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LEHRHAFTIGKEIT IN DER GEISTLICHEN LITERATUR  
DES 14. UND 15. JAHRHUNDERTS

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‘Turning many to righteousness’  
Religious didacticism in the ›*Speculum humanae salvationis*‹  
and the similitude of the oak tree

The ›*Speculum humanae salvationis*‹ is an elaborate religious and didactic text, made up of words and pictures in combination.<sup>1</sup> It is generally held to have been composed in the earlier part of the fourteenth century, and in an ideal copy it consists of 4924 lines of rhyming Latin prose, preceded by a *Summarium*, together with 192 miniatures. It is well known to modern scholarship as the most widely circulated typological text from the Middle Ages, and chapters 3–42 present a sequence of New Testament events, ‘anti-types’, each of which is shown to have been foreshadowed by three *figurae*, ‘types’ or similitudes, mostly taken from the Old Testament. Chapters 1–2, with 8 pictures, take us from the Fall of Lucifer and the Creation of Adam and Eve to the Flood. Chapters 3–42, with 160 pictures, take us from the

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<sup>1</sup> *Speculum humanae salvationis*. Texte critique. Traduction inédite de Jean Miélot (1448). Les sources et l’influence iconographique principalement sur l’art alsacien du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle. Avec la reproduction, en 140 planches, du Manuscrit de Sélestat, de la série complète des vitraux de Mulhouse, de vitraux de Colmar, de Wissembourg, etc., ed. by Jules Lutz and Paul Perdrizet, 2 vols, Leipzig 1907–1909. The Latin text is reprinted in: Immagini di San Francesco in uno *Speculum humanae salvationis* del Trecento: Roma, Biblioteca dell’Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei e Corsiniana 55.K.2, ed. by Chiara Frugoni and Francesca Manzari, Padua 2006 (Biblioteca di Frate Francesco 1), pp. 293–392. Translations are my own, but I have sometimes been guided by those in The Mirror of Salvation [*Speculum Humanae Salvationis*]. An Edition of British Library Blockbook G. 11784. Translation and Commentary by Albert C. Labriola and John W. Smeltz, Cambridge 2002, and Heather M. Flaherty, The Place of the *Speculum Humanae Salvationis* in the Rise of Affective Piety in the Later Middle Ages, thesis University of Michigan 2006.

Annunciation of the Birth of Mary to the Last Judgment, including a detailed presentation of the life of Mary, the childhood of Christ, the Passion and events after the Crucifixion. Each chapter consists of 100 irregularly formed lines with end-rhyme. The text concludes with three chapters of 208 lines, each with seven prayers, on the Seven Stations of the Passion, the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin, and the Seven Joys of the Virgin.

Scholarship on the ›Speculum‹, which is extensive, has suffered from dissatisfaction at the failure to find a clear answer to what would seem at first sight to be fundamental questions, namely about authorship, date of composition and origin, and from too simple a view of the interrelationship of the words and the pictures.<sup>2</sup> In particular there is a lack of clarity, and in the various handbooks a good deal of misinformation, about the intellectual and cultural context – Italian or German? Franciscan or Dominican? – in which the work originated.<sup>3</sup>

Up to a point it is easy to find a solution to these problems, by shifting the focus from a diachronic to a synchronic perspective, understanding the text functionally as it can be discovered in its reception and in the context of the literary history of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries across Europe. The whole issue of the status of textual composition and reception, however, is different with an illustrated text. With purely ‘literary’ texts, whereas it is sometimes possible to establish different and distinctive recensions, many manuscript copies only differ from one another in minor details of the wording, and the real differences, which are better understood in terms of their outreach and intersection with a changing cultural context, are more difficult to reconstruct. With illustrated texts such as the ›Speculum‹, however, each copy has a new set of pictures that may be based on those of the exemplar,

<sup>2</sup> See Hans-Walter Stork and Burghart Wachinger, ›Speculum humanae salvationis‹, in: *VL* 9 (1995), col. 52–65; Manuela Niesner, *Das Speculum humanae salvationis der Stiftsbibliothek Kremsmünster. Edition der mittelhochdeutschen Versübersetzung und Studien zum Verhältnis von Bild und Text*, Cologne 1995 (*Pictura et poësis* 8); Bert Cardon, *Manuscripts of the Speculum Humanae Salvationis in the Southern Netherlands (c. 1410–c. 1470). A Contribution to the Study of the 15th Century Book Illumination and of the Function and Meaning of Historical Symbolism*, Louvain 1996 (*Corpus of illuminated manuscripts* 9), bibliography pp. XV–XLIII; Flaherty (n. 1), pp. 14–29 (“State of the Field”). See also the unpublished dissertation by Evelyn Ann Silber, *The Early Iconography of the Speculum humanae salvationis: The Italian Connection in the Fourteenth Century*, 2 vols, Cambridge 1982. Her article, *The reconstructed Toledo Speculum Humanae Salvationis: The Italian Connection in the early fourteenth century*, in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 43 (1980), pp. 32–51, remains the best introduction to the early history of the work.

<sup>3</sup> The exception is Johannes Janota, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von den Anfängen bis zum Beginn der Neuzeit. III/1: Orientierung durch volkssprachige Schriftlichkeit (1280/90–1380/90)*, Tübingen 2004, pp. 281–282, with precise and accurate information.

sometimes quite faithfully, but its intersection with the visual culture of a specific historical context is always manifest.

In this contribution I shall be interested, among other things, in finding a place for the European phenomenon of the ›*Speculum humanae salvationis*‹ within German literary history, which will inescapably involve revisiting the unfashionable discussion of date and origins. I also intend to ask about the place of this text in the ‘didactic’ literature of the Middle Ages. Is a religious text structured according to sacred history didactic? Much didactic poetry is in the vernacular: What does it mean that the ›*Speculum*‹ was composed in Latin? And what place should be accorded to its vernacular reception? The ›*Speculum*‹ is inscribed within a set of oppositions that would appear to be recurrent in the didactic literature of the later Middle Ages: Latin and vernacular, verse and prose, words and pictures, religious and profane, moral teaching and devotion, clerical and lay. In view of its exceptionally broad transmission in the German lands, both in Latin and in vernacular reworkings, is it possible to describe this text so that it takes a place within a larger picture? In some respects it may stand at a threshold in the history of European didacticism.

## I

The Prologue begins with a statement about the author’s personal reasons for writing, a first step towards establishing the didactic authority with which he will speak:

Qui ad justitiam erudiunt multos,  
Fulgebunt quasi stellae in perpetuas aeternitates.  
Hinc est quod ad eruditionem multorum decrevi librum compilare,  
In quo legentes possunt eruditionem accipere et dare. (Prol. 1–4)

[They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever. For this reason I determined to put together a book for the improvement and instruction of many, from which readers can both receive and give instruction.]

The first two verses are taken directly from Dn 12,3, hence the omission of a rhyme in verse 1.<sup>4</sup> Is the concept of *justitia*, the goal of this instruction, a moral or a religious term here? Does the concept of *eruditio* simply refer to the process of imparting knowledge, or does it also imply moral improvement, social propriety and godliness? That depends on context. Reading the

<sup>4</sup> The conjectural emendation *multos* [*homines*] in the edition by Lutz and Perdrizet (n. 1), which has been accepted uncritically by all later writers on the ›*Speculum*‹, has no basis in the manuscripts. The unrhymed line serves to mark these words as a biblical lemma, as in a sermon.

›Speculum‹ is from the start presented as a two-way process: erudition is sought for oneself and also that it may be imparted to others.

The second section of the Prologue also begins with a dictum:

In praesenti autem vita nihil aestimo homini utilius esse  
Quam Deum creatorem suum et propriam conditionem nosse. (Prol. 5–6)

[I consider that nothing is more useful to man in this life than to know God, his creator, and to know his own situation.]

This bifocal view of what true knowledge entails, to know God and to know oneself, is familiar from earlier didactic texts, for example from Freidank:

Got hêrre, gip mir, daz ich dich  
müeze erkennen unde mich.<sup>5</sup>

‘To know oneself’ by knowing God is also the basis of the formulation ›Speculum humanae salvationis‹, which stands in a firmly established tradition of *speculum* titles.<sup>6</sup> The ‘mirror’, according to the formulation used at the beginning of the first chapter, is not so much a means of seeing one’s own imperfections or the provision of a model of behaviour. It is to be understood rather in terms of personal transformation in the tradition established by Augustine, which was given its clearest formulation by Alcuin, when he compared the reading of the scriptures to gazing into a mirror in order to obtain a true understanding of man’s fundamental nature:

Sanctarum lectio Scripturarum divinae est cognitio beatitudinis. In his enim quasi in quodam speculo homo seipsum considerare potest, qualis sit, vel quo tendat. Lectio assidua purificat animam, timorem incutit gehennae, ad gaudia superna cor instigat legentis.<sup>7</sup>

[The reading of the Holy Scriptures provides knowledge of divine blessedness. It enables man to reflect on himself as in a mirror, to see his true nature and whither he is going. Assiduous reading purifies the soul, it instills fear of hell, and it directs the heart of the reader to celestial joys.]

For the ›Speculum‹ author man’s knowledge of himself embraces the whole of God’s plan from the creation of man to his redemption:

<sup>5</sup> “Lord God, grant that I may know you and know myself.” Fridankes Bescheidenheit, ed. by Heinrich Ernst Bezzenberger, Halle 1872 (ND Aalen 1962), p. 231 (180,8f.).

<sup>6</sup> See Herbert Grabes, *Speculum, Mirror and Looking-Glass. Kontinuität und Originalität der Spiegelmetapher in den Buchtiteln des Mittelalters und der englischen Literatur des 13. bis 17. Jahrhunderts*, Tübingen 1973 (Buchreihe der Anglia 16), pp. 43f., 101f. For further references, see Pamela Kalning (in this volume), p. 428 n. 8.

<sup>7</sup> Alcuin, *De virtutibus et vitiis liber ad Widonem comitem*, PL 101, col. 616; cited by Silber, thesis (n. 2), note 3 to vol. I, p. 1. For a slightly different slant, giving greater weight to the mirror of scripture as providing insight into one’s own individual position within the history of man’s salvation and to the value of biblical figures as exemplars of behaviour, see Gregorii Magni *Moralia in Iob*, vol. I: *Libri I–X*, ed. by Marcus Adriaen, Turnhout 1979 (CCSL 143), p. 59 (II,i,1); cited by Flaherty (n. 1), p. 9.

Incipit Speculum humanae Salvationis,  
 In quo patet casus hominis et modus reparationis.  
 In hoc speculo potest homo considerare,  
 Quam ob causam Creator omnium decrevit hominem creare;  
 Potest etiam homo videre, quomodo per diaboli fraudem sit damnatus,  
 Et quomodo per misericordiam Dei sit reformatus. (I,1-6)

[Here begins the Mirror of Man's Salvation in which the fall of man and the means of his restoration are revealed. In this mirror man can reflect on why it was that the creator of all things decreed that he should be created. It enables man to see how he has been damned through the trickery of the devil and how he has been reformed through God's mercy.]

After the statement about knowledge of God and self-knowledge the prologue continues with a discussion of how this knowledge is to be imparted to an audience consisting of literate clergy and simple laymen by means of words and pictures:

Hanc cognitionem possunt litterati habere ex Scripturis,  
 Rudes autem erudiri debent in libris laicorum, id est in picturis.  
 Quapropter ad gloriam Dei et pro eruditione indoctorum  
 Cum Dei adiutorio decrevi compilare librum laicorum. (Prol. 7-10)

[The literate can derive such knowledge from the Scriptures, whereas the uneducated need to get their instruction from the books of the laity, that is to say from pictures. For this reason I determined to put together, with God's help, a book for the laity which would serve both the glory of God and the instruction of the unlearned.]

The whole project is for the glory of God, the pictures are specifically directed at unlearned laymen.<sup>8</sup> The words however, the *dictamen*, are couched in simple language in order to be intelligible not only to the clergy but also to the laity:

Ut autem tam clericis quam laicis possit doctrinam dare,  
 Satago illum facili quodammodo dictamine elucidare. (Prol. 11-12)

[In order that the teaching should be available to both clerks and laymen I have endeavoured to write the book in fairly clear and simple language.]

The Latin is clear and simple, there is much emphatic repetition, many simple oppositions and parallelisms, and some formulations have the ring of sub-literary expression (as in the infinitive construction of I,4, cited above), but why was the text not written in the vernacular? Although the laity are thought to need instruction through pictures, the author postulates that there is also a level of Latinity where laity and clergy meet. Who were these laymen?

<sup>8</sup> For a brief overview of the literature on the dictum *Pictura laicorum litteratura*, see Nigel F. Palmer, *Bibelübersetzung und Heilsgeschichte. Studien zur Freiburger Perikopenhandschrift von 1462 und zu den deutschsprachigen Lektionaren des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin, New York 2007 (Wolfgang Stammler Gastprofessur 9), pp. 107-108.

Now the scope of the work is sketched out. It will begin with the Fall of the Angels, and then the Fall of Man, after which it will be shown how man's redemption was brought about, and how the Incarnation was predicted by *figurae* (Prol. 16), prefigurations mostly (but not exclusively) derived from the Old Testament. The rest of the Prologue, lines 17–100, is devoted to a defence of two particular aspects of the method employed. First, the reader will find that the narratives (*historiae*) are expounded only in part and not in their entirety, “because the teacher (*doctor*) is not obliged to expound any part of the *historia* other than that which can be seen to accord with his intention” (Prol. 54–55). Certainly, there are examples of this in the ›Speculum‹. Semiramis, queen of Persia, whose licentious life made her a suitable figure to be the leader of the *civitas mundi* in Augustine's ›De civitate Dei‹, is identified in the ›Speculum‹ only as the woman who stood in the hanging gardens of Babylon gazing upon her distant homeland, a type of Mary's commitment to God when she was presented in the temple (chapter 5).<sup>9</sup> The story of how David's wife Michol allows him to escape through a window when Saul's watchmen come to arrest him concentrates entirely on Michol as the type of Mary as defender of mankind (chapter 38) and makes no allusion, either in the words or the picture, to the traditional interpretations of David's flight as prefiguring the Resurrection or the Flight into Egypt.<sup>10</sup> But rather than citing examples from the text, the Prologue justifies the principle of selective interpretation by the similitude of the oak tree in the precinct of an abbey, which, after it was cut down for want of space, was divided up among eleven different professions, each of which was only interested in that part of the tree that could serve their own trade.

Illustrations of the oak tree from the Prologue are very rare,<sup>11</sup> and it is striking that such a bold visual similitude should take up two fifths of the Prologue to a text in which the interplay of words and pictures is so clearly

<sup>9</sup> Kimberly Vrudny, *Scribes, Corpses, and Friars. Lay Devotion to the Genetrix, Mediatrix, and Redemptrix through Dominican Didactic Use of the Speculum Humanae Salvationis in Late Medieval Europe*, thesis Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN 2001, pp. 135–144. The focus on Semiramis gazing from afar on her homeland is already there in Peter Comestor, ›Historia scholastica‹, Daniel cap. 5 (PL 198, col. 1453A).

<sup>10</sup> Karl-August Wirth, *Auf den Spuren einer frühen Heilsspiegel-Handschrift vom Oberrhein*, in: *Jahrbuch des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte* 1 (1985), pp. 115–204, here pp. 161–177.

<sup>11</sup> Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. germ. fol. 245, f. 1r (B 275); illustrated in Aderlass und Seelentrost. *Die Überlieferung deutscher Texte im Spiegel Berliner Handschriften und Inkunabeln*, ed. by Peter Jörg Becker and Eef Overgaauw, Mainz 2003, Kat. Nr. 124 (p. 242). *Ibid.*, Ms. theol. lat. fol. 734 (B 341); Flaherty (n. 1), fig. 122. Copenhagen, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, GKS 79 2°, 8v–11r (B 287); [www.kb.dk/permalink/2006/manus/218/eng/](http://www.kb.dk/permalink/2006/manus/218/eng/) (last consulted 24 April 2009). New York, H. P. Kraus sale cat. 88 (S 380), subsequently stolen and no longer accessible. For the manuscript sigla see note 18 below.

programmatic. Most medieval trees are presented as organic entities, depictions of interconnectivity, parts that have grown out of a whole. But our craftsman contents himself with just that single signification which serves his immediate purpose: each part of a tree can be put to its own individual use, and likewise he will interpret only that aspect of each biblical type that is consonant with his intentions. These are issues to which I shall return in the last section of this contribution.

In the final section of the Prologue the authorial voice addresses a second methodological point:

Notandum etiam, quod convenienter et revera  
 Sacra Scriptura est tanquam mollis cera,  
 Quae juxta cujuslibet sigilli impressionem  
 Caput in se formae dispositionem;  
 Ut si forte leonem continet in se sigillum,  
 Cera mollis impressa statim in dispositione caput illum;  
 Et si forte aliud sigillum aquilam continebit,  
 Eadem cera illi impressa speciem aquilae habebit. (Prol. 59–66)

[It should be noted that, in truth, Holy Scripture can fittingly be compared to soft wax, which, on receiving the impression of a seal, takes on its shape and form, so that if, say, the seal depicts a lion, the soft wax, having been impressed, will immediately take on its shape, whereas if, say, a different seal has an eagle, the same wax, when it receives the impression, will show the eagle.]

One and the same person or *res* can signify both Christ and the Devil on the basis of different attributes. The author cites the example of David, who can be seen to prefigure Christ when performing good actions and the Devil when performing evil actions (such as adultery or homicide). Two further instances are discussed in more detail: Absalom, who, despite wickedly pursuing his father, is the most beautiful of men and is hanged on a tree, and thus a type of Christ (as in chapter 25), and Samson, who, despite the fact that the occasion was a night spent with a prostitute, arose in the middle of the night and smashed the gates of Gaza, prefiguring the Resurrection and the Harrowing of Hell (as in chapter 33, where there is no mention of the prostitute). This amounts to a rather general point about the method of biblical allegory, and nothing specific to the combination of allegorical techniques employed in the ›Speculum‹. The Prologue concludes, before the final prayer, with the statement that these explanations have been included for the benefit of “students of Holy Scripture” (*studentibus in Sacra Scriptura*, Prol. 96), who would seem to make up just a part of the audience the author would like to reach.

Another explicit statement about audience is to be found at the end of the *Summarium*:

Prædictum proœmium de contentis hujus libri compilavi  
 Et propter pauperes prædicatores apponere curavi,

Qui si forte nequiverint totum librum comparare,  
Si sciant historias, possunt ex ipso prooemio praedicare.<sup>12</sup>

[I have compiled this prooemium setting out the contents of the book and taken care to place it here for the benefit of poor preachers, who, if perchance they are unable to purchase a complete copy of the book, will be able to learn the stories and preach them on the basis of this prooemium.]

*Pauperes praedicatores* are scholars, students who need to acquire materials for pastoral teaching, and this formulation draws the ›Speculum‹ into the milieu of the universities and mendicant *studia*.<sup>13</sup> This is an important pointer to the context in which the ›Speculum humanae salvationis‹ was originally composed.

## II

Where does the ›Speculum‹ stand in European literary history, and in particular in the German lands, where it enjoyed its most widespread reception? It occupies a significant position within a series of typological texts and picture cycles popular from the late twelfth to the early sixteenth century, among which it stands out for its extensive and continuous text, its particular interest in Mariology, and its distinctive literary form.<sup>14</sup> The work has a predecessor in respect of its literary form in the ›Vita beatae virginis Mariae et salvatoris rhythmica‹, a southern German monastic text from the mid-thirteenth century.<sup>15</sup>

A significant precursor of the ›Speculum‹ is the ›Pictor in carmine‹, a monastic text composed about 1200 in England, most likely Cistercian, and consisting of an assembly of Latin hexameters describing a very large number of typological pictures in sequence. It had a very modest circulation on the continent.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Lutz/Perdrizet (n. 1), p. viii.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Franz Josef Worstbrock, *Libri pauperum: Zu Entstehung, Struktur und Gebrauch einiger mittelalterlicher Buchformen der Wissensliteratur seit dem XII. Jahrhundert*, in: *Der Codex im Gebrauch. Akten des Internationalen Kolloquiums*, 11.–13. Juni 1992, ed. by Christel Meier et al., Munich 1996 (Münstersche Mittelalter-Schriften 70), pp. 41–60, with examples of compendia of legal and other university texts, in verse and prose, addressing specifically the pecuniary and didactic needs of *pauperes scholares* who could not afford books.

<sup>14</sup> Karl Polheim, *Die lateinische Reimprosa*, Berlin 1925 (reprint 1963), pp. 436–447.

<sup>15</sup> Kurt Gärtner, 'Vita beatae virginis Mariae et salvatoris rhythmica', in: *VL 10* (1999), col. 436–443.

<sup>16</sup> *Pictor in carmine. Ein Handbuch der Typologie aus der Zeit um 1200. Nach MS 300 des Corpus Christi College in Cambridge*, ed. by Karl-August Wirth, Berlin 2006 (Veröffentlichungen des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte 17).



The mid- or later thirteenth century sees the composition of the ›*Biblia pauperum*‹, a Latin typological cycle in book form that circulated in parallel to the ›*Speculum*‹, although it differs in certain respects and may have reached a rather different audience. An ideal early copy would consist of 34 sets of typological pictures and Latin texts, triads with the antitype at the centre, mnemonic verses accompanying each image, two short *lectiones* explaining the significance of the types, and four Old Testament prophets with their utterances pointing forward to the New Testament antitype. The New Testament scenes run from the Annunciation to the Coronation of the Virgin, but without such a dominant Mariological component as in the later ›*Speculum*‹. Two groups of texts and images were often placed above one another on a large page, so that four such groups were visible in a manuscript opening. It is simply an assembly of elements, with no authorial voice or presence, and the links between the parts and between one set of images and those above, below or to the side had to be realized by the reader. About 80 manuscripts are known, mostly monastic and all but a couple from the German lands. Twenty-seven of these manuscripts have the texts in German, some in a much more elaborately worked-out literary form than the Latin, and the vernacular tradition starts in the second quarter of the fourteenth century.<sup>17</sup>

The ›*Speculum humanae salvationis*‹, which was composed half a century or more later, enjoyed a more widespread transmission and was more international than the ›*Biblia pauperum*‹. We count more than 400 manuscripts, of which a majority, but by no means all, are from the German lands. About one third of the manuscripts have illustrations. Translations are known into German, Dutch, French, Middle English and Czech. Eleven German translations, six of them into prose, are known from some 71 manuscripts and a number of early printed versions. A French prose translation by Jean Miélot circulated in de luxe copies, some of them associated with the Burgundian court; 10 manuscripts in French are attested in all.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> See in particular Henrik Cornell, *Biblia Pauperum*, Stockholm 1925; Gerhard Schmidt, *Die Armenbibeln des XIV. Jahrhunderts*, Graz, Cologne 1959; Karl-August Wirth, 'Biblia pauperum', in: *VL* 1 (1978), col. 843–852.

<sup>18</sup> Lutz/Perdrizet (n. 1) [= LP], pp. ix–xvii, list 200 manuscripts in Latin (LP 1–200), 5 Latin/German synopses (LP 201–205); pp. 102–105, 29 manuscripts in German (LP 206–226), 2 in Dutch (LP 237–238), 1 in English (LP 239), 1 in Czech (LP 240), 7 in French (LP 241–247). The catalogue is extended by Edgar Breitenbach, *Speculum Humanae Salvationis. Eine typengeschichtliche Untersuchung*, Strasbourg 1936 (*Studien zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte* 272) [= B], pp. 5–23 (additional information for LP 1–247), pp. 23–26 (B 248–272, with 22 Latin and 3 German manuscripts already listed by Lutz/Perdrizet in their appendix, pp. 329–331), and pp. 26–43 (B 273–351, no. 314 counted twice, with 58 Latin, 3 Latin/German, 18 German, and 1 French manuscript). Silber, in appendix I of her thesis (n. 2) [= ES], II, pp. 74–108, provides an updated and corrected conspectus of 394 items, adding 55 previously unrecorded manu-

Whereas the ›Biblia pauperum‹ can be associated, both in origin and reception, with the Benedictine houses of Southern Germany and Austria, the ›Speculum‹ belongs in a mendicant context and it thus intersects with quite different intellectual traditions, even though it was in considerable measure indebted in its conception to the earlier work. The evidence for Dominican associations is clear and does not need rehearsing again in full.<sup>19</sup> Chapter 37 describes St Dominic's vision of how Mary interceded with the Lord, to whom she offered Dominic and Francis as champions for mankind, and places this event in the succession of events of Salvation History. The Sorrows of the Virgin are witnessed in a vision by a Dominican friar. Dominican saints are mentioned, special use is made of Thomas Aquinas as a direct source, and the Virgin's freedom from Original Sin arises from *sanctificatio in utero* (III,63).

What is more problematic, but of special importance for the status of the work in the German lands, is the question of origin and date. There is good evidence that a significant branch of the manuscript tradition derived from books produced in a Bolognese workshop in the 1320s, even though only four or five of more than 400 manuscripts are of Italian origin. A now lost Italian Latin manuscript long kept as ms. 10.8 in the Archivo y Biblioteca Capitulares in Toledo, photographed there in part (with all the pictures but only a few specimens of the text) in 1934, and not seen since, is the principal witness and was evidently made in Bologna in the 1320s.<sup>20</sup> A second manuscript, of disputed origin and now in Munich (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 146), comes from the commandery of Knights Hospitaller of the Order of St John in Sélestat, Alsace, where its presence is attested by a late fourteenth- (Bernhard Bischoff) or fifteenth-century (Silber/Hernad) ownership inscription.<sup>21</sup> The manuscript is datable to ca. 1340–1350, written on Italian parchment in Italian ink (Bischoff, as reported by Silber) with pen drawings by an Italian (Bologna?) trained illustrator, who was closely copying a

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scripts (ES 352–406), of which 43 are Latin, 8 German and 4 French. These lists include manuscripts that are known to be no longer extant as well as items from medieval library catalogues. Stork/Wachinger (n. 2), col. 53f., offer corrections and a list of 16 further Latin manuscripts.

<sup>19</sup> Lutz/Perdrizet, pp. 241–245; Silber, thesis (n. 2), II, pp. 41–44; Niesner (n. 2), pp. 11–12; Flaherty (n. 1), pp. 29–43.

<sup>20</sup> Silber, thesis (n. 2), chapter 3 (I, pp. 70–107), ES 388; Silber, Toledo (n. 2), p. 38; Wirth (n. 10), p. 126. Silber lists and analyses the manuscripts with Italian connections.

<sup>21</sup> This manuscript forms the basis of the edition and facsimile by Lutz/Perdrizet (n. 1); LP 69. Cf. Silber, thesis (n. 2), I, pp. 108–120; Silber, Toledo (n. 2), pp. 40–41; Béatrice Hernad, *Die gotischen Handschriften deutscher Herkunft in der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek. Teil 1: Vom späten 13. bis zur Mitte des 14. Jahrhunderts*, Wiesbaden 2000 (Kataloge der illuminierten Handschriften der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek in München 5/1), pp. 177–182, ill. 556–558, 569–577. Wirth (n. 10), pp. 190–181, especially p. 191, and Hernad (p. 181) are emphatic in rejecting an Italian origin for Clm 196.

Bolognese exemplar. The script seems to be northern rather than Italian, and the minor fleuronée initials and painted illumination (f. 4r) have close parallels on the Upper Rhine (Silber/Hernad). Joachite prophecies dated 1349 and attributed to a ‘court painter’ Albertus of Limburg, predicting events for the years 1350–1365, were added on f. 1r in a mid-fourteenth-century German hand, suggesting that the manuscript was in northern Europe, and thus perhaps already in Sélestat, by the mid century. However one interprets the evidence, Clm 146 marks an intersection of Italian and German manuscript production, and it documents a cultural transfer from the university city of Bologna, which was also a centre of book production, to the German South-West. There is a similar case, although a century later, in the Vatican, Ms. Reg. lat. 99, a Hungarian Latin manuscript dated 1428/29 copied as a “replic” of a Bolognese exemplar very close to the Toledo manuscript.<sup>22</sup> A fourth Italianate manuscript in the Accademia dei Lincei, Corsini 55.K.2 (2617), executed by a Franco-Italian illuminator in Southern France before 1340, combines the ›Speculum‹ with a typologically conceived picture cycle of the Life of St Francis.<sup>23</sup> There is evidence for the direct reception of the Italian ›Speculum‹ in Bohemia, most evidently in Prague, Metropolitní knihovna, cod. A 13 and rather less directly in cod. A 32 in the same library (both second half of the fourteenth century).<sup>24</sup> Finally, there are two genuine Italian manuscripts from the period 1380–1400, one from Florence, the other possibly from Bologna, which represent a common textual tradition, identifiable by a large lacuna, and with a noteworthy textual addition: *edite sub anno Domini millesimo CCCXXIV nomen vero [!] auctoris humilitate siletur*.<sup>25</sup> If, as seems likely, the author was a Dominican, or an individual close to the Dominican Order and associated with an Italian convent, then, in view of the very limited Italian copying tradition, the date 1324 in two fourteenth-century Italian manuscripts should be given greater weight than it has in the scholarship since Schmidt and Silber.<sup>26</sup> A recent suggestion by Kimberly

<sup>22</sup> Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms. Reg. lat. 99, dated 1428/29 (LP 148).

<sup>23</sup> Frugoni/Manzari (n. 1), pp. 9–54 (with further references), 197–292 (complete colour reproduction). Cf. Silber, thesis (n. 2), chapter 5 (I, pp. 148–210); ES 386.

<sup>24</sup> B 308 (A 13) and LP 139 (A 32). Cf. Silber, thesis (n. 2), I, pp. 231–235.

<sup>25</sup> Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ms. lat. 9584 + Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS. 43–1950 (Florence, datable c. 1390; LP 14+129); *Speculum Humanæ Salvationis*. Being a Reproduction of an Italian Manuscript of the Fourteenth Century. Described and prefaced by M[ontague] R[hodes] James. With a discussion of the school and date by Bernhard Berenson, Oxford 1926; Silber, thesis (n. 2), I, pp. 131–136. Paris, Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal, ms. 593 (Italian, ?Bologna, datable c. 1360–1390; LP 127). Cf. Stork/Wachinger (n. 2), col. 56, incorrectly referring to these as “frühe Hss. des 14. Jh.s”.

<sup>26</sup> Scepticism about this date, as first voiced by Thomas, was based on an ill-founded attempt to date the ›Speculum‹ in the 1330s; Michael Thomas, *Zur kulturgeschichtlichen Einordnung der Armenbibel mit “Speculum Humanae Salvationis”* unter

Vrudny, for example, urging consideration of the Dominican preacher Nicola da Milano, who was associated with the Marian lay fraternity at Imola in 1286–1287, as a candidate for authorship, on the basis of similar Mariological teachings, seems to me much less weighty when due consideration is given to the attested manuscript date 1324.<sup>27</sup> The argument implicit in the more recent literature that the manuscript tradition starts rather too early for the 1324 date to be plausible fails to take into consideration the impulse that the creation of such a striking text-and-image ensemble will have presented for copyists and patrons. This is not to say that an earlier date is impossible.

There are a number of minor, but essentially inconsequential arguments against Italy as the place of origin, relating to a turn of phrase, individual features of costume and iconography, such as the crucifixion *cruce iacente*, and the frequency with which the motif of the thieves being tied, rather than nailed to their crosses is attested.<sup>28</sup> There is also an alternative hypothesis first put forward by Luise von Winterfeld in 1919, developed by Breitenbach in 1936, repeated by Appuhn, tacitly accepted by Wirth, and given undue prominence by Stork/Wachinger, according to which the 34-chapter version, attested in a group of Lower Rhenish manuscripts of the later fourteenth century, represents an original version that was augmented by a later hand (or the author himself) to 42 chapters. The arguments for this hypothesis have been effectively countered by Silber and Niesner.<sup>29</sup>

What happened in Germany? There is evidence that within about fifteen or twenty years of 1324 the ›Speculum‹ may already have reached Alsace, although we cannot build on this. A Vienna manuscript (Österreichische

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Berücksichtigung einer Darstellung des “Liber Figurarum” in der Joachim de Fiore-Handschrift der Sächsischen Landesbibliothek Dresden (Mscr. Dresden A 121), in: Archiv für Kulturgeschichte 52 (1970), pp. 192–225, here pp. 204–208. Schmidt’s view that the style of the four Toledo miniatures available to him precluded a date as late as 1324 for the original composition must be revised in the light of Silber’s more detailed analysis of the complete set of photographs and her attribution of the Toledo manuscript to a Bolognese atelier ca. 1320–1330. See Gerhard Schmidt, review of *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*, ed. Neumüller, in: *Kunstchronik* 27 (1974), pp. 152–166, here pp. 161, 164–165; Silber, thesis (n. 2), I, pp. 90, 309.

<sup>27</sup> Vrudny (n. 9), pp. 17–20, 289–303, 315–318; Flaherty (n. 1), pp. 34–43.

<sup>28</sup> Silber, thesis (n. 2), pp. 55–57; Silber, Toledo (n. 2), p. 47.

<sup>29</sup> Luise von Winterfeld, *Das Cleppingsche Speculum humanae salvationis in der Landesbibliothek zu Darmstadt* (Hs. 2505), in: *Beiträge zur Geschichte Dortmunds und der Grafschaft Mark* 26 (1919), pp. 96–118; Breitenbach (n. 18), pp. 44–51; Heilsspiegel. Die Bilder des mittelalterlichen Erbauungsbuches *Speculum humanae salvationis*. Mit Nachwort und Erläuterungen von Horst Appuhn, Dortmund 1981 (Die bibliophilen Taschenbücher 267), pp. 132–135; Silber, thesis (n. 2), pp. 61–66; Wirth (n. 10); Stork/Wachinger (n. 2), col. 57; Niesner (n. 2), pp. 25–31. See also Margit Krenn, *Das Darmstädter Speculum humanae salvationis: Textgehalt und Bildgestalt*, in: *Heilsspiegel. Speculum humanae salvationis. Handschrift 2505 der Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Darmstadt*, facsimile edition, Darmstadt 2006, pp. 5–14.

Nationalbibliothek, cod. ser. nova 2612), recently the subject of a dissertation by Heather Flaherty, dated 1336, is stylistically localizable in the German South-West, and has an added text in German, the ›Fünfzehn Wunder in der Geburtsnacht Christi‹, showing clear indications of an Upper Rhenish provenance.<sup>30</sup> Two leaves from a Latin ›Speculum‹, the Munich-Forrer fragments, were studied in detail by Wirth and placed in the region of the Upper Rhine, c. 1330–1340.<sup>31</sup> Stained-glass windows based on the ›Speculum‹ in the church of Saint-Étienne in Mulhouse date from about 1340.<sup>32</sup> This is also the approximate date of the earliest German vernacular version, one of the most famous ›Speculum‹ manuscripts, Kremsmünster, Stiftsbibliothek, cod. 243, a Latin-German synoptic text associated with the Premonstratensian Order.<sup>33</sup> In this manuscript, in the Latin text, the figure of the visionary St Dominic has been replaced by St Norbert of Xanten. It can hardly be chance that the earliest known ownership for the manuscript is the Premonstratensian abbey of Weissenau in Swabia, but historical and linguistic arguments suggest that it may actually have been produced south of Lake Constance for Premonstratensians in the Zürichsee area.<sup>34</sup> A British Library manuscript in Latin, Harley MS. 4996, which can be dated on palaeographical grounds to the mid- or later fourteenth century, was already in England in the fifteenth century, to judge from the script of some added scribbles (f. 47v). Script and illumination, however, are German, and the manuscript is tied rather closely by the distinctive iconography of the first picture, the fall of Lucifer, to a Strasbourg prayer-book from ca. 1390.<sup>35</sup> The manuscript also contains an added leaf extracted from an illustrated copy of the ›Liber figurarum‹ of Joachim de Fiore, suggesting a Franciscan connection. Strasbourg was the home of the *studium generale* of the Upper German Franciscan province. This copy of the ›Speculum‹ illustrates a fundamental aspect of the transmis-

<sup>30</sup> Silber, thesis (n. 2), II, p. 104 (sine numero). See the reproduction of f. 1r in Flaherty (n. 1), fig. 117. Note in particular the linguistic forms <â > for e, <y> in *sybend*, invariably <a> for â, <ei> for ei, and the endings of *besamnott* and *bezeichnot*, which taken together point to Freiburg im Breisgau and the adjoining region to the south; cf. Wolfgang Kleiber et al., *Historischer Südwestdeutscher Sprachatlas. Aufgrund von Urbaren des 13. bis 15. Jahrhunderts*, Bern, Munich 1979, maps 9, 22, 41, 62, 99.

<sup>31</sup> B 263; Wirth (n. 10), pp. 116–125.

<sup>32</sup> Sabine Rehm, *Typologische Bildzyklen in der Glasmalerei des 14. bis 16. Jahrhunderts*, Frankfurt a. M. 1999 (Europäische Hochschulschriften 349), pp. 117–138, 500–527; cf. Lutz/Perdrizet (n. 1), pp. 299–316 and ill. 100–115.

<sup>33</sup> B 351. *Speculum humanae salvationis. Codex Cremifanensis 243 des Benediktinerstiftes Kremsmünster. Kommentar von Willibrord Neumüller*, Graz 1997 (Glanzlichter der Buchkunst 7), pp. 13–16; Niesner (n. 2), pp. 164–169.

<sup>34</sup> See Niesner (n. 2), pp. 156–158 for a list of High Alemannic features which make it less likely that the manuscript was written at Weissenau.

<sup>35</sup> B 83. I owe the observation regarding Bern, Burgerbibliothek, cod. 801, f. 9r, to Jeffrey F. Hamburger (Harvard).

sion of text-and-picture ensembles: an extensive picture cycle awakened such curiosity that it quickly became a sought-after object, and we must not be surprised to find a German copy exported to England or Italian copies exported to Germany, Hungary and Bohemia.

One further pointer to the German South-West as a particularly productive area of reception in the fourteenth century is the Paris manuscript Bibliothèque nationale de France, ms. lat. 511, datable c. 1370–1380, which has been placed on stylistic grounds in Alsace.<sup>36</sup> Ludolf of Saxony, who in 1339/40 left the Dominican Order to become a Carthusian in the recently founded Strasbourg charterhouse, made very extensive use of the ›Speculum‹ text in his ›Vita Christi‹.<sup>37</sup> It may come as no surprise, therefore, to learn that a copy of the ›Speculum‹ destroyed in the bombing of Strasbourg in 1870 was copied by Thomas Hamelung at the expense of brother Johannes Merklin of the Order of St John at Strasbourg in 1380, at exactly the time when the foundation texts for the commandery at the Grüner Wörth were being compiled.<sup>38</sup> This manuscript contained a dedication portrait showing brothers Johannes Merklin and Johannes de Ehenheim kneeling before the Madonna. Another link with the order is the Zurich manuscript, Zentralbibliothek, Cod. C 38, of a German prose paraphrase of the ›Speculum‹, which is preserved in a manuscript dated 1443 associated with the commandery of the Knights Hospitaller at Biberstein in the Aargau.<sup>39</sup>

Whereas a number of copies dated by modern scholarship to the mid-fourteenth century have been localized in the Swabian region,<sup>40</sup> there is no evidence for this period that there was any significant transmission of the ›Speculum humanae salvationis‹ in Austria and Bavaria, which was a major area of reception for the ›Biblia pauperum‹. The relevant manuscripts for which information is available have been variously described as Swabian, Swiss/South-West German and Franconian, and no specific evidence has been adduced to suggest that this ‘transalpine-Gothic’ tradition extends back

<sup>36</sup> B 259; Flaherty (n. 1), p. 505.

<sup>37</sup> Walter Baier and Kurt Ruh, Ludolf von Sachsen, in: *VL* 5 (1985), col. 967–977. Cf. Lutz/Perdrizet (n. 1), pp. 247–254, who wrongly saw him as the author of the ›Speculum‹.

<sup>38</sup> Cod. A 112 (LP 170). See *Der Ritter von Stauffenberg, ein Altdeutsches Gedicht*, herausgegeben nach der Handschrift der öffentlichen Bibliothek zu Straßburg von Christian Moriz Engelhardt, Strasbourg 1823, pp. 149–150, ill. 1 (script examples), 24–25.

<sup>39</sup> LP 226; Palmer (n. 8), pp. 26–28, n. 29.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. in particular Augsburg, Universitätsbibliothek, cod. L.2. 2° 23 (B 296); Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. theol. lat. fol. 329 (B 342); Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 23433 (LP 107); New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS. M. 140 (B 307). Compare the catalogue of fourteenth-century manuscripts in Flaherty (n. 1), pp. 500–507.

behind the presumptive Italian exemplars of the Toledo manuscript and Clm 146.<sup>41</sup>

Further north, the abbreviated 34-chapter recension is attested in a small group of manuscripts associated with Cologne, the earliest dating from the 1360s and bequeathed to the Poor Clares of Klarenberg in Dortmund-Hörde by a secular priest (B 19), whereas a Westfalian copy of this version in a German translation was copied ca. 1400 (B 273).<sup>42</sup> In these manuscripts the central shield in the picture of the Tower of David (chapter 6) is charged with the arms of the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, whereas the other shields carry the general arms of the Teutonic Order, providing a clear indication to the patronage of a common exemplar, if not of the whole group. Two further elements that determine the contours of the ›*Speculum*‹ transmission in Germany are a Central German verse translation from the third quarter of the fourteenth century, preserved in 22 manuscripts, and a German prose translation from ca. 1400 preserved in 21 manuscripts as well as in early printed editions.<sup>43</sup>

We have seen that the ›*Speculum*‹ is strongly indebted in its conception to a German model in the ›*Biblia pauperum*‹. Like the ›*Biblia pauperum*‹ it underwent the transfer into the German vernacular, five times into verse and six times into prose, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. We may think of this as the age of prose for religious and didactic writing, but the imitation of the form of a Latin rhymed didactic ‘poem’ by five of the translators and the extensive reception of the German text indicates that this work, in Latin and German, could easily find a place among the ensemble of literary forms that were accepted by the literary public in fourteenth-century Germany, particularly in the South-West. It seems that despite its German model, the work was composed in Italy, in a Dominican context, most likely completed in 1324, and in the cultural sphere of the university city of Bologna. The manuscript evidence suggests that it found no favour in Italy, perhaps because of the style of the unfamiliar and seemingly crude tinted pen-drawings. Its Dominican origin, given the mobility of the friars, and the parallel of *litteratim* copies from Bolognese exemplars for patrons in Spain, Hungary and Bohemia provide a plausible context to explain the immediate interest in Germany, in particular in the region of the Upper Rhine. The German recep-

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Schmidt (n. 26), p. 163; Stork/Wachinger (n. 2), col. 57.

<sup>42</sup> Darmstadt, UB/LB, cod. 2505 (B 19); Heilsspiegel, ed. Krenn (n. 29). Berlin, SMB-PK, Kupferstichkabinett, 78 A 12 (B 273); Aderlass und Seelentrost (n. 11), cat. 125, pp. 243–246 (“Westfalen, um 1400”), with colour plate.

<sup>43</sup> Hartmut Broszinski and Joachim Heinze, Kasseler Bruchstück der anonymen deutschen Versbearbeitung des “*Speculum humanae salvationis*”, in: Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum 112 (1983), pp. 54–64; Martin J. Schubert, Text, Translation und Kontext. Übersetzungsleistung in der ‘deutschen anonymen Versübersetzung’ des ›*Speculum humanae salvationis*‹, in: Wolfram-Studien 19 (2006), pp. 399–424.

tion can be documented to a limited extent, as with the ›Biblia pauperum‹, among the older religious orders, such as Premonstratensians, but the reception in the Upper Rhenish cities would suggest lay and mendicant interest in the text. The frequency of pointers to an interest among the Knights Hospitaller and the Teutonic Order, for whose literary interests there exists only a rather limited amount of evidence, is unlikely to be fortuitous: here perhaps there was an interplay of lay and clerical religious culture in which the specifics of this work found resonance.

There are just two further issues which need to be addressed here: the status of the text as a work that spans didactic and devotional literature, and the oak tree as a memory image.

### III

In chapter 5 three types are adduced that found their fulfilment in Mary's presentation in the temple: a golden table found in the sand and placed in the temple of the sun, Jephthe's sacrifice of his daughter, and Queen Semiramis who gazed at her homeland from afar. Queen Semiramis is a similitude of Mary's contemplative life:

Per quod contemplativa vita Mariae designatur,  
 Quae patriam coelestem semper contemplari nitebatur:  
 Nam omni tempore contemplationi et devotioni erat intenta,  
 Nunquam otiosa, nunquam saecularis est inventa;  
 Semper aut contemplationi aut orationi devotissime se dabat,  
 Aut lectione aut operatione se diligentissime occupabat.  
 Psalmodyam aut versus hymnidicos jubilando psallebat,  
 Saepius in oratione et devotione dulcissime flebat,  
 Pro salute generis humani sine intermissione Dominum exorabat,  
 Scripturas de adventu Christi frequenter legere non cessabat.  
 Quidquid in Scripturis de incarnatione Dei inveniebat,  
 Hoc osculando et amplexando dulciter relegebat. (V, 59–70)

[By this the contemplative life of Mary is signified, who constantly endeavoured to contemplate her heavenly homeland. For she was ever attentive to contemplation and devotion, never acquiring idle habits or worldly ways. She constantly abandoned herself devoutly either to contemplation or prayer, she diligently applied herself either to reading or to work. She would chant the psalms or hymns jubilantly, often weeping sweetly in her prayer and devotion. She implored the Lord for the salvation of mankind without ceasing, she did not desist from reading again and again in the Scriptures about the coming of Christ. Whatever she could find in the Scriptures about the Incarnation of God she read repeatedly, kissing and treasuring it sweetly.]

Mary provides a model for the religious life, described here in terms of personal and individual achievement and placing special emphasis on her study of the Bible in search of an understanding of the Incarnation. Mary's pro-



gramme is a model for the reader of the ›Speculum‹, which demonstrates chapter-by-chapter how Old Testament texts foreshadow or signify man's redemption, enabling him to know God and, by implication, to know himself; and also how the Old Testament is a rich source of images, exempla and other paradigmatic material to be employed in understanding the New.

A common scheme is exemplified by chapter 20, the Flagellation of Christ, when he is brought before Pilate. A report and analysis of the New Testament event is followed by three prefigurations: Achior bound to a tree by the servants of Holofernes, Lamech castigated by his two wives, both physically and with words, and Job's maltreatment by his wife and by the Devil. The body of the chapter is concerned with an analysis of the biblical narrative, explaining Pilate's and Herod's reasons for rejecting the legal case against Jesus and their relative roles in the official jurisdiction of Judaea and Galilee, as well as emphasizing Christ's inner and outer suffering and the engagement of Jews and gentiles in the attacks on him. In conclusion, however, the factual and analytic mode of teaching is set aside, and the last twenty lines are an admonition to the audience to draw the consequences for themselves out of the enormity of Christ's suffering and love, with respect to their own individual salvation, and to heed the disparity between man's suffering for God and God's for man.

Whereas analysis of the biblical narrative stands to the fore in the chapters devoted to the Passion, this is not always the case elsewhere. Chapter 8 treats the Nativity and presents the dream of Pharaoh's cupbearer, the flowering of Aaron's rod, and the Sibyl's revelation of the birth of Christ to Caesar as prefigurations. The illustrated manuscripts all show the nativity scene, most commonly with the heading *Nativitas Domini nostri Ihesu Christi*, but the text of chapter 8 presupposes the birth and substitutes a dramatic speech spoken by the patriarchs in hell, calling on the Lord to liberate them. The antitype is conceived as the coming of Christ bringing redemption to mankind, superimposing Easter on Christmas, and the three types pick out the themes of freedom from bondage, the miracle of the virgin birth, and the birth of the King of Kings whose rule surpasses that of any worldly sovereign.

In this case the freedom with which the New Testament antitype is treated provides space for the elaboration of Christian doctrine. In other chapters the scheme of antitype and types is absorbed into a thematically conceived exposition, not always purely religious in focus. This is, for example, the case in chapter 6 on the marriage of Mary and Joseph. Instead of a narrative the author proposes eight reasons – *octo rationes* – why God wished Mary to be married. In part they relate to motivation in the human narrative, partly to God's plan for Salvation History, but they are also concerned with social and legal aspects of marriage and virginity:

Sexto ut matrimonium sanctum esse approbaret  
 Et a nullo spernendum et incusandum demonstraret.  
 Septimo ut virginitatem in matrimonio servari licere doceret,  
 Si uterque conjux ratum et placitum teneret.  
 Octavo ne conjugati de salute sua desperarent  
 Et virgines tantum electos et se despectos cogitarent:  
 Omnem enim statum bene servatum Dominus approbare veniebat,  
 Et ideo mater sua virgo et desponsata et vidua erat. (VI,17–24)

[Sixth, to demonstrate that matrimony is holy and not to be spurned or blamed by anyone. Seventh, to teach that it is lawful to maintain virginity in marriage if both partners are certain and in agreement. Eighth, so that married people should not despair of their salvation, believing virgins to be the elect and themselves to be despised. The Lord came to give approval to every state, as long as it is properly observed, and therefore his mother was a virgin and married and widowed.]

This is followed by a discussion of the distinctions in spiritual value between the three estates, including a discussion of the difference between physical and mental virginity and the problem of virgins who are raped (in compensation for which their heavenly reward is doubled). Some of the non-specifically religious topics included may betray the mentality of an author schooled in canon law, but they also show how the genre of the Latin didactic poem could reach out to include perspectives that would matter to a lay audience. Such an attitude can also be seen in chapter 2, which includes a discussion of the point that it is not wealth in itself which leads to damnation, but the love of wealth (II,43). This chapter also contains discussions of the value of moderation (II,49–54), the value of true friendship (II,73–88), and of the principle of keeping to one's ordained position in the divine order of society:

Nec etiam pulchra vestis peccat, si cor est Deo datum;  
 Quia quilibet vestiri poterit sine peccato secundum suum statum:  
 Quem Deus vult esse regem, non decet indui sacco,  
 Et quem ordinavit esse rusticum, non convenit uti serico.  
 Quilibet ergo utatur rebus secundum statum sibi concessum,  
 Caveat tamen diligentissime, ne faciat excessum.  
 In omni enim re semper debitus modus est tenendus,  
 Et excessus cum magna diligentia praecavendus. (II, 45–52)

[Fine clothes are not sinful if one's heart is committed to God, for every man is permitted to wear the clothes that befit his own social estate without sin. That man whom God wishes to be a king cannot with propriety wear sackcloth, and it does not befit a man ordained to be a peasant to dress in silk. Every man must therefore act according to the estate allocated to him, and he should pay great attention that he does not exceed it. He should observe due moderation in all things and show great diligence in avoiding excess.]

If the Latin religious poem expands in scope to include elements of a courtesy book for lay people, then we should see this in the context of the programme of cultural transfer set out in the prologue.

There is also a strong devotional element in the ›Speculum‹, which is implicit in the structure of the work.<sup>44</sup> It concludes with three double-length chapters offering devotions structured according to the seven hours of the day on the Stations of the Passion, the Sorrows of the Virgin, and the Joys of the Virgin, as they were revealed in visions to the representatives of three distinct orders of religious life, namely a hermit, a Dominican friar, and a secular priest. In the first of these chapters the hermit prays to the Lord to reveal to him what kind of devotions are most acceptable to him. The hermit is rewarded by a vision of Christ carrying his cross, whom the hermit addresses: “I beg you, sweet Lord, teach me in what way I can carry your cross with you”, to which the Lord replies:

“In corde, inquit Dominus, per recordationem et compassionem  
Et in ore per crebram et devotam gratiarum actionem,  
In auribus per poenarum mearum ferventem auditionem,  
In dorso per propriae carnis tuae assiduam castigationem.” (De 7 stat. 19–22)

[“In your heart”, says the Lord, “by remembrance and fellow-suffering, in your mouth by repeated and devoted expressions of thanks, in your ears by fervent listening to my sufferings, on your back by the assiduous punishment of your own flesh”.]

This devotional programme, summarized as giving thanks to the Saviour “in our hearts, mouths and deeds” (25), goes beyond a life of meditation and reading of the Scriptures in imitation of Mary, demanding that the whole body should resonate in its response to Christ’s Passion as a kind of orthopraxis.<sup>45</sup> It is also to be achieved through participation in the Sorrows and Joys of the Virgin Mary, which have been a major theme of the poem, and in particular the feature of the ›Speculum‹ which distinguishes it from earlier typological compendia.

#### IV

Abbatia quaedam quercum valde magnam in se stantem habebat,  
Quam propter arctitudinem loci praecidi et exstirpari oportebat:  
Qua praecisa officiales ad ipsam convenerunt  
Et singuli quod suo officio congruebat elegerunt.  
Magister fabrurum inferiorem truncum abscidit,  
Quem sibi ad superfabricandum aptum vidit.

<sup>44</sup> For the devotional content see Flaherty (n. 1), chapters IV–VI.

<sup>45</sup> I take the term from Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought. Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200*, Cambridge 1998, pp. 1f.

Magister sutorum cortices sibi elegit,  
 Quas pro corio suo praeparando in pulverem redegit.  
 Magister porcorum glandes sibi adoptavit,  
 Quibus porcellos suos saginare cogitavit.  
 Magister aedificiorum elegit sibi stipitem erectum,  
 Ut inde carpentaret tigna et tectum.  
 Magister piscatorum elegit sibi curvaturas,  
 Ut inde faceret navium juncturas.  
 Magister molendinorum radices effodiebat,  
 Quas propter sui firmitatem molendino competere videbat.  
 Magister pistorum ramos in unum coniecit,  
 De quibus postea fornacem suam calefecit.  
 Sacrista frondes virides deportavit  
 Et cum eis in festivitate ecclesiam stipavit.  
 Scriptor librorum carpsit gallas sive poma forte centum,  
 De quibus temperavit sibi atramentum.  
 Magister cellarii sibi quasdam particulas composuit,  
 De quibus amphoras et alia vasa fieri voluit.  
 Ad ultimum magister coquorum fragmenta colligebat  
 Et ad ignem coquinae deferebat.  
 Ab unoquoque illud assumebatur  
 Quod suo officio competere videbatur.  
 Illud quod uni pro officio suo valebat,  
 Hoc alteri pro suo non congruebat.  
 Idem modus in historia componenda tenetur:  
 Quilibet doctor colligit de ea, quod suo proposito congruum videtur.  
 Eundem modum in hoc opusculo servabo:  
 Particulam historiae mihi congruum solummodo recitabo,  
 Totam historiam per omnia nolo recitare,  
 Ne legentibus et audientibus taedium videar generare. (Prol. 23–58)

What of the similitude of the oak tree, with which the work began? The tree is a very commonly used device within the didactic tradition to present an array of ideas that belong together, which are connected organically. Like the tree in Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Dn 4), the tree of the Church in a well-known passage from Gregory's ›Moralia in Job‹ (XIX,1,3), the Rod of Jesse with the genealogy of Christ, the trees of the vices and virtues, or the ›Lignum vitae‹ of Bonaventura and its progeny, this tree consists of numerous parts that form a whole, and which therefore could demand an integrative interpretation. Trees occur several times as types in the ›Speculum humanae salvationis‹, and there are several manuscripts in which the ›Speculum‹ is preceded by the *Arbores virtutum et vitiorum*.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>46</sup> E. g. Kremsmünster, Stiftsbibl., cod. 243 (B 351), as n. 33 above; New York, H. P. Kraus in 1958, as n. 11 above (S 380); New York Public Library, Spenser 15 (S 381); Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 5.2 Aug. 4<sup>o</sup> (LP 196). Cf. Jeffrey F. Hamburger, in: *The Splendor of the Word. Medieval and Renaissance Illuminated*

But here in the Prologue the oak tree<sup>47</sup> has been felled and eleven professions assemble to take the bits they want: The master of the smiths takes the base of the trunk to make a wooden anvil, the master of the cobblers wants the bark for tanning, the master of the pigs wants the acorns, the builder takes the stem of the trunk for beams and rafters, the master of the fishermen seeks out the boughs to construct the curved parts of a boat, the miller wants the roots, the baker the branches, the sacristan takes the green fronds to decorate his church, the scribe wants the oak apples for ink, the cellarer is looking for wood blocks that can be carved into vessels, whereas the cook just wants the twigs for the fire.



›*Speculum humanae salvationis*‹, anonymous German verse translation

Copenhagen, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, GKS Cod. 79,2°, f. 11r  
<http://base.kb.dk/> and <http://www.handschriftencensus.de/5291>

The real point is that the author of the ›*Speculum*‹ will only use one part of each biblical story, just as each of the monastic tradesmen uses only one part

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Manuscripts at the New York Public Library, ed. by Jonathan F. G. Alexander et al., London, Turnhout 2005, p. 126. See also [Hans] Michael Thomas, Der Gedanke des “Lebensbaumes” (Lignum Vitae) in der Generation nach Bonaventura, in: Bonaventura. Studien zu seiner Wirkungsgeschichte, ed. by Ildefons Vanderheyden, Werl/Westf. 1976 (Franziskanische Forschungen 28), pp. 157–169, with a “Diskussionsbeitrag: zu den Charakteristiken und zur Neubestimmung des *Speculum humanae salvationis* (Heilsspiegel)” on pp. 165–167, adding little to our understanding of the text; id., Erörterungen zum Lebensbaum und zur Geschichte des *Speculum humanae salvationis*, in: Cistercienser Chronik 102 (1995), pp. 15–28.

<sup>47</sup> Silber’s suggestion that “the tree of life, and thus the wood of the cross, were usually identified as an oak” (thesis [n. 2], II, p. 2, n. 8) cannot be verified.

of the oak tree. And yet there are eleven parts of the oak tree, and the eleven trades represented among the laybrothers allow us to see the monastery as an implicit similitude of lay society in the world. It must be borne in mind that this is a text that invites the audience to engage in a programme of Bible study in search of Old Testament materials that will serve as types, foreshadowings, similitudes, exempla, dicta and prophetic utterances, not only as evidence for God's overall plan of Salvation History, but also as rhetorical tools for the better understanding and remembering of the New Testament revelation of man's redemption; verbal rhetorical devices intersecting with visually conceived imaginative structures.<sup>48</sup>

Should we not, therefore, allow that this same hermeneutic might also be applied to the similitude of the oak tree in the abbey precinct? Like the Bible, the ›Speculum‹ is a quarry where all classes of society will find the teaching they need. Just as the didactic trees present their materials in an ordered array, in the ›Speculum‹ the events of Salvation History from the Annunciation of the Birth of Mary to the Last Judgment are presented as an ordered visual sequence, in numbered chapters, together with their Old Testament types and supported by a didactic poem: memorable, searchable, a fund of biblical history and information about the world, but also a basis for individual devotion.

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<sup>48</sup> Cf. Mary Carruthers, *Moving images in the mind's eye*, in: *The Mind's Eye. Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Anne-Marie Bouché, Princeton, NJ 2006, pp. 287–305.