

Creating the Memory of God in a Medieval Miscellany: Melk MS 1075, Jean de Hesdin (fl. 1350–1370), and Late Medieval Monastic Reform

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Accustomed as we modern readers are to the notion of an ‘author’ as the originator of an entire work, it can be difficult to remember how fluid the idea of authorship was in the Middle Ages. This fluidity is especially apparent in the work of the medieval compiler, who could create both a new treatise or an entire miscellany from other works. Sometimes new works were created from extracts of old ones and by trains of mental associations. These ideas can be explored through a small tract entitled *Ex Iohanne de hysdinio de memoria* in Melk, Stiftsbibliothek, 1075. Though the contents of the tract were written by the author named in the title—the French Hospitaller and biblical scholar Jean de Hesdin (fl. 1350–1370)—the tract itself was compiled by someone else, likely a Benedictine monk living at the monastery of Melk in the fifteenth century. The piece, a collection of ideas about memory extracted from Jean de Hesdin’s *Commentary on Job*, is contained in a manuscript miscellany composed of short works on religious and pedagogical topics chosen to appeal to a Benedictine monk. The manuscript contains a number of commentaries on the Rule of St. Benedict, two *ars memorativa* treatises, several sermons by the Benedictine reformer Johannes Schlitpacher (d. 1482), and a number of pedagogical treatises.¹

This paper explores two questions: first, what guided the selection of extracts on memory from Jean de Hesdin’s *Commentary on Job*? How was

¹ The manuscript came from a Benedictine house, and several of the treatises have a Benedictine theme, including five works that treat the Rule of St. Benedict. See the Appendix for a complete list of the manuscript’s contents. Manuscript information may be viewed through the Electronic Access to Medieval Manuscripts at the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library (EAMMS at HMML): <http://www.hmml.org>.

the work compiled and what purposes did it serve? Because the Melk library catalogue from the fifteenth century lists Jean de Hesdin's *Commentary on Job* among its contents, we can trace the origin of the compilation with some accuracy. However, ascertaining what purpose the compilation served requires more interpretation. Second, what relationship, if any, exists between the *Ex Iohanne de Hesdinio de memoria* and the rest of the contexts of Melk 1075? In particular, is there a connection between the obvious interests in memory and religious meditation exhibited in the manuscript's contents and the Benedictine reform movement sponsored by the monastery at Melk in the fifteenth century? Some sections of the manuscript appear to show connections of association in the placement of one text next to another, though one cannot make such an argument for the whole manuscript. It is the working hypothesis of this author that there is a connection between memory, meditation, and the Benedictine religious reform movements of the fifteenth century. The connection between memory and religious reform also extends to pedagogical concerns.

It is best to begin with some background about Jean de Hesdin, as he is not particularly well known to modern scholars. Jean de Hesdin is a figure remembered today chiefly because of an epistolary duel he fought against Petrarch over the validity of the Avignon papacy in the later fourteenth century. Well-known for his disdain of the papacy's residence in Avignon (which he called the "Babylonian captivity"), Petrarch wrote to Pope Urban V both before and after the pope's return of the papal court to Rome in 1367.² In his letters he made several uncomplimentary observations about France, Avignon and its climate, and the quality of

² Grover Furr, "France vs. Italy: French Literary Nationalism in 'Petrarch's Last Controversy and a Humanist Dispute of ca. 1395,'" *Proceedings of the Patristic, Medieval and Renaissance Conference, Villanova University* 4 (1979): 115–25. For more on Hesdin's involvement in the dispute, see also Beryl Smalley, "Jean de Hesdin O. Hosp. S. Ioh.," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 28 (1961): 283–89; Pierre de Nolhac, *Pétrarque et l'humanisme*, 2 vols. (Paris: H. Champion, 1907), vol. II, 307–11; Kimberly A. Rivers, *Preaching the Memory of Virtue and Vice: Memory, Images, and Preaching in the Later Middle Ages*, Sermo 4 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), chapter 7; and Philip Edward Burnham, "Cultural life at Papal Avignon, 1309–1376" (Ph.D. diss., Tufts University, 1972). For Urban V's return of the papacy to Rome, see G. Mollat, *The Popes at Avignon, 1305–1378*, trans. Janet Love (London: Nelson, 1963), 154–60, and Yves Renouard, *The Avignon Papacy: The Popes in Exile, 1305–1403*, trans. Denis Bethell (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1970), 53–61.

French scholarship. Naturally enough, the French resented Petrarch's insinuations and put up Ancel Choquart, a professor of canon law, to defend the honor of Avignon and the advantages of the protection of the French king just before Urban left for Rome.

After Choquart died in 1368/69, Jean de Hesdin joined the fray, becoming known as the *Gallus calumpniator* (the Gallic challenger). Because of his solid career at the University of Paris, Hesdin would have seemed a natural choice for the French side. Hesdin was a member of the Order of the Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem and likely held the position of regent master of theology at the Order's house in Paris for over 25 years.³ By the late 1360s, he had written a number of biblical commentaries and sermons, most of them studded with references to classical culture. He was also Dean of the Faculty of Theology at Paris by 1364, a respected position at the university rarely held by a member of a religious order.⁴ In addition, he had spent at least a few months in Avignon itself, on his way back from a mission to Hungary with his patron, Guy de Boulogne, later Bishop of Porto. Wishing to defend the reputation of France, he wrote to Petrarch, probably in 1369 or 1370. Among the disputed points was a differing idea of classical culture and the uses to which it should be put. While Petrarch valued the eloquence of the ancient writers and the sense of Italian history that he drew from Rome's past, Hesdin and the French defenders subordinated verbal eloquence to

³ Smalley, "Jean de Hesdin," 284, and Anthony Luttrell, "Jean and Simon de Hesdin: Hospitallers, Theologians, Classicists," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 31 (1964): 137–40. See also Rolf Sprandel, *Altersschicksal und Altersmoral: Die Geschichte der Einstellungen zum Altern nach der Pariser Bibelexegese des 12.–16. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1981), and Andrew Jotischy, *The Carmelites and Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 171–72, 185, 225.

⁴ Smalley, "Jean de Hesdin," 284. A roll of petitioners for papal provisions sent in June 1365 lists him as dean of theology: *Primo fratri Johanni de Hesdinio, Ord. S. Johannis Jherusolimit. decano ad presens theologice facultatis Parisius, qui per xxv annos fuit quasi continue actu regens, excepto tempore quo in Avinione cum domino cardinale Boloniensi peregit lecturam supra Job, quam Parisius inceperat, et postea Parisius fecit lecturam supra epistolam Pauli ad Titum, cum pluribus sermonibus et aliis operibus, que per copiam habentur Parisius*, H. Denifle and E. Chatelain, eds., *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, rpt ed., vol. 3 (Bruxelles: Culture et Civilisation, 1964), 127, no. 1305. See also no. 1299, 1336, and 1429.

Christian wisdom: to them the riches of the past should be put to a Christian use.⁵

The careful appropriation of classical culture was, in fact, the approach that Hesdin had taken in his own scholarship. During his career, he composed three or four biblical commentaries which are still extant: a commentary on Job, a commentary on Paul's epistle to Titus, another on the gospel of Mark, and possibly one on the Song of Solomon, which has not been studied.⁶ Beryl Smalley describes all of them as *lecturae*, products of his years in the classroom in Paris. In the commentaries on Job, Mark, and Titus, Hesdin makes liberal use of secular authorities, as well as the standard biblical and theological ones, but he incorporates the most classical sources into his work on Titus.⁷

There is also one other work attributed to Hesdin which has not been noted by previous scholars. This is the small treatise entitled *Ex Iohanne de hysdinio de memoria* (*From Jean de Hesdin, On Memory*), which I found in Melk 1075, written in the fifteenth century at the Benedictine monastery of Melk.⁸ Hesdin's *De memoria* is not an independent treatise so much as a compilation of extracts from his commentary on Job. The preponderance of quotations from the book of Job, as well as a long one from Gregory the Great's *Moralia in Iob*, which, according to Smalley, Hesdin made much use of in his own commentary, would lead any reader to suspect a connection with Hesdin's commentary. In addition, the title *Ex Iohanne de hysdinio de memoria* suggests that the work may consist of extracts from some of Hesdin's writings. In the same manuscript there is a copy of the library catalogue at Melk (called an *Ordinatio librorum*

⁵ Furr, "France vs. Italy," 120.

⁶ As in so many areas related to medieval biblical commentaries, Beryl Smalley has already laid the ground work for a study of Hesdin's writings. See Smalley, "Jean de Hesdin," 289–91, and Friedrich Stegmüller, *Repertorium Biblicum Medii Aevi* (Madrid: 1949–80), vol. III, nos. 4551–56, VII, no. 10707, and IX, nos. 4551–56.

⁷ R. A. B. Mynors, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Balliol College, Oxford* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 184. For an examination of Hesdin's treatment of the virtues, vices, and mnemonic images in Titus, see Rivers, *Preaching the Memory*, chapter 7.

⁸ Melk, Stiftsbibliothek, Codex Mellicensis 1075 (421. H 38) (henceforth Melk 1075). I have consulted the microfilm copy held by the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library (HMML 1833) in Collegeville, Minnesota.

bibliothecae Mellicensis) made in 1483 that notes that the library possessed a copy of Hesdin's *Postilla super librum Iob*.⁹

An examination of Hesdin's Job commentary reveals that it is indeed the source of the *De memoria*, as nearly every section of the small treatise can be found in the larger work.¹⁰ I have used the copy of the Job commentary contained in Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine, 200, fol. 17ra–357rb (= P²). One can ascertain the connection between the two works from the incipit of the *De memoria* and the *Tabula* of Hesdin's work on Job. The incipit of the *De memoria* is:

*Nota quatuor. Primo memoria investiganda est vario modo; secundo quomodo memorari Deum facere debemus in oratione plura; tercio memoria malorum consistit in quatuor; quarto memoria sanctorum consistit in quatuor.*¹¹

If one looks for the word *memoria* in the *Tabula*, one finds the following topics: *Memoria bonorum habet quadruplex bonum; Memoria malorum quadruplex malum habet; Memoriam dei debemus memorare ut sit memor nostri et aliqua ostendere deprecando; memorio antiquorum laudanda multipliter.*¹² When the topics are followed up in Job, most of them turn out to be exactly the same as the items listed in *De memoria*. One can find almost the entire contents of *De memoria* in the Job commentary. To take one example, we can compare what each work says about the memory of one's elders or "ancients."

De memoria, Melk 1075 (fol. 863r)

Generacio capitur dupliciter. Vno modo prout est via in ens, et sic accipitur 4 Methaphysice et Philosophus, 5 Physicorum et secundo Methaphysice, vbi dicit generacio est media inter non ens simpliciter et esse simpliciter. Alio modo dicitur generacio successio plurimi ex vno homine, et sic dicitur Genesis 4: *hee sunt generaciones Ade*.

Commentary on Job, P² (fol. 97rb)

Generacio sicut scitis dicitur dupliciter. Vno modo prout est via in ens, et sic accipit quattuor 4^o Methaphysice et Philosophus 5^o Phisicorum et 2^o Methaphysice, vbi dicit quod generacio est medium inter non ens simpliciter et esse simpliciter. Alio modo dicitur generacio successio prolium ex vno homine, et sic dicitur Genesis 4: *hee sunt generaciones Ade et cetera*.

⁹ See Melk 1075, p. 25. An extant copy of Hesdin's Job Commentary can be found in Melk, Stiftsbibliothek, Codex Mellicensis 520 (592. L.11), saec. XV, *Commentarius in librum Iob*.

¹⁰ I have used Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine 200, fol. 17ra–357rb (henceforth P²). See Smalley, "Jean de Hesdin," 290, and Stegmüller, *RB* III, no. 4551.

¹¹ Melk 1075, p. 863.

¹² P², fol. 5v.

Dicitur ergo *interoga enim generationem*,¹³ id est, inquire de antiquis quid senserunt. Nam ab antiquis debemus inquire de quatuor:
de mirabilibus ad addiscendum,
de agibilibus ad nos conformandum,
de moralibus ad nos instruendum,
de credibilibus ad nos confirmandum.

Et sic accipitur hic cum dicit *interroga et cetera*, id est, inquire de antiquis quid senserunt de hoc, et merito nam ab antiquis debemus inquirere:
de admirabilibus ad addiscendum,
de agibilibus ad nos confortandum,
de moralibus ad nos instruendum,
de credibilibus ad nos confirmandum.

De memoria, Melk 1075 (fol. 863r)

"Generation" is taken in two ways. In one way, just as a way into being, and so it is understood in Book 4 of the Metaphysics, and the Philosopher, Book 5 of the Physics, and in the second book of the Metaphysics, where he says that generation is the midpoint between non-being simply and being simply. In the other way "generation" is called a succession of many from one man. And so it is said in Genesis 4: "these are the generations of Adam."

Therefore it is said, "*For inquire of the... generation*," that is, ask your forefathers (*antiquis*) what they felt. For from our forefathers we ought to ask about four things:

About the wonderful things that ought to be learned;
About the practiceable things for forming us;
About the moral things for instructing us;
About the things worthy of belief for strengthening us.

Commentary on Job, P² (fol. 97rb)

"Generation," just as you know, is said in two ways. In one way, just as a way into being, and so it is understood in Book 4 of the Metaphysics, and the Philosopher, Book 5 of the Physics, and in the second book of the Metaphysics, where he says that generation is the midpoint between non-being simply and being simply. In the other way "generation" is called a succession of offspring from one man. And so it is said in Genesis 4: "these are the generations of Adam, etc."

And so it is accepted here, when he says "*Inquire etc*," that is, ask your forefathers (*antiquis*) what they felt about this, and rightly, for from our forefathers we ought to ask about four things:

About the wonderful things that ought to be learned;
About the practiceable things for forming us;
About the moral things for instructing us;
About the things worthy of belief for strengthening us.

The same kind of similarity exists in the rest of the two texts, the main difference being that the *De memoria* supplies much longer biblical quo-

¹³ Job 8,8.

tations than the Job commentary. Given that the reader of Job would presumably expect frequent references to the biblical text and that the reader of the *De memoria* might not, the difference is not surprising.

What can we say about the authorship of this work, then? It seems most useful to follow the distinction made in the late Middle Ages between an *auctor* and a *compilator*, regarding Hesdin as the *auctor* of the extracts from the original text of the Job Commentary, and the unknown writer of this manuscript as a *compilator* for taking the quotations from the Job commentary and putting them together into a new work.¹⁴ Though most compilations were drawn from many sources and authorities, compilations of quotations from only one *auctor* certainly existed. For example, the *florilegium* entitled *liber qui vocatur Flores Bernardi* collected excerpts from a single author (Bernard of Clairvaux) rearranged according to subject matter.¹⁵ Our *compilator* has chosen from Hesdin's work the original headings given to each section under consideration, some original commentary by him, and the initial references to authorities (biblical, patristic, and philosophical), which are taken from parts of the Job commentary. The headings serve to organize the collection of quotations, especially biblical ones, which are extensive, sometimes two to three paragraphs long. Though the identity of the *compilator* remains unknown, one has to assume that a monk at Melk took the initiative in creating a new work on memory. The various ex-

¹⁴ Given that Hesdin was actually a commentator on the Book of Job, the question of authorship could get quite complicated. See Alastair J. Minnis, "Late-Medieval Discussions of *Compilatio* and the Role of the *Compilator*," *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur* 101, no. 3 (1979): 415–16, where he discusses St. Bonaventura's discussion of four kinds of writers: scribe, compiler, commentator, and author.

¹⁵ Malcolm Beckwith Parkes, "The Influence of the Concepts of *Ordinatio* and *Compilatio* on the Development of the Book," in *Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays Presented to Richard William Hunt*, ed. J. J. G. Alexander and M. T. Gibson (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976), 130. For the literature on *compilatio* and the debate over its origin and influence on book production, see also Minnis, "Late-Medieval Discussions"; Alastair J. Minnis, "*Nolens auctor sed compilator reparator*: The Late-Medieval Discourse of Compilation," in *La méthode critique au Moyen Âge*, ed. Mireille Chazan and Gilbert Dahan (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 47–63; Neil Hathaway, "*Compilatio*: From Plagiarism to Compiling," *Viator* 20 (1989): 19–44; and Mary A. Rouse and Richard H. Rouse, "*Ordinatio* and *Compilatio* Revisited," in *Authentic Witnesses: Approaches to Medieval Texts and Manuscripts*, ed. Mark D. Jordan and Kent Emery, Jr. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991), 113–34.

tracts were scattered throughout the original biblical commentary, so the compiler has made a conscious decision to bring them together into one work. Because some of the extracts did not arise in the context of a discussion of memory in the Job commentary, the compiler has done more than simply excise a single block of text. Rather, he has adapted the original material for a new purpose. This text demonstrates that one can create new works on a topic by creatively extracting from something else. Texts are endlessly recyclable.

What purpose did this new work serve? Since its title says it is about *memoria*, what view of *memoria* does it give us? If we go back to the opening remarks about Hesdin's career, we should remember that Hesdin's view of the past served as an example of the medieval style of classical culture that was about to be overthrown by the new humanism pioneered by Hesdin's antagonist, Petrarch. To Hesdin and other medieval writers, classical culture could be pulled into Christian service by providing a rich pool of *exempla* of virtuous and vicious men. Such *exempla* from the past should be reduced to memory, so that present generations can learn from their behavior. This is the clear message of *De memoria*, which organizes biblical quotations around the things worthy of remembrance, touching on what we should remember about the *antiqui*, how we should remember God, what is remembered about evil men, and what to remember about the saints. By far the most attention is given to the *memoria antiquorum*, which one could probably interpret as the memory of either "the ancients" or "forefathers." The biblical quotation from Job 8—"Inquire now of bygone generations, and consider what their ancestors have found"—implies the idea of forefathers but does not rule out the possibility of the classical writers. Hesdin says that one should ask what the ancients or forefathers thought, what miracles we should learn, the deeds and the beliefs to which we should conform ourselves, and the morals we should learn.¹⁶

What is noteworthy here is that the compiler found Hesdin's headings about memory in Job to be worth extracting. Though the philosophy of education at Melk in the fifteenth century certainly embraced humanism, scholasticism, as we shall see, was hardly dead there. In fact, Hesdin's views about the past were evidently not incompatible with those of the monks at Melk. In addition, Hesdin's claim that one should remember God in prayer had long been a monastic ideal.

¹⁶ Melk 1075, p. 863.

The implications of the arrangement of the treatise and ideas about memory at Melk are interesting and bring us to the second major question of the paper: what relationship, if any, exists between the *Ex Iohanne de hysdinio de memoria* and the rest of the contents of Melk 1075? The manuscript is from the Benedictine monastery at Melk and must date from the very end of the fifteenth century or beginning of the sixteenth century, as several of the materials contained in it are dated and come from the late 1460s to the end of the century.¹⁷ The library *ordinatio* mentioned before dates from 1483, while a number of pieces are dated from the very end of the century: one sermon by Johannes Schlitpacher is dated 1494, another sermon, by an anonymous author, 1497.¹⁸ There are signs of at least two hands in this very long manuscript (926 pages), and the pagination of the manuscript is by a modern hand, though there are signs of medieval foliation in the pages devoted to Johannes Schlitpacher's *Expositio Regulae S. Benedicti*.¹⁹ It is safe to conclude that some parts of this manuscript were assembled from previously separate components.

The pieces in the manuscript have a clear Benedictine context. In addition to the library *ordinatio* and Hesdin's work, there are seven sermons by Johannes Schlitpacher, five commentaries, extracts, or tables on the Rule of St. Benedict (one of them by Schlitpacher), a number of works on meditation (about which more later), two *ars memorativa* treatises, some school texts on the *ars dictaminis* and astronomy, and a few miscellaneous sermons. (See the Appendix for a complete list of the manuscript's contents.)

I would like to suggest that some parts of the manuscript reflect an interest in memory on the part of the compiler and perhaps of the monastery as a whole in the fifteenth century and that this interest in memory stemmed from the monastery's role in monastic reform and a concomitant enthusiasm for methodical meditation. In addition, memory techniques served to support the pedagogical aims of the monastery, aims that are also reflected in Melk 1075 through the school texts men-

¹⁷ There are a number of sermons by Johannes Schlitpacher that date from the 1460s and 1470s; see Melk 1075, pp. 301, 308, 337, 345.

¹⁸ For the sermons, see Melk 1075, pp. 287, 914. Some excerpts from Johannes de Turrecremata (Juan de Torquenada, O.P., 1388–1468) are dated to 1499 (p. 850), while the explicit to Conrad Celtis's *ars memorativa* reports a date of 1497, p. 879.

¹⁹ Melk 1075, pp. 662–94.

tioned above. In addition to Hesdin's extracts on memory, the manuscript contains two tracts on the *ars memorativa*, a genre of short treatises that provided rules for improving one's memory, and that became wildly popular in the fifteenth century. The work by Hesdin is not an art of memory, though the presence in the manuscript of one of the *artes memorativae* immediately after his piece implies that the manuscript's compiler associated Hesdin's tract with mnemonic concerns or simply with memory in general. The same kind of associations can be seen in the meditational texts in the manuscript, which are grouped together.

The two memory treatises contained in Melk 1075 are representative examples of the genre and contain mnemonic principles that link them to some of the meditative materials in the same manuscript. The first memory treatise in the codex has the incipit *Quidam magister studii lipcensis tradens artem memorandi eandem commendat auctoritatibus Aristotelis Senece Tullii et sancti Thome de Aquino...* According to Sabine Heimann-Seelbach, there are five extant manuscripts of this *ars*, four of them held at Melk.²⁰ The text is short—only two manuscript pages—and represents an abbreviation of a longer mnemonic treatise, the *Attendentes nonnulli*, a treatise that Heimann-Seelbach sees as a school text.²¹ The *Quidam magister* employs the usual places and images system of fifteenth-century *artes memorativae* and claims that its method can be learned in three or four hours. It also says that greater effort in memorizing is required for the seven liberal arts than for the other three faculties of the university. Its list of things that would require images for remembering certainly implies a treatise aimed at people with a scholarly or religious connection. Examples include substances, accidents (*iustitia* represented by a *gladius*, *albedo* represented by a *lilia*), propositions, arguments, unknown words (*dictiones ignotae*), the beginnings of verses, *negocia*, sermons and collations. In the section on remembering sermons and histories, the tract also mentions the use of "fingers and joints" (*digitos et articulos*) to remember authorities with many chapters,

²⁰ Sabine Heimann-Seelbach, *Ars und scientia: Genese, Überlieferung und Funktionen der mnemotechnischen Traktatliteratur im 15. Jahrhundert; mit Edition und Untersuchung dreier deutscher Traktate und ihrer lateinischen Vorlagen*, Frühe Neuzeit 58 (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2000), 56–57.

²¹ *Ibid.*

presumably as a modification of the usual place system.²² We will return to the significance of the hand as a repository of mnemonic places.

The second memory treatise has the incipit *Memoriam in naturalem et artificialem scindunt, illam autem nostris animis insitam et ingenitam, alteram que preceptione quadam confirmetur*. This text is Conrad Celtis's *Epitoma in utramque Ciceronis rhetoricam cum arte memorativa nova et modo episolandi utilissimo*.²³ It was published around 1492; the copy in Melk 1075 is one of only two known manuscript copies. Farkas Gábor Kiss has worked on this text and notes that it uses the place and image system of the fifteenth century, but adds the use of the alphabet as a way to create the places.²⁴

I would argue that the interest in memory in this manuscript stems at least in part from the support that memory techniques could offer certain kinds of religious devotion, especially the methodical meditation (or mental prayer) becoming increasingly popular in the fifteenth century.²⁵ Both memory treatises and meditational tracts emphasized the necessity of vivid descriptions based on individual experience, the construction of scenes, the reliance on the pictorial imagination, and an emotional connection to the subject.²⁶ One reason among many that art of memory treatises, relatively rare texts in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, suddenly took off in the fifteenth century may have been the need for the

²² Melk 1075, p. 45: *Item commemoracio auctoritatum quantum ad quot tam capitulorum habetur per digitos et articulos.*

²³ Heimann-Seelbach, *Ars und scientia*, 133–35.

²⁴ Farkas Gábor Kiss, "Valentinus de Monteviridi (Grünberg) and the Art of Memory of Conrad Celtis," in *Culture of Memory in East Central Europe in the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period*, ed. Rafał Wójcik, Prace Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej 30 (Poznań: Biblioteka Uniwersytecka, 2008), 109–10.

²⁵ Jean Ledercq, "Prayer and Contemplation: II. Western," in *Christian Spirituality I: Origins to the Twelfth Century*, ed. Bernard McGinn and John Meyendorf, World Spirituality: An Encyclopedic History of the Religious Quest 16 (New York: Crossroad, 1985), 423–24; Mathias Goossens, "Meditation au Moyen Âge. II. Les méthodes dans la spiritualité chrétienne. 1 La 'Devotio moderna'," in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique, doctrine et histoire*, ed. Marcel Viller, Ferdinand Cavallera, and J. de Guibert (Paris: G. Beauchesne et ses fils, 1980), 10: 914–19.

²⁶ David Freedberg, *The Power of Images. Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 169.

strong visual memory demanded by late medieval meditation practices.²⁷

The crucial role of memory in meditation turns up as a theme in some fifteenth-century *ars memorativa* treatises (though certainly not all of them). The most interesting of these treatises has the incipit *Memoria fecunda Deus Pater eternus* ("With fruitful memory, God the eternal father") and was edited in 1979.²⁸ From the very beginning of his treatise, the author exhibits a particular interest in applying memory techniques to religious themes. Perhaps in response to contemporary criticism of artificial memory, he concedes that his art, like any other, can be used for good or ill, and thus its use depends on the will of the user. According to him, artificial memory enables people of good will to remember things that delight them, like sermons, the Gospels, the Epistles, and the Psalms.²⁹ They should also meditate on the memory of gifts or benefits (*beneficia*) given to humans by God, and our mnemonic author stresses the importance of this memory:

²⁷ Farkas Kiss has also seen a constellation of memorial practices in the late Middle Ages involving memory, preaching, and meditation: Kiss, "Valentinus de Monteviridi," 58.

²⁸ Roger A. Pack, "An *Ars memorativa* from the Late Middle Ages," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 46 (1979): 221–75. Pack based his edition on the text contained in Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Codex Vindobonensis Palatinus 4444, which he thought was the only copy of the manuscript. However, the publication of new manuscript catalogues since 1979 and the work of Heimann-Seelbach have revealed that in fact this was a relatively popular memory treatise, with at least fifteen manuscripts extant: Heimann-Seelbach, *Ars und scientia*, 28–34. This manuscript has also been discussed a number of times by scholars interested in various aspects of the *ars memorativa*. See Jacques Berlioz, "La mémoire du prédicateur. Recherches sur la mémorisation des récits exemplaires (XIIIe–XVe siècles)," in *Temps, mémoire, tradition au Moyen Age. Actes du XIIIe Congrès de la société des historiens médiévistes de l'enseignement supérieur public, Aix-en-Provence, 4–5 Juin 1982* (Aix-en-Provence: Publ. Univ. de Provence, 1983), 157–83; Helga Hadjú, *Das Mnemotechnische Schrifttum des Mittelalters* (Vienna: Verlag Franz Leo & Comp., 1936), 101–03; Lina Bolzoni, *The Gallery of Memory: Literary and Iconographic Models in the Age of the Printing Press*, trans. Jeremy Parzen (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 150, 213; Giuseppa Saccardo del Buffa, "Dalla narrazione alla scena pittorica mediante le tecniche della memoria (Wien, Ö.N.B. 4444)," *Arte lombarda* 105–07, no. 2–4 (1993): 79–84.

²⁹ Pack, *Ars memorativa*, 230.

By meditation on the benefits of God with a firm memory, the intellect is consequently illuminated by knowledge (*agnicia*) and the will is inflamed by the love of God and the virtues. But if memory is not strengthened, consequently neither the intellect nor the will will be able to grasp the ends of their perfection, namely the True and the Good. For a great number of God's servants lament their slippery memories, and among many few meditative [servants] are found, because they do not have a means of strengthening their memories. Therefore, with the mediation of God's grace, an art of memory is a manifold aid to devout and good meditation.³⁰

For this author, then, meditation on the gifts or benefits of God to humans directs the intellect and the will toward their proper ends. Unfortunately, this task depends on holding the awareness of these gifts in memory. Like many other ancient and medieval writers, the author assumes the essential fragility of memory and sees its weakness as an obstacle to meditation.³¹ Artificial memory can stabilize or strengthen memory and thus contribute to devout meditation.

The author of *Memoria fecunda* was not the only mnemonic expert to justify artificial memory by praising its usefulness in meditation. The art of memory contained in Colmar 277 (incipit *Attendentes nonnulli philosophye*) expresses nearly the same sentiment. Borrowing from the same prologue used by the first author, he claims that the art can be used by men who have a good will to remember sermons, the gospels, proofs, and judicial matters. Though he does not mention the memory of the benefits of God, he does agree that many willing servants of God lament their bad memories and are thus prevented from meditating.³² Since there are at least 32 manuscripts extant with this incipit, and another 15

³⁰ *Ibidem* (my translation).

³¹ *Ibidem*, 21. The treatise cites Seneca on the weaknesses of memory: *Memoria est res ex omnibus animi partibus maxime delicata et fragilis, in quam primam senectus incurrit* (Seneca pater, *Controversiae* I, 2, in Adolf Kiessling, *Annaei Senecae Oratorum et rhetorum sententiae divisiones colores* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1872). For the significance of the trope *memoria beneficiorum*, see Rivers, *Preaching the Memory*, chapter 3.

³² Colmar, Bibliothèque du Consistoire, 277, fol. 69r: *Applicable vero ad bonum per eos qui habent bonam voluntatem; mediante enim uero tali memoria artificiali melius habent modum se posse recolligere et in se subsistere et ea quorum delectationem habent recordari, puta predicaciones, Ewangelia, capitula, allegaciones, causas iuridicas, et alia si qua memorie commendari voluerint. Magna eciam pars seruorum Dei de labilitate ipsius memorie lamentatur; inter multos enim pauci apprime meditati loqui reperiuntur, quia non habent modum stabiliendi memoriam, quemadmodum per artificialem memoriam a philosophis dictatam haberi potest.*

of the *Memoria fecunda*, this was a sentiment with which many would-be mnemonic experts could have become familiar.³³ Thus, these *ars memorativa* treatises base their claims of utility in part on the support their methods can offer for religious purposes like meditation, as well as for remembering texts useful to religious and scholars, such as sermons, the Bible, and legal matters. This same tie between memory and meditation can be seen in Melk 1075.

There are a number of examples of meditational treatises in Melk 1075 that are clearly expected to involve memorization, and they are mostly grouped together.³⁴ A particularly good example is the text with the incipit *Nota homo duas vitas esse rationales, que ut sequitur in duobus cherub describe reperiuntur actiua scilicet et contemplatiua*.³⁵ The text says it describes two cherubs representing the active and the contemplative life. The cherub for the active life has six wings covering its body, with each wing representing one of six concepts: *contemplacio superiorum, spes premiorum, tenor discipline, vigor fortitudinis, virtus rectitudinis*, and *modus temperancie* (contemplation of celestial things, hope of rewards, continuity of discipline, vigor of fortitude, strength of rectitude, method of temperance). Each of these wings then has five feathers (*penas*) with writings on them as well. There is a similar arrangement for what the text calls the cherub of the contemplative life, with its six wings representing *dilectio Dei, dilectio proximi, confessio, satisfactio, puritas mentis, mundicia carni* (love of God, love of neighbor, confession, satisfaction, purity of mind, cleanliness of the flesh), that is the degrees of penance.³⁶

Two points can be made about the cherubs. First, the text and content of the cherubs are not original to this manuscript. To take only one example, there are drawings of two cherubs with nearly identical mottos on their wings in Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, 12465, a fifteenth-century manuscript with a number of similar drawings meant for meditation and religious edification (Figures 11 and 12).³⁷

³³ See Heimann-Seelbach, *Ars und scientia*, 28, 46–47.

³⁴ The tracts for meditation occupy pp. 351–92, as well as pp. 882–86.

³⁵ Melk 1075, pp. 351–53.

³⁶ Michael Evans, "The Geometry of the Mind," *The Architectural Association Quarterly* 12, no. 4 (1980): 38; the article includes a late fourteenth-century drawing of a cherub with similar wording.

³⁷ See fol. 75v and 76v. I have used the microfilm version available through the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library (HMML), Collegeville, MN, Project No. 19968.

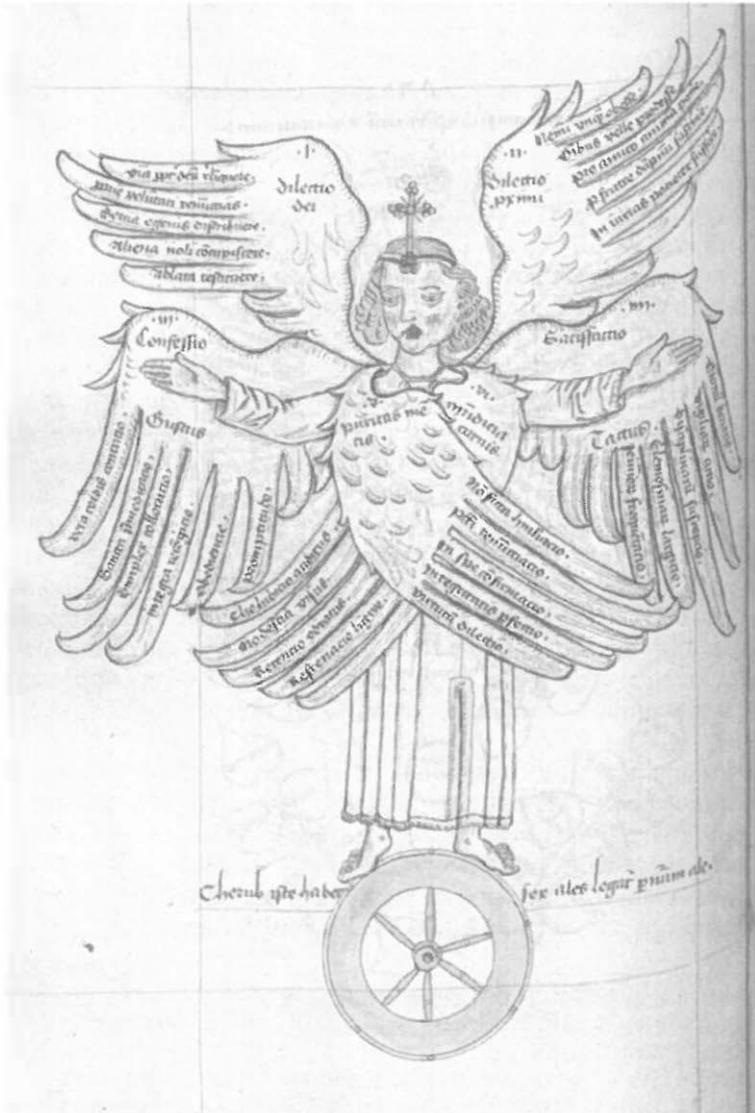


Figure 11: Drawing of a cherub. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Codex Vindobonensis 12465, fol. 75v. By permission of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek. See also the colour plate at the end of this volume.

I have made no systematic search as yet for cherubs, but I suspect that these examples were common subjects of contemplation in the fifteenth century.³⁸ Second, our scribe made no attempt to draw in the cherubs, but rather left the visualizing of them to the imagination of the reader. However, the scribe/compiler notes that “with respect to the active life the writings of the feather with their wings may be adjusted to the fingers of the hands or the joints of the fingers.”³⁹ He seems to think that some meditators might find the hand easier to use as a repository of mnemonic places for the phrases corresponding to the active and contemplative lives than the cherub. Neither the cherub nor the hand represented an unusual subject of meditation by the end of the fifteenth century. A long tradition within the Franciscan order linked the cherub (or seraph) to meditation,⁴⁰ while texts like Jean Mombaer’s *Chiro-psalterium* and the *Alphabetum divini amoris* (discussed below) made the hand the site of mnemonic places for recalling the Psalms.⁴¹ Both required the aid of the imagination and both would be strengthened by the precepts of the *ars memorativa* circulating so widely in the fifteenth century, including the first one contained in Melk 1075.

It certainly appears that the hand served as a useful mnemonic device to the readers of Melk 1075. A few folio pages after the end of the *De duplici vita* is another text for meditation:

³⁸ The inscriptions for the cherub of the contemplative life match those found in the treatise *On the Six Wings of the Seraph*, attributed to Alan of Lille. See Bridget Balint, trans., “[Alan of Lille], On the Six Wings of the Seraph,” in *The Medieval Craft of Memory: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*, ed. Mary Carruthers and Jan M. Ziolkowski (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 82–102.

³⁹ Melk 1075, p. 351: *Quantum ad vitam actiuam scripte penne cum suis alis ad digitos manuum siue articulos digitorum aptentur.*

⁴⁰ See, for instance, Lina Bolzoni, “St Bernardino da Siena,” in *The Web of Images: Vernacular Preaching from its Origins to St Bernardino da Siena* (Aldershot, England; Brookfield, Vt.: Ashgate, 2004), 117–95; Mary J. Carruthers, “Ars oblivionis, ars inveniendi: The Cherub Figure and the Arts of Memory,” *Gesta* 48, no. 2 (2009): 1–19.

⁴¹ Albert Deblaere, “Mombaer (Jean; Mauburnus, de Bruxelles),” in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique, doctrine et histoire*, ed. Marcel Viller, Ferdinand Cavallera, and J. de Guibert (Paris: G. Beauchesne et ses fils, 1980), 10: 1520. Geneviève Hasenhor, “Méditations méthodique et mnémonique: un témoignage figuré ancien (XIIIe–XIVe s.),” in *Mélanges d’histoire, d’histoire de l’art et d’archéologie offerts à Jacques Stiennon*, ed. Rita Lejeune and Joseph Deckers (Liège: Pierre Mardaga, 1982), 376–77.

Incipit alia figura crucifixi sub specie monachi habentis os clausum sera, in dextra serpentem appensum sub lampade. Et fune cinctus, nudus, pedibus cruci affixus.

Another figure of the crucified begins under the image of a monk having his mouth sealed with wax, having in his right hand a serpent hanging from a lamp. And he is bound with a rope, nude, affixed to a cross by his feet.⁴²

It is dated to 1495.⁴³ This text, which calls itself a *Ciromancia spiritualis*, claims that it teaches about past things, present things, and the future concerning eternal life and the misery of damnation.⁴⁴ The text then gives mottos for meditation to be placed on both the right and the left hands according to each finger and its joints. For instance, the meditation for the index finger of the right hand includes three teachings, one for each joint of the finger.

Attende ad indicem

- Primum* *Quam angusta porta penitencie uel caritatis, quam arda via iusticie, et quam pauci sunt qui inueniunt eam.*⁴⁵
- Secundum* *Pauci omni sunt qui querunt, pauciores inueniunt, paucissimi qui perueniunt. Item pauci qui veniunt, pauciores per ea introre contendunt.*
- Tercium* *Nemo intrat sine labore et sine animi puritate. Ex premissis ergo multitudo reproborum electorumque paucitas conprobatur.*

Consider the index finger

- First How narrow the gate of penitence or charity, how restricted the way of justice, and how few are those who find it.
- Second There are few who seek, fewer who find, the fewest who arrive. Again there are few who come, fewer who strive to enter through it.
- Third No one enters without labor and without purity of spirit. From those sent ahead, therefore, a multitude of the reprobate and a paucity of the elect are sanctioned.

The meditations appear to be designed for monks, as there are frequent references to their proper mindset and behavior. Toward the end of the

⁴² Melk 1075, pp. 357–62.

⁴³ Melk 1075, p. 362.

⁴⁴ Melk 1075, p. 357: *Hec est Ciromancia spiritualis, vera, infallibilis atque certa, que docet de preteritis, presentibus et futuris, de vita eterna atque miseria damnatorum indicibili.*

⁴⁵ Mt 7,14.

meditations for the right hand, the author declares *Crux ista in specie monachi notatur. Verus religiosus gerit ymaginem crucifixi, vt videlicet sic mundo carni et dyabolo crucifixus.*⁴⁶ ["This cross is marked by the form of a monk. The true religious bears the image of the crucifix, and namely is so crucified by the world of the flesh and by the devil."] There are also a number of lengthy quotations from St. Bernard on the comportment of a monk. I would argue that the monk who compiled this manuscript employed the rules of the *ars memorativa* to aid in religious meditation and religious life in the monastery.

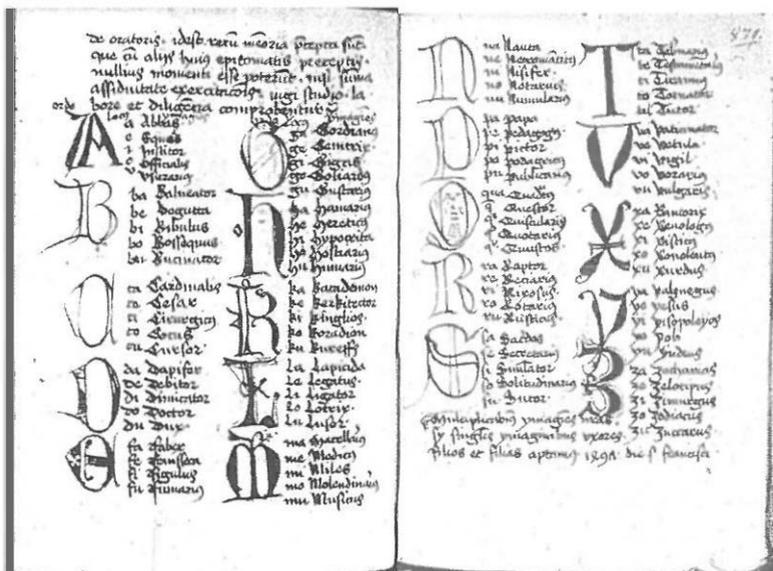


Figure 13: Conrad Celtis's mnemonic alphabet, Melk, Stiftsbibliothek, 1075, pp. 878-79. Image provided by the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library, Collegeville, MN.

This conclusion is strengthened by the positioning of the texts after the second *ars memorativa*. The positioning shows a chain of mnemonic associations. The *ars* by Conrad Celtis ends with an alphabet for creating places and images in one's memory house (Figure 13). It is immediately followed by two short texts with lists with a connection to the alphabet. The first one is entitled *Nota Signationes capitulorum Regulae S. Benedicti*

⁴⁶ Melk 1075, p. 358.

secundum alphabetum.⁴⁷ [Note the designations of the chapters of the *Rule of St. Benedict* according to the alphabet."'] The manuscript pages are laid out to reflect the divisions of the text in alphabetical order, not unlike the way the places are marked out at the end of Celtis' *ars* (Figure 14). The implication is that one should memorize the chapters of the Benedictine Rule using a mnemonic alphabet like Celtis'.

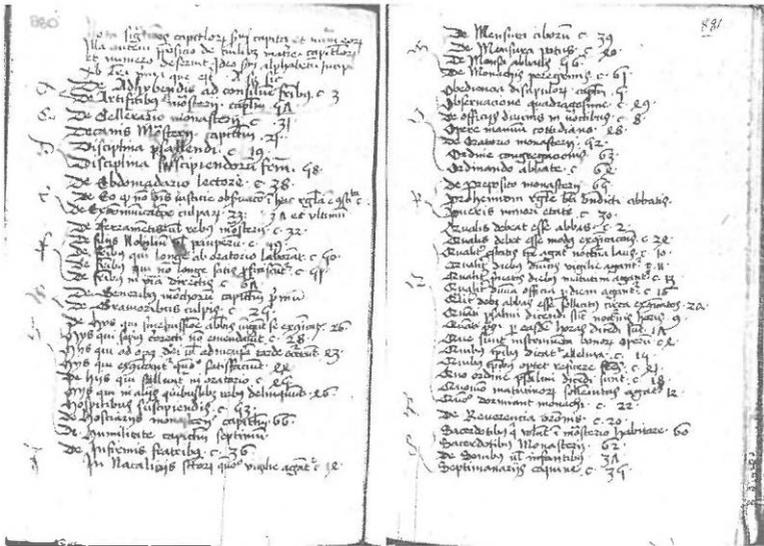


Figure 14: Alphabetical table to the Rule of St. Benedict: *Signationes capitulorum Regulae S. Benedicti secundum alphabetum*. Melk, Stiftsbibliothek, 1075, pp. 881–82. Image provided by the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library, Collegeville, MN.

The second short text is entitled *Nota vias novem, ex alphabeto divini amoris*.⁴⁸ ["Note the nine ways from the Alphabet of Divine Love."'] These pages comprise a compilation much like the one from Jean de Hesdin's Job Commentary. This time the text is a series of extracts from the *Alphabetum divini amoris*, an anonymous devotional work written in the early fifteenth century and stemming from Austrian-Bavarian circles.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Melk 1075, pp. 880–82.
⁴⁸ Melk 1075, p. 882–86.
⁴⁹ Dennis D. Martin, ed., *Carthusian Spirituality: The Writings of Hugh of Balma and Guigo de Ponte* (New York: Paulist Press, 1997), 56.

The work, itself a compilation of extracts from religious authorities, divides its quotations first according to fifteen different *vias*, and then under each *via* according to the letters of the alphabet.⁵⁰ (In essence we have a compilation of extracts from a compilation of extracts!) The orientation of this text is clearly toward meditation, with a strong implication that the extracts should be memorized. Certainly, the section on the *Via orativa* (Way of Prayer) contains mnemonic advice for “attending to the Psalmody” (*De modis attendendi in psalmodia*).⁵¹ The author provides a table with 28 clauses that he recommends the reader locate on 28 places on the fingers of one hand (with the thumb being excepted). (One gets 28 places by counting four places for each of the four fingers on the palm side of the hand and three places per finger on the back side). The thumb is used to count out each place on the finger as one recites the clauses; the whole exercise is meant to concentrate the mind on arousing emotions and preventing distraction.⁵² As in the case of the Hesdin compilation, the compiler must have had a copy of the *Alphabetum divini amoris* available to him at Melk: the library *ordinatio* of 1483 lists at least two copies of the text.⁵³ The link between the three texts is the use of the alphabet to organize and remember religious material.

Why should a monk or monks at Melk be interested in this kind of religious meditation? In fact, it was one of the features of the Benedictine reform movement in the fifteenth century that began in Italy and then spread to Germany and Austria, with Melk itself becoming one of the main centers of reform. Melk came under the influence of the monastery at Subiaco, near Rome, which had been reformed in the 1350s and 1360s; the Italian community was filled with monks from Germany and Austria.⁵⁴ In 1403, a group of scholars from the University of Vienna

⁵⁰ See the brief mention of the text in Horst Wenzel, *Hören und Sehen, Schrift und Bild: Kultur und Gedächtnis im Mittelalter* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1995), 439. The text has received little scholarly treatment.

⁵¹ *Alphabetum divini amoris* (Argentatorum 1510), p. 69 (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek).

⁵² *Alphabetum divini amoris*, p. 76: *Et sic in primo digito habebis septem affectus: quos excitare poteris in te: adaptando cuilibet affectui unum psalmum vel plures: unum versum vel plures [sic]. Et cum pollice punge articulum illius digiti: vt illa punctio vel impressio digiti impediatur distractione.*

⁵³ Theodor Gottlieb, ed., *Mittelalterliche Bibliothekskataloge Österreichs, I. Niederösterreich* (Vienna: A. Holzhausen, 1915), 156, 183.

⁵⁴ Peter King, *Western Monasticism: A History of the Monastic Movement in the Latin Church*, Cistercian Studies Series, 185 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications,

entered the monastery. Prominent among the group were Nikolaus Seyringer, who became abbot in 1412, and Petrus von Rosenheim. Unfortunately for them, they were pushed out of the monastery and moved on to another community (Rocca di Mondragone), where Seyringer was made prior by Gregory XII.⁵⁵ Seyringer's reputation reached the ears of the leaders of the Council of Constance, who planned to promote the reform of the Benedictine order. Seyringer was invited to the Council and was asked by the Duke of Austria to take on the task of reforming the monasteries in his lands. Seyringer accepted the challenge and, along with a number of religious who had accompanied him from Italy, tackled Melk first.⁵⁶ Seyringer became abbot there and began the process of reforming religious life in that monastery. The movement then spread to other convents in the area.

Among the many aspects of the Benedictine reform movement was a renewed emphasis on religious meditation. There were a number of sources of the movement toward meditation, including the writers of the *devotio moderna*, the writings of Louis Barbo and the reform movement of Saint Giustina of Padua, and the traditions of the Franciscans and Carthusians, all of which were popularized and disseminated throughout Europe in the fifteenth century.⁵⁷ Writers and teachers from all of these

1999), 252, and James G. Clark, *The Benedictines in the Middle Ages*, Monastic orders (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2011), 295-304. See also James D. Mixson, *Poverty's Proprietors: Ownership and Mortal Sin at the Origins of the Observant Movement* (Leiden: Brill, 2009); D. M. Lunn, "Benedictine Reform Movements in the Later Middle Ages," *Downside Review* 91 (1973): 275-97; J. Angerer, *Die liturgisch-musikalische Erneuerung der Melker Reform*, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften: Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Sitzungsberichte, 287 (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1974), esp. 29-75; Karl Suso Frank, OFM, *With Greater Liberty: A Short History of Christian Monasticism and Religious Orders*, trans. Joseph T. Lienhard, SJ, Cistercian Studies Series 144 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1993), 131-46; Philibert Schmitz, *Histoire de l'Ordre de Saint-Benoît*, 2nd ed., 7 vols. (Maredsous: Éditions de Maredsous, 1948), III, 175-201; Dennis D. Martin, *Fifteenth-Century Carthusian Reform: The World of Nicholas Kempf*, Studies in the History of Christian Thought 49 (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 58-66, and Ursmer Berlière, "La réforme de Melk," *Revue bénédictine* 12 (1895): 204-13, 289-309.

⁵⁵ Meta Niederkorn-Bruck, *Die Melker Reform im Spiegel der Visitationen*, Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung, Ergänzungsband 30 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1994), 17-27; Berlière, 206.

⁵⁶ Berlière, 206-07.

⁵⁷ H. Outram Evennett, "Counter-Reformation Spirituality," in *The Counter-Refor-*

religious groups helped to create a systematic method of private, meditative prayer, which is also sometimes called “mental prayer” as opposed to vocal prayer.⁵⁸ In particular, Spain, Germany, and Italy were all influenced by the writings of the *devotio moderna*. The monastery at Melk was no exception. Christine Glassner, who has studied the contents of the library at Melk extensively, has commented on the great number of manuscripts of Carthusian writings and works from the *Devotio moderna* dating from the fifteenth century at Melk.⁵⁹

Monks at Melk needed a good memory for more than just meditation; they also needed it to enhance their grasp of the Bible as well as academic texts. During the whole of the fifteenth century, there was a strong relationship between the University of Vienna and the convent. Not only were clerics sent from Melk to the studium at Vienna, but the cloister itself exercised such an attraction for the graduates of the university that in the first fifty years after the beginning of the reform in 1418, some twenty-five graduates, from bachelors to doctors, entered the Benedictine order at Melk.⁶⁰ Melk also housed a studium for the order that helped to increase ties between Melk and the university. The well-known theologian, Nikolaus von Dinkelsbühl, lectured on the fourth book of the Sentences at Melk from 1421–24.⁶¹ Monks at Melk, then, were not just religious, but also students and teachers, and had mnemonic needs for their studies as well as for religious devotion.

In fact, Petrus von Rosenheim, author of the *Roseum memoriale*, one of the most famous mnemonic works of the late Middle Ages, was one of the original group of monks who accompanied Seyringer from Subiaco to

mation: The Essential Readings, ed. David M. Luebke, Blackwell Essential Readings in History (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 1999), 55–56, who emphasizes the importance of the *devotio moderna* and the Franciscans and Carthusians; Francis Oakley, *The Western Church in the Later Middle Ages* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1979), 236.

⁵⁸ Evennett, “Counter-Reformation Spirituality,” 57.

⁵⁹ Christine Glassner, “Schreiben ist lesen und studieren, der sel speis und des herzen jubiliern: Zu den mittelalterlichen Handschriften des Benediktinerstiftes Melk,” *Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des Benediktiner-Ordens und seiner Zweige* 108 (1997): 297. She also says that the most influential fifteenth-century author at Melk was Jean Gerson, who after the Council of Constance stayed at Melk for a short time. Roughly 80 works at Melk are ascribed to him.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, 293.

⁶¹ *Ibidem*, 293–94.

Melk.⁶² Rosenheim was prior from 1418–24, and from 1423–26 he was *cursor biblicus* and *magister studentium*. His best known work was the *Roseum memoriale divinatorum eloquiorum*, which he composed between 1423 and 1426, and which he designed to aid in the memorization of the whole Bible except the Psalms. It has been called the “most beautiful literary fruit of Melk’s reform movement.”⁶³ Rosenheim may also have composed a mnemonic work for memorizing the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard.⁶⁴ It was probably no accident that Rosenheim wrote his biblical work while he was *cursor biblicus* and master of the students.⁶⁵ The instant success of the work shows how eminently useful it was to students, preachers, members of religious orders and the like.⁶⁶ Johannes Schlitpacher, who also served as the monastery’s *magister studentium* in mid-century, composed an abbreviation of Nikolaus von Dinkelsbühl’s *Lectura Mellicensis* on the fourth book of the *Sentences*, which was apparently one of his most successful works.⁶⁷ It is also worth noting that

⁶² F. X Thoma, “Petrus von Rosenheim OSB,” *Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des Benediktinerordens und seiner Zweige* 45 (1927): 94–222. For background on Rosenheim, see also Franz Thoma, “Die Beziehungen des Petrus von Rosenheim zu den Xylographia der Ars memorandi und zu den Frühdrucken des Rationarium evangelistarum,” *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen* 46 (1929): 533–46; C. Märtl, “Petrus Wiechs (Vix) v. Rosenheim,” in *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, 10 vols (Stuttgart: Metzler, [1977] 1999), 6: 1988–89 (*Brepolis Medieval Encyclopaedias – Lexikon des Mittelalters Online*).

⁶³ “Man darf ruhig das ‘Roseum memoriale’ des Petrus von Rosenheim also die schoenste der literarischen Fruechte der Melker Reformbewegung bezeichnen,” Thoma, “Petrus von Rosenheim osb,” 206. See also Susanne Rischpler, “*Biblia Sacra figuris expressa*: Mnemotechnische Bilderbibeln des 15. Jahrhunderts (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2001).

⁶⁴ Susanne Rischpler, “Le coeur voyant. Mémoriser les *Sentences* de Pierre Lombard,” in *Medieval Memory: Image and Text*, ed. Frank Willaert et al., Fédération Internationale des Instituts d’Etudes Médiévales: textes et Etudes du Moyen Age 27 (Turnhout: Brepolis, 2004), 3–40.

⁶⁵ Of course, Rosenheim was hardly the only scholar to compose aids for memorizing the Bible. For an overview of some other late medieval Biblical versifications, see Greti Dinkova-Bruun, “Biblical Versification and Memory in the Later Middle Ages,” in *Culture of Memory in East Central Europe in the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period*, ed. Rafał Wójcik, *Prace Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej* 30 (Poznań: Biblioteka Uniwersytecka, 2008), 53–64.

⁶⁶ Thoma, “Die Beziehungen des Petrus von Rosenheim,” 205.

⁶⁷ Glassner, “Schreiben,” 294. For background on Schlitpacher, see St. Freund, “Schlitpacher, Johannes v. Weilheim,” in *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, vol. 7, col. 1490–91, and G. Michiels, “Jean Schlitpacher,” in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et*

Conrad Celtis taught at the University of Vienna in the 1490s, which could explain how Melk came to have one of the manuscript copies of his *ars memorativa*.⁶⁸ The composition of such famous mnemonic pieces as these demonstrates an interest in memory for pedagogical purposes at Melk from the beginning of the fifteenth century.

In the end, the way to view Melk 1075 is as a miscellany of Benedictine texts with sections organized around memory and meditation, what Derek Pearsall calls "Unorganized manuscripts with an element of local anthologizing."⁶⁹ The more organized sections seem to follow a chain of association that could perhaps be pursued because of the sheer volume of texts at the monks' disposal. Copying manuscripts was an important component of the reform movement: there was an almost explosive growth in the number of manuscripts dating from the fifteenth century compared to the previous centuries at Melk.⁷⁰

The contents of Melk 1075 also suggest that memory was an important component of education. The excerpts from Jean de Hesdin show that the monks at Melk found ways to recycle useful texts from the past in a way to make them relevant for their program in the fifteenth century. The manuscript as a whole suggests that the reformed monks at Melk participated in one of the most important revitalizing aspects of religious life in the fifteenth century—the enormous popularity of methodical meditation, a component that required special training through the *ars memorativa*.

mystique, doctrine et histoire, ed. M. Viller, F. Cavallera and J.d. Guibert (Paris: G. Beauchesne et ses fils, 1980), 8: 723–24.

⁶⁸ Heimann-Seelbach, *Ars und scientia*, 132–33; G. Campbell, "Celtis, Konrad," in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), accessible online at <http://www.oxfordreference.com>.

⁶⁹ Derek A. Pearsall, "The Whole Book: Late Medieval English Manuscript Miscellanies and Their Modern Interpreters," in *Imagining the Book*, ed. Kelly Stephen and John J. Thompson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 25.

⁷⁰ Glassner, "Schreiben," 292; S. H. Steinberg, "Instructions in Writing by Members of the Congregation of Melk," *Speculum* 16, no. 2 (1941): 210–15.

Appendix

Melk, Stiftsbibliothek, Codex Mellicensis 1075 (421. H 38), duodecimo, 928, 15th century.

Pages	Text
pp. 2–93	<i>Ordinatio librorum bibliothecae Mellicensis anno 1483 facta.</i>
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Medieval Manuscript Miscellanies:
Composition, Authorship, Use

MEDIUM AEVUM QUOTIDIANUM

SONDERBAND XXXI

Medieval Manuscript Miscellanies:
Composition, Authorship, Use

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