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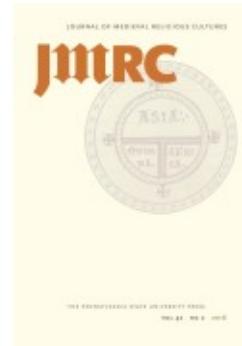
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## FEMALE AUTHORSHIP IN THE AUGUSTINIAN CONVENT OF JERICHO AND THE TRANSLATION OF CONRAD OF SAXONY'S *SPECULUM BEATAE MARIAE VIRGINIS* IN SERMONS BY MARIA VAN PEE AND JANNE COLIJNS

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### ABSTRACT

In the fifteenth century the Augustinian canonesses of the Brussels convent of Jericho had a large, creative share in the preservation of the sermons that they heard their confessors preach in the convent's church. Previous research has studied their methods of working as well as their motivation in taking up their pens. Less attention has been paid thus far, however, to the integration of written sources into those sermons. This article, therefore, focuses on two sermons by Sisters Maria van Pee and Janne Colijns that are based on the tenth *lectio* from the *Speculum beatae Mariae virginis* by the thirteenth-century Franciscan author Conrad of Saxony. By comparing the ways both canonesses dealt with this text (presumably in Latin), this article aims to shed more light on the sisters' literacies and to arrive at a more nuanced view of their authorship.

**KEYWORDS:** female authorship and literacy, sermons, Low Countries, translation strategies, monastic literature

As stated in my previous publications on the sermons from the Brussels Augustinian convent Our Lady of the Rose Planted in Jericho (Onze Lieve Vrouw ter Rosen Gheplant in Jericho) (1456–1783), the sisters who wrote down the sermons that they had heard their confessors preach in the convent's church had a large share in the texts as they appear to us today.<sup>1</sup> The extant sermons—and especially the collections in which they are preserved—were the result of a collective, layered authorship, in which several “author roles” can be discerned.<sup>2</sup> Women (*redactors*) wrote down the spoken sermons of their confessors (*auctores intellectuales*) from a first-person perspective and put themselves, as it were, in the

priests' position. A second, anonymous sister made editorial adaptations and sometimes even adjustments to the content (*editor*). Finally, this sister (or a third) copied the sermons into the manuscript (*copyist*).<sup>3</sup> In particular the redactors of the sermons—the women who initially took up their pens to write down their confessors' sermons—had a large, creative share in the process. They showed themselves to be talented and skilled women who were able to reauthor the sermons they had heard (and they also had permission to do so). Thus they arrogated to themselves the clerical genre of the sermon in its written form and gained authority over the texts. In my monograph *Schrijven in commissie* I extensively studied the ways in which Canonesses Maria van Pee (d. December 31, 1511), Janne Colijns (d. April 30, 1491), Barbara Cuyermans (d. 1507), Elizabeth van Poylec (d. August 17, 1499), and Anne Jordaeus (d. 1495) modeled their texts; by comparing the sermons I shed light on the processes of writing and the literary and stylistic features that appeared to be distinctive for the women.

From the extant manuscripts it is obvious that the women made clear arrangements for the division of the writing. The later prioress Maria van Pee laid the foundation for the sermon-writing tradition in Jericho that lasted until 1718 and resulted in five different medieval and three early modern sermon collections containing more than three hundred individual sermons.<sup>4</sup> She wrote down seventy-seven sermons by Jan Storm, a canon regular from the convent of Our Lady on the Throne (Onze Lieve Vrouw Ten Troon) in Grobbendonk (located some twenty miles east of Antwerp), who was appointed rector and confessor shortly after the foundation of Jericho in 1457 and who led the convent for no less than thirty-two years until his death on May 3, 1488.<sup>5</sup> Maria's reports of Storm's sermons from the period between December 8, 1459, and December 27, 1464, have been preserved in two manuscripts. MS. Brussels, Royal Library, 4367–68 (331 folios; ca. 14.5 by 9 centimeters) was copied before August 10, 1466, and supplemented by eight sermons by other priests before September 6, 1467.<sup>6</sup> In 1486 Storm's sermons were copied by nine copyists into Brussels, Royal Library, MS IV 402 (354 folios; ca. 21 by 14 centimeters).<sup>7</sup> Maria van Pee states in the prologue to her collection that she wrote the sermons at her own initiative and "only for [her] own improvement and salvation" [alleen tot [haers] selfs orbore ende salicheit].<sup>8</sup>

After her sermons were made available for the community, most likely at the request of the other sisters, the sermon writing was systematized. Canonesses Janne Colijns, who became prioress in June 1486,<sup>9</sup> and Barbara

Cuyermans, the convent's writing mistress,<sup>10</sup> concentrated on the sermons that Jan Storm preached between 1468 and 1474 and thus strove to preserve the spiritual legacy of the confessor, who was held in high regard by the sisters and whose influence on the spiritual course of the new institution was enormous.<sup>11</sup> Forty-four of these later sermons found their way to MS. Brussels, Royal Library, II 298 (385 folios; 21 by 14 centimeters), which was copied in part in the 1470s (fol. 79r–119v) but for the most part in the first decade of the sixteenth century, as is suggested in the colophon that is pasted onto folio 385r.<sup>12</sup> In the meantime Canoness Elizabeth van Poylc ( prioress from June 15, 1482, until June 24, 1486) wrote down thirty-seven sermons that had been preached by visiting Dominican and Franciscan friars from the Brussels region in the period between 1466 and 1477.<sup>13</sup> These sermons have been preserved in the so-called Jericho-collection, MS. Gent, University Library, 902 (256 folios; 20.5 by 14 centimeters), in a copy written by Sister Mergriete van Steenbergen (d. 1504).<sup>14</sup> The codex was completed on June 6, 1479.<sup>15</sup> And Anne Jordaeus, finally, wrote twenty-five sermons into MS. Brussels, Royal Library, 4287 (254 folios; ca. 21 by 14.5 centimeters).<sup>16</sup> These were sermons that Jericho's confessor, Paul van Someren (d. 1503), gave between April 11, 1479, and February 22, 1481; he had previously preached for the General Chapter of the Windesheim Congregation and therefore must have had a good reputation. At a later stage, sometime between 1520 and 1550, this manuscript was copied into MS. Brussels, Royal Library, 15130 (150 folios; 21 by 14 centimeters).<sup>17</sup>

Fascinating as it is that the sisters of Jericho systematized the sermon writing and divided the work among themselves, the result of this approach is that none of the sermons has been copied by more than one redactor, even though it is clear from a statement in the opening sermon of MS. Gent, University Library, 902 (fol. 5r–10v) that Sister Mergriete van Steenbergen, who copied the text into the manuscript from a copy written by Sister Elizabeth van Poylc, had also heard the sermon preached by the visiting Dominican friar Brother Petrus on Saint Catherine's Day (November 25), 1466. Sister Elizabeth is not mentioned by name here, but her identity can be deduced from the prologue to the collection, in which Sister Mergriete explains who initially wrote down which sermon in the collection she copied afterward:

Men sal oec weten dat alle dese sermoene sijn ghescreven uit der predicaren monde, alsoe na ende ghelyck als men can, van twee

onse religiose susteren, uut devocien ende warechtegher minnen te gode omdat sij gode daer ten yersten inne eerden souden ende om alle dat goet datter namaels af comen soude, dat sij daer in deylachtich wesen mochten. Dus hebben sijn eerstelijck gheerbeyt, nacht ende dach ende noch daghelyck doen, soe dat ick in desen boeck maer van haren minsten werke en hebbe na dat sij noch meneghe sermonen hebben. Sij sijn wonderlijck verlicht in claeerde verstannissen ende onthoudender memorien, dwelck sij oec met werdegher dancbarheit onsen lieven here wedergheven met neersteghen aerbeyde ende met stichteghen duechdeliken leven. God sij ghebenedijt ende gheloeft. Der eender name es suster Baerbara Cuyermans. Dese heefter hier viere, als die drie van onsen eerwerdeghen pater ende die vierde van den eerwerdeghen provinciael onser liever vrouwen dach in den advent. Die ander es ghenaemt suster Elizabeth van Poelken. Dese heeft alle die ander vergadert. (fol. iv–2r)<sup>18</sup>

[One should also realize that all these sermons have been written from the mouth of preachers, as closely and accurately as possible, by two of our religious sisters, out of devotion and true love for God, so that they in the first place might thereby honor God and bring about the salvation of their soul, and that they might share in the good that would come of it later. Thus they worked diligently, night and day, and they still do every day, so that in this book I have only the least of their work, considering that they still have many more sermons. They are wonderfully enlightened with a clear understanding and retentive memory, which they, with due thankfulness, return to our dear Lord with diligent work and an edifying, virtuous life. God be honored and praised. The name of the one is Sister Barbara Cuyermans. She has four [sermons] here, three by our reverend Father [= Jan Storm] and the fourth by the reverend Provincial [= Michael van Lyra] on the day of Our Dear Lady in Advent [= December 8, the feast of the Immaculate Conception]. The other is called Sister Elizabeth van Poylc. She collected all the others.]

On fol. 9r Mergriete expresses her disappointment that Sister Elizabeth did not fully elaborate on a dialogue between Saint Catherine of Alexandria and Emperor Maxentius. And the copyist knows what she is talking about because she had heard the sermon herself! Sister Elizabeth must have been

disappointed, as she explicitly stated in the draft of her text that she left this passage out because she failed to understand it:

Dit seide Katherina, want sij wiste wel dat hijs niet en soude moghen onderscheyden. Doe soe wert hi confusuus. Ende onder vele disputacien die sij hadden van vii liberalen arten ende van der zielen edelheit, oec mede van den sacramenten der heilegher kerken die zere schoene ende lanc waren die welke die ghene diet screef uit des predicaers monde al heeft uit ghelaten ende wel na alle dat schoenste. Mer sij schrijft in haer yerste uutworp dat sij dit niet en heeft ghedaen uit wille mer uit sympelder verstennissen. Dwelc ic die dit scrive zere beclaghe, want hi was alsoe schoenen ende diepen verstennisse in alsoe claerder leeringhen di ic nye des ghelyc en hoerde van haer predicken, want ic hoerde dit sermoen selve.

[This was said by Catherine, because she knew that he [= Emperor Maxentius] would not be able to understand it. And he became confused. They had many very beautiful and long disputations about the seven *artes liberales*, the nobleness of the soul, and the Holy Sacraments of the Church, which the woman who wrote down the sermon from the preacher's mouth has completely left out and in particular almost all of the most beautiful parts. She writes in her first draft, however, that she did not do this deliberately but because of her poor understanding. Which I, who write this, much regret, because the passage was of such beautiful and deep understanding in such a clear lesson as I never have heard preached about her [= Saint Catherine] before, as I heard this sermon myself.]

Elizabeth's remark, for that matter, forms a strong contrast with the statement Mergriete van Steenbergen made in her prologue where she praised both Elizabeth van Poylc and Barbara Cuyermans for their "clear understanding and retentive memory." It links perfectly in, however, with the humility tropes used by other women who wrote down sermons "from the preachers' mouth" (*uit der predicaren monde*). In the prologue to her collection of Storm's sermons Maria van Pee, for instance, expresses her regret that she was—in her own words—"so dull in my wits" [soe plomp van begripe] that she had "not been able to retain word for word all the beautiful reasonings, and the quotations of the saints that he adduced in his sermons, so as to write them down as he explained them so beautifully" [alle die scoene redenen ende auctorijteyten der heilegen welke hi in sinen sermoenen alligeerde, niet en

heb connen van woerde te woerde onthouden om te scriven soe hi se schoen uutleide].<sup>19</sup> Instead, she tried to remember the bare sense of Storm's sermons as best she could. For that reason, she begs the readers of her sermons to forgive her her dull-wittedness (*plompheit*) if they do not find the points put across properly, because, she says, "it was too elevated for my mind to write all things as beautifully and as skillfully as they were explained and preached" [want minen sinnen veel te hoege was alle dingen soe schoene ende cuystelic te bescriven als sij uitgeleit ende gepredict waren].<sup>20</sup>

Despite the lack of overlapping sermons, it is possible to analyze the writing styles of the sermon-writing sisters. Sermons by one priest were written down by more than one woman, on the one hand—Jan Storm's sermons, for example, were transmitted by Maria van Pee, Janne Colijns, and Barbara Cuyermans—and, on the other, one canoness (Elizabeth van Poylc) wrote down sermons by several visiting priests from the Dominican and Franciscan orders in Brussels. (In some instances, such as Johannes van Namen [d. ca. 1475/76], the founder and first prior of the Dominican convent, and guardian Hendrick Berrinck [ca. 1396–1492], they were the superiors of their orders.) As a result it is possible to state that the redactors of the sermons had a large creative share in the transmission of the texts and therefore a large autonomy in their authorship. Barbara Cuyermans, for example, strove to report Storm's sermons by way of lively, eloquent reasoning from the perspective of an authoritative "I" who takes the readers from the beginning by the hand in order to guide them to a more profound level of devotion. Thus Barbara showed herself a gifted redactor, even though her sermons stylistically and with respect to the *auctoritates* used are more simple than the texts by her former pupil Janne Colijns, which are based on preaching by the same man. In style Barbara's redaction of the sermon of the provincial of the Friars Minor of the Observance is not very different; the content, however, is not focused on contemplation, as is the case in Storm's sermons, but, rather, on the practical aspects of convent life and compliance with the Rule (as is also the case in the sermons by the other visiting priests that Elizabeth van Poylc wrote down and which are transmitted in the Jericho-collection copied by Mergriete van Steenbergen).

The example of the sermons written down by Barbara Cuyermans also demonstrates, however, that the influence of the preachers is very manifest in the sermons, especially in the spiritual views that are put forward. Whereas we learn via the pens of Maria van Pee, Barbara Cuyermans, and Janne Colijns that their respected confessor Jan Storm stimulated the sisters to a more perfect inner spiritual experience and stressed contemplation, his colleagues particularly focused on exegesis and teaching the nuns

the right attitude toward the more ascetic aspects of monastic life. These striking differences notwithstanding, it remains hard to identify the exact contributions of the individual people, not least because notes on the sermons have not been preserved.<sup>21</sup> With regard to this, we have to take into account that the search for individual contributors to the sermons probably matters more to the modern reader of the sermons than to the contemporary readers, who functioned in a context that favored community life and collective identity over the individual. Besides, it is quite conceivable that the sisters helped one another in constructing the sermons, especially given the fact that some redactors were executing comparable tasks at the same time. It is equally plausible that the priest helped the sisters in their writing tasks, as all parties shared the same interest in producing texts that could support the members of the community in their religious life.

The fact that the sisters divided the tasks and copied out different sermons by different preachers, or by the same priest but over a different period of time, as is the case with Jan Storm's sermons, does not mean that they did not include overlapping materials in their texts. Little attention has been paid to this aspect of the sermon writing: the use of written sources, be it in the form of sermons already written, notes taken during or after the sermon, or the use of texts that came into being outside the convent walls, often in the form of (translated) citations of authoritative people such as Bernard of Clairvaux, Augustine, and Thomas Aquinas. Nevertheless, those passages might give us a more nuanced idea of the authorship of the individual women. In the second part of this article, therefore, I will briefly focus on a passage that occurs in a sermon by both Maria van Pee and Janne Colijns. Before I do so, however, I will shortly focus on the prologues to the sermon collections by Maria and Janne, as they provide some more context for their writing activities.

As is already suggested in this article, important access to the sermon writing of the scribes in Jericho is offered by the extensive and detailed prologues that precede one seventeenth-century and three medieval collections.<sup>22</sup> In these paratexts the women specified their motivation in taking up their pens and gave accounts of their working process. (One should not forget, however, that the phrasing in these prologues, like the prefaces to many other text genres, often has a rather conventional character in which modesty tropes play a huge role.)<sup>23</sup> Maria van Pee, for instance, states that she "tried to compile the following book from many collations that were preached in our house of God within five years by a worthy priest who was our commissary and acted as confessor for us" [soe hebic

dit navolgende boec ghepijt te vergaderen uut veel collacien die in onsen godshuyse gepredict sijn binnen vijf jaren van eenen weerdigen priester die ons commissarijs was ende biechtvader bi ons stont].<sup>24</sup> She was very much aware of the fact that by writing down only a number of Storm's sermons, she did not do justice to the effort that the confessor made on behalf of the sisters. Moreover, she was unable to remember his sermons verbatim and merely tried to represent their "bare sense" (*bloeten sin*) as accurately as possible. And initially this did not have the same relevance as it had later when the sermons were made available to the community, because Maria first wrote down the sermons for her own benefit and spiritual welfare and in order to assist her "unstable thinking" (*vliteger ghedachten*) by rereading the sermons many times. In other words, she noted down the sermons in order to be able to memorize them.<sup>25</sup>

Janne Colijns, however, postulated in her prologue that she did not copy out Storm's sermons herself, although she heard many of them, but, rather, collected them from rolls, letters, and old quires written by the preacher himself and from sermons written down by her writing mistress, Barbara Cuyermans:

Ic begheere oec dat nyement en meyne maer zeekerlijc weete dat ic, scriverse dees boecks, dese weerdighe sermoenen som selve hoerende niet en hebbe uitghecopiert, want dat en is in der waerheit mijnre plomper verstennisse niet verleent myts dat ic leyder mijn yonghe domheit tot selker graciē niet en hebbe bereyt. Maer ic hebse alleene vergadert eens deel ende oec des meesten deel uuyt rollen, brieven ende ouden quaternen ghescreven metter hant des selven predicaers. Ende die andere sijn uitghecopieert van sijnre gheestelijker dochter ende religioeser suster ons cloesters van Jericho, met namen suster Barbara Cuyermans, die, in den heere ghestorven, voertijts mijn meerstersse van scrijven gheweest is, waer bij ic met dobbelder scout my hebbe verbonden in ghetrouwigher danckbaerheit bekint dit werck te aengaene ende te willichlijker aenghenoemen.<sup>26</sup>

[I also desire that no one should assume but should know for certain that I, the woman who writes this book, did not copy out any of these worthy sermons myself, although I sometimes listened to them, because in truth that is not granted to my dull understanding, considering that unfortunately I did not prepare my youthful dimness [literally, "my young dumbness"] for such grace. But I merely

gathered them together, in part—and in the main part—from rolls, letters, and old quires written by the hand of the preacher himself. And the others were copied out by his spiritual daughter, a religious sister of our convent of Jericho, Sister Barbara Cuyermans by name, who, passed away in the Lord, in former days was my writing mistress, for which reason it is with a double debt that, bound in faithful gratitude, I have pledged to undertake this work and have taken it upon me all the more willingly.]

However, in *Schrijven in commissie* I make a strong argument that Janne actually did formulate her own sermons and minimized the significance of her own role in the transmitting of the sermons in her prologue.<sup>27</sup> The canoness showed herself to be a very talented writer, who wrote in a high literary style. Her sermons are interlaced with terminology that echoes the mystical literature of her day as well as many metaphors and figures of speech. Moreover, the scope of her citations is far more wide-ranging than that of her fellow sisters: she quite fluently integrated theological as well as classical and more contemporary philosophical authorities into her work. Another striking feature is that Janne more than the other scribes integrated translations or adaptations of Latin texts into her collection, which makes her work more heterogeneous in nature than the other sermon collections. She integrated, for example, a translation of Pseudo-Origen's very popular homily *De Maria Magdalena*—on Christ's devotee who found His grave empty (John 20:11–18)—in a translation by her confessor Jan Storm.<sup>28</sup> Another “chapter” (*capittel*) in her collection—and she must have been very aware of the different status of these texts, as she does not use the word “sermon” (*sermoen*) for them—is a translation (or adaptation) of Pseudo-Augustine's *Tractatus de assumptione beatae Mariae virginis* (Sermon 27, on fol. 256r–58v).<sup>29</sup>

The specific case I would like to focus on here, however, is a passage in Sermon 39 (fol. 338v–4iv) with the heading “A beautiful chapter on the word Maria mater Domini, which is the beginning of the hymn for the Feast of the Conception” [Een schoen capittel op dat woert Maria mater Domini, waerop die ymne beghint in deser feesten der conception]. It is a translation of *Lectio 10* from the widespread *Speculum beatae Mariae virginis* by the Franciscan author Conrad of Saxony (d. 1279) (the treatise is often erroneously attributed to Saint Bonaventure).<sup>30</sup> It is of interest here because the same material is used by Maria van Pee for her third sermon on the occasion of the Annunciation of Mary (March 25) in MS. Brussels,

Royal Library, 4367–68, Sermon 32, fols. 111v–15v.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, this case offers a fascinating opportunity to investigate a still understudied aspect of the authorship of both women.

From a comparison of both Janne's and Maria's texts with the edition of the tenth *lectio* by Conrad of Saxony it is immediately clear that the sisters had—directly or indirectly via a translation—access to a copy of the Latin text (thus far I have not found a translation that could have served as the basis of their texts). Interestingly enough, the male Augustinian convent of Sint-Maartensdal in Leuven, with which the canonesses of Jericho had a close connection via Anne Jordaens's brother Adam (d. 1494),<sup>32</sup> owned a Latin copy of Conrad of Saxony's *Speculum de beata Maria*.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, it seems likely that Conrad's original text entered Jericho via this connection, as most certainly was the case for a “study book” (*studeerboeck*) and “a Middle Dutch book called the golden throne” [een dietsch boeck geheeten den guldenden throen]<sup>34</sup> and probably also for other (Latin) treatises.<sup>35</sup> Possibly the sisters owned a Latin copy of the *Speculum*, because after Janne's version was copied into the later part of MS. Brussels, Royal Library, II 298 in the first decade of the sixteenth century, someone added Latin citations in the margins that, given their quality, clearly stem from a written source.

What can we deduce from the versions that have been preserved by Maria van Pee and Janne Colijns? If we look at the overall structure of the text, it is striking that Maria's text—after a short introduction that contextualizes the sermon and stresses how the Virgin Mary makes impossible things possible in the heart of every person—followed the general structure of Conrad's sermon, from the beginning to the end. In this process the canoness also followed the four *divisiones* as they are pointed out in the Latin text: whereas the Latin text marked the second point of the structure with the words “Secundo attendite, carissimi, quod Dominus iste, qui tam singulariter est cum Maria” (p. 134), Maria van Pee used the phrase “Second, how the Lord the son is especially with Mary” [Ten anderen hoe die here die sone besonder es met Marien], thus distinguishing one of the persons of the Holy Trinity in the formula (fol. 112v ll. 21–22).<sup>36</sup> At the end of the sermon, Maria added a long exemplum (fols. 114v–15v) on the power of the Virgin to save people, which cannot be found in the Latin *lectio* or in Janne's representation of the text.

Janne Colijns, however, moved more freely through the Latin text. Like Maria van Pee and Conrad of Saxony, she started her chapter (on fol. 339r) with the words of the archangel Gabriel to the Holy Virgin: “Dominus tecum” (Luke 1:28). After that she skipped the introduction of the Latin

text and immediately came to the three divine persons who are with Mary, stating how she is the Father's most noble daughter ("alder edelste dochter"), the Son's most venerable mother ("alder weerdichste moeder"), the Holy Ghost's most beautiful bride ("alder scoenste bruyt"), and the humble servant to the Holy Trinity ("here almechtich drievidlich in een, diens onderdanighe deerne") (fol. 339r ll. 7–12; pp. 131–32 in the Latin edition). Then she left out another long passage and passed on to the second part of Conrad's sermon, on the motherly aspect of the Virgin Mary (p. 134 in the edition of the Latin text). From this point onward her text followed the Latin text closely, until a citation of Anselm: "On this Anselm says: O dear Mother, worthy Mother, grand Mother, why did we receive such a brother. What grace, what praise should we return to you?" [Hier af spreect Ancelmus: Och lieve moeder, weerdiche moeder, hoeghe moeder, bij die welke wij vercreghen hebben alsulcken broeder. Wat graciën, wat loefs selen wij di gheven?; Hinc bene Anselmus ait: Domina mater, per quam talem fratrem habemus, quid gratiarum, quid laudis tibi retribuemus?] (fol. 340r ll. 10–13 in Janne's collection; p. 135 in the Latin edition). At this point Janne added a short praise of Mary and concluded it with Elizabeth's greeting to Mary in Luke 1:43: "Unde hoc mihi. Whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" [Unde hoc mihi. Wanen comt my ditte dat die moeder myns heren tot my comt?] (fol. 340r ll. 25–27),<sup>37</sup> which in both the Latin text (p. 134) and Maria van Pee's sermon (fol. 112v ll. 24–26) occurred at an earlier stage. After this salutation Janne continued with a literal translation of the Latin text, until the text unexpectedly breaks off on fol. 341v l. 6, after citing Genesis 21:10: "Cast out this bondwoman, and her son" [Worpt wech die maerten ende der maerten sone; Eiice ancillam et filium eius] (fol. 341v l. 6; p. 138), most probably as the result of a corrupt source.

Where Janne's text on the level of its structure displays a considerable freedom toward the Latin original—paragraphs were deleted, other elements were added, and at one point the text was rearranged—on the textual level less liberty is taken. The version of the text in Janne Colijns's collection is for the most part a literal translation of the Latin. In Maria's text this is exactly the opposite: at the structural level Maria's text follows the Latin more closely, but on the textual level her translation deviates considerably. I will demonstrate this with two somewhat longer examples. The first is taken from the second point of the *lectio*:

Unde beatus Bernardus ait: Nec enim decebat Deum alia mater quam virgo, nec virginem aliis filius quam Deus, quia nec maior inter

matres, nec maior inter filios nasci potuit. Haec itaque est mater floris misericordiae, mater solis iustitiae, mater fontis sapientiae, mater Regis gloriae. Mater, inquam, est eius cuius misericordia ad dilectionem, cuius iustitia ad timorem, cuius sapientia ad agnitionem, cuius glora ad spem nos inducit. Maria ergo est mater eius cuius effective est nostra dilectio per misericordiam, noster timor per iustitiam, nostra agnitus per sapientiam, nostra spes per gloriam, ut vere ipsa dicere possit illud Ecclesiastici vigesimo quarto: Ego mater pulchrae dilectionis et timoris et agnitionis et sanctae spei. (pp. 134–35)

[For that reason Saint Bernard said: No other mother than a virgin was fit for God, nor another son than God fitted a virgin, because no better mother, nor a better son could be born. This is the mother of the flower of compassion, mother of the sun of justice, mother of the fountain of wisdom, mother of the king of glory. Mother, I say, of the one whose compassion induces love, whose justice leads to fear, whose wisdom brings recognition, whose glory leads us to hope. Maria therefore is the mother of the one who is the cause of our love by compassion, our fear by justice, our recognition by wisdom, our hope by glory, so that she can say rightfully in Ecclesiasticus 24: I am the mother of fair love, and of fear, and of knowledge, and of holy hope [Ecclesiasticus 24:24].]

The word-for-word translation in Janne's version reads:

Hier om seet sinte *Bernardus*: Nec enim decebat Deum alia mater quam virgo, nec virginem aliis filius quam Deus, quia nec maior inter matres, nec maior inter filios nasci potuit. *God en betaemde gheen ander moeder dan een maeght, noch | der maghet en betaemde gheen ander sone dan god.* Want noch meerder onder die moederen noch meerder onder die sonen en mochte werden gheboeren. *Dits die moeder vander bloemen der ontfermherticheit, moeder vander zonnen der rechtverdicheit, moeder vander fonteynen der wijsheit, moeder des conincs der glorien.* Moeder, seghick, des gheens ontfermherticheit trect totter minnen, diens rechtverdicheit drijft tot vreesen, diens wijsheit verlicht tot kinnissen, diens glorie ons leyter hopen. Maria is dan een moeder des gheens die oerzakelijck is *onse minne bijder ontfermherticheit, onse vreeese overmits die rechtverdicheit, onse kinnesse bijder wijsheit, onse hope bijder glorien*, alsoe dat sij ter waerheit wel segghen mach dat staet

Ecclesiastici xxiii: Ego mater pulcre, etcetera. *Ic ben een moeder der scoender minnen, der vroesen, der kinnissen ende der heyligher hopen.* (fol. 339r l. 23–39v l. 18)

The phrasing by Maria van Pee is shorter—although it offers the same views in similar, but not the same, wording. In order to point out the difference from Janne's text, I highlight the resemblances in both texts in *italics*:

*Bernardus: Ten betaemde gode niet te hebben een ander moeder dan / een maghet, noch ten betaemde der maghet niet te hebben enen anderen sone dan den gods sone. Si es moeder der bloemen der ontfermherticheit, een moeder der zonnen der rechtverdicheit, een moeder der kinnessen der wijsheit ende een moeder des conincs der glorien.* In desen vier veerskens werden vier poenten ghemerct: dat es minne ende ontfermherticheit op deerste, *vreese der rechtverdicheit* op dander, *kinnesse der waerheit* op terde ende *hope der ewigher glorien* opt vierde. Dit selve staet van haer in dboeck der wijsheit daer si seit: *Ic ben een moeder der schoender minnen, der kinnessen ende der heiligher hopen.* (fol. 112v l. 28–13r l. 13)

My second example is taken from the third point of the *lectio*, on Mary as the bride of the Holy Ghost. Yet again Janne's text is a literal translation of the Latin:

Unde tam de isto Domino, quam de ista sponsa exponi potest quod dicitur Osee secundo: Sponsabo te mihi in iustitia et iudicio et in misericordia et in miserationibus, et sponsabo te mihi in fide, et scies, quia ego Dominus. Ecce, pulchra sponsa: pulchra in iustitia et iudicio respectu sui, pulchra in miserationibus et misericordia respectu proximi, pulchra in fide respectu Dei. Pulchra utique in iustitia vitae et in iudicio conscientiae, pulchra in misericordia in affectu et in miserationibus in effectu, pulchra in fide, qua credit omnia credenda supra se et qua credit omnia perficienda in se, iuxta illud Lucae primo: Beata quae credidisti, quoniam perficiuntur in te quae dicta sunt tibi a Domino. (p. 136)

[For that reason it can be explained about that Lord and that bride as it is said in the second [book] of Osee: I will espouse thee to me in

justice, and judgment, and in mercy, and in commiserations. And I will espouse thee to me in faith: and thou shalt know that I am the Lord [Osee 2:19–20]. See the beautiful bride: beautiful in justice and judgment toward herself, beautiful in commiserations and mercy toward her neighbors, beautiful in faith toward God. Beautiful also in the justice of life and in the judgment of consciousness, beautiful in mercy of affect and in commiserations of effects, beautiful in faith, as she believed all that could be believed above her and she believed all things that could be completed within her, according to the first chapter of Luke: Blessed art thou that hast believed, because those things shall be accomplished that were spoken to thee by the Lord [Luke 1:45].]

Daer om mach men wel van desen heere ende van deser vrouwen verstaen datter gheseet is Ozee ii<sup>o</sup>: Sponsabo te mihi in iusticia et in iudicio et in misericordia et in miserationibus. *Ic sal u ondertrouwen inder rechtverdicheit, inden ordeele, inden mededoeghen ende weldoene.* Ecce, pulcra sponsa. Siet dese scoene bruyt Maria: *scoene inder rechtverdicheit ende inden ordeele ten opsiene huers selfs, scoene inder ontfermherticheit ende mededoeghen inden weldoene ten opsiene haers evenkerstens, scoene inden gheloeve ten opsiene van gode.* Scoene, segick, inder rechtverdicheit des levens, inden ordeele der consciencien; scoene oec inden mededoeghen der goeder begheerten ende inden weldoenen der goeder werken; scoene inden gheloeven, want sij gheloefde al dat te gheloeven was boven haer ende sij gheloefde dat alle dinghen souden vervult werden in haer alsoe in Luce primo staet: Benedicta que credisti perficientur in te. *Salich bestu die gheloeft hebt.* (fol. 340v ll. 2–23)

And yet again, Maria's text is much shorter, this time about half the length:

“Te rechte wert bi haer beteekent dat in Osee staet: *Ic sal di ondertrouwen te minen behoef, in rechtverdicheit ende ordeele, in ontfermherticheit ende mededoeghen, in gheloeve ende sueticheiden.* Si es schoene in rechtverdichenen ende ordeele soe verre alst aengaet haer | selven, schoene in ontfermherticheit ende mededoeghen soe verre alst ons aengaet. *Si es oec schoene int gheloeve,* inder trouwen ende in sueticheiden. Want tot haer es ghesproken: *Du best salich, want du gheloeft hebs dat van di gheseet es, want si selen al vervult werden in di*” (fol. 113r l. 24–113v l. 6).

In both examples it is striking that the text in the collection by Maria van Pee is considerably shorter than both the Middle Dutch version by Janne Colijns and the Latin original by Conrad of Saxony. In part that is because Maria left out the Latin phrases from the Bible and other *auctoritates* that Janne included in her text. Maria was also less accurate in mentioning those references. She wrote “book of wisdom” [dboeck of wijsheit] and “Osee” instead of the more precise “Ecclesiasticus 24” [Ecclesiastici vigesimo quarto/Ecclesiastici xxiii] and “Osee 2” [Osee secundo/Ozee ii] that, respectively, Conrad and Janne used. Most impactful on the length, however, was her decision to leave out the phrases that repeat—with a slight difference—what was already mentioned. In those instances, Maria seems to take a shortcut compared with the original Latin text. In the second example, for example, she mentioned the justice and the mercy, but she left out the phrase “justice of life” and “mercy of affect.” In the first example she summarizes the point explicitly: “In these four little verses four points are mentioned. First: love and compassion; second: fear of justice; third: recognition of wisdom; and fourth: our hope of eternal glory” [In desen vier veerskens werden vier poenten ghemerct: dat es minne ende ontfermherticheit op deerste, vreeze der rechtverdicheit op dander, kinnesse der waerheit op terde ende hope der ewigher glorien opt vierde].

For what reason Maria decided to eliminate those modifications is not clear; the examples in any case show that the canoness was skillfully exploiting her source. Although Maria did not use all the arguments in Conrad’s text, it is clear from the sentences she did keep that she—like her colleague—used a written source. Her phrasings are never exactly the same as those in Janne’s text, but they are never so different that one might suppose that she wrote the text from memory as she claimed in her prologue. This observation, however, does not exclude the possibility that Jan Storm actually used Conrad’s sermon—in the original Latin or in a translation that he possibly made himself—as a model sermon and preached it on the occasion of Mary’s Annunciation in the period between 1459 and 1464.

The fact that both Maria and Janne used a written source but went in different directions with it raises the question of what that source looked like. Did both sisters make their own translations of Conrad’s text, or did they use a translation that was put at their disposal, for instance, by Jan Storm himself? After all, Janne stated in her prologue that the confessor gave her written materials, and from the translation of the Pseudo-Origen sermon on Mary Magdalene it is clear that the priest sometimes made translations from Latin. But if Storm also made a translation of the *lectio* from the *Speculum beatae Mariae virginis*, why is it not stated here?

And—more importantly—why does Maria's text differ in so many details from Janne's version if they both used a Middle Dutch intermediate version, which we may assume was the same copy? Why did Maria not merely copy that exemplar? Or did one of the sisters use an existing vernacular version, while the other made a translation for herself? In that case it might seem most conceivable that Janne copied an existing translation (and adjusted it to her purposes if needed) and that Maria went her own way with the original Latin text,<sup>38</sup> of which the sisters might have owned a copy themselves given the fact that at least three sisters seem to have had access to it over a period of fifty years (Maria van Pee in the early 1460s, Janne Colijns at some point in the period between 1468 and her death in April 1491, and the anonymous sister who added Latin quotes in the margins of MS. Brussels, Royal Library, II 298 in the first decade of the sixteenth century). However, by integrating correct Latin citations into her version, Janne demonstrated that she at least was capable of copying Latin. From her other sermons, moreover, it is clear that this canoness far more frequently than the other redactors integrated Latin quotes into her sermons, invariably followed by a Middle Dutch translation. She did not limit herself to citations from the Bible but also used Latin quotes from classical authors such as Ovid, Boethius, and Aristotle.<sup>39</sup> In those sermons she demonstrated much more fluency in Latin than any of her sermon-writing colleagues. Therefore, it seems plausible that Janne Colijns, like Maria van Pee, made her own translation of Conrad of Saxony's original text, in which case both canonesses demonstrated a considerable level of Latin literacy.<sup>40</sup>

This case study also proves that the sermons by Jan Storm—at least in their written representations—were not always entirely new, original texts. The women who redacted them used several methods to produce written sermons that they believed would serve not only as a vehicle for their own spiritual growth but also as an educational tool for the other members of the community. Not only did they write them from memory or based on written notes; they also wrote them by integrating and adjusting existing (Latin) treatises. Clearly the sisters had access to other sources than florilegia or collections of exempla to underpin the sermons they reauthored after they had heard them preached. Studying those sources may shed new light on the authorship of individual women and on the range of their literacy and education, as well as on to what extent and in what form female religious in the Low Countries had access to (Latin) knowledge.

## NOTES

1. For a brief history of the convent, see Patricia Stoop, "From Reading to Writing: The Multiple Levels of Literacy of the Sister Scribes in the Brussels Convent of Jericho," in *Nuns' Literacies in Medieval Europe: The Kansas City Dialogue*, ed. Virginia Blanton, Veronica O'Mara, and Patricia Stoop (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2015), 47–66, at 49–50; and Patricia Stoop, "The Brussels Convent of Jericho and Its Literary Network/El convent de Jericó en Bruselas y su red literaria," *Anuario de estudios medievales* 44 (2014): 381–412, at 385–88. The convent's history is more extensively discussed in Patricia Stoop, *Schrijven in commissie: De zusters uit het Brusselse klooster Jericho en de preken van hun biechtvaders (ca. 1456–1510)* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2013), 43–54. See also A. Despy-Meyer, "Prieuré de Notre-Dame de la rose de Jéricho, à Bruxelles," in *Monasticon Belge*, ed. Ursmer Berlière (Maredsous, Belgium: Abbaye de Maredsous, 1890–1993), vol. 4, 1247–71. This article is part of my larger book project "Female Authorship and Authority in Late Medieval and Early Modern Vernacular Sermons from the Low Countries," which I started as a postdoctoral fellow of the Research Foundation Flanders (2010–13).

2. This article builds on my earlier article in this journal: Patricia Stoop, "Sermon-Writing Women: Fifteenth-Century Vernacular Sermons from the Brussels Augustinian Convent of Jericho," *Journal of Medieval Religious Cultures* 38 (2012): 211–32. For further discussions of the sermons from Jericho, see Thom Mertens, "Ghostwriting Sisters: The Preservation of Dutch Sermons of Father Confessors in the Fifteenth and the Early Sixteenth Century," in *Seeing and Knowing: Women and Learning in Medieval Europe 1200–1550*, ed. Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2004), 121–41; Thom Mertens, "Relic or Strategy: The Middle Dutch Sermon as a Literary Phenomenon," in *Speculum Sermonis: Interdisciplinary Reflections on the Medieval Sermon*, ed. Georgiana Donavin, Gary J. Nedorff, and Richard Utz (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2004), 293–314; Patricia Stoop, "The Writing Sisters of Jericho: Authors or Copyists?" in *Constructing the Medieval Sermon*, ed. Roger Andersson (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2007), 275–308; Stoop, *Schrijven in commissie*, 169–365.

3. See Stoop, *Schrijven in commissie*, 308–11 and 351–53.

4. Maria was probably born in or shortly before 1435, as the illegitimate daughter of the knight Aert (II) van Pee (d. 1456), who was alderman in Brussels in 1436 and counselor of the Council of Brabant from 1445 onward. In 1450 Maria took her vows in Onze Lieve Vrouw ter Cluysen (Our Lady of the Hermitage), a convent of canonesses regular in Braine-l'Alleud in the Fôret de Soignes, one of the predecessors of Jericho (the convent was the result of the merger of two older institutions, the monastery in the Fôret de Soignes and Saint Catherine's convent of the White Sisters of St. Victor, which was located just outside the ramparts of Brussels and housed the sisters after the amalgamation). After Ter Cluysen was closed, Maria was one of the canonesses who came to Jericho, where she was chosen prioress on November 21, 1465. It is quite possible that this election was influenced by her writing ability: not only did the sermons show her intellectual capacities, but the fact that she must have written them in her leisure time testified to a considerable spiritual diligence. In the office of prioress Maria was responsible for the refurbishment of the scriptorium, in which numerous books were written for the convent (one Latin and twenty-nine Middle Dutch manuscripts from the period before 1520 and six later manuscripts still exist), as well as for wealthy and often noble laypersons, for clerics, and foremost for (semi)religious communities of various religious orders, both female and male, outside the convent walls. (For the writing for external parties [*pro pretio*], see Patricia Stoop, "Dits scrite dat nu inder handen es: Commercial Writing in the Brussels Augustinian Convent of Jericho," *Quaerendo* 42 [2012]: 114–33.) Maria governed the convent for fifteen years, until about 1482, when she was elected prioress of the newly founded convent of Vredenberg (Mountain of Peace) in Breda, which today is located in the southern part of the Netherlands. In this convent Maria celebrated her Jubilee, or her fiftieth year in the order, in 1500. Undoubtedly as a result of her impressive record of service—Maria had been in charge of a convent for more than forty years—she was buried in front of the high altar in the choir of Mons Pacis. At the time of her death she was at least seventy-six years old. For an extensive biography of Maria van Pee, see Stoop, *Schrijven in commissie*, 85–90. A short biography in French can be found in Berlière, *Monasticon Belge*, vol. 4, 1258–59.

5. For a full biography of Jan Storm, see Stoop, *Schrijven in commissie*, 78–82.

6. Storm's seventy-seven sermons can be found on fols. 5r–299r; the supplementary eight sermons by other priests are on fols. 300r–330v. For a description of the codex, see *ibid.*, 373–76 (no. 2).

7. For a description of this manuscript, see *ibid.*, 380–82 (no. 5).

8. Prologue by Maria van Pee, ll. 38–39. The translations of the Middle Dutch prologues were made by Dr. Maria Sherwood-Smith and me. Three medieval sermon collections and one from the seventeenth century have been preceded by prologues. These fascinating texts, to which I will return later in this article, have been discussed in Patricia Stoop, "Nuns as Writers? On the Contribution of the Nuns of the Brussels Jericho Convent to the Construction of Written Sermons," in *A Place of Their Own: Women Writers and Their Social Environments (1450–1700)*, ed. Anne Bollmann (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2010), 197–214, at 198–200; Stoop, "Sermon-Writing Women," 217–22; Stoop, *Schrijven in commissie*, 177–89; and Patricia Stoop and Thom Mertens, "Memory and Reward: Dutch Collections of Sermons and Their Functions in the *Memoria* Tradition in the Female Convent of Jericho in Brussels (c.1450–1650)," *Medieval Low Countries* 2 (2015): 187–214. For editions of the prologues, which include the line numbers I refer to here, see Stoop, *Schrijven in commissie*, 446–51. Thus far only the prologue by Mergriete van Steenbergen in MS. Gent, University Library, 902 has been translated into English; see Mertens, "Ghostwriting Sisters," 138–41. The prologue to the seventeenth-century collection, accompanied by a summary in English, has been published in Stoop, "Writing Sisters of Jericho," 288–308.

9. Janne Colijns was born in 1453 or 1454 as one of the (at least) three daughters of Master Andries Colijns (d. 1481) and Jacoba Tsgroten (d. between November 1, 1484, and November 25, 1485). We know hardly anything about her family. The coat of arms that is depicted on the epitaph that hung over her grave in the convent church of Jericho, however, points toward a noble birth. The church in the left upper corner of the painting has been identified as the Saint Nicholas church in Furnes, a small town close to the coast in West Flanders, and probably indicates where Janne was born. (For a description of the epitaph, see Stoop, *Schrijven in commissie*, 90–92 and Figure 11; and Jutta Frings and Jan Gerchow, eds., *Krone und Schleier: Kunst aus mittelalterlichen Frauenklöstern* [Munich: Hirmer, 2005], 486 [no. 426].) On May 29, 1461, at the age of seven or eight, Janne entered Jericho as a schoolgirl. It seems likely that she received most of her education in the convent's school, under the guidance of Sister Barbara Cuyermans, whom she called her "writing mistress" (*meesterse van scrijven*) in the prologue to the sermon collection she wrote later (see below). In 1468/69, at the age of fourteen, Janne became a novice. Shortly after this she listened to Jan Storm's sermons, which she eventually wrote down. But Janne was not only active as a sermon writer. She was also involved in the copying of at least part of one other book for her own convent, MS. Philadelphia, Free Library, Lewis European 213 (written between the 1480s and April 1491), which contains the *Expositio in regulam sancti Augustini*, Hugh of Saint Victor's commentary on the Rule of Saint Augustine, and which was copied by at least twelve copyists (Philip E. Webber, "Medieval Netherlandic Manuscripts in Greater Philadelphia Libraries," *Archief en Bibliotheekwesen in België* 47 [1976]: 459–513, at 506). Besides this, she copied a number of books for payment (*pro pretio*) for priests who lived in other convents. In 1482 Janne was appointed procuratrix. She executed this function until about All Saints' Day, 1483. A few years later, on June 26, 1486, she was elected prioress. This office she held until her death at the age of thirty-seven. This biography is based on the more detailed account in Stoop, *Schrijven in commissie*, 90–103.

10. For a short biography of Barbara Cuyermans, see Stoop, *Schrijven in commissie*, 105–6.

11. Barbara also copied down a sermon by Michael van Lyra, who in his role as provincial of the Brussels Observant Friars Minor visited Jericho most likely in 1476; this sermon is preserved in MS. Gent, University Library, 902, fols. 171–23v.

12. For a description of the manuscript, see Stoop, *Schrijven in commissie*, 377–80 (no. 4). The colophon suggests that the codex was copied between January 18 and May 9, 1507. This year is also mentioned in the prologue. Close examination demonstrates that in the prologue, as in the collection, two time levels can be found. It most probably is an ingenious synthesis of the work of Janne Colijns, who drafted the prologue in its initial form, and an anonymous sister who later adjusted the foreword to its sixteenth-century context. This posthumous attribution to Janne has caused much confusion over time, especially because MS. Brussels, Royal Library, 15071, written in 1510 and containing the forty *Homiliae in evangelia* by Gregory the Great in the Middle Dutch translation by the so-called Bible translator of 1360, is also attributed to her. From this period onward the sources suggest that two canonesses named

Janne Colijns lived in the convent, even though there are a number of strange coincidences—both sisters, for instance, would have been born in the same year and would have entered the convent within six weeks of each other, even though there are no traces of two women with the same name in the sources before the death of Prioress Janne Colijns in 1491. In the detailed description of Janne's biography in my monograph I have argued, based on a number of observations, that the existence of a second Janne Colijns is highly unlikely. One of my arguments is that the posthumous attribution of manuscripts is not uncommon. Maria van Pee's name, for example, was also only added to the prologue of her collection after her death: "Sister Maria van Pee. May God grant her his eternal peace" [Suster Marie van Pee. God wil haer geven sinen ewegen vree] (fol. 3r).

13. Elizabeth's biography can be found in Stoop, *Schrijven in commissie*, 103–5. A short biography in French is also available in Berlière, *Monasticon Belge*, vol. 4, 1259–60.

14. For a short biography of Mergriete van Steenbergen, see Stoop, *Schrijven in commissie*, 106–7.

15. For a description of the manuscript, see ibid., 383–86 (no. 6).

16. For short biographies of Paul van Someren and Anne Jordaeus, respectively, see ibid., 82–84 and 107–10.

17. For descriptions of these manuscripts, see ibid., 371–73 (no. 1) and 376–77 (no. 3).

18. See the prologue by Mergriete van Steenbergen, ll. 35–47.

19. Prologue by Maria van Pee, ll. 25–28.

20. Ibid., ll. 34–37. Comparable statements can be found in the prologue by Janne Colijns (see below) but also in sermon collections that were written in other convents. The anonymous Carthusian nun who wrote down thirty-nine sermons by Vicar Henricus Cool (d. ca. 1578)—distributed over two manuscripts, respectively, MSS. Brussels, Royal Library, II 2098 (sermons from 1573–74) and 2981 (sermons from 1576)—extensively expresses her inadequacy to write down the sermons "so clearly and profoundly according to the true intention of God as they were explicated and explained to us" [soe claeericke ende soe grondeliche naer den rechten sijnne gods als sij ons verclaert ende uitgheleijt waeren] (MS. Brussels, Royal Library, II 2098, fol. 179v). This epilogue has been published in Lisanne Vroomen and Patricia Stoop, "Vijf preken uit de kerstkring van 1574 van Henricus Cool, vicaris van het kartuizerinnenklooster Sint-Anna-ter-Woestijne bij Brugge (Brussel, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, II 2098)," *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 86 (2015): 43–79, at 75–76. For an initial analysis of the sermons in collection II 2098, see Patricia Stoop and Lisanne Vroomen, "A Carthusian Nun's *Reportationes* of Henricus Cool's Sermons in the Low Countries," in *Nuns' Literacies in Medieval Europe: The Antwerp Volume*, ed. Virginia Blanton, Veronica O'Mara, and Patricia Stoop (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, forthcoming).

21. A fascinating exception is Sermon 24 (fols. 227r–34v), which according to its heading was "written from word to word with his own hand" [met sijns selfs hant van woerde te woerde ghescreve[n]] by Jan Storm. An edition of the sermon has been published, with a short analysis, in Patricia Stoop, "Uit het geheugen: Het gebruik van de Bijbel in biechtvaderpreken van Jan Storm (†1488)," in *De Middelnederlandse preek*, ed. Thom Mertens, Patricia Stoop, and Christoph Burger (Hilversum: Verloren, 2009), 133–81, at 142–47 and 161–70.

22. See n. 8.

23. The prologues of the Jericho sermon collections show, for example, large resemblances to the prologues of the sister-books from Modern Devout circles, e.g., the Sister-Book of Diepenveen. See Wybren Scheepsma, *Medieval Religious Women in the Low Countries: The Modern Devotion, the Canonesses of Windesheim, and Their Writings* (Woodbridge, U.K.: Boydell, 2004), 145–46. The similarities of the prologues to those in medieval monastic historiographic sources are also striking; see Steven Vanderputten, "From Sermon to Science: Monastic Prologues from the Southern Low Countries as Witnesses of Historical Consciousness (Tenth–Fifteenth Centuries)," in *Medieval Narrative Sources: A Gateway into the Medieval Mind*, ed. Werner Verbeke, Ludo Millis, and Jean Goossens (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005), 38. The similarities in style and figurative language in the Jericho prologues have been discussed in Stoop, *Schrijven in commissie*, 186–89.

24. Prologue by Maria van Pee, ll. 14–17.

25. Ibid., ll. 39–42.

26. Prologue by Janne Colijns, ll. 59–69. What the material put at her disposal by Jan Storm looked like is not clear. It has not been preserved, with the exception of two letters that are copied at the end of MS. Brussels, Royal Library, II 298, fols. 375r–85r.

27. For an analysis of Janne Colijns's sermons, see Stoop, *Schrijven in commissie*, 216–71.

28. Sermon 12 in MS. Brussels, Royal Library, II 298, fols. 119v–28r. Apparently the sermon, which according to its heading was related to the Thursday after Easter (“Des donderdaegs in die paeschweke Origenes omelie overgheset van pater Storm”), was a source of inspiration: Barbara Cuyermans made an adaptation of the text, which in the manuscript precedes Storm’s translation (Sermon 11, on fols. 112r–19v). The texts show so many analogies that it is highly unlikely that Barbara did not have Storm’s translation at hand. Why the canoness decided to make an adaptation of a text she had at her disposal, and why both sermons were integrated immediately after one another in the same collection (albeit that Barbara’s sermon occurs in the earlier part from the 1470s, whereas Storm’s sermon is found in the later part written in the first decade of the sixteenth century), is not clear. A more in-depth comparison of both texts may shed more light on the writing strategies of the Jericho sisters.

29. In the collection of Maria van Pee this distinction between sermon and chapter is not made, as we will see below.

30. Conrad of Saxonia, *Speculum Beatae Mariae Virginis*, ed. Collegium S. Bonaventurae (Florence: Ad Claras Aquas, 1904), 130–40. On the author, see Gerhard Stamm, “Conrad von Sachsen,” in *Die Deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon*, ed. Kurt Ruh et al. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1978–2008), vol. 5, 247–51.

31. Maria van Pee and Janne Colijns were not the only nuns to integrate shared materials into their sermons, as may be illustrated by an anecdote that is used both by Maria van Pee in her report of a sermon on a Tuesday after Easter by Jan Storm in the period between 1459 and 1464 (Brussels, Royal Library, 4367–68, Sermon 37, fols. 131v–34r) and by Anne Jordaens in her version of a sermon for Easter Sunday, 1479, by Paul van Someren (MS. Brussels, Royal Library, 4287, Sermon 1, fols. 2r–10v). The exemplum illustrates the virtue of compliance with one’s neighbor by showing him or her mildness and humility. The story tells how a goat lies down when it meets another goat at the other end of a bridge that is so narrow that it is impossible for both of them to cross at the same time. Maria is brief in this example. She tells how helpfulness is “properly demonstrated by the goat that wants to cross a river or water, because she lies down on her four limbs on the bridge and allows her companion to walk over her so that both can cross safely” [Dat properlijc bewijst wert in der gheyt en soe wanneer si over een riviere oft water gaen sal, soe gheet sij op haer vier poekens ligghen op die brugghe ende laet haer ghenoekens over haer ende op haer treden op dat si soe beide over comen souden] (fol. 133v). Anne describes the example in a bit more detail: “As I have heard in an anecdote once: a master from a palace in Rome wanted to lead two goats at the same time over a narrow bridge. When they arrived in the middle of the bridge that was so narrow that the two animals could not pass by, they watched one another. Good advice was very valuable there, because neither of them wanted to go back and they did not want to fall into the water. At long last one of them bent down and allowed the other to walk over her, so that they both could stay alive” [Ghelyc dat ic een exemplel te eender tijt hoerde vertellen: eenem meester uten paleys van Rome van twee gheyt en die te eender tijt over een nauwe brugghe soude lijden. Als si ter middelt van der brugghen quamen die alsoe nauwe was dat daer gheen ii beesten bij een en mochten lijden, soe saghen si deern op den anderen. Want goede raet was daer zeire diere, nyement en mochte daer achter weert ende si en hadden niet gheerne in den water ghevallen. Ten lesten boechde haer die eene neder ende liet dander over haer lijden, soe dat se beyde dat liff behouden mochten] (fol. 9r).

32. For a brief biography of Adam Jordaens, who had a good reputation in humanist circles, see Stoop, *Schrijven in commissie*, 108.

33. Willem Lourdaux and Marcel Haverals, *Bibliotheca Vallis Sancti Martini in Lovanio: Bijdrage tot de studie van het geestesleven in de Nederlanden, 15de–18de eeuw*, 2 vols. (Leuven: Universitaire Pers, 1978–82), vol. 2, 310. The *Speculum* is mentioned in the *Registrum Rubeavallis* (MS. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Series nova, 12694, fol. 192r). The register, which most likely was written by Antonius Geens, canon regular in Rooklooster in the Forêt de Soigne, mentions a long list of books that were present in the surrounding convents. Antonius Geens died in 1543, so before the merger of Sint-Maartensdal and Ten Troon (see n. 35). This implies that the Latin copy of the *Speculum* most likely was owned by Sint-Maartensdal from the beginning and did not stem from the library of Ten Troon.

34. Anderlecht, Archives ecclésiastiques du Brabant, 12.784, respectively, fols. 17r and 8v. See Stoop, *Schrijven in commissie*, 108–9 n. 219.

35. In previous publications I have indicated, based on a quick comparison of the texts that Janne Colijns mentioned in her sermons with the inventory of the book collection of Sint-Maartensdal, that the canonesses of Jericho seem to have had access to (Latin) books that

belonged to this convent, where Adam Jordaeus lived. In 1586 Sint-Maartensdal amalgamated with the impoverished monastery of Ten Troon, the convent where Jan Storm was professed and prior at a later stage. Most probably, the brothers of Ten Troon took their book collection with them to Leuven. Books that are mentioned in the book list of Sint-Maartensdal, published by Willem Lourdaux and Marcel Haverals, may therefore originally stem from the library of Ten Troon in Grobbendonk, which would make the link with Jericho all the more direct. See Stoop, *Schrijven in commissie*, 256–57; and Stoop, “From Reading to Writing,” 53. For the literary network in which Jericho functioned, see Stoop, “Brussels Convent of Jericho and Its Literary Network,” 389–408, especially 390, for the reference to the study book and the Golden Throne. Of major importance in this literary exchange is the role of the spiritual caretakers (priors, rectors, confessors, and *visitatores*) and family members and friends.

36. In the first point Maria refers to the Father (“die here die vader”); in the third, to the Holy Ghost (“die here die heilige gheest”); and in the fourth, to the Holy Trinity itself (“drivuldicheit”). In the text I refer for the Latin work to the page numbers in Conrad of Saxonia, *Speculum Beatae Mariae Virginis*. For the Middle Dutch texts I point to the folio numbers and to the line numbers in the manuscripts.

37. English translations of the Latin biblical quotations are taken from the Douay-Rheims Catholic Bible, which can be consulted online at <http://www.drbo.org> (accessed February 20, 2016).

38. This is the most plausible hypothesis unless we assume that Maria had access to an already abbreviated translation that circulated within the convent walls next to a complete and more literal Middle Dutch version of the text. Unless the opposite is proved (which in the absence of any intermediate copies is difficult) I think that we must assume that both women worked from one and the same text.

39. See Stoop, *Schrijven in commissie*, 252–54.

40. For a very inspiring discussion with regard to the Latin literacy of female religious, see Monica Hedlund, “Nuns and Latin, with Special Reference to the Birgittines of Vadstena,” in *Nuns’ Literacies in Medieval Europe: The Hull Dialogue*, ed. Virginia Blanton, Veronica O’Mara, and Patricia Stoop (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2013), 97–116.