

**Hybrid Ritual (use of Carmelite nuns) with a printed Psalter**  
**In Dutch and Latin with musical notation, illuminated manuscript and decorated imprint on paper**  
**Belgium (Bruges?), c. 1600; imprint, c. 1500-1550 (?)**

*ii parchment + ii (paper) + 144 [manuscript] + 137 [printed] + ii paper + ii parchment, modern foliation in pencil top outer corner recto of the manuscript, manuscript is complete, printed Psalter missing leaves at the end (collation i<sup>6</sup> ii-iii<sup>8</sup> iv-v<sup>10</sup> vi<sup>12</sup> vii-viii<sup>8</sup> ix-xii<sup>10</sup> xiii<sup>4</sup> xiv<sup>10</sup> xv-xvi<sup>8</sup> xvii<sup>4</sup>; printed Psalter: a-r<sup>8</sup> s<sup>8</sup> [only 1, fol. cxxxvii, remains, presumably lacking 2 through 8] [\$4]), manuscript: ruled in red ink, full-length vertical bounding lines (justification 117-115 x 76 mm), written under the top line in a cursive gothic bookhand, ff. 25, 27v-32v, 69-70v, 125-132, ruled with thirty-four lines with the text copied on every other line, square musical notation on four- and five-line red staves, cadel initials touched with red, 1- to 2-line red initials, some with decorative void spaces within the initial, painted initials and borders were all cut out from earlier parchment manuscripts and carefully pasted in, including over ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY 1- to 2-line gold initials infilled in pink or blue with white highlights on grounds of the opposite color, or on pink and blue grounds with white highlights, one 2-line gold initial infilled with a short vine tendril, FOUR ILLUMINATED BORDERS (in two styles) and FOUR 4- to 5-line HISTORIATED INITIALS (described below); printed Psalter: printed folio numbers in red, top outer corner recto, red rubrics, 1- to 2-line initials, thirteen 5- to 4-line woodcut initials (four are figurative), outer margin of border f. 7 cropped, tear into border f. 71 with staining from attempted repair on verso, folios with large pasted-in decoration are slightly cockled, fol. cxxxix of printed psalter detached (laid in), printed Psalter closely cropped (text is intact apart from one added annotation). Bound in quarter brown calf over wooden boards, spine with three raised bands, edges dyed red, traces of two fasteners remain, worn at the top and bottom of spine, along raised bands and at joints, but in sound condition. Dimensions 156 x 93 mm.*

Hybrid in all respects, this book combines a liturgical manuscript with a printed Psalter. The manuscript is decorated with initials and borders cut from earlier illuminated manuscripts and meticulously pasted in place. It was copied for, and possibly by, the use of a Carmelite nun, whose solemn profession is recorded here, with her name Jacoba van Dycke and the date. Dutch and Latin alternate quite fluidly within the text. This is a remarkable object that will interest scholars in many fields including book history, women's studies, and linguistics.

### 1. PROVENANCE

Made for the use of a Carmelite nun, Jacoba or Jacqueline van Dycke, who made her solemn profession in a house of that order when she was nineteen on June 2, 1600 (ff. 40v-41). Her complete profession copied out in Dutch and then in Latin on ff. 41-42, beginning "Ego soror Jacobum van dycke facio professionem meam ..." (I sister Jacoba van Dyke, make my profession. I promise obedience, poverty and chastity to God and the Blessed Virgin of Mont Carmel, and to the Reverend Henry Silvius, prior general of the brothers of the order of the same blessed Mary Virgin of Mont Carmel and his successors and to the prioress of this house, according to the second rule of that order." Given this evidence, we conclude that this book was made for, and very possibly by, Sister Jacoba either on the occasion of her solemn profession, or shortly after, c. 1600, in the Southern Netherlands.

Both Dutch and Latin are used in the manuscript Ritual. There were numerous convents for Carmelite nuns in the Netherlands, many of them former Beguine houses that were accepted into the order in the middle of the fifteenth century by Jean Soreth (1394-1471). It is possible that Jacoba was a member of the Convent of Sion in Bruges, where there was a tradition of copying and illuminating books for sale. Sion was home to a number of illuminators, in particular the well-known artist Sister Cornelia van Wulfschkercke (d. 1540), as well as her teacher, Grietkin Sceppers (d. 1505), and her pupil, Margriete van Rye.

A printed Psalter concludes the volume, which does not include any indication of its printer, place of origin, or date; it may date c. 1500-1550. The Psalter was annotated with cues for other prayers for the Divine Office, and some Psalms have been accented for chanting.

2. Probably in France when the book was rebound, using parchment guards at the front and back from a seventeenth-century document mentioning the Prince de Conty (Conti), a title in use 1581-1614 and then from 1629-1814.
3. Notes in French on final the endleaf identify the manuscript as from Holland, 15th century.

## TEXT

### I. Manuscript Ritual:

[ff. 1-6, ruled blanks]; ff. 7-12, [reception of a novice], *Ulanden ontfanghen der bruden int Capitel*, incipit, "Die prioresse vergadert synde met huer conuent ...";

ff. 12-37, [clothing of a novice], *Modus indutionis sororis ordinis Carmelitarum*, incipit, "Postquam puella sufficientes probabata fuerit ..."; [f. 37v, blank];

ff. 38 -70v, [profession], *De professione Sororum*, incipit, "Cum dies professionis aduenerit ..."; [Sister Jacoba Van Dycke's Profession, in Dutch and Latin], f. 40v, incipit, "Ego soror Jacoba van dycke profeste int Jaer ons heeren 1600 den ii van Junius houdt zynde 19 Jaer. Ic suster laquelyne van dycke doen myn professie ..."; f. 41v, incipit, "Ego soror Jacoba van dycke facio professionem meam et promitto obedientiam paupertatem et Castitatem Deo ... et Reuerendissimo patri magistro Henrico Siluio priori generali fratrum ordinis eiusdem beate Marie virginis de monte Carmeli ...";

ff. 71-77v [Communion of the sick], *De communionem infirmorum*, ...;

ff. 78-90, [Extreme Unction], *De unctione infirmorum*, ... [ending near top f. 90, remainder and most of f. 90v, blank];

All in Latin, but with Dutch rubrics, ff. 83-84.

ff. 90v-114v, [On the death of a brother or sister], *De obitu fratris et sororis. Incipiunt. Cum frater mori proximus ...;*

The Litany, ff. 92-95, includes Carmelite saints, including Abraham, John the Baptist, Elia (Elisha), Elisee (Elijah), revered among the Carmelites as the founder of their order, Angelus (1185-1220), the first Carmelite martyr (his feast observed by the Carmelites from 1456), Silvester, Cyril, and Albert of Sicily (c. 1250-1306/7), the first specifically Carmelite saint, who was canonized in 1457; f. 104, describes the dressing and disposition of the body before the altar; with the noted response, "Libera me domine de morte eterna . . .," versicles, and the Kyrie, on ff. 111-112v (with numerous corrections to the music); concludes with a prayer in Dutch.

ff. 115- 127v, Great Psalter of St Gertrude;

Includes prayers to be said with the Psalms for the soul of the departed nun; Johannes Tauler (c. 1300-1360), is mentioned on f. 126v. Many of the prayers and the rubrics are in Dutch.

ff. 128-143, Commendation of the dead and burial service [ends mid f. 143, remainder and f. 143v, blank]; f. 144, incipit, "Hec soror despiciens mundum . . ." [ending mid f. 144; f. 144v, blank].

## II. Printed Psalter

fo. i-cxxxvii verso, Psalms, followed by Canticles, Creed, and litany, now ending imperfectly at the beginning of the litany, with the intercession to St. Michael.

## ILLUSTRATION

The manuscript is illustrated with initials and borders that were meticulously cut out from two or three different illuminated manuscripts from the southern Netherlands, c. 1450-1520, and then pasted in this manuscript. The four historiated initials were likely cut from one manuscript, probably from the Southern Netherlands, c. 1480-1520. They are all enclosed in the same gold initials, heavily bordered in black, on cusped pink or blue grounds. The work of two artists seems to be represented since the style of initials with the scenes from the Passion, ff. 7 and 71, differs from that of the faces of Christ and the Virgin, ff. 38 and 91. The scatter borders, ff. 7, 71, and 91, could have been cut from this same manuscript as the historiated initials, but it is difficult to be sure; they could date c. 1520. The final illuminated initial decorated with a border in a different style is likely from an earlier manuscript, c. 1450-1475.

Subjects as follows:

f. 7, 5-line gold initial on a cusped pink ground of the Mocking of Christ, with a full scatter border with flowers, a strawberry, and a snail;

f. 38, 5-line gold initial on a cusped pink ground of the face of Christ with a short border assembled from separate flowers;

f. 71, 4-line gold initial on a cusped pink ground of the Nailing to the Cross, with a full scatter border;

f. 91, 5-line gold initial on a cusped blue ground with the face of the Virgin Mary (?), and a short scatter border;

f. 115, 2-line blue initial infilled with a simple vine on a square gold ground with a short panel border of leaves and flowers with penwork and gold disks.

The printed Psalter is decorated with thirteen 5- to 4-line woodcut initials, most with decorative floral motifs against stippled grounds, but with figurative initials introducing Psalms 1 (King David praying), 52 (Jesus and another man), 114 (initial for Psalm 52 repeated), and 121 (Moses receiving the ten commandments). There is an animal depicted in the initial before Psalm 131.

Whereas liturgical books for the Mass and Office were quite well-defined by the late Middle Ages, the services for monastic profession, the anointing of the sick, and death and burial are found in a number of different types of liturgical manuscripts. The contents of this manuscript are as hybrid as its material features and language. It is a monastic Ritual, with the services associated with entry into the convent and profession, together with prayers for death and burial, but with the addition of a Psalter. It was clearly intended for the personal use of the nun named within the manuscript, Jacoba van Dyke, and in that sense (although not in terms of all of its contents) calls to mind the Processionals that were so often personal books associated with particular nuns in the later Middle Ages.

The Carmelite Order dates back to the twelfth century, when a group of hermits settled on Mount Carmel in the Holy Land. By the thirteenth century the growing order had adopted a mendicant rule and spread to Europe. They received provisional approval by the pope in 1247 (confirmed in 1274). From an early date, there were convents of nuns who considered themselves Carmelite, but there were no official Carmelite sisters until the middle of the fifteenth century, when they were accepted into the order and granted their own constitutions at the urging of the reformist general of the order, Jean Soreth (1394-1471), approved by the bull *Cum nulla* (1452), by Pope Nicholas V.

Many houses of Beguines in the Low Countries were accepted into the order at that time, including the Beguine house of "Ten Elsen" at Guelders (1452-3), Nieuwkerk (1455), Dinant (1455), Liège (1457), Haarlem (1466), Namur (1468), Vilvoorde (1469), Rotterdam (1482), and Bruges (1487). This manuscript could have been copied at any convent of Carmelite nuns in the Southern Netherlands. Given the strong tradition of copying and illuminating manuscripts at the convent in Bruges, it seems possible that it was copied there.

The fluid alternation between Latin and Dutch is an interesting feature of this manuscript, reflecting the prominent place of vernacular prayers within the Latin liturgy. For example, on f. 12, the Office for entry of sisters into the Carmelite order begins with a Latin title (*Modus inductionis sororis ordinis Carmelitarum*), and a short paragraph, also in Latin, of liturgical directions, describing how the novice is dressed in her new habit. She is then asked – in Dutch and in Latin, "Daughter, what do you wish?" Her response is given in Latin only, "Through God's mercy, I wish to prove myself through obedience, poverty and chastity in your order." The service continues in Latin, but concludes with an (extra) prayer in Dutch. The first service recorded in the volume for the reception of the postulant at the door of the house, in contrast, is almost all in Dutch, with the exception of a few prayers.

Similarly, the gender varies throughout the manuscript. Although many of the prayers are copied in the feminine, and mention the sisters and the prioress, some texts were evidently

copied without alteration from a Ritual for male use. Only the profession on ff. 40v-42, mentions Jacoba van Dyke by name; in other places the usual formula, "famula tua N" (your servant N) is used (e.g. f. 56v). Within the Communion of the sick, the "brothers" are mentioned, for example on f. 71, "Et fratres omnes ...."; on f. 73, both the brothers and the prior are mentioned. On f. 74, in contrast, the sister, "soror" is mentioned. Similar examples can be found in the remainder of the texts: f. 78, "fratres," f. 85, "sorores"; ff. 88v and 96v, "famula tuam N," and f. 113, "N. sororis nostre." It is not uncommon to find manuscripts used by nuns that retain male references; the mixture here of prayers adapted for female use and prayers for male use is interesting.

The continued importance of manuscripts in the centuries after the discovery of printing cannot be more eloquently expressed than in books such as this one that include both manuscript and printed sections. Long neglected by both historians of manuscripts and historians interested in early printing, recent scholarship has underlined their importance for our understanding of this when both print and manuscript production flourished as different options for the making of books (Hindman and Farquhar, 1977; Hindman, 2009; McKitterick, 2003). This volume is a perfect example of how both technologies were used in the early seventeenth century, using a printed section for the standard text of the Psalms, but supplementing it with the more specialized liturgical texts tailored for the use of a particular convent and diocese. McKitterick mentions a manuscript Breviary for the Nazareth community in Brussels with a printed Psalter, use of Tournai, (McKitterick, 2003, pp. 42-3, 51), and TM 148, 172, and 759, described on this site, are also hybrid liturgical books with printed Psalters.

The book described here is a hybrid in a second sense as well, since it is decorated with initials and borders cut out from earlier manuscripts and pasted in here. Manuscripts decorated by pasting in printed woodcuts and engravings have been discussed in the literature (Erler, 1992, Hindman and Farquhar, 1977; Hindman, 2009). Hybrid manuscripts decorated with illuminated initials and borders cut from other manuscripts are less common, and have not yet been the subject of a comprehensive survey. Many of the known examples are, like this one, manuscripts associated with nuns. The number of initials here – over 150 – in addition to the historiated initials and borders make this a particularly striking example.

The nuns from the English Bridgettine Abbey of Syon also cut out initials from their manuscripts; British Library, Add. MS 5208, Royal MS 2 A.XIV, and Oxford Bodleian Library, MS Rawl. C. 781, have missing initials; London, St. Paul's Cathedral MS 5, Oxford, St. John's College, MS 167, Oxford Bodleian Library, and MS Rawl D. 403 have pasted-in initials (De Hamel, 1991; Alexander, 1992, p. 49; McKitterick, 2003). The Augustinian canonesses at Sint-Mariëndall in Diest (North-Brabant), and the nearby convent of Soeterbeeck, also decorated their books in this fashion (Rudy, 2015, pp. 106-108). Pasted-in initials are found in a manuscript copied by the Cistercian nuns at Medingen in Lower Saxony (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Don.e.48). Other examples include London, Victoria and Albert, Reid MS 51, a German Collectar, a Commentary on the Mass in German c. 1596, sold at Sotheby's, 29 November 1990, lot 126; and a Noted Antiphonal (Augustinian Use), from the Southern Netherlands or Germany, described on this site (TM 717).

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