

Fifteenth-Century Manuscripts

The Liturgical and Musical Testimonies from the Cistercian Nunnery in Riga

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Only a fraction of the liturgical books used in the former Cistercian nunnery of Saint Mary Magdalene in Riga has been preserved in the libraries in Uppsala and Vilnius, and no manuscript has survived from the nunnery in the city of Riga itself. Since most of the nunnery's books have vanished, the remaining sources are the only testimonies that narrate the spiritual and intellectual life of the nuns.¹

After the closure of the nunnery in 1583, the nuns' books were added to the library of the local Jesuit college.² As they were no longer relevant to the new owners, some of these artefacts naturally went missing, whereas others were used as binding material for printed books, a common practice from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century.³ Subsequently, in 1621, most of the Jesuit books along with the remains of the Cistercian nuns book collection was transferred to Sweden as war booty. According to existing research, in the collection of Uppsala University Library there are thirteen liturgical codices from the Cistercian nunnery of Riga.⁴ These manuscripts are prayer books for the

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- 1 This study presents some results of my PhD thesis at the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music in Rome, under the direction of Prof. Dr. Franz Karl Prassl. I would like to express my gratitude to Jeremy Llewellyn for his revision of this chapter.
 - 2 For more on the history of the Cistercian nunnery of Riga and its books, see Gustavs Strenga and Andris Levāns, 'Medieval Manuscripts in the Riga Jesuit College Book Collection: Manuscripts of the Riga Saint Mary Magdalene Cistercian Nunnery and Their Tradition', in *The Catalogue of the Riga Jesuit College Book Collection (1583–1621): History and Reconstruction of the Collection = Rīgas Jezuītu Kolēģijas Grāmatu Krājuma (1583–1621) katalogs: Krājuma vēsture un rekonstrukcija*, eds. Andris Levāns and Gustavs Strenga (Riga: Latvijas Nacionālā bibliotēka, 2021), pp. 167–186. See also Otto Walde, *Storhetstidens litterära krigsbyten: En kulturhistorisk-bibliografisk studie* (2 vols., Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1916–1920), 1, pp. 49–51; Wolfgang Schmidt, 'Die Zisterzienser im Baltikum', *Finska kyrkohistoriska samfundets årskrift*, 29/30 (1939), pp. 174–177.
 - 3 See, for instance, Nicholas Pickwoad, 'The Use of Fragments in Mediaeval Manuscripts in the Construction and Covering of Bindings on Printed Books', in Linda L. Brownrigg and Margaret M. Smith (eds.), *Interpreting and Collecting Fragments of Mediaeval Books: Proceedings of the Seminar in the History of the Book to 1500* (London: Red Gull Press, 2000), pp. 1–20.
 - 4 Uppsala universitetsbibliotek (hereafter: UUB).

personal use of the nuns and date to the fifteenth century. In terms of content, the larger part of the nuns' collection is composed of books of hours: C 438; C 454; C 467; C 474; C 486; C 487; C 488; C 491; C 503, designed for monastic use.⁵ A smaller part of the collection consists of different types of breviaries: C 436 with a reduced office without nocturns; C 293 and C 434 contain the night offices; and C 477, a hymnary/collectary.⁶ In addition to the manuscripts preserved in the Uppsala University Library, there is one psalter preserved in the Manuscript Department of the Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences.⁷ According to the inscription of ownership, it belonged to the Jesuit college in Riga and according to scholarship its origin is the Cistercian nunnery in Riga.⁸ The present study is based mainly on an examination of five books of hours with musical notation, one psalter and two breviaries.⁹

Our overview of the liturgical and devotional practices of the Cistercian nuns of Riga is based on general liturgical and musicological analysis. These topics are studied for the first time here. One of the main focal points is the common liturgy of the Cistercian Order and its use in a nunnery in the far North. Another question concerns the concrete practice of the Riga Cistercian nuns: what the manuscripts at our disposal can tell us about the daily and festive liturgy of nuns. What was the function of the books of hours of the Riga Cistercians nuns, and what are their most characteristic features? Did the nuns celebrate the full liturgy of the hours like the monks, or did they only celebrate some parts of the office together, otherwise using further canonical hours within the context of private devotions.¹⁰ In addition, the study investigates what the specifics are that characterise the liturgical calendar and the cult of

5 Lat. *liber horarum*, fr. *livre d'heures*.

6 For detailed medieval manuscripts catalogue descriptions, see Margarete Andersson-Schmitt et al., *Mittelalterliche Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Uppsala: Katalog über die C-Sammlung* (8 vols., Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1988–1995); *The Catalogue of the Riga Jesuit College Book Collection (1583–1621)*.

7 Lietuvos mokslų akademijos Vrublevskių biblioteka (hereafter: LMAVB), *Psalter et cantica alia in usu Colleg. Rig. Soc. Iesu*, LMAVB RS F 22–96. I was able to securely identify this source as a manuscript of the nunnery; see also the following explanations.

8 The content of additional elements to the psalter shows a considerable overlap with other manuscripts from the nunnery of Riga, e.g., the most precise match is the list of Marian antiphons LMAVB RS F 22–96 fols. 149v–150v, presumably written with the same hand as the list on UUB C 477 fols. 123v–124rv. An analogous but partial list is present in UUB C 434 fol. 267v.

9 *Liber horarum* UUB C 438, C 467, C 486, C 487, C 488, *Psalterium Davidis* LMAVB RS F 22–96, *Breviarium* C 434 and C 436.

10 Cf. Thomas Csanády, *Breviarium monialium Seccoviensium: Über einige so genannte Seckauer Nonnenbreviere; Liturgiewissenschaftlicher Beitrag zur Frage der Lokalisierung einer Handschriftengruppe an der Universitätsbibliothek Graz*, (PhD thesis, Universität Graz, 2008).

saints in the nunnery and whether there is consistency with the other sources from the diocese? Finally, special attention is devoted to the musical material occurring in the manuscripts. In the bibliography concerning the books of hours, any reference to musical details is almost totally absent. How relevant is the musical notation present in monastic prayer books and can it reveal information about the nuns' communal and private prayer? During recent decades, research on female monastic practices, for example, in Northern Germany, has become increasingly more important.¹¹ In the case of Riga, however, there is no certainty about the motherhouse with which the nunnery was initially affiliated. Obviously, the nuns of Riga were related to the religious culture of Northern Germany from which presumably the first nuns were invited.¹²

At the end of the fifteenth century the Cistercian nunnery in Riga was of considerable size. A surviving charter from 1495 lists 53 Cistercian nuns, most of whom were of noble origin.¹³ Because of the background of wealth of many nuns, the nunnery had the economic means to produce books or commission books and must have also had a considerable collection of both choral liturgical books and books for private prayer. Unfortunately, none of the nunnery's liturgical-musical manuscripts have survived.

The peculiar type of book of hours for monastic use, which forms a major portion of the surviving manuscripts used by the Riga nuns, represents two aspects of the nuns' ritual life: private piety and liturgy. On one hand, the content of weekday liturgies, which is common in these books of hours, very plausibly indicates that the nuns prayed in choir. It is also noteworthy that five books of hours (C 438, C 467, C 486, C 487, and C 488) contain musical entries, which is unusual for this type of book. The liturgical characteristics of the majority of the musical content of the manuscripts suggest their choral use. On the other hand, the books of hours were also designed for private use. The dimensions of the books have the features of a private prayer book: practicality and compactness. Given that the structure of this category of book is less uniform than other types of liturgical manuscripts, it can be concluded that there are no two identical books of hours.¹⁴ In the case of the Riga Cistercians

11 Jeffrey F. Hamburger, Eva Schlotheuber, Susan Marti, and Margot E. Fassler, *Liturgical Life and Latin Learning at Paradies bei Soest, 1300–1425: Inscription and Illumination in the Choir Books of a North German Dominican Convent* (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2016).

12 Schmidt, 'Die Zisterzienser im Baltikum', pp. 158–161.

13 *Liv-, Est- und Kurländisches Urkundenbuch: Nebst Regesten* (section 1, 12 vols; section 2, 3 vols, Riga: J. Deubner, 1853–1914), 2/1, (hereafter: LUB 2/1), no. 252.

14 Peter Ochsenbein, 'Stundenbücher', in Leo Scheffczyk and Remigius Bäumer (eds.), *Marientlexikon* (6 vols., St. Ottilien: EOS, 1988–1994), 6, pp. 320–322; Victor M. Leroquais, *Les Livres d'heures manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale* (Paris: Macon, Protat frères imprimeurs, 1927), p. VII. See also Csanády, *Breviarium monialium Seccoviensium*.

every book of hours has a slightly different layout. Even though large parts of the layouts coincide, the disposition of content or additional texts varies to some degree, making these books individual and unique. Books underwent a continuous process of accumulation. After the main content by one or more scribes was finished, later owners or readers made their own additions, as is evidenced by the large number of different kinds of handwriting.¹⁵ As a typical feature of a book intended for a female community, there is the presence of the Latin feminine ending in the prayer texts, as well as frequent textual errors and different entries in the vernacular, varying from short rubrics to entire prayers and devotional texts.¹⁶ While the main characteristic of the private use of the book is the singular form, in books of hours these textual differences occasionally appear in the same prayer in different manuscripts. Another feature attesting to the personal use of a book is smaller sheets of paper, and drawn and printed images that occasionally appear among the pages.¹⁷ All these observations indicate that part of the content of the book of hours constituted the private devotion of a nun and part was recited in choir.

1 The Nuns' *Consuetudo* of Prayer

Little is known about the ritual practices in the Cistercian nunnery of Riga. From the manuscripts at our disposal, however, it is possible to gain an insight

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- 15 Although the books contain the hands of a well-trained copyist, there are numerous additions with less trained hands or hastily written pages, probably copied by the same nuns. E.g., in the book of hours UUB C 488 a great variety of hands appears including even an entry that seems to come from a scribe without writing practice, see UUB C 488, fol. 220r. Only one manuscript contains information from the scribe, it is the book of hours UUB C 438, where the inscription points out that the scribe was a man C 438, fol. 128v: 'Orate pro scriptore fratre vestro unum p[ater] n[oster]'. In addition, this manuscript in contrast to other books of hours, is written on paper, and its layout most differs from the other books of the same kind.
- 16 For instance, the widely known medieval prayer 'Here ihesu christe ik anbede dy', attributed to Pope Saint Gregory the Great, is present on front flyleaf recto of manuscript UUB C 486. The same prayer in Latin 'Domine ihesu christe adoro te' can be found also on fol. 1r of psalter LMAVB RS F 22–96. There is a wide collection of prayers in Middle Low German toward the end of the manuscript UUB C 474, fols. 190r–237r.
- 17 E.g., the handwritten and paper-printed prayers and fragments in Middle Low German in UUB C 486, fols. 161br–161fv. The smaller size paper sheets with liturgical texts at the end of breviary UUB C 436, fols. 156r–166v. Paper leaves with blessings in vernacular in UUB C 454 between fol. 87v and fol. 88r. Different illustrations appear on UUB C 477, fols. 1rv, 129v. Whereas, UUB C 491 contains two leaves (the front flyleaf verso and fol. 171v) with woodcut printed images.

into the daily and festive prayer life of nuns. An important aspect to consider is the fact that the nuns knew a large part of the Office by heart. Therefore, it was only natural that the manuscripts do not contain all the daily repetitions that were easily memorised.¹⁸ Certainly, one manuscript alone cannot give a comprehensive view of the rhythm of the inner liturgical life of a monastic community; moreover, the presence of some elements intended for private use can also create a misleading impression regarding the celebration of the common liturgy. The night office with twelve lessons and the distribution and number of psalms in the liturgical hours revealed in the breviaries C 293, C 434, C 436 indicate the monastic cursus used in monastic families, especially those who follow the Rule of Saint Benedict, such as the Cistercians.¹⁹ One of the indications is the number XII alongside the important feasts on the liturgical calendar of the Vilnius Cistercian psalter.²⁰ There is clear evidence verifying the observation of the Rule in the nunnery of Riga. A charter of 2 August 1255, which confirms the privileges of the Cistercian nunnery, indicates that Pope Alexander IV (pp. 1254–1261) promulgated the Rule of Saint Benedict and the Cistercians' statutes for the newly founded community.²¹ Additional proof that the nuns followed Saint Benedict's precepts can also be found in the manuscripts. The book of hours C 486, which belonged to the last nun of the nunnery, Anna Noetken, contains a private confession of infractions of the monastic rule such as poor performance of the divine office and failure to observe the Rule of Saint Benedict.²² In other books of hours, at the beginning

18 Chrysogonus Waddell, *The Primitive Cistercian Breviary (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. lat. oct. 402) with Variants from the 'Bernardine' Cistercian Breviary* (Fribourg: Academic Press, 2007), p. 29.

19 See Jörg Oberste, 'Constitution in progress: Der Zisterzienserorden und das System der "Carta Caritatis"', in Georg Mölich et al. (eds.), *Die Zisterzienser im Mittelalter* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2017), pp. 31–43, here pp. 36–37; see also Albert Schmidt, 'Zusätze als Problem des monastischen Stundengebets im Mittelalter', *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alten Mönchtums und des Benediktinertums*, 36 (1986), p. 67.

20 See Lila Collamore, 'Charting the Divine Office', in Margot E. Fassler and Rebecca A. Baltzer (eds.), *The Divine Office in the Latin Middle Ages: Methodology and Source Studies, Regional Developments, Hagiography; Written in Honor of Professor Ruth Steiner* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 3–11; see also Andrew Hughes, *Medieval Manuscripts for Mass and Office: A Guide to their Organization and Terminology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), pp. 50–80. The liturgical calendar is positioned at the beginning of the psalter. *Psalterium Davidis* LMAVB RS F 22–96, fols. 2r–7v.

21 LUB 3, no. 283.

22 UUB C 486, fol. 144r: 'Carissima domina dico deo et vobis culpam meam de omnibus defectibus meis De diuino officio male et indeuote persoluto ... De malis exemplis datis sororibus meis et feci contra regulam sancti benedicti ...' The later entry on fol. 1r reveals that the manuscript belonged to last nun Anna Noetken. See Nicolaus Busch, *Die*

of the *Confiteor*, one can find additional mention of Saint Benedict or in some cases Saint Bernard after the mention of God and the Virgin Mary.²³

As noted earlier, at first glance one can observe in the surviving sources a very intense prayer life of the nuns, both in common and in private. Besides the regular Office, the centre of the Cistercian *Opus Dei*, the nuns' spiritual habits consisted of non-canonical daily observances such as memorials, additional offices, suffrages, preces and benedictions, Scripture readings, daily devotions, and penitential piety.²⁴ The custom of adding supplemental services to the canonical hours was a regular practice in the monasteries of the later medieval centuries and the books of hours are the main testimony about this custom in the Cistercian nunnery in Riga. Unlike Cistercian monks, female communities had much more liberty and independence in liturgical and spiritual activities.²⁵ A considerable quantity of votive observances indicates that they were given an importance similar to Office Hours.²⁶ Consequently, until the Reformation, besides the daily divine office, there was a rather complicated and dynamic system of votive services alongside the canonical office. These extensive ritual practices refer to a real need to support the founders, benefactors, family members, noble and clerical patrons and their dead with prayer; consequently, this reflects the principle that 'liturgy springs from life.'²⁷ Such an intense ritual life was only possible in monastic circumstances where prayer was the main obligation of a choir nun.

All the manuscripts from the nuns' collection show that their use depended on their content; for the daily prayer life they were used in combinations. The breviaries C 293, C 434 and C 436 contain the parts of canonical hours of the Proper for Sundays and feast days during the year: Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, Trinity, Corpus Christi, and Sundays of Advent, after Epiphany, Lent Sundays, Sundays after Easter, Sundays after Pentecost,

Geschichte der Rigaer Stadtbibliothek und deren Bücher (Riga: Rigaer Stadtverwaltung, 1937), pp. 95–96; see also Leonid Arbusow Sr., *Livlands Geistlichkeit vom Ende des 12. bis ins 16. Jahrhundert* (Mitau: Steffenhagen und Sohn, 1913), pp. 152, 281.

23 For instance, UUB C 467, fol. 35v; C 488, fol. 40v; C 487, fol. 35v; C 438, fol. 70v: 'Confiteor deo et beate marie et sancto benedicto et omnibus sanctis...'; UUB C 486, fol. 37r: '... et sancto bernardo ...'.

24 For additional services, see Schmidt, 'Zusätze als Problem', pp. 9–17.

25 Elizabeth Freeman, 'Nuns', in Mette B. Bruun (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Cistercian Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 100–124, here pp. 103–105.

26 See Leroquais, *Les Livres d'Heures*, pp. IX–XII; see also Hughes, *Medieval Manuscripts*, pp. 3–19; Schmidt, 'Zusätze als Problem', pp. 83–92.

27 Chrysogonus Waddell, 'The Early Cistercian Experience of Liturgy', *Cistercian Studies*, 12 (1971), pp. 77–116, here p. 88.

Sundays after Trinity.²⁸ Other sections are dedicated to the *Sanctorale* and *Commune Sanctorum*. In addition, breviaries contain smaller sections, such as the *Hymnal* and *Collectary*, and sections of lesser importance placed between the main sections, such as devotional offices of specific saints. The liturgical feasts marked in manuscripts are congruent between all three breviaries and correspond to the liturgical calendar of the Vilnius Cistercian psalter. In differing from other breviaries, the manuscript C 436, contains only diurnal offices (from *Lauds* to *Vespers*) of Sundays and feast days. This predisposition for daylight hours also occurs in the psalter section, which does not form part of other two breviaries. In addition, it also contains some itemised *ferias* of a privileged category: seasonal weekdays of Advent, especially, the fourth week of Advent, *ferias* during Octave of Epiphany, Lent and Eastertide. Overall, the ferial weekday office is a link between the breviary C 436 and the book of hours.

One type of book of hours, especially the kind designed for laity, is characterised by supplemental services without any presence of the rhythm of the liturgical year. The type designed for Riga's community contained an essential part of the nuns' monastic ferial office: both in Ordinary time and during prominent seasons of the *Temporale*. As one can observe from rubrics, the Office provided for *privatis diebus*, days during the weekdays when saints with a Proper office were not celebrated.²⁹ It includes the ferial format of the night office (*Matins* with two nocturns), *Lauds*, *Vespers*, and little hours from Monday to Saturday. Besides the ferial office, the books of hours, similar to the breviary C 436, contain different parts of weekday offices of *Temporale* Proper from Advent to *Corpus Christi*. These offices present Proper texts for more important *ferias* of the liturgical year, such as Rogation Days, Ash Wednesday, weekdays during the Lenten season, *ferias* of Holy Week, and weekdays of the octave of Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, and *Corpus Christi*.³⁰ Further offices include All Saints, and the Marian feasts (*Purification*, *Visitation*, *Assumption* and *Nativity*), the *Dedication of the Church* and *Mary Magdalene*. Manuscript rubrics do not provide clear indications as to when these offices were recited, but the ferial context of their content leads to the supposition that they are Proper texts of the weekdays during the octaves of these feasts.³¹ The presence of Proper texts for feasts such as the *Dedication of the Church* and *Mary*

28 The number of Sundays differs between the manuscripts from twenty-four to twenty-six.

29 UUB C 486, fols. 40v, 131v; C 467, fols. 40r, 144r; C 488, fol. 45r; C 487, fols. 40r, 157v.

30 UUB C 486, fol. 157v the rubric 'in Rogacionibus'.

31 Not all Marian feasts (*Visitation*, *Purification*) in the manuscripts are marked with octaves, the historical sources show that the octave of *Visitation* was celebrated in the nunnery, see Hermann von Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet nach dem Brauche der Rigaschen Kirche im späteren Mittelalter* (Riga: Kymmell, 1904), pp. 557–558.

Magdalene, reported with two nocturns, attract major attention. It follows that these two feasts were relevant to the monastic community. Even though there is no proof about the relative octaves in the calendar, the Proper texts of these liturgical celebrations in the book of hours appear next to the other offices. They may have been celebrated, in practice, as primary feasts observed for the length of an octave. In light of another hypothesis, some ferias might have been assigned commemorative offices of a patron or other locally venerated saint, such as could have been the case of Mary Magdalene.³²

The central and the most distinctive element of the book of hours is the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary (*Officium Parvum Beatae Mariae Virginis*). Almost all books of hours belonging to the nuns of Riga begin with this office.³³ The Office of Virgin consists of one nocturn and three lessons celebrated in combination with the regular Office throughout the entire day, before the canonical hours, except Compline which was performed afterwards.³⁴ The manuscripts of the Cistercian nunnery do not include rubrics or special indications as to when this office was used, but traditionally in a major part of the liturgical year the Marian office was performed, during the weekdays, even though its uses can differ according to local customs. The Hours of the Virgin contain an indication of the possible festive context of this office through the presence of the hymn *Te Deum* in Matins.³⁵

Besides the votive Marian service, these manuscripts contain the commemorative memorial Office of the Virgin for Saturday (*de beata Virgine in sabbato*), from which it originates. In fact, Saturday was highly privileged for the veneration of the Mother of God, this also being the case in the Church of Riga.³⁶ Besides the books of hours, this office can be found in breviaries C 436 and C 434, placed between the main sections.³⁷ Among other votive offices worth mentioning there exists a shorter Hours of the Cross (*Horae de Sancta Cruce*),

32 See Hughes, *Medieval Manuscripts*, p. 13.

33 *Officium Beate Virginis* UUB C 467, fol. 1r.

34 Schmidt, 'Zusätze als Problem', pp. 13, 87–88; see also Stefano Rosso, 'Il Sabato mariano in Occidente', in Ermanno M. Toniolo (ed.), *La Vergine Madre del VI secolo al secondo millennio* (Rome: Centro di cultura mariana "Mater Ecclesiae", 1988), pp. 165–189, here p. 180.

35 Normally in the regular Office the *Te Deum* was sung in Matins on Sundays (excluding Septuagesima and Lent) and for major feasts, as well as for weekdays of Christmas and Paschal seasons, this could indicate that the office was not scheduled for weekdays alone see, e.g., Collamore, 'Charting the Divine Office', pp. 4–6; Hughes, *Medieval Manuscripts*, pp. 53, 66.

36 Cf. Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 63, 169–170, 172.

37 The books of hours as well breviary UUB C 436 contain only the Vespers, while UUB C 434, fols. 240r–241v, and UUB C 293, fols. 95r–96v, contains Night Office with twelve Lessons positioned as follows between the main sections Temporale and Sanctorale (C 293),

usually assigned to Friday, and Office of the Dead, one of the oldest additional offices.³⁸

One particularly important role of the female monastic community was its intercessory authority within the society of medieval Livonia. The memorial obligations observed by the nuns were rather important in maintaining social and familial networks. As an element of reciprocity, the material donations by benefactors were made in exchange for prayer obligations: spiritual offerings in the Mass, the divine office and other prayers.³⁹ The existing sources, including memorial records in the manuscripts, attest to the relationship between the Cistercian nunnery of Riga and other institutions, both religious and secular: confraternities, other orders and convents and individual supporters.⁴⁰ As indicated in the agreement between the Beer Carters' guild and the community, the nuns sang night vigils and masses for the deceased members of the confraternity.⁴¹ One particularly noteworthy obituary appears on July 6 in the calendar of the Vilnius Cistercian psalter. The entry concerning the anniversary of the death of a man called Conrad: '*Anniuersarium domini conradi et so[ciorum]*'. Considering the fact that there is only one personal memorial record present in the calendar, this annual memorial must have been of particular importance for the book's owner or even for the entire Riga Cistercian nunnery.⁴² Since memorial culture led to an increase in prayers for the departed, the Office of the Dead occupied a considerable amount of time

and the Common of Saints and Collectory (C 434). For more about the office, see Rosso, 'Il Sabato mariano in Occidente', pp. 165–189.

38 Hughes, *Medieval Manuscripts*, pp. 13–14.

39 See Gregory Leighton, 'Written and visual expressions of authority of female monastic institutions in Medieval Livonia: 13th to 15th centuries', *Studia Slavica et Balcanica Petropolitana*, 1. (2021), pp. 15–35; Mette B. Bruun and Emilia Jamrozak, 'Introduction', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Cistercian Order*, pp. 1–22, here pp. 10–14; Gisela Muschiol, 'Time and Space: Liturgy and Rite in Female Monasteries of the Middle Ages', in Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Susan Marti (eds.), *Crown and Veil: Female Monasticism from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Centuries* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), pp. 191–206, here pp. 192–195.

40 E.g., the memorial present at the end of breviary UUB C 436 mentions Margrete Brynckke, probably the abbess of the Cistercian nunnery in Tallinn UUB C 436, fol. 167r: 'Item domen schref ýnt ýar (xlýx) do vor starf selýge margrete brýnckke dess frýdagess vor ýubýlate dat er got gnedých sý unde barmehertých'. See also Gustavs Strenga, 'Cistercian Networks of Memory: Commemoration as a Form of Institutional Bonding in Livonia and Beyond During the late Middle Ages', in Anu Mänd and Marek Tamm (eds.), *Making Livonia: Actors and Networks in the Medieval and Early Modern Baltic Sea Region* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020), pp. 214–218.

41 LUB 2/1, no. 252.

42 LMAVB RS F 22–96, fol. 5r.

of the nuns' prayer life. This may have favoured the formation of an office characterised by local customs. The series of responsories in the Office of the Dead varies from source to source, which means identifying them can be useful in establishing the origin of a source. In the present case there is clear compatibility between the series of responsories in the books of hours associated with the Cistercian nuns of Riga. According to the research of Knud Ottosen, these series are attributable exclusively to these manuscripts of the Riga nunnery, which means that they constitute the local customs of this specific community, providing one more useful means of further clarifying the provenance of other manuscripts associated with the nunnery.⁴³

2 The Liturgical Calendar and the Cult of Saints

Due to the scarcity of surviving liturgical sources from the diocese of Riga, the only two liturgical books that were available for a long time as the principal evidence about the cult of the saints were the fifteenth century Missal used in the cathedral of Riga and the diocesan Breviary (1513).⁴⁴ The liturgical calendar is an outstanding source and, fortuitously, one has been conserved in one of the fourteen liturgical manuscripts from the nuns' collection: the Vilnius Cistercian psalter.⁴⁵ Beside the calendar included in the *Missale Rigense*, the calendar of the psalter is the second one fully preserved from the diocese of Riga. This unique source is an important historically not only for the cult of the saints of the nunnery but also of the entire diocese.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, the presence of the liturgical feasts in the calendar still does not prove by itself their ritual celebration by the monastic community, but the necessary confirmation is contained by other liturgical components in the manuscripts. An overview

43 See Knud Ottosen, *The Responsories and Versicles of the Latin Office of the Dead* (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1993), pp. 387–420. Published on the Cantus planus website: www.uni-regensburg.de/Fakultaeten/phil_Fak_I/Musikwissenschaft/cantus/ (last accessed 20 March 2021).

44 *Missale Rigense*, LU AB Ms. 1 and *Breviarium Rigensis* (Paris: Wilhelm Corver, 1513), LU AB R 2522, USTC 183289; both preserved in the Department of Manuscripts and Rare Books of the Academic Library of the University of Latvia. For information on *Missale Rigense*, see Guntars Prānis, *Missale Rigense Livonijas garīgajā kultūrā: Gregoriskie dziedājumi viduslaiku Rīgā* (Riga: Neputns, 2018), also Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*.

45 For a more detailed study see Laine Tabora, 'Psalterium Davidis of the Cistercian Nunnery of Riga (LMAVB RS F 22–96) and its Liturgical Calendar', *Analecta Cisterciensia*, 71 (2021), pp. 119–169.

46 Anu Mänd, 'Saints' Cults in Medieval Livonia', in Alan V. Murray (ed.) *The Clash of Cultures on the Medieval Baltic Frontier* (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 191–223, here p. 193.

and examination of written sources such as notices of the dedication of altars and chantries in the monastic church, presence of relics, and liturgical evidence in the manuscripts (proper texts, feast days' rubrics, litany of saints and suffrages) are needed for a comprehensive view. The present study will focus only on a few selected aspects of the cult of saints in the nunnery.

The Cistercian nunnery was located inside the city walls and considerable influence on the cult of saints is certainly derived from the diocese. For instance, the diocese's impact is particularly strong concerning some Marian feasts. One of these is the feast of the Presentation, celebrated on 21 November. The General Chapter of the Cistercian Order did not hasten to add the new feast to the Order's calendar. In fact, most of the Cistercian liturgical books give no notice of the feast until 1613.⁴⁷ Liturgical evidence in the manuscripts from the Cistercian nunnery of Riga dating back to the fifteenth century, however, reveals the nuns' practice of following the local custom of the diocese and incorporating this feast into their calendar.⁴⁸ Another Marian feast, which indicates local influence, is the feast of the Visitation. The general Cistercian calendar introduced it only in 1476, while in the diocese of Riga the feast is noted much earlier. The feast is assigned by a peculiar rhythmical office which apparently represents a proper tradition of Riga.⁴⁹ Consistency with the diocese appears even in such characteristic detail as the absence of prominent thirteenth-century saints such as Saints Anthony of Padua and Thomas Aquinas. Despite their cult and popularity throughout Europe soon after their canonization, there is no evidence of celebrations of these saints in any of the liturgical books from Riga. As some scholars have pointed out earlier, hesitancy in accepting new saints indicates a certain conservatism in the Church of Riga.⁵⁰ Overall, it should be emphasised that a comparison between the manuscripts of the nuns and diocesan sources reveals a certain conformity

47 Cf. Bernard Backeart, 'L'évolution du Calendrier cistercien', *Collectanea ordinis Cistercensium reformatorum*, 13 (1951), pp. 112–113.

48 The calendar of the psalter LMAVB RS F 22–96 contains a remarkable detail that attracts attention: on 21 November, next to *Columbani abbatis*, is reported *Presentatio*, the entrance is by the same hand, underlined without being highlighted in red. In addition, the breviaries, the hymnary UUB C 477 and the *Benedicamus* collection comprise this festivity.

49 As claimed by Antonie Schmid, the office is possibly a local creation of the diocese. See Antonie (Toni) E.M. Schmid, 'Stundengebet und Heiligenverehrung Magdalenenkloster zu Riga', in *Beiträge zur Kunde Ehst, Liv- und Kurlands*, 21 (Reval: Lindfors' Erbenpp, 1938), pp. 12–26, here pp. 15–22; see also Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, p. 346; Schmidt, 'Die Zisterzienser im Baltikum', p. 176.

50 Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 22–45; see also Mänd, 'Saints' Cults in Medieval Livonia', p. 222.

within the cult of saints, ordinarily known and venerated in northwestern and western Europe.⁵¹

In connection with the Proper celebrations of the Riga nuns' community, mention should be made of the feast of the patron saint and the Dedication of the Church. Cistercian houses were traditionally dedicated to Mary.⁵² In fact, the first documents related to the Cistercian nunnery of Riga report the name of the Virgin Mary to whom the nunnery was devoted.⁵³ Nevertheless, according to historical sources, the patron saints of the monastic house appear in different guises over the centuries. Later written sources attribute other, presumably secondary, patronages, such as Saint Mary Magdalene, Saint Margaret, and the Eleven Thousand Virgins.⁵⁴ Among these holy women, highly celebrated in the Riga Church, the veneration of Saint Mary Magdalene is notably evident. In the fifteenth century, she appears as a patron saint of the nunnery. This dedication could be linked to the construction of the nunnery's church, over which Magdalene was chosen as patron.⁵⁵ Her particular veneration is clearly shown in the breviaries, the books of hours and even C 477 *Hymnarium et Collectarium*, which contain the antiphons of the Office of Mary Magdalene.⁵⁶ The set of manuscripts includes a large collection of hymns, including six hymns in honour of the patron saint, a noteworthy quantity.⁵⁷

51 More on the saints venerated in the diocese of Riga, see Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 311–596. See also Tabora, 'Psalterium Davidis of the Cistercian Nunnery of Riga', pp. 133–136.

52 Emilia Jamrozak, *The Cistercian Order in Medieval Europe 1090–1500* (London: Routledge 2013), pp. 14, 174; see also Louis J. Lekai, *I cistercensi: Ideali e realtà* (Certosa di Pavia, 1989), p. 23.

53 Hermann von Bruiningk and Nicolaus Busch (eds.), *Livländische Güterurkunde aus den Jahren 1207 bis 1500* (2 vols., Riga: Jonck & Poliewsky, 1908–1923), 1, (hereafter LGU 1) no. 27; no. 36; LUB 3, no. 283a, LUB 1, no. 300, LUB 1, no. 336. Noticeably at the beginning the title has not yet been established and in the documents, in relation with nunnery, a reference to Saint James occurs as well. This reference could be associated with the convent's location near the church of Saint James, originally used by nuns until the construction of a monastic church.

54 The first time the name of Saint Mary Magdalene and Saint Margaret appears in the letter of indulgences issued on 15 January 1359, see Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, p. 581; other denominations: '*monasterium sancta Marie Magdalene Rigensis Cisterciensis ordinis*', LUB 8, no. 408; '*ad honorem Dei et sub vocabulo sancta Dei genetricis virginis Marie et sanctorum Undecim milium virginum*', LGU 1 no. 263. The denomination Eleven Thousand Virgins refers to Saint Ursula and her companions. See also Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 333, 474–476.

55 Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 324–325, 332–333, 475–476.

56 UUB C 477, fols. 126r–128r.

57 Schmid, 'Stundengebet und Heiligenverehrung', p. 23.

There is no evidence in historical sources about the exact date of the anniversary of the Dedication or even when the church was built, nor does the calendar provide the date of this highest ranking feast day.⁵⁸ From the location of Proper texts for the Dedication in the breviaries, one possible date is the month of November. According to Toni Schmid's study of manuscripts C 293, C 434, C 477, and C 486, the dedication date of the church was determined as having been between the 13th and 19th of November. This time span can be narrowed thanks to the rubrics present in the *Benedicamus* collection at the end of the manuscript C 438, as well the other manuscripts C 434, C 436, C 477, where the feast appears between Saint Brictius and Saint Anianus. On this basis, it may be assumed that the celebration occurred between 13th and 17th of November.⁵⁹

The cult of saints in the Cistercian nunnery was also characterised by Cistercian liturgical practices which in the monasteries of the Order maintained uniformity. The calendar of the psalter demonstrates a typical designation of Cistercian Sanctorale feasts where the liturgical festivities are classified into feasts of twelve lessons and commemorations.⁶⁰ There is a perfect correspondence between Cistercian saints present in the calendar of the Vilnius Cistercian psalter and their commemorations inside the liturgical books of nuns.⁶¹ The absence in the calendar and within the liturgical texts of an important saint of the Order such as Robert of Molesme (c.1027–1111), a standard in the Cistercian Order, should be noted, however. Furthermore, as far as

58 The monastic church is first indirectly mentioned in a mid-fourteenth century letter of indulgence. The document dated to 15 January 1359 assigned forty days of indulgence to the faithful who visit the monastic church on specific feasts of the year. See Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, p. 475. In addition, later indications of the altars of the monastic church can be found e.g., LUB 8, no. 408, 782; LUB 10, no. 150.

59 UUB C 438, fol. 125r; C 434, fols. 261v, 262r; C 436, fols. 125v, 126r; C 477, fols. 65r, 66r. See Schmidt, 'Die Zisterzienser im Baltikum', p. 177; see also Schmid, 'Stundengebet und Heiligenverehrung', p. 24.

60 In the calendar of the psalter LMAVB RS F 22–96 the commemoration is abbreviated with *con* (sic).

61 The calendar of the psalter includes liturgical days of Cistercian saints: *Mauri, Sotheris, Albini, Benedicti, Mamerti, Daciani et Rogaciani, Medardi, Cirici et Iulite, Translacio Benedicti, Eusebii, Mammetis, Bernardi, Genesisii, Marcelli, Ewertii, Sequani, Andochi et Ruffi, Aniani, Columbani, Vitalis et Agricole* and *Chrysanthi et Darii*. Although Schmid already mentioned some of these saints in her study, the complete calendar, useful for comparison with the liturgical texts, was not available to her. See Toni Schmid, 'Ett breviarium från Magdalenenklostret i Riga', *Nordisk tidskrift för bok- och biblioteksväsen*, 18 (1931), pp. 271–273. Particular indication to Saint Benedict and Saint Bernard is observable in the collection of *Benedicamus* chants (UUB C 438 fols. 119v–130v) where both saints have a special chant in troped form assigned.

the Cistercian customs related to the calendar went, it should be emphasized that the nunnery maintained the Order's tradition of celebrating an annual commemoration of the deceased. Three out of four annual memorial days are present in the calendar: 11 January, the day of the commemoration of abbots, as well as deceased bishops of the order; 18 September, the commemoration of the first martyrs of the Order; and 20 November, the commemoration of relatives and parents. The calendar lacks only the commemoration of the deceased members of Order on 20 May, which was introduced in the Cistercian calendar in 1350.⁶²

Another aspect characterising the cult of the saints in the Cistercian nunnery is the influence of its spiritual connectedness to other monastic communities. In the manuscripts, a Bridgettine influence can be observed. There is a substantial likelihood that it is mainly related to the relationships between the Cistercian nunnery of Riga and the Bridgettine convent in Pirita (Mariendal), founded in the early fifteenth century.⁶³ The liturgical influences are defined by the presence of saints such as Saint Joseph, celebrated on 15 January, and Saint Bridget of Sweden (1303–1373) on 6 October and 23 July. The 15 January date coincides entirely with that adopted by the Swedish dioceses.⁶⁴ However, the feast of Saint Joseph was one of the recently introduced feasts in the Church of Riga.⁶⁵ The fact that in Northern Germany the cult of Saint Joseph had a later start than in Tallinn (Reval) and Riga suggests the feast's Scandinavian origin. This was one of the specific features that led scholars to suppose Riga as being the provenance of manuscripts.⁶⁶ Saint Joseph's Day was especially

62 In the calendar of LMAVB RS F 22–96 these memorial days are documented as: *Commemoratio episcoporum*, *Commemoratio primorum et martyrum* and *Commemoratio parentum*. Schmidt, 'Zusätze als Problem', p. 71. Cf. also Backeart, 'L'évolution du Calendrier cistercien', *Collectanea ordinis Cistercensium reformatorum*, 12 (1950), pp. 81–94, 307–316; 13 (1951), pp. 108–127.

63 See Strenga, 'Cistercian networks of memory', pp. 214–218; see also Anu Mänd, 'The Cult and Visual Representation of Scandinavian Saints in Medieval Livonia', in Carsten S. Jensen et al. (eds.), *Saints and Sainthood around the Baltic Sea: Identity, Literacy, and Communication in the Middle Ages* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2018), pp. 101–143.

64 See Hermann Grotefend, *Taschenbuch der Zeitrechnung des Deutschen Mittelalters und der Neuzeit*, 10th edition (Hannover: Hahnische Buchhandlung, 1960). See an online version www.manuscripta-mediaevalia.de/gaeste/grotefend/grotefend.htm (last accessed 10 March 2021).

65 There is no evidence that suggests that the cult of Saint Joseph may had been introduced into the Riga Church before the fifteenth century. See Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 452–456.

66 Schmid, 'Stundengebet und Heiligenverehrung', p. 15; see also Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 452–453; Carl-Allan Moberg, *Die liturgischen Hymnen in*

commemorated in Riga and the printed breviary of Riga contains a slightly different Scandinavian rhythmical office for Saint Joseph. An analogous office can be found in breviary C 434, and a partial office in the other two breviaries C 293, C 436.⁶⁷ The second manifestation of Scandinavian influence is the presence of the liturgical feasts of Saint Bridget of Sweden in the nuns' manuscripts. Even the Litany of the Saints provides evidence of special devotion to the Swedish saint. In the litany present in C 487 (fols. 57v–60r) Saint Bridget is placed as second among the female saints, directly after Saint Anna, while in the other books of hours she appears as third, after Saint Mary Magdalene. The calendar of the nunnery indicates her feast on 6 October, which is confirmed with the presence of antiphons from her office *Birgitte matris inclite* in C 436 and Bridgettine hymns in C 477 and C 434.⁶⁸ In addition, there is an indication that 23 July, the day of her death, was also commemorated by nuns.⁶⁹ The fact that Saint Bridget was venerated in a Cistercian context is a very intriguing and noteworthy feature because she was not a Cistercian saint. There must have been direct connections between the Cistercian monastic communities and the Swedish Bridgettine circles that produced these liturgical exchanges. In the case of Riga's nunnery, these presumably arose from the strong ecclesiastical relations with the Bridgettines of Pirita.⁷⁰

It should be noted that two locally venerated saints are distinctive to the Riga community. Evidence for this consists of a cult of relics and the existence of a chantry in the monastic church. The calendar of the psalter reports several commemorations of the translation of relics (*translatio*). Not all these feast days can be confirmed as being celebrated liturgically, however. The liturgical texts offer only three of the six of these liturgical commemorations, namely, the feast of the translation of Saint Benedict, Saint Martin of Tours and the translation of Saint Gengulphus (*sancti Gengulphi martyris*), martyr of Burgundy. Particular devotion to this saint in the nunnery cannot go unnoticed. The calendar of the psalter contains as many as three liturgical days assigned to this

Schweden (2 vols., Kopenhagen: Einar Munksgaard, 1947), 1, p. 285; Grotfend, *Zeitrechnung des Deutschen Mittelalters*.

67 See also Schmid, 'Stundengebet und Heiligenverehrung', pp. 15–22.

68 The calendar of the psalter shows that in the nunnery of Saint Mary Magdalene the Saint was celebrated on 6 October, whereas in the Swedish dioceses the celebration was on 7 October.

69 Similar to *Breviarium Rigensis* (4, fols. 60r–61r) the indication of celebration on 23 July is found in the *Collectarium* part of UUB C 293, fol. 212v. For further information on *Officium Sancte Birgitte*, see Ann-Marie Nilsson, *Två hystorie för den heliga Birgitta* (Bromma: Reimers, 2003), see also Moberg, *Die liturgischen Hymnen*, pp. 301–302.

70 For memorial networks between Birgittines of Pirita and Cistercian nunnery of Riga, see Strenge, 'Cistercian networks of memory', pp. 212–231.

Burgundian knight. His liturgical day on 13 May, coincides with most of the calendars of German dioceses.⁷¹ 4 May was the day on which the translation occurs, and 10 September is the day for the deposition of his relics. Noticeably, this is the only saint in the calendar to whom the deposition is given. The proper texts of manuscripts C 436, C 477, C 293, C 434 indicate only one prayer on the day of the translation. Furthermore, his name is reported in the litany of one of the books of hours; this certainly suggests that the saint was also venerated privately for special patronage.⁷² It is not known if the cult of this saint in the nunnery was related to the relics available for veneration or if Saint Gengulphus was honoured as a patron saint for a more specific reason, such as his unique merits.⁷³ This is the only traceable mention thus far of the saint in the written sources of the diocese of Riga. Other evidence of special devotion to saints is given by the altars and chantries in the monastic church dedicated to specific saints. Six altars of the monastic church can be identified from the historical sources.⁷⁴ In particular it is worth noting Saint Procopius. The chantry in his honour in the monastic church was established on 8 July 1445.⁷⁵ The available sources show that the unique appearance of Saint Procopius in the diocese of Riga is associated exclusively with the Cistercian nunnery. Although the calendar of the psalter does not mention the Saint, the breviaries C 293, C 434, C 436, the hymnary/collectary C 477 and the collection of *Benedicamus* in C 438 contain an indication and Proper text of the Bohemian abbot. In Toni Schmid's opinion, the presence of Saint Procopius in liturgical texts was further proof that the manuscripts belonged to this specific nunnery.⁷⁶ It is pertinent to note that besides the manuscripts, there are only a few historical sources that report the notices of the liturgical feasts of the nunnery. One of these is the indulgence document issued by the papal curia in Avignon in 1359. That the feasts that appear in the liturgical manuscripts match those of the curial document is an important fact to note.⁷⁷

71 See Grotefend, *Zeitrechnung des Deutschen Mittelalters*.

72 UUB C 503, fol. 39r.

73 Saint Gengulphus was particularly considered as the patron saint of deceived husbands and unhappy marriages. More on Saint Gengulphus see, e.g., Paul G. Dräger, *Das Leben Gangolfs* (Trier: Kliomedica, 2011).

74 See Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, p. 594.

75 LUB 10, no. 150, see Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 531–532. See also Schmid, 'Ett breviarium från Magdalenenklostret i Riga', p. 272.

76 Schmid, 'Stundengebet und Heiligenverehrung', p. 24. See also Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 472, 531.

77 There is no evidence of the feast of Saint Ivo (*Sancti Yvoni*) in the liturgical sources from nunnery. More on veneration of Saint in the diocese of Riga, see Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 65, 438, 582–583.

3 The Musical Material in the Cistercian Manuscripts

Since there are no known musical-liturgical manuscripts that fully present the nuns' musical practices in the nunnery of Saint Mary Magdalene, it is only possible to examine the pages with musical notation in seven of fourteen liturgical manuscripts for its liturgical context, practical purpose, and usage. These are five books of hours (C 438, C 467, C 486, C 487, C 488), a breviary C 436 and the Cistercian psalter now located in Vilnius. Unlike liturgical manuscripts, which in Cistercian circles have a high degree of uniformity, the book of hours is extraordinarily versatile and individually designed, including the nature of musical entries. The space dedicated to music in the manuscripts is not large, but nevertheless, due to its particularities, provides valuable information about the musical practice of the nuns' prayer life. The musical material varies from melodic incipits to complete compositions. Five books of hours contain the same notated Invitatory psalm *Venite*. In three of them (C 486, C 487, C 488) the *alleluia* antiphons are present. The manuscript C 486 includes two fully notated hymns for the feast of Purification of Virgin and two incipits of Paschal hymns, while the Vilnius Cistercian psalter contains two hymns with the same melody for the feast of the Ascension of the Lord. C 436 contains only one chant in notation form, but at the end of the manuscript C 438 can be found the selection of melodies of versicle *Benedicamus domino* and incipits of hymns and tropes of *Benedicamus* chants.

Musical material is not commonly encountered in a book of hours intended for private and devotional uses. Nevertheless, it could emerge in the books of monastic use. Incidentally, this feature confirms the characteristic appellation of nuns which appears in historical sources, namely, the singing virgins.⁷⁸ There is an obvious question: What were the criteria for choosing which chants in the prayer book should be notated? Because the musical material differs between the manuscripts, the primary reasons for its inclusion in the prayer books may also differ. Presumably, some musical entries may have been related to a peculiarity of a book, namely, that it was created not only for private devotion but also for ferial use within the liturgy.

The notation present in the manuscripts is an example of diastematic notation: the 'Gothic' script.⁷⁹ Gothic notation was characteristic for many Northern countries, but Sweden was an exception in using the square notation.⁸⁰ Correspondingly, evidence of Gothic notation in Sweden (Uppsala University

78 *singende vrouwen* (LUB 3, no. 1332) and *singende juncvrouwen* (LUB 7, no. 372).

79 German: *Hufnagelschrift*.

80 See Moberg, *Die liturgischen Hymnen*, p. 82.

Library) is proof of the foreign origin of a manuscript. The notation present in each manuscript was copied by a particular scribe. The writing of the notator does not change inside each manuscript, apart from the C 487, where the *alleluia* antiphons are written with a different hand than the Invitatory psalm. However, the handwriting of the Invitatory psalms in C 487 and C 467 is identical. Likewise, the graphic forms of the notation do not differ between the sources and the notation's script is standardised. Greater differences can be observed in the accurate or more urgent and superficial form of records in, for example, C 438. While the copyist was unable to intervene and express his/her own individuality through the graphics of notation, this was possible by the use of accessory elements: catchwords, clefs, alteration signs and staff sign, *custos*. Four manuscripts that use the sign of *custos*, report variations in shape and size. Similar observations can be made for clefs.⁸¹

What can the musical compositions in the manuscripts reveal about the nuns' liturgy? The most common chant recorded in notation is the Invitatory *Venite exultemus* found in different places in five books of hours. Of all the books, C 488 shows most clearly its predetermined place in the liturgy, as attested to by rubrics and by its location in the text. The rubric *feria secunda ad matutinas* following the hymn *Sompro refectis artubus*, used for Matins on Mondays, confirms the ferial office context. Consequently, one can clearly see that nuns' ferial office was sung in choir.⁸² The melody used for the Invitatory represents a simple tone which aligns with weekday circumstances.⁸³ The chant is noted in its entirety of six verses occupying four to eight folios, according to the manuscript in question. The manner of notation differs between manuscripts and in some manuscript the musical notation is divided by lines of the staff, showing the melody's relation to the text. This is notable indication, more so because the division of melody does not match between some of the Invitatories. Normally, the Invitatory chant was sung daily. Since it was easily memorised, there was no need for it to be written, at least not in its entirety. The way of structuring the melody with staff lines could indicate

81 The written features of these incidental and modest elements, as individual imprints of the copyist, are valuable information relating to the identification of the hand. The particularity in the shape and dimension of the *custos* can be locally characteristic and reveal the provenance of the manuscript. For more on the *custos*, see Gabriella Gilányi, 'Jelentéktelen kis apróság? A gregorián custos', *Magyar Zene*, 56 (4) (2018), pp. 385–397.

82 UUB C 488, fol. 143v.

83 With some variants the tone generally corresponds with the melodic version of VI tone, till now in use in Cistercians' liturgy. See *Antiphonarium Cisterciense pars prima* (Westmalle: Typis Ordinis, 1955).

some educational intent for a less experienced singer.⁸⁴ In effect, in the second strophe of C 467, the staff lines appear in red colour, while the Invitatory present in C 487 (copied by the same hand), does not represent any structuring of the melody. Beyond these five manuscripts, no other book of hours from the nuns' collections contains a notated *Venite*. Evidently, the notation was the personal choice of the book's owner.⁸⁵

The most accurate script of musical notation is present in manuscript C 486.⁸⁶ This manuscript contains a 'musical section' that starts with *alleluia* antiphons on fol. 147r following the Invitatory and continues with two entire hymns for the feast of Purification: *Lux maris gaude celesti digna* and *Quod chorus vatum* (fols. 149v–152r). In addition to these hymns, in some later folios there appear two incipits of Paschal hymns: *Te lucis auctor personet* on fol. 156v and *Aurora lucis rutilat* on fol. 157r. In regard to these notated hymns, some peculiarities are worthy of commentary. At present, no complete, entirely notated and legible version of the hymn *Lux maris gaude* has been discovered.⁸⁷ Thus the entire notated melody for every stanza in C 486 is a valuable resource.⁸⁸ Even though its fortuitously notated form appears only in manuscript C 486, the same complete textual version can be found in two other manuscripts: C 477 fol. 84r and C 434 fol. 274v. No other book of hours contains this hymn. This may lead us to believe that in this case the choice of notation might have been a personal decision of the book's owner. C 434 specifies the hymn's liturgical use, giving the hymn's incipit for Lauds on the day of the Purification (fol. 126r). Alternatively, *Quod chorus vatum*, the second entirely notated hymn in the same manuscript, is provided for the Office of

84 This may be an indication that the verses of the *Venite* were assigned to young novices or even the convent's school children (*scholares, iuvenule*). For more on the children's roles in the liturgy, see Alison Noel Altstadt, *The Music and Liturgy of Kloster Preetz: Anna von Buchwald's Buch im Chor in its Fifteenth-Century Context* (PhD thesis, University of Oregon, 2011) Available at: www.works.bepress.com/alison-altstatt/12/ (last accessed 12 July 2021).

85 UUB C 467, fols. 170r–173v; UUB C 487, fols. 181r–184r.

86 This manuscript probably belonged to the last nun of Riga's convent, Anna Noetken.

87 *Analecta Hymnica Medii Aevi* 52 (hereafter: AH), no. 50; Ulysse Chevalier, *Repertorium hymnologicum: Catalogue des chants, hymnes, proses, séquences, tropes en usage dans l'église latine depuis les origines jusqu'à nos jours* (Louvain: Imprimerie Lefever, 1892), nr. 10846.

88 The hymn is found in two manuscripts. The first of these is the three-part breviary Wolfenbüttel HAB 169, 170 and 335 (D–W 169 fol. 15r) which presents the first four lines reported in notation. The second is breviary Wolfenbüttel HAB 1298, which contains melody of the v–vii line, unfortunately in ineligible notation. See Bruno Stäblein, *Hymnen: Die mittelalterlichen Hymnenmelodien des Abendlandes, Monumenta Monodica Medii Aevi* (MMA) (12 vols., Kassel: Bärenreiter 1956–1999), 1, p. 589.

Matins.⁸⁹ There are no traces of the hymn *Lux maris gaude* in the printed diocesan Breviary; consequently, there is no evidence of the hymn's liturgical usage outside the Cistercian nunnery within the diocese.

Further information can be gleaned from the Vilnius Cistercian psalter, meant for private use, which transmits a hymn in notation. This hymn for the feast of the Ascension of the Lord is divided into two separate hymns: *Optatus votis* and *O grande cunctis gaudium*.⁹⁰ Two hymns are indicated as having the same melody and, incidentally, in the second hymn, both melody and text are copied in an inaccurate and imprecise way. For example, an error appears in the first stanza of the second hymn which, thanks to musical notation, is clearly evident. Instead of 'Quod partus nostre virginis' the copyist wrote 'Quod nostre partus virginis' (sic).⁹¹ This feature in particular appears to be a common variant present in other manuscripts from the nuns' collection.⁹² This textual version has no correspondence with the melodic line and is unsingable. Inasmuch as different manuscripts contain the same error, this observation provides significant information. Presumably, they were copied from a single source. The peculiar textual variant suggests that the musical notation did not ensure a particular version of the text which was, in some way, independent. From the context of the manuscript as a private prayer book, not intended for liturgical uses, the presence of notation likely serves as more of a decorative element than an indication for performance. Considering that hymns are compositions that retain the same melody for every stanza, there was no need to provide notation, much less to provide it for the entire piece. Such a decision reveals the personal attitude of the book's owner toward a particular chant, since it was the owner who made that choice.

Another noteworthy chant is the rhymed *Rector celi nos exaudi*, the unique chant accurately copied at the end of diurnal breviary C 436 fol. 155v, which illuminates another property of music in the prayer books. The chant could be identified by the context of the preceding rubric *Pro tempestate* which, in turn, locates the chant among the benedictions against inclement weather. The rhymed text, in its brevity and expressiveness, is a very clear and solemn prayer directly addressed to the Heavenly King. The origin of this invocative antiphon's text is unknown but is recognized as one of the most common and most beautiful prayers engraved on the bells of the medieval churches in different

89 The incipit of hymn can be found in UUB C 434, fol. 124r, as well in *Breviarium Rigensis* IV, fol. 16v.

90 LMAVB RS F 22–96, fols. 152v–153r. For melodic comparison see Stäblein MMA 1, no. 60.

91 Cf., e.g., AH 51, no. 87, and Chevalier, *Repertorium hymnologicum*, no. 14177.

92 E.g., UUB C 477, fol. 93v; C 467, fol. 152r; C 488, fol. 123r; C 487, fol. 164v; C 434, fol. 280v.

parts of Europe. Such bells are also symbolically called ‘peace bells’.⁹³ Despite the fact that this text was well-known in the medieval centuries and was musicalized, it occurs precisely in the context of impetratory orations for clement weather.⁹⁴ Even though intercessory orations for rain or clement weather are a common phenomenon in liturgical books such as those of rituals and the pontifical, chants added to benediction and prayer are rather exceptional in the breviary. In the present case, the musical addition to this prayer could be classified as part of personal devotion since it does not appear in other manuscripts of the nuns’ collection, even without the music.

Finally, the last musical material to be examined is an extensive collection of 103 melodic indications of the versicle *Benedicamus Domino*. For most of these musical fragments transmitted on the last folios of C 438 (119v–130v), only the melodic and textual incipits are recorded. From 103 musical entries, nine melodies of the *Benedicamus* can be distinguished, from which only six are entirely notated. In addition, four troped versicles show that for the most prominent feasts of Church year and within this specific nunnery, the *Benedicamus* in troped form was used, increasing the richness and solemnity of the celebration. Indications of inaccurate and incomplete notation, as occur in other similar cases, suggest that this musical material served as a visual aid for the memory of the cantor who already knew the melodies by heart. The collection in question is organised in a *de tempore* system and the melodic incipits are indicated according to its liturgical usage. The rubrics consequently create a ‘virtual’ calendar of the most important festivities of the nunnery.⁹⁵ However, the *Benedicamus* collection presents incoherencies in the order of festivities, which interrupts the sequence according to the liturgical calendar. In addition, from comparison with the calendar of the Vilnius Cistercian psalter, the lack of some relevant feasts can be observed. Presumably, this was caused by later dismemberment and reassembling, which led to a codicological confusion concerning the order of the folios.⁹⁶ Since no other manuscript contains such a

93 Cf. Karl Walter, *Glockenkunde* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1913), p. 203; see also Friedrich W. Schubart, *O rex gloriae, Christe, veni cum pace Amen: Ein uraltes Glockengebet; Ein Beitrag zur Glockeninschriftenkunde* (Baumann: Dessau 1896), pp. 3–4; Klaus Berger, *Leih mir deine Flügel, Engel: Die Apokalypse im Leben der Kirche* (Freiburg: Herder, 2018), p. 161.

94 A similar constellation of chants against inclement weather appears in *Rituale Cod. Guelf. 1028 Helmst*, fols. 117v–199v, see www.diglib.hab.de/mss/1028-helmst/start.htm?distype=thumbs-img&imgtyp=0&size= (last accessed 1 March 2021).

95 The feasts are indicated by rubrics, e.g., *Brigitte vidue, Augustini episcopi* etc. or *de virginibus, de confessoribus* etc. See also Moberg, *Die liturgischen Hymnen*, p. 57.

96 The relevant feasts between Saint Ambrose (4/4) and Saint Barnabas apostle (11/6) are missing.

collection, it can be assumed that manuscript C 438 belonged to someone who had the task of performing the intonation of the *Benedicamus* chant at the end of the liturgical celebration. This series of *Benedicamus* versicles refers to the most relevant feasts of the nunnery. Every feast was provided with a melody according to the classification of festivity. The primary reason for the use of different melodies was, presumably, to give a distinctive 'colour' or 'acoustic signal' for specific feasts or categories of feasts. This is one of the many examples of how music itself is a type of identification of different liturgical occasions.⁹⁷

4 Conclusions

Since sources such as customaries, ordinaries, visitation records and even the choral liturgical manuscripts have not survived or have not yet been found, the small portion of the nuns' library at our disposal provides significant insights into the common and private ritual life of the Cistercian nuns of Riga. The manuscripts available for researchers in the libraries in Uppsala and Vilnius open a way of reconstructing, even in an incomplete and fragmentary manner, the prayer of the divine office, revealing the particulars of ritual practices based on common worship and private piety that have not yet been studied.

The sources confirm that breviaries like C 436 were used for the hours of feasts and prominent weekdays of the liturgical year; breviaries such as C 434 and C 293 were used for night offices of Sundays and feast days; while books of hours were used for the ordinary weekday office and ferias during the octaves of important feasts celebrated in the nunnery. Liturgical texts such as rhymed offices indicate relevant local liturgical practices of the female community in fifteenth-century Riga. Besides the canonical office, nuns experienced assorted votive services including the rich practice of Marian devotion and extensive memorial culture. This wide and intense prayer life was the result of numerous prayer obligations due to the commemorative bonds with the outside world.

The book of hours, the type of liturgical book that forms a major part of surviving codices, reveals an unusual content for a book of this kind. The most significant feature of the books of hours from the Riga nunnery is a combination between votive observances and weekdays office as well as different offices of the *Temporale* and the *Sanctorale*. This delineates the function of the book, which served not only for supplemental services but, particularly, for ordinary weekday liturgy throughout the entire liturgical year, including

97 Franz Karl Prassl, 'Pavlov's Dog and Liturgy: Listening and Recognition in Gregorian Chant', *De musica disserenda*, 9:1–2 (2013), pp. 253–269.

the festive octaves Proper of the local monastic community. An analysis of the content and comparison between the manuscripts suggests the community as a whole most likely recited supplemental services together, in addition to the canonical weekday office.

The cult of the saints of the Cistercian nunnery of Riga, as testified to by the nuns' breviaries and a unique source, the calendar of the Vilnius Cistercian psalter, reveals that, on the one hand, the monastic community had taken root in a concrete region which allowed it to be influenced by local religious practices and the regulations of the diocese. On the other hand, it demonstrates that the Cistercians' general practices of the veneration of saints remained unified with the larger family of the Order. Either way, the bonds with other religious communities and secular institutions, patrons and benefactors, had an important role in the development of the cult of saints in the nunnery. The manuscripts from the nunnery show a clear correspondence with the missal used in the cathedral of Riga and the printed diocesan breviary. Nevertheless, the several liturgical memorial days, until now unknown in the diocese of Riga, that appear in the columns of the calendar, are confirmed to have been celebrated liturgically in the nuns' breviaries.

Music in the books of hours has not yet received enough attention from scholars. Even though studies have been carried out on notated chants in late medieval prayer books and books for private use, conclusions related to music cannot be generalised. Thus, for example, well-known devotional books such as the fruit of the movement of piety *Devotio Moderna* (e.g., the Medingen prayer books), present a different reality: music for use within private devotional practice.⁹⁸ Likewise, the music present in the books of hours used by laypeople, which is a very rare occurrence, does not prove whether the notated music was intended for private performance or served only as a decorative element. These case studies, apparently, are not conversant with the reality of books of hours of the type used by the Cistercian nuns in Riga. Rather, the situation is similar to the fifteenth-century books of hours preserved in the Baden State Library from the Cistercian nunnery in Erfurt (Thuringia) which presents chants with the notation for the Office of the Dead.⁹⁹ These examples demonstrate the common liturgical prayer in the book of hours in a monastic context.

98 Henrike Lähnemann, 'Bilingual Devotion in Northern Germany: Prayer Books from the Luneburg Convents', in Elisabeth Andersen et al. (eds.), *A Companion to Mysticism and Devotion in Northern Germany in the Late Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), pp. 317–341; Ulrike Hascher-Burger, 'Notation, Devotion und Emotion in spätmittelalterlichen Andachtsbüchern aus dem Kloster Medingen', *Musica Disciplina*, 55 (2010), pp. 33–73.

99 Badische Landesbibliothek, Cod. St. Peter perg. 38 a; 66, 107.

The books of hours from Riga have a multifunctional character: they were used not only for individual prayer or votive services but also for weekday office performance. Musicological and liturgical analysis demonstrates that the nature of such musical elements as the Invitatory, alleluia antiphons, and versicles of the *Benedicamus*, is fully liturgical and very likely attests to their use precisely in the weekday liturgy. The intention of including musical examples in the book which, by its nature, is not a liturgical-musical book is a significant point of interest. Musical material, especially in books of hours and breviaries is not common at all and is thus of specific importance. There is no evidence that these chants were sung during the nuns' individual practices: on the contrary, their nature is liturgical rather than privately devotional. What was the reason for including chants in these books, or how and by whom were they performed? Explicating such performative scenarios remains one of the main questions for further research.