no need of such things which fortify it with lies.<sup>81</sup>

As we shall soon see, the Dutch amplifications in our manuscript, perhaps to controvert scruples such as these, are said to have been ratified by Christ himself, who discerns amidst his current afflictions that he is fulfilling the key prophecies of his Passion. It is Christ, source of all truth, who attests that these *visieringen* are real, not mere affective embellishments.

## 5 Two Routes to Golgotha: Affective Violence and Meditative Reflection in the *Groenendaal Passion*

Let us now more closely examine the differences between the adjacent Dutch texts and inscribed Latin inscriptions. Whereas the Latin tends to moderate the expression of strong emotion, the Dutch intensifies and expands upon Van Meckenem's subtle portrayal of Christ's felt emotions, visible in his face, whether the sad resignation of the *Betrayal and Capture of Christ*, the desperate exhaustion of the *Carrying of the Cross*, or the anxious dejection of *Christ Awaiting Crucifixion*. Take the texts attached to the *Capture of Christ* [Figs. 11.5, 11.11, & 11.12]. The Latin emphasises that Christ controls the circumstances of his Passion, here fashioning them into a series of performative, meditative images for our benefit: in the garden of Gethsemane, at the moment he is seized, he stages one such image, making a show of his spirit's willingness to suffer for our sakes.

81 See *Exposicie der Passien* (Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, MS 2694), fols. 85v–86r, as cited in Ampe, “Naar de geschiedenis van de Passie-beleving” 164–165: *Daer om es te duchten, dat ene voirsienige loegene es van desen tveen borden, die men seit, dat aen dit cleet hingen. Want de evangelisten en scrivent niet, noch geen leerare en seget, noch niemant, dair men enich fundament der waerheit op stichten mach. Maer men leset alleen in een boexkin dat men heet Die verholen passie, die geopenbairt was, als men seit, enen geesteliken person. Mair daer staen vele dingen in, de gene ghelikenisse en hebben metter waerheit. Ic duchte dat si grotelec misdoen, die sulke dingen visieren om compunctie ende devocie inder menschen herten te maken, want de passie Christi is groot genoeg in hairselven, ende en heeft van genen dingen not, dat men se met loechenen versterken.*

How ready your spirit was for the Passion, good Jesus, you clearly showed, when of your own accord you went to meet the men of blood coming at you in the company of your betrayer, with lanterns, torches, and arms seeking after your spirit contemptuously. And at a sign from him who was first in disgrace, you revealed yourself.<sup>82</sup>

Everything that occurred there was exhibited to men's eyes, above all the eyes of Judas, for the purpose of mollifying obdurate, sinful hearts (*ut omnia illi exhiberes quae pravi cordis sui pertina[n]tiam emollire potuissent*).<sup>83</sup> The Latin closes by addressing the exercitant, urging him not to react as Peter did toward Malchus, to be neither enraged nor indignant, and to keep in mind that Christ, howsoever abject, remains ever mighty, having the power to heal every limb, raise up any person slain (*ipse restituet omnia qui etiam si quem occideris suscitabit*).<sup>84</sup> Contrastingly, the Dutch brings the repudiation of Christ to the fore, along with the violence perpetrated against him (fol. 19r):

And we had better believed that he who ate great herbs (i.e., John the Baptist) was the Son of God, than this wine-drinker. And with this they struck his mouth and ears and cheeks [...]. With a great clamor, they brought him into the city, leapt upon him like ravening wolves. His pain and confusion could in no wise content them. They cast him down 40 times, and as he was half falling yanked him upright, pulling on the rope [around his waist], piercing him 43 times with goads, setting their fingers 15 times upon the dear Lord's face, as if ripping it to pieces.<sup>85</sup>

The reference to 'ravening wolves' identifies Ezechiel 22:27 – 'Her princes in the midst of her are like wolves ravening the prey to shed blood and to destroy souls' – as the distant source of this passage.

The Latin texts tend to cleave more closely than the Dutch to Van Meckenem's images, and in elaborating upon them, they appear to respond to specific features rather than interpolating violent details into them. The Latin inscribed

82 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 18r, inscription on verso of *Betrayal and Capture of Christ: Quam promptus bone ihesu spiritus tuus ad passionem fuerit evidenter ostendisti, quando venientibus una cum proditore tuo viris sanguinum et quaerentibus animam tuam cum lanternis et facibus et armis per contem ultro occuristi. Et signo quod acceperant a duce flagitij teipsum manifestasti. Cf. Vita Jesu Christi 611.*

83 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 18r, inscription on verso of *Betrayal and Capture of Christ: [...] ut omnia illi exhiberes quae pravi cordis sui pertina[n]tiam emollire potuissent. Cf. Vita Jesu Christi 612.*

84 See *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 18r, inscription on verso of *Betrayal and Capture of Christ*.

85 See Appendix 9.

on *Christ before Annas* is a good case in point (fol. 20r) [Fig. 11.6]: it calls attention to Christ gazing at Peter, and begs the Lord to cast his gaze at the votary just as he looked lovingly at Peter at the time of his threefold betrayal (*Utinam bone ihesu tuus me dulcis respiciat oculus*).<sup>86</sup> Like a chastened Peter, the votary should observe the circumstances in which Christ finds himself and learn to express merciful contrition at this sight, which should be appreciated as an epitome of patient modesty (*insuper intueri nunc opprobrijs Dominum verecundum in tormentis vero patientem*).<sup>87</sup> To cultivate penitential compassion, the reader-viewer must reflect on the antitheses here made apparent: brought before Annas, Christ the truth is falsely adjudged blasphemous, the living source of joy and worthy object of prayerful devotion is instead defiled and disgraced, the Lord of all creation is treated like a contemptible servant. On the contrary, the Dutch concentrates fixedly on imagining excesses of defilement so extreme that words cannot describe them (nor images picture them): '[Then] with devilish, fell cruelty they led our dear Lord to Caiaphas. O, how they do treat our dear Lord, mishandling him on the street in ways not to be expressed in words (*wt te spreken*)'.<sup>88</sup>

The horror of the judgment scene is to be exacerbated by imagining how Mary came upon Christ being dragged away, so maltreated and debased that she could barely recognize his form and face (*dat si sijn gestelnisse nau gesien conste*).<sup>89</sup> Conversely, the votary is to visualize how Christ, upon seeing his tearful, deathly pale mother, is cut to the quick by a sword of sorrow no less sharp than the one that cut through her (*want als ons lieve here sijn lieve moeder aensach, dootverwich gedaen van weenen [...] och hoe doersneet dat sweert des rouwen deser twee alder haer herten*).<sup>90</sup> Another inciteful device involves visualising how the mob saw Christ: his captors stood at a distance to allow the people to see him and cast aspersions on him, but what they beheld was a man so battered as to be unrecognizable. Then one must imagine how the angels saw their Lord scorned and maltreated, but were not allowed to assist him. And finally, one should envisage Mary forced to observe her Son from afar, shunted aside by the great press of people.<sup>91</sup> Each of these imagined details is a further

86 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 19v, inscription on verso of *Christ before Annas*. Cf. *Vita Jesu Christi* 626.

87 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 19v, inscription on verso of *Christ before Annas*.

88 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 19v: [...] *ende gingen onsen lieven here leyden met duvelscher felheit tot cayphas wert. Och hoe si doen op onsen lieven here gebeerden opter straten dat en waer niet wt te spreken.*

89 *Ibid.*, fol. 22v.

90 *Ibid.*

91 *Ibid.*, fols. 22v–23r: see Appendix 10.

blow-by-blow image laminated onto the printed image, pushing far beyond the limits of what is pictured and what Scripture corroborates.

Another difference between the Latin and the Dutch is temporal: the former often stops in mid-stride to digress on the meaning of the image we are viewing and its true cause and purpose. The Latin addendum to the *Flagellation*, to cite one example, explains that he ‘made himself visible (*extiti*), a man abandoned by reason of our absolute contrition and shame’ (fol. 24v) [Fig. 11.7].<sup>92</sup> This is to say that he is the veritable image of our sinful condition, a condition needful of atonement and fit to arouse feelings of guilt. The Dutch instead particularises the punishments visited on Christ, recounting that he was striped by three kinds of scourges – respectively formed of rods, cords knotted with metal hooks, and dried ox-sinews – wherefrom blood spurted everywhere, flooding the floors, while thick lumps of flesh adhered to the scourges. The emphasis falls on the horror of the scene, at the climax of which ‘the Lord was pitiable to see, for then from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet there was nothing that had not been thoroughly wounded’.<sup>93</sup> The votary is then urged to think of Jesus as his bridegroom, who holds himself still, both in body and soul, amidst all this suffering, which he feels more grievously from within than from without.<sup>94</sup> The abruptly sudden shift to the bridal imagery of the *Song of Songs*, and the concomitant adjuration, ‘[...] attend to your bridegroom Jesus with your inward eyes’, brief as they are, function less to foster contemplative devotion than to shock the votary into acknowledging his sinful guilt and shame.<sup>95</sup> He has betrayed his spouse, thrown him to the wolves devouring him.

In contradistinction to the *Exposicie der Passien*, cited above, the juxtaposition of the Latin and the Dutch does not constitute an implicit critique by the former of the latter’s form, tenor, and function. It makes better sense to consider how they work in tandem, as complements, the Dutch arousing horror and shame conducive to self-accusation and penitential contrition, the Latin harnessing that self-loathing to the task of meditative reflection and contemplative devotion. This becomes specially evident in the relation between the Latin and Dutch texts attached to *Christ Crowned with Thorns* [Fig. 11.8]. The Latin, as discussed *supra*, having framed this Passion episode in terms of Isaiah 52:13–14 and Isaiah 53:3ff, then addresses the votary’s soul, enjoining

92 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 24v, inscription on verso of *Flagellation*: *Ego homo perditus totius contritionis totius confusionis tuae causa extiti.*

93 *Ibid.*, fols. 25r–v: *Och hoe deerlijc was ons here doen aen te siene. Want hi niet geheels en hadde vander cruynen sijns hoefts totten planten sijnre voeten ten was al doe[r]wont.*

94 *Ibid.*, fol. 25v: *O devote siele merct nu uwen brudegom, ende siet hoe stil ende lijdsamlijc dat hi al dit swaer liden lijf van buten, ende noch is sijn liden veel swaerder van binnen.*

95 *Ibid.*: [...] *hebt altoes u inwendige ogen op uwen brudegom ihesum.*

it attentively to consider, i.e., to meditate, the paradoxical image of Christ the King as the Isaian servant (*Attende anima mea quis est iste qui ingreditur habens imaginem quasi regis et nihilominus servi despectissimi*).<sup>96</sup> The Dutch instead demands that the votary scrutinise Christ's face and body caked with drying blood, his features so obscured that he appears barely human, the thorny crown pressed low on his head, streams of blood flowing from 72 puncture wounds.<sup>97</sup> The compassion one perceives feels is described as reactive, the natural result of viewing this dire and pitiable spectacle, the sort of reaction sights distressing as these inevitably elicit. The mode might best be characterised as narrative rather than meditative, intensely poignant rather than affectingly ruminative. Encapsulated within the cascade of graphic particulars are a few brief thoughts about the love that motivated Christ to endure all this pain and suffering: 'And if the pain and great humiliation of our Lord are very much to be marveled at, still more the great love that surpasses all. One drop of his holy blood had been enough to redeem every one of us, but so great was his love, that in order to draw us to it he could neither spare himself in any degree, nor wished to do so'.<sup>98</sup> But the emphasis falls not on thoughts such as these but on the material details of the Passion; these start up again immediately after the two lines just quoted. The verbal depiction of the Crowning with Thorns leads directly into a description of the *Ecce Homo*, the subject of the next print in the series; tellingly, instead of calling upon the votary to give thought to the Man of Sorrows and consider what it means to ruminate him, the text recounts how and why Pilate put Christ forward as an epitome of suffering, making him maximally visible to the people as a would-be king, scorned and chastised (*op dat men onsen here so mismaect te bat soude sien*) [Fig. 11.9].<sup>99</sup> Not the image we should fashion meditatively, but the circumstances of Pilate's image-making, his calculated strategy in showing Christ (in hopes of freeing him from certain death) is the topic at hand.

The difference between the two modes becomes all the more apparent through the collocation of texts adjacent to the *Carrying of the Cross* [Fig. 11.11]. The Dutch augments its account of outrages committed on the road to Calvary by describing a scene not pictured by Van Meckenem, the nailing of Christ

96 Ibid., fol. 26v.

97 Ibid., fol. 27r: *Denct hoe dat die dorne crone op sijn hoeft gedruet wort, so dattet dbloet tot lxxij. steden wtloyede met strangen als dumen.*

98 Ibid.: *Ende al is dit seer te verwonderen die pijnre ende die grote smaet ons heren, nochtans die grote minne gaet boven al. Hi hadde ons allen mogen verlossen met enen druppel sijns gebenedijts bloets, mer die minne was so groet, dat hi hem geen sins gesparen en conste, noch en woude op dat his ons tot sijnre minne trecken soude.*

99 Ibid.



to the cross once he reached the summit of Mount Golgotha. Laid prone upon the cross, his limbs are painfully stretched, his hands and feet pierced by large, faceted nails that push his flesh and sinew into the wood. So dreadful is the nailing, so shameless and baleful the executioners, that they surpass the human capacity to know or understand what actually transpired (*dat mente gronte niet geweten en can*).<sup>100</sup> And yet the votary is given to see the Lord's face, trampled by executioners who revile his merciful countenance, finding it unendurable (*doen en consten si dat goedertieren gesicht niet gesien*).<sup>101</sup> All the suffering incurred at Calvary must be held before one's bodily eyes, i.e., seen as if veritably present, the Holy Face above all: 'Ah, hold this sweet, pitiable face ever before [your] external eyes ([*wt*]wendige oogen)'.<sup>102</sup> The directive to gaze unflinchingly at the Lord's bloody mouth, nose, cheeks, eyes, and beard harmonises with Van Meckenem's *Carrying of the Cross* and *Christ Awaiting Crucifixion*, both of which center on a frontal view of the face of Jesus, turned toward the beholder [Figs. 11.11 & 11.12]: 'Ah, look at him well, who is nothing but wounds and blood, his holy beard plucked, holy mouth bruised and blood-soaked, nose split in two and burst open, cheeks broken and torn, eyes maimed and blood-stained, and holy hair damp and red with blood'.<sup>103</sup> A new outrage is now added to the ones that preceded: once nailed to the cross, he is raised then thrown downward, the weight of the wood bearing down upon him.<sup>104</sup>

The Latin takes, so to speak, an alternative route to Golgotha. It asks the exercitant to see the spectacle unfolding as the fulfillment of Psalm 44:7, 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the scepter of thy kingdom is a scepter of uprightness'; Hebrews 1:8, 'but to the Son: Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a scepter of justice is the scepter of thy kingdom'; and Isaiah 9:6, 'For a child is born to us, and a son is given to us, and the government is upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, God the Mighty, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of Peace'.<sup>105</sup> The eyes of the soul, the 'eye of devotion' (*oculus pietatis*) is advised to see the cross as an

100 Ibid., fol. 31v.

101 Ibid., fol. 33r.

102 Ibid.: *Och dit suete deerlijk aenschijn hout dit altijt voer van [wt]wendige oogen, ende laet om sinen wille alle cierheit des hoefts*. See note 42 *supra* on the term *wendige*, its inflections ([*wt*]wendige or [*in*]wendige), and its likely use here to signify external vision.

103 Ibid.: see Appendix 11.

104 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 33v: *ende wreedden gebeere hieffen si dat cruys in die locht, ende lietent swaerlijc neder vallen tegen den steen achtigen berch, met sijnen h[eilige] bloedigen doerwonden leden ondert swaer cruce, ende met sijnen bloedigen aenschijn inder onreynder erden*.

105 Ibid., fol. 32v.

instrument of the triumph of Christ, a warrant of his power to save but also to judge the whole world.<sup>106</sup> The process whereby abject suffering is converted into glorious victory is exegetical: not only are passages from Psalms, Isaiah, and Hebrews marshalled, but also Peter's avowal in John 13:37, 'Why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thee', and Thomas's in John 11:16, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him'.<sup>107</sup> Quite unlike them, the *meditans* must cleave close to Christ, refusing to fall away, instead dying with him to arise with him, an implicit allusion to Romans 6:4: 'For we are buried together with him by baptism into death: that, as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life'. Whereas the Dutch invokes the [*wt*]wendige oogen, the meditative, exegetical work of reading the Passion as a prophecy of the Resurrection and all it portends for sinful humankind proceeds, in the Latin, by way of mobilising the *oculus pietatis* (fol. 29v):

See, my soul, how that man was pressed and spurned in all things, ordered to bend his back under the weight of the cross and to bear ignominy upon himself. O, do you see the spectacle? Behold his government upon his shoulder; this is the scepter of justice, the scepter of his rule.

I imagine that pious mother following [her] son, her voice saying: Thither you go, the sole propitiator, making sacrifice for all. Peter comes not to meet you, he who says, 'For you I would die'. Thomas deserts you, who says, 'With him let us all die'. And none of these but you alone are led forth, you who preserved me chaste, you my Son and my God. Even so, let it suffice to bring these words to remembrance, that the eye of piety, feeling compassion for the groaning affections of so great a mother, may merit to be rewarded with the fruit of his/her godly love hereafter.<sup>108</sup>

The theme of Mary's love for Jesus is layered onto that of Jesus's love for humankind, and his redemptive power is tied implicitly to her power of merciful intercession.

The final Latin inscription, one of the longest, when read in conjunction with the adjacent Dutch texts, serves to transmute their emphasis on the corporeal aspect of Christ crucified, as seen first by the crowd on Golgotha and then by Mary upon her arrival, into a contemplative vision of Calvary as the site of divine love, and of Jesus as its immeasurable source. The text is written on the recto of the sheet with *Christ Awaiting Crucifixion* on the verso (fol. 34r)

106 Ibid.

107 Ibid.

108 Ibid.: see Appendix 12. Cf. *Vita Jesu Christi* 647.

[Fig. 11.12]. The Dutch turns on the antithesis between the manner of the people's viewing of Christ and the manner of the Virgin's. The mob mocks the man they take for a criminal, sneering and shaking, wagging their heads and laughing to scorn, bodying forth the imagery of Psalm 21:7–9, as well as John 2:19: 'They cried out, are you the one who would destroy the temple and in three days raise it up?'<sup>109</sup> Oppositely, Mary's heart is wounded to the core when, after Jesus has been crucified, she pushes through the crowd to see her Son hanging from the cross, cruelly torn, pierced, and bloody.<sup>110</sup> In the Latin, it is the soul that beholds Christ on the cross, hears him utter the prayer of supplication, 'Father forgive them' (Luke 23:34), and interprets the sight and the words by visualising an image of the Lord hanging between heaven and earth, uniting and conjoining them by means of the cross: 'Mediator of God and men, hanging midway between heaven and earth, nay rather, he who unites, conjoins terrestrial things to supernal, celestial ones.'<sup>111</sup> Christ in the Passion is transmogrified by the soul that sees through his suffering to its redemptive effect, recognising him at first sight as the most gentle and benign of men. Indeed, the Latin insists that one consider how neither his injuries nor the penalty he pays concern him or disturb his sweetness and tranquility of heart: 'What man have you seen, more gentle, more benign? And again: in all this look closely at that most sweet heart, at the tranquil sense of duty it preserved. It attends to no injury, counts no penalty, feels no contumely, but instead feels compassion for those who torment him.'<sup>112</sup> For this reason, the soul finds itself contemplating Christ's humanity inseparably conjoined with his majesty, divine mercy, and ineffably loving piety: 'Behold me, Lord, one who adores your majesty, not a slayer of your body, one who venerates your death, not a scoffer at your Passion, a contemplator of your mercy, not a contemner of your infirmity. Let

109 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 33v: *Ende al dat quade volc liep om dat cruce, daer ons here so deerlijc aen hinc roepende al spottende ende blasphemerende. Doen mochte ons here wel seggen. Al die mi sagen bespotten mi, si waechden haer hoefde ende riepen.*

110 *Ibid.*: *Och doen si haren lieve sone ontefermelijc aensach so iammerlijc begaet doerwont, ende al bebloet gelaten van sijnen hemelscen vader, ende bespot vanden menscen doen ginc een doot wee doer haer moederlijc herte.*

111 *Ibid.*, fol. 34r: *Mediator Dei et hominum inter c[a]elum et terram medius pendens, imo superis unit c[o]elestibus terrena coniungit.*

112 *Ibid.*: *Quid hoc viro mansuetius quid benignius anima mea vidisti. Et iterum: In omnibus his considera illud dulcissimum pectus quam tranquillitatem servavit pietatis. Non suam attendit iniuriam non p[o]enam reputat non sentit contumelias sed ipsis potius a quibus patitur ille compatitur.*

your sweet humanity advocate on my behalf; let your ineffable piety commend me to your Father'.<sup>113</sup>

If the soul now approaches closer to the cross and views the pallid face of Jesus from nearby, continues the Latin, let it feel compassion like that felt by Mary, and then, hearing Christ's words, 'Father, why hast thou forsaken me?' (Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34), let it recognise that he was showing forth, i.e., exposing to view, as if in an image, the purpose and proficient effect of ejaculatory prayer (*Insuper addidisti, 'Deus meus ut quid dereliquisti me', ut ostenderes effectum orationis*).<sup>114</sup> Citing Psalm 41:2, 'As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so my soul panteth after thee, O God', the soul gives voice to its realisation that what Christ truly exemplifies in the Passion is neither the suffering nor death to which mortal life is subject (*vita mortalis*), but the vital life of the spirit (*vita vitalis*), whose eternal font is Jesus himself, the fountainhead of beatitude and spiritual joy:

Also you added, Lord Jesus Christ, 'I thirst'. For what do you thirst, Lord Jesus: the wine of the vine or a river's water? Your thirst [is] my salvation, your food, my redemption. [...] Why, then, do you, [my soul,] not desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ? Why does the mortal life hinder you, and why does the vital life not incite you, beatitude flowing like a fountain, spiritual companionship and joy? Therefore long for, consider how great is, the multitude of your sweetness, how glorious are the things said about the city of God, where the light of life is, the font of absolute sweetness, the felicity of every man.<sup>115</sup>

In conclusion, the inscription calls upon the votary to be crucified with Christ, but in doing so, to train one's thoughts on the salvation enduringly to be attained (*ut salute consequaris perseverantia*).<sup>116</sup> This text furnishes the perfect complement to Van Meckenem's still figure of Christ awaiting crucifixion in the foreground, as also to the Crucifixion scene in the background [Fig. 11.12]. Whereas the Dutch amplifies both scenes by imagining them corporeally, the

113 Ibid.: *Ecce ego Domine tuae majestatis adorator non tui corporis interfector[,] tuae mortis venerator non tuae passionis derisor[,] tuae misericordiae contemplator[,] non infirmitatis contemptor[.] Interpellat pro me tua humanitas dulcis[,] commendet me patri [tuo] tua ineffabilis pietas.*

114 Ibid.

115 Ibid.: see Appendix 13.

116 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 34r.

Latin elaborates upon them contemplatively, fixing the soul's spiritual eyes on the conciliatory, pacifying, and joyful effects secured in and through Christ by all who trusting him fully, cultivate the *vitam vitalem* he bestows.

## 6 A Modal Turn: Asserting the Primacy of Marian Affection

The inscription discussed above is the last of the Latin inscriptions, even though three prints follow – *Pietà and Lamentation, Resurrection, and Supper at Emmaus* [Figs. 11.13, 11.14, & 11.15]. The reason that the three latter prints lack a text in Latin, I think, is that the substance and tone of the Dutch texts changes after the death of Christ on the cross. They become less visceral, more reflective, and exegetical, diverging from the imagery of the *Extendit-manum-Passion*, the *Christi Leiden in einer Vision geschaut*, and the *Secret Passion*. Instead, they more closely resemble the argument of Ludolphus's *Vita Christi*. This thematic change is in part a consequence of the focus on the Virgin's empathetic, loving relation to Christ in the final section of the manuscript. Latin addenda modally distinct from the main text in Dutch were thus no longer required. The brief Latin heads atop the columns of text shift in tone: whereas they formerly compressed various Passion themes, they now function as ejaculatory prayers pleading for consolation of the spirit [Fig. 11.20].

Typical of this section of the manuscript is the account of how Mary beheld the Crucified: sorrowfully and thoughtfully, she first looked up at him, then down at the people standing round the cross, and considered the difference between his piety and their impiety (*ende saget daer hange[n] u lief kijnt [...] saget nederwaert ende scouwende daer die gene [...] die uwen scat u beroeft hadden*).<sup>117</sup> Mary exemplifies and, more than this, models for our benefit a meditative connection to Jesus. This leads further to a series of meditations, more subdued than the previous ones, on the kinds and degrees of pain felt by Jesus in his five senses as he hung dying on the cross.<sup>118</sup> Previously, his eyes, to cite one of the chief organs of sense, were said to have been punched, poked, and bloodied; now they cause pain at one remove, allowing him to bear witness to, to see as if presaging, the spiteful gestures directed against him and the visible sorrow experienced by his mother and friends. In consequence, after entrusting his mother to John and John to his mother (John 19:26–27), he pauses to meditate the mystery of the Passion, 'raising his voice in a long

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., fol. 36r.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.: *Aldus hangende was ihesus gepijnt in allen sijn vijf simen.*

prayer' that begins, 'My God, my God, look upon me'.<sup>119</sup> This is the opening line of Psalm 21, and the reference to the prayer's length (*hief hi op een lanc gebet*) makes clear that he recited the whole of the psalm, which is to say that even in the throes of the Passion, he chose steadfastly to reflect upon its typological meaning:

And he spared neither his bruised mouth nor his holy mangled, parched head, but read out the holy psalms of his sacred Passion, in order that his Father might look, with satisfaction, upon the misdeeds of men. And his godly voice trembled and burned, and was soft, and now was loud and wailing. And at once the world was covered over by a great darkness, [and] the sun left off from shining from the sixth hour to the ninth. Then our Lord cried out in a loud voice, 'Heli, heli lamasabathani', that is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' And think not that Christ murmured against his Father, for his will was in all things like unto the Father's will. [...] O devout soul, suffer as if you had been abandoned, and pay heed to your hapless bridegroom on the holy cross.<sup>120</sup>

The earlier call to consider how Jesus suffered in his sense of sight sets the scene for this recitation of the Psalms, wherethrough the Crucifixion, indeed the whole Passion, is viewed through the lens of the Psalmist's prophecies thereof. Jesus is to be seen considering himself and his straitened circumstances in light of the imagery of these Psalms:

- Psalm 21:2, 'O God, my God, look upon me: Why hast thou forsaken me?';
- Psalm 26:2: 'Whilst the wicked draw near against me, to eat my flesh';
- Psalm 26:9: 'Be thou my helper, forsake me not';
- Psalm 30:6: 'Into thy hands I commend my spirit';
- Psalm 34:11–12: 'Unjust witnesses rising up have asked me things I knew not';
- Psalm 34:15: '[...] scourges were gathered together upon me, and I knew not';
- Psalm 34:19: '[...] who have hated me without cause and wink with the eyes';
- Psalm 54:4–5: 'For they have cast iniquities upon me: and in wrath they were troublesome to me';
- Psalm 56:5: '[...] the sons of men, whose teeth are weapons and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword';
- Psalm 68:21–22: 'In thy sight are all they that afflict me: my heart hath expected reproach and misery';

119 Ibid.: *Als die suete goedertieren here sijnder liever moeder toegesproken hadde so hief hi op een lanc gebet. Deus Deus meus respice.*

120 Ibid.: see Appendix 14.

- Psalm 87:7–8: ‘They have laid me in the lower pit’;
- and Psalm 108:25: ‘And I am become a reproach to them’.
- And most relevant, since it prophecies this very scene of Christ crucified meditating upon the Psalms, Psalm 108:4: ‘Instead of making me a return of love, they detracted me: but I gave myself to prayer’.<sup>121</sup>

At the conclusion of this episode, the soul is charged to see how not even one kind word was offered to the crucified Lord, and how, on the contrary, his tormenters gnashed their teeth against him.<sup>122</sup> Following the meditative example set by Christ, his situation can be identified as fulfilling Isaiah 63:3, ‘I have trodden the winepress alone’, and Psalm 111:10, ‘The wicked shall see and shall be angry, he shall gnash with his teeth and pine away’. Soon after, in a prayer of supplication, the votary pleads for divine assistance in keeping the Lord’s death ever present in his heart, as it was ever present to the heart of Christ, there to be meditated (*doer die tegenwoordicheyt uwer bitter doot, die u altoes voer stont, dat u werdige doot nummermeer en moet comen wt mijnre herten*).<sup>123</sup>

In sum, the final portion of the manuscript assimilates the modal characteristics of the prior Latin inscriptions which, cleaving close to the relatively subdued but expressive manner of Van Meckenem’s prints, provide a gloss on his images parallel to and distinct from that furnished by the Dutch texts that constitute the bulk of the book. Whereas these texts amplify Suso’s *Hundred Articles* by reference to treatises associated with the *Secret Passion* (as well as the *Revelations* of Saint Bridget and other Passion cycles), and enrich Van Meckenem’s Passion series by layering upon it detailed verbal images of the corporeal atrocities visited on Christ, the Latin texts instead focus on bringing the theme of divine mercy to the fore and on cultivating thoughts and feelings associated with the contemplative spousal imagery of the *Song of Songs*. The two sets of texts qualify each other, as well as commenting upon the printed images, in a proto-emblematic compound of the verbal and the pictorial that, in triangulating amongst a series of engravings and a series of texts, invokes two registers of vision to allude to dual meditative modes. The fact that the prints are material images lends a material effect to the verbal images, incarnational with respect to the Latin, corporeal with respect to the Dutch.

121 *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 36r–v.

122 *Ibid.*, fol. 36v: *Want in alre sijnre pijnen ende noot, soe in sprac hem niemant toe een troestelijc woort, mer wt spotte, ende scipmpte scudden si haer hoeft op hem, ende arselden met haren tanden op hem.*

123 *Ibid.*, fol. 37v.



FIGURE 11.2 Cologne School, *Saint Jerome Kneeling in Penitence before the Crucifix*, ca. 1470–1480. Metalcut, hand-coloured in green, yellow, brown, orange, gold, and red lake, 255 × 179 mm  
NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 2003.476





FIGURE 11.3 Netherlandish School, *Christ the Man of Sorrows*, ca. 1490–1500. Woodcut, hand-coloured in green, two shades of brown, flesh colour, yellow, black, and touches of red lake, 257 × 170 mm  
NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 2003.476



FIGURE 11.4 Israhel van Meckenem, *Christ Washing the Disciples' Feet and the Departure of Judas, with the Agony in the Garden and the Last Supper*, from the *Große Passion*, ca. 1480. Engraving, ca. 205 × 151 mm  
NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 2003.476





FIGURE 11.5 Israhel van Meckenem, *Betrayal and Capture of Christ*, from the *Große Passion*, ca. 1480. Engraving, ca. 205 × 151 mm  
NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 2003.476



FIGURE 11.6 Israhel van Meckenem, *Christ Brought before Annas, with Denial of Peter and Mocking of Christ*, from the *Große Passion*, ca. 1480. Engraving, ca. 205 × 151 mm  
 NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 2003.476





FIGURE 11.7 Israhel van Meckenem, *Flagellation of Christ in the Presence of Pilate, with Christ Brought before Herod*, from the *Große Passion*, ca. 1480. Engraving, highlighted in gold, with touches of pen and red ink (on Christ's feet), ca. 205 × 151 mm

NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 2003.476



FIGURE 11.8 Israhel van Meckenem, *Christ Crowned with Thorns, with Mocking of Christ*, from the *Große Passion*, ca. 1480. Engraving, highlighted in gold, ca. 205 × 151 mm  
 NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 2003.476





FIGURE 11.9 Israhel van Meckenem, *Ecce Homo, with Pilate and his Wife*, from the *Große Passion*, ca. 1480. Engraving, ca. 205 × 151 mm

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FIGURE 11.10 Israhel van Meckenem, *Pilate Washing his Hands, with Workmen Building the Cross and Judas Returning the Thirty Pieces of Silver*, from the *Große Passion*, ca. 1480. Engraving, ca. 205 × 151 mm  
 NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 2003.476





FIGURE 11.11 Israhel van Meckenem, *Christ Carrying the Cross, with Mary, John, and the Holy Women in the Distance*, from the *Große Passion*, ca. 1480. Engraving, ca. 205 × 151 mm  
NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 2003.476



FIGURE 11.12 Israhel van Meckenem, *Christ Awaiting Crucifixion, with the Crucifixion in the Distance*, from the *Große Passion*, ca. 1480. Engraving, ca. 205 × 151 mm  
 NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 2003.476





FIGURE 11.13 Israhel van Meckenem, *Pietà and Lamentation over the Body of Christ, with the Deposition in the Distance*, from the *Große Passion*, ca. 1480. Engraving, ca. 205 × 151 mm  
NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 2003.476



FIGURE 11.14 Israhel van Meckenem, *Resurrection, with Christ Breaking the Doors of Hell*, from the *Große Passion*, ca. 1480. Engraving, ca. 205 × 151 mm  
 NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 2003.476





FIGURE 11.15 Israel van Meckenem, *Supper at Emmaus, with Christ and the Two Disciples on the Way to Emmaus and Christ and the Magdalene in the Garden*, from the *Große Passion*, ca. 1480. Engraving, ca. 205 × 151 mm  
NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 2003.476

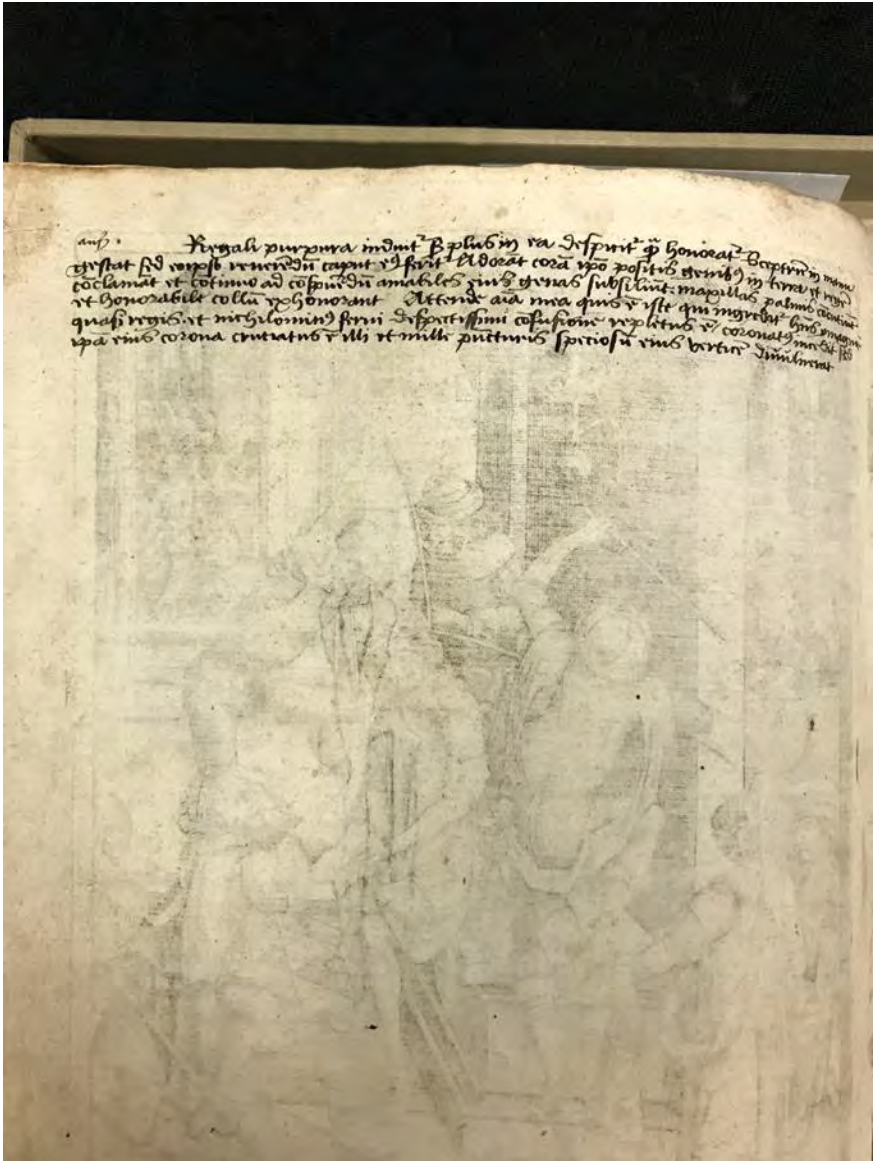


FIGURE 11.16 Verso of sheet with *Christ Crowned with Thorns*. *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 26v  
 NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 2003.476

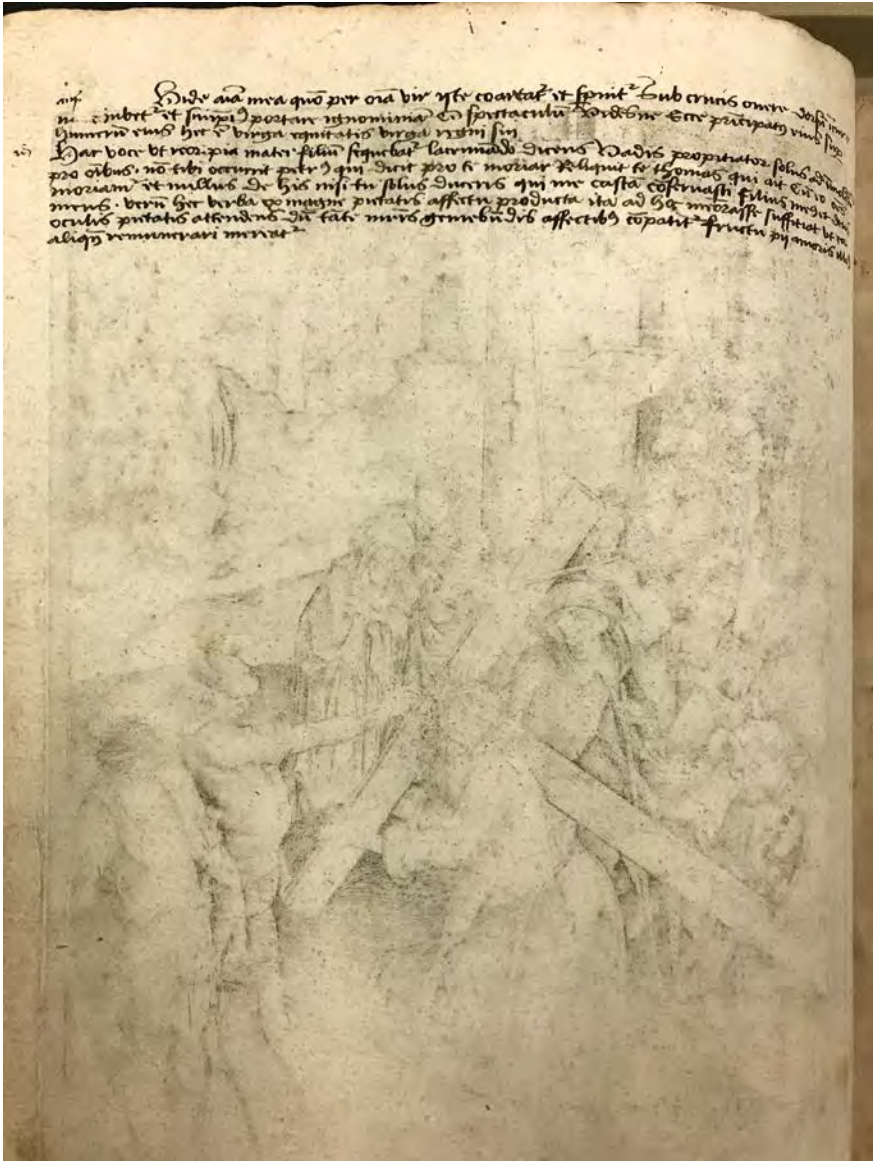


FIGURE 11.17 Verso of sheet with *Christ Carrying the Cross*. Groenendaal Passion, fol. 32v  
 NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 2003.476





FIGURE 11.18 "Vanden hoechsten ende den alder costelijcken scat ons heren ihesu christi der doecht des lijdsamheit". Groenendaal Passion, fol. 6r  
 NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 2003.476



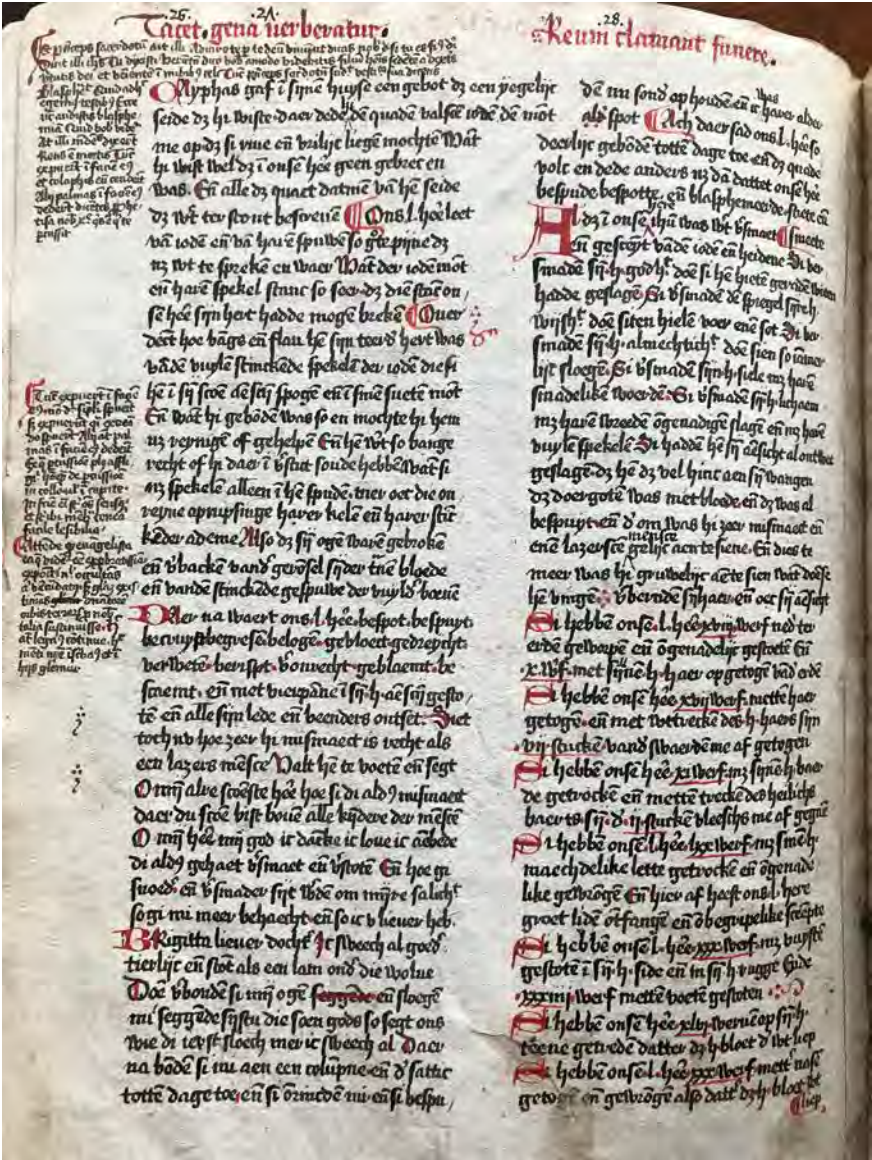


FIGURE 11.19 Articles 26, 27, and 28 from *Hondert Articulen*, with marginal notations. Groenendaal Passion, fol. 21v  
 NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 2003.476

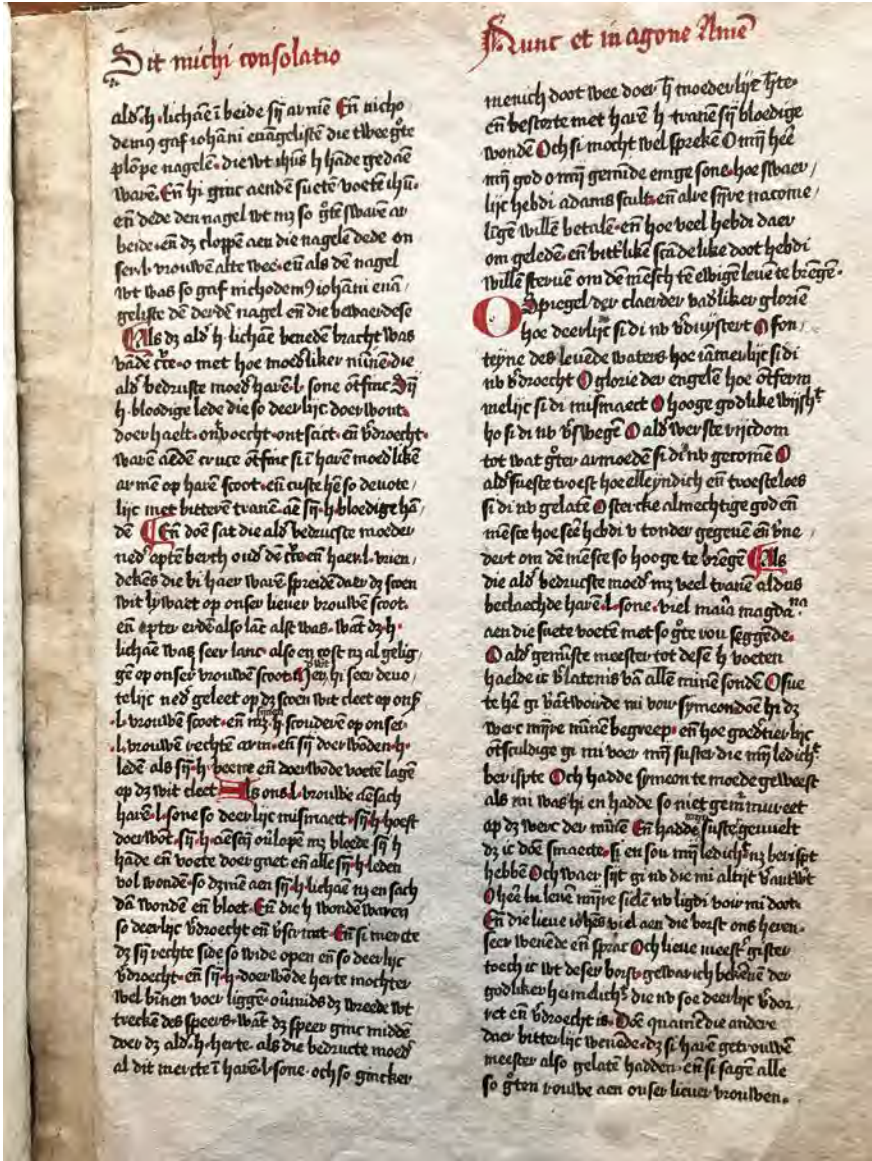


FIGURE 11.20 “Sit michi consolatio” and “Nunc et in agone[.] Amen”. *Groenendaal Passion*, fol. 40r

NEW YORK, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 2003.476

## Appendix of Cited Text Passages

1.

[Fol. 21v] *Tunc expuerunt in faciem eius. [Unde Matthaeus] non dicit [simpliciter] spuerunt, sed expuerunt quasi excreando spuerunt. Alij [autem] palmas in faciem ei[us] dederunt [...] ex qua percussione plus affligitur homo, quam de percussione in collo, ultra quam in capite. In facie enim sunt omnes sensus, et sunt ibi membra tenera facile l[a]esibilia.*

2.

[Fol. 10r] *Begeve ic op u met al wes ic vermach, dat gi tsavons end smorgens, enigen varcien wilt, die u daer alder bequaemste toe is, omtrent een vieredeel van eender uren, of min of meer, na dat god graci geeft ende verleent. In welker tijt gi u selt inkeren, ende setten in u herte, dat gecruyste beelt ons liefs heeren iesu christi. Ende gi selt dan met groeter oetmoedicheit ende verniettenheit ws selfs, u inwendigen ogen slaen op dat gecroende doerwonde hoeft. Ende dat mismaect ende verscoerde aenscijn, dat geneycht hanget op sijn gebenedide scouderen, gelijc gemaect eenen melaetschen mensch. Als gi dit beelt aensiet in uwer herten staende, so denct dan hoe hi sijn bloedige wenede ogen op di slaet. Ende spreect u toe aldus clagende ende seggende. O mijn lief kijnt siet wat ic voir di lide. Ic hebdi voir mijn bruyt wtvercoren, mijn geneuchte is bi di te wesen. Ende en wilt mi nu doch niet verstoten. Want van di te sceyden is mi bitterde dan dese lastige passie ende smertte, ende die ellendige doot te sterven. Dese woirde ende deser gelike wilt vestigen in uwer memorien.*

3.

[Fol. 10r] *Och niet saliger niet beters en mach een mensch doen, dan dat hi hem oeffent inden liden ende passie ons liefs heeren[.] Want als sanctus albertus seet. Dat een simpel gedachte of oeffeninge der passien iesu Christi, is beter orbeliker ende salichliker die sielen, dan dagelijc gegeeselt te worden totten bloede toe, of dan een iaer lanc alle dage gevast te water ende te broede, of oec een iaer lanc dagelijc enen davids souter gelesen.*

4.

[Fol. 6r] *Want het sijn die liefde gaven gods, die god sijnen verborgen vrienden geeft om haer siel daermede te verciereren. Want noyt en was beeltmaker alsoe abel, die met grooter nerstiger sorchvuldicheit, die trecken van eenen beelde arbeit te trecken nae der volcomenheit exemplaers, daer hijt na maket, als god almechtich van ewicheit, wt sijnre ongemetenre wijsheit heeft voersien, ende voer geordineert vanden verborgen vrienden, hoe hise brengen soude, met sus danige middel des lidens tot eenre volcomelike gelikenisse ihesus christi.*



5.

[Fol. 25r] [...] *onsen here ende keerden om met sinen heiligen aenscijn voerwaert, ende met sinen doerwonden rugge aender columpnen, ende bonden sijn gequeste bloedige hande boven sijn hoeft soe hoege, ende stijf met scerpen corden. Ende si bonden hem met scerpen corden [...] om sijn heilige voeten so stijf aender columpnen dat hi hem niet gerueren en conste, ende dat sijn heiligen voeten niet dan metten teenen dat paviment en raecten.*

6.

[Fol. 40v] *Doen die werdige moeder gods ende al dit liefgeselschap was in also groter droefheyt doen verscoonde ons lieve here sijn heyligen lichaem van allen sijnen wonden tot enen miracule ende troest sijnre eerwerdige moeder, ende sijnre liever vriendekens die so seer bedruet waren, so dat in sijn heylige lichaem geen wonden en toenden dan die heylige vijf wonden, in sijn handen voeten ende in sijn heylige rechte side, die hielt ons hem open tot enen teeken der victorien. [...] O doen si sagen dat heylige lichaem dat also soon ende geheel was, dat nergens quetsure en openbaerde dan sijn heylige vijf wonden doen waert die werde moeder gods, ende die ander seer getroest.*

7.

[Fol. 16v] *O mijn hemelsce vader dits nu mijn bedrueffenis, dat allet dat menscelike geslecht niet salich werden en sal. Ende doen beweende ic den doot des sonders, ende om die ghene die hem mijns lidens, ende bitteren doots onwerdich souden maken. Waert mogelijk dat ic so menigen lichaem hadde als daer menige sterre inden hemel is, die woude ic alte mael liever geven in die doot also icse geleden hebbe, dan dat ic eenen sondaer van mijnre wegen verloren bleef.*

8.

[Fol. 21v] *Overdenct hoe bange ende flau hem sijn teerder hert was vanden vuylen stinckende spekelen der ioden die si hem in sijn scoen aenscijn spogen ende in sinen sueten mont. [...] Ende hem wert so bange recht of hi daer in verstat soude hebben. [...] Also dat sijn ogen waren gebroken ende verbacken vander geronsel sijnder tranen bloede ende vanden stinckende gespuwe der vuylder boeven. [...] Ende hoe gi snoeder, ende versmader sijt werden om mijnre salicheit so gi mi meer behaect.*

9.

[Fol. 17r] *Ende at gruen cruyt dien haddens wi bat geloeft, dat hi gods sone hadde geweest, dan desen wijn drencker. Ende met dien sloegen si mi voer mijnen mont, ende aen mijn oren, ende aen mijn wangen. [...] Ende met groten geruchte brachten si hem in die stad, si liepen om hem als gapende volve. Si en mochten sijnre prijnen ende confusien*

*niet versaedt werden. Si hebben onsen lieven here xlwerf neder gestoeten, ende als ons here half neder was so hebbensi hem averrecht op getrocken meeten zeele ende hem xliij werf, met hekelen gestoeten ende setten haer vingeren .xvwerf in dat heiligen aenscijs ons lieven heren recht of sijt met stucken wt gehaelt soudē hebben.*

10.

[Fol. 23r] *Ende dan gingen si verre van hem op dat hem alle dat volc wel sien soude. [...] Si hadden onsen here so deerlijc mismaect, datmen nauwe die gestelnis van sijnen aensicht en sach. [...] Ende die engelen sagen haren here in deser groter versmaetheyt, ende si en dorsten hem niet helpen mer met groter werdicheyt bewaren si sijn here tranen, ende sijn dierbaer bloet. Ende sijn werdige moeder seer bedruet volchde van verren na met dootliken wee ende si en const hem niet gehelpen.*

11.

[Fol. 33r] *Och besiet hem wel want gi en sieter niet aen dan een wonde ende bloet, sijnen h[eilige] baert is hem wtgetogen, sijnen h[eilige] mont is doerwont ende al vol bloots sijn h[eilige] nose is al ontwee gesmeten ende geborsten sijn h[eilige] wangen sijn al gebroken ende gescort, sijn oogen sijn doerquest ende vol van bloede, ende sijn h[eilige] haer is al nat ende root van bloede.*

12.

[Fol. 29v] *Vide anima mea quomodo per omnia vir iste coarctatur et spernitur. Sub crucis onere dorsum incurvare iubetur et sui ipsius portare ignominiam. O spectaculum, vides ne? Ecce principatus eius super humerum eius, haec est virga aequitatis virga regni sui.*

[Fol. 32v] *Hac voce ut reor pia mater filium sequebatur dicens. Vadis propitiator solus ad immolandum pro omnibus. Non tibi occurrit Petrus qui dicit: Pro si moriar. Relinquit te Thomas qui ait: Cum eo omnes moriamur, et nullus de his nisi tu solus ducis qui me castam conservasti filius meus et Deus meus. Verum haec verba ex magnae pietatis affectu producta ita ad hoc memorasse sufficiat ut oculus pietatis attendens. Dum tantae matris gemebundis affectibus compatitur, fructui pij amoris illius aliquando remunerari mereatur.*

13.

[Fol. 34r] *Adiecisti etiam[,] domine ihesu Christe[,] sitio. Quid sitis Domine ihesus: Vinum de vite aut aquam de flumine? Sitis tua, salus mea[,] cibus tuus[,] redemptio mea. [...] Cur igitur non cupis dissolvi et esse cum Christo? Cur te retardat vita mortalis, et non provocat te vita vitalis, beatitudo fontalis[,] societas et l[etitia] spiritualis? Desidera igitur et considera quam magna multitudo dulcedinis tuae, quam gloriosa dicta sunt de civitate Dei, ubi est lumen vitae[,] fons totius dulcedinis[,] et beatitudo utriusque hominis.*

14.

[Fol. 36r] *Ende hi spaerde niet sijnen gequesten mont, noch sijn h[eilige] doerwonde verdoerende hoeft mer hi las die heiligen psalmen wt, van sijnder h[eilige] passien, op dat hi sijnen vader genoech soude doen voir die misdaet der menscen. Ende sijn h[eilige] stemme was bevende ende vijerende, ende als nu was si stille ende als nu was si geluyt ende seer wenende. Ende terstont waert een groet duysternisse over al die werelt, die sonne liet haer scijnen vander sester uren totter nonen. Doen riep ons here met luyder stemme. Heli heli lamasabathani. Dat is mijn god, mijn god, waer om hebstu mi gelaten. En wilt niet dencken dat christus murmureerde tegen sijnen vader, want sijnen wille was gelijk den vaderliken wille in alle dingen. [...] O devote siele lijt u als gi gelaten sijt, ende merct uwen troesteloesen brudegom aen, inden h[eilige] cruce.*

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# Afterword: Making an End of the Beginnings of Early Printing in Western Europe

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Thenne emonge whom there was an excellent doctour of dyuynyte in the royaume of fraunce of the ordre of thospytal of Saynt Johns of Jherusalem whiche entended the same and hath made a book of the chesse morlay-sed whiche at such tyme as I was resident in brudgys in the counte of Flaundes cam into my handes, whiche whan I had redde and ouerseen, [m]e<sup>1</sup> semed ful necessarye for to be had in englisshe. And in eschewyng of ydlenes And to thende that somme which haue not seen it ne vnderstonde frenssh ne latyn, I delybered in my self to translate it in to our maternal tonge. And whan I so had achyved the sayd translacion, I dyde doo sette in enprynte a certeyn nombre of theym, whiche anone were depesshed and solde. Wherefore by cause thys sayd book is ful of holsom wysedom and requysyte vnto euery astate and degree, I haue purposed to enprynte it, shewyng therin the figures of suche persons as longen to the playe, In whom al astates and degrees ben comprysed, besechyng al them that this litel werke shal see here, or rede to have me for excused for the rude and symple makyng and reducyn in to our englisshe.<sup>2</sup>

WILLIAM CAXTON, prologue, *The Game and Playe of the Chesse*, second edition [1483], fols. [ai]r-[ai]v<sup>3</sup>

William Caxton's prefatory comments in his second revised edition of *The Game and Playe of the Chesse* offer an unusually detailed bio-bibliographical insight into the impulses underlying the decision by England's first printer to produce a second edition of a text that he had printed for the first time in English some nine years earlier. The 1474 print of *The Game and Playe* has

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1 The printed text reads 'ne'.

2 Caxton's spelling and capitalization has been retained and his punctuation conventions rendered as closely as possible in modern form. See the modern facsimile edition in Blake N.F. (ed.), *Jacobus de Cessolis, The Game of Chess: Translated and Printed by William Caxton, c. 1483* (London: 1976). For an edition of the rest of the 1483 prologue see Blake N.F. (ed.), *Caxton's Own Prose* (London, 1973) 87–88 and the student edition of the entire 1483 print in Adams J. (ed.), *William Caxton, The Game and the Play of the Chesse* (Kalamazoo: 2009).

3 *The Game and Playe of the Chesse* ([Westminster], William Caxton: [1483]), STC 4921, ISTC ic00414000.

the distinction of being Caxton's first dated work.<sup>4</sup> We are told it was completed *the last day of marche the yer of our lorde gode a thowsande foure honderd and lxxiii* and it was only the second book ever printed in English.<sup>5</sup> It was produced in the Low Countries, probably in Ghent, likely in collaboration with David Aubert.<sup>6</sup> It deployed Caxton's earliest known supply of type: Type 1, modelled on a Burgundian book hand with similarities to a script used by Colard Mansion for his manuscripts. In addition to the range of material evidence discussed in the essays in this volume, the types used by the early printers are an important source for the investigation of vernacular books and readership. The nature of the types, the printers' shared knowledge and experience of the technical aspects of book production and printing tell us about the kinds of collaborative work taking place in certain workshops. Caxton's Type 1 had been cut and cast by another business associate who was resident in Flanders during the period of Caxton's earliest forays into printing and publishing, namely Johann Veldener, the Cologne printer and type-founder who had moved to Louvain in 1473 and was responsible for cutting most of Caxton's types thereafter.<sup>7</sup> As I shall show further below, in Caxton's case, such matters have important implications for our understanding of the chronology of his prints, his early business arrangements in the Low Countries (still a matter of modern scholarly debate), and, most importantly for the purposes of this volume, for the nature of his understanding of the vernacular readership likely to have been attracted by his printed books.

*The Game and Playe*, we are told in both the 1474 and 1483 editions, is based on Caxton's own translation. Although his actual source has not been traced, it may well have been presented to him in his exemplar as a mid-fourteenth century manuscript confection of two French translations by Jean Ferron and Jean de Vignay respectively, ultimately derived from *De ludo scachorum*,

4 *The Game and Playe of the Chesse* ([Ghent?, David Aubert?], for William Caxton: 31 Mar. 1474), STC 4920, ISTC ic00413000.

5 For the 1474 text see Axon W.E.A. (ed.), *Caxton's Game and Playe of the Chesse, 1474* (London: 1883).

6 See Hellinga L., "William Caxton, Colard Mansion, and the Printer in Type 1", *Bulletin du bibliophile* (2011) 86–114.

7 For a summary outline and chronology of Caxton's different but related types see *William Caxton, An Exhibition to Commemorate the Quincentenary of the Introduction of Printing into England, published for the British Library by British Museum Publications Limited* (London: 1976) 12–17, also Barker N., "Caxton's Typography", *Journal of the Printing Historical Society* 11 (1976–1977) 114–133. Veldener's role in securing Caxton's commitment to printing and publishing is outlined in detail by Hellinga L., "Printing", in Hellinga L. – Trapp J.B. (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, Volume III, 1400–1557* (Cambridge: 1999) 73–75, 78–79.

a thirteenth-century Latin moral treatise by Jacobus de Cessolis.<sup>8</sup> Translations of the Latin work continued to be rendered in many European vernaculars not just before but also during and after Caxton's time.<sup>9</sup> Caxton knew French and Dutch so it is likely that he would have been familiar with several manuscript versions, perhaps even in different languages, prior to his own translation work. In the 1483 edition he attributes his vernacular source to *an excellent doctour of dyvynyte*, a reference to Jean de Vignay (ca. 1285–ca. 1350) who was a hospitaller of the Order of Saint-Jacques-du-Haut-Pas in Paris. As Caxton likely knew, the illuminated manuscripts containing de Vignay's *Jeu des échecs moralisé* had originally been commissioned as luxury products. In de Vignay's version the translation is offered to Prince John of France, Duke of Normandy and brother of the French king. This may go some way towards explaining why Caxton thought it fitting to dedicate his March 1474 print to George, Duke of Clarence, and brother of Edward IV.

Caxton was probably well placed to judge the likely market for the Latin, French and English texts he printed during his time in the Low Countries. For about twenty years prior to making his first English translations in the 1470s he had been a prominent member of the English community in Bruges and a successful member of the English Staple at Calais. He was in a strong position to advance his career by taking advantage of the wealth and privileges associated with the lifestyle of a successful English merchant adventurer and diplomat with good knowledge on the ground of Hanseatic matters and Anglo-Burgundian relations and rivalries in the Low Countries.<sup>10</sup> The autobiographical information in Caxton's prologues suggests that he was aware of the importance of

8 See Wilson R.H., "Caxton's Chess Book", *Modern Language Notes* 62 (1947) 93–102. Wilson argues that Caxton's source was similar but not identical to the late fourteenth-century manuscript now known as University of Chicago, Regenstein Library MS 392 ('the Cockerell manuscript'), produced by unknown but probably Flemish copyists and illuminators ca. 1365. See also Knowles C., "Caxton and His Two French Sources: 'The Game and Playe of the Chesse' and the Composite Manuscripts of the Two French Translations of the 'Ludus Scaccorum'", *Modern Language Review* 49 (1954) 417–423.

9 Notable early examples include the French treatments noted above; two roughly contemporaneous German versions by Heinrich von Beringen (ca. 1330) and Konrad von Ammenhausen (1337), respectively, and the Dutch translation *Dat Scaecspel*, completed on the eve of Saint Lawrence's day in 1403 by someone calling himself Franconis, according to its oldest extant manuscript. Some early prints of the latter are identified in n. 20 and will be discussed further below.

10 Useful biographical details in Painter G., *William Caxton, a Quincentenary Biography of England's First Printer* (London: 1976); see also Blake N.F., *Caxton: England's First Publisher* (London: 1976) and Hellinga L., *Caxton in Focus, the Beginnings of Printing in England* (London: 1982).

making and maintaining the noble, aristocratic and mercantile contacts and trading partners that had served him well before he took up the commercial business of printing. Such contacts were presumably strong enough to secure Caxton's own political and diplomatic influence and socio-literary standing in both international mercantile and court circles at home and abroad. It was presumably mostly through his own personal endeavours in this environment that he was able to procure or select the necessary Latin and vernacular material to meet both the practical and aspirational needs of his imagined vernacular audiences.

In the 1483 preface to *The Game and Playe* cited above Caxton describes how a French version of his source came into his hands in Bruges and, having read it, he thought it a profitable exercise to work on an English translation and make it more largely available for others who knew neither Latin nor French. Similar sentiments had been expressed for centuries by English translators of much older Latin and French works circulating in manuscript form, so Caxton's comments in the second edition hardly signal a radical departure from venerable anglophone literary tropes where the vernacular writer assumes the role of overseer determining the nature and extent of anglophone literary taste. On the other hand, Caxton's 1474 preface has a distinctively different purpose and focus. Here he makes no mention of the linguistic capabilities of his imagined audience, claiming more generally that the text is written *to thentent that other of what estate or degre he or they stande in may see in this sayd lityll book, yf they gouerned themself as they ought to doo*. Moreover, unlike in the 1483 edition, he addresses a specific aristocratic figure who is presented as his patron. Such a change in emphasis demonstrates once more just how versatile and commercially minded the earliest and most successful exponents of the print trade across Europe had to be with regard to their immediate strategic needs and local circumstances.

In his address to George, Duke of Clarence, in the 1474 preface, Caxton claims the work is rendered in print *in the name and vnder the shadewe of your noble protection, not presумыng to correcte or enpoigne ony thyng ayenst your noblesse*, strongly implying that the translation work has been overseen or approved by his noble patron whose *excellent renome shyneth as well in strange regions as with in the royaume of england*. Setting aside the conventional and hyperbolic nature of the compliment, the important point here is that Caxton characterises Clarence as his mentor or protector for a printing enterprise in the Burgundian Netherlands which was designed to appeal to contemporary English vernacular reading habits at home and abroad. This was a promotional strategy that Caxton had previously deployed for *The Recuyell of the Histories of*

*Troy*, the first book ever printed in English, probably in association with David Aubert in Ghent, and a truly international production.<sup>11</sup>

In *The Recuyell* Caxton describes how he had been prompted to continue the translation work on his French courtly romance source while in Ghent by no less a person than Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy (wife of Charles the Bold since 1468 and sister of George, Duke of Clarence, also of Edward IV and Richard III).<sup>12</sup> He reports that his aristocratic commission was completed in Cologne in September 1471. It was printed using the same ornate and spacious Type 1 that Caxton then used slightly later for his undated print of Raoul Lefèvre's *Recueil des histoires de Troyes*.<sup>13</sup> The latter text had been the French source for Caxton's translation and the Caxton print was again produced in association with David Aubert. The venture must have been successful since French, English and Dutch versions of texts by Lefèvre were obviously soon viewed as lucrative publishing opportunities by printers other than Caxton and Aubert in the Low Countries, such as Jacob Bellaert in Haarlem and Gerard Leeu in Antwerp, both of whom soon followed Caxton's lead.<sup>14</sup>

In establishing Caxton and Aubert's place in the chronology of early printing ventures such as these, it is important to pay attention to the very early date that can be associated with Caxton's Type 1. That same supply of type was used for two of the three other undated works in French that Caxton printed in the 1473–1476 period: Petrus de Alliaco's *Meditationes circa psalmos poenitentiales* and Raoul Lefèvre's *L'histoire de Jason*.<sup>15</sup> Both works were probably pitched at the Anglo-French and Burgundian markets and were soon followed by similar productions from other contemporary printers in the Low Countries and beyond. The early date of Type 1 nevertheless seems sufficient grounds to

11 *The Recuyell of the Histories of Troy* ([Ghent?, David Aubert?], for William Caxton: [ca. 1473–1474]), ISTC il00117000, STC 15375.

12 For Margaret as mediator for the Yorkist cause and the heightened significance of Anglo-Burgundian affairs during Caxton's time in the Low Countries see Armstrong C.A.J., *England, France and Burgundy in the Fifteenth Century* (London: 1983).

13 Lefèvre Raoul, *Recueil des histoires de Troyes* ([Ghent?, David Aubert?], for William Caxton: [ca. 1474–1475]), ISTC il00113000.

14 For the growing competitive awareness among early printers in the Low Countries of the kinds of narrative literature in vogue in several different European vernaculars, see Bruijn E. de, "The Southern Appeal: Dutch Translations of French Romance (ca. 1484–ca. 1540) in a Western European Perspective", in Besamusca B. – Bruijn E. de – Willaert F. (eds.), *Early Printed Narrative Literature in Western Europe* (Berlin – Boston: 2019), 93–124.

15 Alliaco, Petrus de, *Meditationes circa psalmos poenitentiales* ([Ghent?, David Aubert?], for William Caxton: [ca. 1474–1475]), ISTC ia00479600 and Lefèvre, Raoul, *L'histoire de Jason* ([Ghent?, David Aubert?], for William Caxton: [ca. 1476]).

suggest that Caxton, the Father of English printing, might also have a claim to being considered the first printer of French language texts, at least in the Low Countries. Similarly to all Caxton's works printed using this distinctive early type, it is no surprise that *The Game and Playe* was marketed at this early stage in his career as a printer and publisher as polite courtly reading matter intended for likeminded anglophone readers wherever they might be found in Western Europe.

The commercial success of early printing ventures was never completely assured, of course. In the case of both *The Recuyell* and *The Game and Playe*, the novelty of printing in the English language had to be matched by the associated risk of printing multiple copies of polite reading in a new vernacular version for the first time. The risk was perhaps mitigated in the very early days by undertaking small print runs – a strategy that is notoriously difficult to detect with any degree of certainty and perhaps for that reason is not featured prominently in this volume. Some of the risk could be shared by working in collaboration with others who had an interest of some kind in the book trade but did not necessarily want to get their hands covered in printer's ink. Caxton may well have started out in the printing trade as one such investor. Even at a time when manuscript book production had moved definitively beyond the confines of court and cloister, there would still have been much merit in associating works of courtly fiction with the exclusive literary tastes of a prominent noble patron such as George, Duke of Clarence. In claiming to have 'reduced' the text he was translating into English in the 1483 prologue, Caxton would also have been well aware that the English vernacular he was promoting had already been enjoying for nearly a century some of the prestige that much earlier generations of aristocratic readers across Western Europe would have more readily associated with Latin, French or Italian narrative fiction.<sup>16</sup> No doubt his decision to publish the most characteristic works of Geoffrey Chaucer and John Gower – the two English literary giants of his day – was due to an astute awareness of the commercial advantages associated with such a move, rather than any true sense of the inadequacy of *our englisshe* as a literary vernacular.<sup>17</sup>

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16 Examples of this general fifteenth-century development in English manuscript culture continue to attract modern scholarly attention; however see the general overviews provided by the relevant essays on the publishing and marketing of Chaucer and Gower and other polite literature of various kinds in English and for the English readers who could afford them in Griffiths J. – Pearsall D. (eds.), *Book Production and Publishing in Britain, 1375–1475* (Cambridge: 1989); Hellinga and Trapp, *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*.

17 One of the first ambitious printing projects Caxton undertook following his return to Westminster was his 1476–1477 edition of *The Canterbury Tales* (ISTC ic00431000,

For his second edition of *The Game and Playe* in 1483, Caxton's prefatory words suggest that he was by this stage in his career banking on previous success with similar material. He had already benefitted financially from the English vernacular reading networks while resident in the Low Countries and overseeing the work of his earliest printing associates. By the time of his second edition of *The Game and Playe*, however, many of the noble, aristocratic and mercantile interests Caxton displays in his prologues were in the process of being refashioned to meet changing circumstances: Clarence had been executed by Edward IV in 1478 and Edward himself had died of illness in 1483, just as Richard III had taken the English throne. But, perhaps most importantly, in the interim period between the two editions Caxton had become England's first metropolitan printer. By September 1476 he had moved his residence and printing business to Westminster where he must have quickly gained a much more immediate and sophisticated understanding of English vernacular reading habits. Despite his request to be excused for his part in the text's *rude and symple makyng* the conservative view of the universal social order perpetuated by *The Game and Playe*, expressed in the firmly-established English national vernacular, probably held considerable appeal for the anglophone metropolitan and mercantile circles in which the printer now moved as a Westminster resident.

An additional factor that led Caxton to publish a second edition of *The Game and the Playe* was perhaps his not unnatural readiness to make some further commercial gain from the renewed production in England of the latest vernacular version of a much older moral text that had already enjoyed some currency among Dutch-speaking, francophone and anglophone readers while the printer had resided in Bruges. In the 1483 prologue Caxton tells us that his first print run had sold out and a second edition was deemed necessary. In order to refresh the text, he omitted the original 1474 dedication and wrote a new prologue so that his translation work could be pitched at the broadest possible imagined anglophone audiences likely to want to see, hear or read it. The type used for this second edition is also an important and distinctive feature. For the 1483 print Caxton has revised and reset the text using a fresh casting, Type 2\*, which gave the English vernacular texts produced at Westminster using this type a new and quite distinctive slimmed-down visual appearance.<sup>18</sup>

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STC 5082), followed in 1483 by a second *Canterbury Tales* edition (ISTC ic00432000, STC 5083), published in the same year as Caxton issued his edition of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* (ISTC ic00435600, STC 5094).

18 Type 2\* represents a second state of type 2, the supply that Caxton had brought with him from the Low Countries and had first used there for his 1475–1476 print of the French translation by Jean Miélot of the *Cordiale quattuor novissimorum* ([Bruges, Colard

The reference to seeing the text in Caxton's 1483 prologue seems particularly apt since this second edition of *The Game and Playe* is one of the first known illustrated English vernacular printed books.<sup>19</sup> The written text is accompanied by twenty-four woodcut illustrations taken from sixteen separate blocks. It has been assumed that these are likely to have been specially cut for the text under Caxton's supervision by the same cutter who made the blocks for the twenty-six woodcuts in Caxton's second edition of *The Canterbury Tales* (1483). Although considered fairly crude in their execution, the 1483 images for *The Game and Playe* graphically illustrate the general thrust of the written text. All estates and degrees (both high and low) should recognise the royal prerogative to preside over an ordered body of state with the individual members of that society carrying much personal responsibility for contributing to the common good by their demeanor and attitude. In the illustrated Caxton edition the woodcut images of the king in various guises are directly relevant to the parts of the text they illustrate: at first the king's body is dismembered and his body parts scattered as a sensational representation of total social disorder. Then, in more orderly fashion, the king is seen seated on a broad throne with sceptre in hand, on one occasion also with a queen by his side. There then follow images illustrating how the proper restoration of order can be managed and maintained throughout all sections of society: a judge is calmly seated with an open book; a fully-armoured knight on horseback is fully engaged in riding forth; a peasant poses with a spade; we see a smith, a clerk, a merchant and so forth engaged in their occupations; a number of ordinary folk of indeterminate occupation indicate that they are fully engaged in the business of living properly by having coins in hand or nearby, keys or purses at girdle and, on one occasion, a host figure offers hospitality to a lone traveller.

The disposition of text and image in the 1483 print suggests strongly that, by this stage in his career, Caxton was in a good position to exploit the commercial opportunities presented to him because of the general impulse to visualise core aspects of the de Cessolis Latin text in several of its vernacular manifestations. He was likely already aware of this visual tradition because of his experience of the *Jeu des échecs moralisé* manuscripts and perhaps a number of other vernacular renderings in print. These latter included the Dutch translations of de Cessolis printed by Johannes de Vollenhoe at Zwolle and by Gerard Leu

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Mansion?], for William Caxton: [ca. 1475–1476], ISTC ic00908000). The earliest dated book to have been produced using type 2\* was Caxton's print of the English translation of Miélot's *Cordiale* attributed to Anthony Woodville, Earl Rivers ([Westminster], William Caxton: 24 March 1479, ISTC ic00907000; STC 5758).

19 Details in Hodnett E., *English Woodcuts 1480–1535* (second revised edition Oxford: 1973) 75–76, 111–113.



at Gouda.<sup>20</sup> The Dutch incunabula are particularly interesting in the context of Caxton's 1483 print not only because of their earlier date but also because spaces were reserved in both of them for illustrations to be added at a later stage, as demonstrated by Fig. 0.4 in the introduction.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, just as the members of Caxton's Westminster workshop were completing preparations for his second, now illustrated, edition of *The Game and Playe*, similar preparations were being made, practically simultaneously, in the Delft workshop of Jacob Jacobszoon van der Meer where another set of sixteen broadly similar but not identical woodcuts had been specially cut. These were then used to illustrate his edition of the Dutch *Scaecspel*.<sup>22</sup> Caxton's decision to illustrate his 1483 print, therefore, probably expresses something of his entrepreneurial and competitive spirit. It also suggests that publishers such as Caxton, Leeu and van der Meer who wanted to survive in the business of printing had to move with the times, remaining aware of where their businesses were situated (both geographically and socially) and the languages, texts and production processes in vogue across a range of European cultural settings. Leeu's later career in Antwerp as a printer for an international market is particularly relevant in this context because of his obvious interest in publishing the same or parallel French, English and Dutch texts to those that had earlier brought Caxton some commercial success.<sup>23</sup>

The Caxton anecdote usefully illustrates the manner in which the pioneers of European vernacular printing sometimes faced the task that the contributors to this volume have also largely set themselves. How can one identify the likely interests and changing needs of vernacular readers from the limited available evidence of the books and texts they are previously known to have owned and read and the geographical and social settings and networks to which they belonged or through which our imagined early readers moved? The early printers were perhaps more familiar with the distribution patterns and marketing habits associated with the organized production, commissioning and marketing of texts and books in a manuscript culture than with those that could be

20 *Dat scaecspel* (Zwolle, Johannes de Vollenhoe: 1478–1480), ISTC ic00411500; Cessolis Jacobus de, *De ludo scachorum*, Dutch translation (Gouda, Gerard Leeu: 2 October 1479), ISTC ic00411000.

21 On this general phenomenon see McKitterick D., "What is the Use of Books without Pictures? Empty Space in Some Early Printed Books", *La Bibliofilia* 116 (2014) 67–82.

22 *Boek dat men hiet dat scaecspel* (Delft, Jacob Jacobszoon van der Meer: 14 February 1483), ISTC ic00412000.

23 See note 14 above. One might well also wish to compare the likely circumstances of Caxton's relocation of his printing business from the Low Countries to Westminster in 1476 with Leeu's strategic decision to move his printing house from Gouda to Antwerp in 1484.

directly attributed to the new print technology. As many of the essays in this volume have shown, the transition from script to print was neither immediate nor absolute at any point during the period under consideration. They support the assumption that members of the early print trade across Europe must often have relied upon their past experience as readers and that of their peers and contemporaries at home and abroad in making a judgement call regarding how to identify and secure the potential market for their work. Allied to this may well have been a growing general awareness of how improved education and literacy (and the increased social and geographical mobility associated with this development, especially in urban settings) had created much larger, more peripatetic and less clearly defined vernacular reading networks. As many of the essays in this volume have indicated, such networks included readers with rapidly-developing literary tastes, devotional interests and pragmatic needs. Increasingly such needs were being met by the host of Latin and vernacular materials made available to them in commercial settings, often but not always by printers working increasingly in urban and metropolitan milieux and with an eye for established markets where certain types of books and prints were known to have sold well in the past. It was around such broadly comparable production and marketing strategies for early printing that European cultural attitudes of the time were formed.

By their focus on the materiality of books and reading practices in the search to identify the vernacular readers in the early age of print, the essays in this volume demonstrate the importance of recovering and understanding such strategies. The Caxton example nicely reflects and ties together the issues raised by our focus on real and imagined readers, the mobility of texts and images, and intermediality, demonstrating on a number of levels the growing reliance of early European printers on identifying and exploiting what might be broadly characterized as expanding reading habits and commercial interventions in the early print trade. Importantly, this final anecdote acts as a fitting reminder of the essential interconnectedness of the three thematic sections within which the essays in the volume as a whole have been arranged. Such an approach has allowed a thoroughly European focus to emerge from what might otherwise be presented as a series of disparate national case studies. In terms of vernacular readership in the period, the rapid development of pragmatic forms of education and literacy was clearly a European phenomenon that played a huge part in making many apparently local interventions commercially attractive in a variety of geographically and socially diverse European settings. The careers of Caxton and his contemporaries and successors across Europe discussed by the essays in this volume confirm that there was an exponential growth in the market for the vernacular printed word, particularly for informational texts

dealing with religious and devotional matters, courtesy texts offering rules for living well, certain chronicles and history writings, legal, educational, medical, geographical, horticultural, or business materials, and shorter texts sometimes produced as pamphlets or as broadsheets and even sometimes presented as wall art. Such works were clearly designed to amuse or inform a rapidly expanding and voracious audience as often anonymous members of that audience found the time and opportunity for reading as part of their day-to-day business activities, their devotions, and their casual entertainment.

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