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SPIEGEL DER GHEWARIGER MAECHDEN CHRISTI

In Dutch, illustrated manuscript on paper and parchment
[southern Netherlands (probably St. Trond)], dated 1546

273 paper leaves plus 17 parchment leaves, complete (i6, ii10, iii6, iv10, v6, vi10, vii6, viii10, ix6, x10, xi6, xii10, xiii6, xiv10, xv6, xvi10, xvii6, xviii10, xix6, xx10, xxi6, xxii10, xxiii6, xxiv10, xxv6, xxvi10, xxvii6, xxviii10, xxix6, xxx10, xxxi6, xxxii10, xxxiii6, xxxiv10 + 1, with 17 single paper leaves with prints tipped in after ff. 42, 66, 67, 68, 71, 79, 87, 94, 97, 100, 111, 133, 139, 182, 194, 206, and 222), contemporary foliation, skipping tipped in leaves, written on 29 long lines, ruled in red ink (justification 137 x 68 mm.) in black ink in a cursive bookhand, rubrics and sidenotes in red, capitals touched in red and punctuation in red, 2- and 4-line initials in red and brown, 8 large (6- to 9-line) red and brown puzzle initials, with red and black penwork foliage infill, in one with confronted profile heads (f. 75v), SEVENTEEN HAND-COLORED ENGRAVINGS, added painted frames in black and sometimes gold, on paper, stuck on to single parchment leaves tipped into the manuscript, some thumbing and signs of use, generally in very good condition. Bound in wooden boards covered in brown calf, sewn on 5 cords, on the sides stamped and gilt center roundel with the Crucifixion, the Instruments of the Passion and the IHS monogram, on the upper cover I.F. BACX, SALICH IN GER[TT] CHEYT, followed by a stamp of a bee, on the back cover "ANNO 1601," 5 fleur-de-lis on the spine, brass clasps, edges gilt, with quarter brown morocco fitted case, title "Spiegel der Maechden/ Ms. Met gravures/ 1546." Dimensions 171 x 119 mm.

Product of a Netherlandish nun's convent, this hybrid manuscript is written on paper and includes a noteworthy sequence of hand-colored engravings pasted onto parchment and tipped into the text at appropriate junctures. Prefaced by Jerome's famous Epistle to Eustochium, the manuscript contains a large number of texts in the vernacular specifically intended to promote female piety. Representing the work of four important engravers of the period, the prints include both some unrecorded examples and some rare impressions.

PROVENANCE

1. Made at or for use in Sint-Hieronymusdal in St.-Trond, now Liege, in the mid-sixteenth century. A number of Dutch-language prayer books from St. Trond contain engravings by the same printmakers represented in this manuscript (including the Monogrammist S. Allaert Claesz, Jacob Binck, Israhel van Meckenem, etc.), many now in the University Library in Liege (see Sint-

Truiden, 1986, nos. 30-34). The juxtaposition of these prints with texts concerning or attributed to St. Jerome suggests an origin in St. Trond. In the sixteenth century, two nuns, a Sister Franssoes Backy, and a sister Gritchen van der Ellen, inscribed the manuscript on the inside of the front cover.

2. In July 1546, an anonymous scribe, presumably the confessor of the monastery, added the text on ff. 272r-273v and wrote the colophon on f. 273v: "Bide toch voer den gheenen die dit screef/ Want hij sonder twijfel arm van duechden bleef/ Dij is bekent sijnen naeme/ Bidt toch dat hij gode sij bequaeme; m.ccccc.xlvi. In Julio; Godt sij gheloest Ihesus Maria Catharijna."

3. Bound in 1601 for I. F. Bacx, name stamped on the binding, whose death on St. Martins day [1] November 1602 is recorded on f. 273v.

4. J. R. Ritman, *Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica*, Amsterdam, MS 82, purchased from Hartung and Karl, Munich, Auction 55, 3-6 November 1987, lot 11.

TEXT

Prefaced by Jerome's famous letter to Eustochium, which served as a model for female monasticism throughout the Middle Ages, the manuscript contains a series of extracts from biblical, patristic, and hagiographic literature and prayers as aids to devotion, in medieval Dutch. Marginal titles in red indicate either the content or source of each text.

f. 1, rubric, *Eenen claren spiegel der ghewariger maechden christi ...* [passages on the wise and foolish virgins, passages from Matthew];

ff. 1v-2, Table of Content, in eight chapters;

ff. 2-3, rubric, *Den goederberen leser gruete ende gunste in Christo*; incipit, *Int iaer van xxxv lest geleden soe benick ...*;

ff. 3-5, rubric, *Der eerbaerder godvruchtigher oetmodigher maeghet ...*; incipit, *Christus Ihesus ons here ende ons god ...*;

Chapter 1, Saint Jerome, Epistle 23, Letter to Eustochium

ff. 5-43, rubric, *Hier beghint eenen notabel tractaet getrocken wt somigthe brieven des heylighs mans S. Ieronymi on ghewaerighe maechdelichz te beleeven wt den latijne in duytscher spraecken overgeset*; incipit, "Hoort dochter ende siet ende neyge dijne oren ende vergeet dijn volck ...";

Chapter 2, Aids to prayer, including the Rosary and miscellaneous Suffrages

ff. 43-75v, rubric, *Vanden ghebede ende ene goede onderwijsinge hoe ghij u daer inne alder profijteliichste oefenen sult. Dat twede capitel*; incipit, "Die glorioese leeraer Sinte Hieronimus heest in dit voegaende tractaetken totter heyligen maeghet Eustochium ...", followed by extracts from Jerome, Bernard, Augustine et al., as aids to prayer, including the Rosary (f. 64), prayers to Saints John the Evangelist, Laurence,

Jerome, Francis, Katherine, Barbara, Agnes, the crucified Christ, Apollonia, Elizabeth, etc. (from f. 66v);

Chapter 3, On the Seven Wounds of Christ

ff. 75v-140, rubric, *Wanden seven bloetstortinghen ons liefs heren Jesu Christi ende vanden groten die deselve te overdencken geleghen sijn. Dat derde Capitel*, arranged with prayers for the days of the week, opening "Ons heere ende ons god riep over veel iaeren," arranged to be said over the seven days of the week;

Chapter 4, On the Sacraments

ff. 140-195, rubric, *Vanden heijlighen sacramento diversche goede leeringhen ende hoe ghij u daer toe alder profijtelijske bereiden sult om dat selve weerdelijcken te ontfangen. Dat vierde Capitel*, incipit, "Eest dat ghij begeert devotelijcken orbaerlijcken ende sachlijcken totten heylighen weerdijghen sacramento te gaene ...",

Chapter 5, On the Seven Deadly Sins, the Evils of Humanity, and Grace after Sin

ff. 195-207, rubric, *Vanden menichfuldijghen weldaeden ende gratien die u de beere verleent beest om danckaer daer af te zijne. Dat vijfte Capitel*; incipit, "Tijtljcke gaeven ende giften vercrijgen dicwils minne ende grote liefde ...",

Chapter 6, On Death

ff. 207-222, rubric, *Van dat berdencken des doots ende dijns sterfdachs waer duer ghij lichtijcken vander liefsten deeser weerelt totter minnen gods bekeert muecht worden. Dat v Capitel*; incipit, "Gelijck dat die menschen malcanderen seer onghelijck sijn ...";

Chapter 7, On God's Mercy

ff. 222v-237v, rubric, *Vander oneyndelijcker barmherticheit gods teghen alle wanhopen ende cleyndoedicheyt. Dat sevenste Capital*; incipit, "Als nu die sesse eerte capittulen ...";

Chapter 8, On Patience in the Face of Suffering

ff. 237v-273v, rubric, *Vander verduldicheit in alle lijden deeser tijt ende ongemeten loon die daer nae volghen sal. Dat achste ende dat leste Capitel*; incipit, "Wildij volherden in uwen heijlighen opsette ...".

The inclusion of Saint Jerome's Epistle 23, Letter to Eustochium, originally written in Rome in 384 A.D., places our *Spiegel* firmly in the tradition of female monasticism. Daughter of Saint Paula, Eustochium was the spiritual student of Jerome and made a vow of perpetual virginity. She traveled with Paula and Jerome, helped him with the translation of the Vulgate (she spoke Latin and Greek and read Hebrew), and, in 404, when her mother died she took over the spiritual direction of three women's communities. In the letter Jerome formulates at great length, first, the motives which ought to actuate those who devote themselves to a life of virginity, and, second, the rules by which they ought to regulate their daily conduct. Evidently, the Dutch translation remains unedited.

ILLUSTRATION

The prints appear on unfoliated tipped-in leaves, numbered consecutively through the manuscript, as follow:

- 1, between ff. 43-44, Jacob Binck (c. 1500-69), *Christ and the Woman at the Well* (100 x 74 mm.), Christ addressing the woman who is drawing a bucket up from the well, with a group of apostles in the background, set in a landscape, lightly colored (see Hollstein, *German Engravings*, p. 22, no. 24);
- 2, between ff. 66-67, Monogrammist S (Alexander van Brugsal, d. c. 1554), *Saints Stephen and Laurence* (109 x 84 mm.), the two saints holding their attributes standing under a decorative arch, the martyrdom of St. Laurence in a roundel above, with a border of flowers, fruit and foliage on three sides, lightly colored (Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Engravings*, XIII, p. 201, no. 369);
- 3, between ff. 67 and 68, Israhel van Meckenem (c. 1440/4-1503), *Saint Francis* (125 x 71 mm.), the saint holding a crucifix and displaying the stigmata, lightly colored (Hollstein, *German Engravings*, XXIV, p. 134, no. 33611, XXIVA, p. 138);
- 4, between ff. 68-69, Allaert Claesz (c. 1500-26), *Saint Catherine*, a bust of the saint in profile, in a fashionable head-dress, holding a sword, with a border of flowers, fruit and foliage on three sides, lightly colored (Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Engravings*, IV, p. 127, no. 101);
- 5, between ff. 71-72, Anonymous (Cologne?) Master, *The Crucifixion* (116 x 80 mm.), Christ on the Cross, with the fainting Virgin, Saint John and Mary Magdalene, set in a landscape, strongly colored (unrecorded?);
- 6, between ff. 79-80, Monogrammist S, *The Garden of Gethsemane* (116 x 82 mm.), Christ kneeling before an angel holding the cross, the foreground the sleeping disciples, to the right Judas entering with soldiers; above in a roundel the Taking of Christ, all enclosed in a sculpted Renaissance arch, with "Memento Me Domine" across the base, strongly colored (unrecorded?);
- 7, between ff. 87-88, Monogrammist S, *The Flagellation* (110 x 85 mm.), Christ bound to a pillar surrounded by tormentors; above in a roundel the Mocking of Christ, all enclosed in a sculpted Renaissance arch, with "Miserere Me Deus" across the base, strongly colored (unrecorded?);
- 8, between ff. 94-95 (verso), Monogrammist S, *The Mocking of Christ* (110 x 85 mm.), Christ surrounded by tormentors; above in a roundel the Ecce Homo. In a sculpted Renaissance arch, with "Ave Benigne Ihesu" across the base; strongly colored (Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Engravings*, XIII, p. 147, no. 187).
- 9, between ff. 97-98, Allaert Claesz, *Saint Apollonia* (120-85 mm.), the saint holding an open book and a tooth in a pair of tongs, flanked by two female saints, standing under a Renaissance arch, with above in a roundel the martyrdom of Apollonia; monogram in lower foreground, with a frame of birds, fruit and flowers on three sides, colored (Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Engravings*, IV, p. 125, no. 94).
- 10, between ff. 101-02, Monogrammist S, *Christ before Pilate* (110 x 80 mm.), Pilate washing his hands; above in a roundel the Carrying of the Cross.; in a sculpted Renaissance arch with "Memento me Domine" across the base; strongly colored (unrecorded?).

11, between 111-12 (verso), Monogrammist S, *The Preparation for the Crucifixion* (110 x 81 mm.), Christ seated surrounded by mockers; above in a roundel the Nailing to the Cross; in a sculpted Renaissance arch, with "Ave Benigne Ihesu" across the base, strongly colored (unrecorded?).

12, between 133-34, Monogrammist S, *The Entombment* (114 x 84 mm.), Christ laid into the tomb by the Virgin, St. John, et al.; above in a roundel the Resurrection; in a sculpted Renaissance arch with "Sicut Liliun inter Spinis" across the base, strongly colored (unrecorded?);

13, between ff. 139-40 (verso), Allaert Claesz (?), *The Last Supper* (113 x 75 mm.), Christ and the apostles seated around a table, Christ embracing Saint John; above in a roundel Moses instituting the Passover; in a classical arch, lightly colored (possibly Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Engravings*, IV, p. 110, no. 35).

14, between ff. 182-83 (verso), Monogrammist S, *Mary Magdalene* (114 x 80 mm.), the naked saint is lifted into heaven by angels to receive communion from Christ's own hand, watched by a man kneeling in a landscape below; above in a roundel the Magdalene arriving in a rudderless ship at Marseilles, and in the same image preaching the Gospel to crowds. According to French tradition of her legend, after preaching through Provence, she retired to a cave in the mountain and lived as a penitent hermit for thirty years. Her clothes rotted off her body, but her long hair served to clothe her, and although she had nothing to eat or drink, the heavenly communion which she received at each of the seven canonical hours was enough to sustain her. In a border of scrolling acanthus, lightly colored. Probably from the same series as Saint Catherine (Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Engravings*, XIII, p. 209, no. 398);

15, between ff. 194-95 (verso), Jakob Binck, *The Virgin and Child* (100 x 70 mm.), the Virgin of Humility, seated on a cushion on the ground, holding the child wrapped in swaddling cloths, monogram in lower right, strongly colored (Hollstein, *German Engravings*, IV, p. 37, no. 55);

16, between ff. 206-07 (verso), After Monogrammist S, *Death* (117 x 80 mm.), a cadaver with an open belly, lying before a tomb on which rest three skulls (after Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Engravings*, XIII, p. 222, no. 456);

17, between ff. 222-23, Anonymous Netherlandish Master, c. 1530, *The Fountain of Life* (115-81 mm.), King David kneeling before an elaborate fountain, at the top of which is the Crucifixion; on either side Saints Mary Magdalene and Mary of Egypt; in the manner of Monogrammist S or Allaert Claesz.

Engravings by four artists are included in this hybrid manuscript. The most famous of these and the earliest is Israhel van Meckenem (fl. Bochoeld, c. 1457; d. c. 1465-70). As an engraver, he is often identified with the Master of the Berlin Passion named after a passion cycle of nine engravings, of which seven were glued in a manuscript from the Lower Rhine, written in the convent of the Sisters of the Common Life at Arnheim. He contributed the beautiful *Saint Francis* (no. 3). The other three artists are roughly contemporary with the manuscript. Jakob Binck (born Cologne, c. 1500; d. Konigsberg, c. 1569) is a German painter, engraver and designer active in Denmark and Sweden. Especially striking is his *Virgin and Child* (no. 15). Allaert Claesz. (fl. Utrecht

(?), c. 1520-26), also known as the Monogrammist AC, is distinguished by the jewel-like quality of his work, the precious detail, and his elaborate ornamental style; several of the plates prefacing the suffrages are by him (nos. 4 and 9). Although over 200 plates are attributed to him, extant impressions are rare. The last artist, known as the Master S, because he usually signed his engravings with the monogram S, headed an active workshop in the southern Netherlands, where he mass-produced prints often for insertion into manuscripts as is the case here. He is possibly identical with the Antwerp goldsmith Alexander van Brugsal (died before 1545). The Passion sequence is attributed to him (nos. 6-8, 10-12).

Most of the engravings are carefully placed next to texts that they illustrate and accordingly oriented to the recto or the verso: *Saint Laurence* appears next to a prayer to the saint, as does *Saint Francis*; *The Crucifixion* next to a prayer on the crucified Christ; the skulls at the opening of Chapter 7 on death; and so forth.

Recent excellent studies on the practice of inserting prints in manuscripts stop short of the sixteenth century (e.g., Areford, Schuppisser, Weekes). Nevertheless, a coherent group of sixteenth-century manuscripts made at and for St.-Trond and now housed in Liege (see Sint-Truiden, 1986, nos. 30-34), one with as many as 98 inserted engravings, confirms the persistence of this practice and deserves further study in comparison with the present copy.

LITERATURE

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ONLINE RESOURCES

Letter of Jerome to Eustochium (English translation)
<http://www.catholic-forum.com/saints/stj06003.htm>

St. Jerome Letters and Selected Works (in English)
<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf206.html>