

# Cash for Access: Simony, Convent Entry and the Limits of Reform in the South-West German Cistercian Convent of Günterstal

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## I. INTRODUCTION: SPIRITUALITY AND TEMPORAL PROVISION

The question how best to balance the economic and material needs of the convent with its spiritual and religious functions was one of the defining concerns of late medieval monasticism. On the one hand, the issue was of particular concern for late medieval monastic reformers who sought to weigh up the need for convents to have a secure enough economic base to allow religious life to flourish, amidst the growing disquiet, on the other hand, that such an approach would damage some of the central tenets of monastic life, not least a commitment to poverty and the common life. Calls for the reintroduction of stricter enclosure into convents necessitated firm economic foundations to ensure that nuns did not return to their families at times of hunger, most notably in spring. The ›Buch der Reformacio Predigerordens‹ by the influential south-west German Dominican reformer Johannes Meyer (1422–82) is full of examples which illustrate this connection between spiritual and temporal affairs. In his account of the reform of the Alsatian Dominican convent of Schönensteinbach, the first book of his reforming chronicle, Meyer notes at an early stage that »when spiritual means declined in the convent of Schönensteinbach, temporal means also greatly declined«<sup>1</sup>. For Meyer such a connection

1) Johannes Meyer, *Buch der Reformacio Predigerordens*, books 1–3, ed. Benedikt Maria REICHERT (Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte des Dominikanerordens 2), Leipzig 1909, book 1, p. 18: *als dem selben closter Stainbach abgieng an gaitlichem güt, do ging im och grösslichen ab an dem zitlichen*. All translations are my own unless otherwise stated. A new translation has recently appeared which I have been unable to consult: Claire Taylor JONES, *Women's History in the Age of Reformation. Johannes Meyer's Chronicle of the Dominican Observance*, Toronto 2019. For the role of Meyer in the Dominican reform movement see Johannes Meyer, *Das Amptbuch*, ed. and transl. Sarah Glenn DEMARIS (Monumenta Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum Historica 31), Rome 2015, pp. 1–11; Claire Taylor JONES, *Ruling the Spirit. Women, Liturgy, and Dominican Reform in Late Medieval Germany*, Philadelphia 2018, pp. 127–141.

was grounded in the words of Christ that a good tree bears good fruit (*Sic omnis arbor bona fructus bonos facit*<sup>2)</sup>) and was a sign of the successful implementation of reform<sup>3)</sup>.

Meyer spent the last three years of his life in Freiburg im Breisgau as confessor to the Dominican nuns of Adelhausen, St. Agnes and St. Maria Magdalena, three convents whose reform he had instituted on the same day in 1465<sup>4)</sup>. South-east of Adelhausen, five kilometres from Freiburg's Minster, lay the Cistercian convent of Günterstal, whose abbess in the first decade of the sixteenth century obtained a hitherto unknown German translation of a text which also established the interdependency between spirituality and temporal provision:

»[...] and since temporal provision soon declines, spirituality also declines with it, for spirituality cannot survive for long without temporal provision«<sup>5)</sup>.

The text which the Günterstal nuns obtained addressed the issue of entry and specifically whether in the convent it was permitted to accept a novice above the number of persons who could otherwise be supported by the goods of the convent without falling into penury<sup>6)</sup>. The question had been posed by the Cologne theologian and university professor, Bernard de Reyda († 1466), in the mid-1450s and provides a striking example of the wider controversies surrounding acceptance into a convent<sup>7)</sup>. This was a process which has been described as the decisive point of contact between convent and world, in which the affairs of families came into direct contact with those of the convent<sup>8)</sup>. Male monastic reformers

2) Matth. 7,17; Meyer, Buch (as n. 1), book 1, p. 20: *Nim war wie fil güter frucht diesser guter bom bat, aber also for geschriben ist, do hat das gaistlich leben gar vast abgenomen, darumb müst daz zitlich och abgon.*

3) Johannes Meyer, Buch der Reformacio Predigerordens, books 4–5, ed. Benedictus Maria REICHERT (Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte des Dominikanerordens in Deutschland 3), Leipzig 1908, book 5, p. 53, on the Basle Dominican Steinenkloster: *Wie daz selb closter zû Basel an den stainen so grösslich zû nam gaistlich und zitlich.*

4) Meyer, Buch (as n. 3), book 5, pp. 117–121.

5) Cod. Sang. 1344, p. 2: [...] *et tandem deficientibus temporalibus etiam deficient spiritualia que sine eis diu stare non possunt*; p. 24: [...] *vnd so die zittliche narung gereit abgon, dz den die geistlicheyit ouch da mit abgienge, den die geistlicheyit nit lange geston mag on zitlich versorgung.* The manuscript has been digitised: <https://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/list/one/csg/1344> (04.07.2019). My English translation is based on the German.

6) Cod. Sang. 1344, p. 1: *Utrum in monasteriis feminarum liceat recipere ultra numerum personarum que de bonis monasterii sine penuria possunt sustentari*; p. 23: *Es ist ein froge, ob in den frowen clöstern zimlich ist, zû nemen ein frowlich bild zû einem nouitzen vber die zal der personen, die das selbe closter on gebresten uff enthalten mag.*

7) Maarten VAN RHIJN, Bernard van Reida, in: *Nederlandsch archief voor kerkgeschiedenis* 35/2 (1946), pp. 81–84.

8) Eva SCHLOTHEUBER, *Klostereintritt und Bildung. Die Lebenswelt der Nonnen im späten Mittelalter. Mit einer Edition des »Konventstagebuchs« einer Zisterzienserin von Heilig-Kreuz bei Braunschweig (1484–1507) (Spätmittelalter und Reformation N. R. 24)*, Tübingen 2004, p. 4.

paid a great deal of attention to this pragmatic issue of convent life, but as the manuscript from Günterstal suggests, the nuns themselves also played an active role in finding solutions to this question.

In the series of attempts at monastic reform in the fourteenth, fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries known as the Observant Movement, reformers strove to revitalise the founding ideals of their order's monasteries and convents and to restore the practice of strict observance. There was a desire to establish a uniform basis through the regulation and ordering of monastic life. As James Mixson has argued in his study of Observant reform, »the tensions of religious reform, poverty, property and community« were not a debate exclusively found in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries or unique to Franciscans. Rather they were given fresh impetus and new meaning in the context of the later Middle Ages and also amongst other orders<sup>9</sup>). Debates about convent entry in this period touched on precisely the issues which Mixson identifies. At the heart of these debates was a concern, indeed in some cases even a fear, that paying for convent entry amounted to a form of simony, the buying or selling of spiritual privilege<sup>10</sup>). This was nowhere more evident than in the case of Heinrich Seuse (1295–1366) who in his ›Vita‹ expressed torment that he was guilty of the charge: »This trial came to him from inordinate fear. He had been told that his admission into the order had taken place by means of the transfer of worldly goods, whence comes the sin which is called simony, that is, the purchase of spiritual things by temporal ones«<sup>11</sup>). While the text which the Günterstal nuns had was less emotive in its language, it confronted the same issues and concerns and was constitutive of the wider debate on monastic simony in south-west German convents which Falk Eisermann has documented<sup>12</sup>). Eisermann situates the vernacular ›Carissima soror Agnes‹, a translation and commentary of *Ne in vinea domini*, a papal decree on simony from April 1369, within the context of the reform movement and argues that access to the text was a form of emancipation for the nuns<sup>13</sup>). The example from Günterstal presents another instance

9) James MIXSON, *Poverty's Proprietors. Ownership and Mortal Sin at the Origins of the Observant Movement* (Studies in the History of Christian Traditions 143), Leiden 2009, p. 7.

10) For a definition and the biblical origin of the word through the example of Simon Magus see Roman DEUTINGER, *Simonisten rechtfertigen sich. Mittelalterliche Antworten auf den Vorwurf der Simonie*, in: ZKG 120/2 (2009), pp. 145–159, at p. 145.

11) Henry Suso, *The Life of the Servant*, transl. James M. CLARK, London 1952, pp. 64–65; Heinrich Seuse, *Deutsche Schriften*, ed. Karl BIHLMAYER, Stuttgart 1907, p. 62: *Disú anvehtung viel im zû von ungeordneter vorte: im ward geseit, daz sin enphaben in den orden weri geschehen mit undertragene zûlichs gûtes, dannen dú sünd komet, du da heisset symonia, da man ein geischliches umb ein liplichs kofet.*

12) Falk EISERMANN, *Carissima soror Agnes. Zur Rezeption einer päpstlichen Simonie-Konstitution in spätmittelalterlichen Frauenklöstern*. Mit Edition, in: *Studien und Texte zur literarischen und materiellen Kultur der Frauenklöster im späten Mittelalter. Ergebnisse eines Arbeitsgesprächs in der Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel*, 24.–26. Febr. 1999, ed. Falk EISERMANN/Eva SCHLOTHEUBER/Volker HONEMANN (Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought 99), London/Boston 2004, pp. 119–167.

13) EISERMANN, *SOROR* (as n. 12), p. 141.

of a text on simony which was transmitted in south-west Germany and which gave the nuns an active role in the application of its findings. That it was transmitted alongside a series of translations of normative texts of the Cistercian order is a further indication of the reforming spirit with which it was written.

Yet at the same time the Günterstal text paints a more ambiguous picture of the nature of late medieval reform and shows how the tensions amongst reformers seeking to find legal and religious solutions to a pragmatic problem could develop. In many respects, far from reforming the practice of convent entry, Bernard de Reyda allowed former practices to continue unchallenged and to maintain the status quo, a fact which was recognised as soon as his text appeared in the mid-1450s and a heated debate broke out with his former pupil, Denis the Carthusian (1402–1471), about the legitimacy of Bernard's conclusions. The Günterstal nuns, whose members were drawn mainly from a higher social stratum than those of Freiburg's other convents, and who owned extensive landholdings, in part derived from the gifts from families on entry, do not seem to have been aware of this controversy, which fortuitously suited their interests<sup>14</sup>. The convent, moreover, belonged to an order, the Cistercian, which played a particular role in the context of the late medieval reform movement, with an attitude towards Observance which has been characterised as reserved and which needs to be investigated more deeply at a local level<sup>15</sup>.

This article aims to study the dynamics of the relationship between material and spiritual affairs and the nature of reform through the example of the Cistercian convent of Günterstal. The continual division between social and economic studies of convents, on the one hand, and religious, literary and cultural approaches, on the other, creates an artificial division which distorts our picture of the realities of convent life and makes it harder to assess the connections and possible tensions between the two areas<sup>16</sup>. This article seeks to bridge that gap by arguing that not just male reformers in monasteries and

14) Ulrike DENNE, *Die Frauenklöster im spätmittelalterlichen Freiburg im Breisgau. Ihre Einbindung in den Orden und in die städtische Kommunität* (Forschungen zur oberrheinischen Landesgeschichte 39), Munich 1997, pp. 153–177; Yu-Kyong KIM, *Die Grundherrschaft des Klosters Günterstal bei Freiburg im Breisgau. Eine Studie zur Agrargeschichte des Breisgaus im späten Mittelalter* (Forschungen zur oberrheinischen Landesgeschichte 45), Freiburg im Breisgau/Munich 2002, who notes (p. 10) that Günterstal »war im Freiburger Raum eines der reichsten Frauenklöster«.

15) Kaspar ELM, *Spätmittelalterliche Reformbemühungen unter den Zisterziensern im Rheinland und in den Niederlanden*, in: *Die niederrheinischen Zisterzienser im späten Mittelalter. Reformbemühungen, Wirtschaft und Kultur*, ed. Raymund KOTTJE (Zisterzienser im Rheinland 3), Cologne 1992, pp. 3–20, at p. 10; SCHLOTHEUBER, *Klostereintritt* (as n. 8), p. 59.

16) SCHLOTHEUBER, *Klostereintritt* (as n. 8), p. 2; on the need to bring together the economic and religious lives of Cistercians see Werner RÖSENER, *Spiritualität und Ökonomie im Spannungsfeld der zisterziensischen Lebensform*, in: *Cîteaux. Commentarii Cistercienses* 34 (1983), pp. 245–274. For the English context see Nancy Bradlen WARREN, *Spiritual Economies. Female Monasticism in Late Medieval England*, Philadelphia 2001, p. ix, who comments on »the complex vibrancy of material and spiritual life in later medieval nunneries«.

universities but also the nuns themselves actively engaged in and reflected upon the practical, even legal, questions surrounding convent entry. Such questions proved so controversial as they accentuated the inherent tension between the dual role of a convent as both a religious and social institution. The influence of families loomed large over convents and it was more often than not the social makeup of houses, and not the order to which they belonged, that determined the profile of individual houses.

The article will first frame the text on convent entry by Bernard within the context of the manuscript in which it was transmitted in Günterstal; secondly, set out the debate on simony which emerged between Bernard and Denis the Carthusian as a means of exploring the tensions within the reform movement on the issue; and thirdly, in part by drawing on the writings of the nuns themselves, trace the text's transmission against the backdrop of the specific circumstances surrounding acceptance into a convent such as Günterstal. It will thereby demonstrate the challenges to reform practices such as convent entry in the contexts of tradition, the influence of family members and the nuns' own appreciation of their exclusive social, economic and religious status. There has been some caution about framing the religious life of the fifteenth century in anticipation of the dramatic events of the Reformation. This article will nevertheless conclude by suggesting that the strength of feeling which emerged towards the convents and monasteries in the 1520s, specifically during the Peasants' War, had its roots in a sense of exclusivity which nuns and monks had developed<sup>17</sup>. Debates about convent entry in the fifteenth century and convent exit in the sixteenth century were two sides of the same coin, trying to find an answer to the question of what a convent's role in society should be whilst attempting to strike a balance between a convent's economic and social function, on the one hand, and its religious function, on the other.

## II. ›COD. SANG. 1344‹: THE REGULATION OF RELIGIOUS AND MATERIAL LIFE

›Cod. Sang. 1344‹ was one of several manuscripts from Günterstal which were bought in 1782 by Gall Metzler (1743–1820), a St. Gall monk and parish priest of Ebringen, near Freiburg, for the Stiftsbibliothek in St. Gall<sup>18</sup>. The manuscript contains the following texts:

17) MIXSON, *Poverty's Proprietors* (as n. 9), p. 12.

18) Cod. Sang. 1343 and 1345 were also bought by Metzler. Gustav SCHERRER, *Verzeichniss der Handschriften der Stiftsbibliothek von St. Gallen*, Halle 1875, p. 450.

Pages (modern foliation)	Text
1–22	Bernard de Reyda, Incipit: <i>Utrum in monasterijs feminarum</i> (Latin)
23–47	Bernard de Reyda, Incipit: <i>Es ist ein froge, ob in den frowen clöstern</i> (German)
49–175	›Libri definitionum‹ (›Libellus antiquarum definitionum‹ [1289] <sup>19</sup> , ›Libellus novellarum definitionum‹ [1350] <sup>20</sup> ) (Latin)
177–309	›Libellus antiquarum definitionum‹ (German)
310–363	›Libellus novellarum definitionum‹ (German)
364–395	›Constitutio a Benedicti Papae XII pro reformatione ordinis cisterciensis‹ <sup>21</sup> (German)
395–398	Bull of Clemens VI
398–431	General Statutes of the Cistercian Order (1381, 1383, 1398, 1400, 1432, 1443, 1449, 1450 and 1463) (German)
441–674	›Ecclesiastica officia‹ <sup>22</sup> (cap. 13, 20–23, 56–58, 70, 72–120) (German)
681–691	›Ecclesiastica officia‹ (register) (Latin)
691–693	›Privilegium domini papae‹ (Callixtus II, 1119) <sup>23</sup> (Latin)
693–699	›Textus redactionis originalis Institutorum Generalis Capituli apud Cistercium‹ <sup>24</sup> (register) (Latin)
700–703	›De forma visitationis‹ <sup>25</sup> (Latin)
703–704	›Usus Conversorum‹ <sup>26</sup> (register) (Latin)
705–735	›Ecclesiastica Officia‹ <sup>27</sup> (cap. 13, 15, 21–24, 56–58) (Latin)
749–921	›Ecclesiastica Officia‹ <sup>28</sup> (cap. 68–84, 86–99, 102, 106–108, 110–120) (Latin)

19) *Nomasticon cisterciense*, ed. H. SEJALON, Solesmes 1892, pp. 367–470.

20) *Ibid.*, pp. 496–536.

21) For the original Latin see *Nomasticon* (as n. 19), pp. 473–496 and *Statuta Capitulum Generalium Ordinis Cisterciensis ab anno 1116 ad annum 1786*, 8 vols., ed. Joseph Marie CANIVEZ, Louvain 1933–1941, here vol. 3, 1335:1–42.

22) *Les Ecclesiastica officia cisterciens du XIIe siècle. Texte latin selon les manuscrits édités de Trente 1711, Ljubljana 31 et Dijon 114, version française, annexe liturgique, notes, index et tables*, ed. Danièle CHOISSELET/Placide VERNET, Reiningue 1989, pp. 86–91, 100–115, 174–181, 202–209, 212–337.

23) *Les plus anciens textes du Cîteaux. Sources, textes et notes historiques*, ed. Jean de la Croix BOUTON/Jean Baptiste VAN DAMME, Achel 1974, p. 104.

24) Joseph TURK, *Cistercii Statuta Antiquissima*, in: *Analecta Sacri Ordinis Cisterciensis* 4 (1948), pp. 16–28.

25) *Nomasticon* (as n. 19), pp. 219–220.

26) *Cistercian Lay Brothers. Twelfth-Century Usages with Related Texts*, ed. Chrysogonus WADDELL (*Studia et Documenta* 10), Cîteaux 2000, pp. 55–78.

One hand is responsible for the composition of pages 1 to 47 and 177 to 431 of the manuscript, a second hand for pages 49 to 175 and a third hand completes pages 441 to 921. Two separate colophons at the end of the original Latin version of Bernard's text and its German translation, both in rhyming couplets, reveal the process of production, the identity of the first hand and how the manuscript came to Günterstal:

»Thus praise to almighty God, who may lead us to his blessed kingdom, and also to our order in whose honour this should be written. The honourable Abbess of Müllenheim«<sup>29</sup>.

»This is dedicated to the honourable Abbess of Müllenheim. By me Brother Johannes, whom she lent a copy. May God instruct us here and feed the writer and the reader with his bread of heaven in eternal joy. Amen. Brother Johannes«<sup>30</sup>.

The text was therefore written by Brother Johannes for Veronica von Müllenheim, the abbess of Günterstal between 1504 and 1508<sup>31</sup>. Veronica belonged to the noble Strasbourg Müllenheim family and was the daughter of Ritter Walter von Müllenheim, a member of the Council of Twelve in Offenburg, and Magdalena Roeder. Veronica's sister Aurelia was a nun in the Strasbourg Dominican convent of St. Mark's and her brother Conrad was abbot of the Benedictine abbey of Gengenbach between 1500 and 1507<sup>32</sup>. Veronica is recorded as the convent's *procuratrix* in 1480, responsible for supervising the material affairs of the convent<sup>33</sup>. In the list of almost 2,500 members of Freiburg's rosary fraternity (›Rosenkranzbruderschaft‹), which had been founded by the town's Dominican monastery in the 1490s and which includes a record of twenty-five nuns of Günterstal, Veronica's name is one of three sisters to be written in red, alongside the abbess and another choir nun, possibly indicating her elevated status<sup>34</sup>.

27) *Les Ecclesiastica officia* (as n. 22), pp. 86–95, 100–115, 174–181.

28) *Ibid.*, pp. 192–291, 294–299, 302–337.

29) *Cod. Sang.* 1344, p. 21: *Sic laus omnipotenti Deo Simulque ordini nostro In cuius honore hoc sit scriptum, Qui nos ducat ad suum regnum benedictum. Domina honoranda de Mulhein.*

30) *Cod. Sang.* 1344, p. 47: *Der erwirdigen frowen von Mulhein ist es geschriben. Durch mich brüder Johansen, dem sy die abgeschrift hat gelihen. Got wel vnß hier irwisen. Den schriber vnd dem [sic] leser dar zü in ewiger fröwd mit sinen himelbrot spisen. Amen. Frater Johannes.*

31) Ernst DREHER, *Die Äbtissinnen des Zisterzienserinnenklosters Günterstal*, in: *Freiburger Diözesan-Archiv* 120 (2000), pp. 5–51, at p. 28.

32) Julius KINDLER VON KNOBLOCH, *Oberbadisches Geschlechterbuch*, vol. 3, Heidelberg 1919, p. 133.

33) *Ibid.*

34) Universitätsbibliothek Freiburg im Breisgau, Hs. 10: *Jahrzeitbuch der Dominikaner*, fol. 44v; for a description of the manuscript see Winfried HAGENMAIER, *Die deutschen mittelalterlichen Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek und die mittelalterlichen Handschriften anderer öffentlicher Sammlungen* (Kataloge der Universitätsbibliothek Freiburg im Breisgau 1,4), Freiburg im Breisgau 1988, p. 5. For the role of the fraternity see Jan GERCHOW, *Bruderschaften im spätmittelalterlichen Freiburg i. Br.*, in: *Freiburger Diözesan-Archiv* 113 (1993), pp. 5–74, at pp. 24–31.

From the German colophon it is apparent that Veronica already had a copy of this text which she then gave to Brother Johannes, who presumably produced the German translation, although this cannot be proved. The ornate decoration at the beginning of both the Latin and German versions, the neat hand and the lack of corrections point to a professional scribe. In fact, Brother Johannes had a close connection with Günterstal: in 1490 he had produced another manuscript for the convent, Alan of Lille's ›Distinctiones dictionum theologialium‹, for Veronica's predecessor as abbess, Agnes von Tüsslingen. The colophon to this manuscript identifies Johannes's family name as Strentzlin<sup>35</sup>. Cynthia Cyrus draws on this manuscript, without evidence to support the claim, as an example of a contractual relationship in which the scribe, working directly for the abbess, copied for financial reward<sup>36</sup>.

Brother Johannes Strentzlin's involvement in the production of material for Günterstal was in many respects surprising given a controversial period in his past. In 1493 a complaint had been brought to the General Chapter meeting of the Cistercian Order by the abbot in Tennenbach between 1490 and 1508, Michael Sitz, concerning Johannes. Brother Johannes had attacked Jean de Cirey, abbot of Cîteaux, both in writing and orally and forced him to issue a command to Michael Sitz. The abbot of Tennenbach had to support Johannes at university in Freiburg despite the fact that two years previously Johannes had been punished and condemned to the university prison. When Johannes tried to blackmail the abbot of Cîteaux improperly and deceitfully, the General Chapter annulled the command on the condition that Johannes should show his abbot appropriate obedience and that the abbot in turn should have authority over his own monk<sup>37</sup>.

A decade later Johannes Strentzlin, controversy now seemingly behind him, was producing material for Günterstal once again. The monastery of Tennenbach, Günterstal's

35) BLB Karlsruhe, cod. St. Peter pap. 29, fol. 160v: *Liber iste pertinet domine Agnete de Tüßlingen abbatissi in Günterstal. Scriptum per me fratrem Iohannem Strentzlin sabbato ante trinitatis finitum anno LXXXX.*

36) Cynthia CYRUS, *The Scribes for Women's Convents in Late Medieval Germany*, Toronto/London 2009, p. 174. On the methodological problems of this work see Jeffrey F. HAMBURGER, Review of: Cynthia CYRUS, *The Scribes for Women's Convents in Late Medieval Germany*, Toronto/London 2009, in: *Speculum* 85/2 (2010), pp. 379–382.

37) Statuta (as n. 21), 1493:37: *Conquestus est et se deplanxit coram praesenti Capitulo generali abbas monasterii de Porta coeli quod frater Ioannes Strentzlin professus suus, sicut pridem saepe attentavit tam per scripta quam aliunde personaliter accesserit Rmum D. N. Parisiis, tantumque effecerit male narando erga D. Cistercii, ut dictus abbas conquerens coactus sit expresso mandato dicti Rmi D. N. ipsum fratrem in studio generali Friburgi tenere et sustentare, cum tamen idem frater ante duos annos, per commissarios expresse ad hoc per Rmi D. N. deputatos, etiam usque ad carceres inclusive fuerit iudicatus et punitus. Cum ergo dictus frater Ioanes Strentzlin sinistre et fallaciter a Rmo D. N. supra memoratum mandatum extorsit, generale Capitulum dictum mandatum revocat, cassat et annullat, in virtute salutaris obedientiae et sub poena caceris dicto frateri Ioanni praecipit et mandat, ut proprio abbati suo debitam exhibeat obedientiam, nihilominus ipsi abbati iuxta formam Ordinis potestatem super proprium monachum dando.*



father house, was responsible for the spiritual and material care of the nuns<sup>38</sup>). The ›Li-bellus antiquarum definitionum‹ from 1289, a codification of existing statutes of the order, which was transmitted in the same manuscript and contains four chapters on the care of souls of nuns, noted how the visitor should, with the help of experienced monks, set the number of nuns which the convent could support according to its wealth, the so-called *numerus taxatus*<sup>39</sup>). This was one of the issues which the text copied by Johannes addressed.

The colophons reveal a relationship between Johannes and the abbesses of Günterstal that was by no means one-sided, since Veronica handed over material to Johannes to be copied<sup>40</sup>). Indeed, from a surviving library catalogue from Günterstal from 1457 copied in the 1480s or 1490s, we know that the nuns lent the Tennenbach monks manuscripts, including a copy of Caesar's ›De bello Gallico‹<sup>41</sup>). The exchange of material was part of a wider relationship between the two houses. The houses were connected by a prayer fraternity and at least sixteen Tennenbach monks were listed in a necrology from Günterstal, including the death of Günterstal's confessor and Tennenbach monk Nicolaus de Haslach in 1486<sup>42</sup>). Moreover, the houses cooperated over material affairs. The nuns recorded, for example, the welcome reception which they gave to Abbot Konrad Pfitelin of Tennenbach in 1489, along with his fellow Cistercian abbots of Bebenhausen and Salem, as well as a visit by Abbot Michael Sitz of Tennenbach with his prior in 1505 to organise the payment of the *Frongeld*, a tax for exemption from labour<sup>43</sup>). Such cooperation had a long tradition. In 1341 Abbot Johannes Zenlin had overseen the production of an *Urbar*, a

38) DENNE, *Frauenklöster* (as n. 14), pp. 102–106.

39) Cod. Sang. 1344, p. 304: *Ouch sullent die vatteräbtt mit rät der eltern durch gewalt der gemeinen capitels die zal der personen steben nach vermuglichkeit der güter, also das sie da von mügent haben ir gewand vnd narung*. The text continues that the abbess should be removed from office if she ignores the authority of the father abbot: *Welche zal ob sie die äbttissin on des vatter abbttes vrloub merete durch vffnennen personen oder anderley wjß, so soll sie on widerred abgeseht werden vnd soll dennoch sölllich vffnennung fur nûhit gehalten sin*.

40) On the *cura animarum* and the importance of exchange see Partners in Spirit. Women, Men, and Religious Life in Germany, 1100–1500, ed. Fiona J. GRIFFITHS/Julie HOTCHIN (*Medieval Women. Texts and Contexts* 24), Turnhout 2014.

41) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 40r: *Item III bücher sind gelihen gon tenibach. Item dz erst heist liber Gaii Julii Cesaris belli gallici de narracione temporum*.

42) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 42v: *Wenn I herr zû Tenibach stirpt, so setz man im I psalter vnd I meß vnd sust mit den brüedern öch*; *Necrologium Güntersthalense*, in: *Dioecesis Augustensis, Constantiensis, Curiensis*, ed. Franz Ludwig BAUMANN (*MGH Nocr.* 1), Hanover 1888, pp. 296–309, at p. 302.

43) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 24v–25r: *vnd an sant Maria Magdalenen tag do kam der apt von Salmaswiler har vnd der apt von Bebenhusen vnd der apt von Tenenbach vnd ofsend hie ze imbiß in der couent stuben. Item wir warteten iren mit der meß vnd do sy komend, do luten wir meß, vnd noch der meß do tett man die tur vff vnd vieng man gelich den respons an, do mit man den apt von Tenenbach empfieng, vnd fûrt man sy do gelich in die stuben vnd hieß sy wilkom sin*; fol. 15v: *Im XV<sup>c</sup> V jor vor Thome kam vnser her apt Michel vnd sin prior*.

register of land ownership, for Tennenbach, and in 1344 one was also commissioned for Günterstal, which continued to be added to over the course of the fifteenth century<sup>44</sup>. Such records were not just a means of control, but also had a highly symbolic function, as a sign of the wealth, power and reach of an institution<sup>45</sup>. That function was as important in female houses as in male ones.

Cistercian monks were furthermore responsible in this period for the production of German-language translations of normative texts of the Cistercian Order. From its origins in the eleventh century the Cistercians had developed a unique programme of religious life with a liturgy distinct from those of other orders which was presented in a group of texts which continued to be propagated across the Middle Ages<sup>46</sup>. A large number of translations of these texts survive from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, intended primarily for nuns or lay brothers or sisters whose command of Latin was not of a sufficient standard<sup>47</sup>. In 1476, for example, Brother Johannes Keller from the Cistercian abbey of Neuburg in Kaisheim sent the Cistercian nuns of Kirchheim a German translation of the ›Ecclesiastica Officia‹, a normative text on liturgical life<sup>48</sup>. Translations of

44) GLA Karlsruhe 66/3210; DENNE, Frauenklöster (as n. 14), p. 105; KIM, Grundherrschaft (as n. 14), pp. 49–59.

45) Roger SABLONIER, Verschriftlichung und Herrschaftspraxis. Urbariales Schriftgut im spätmittelalterlichen Gebrauch, in: Pragmatische Dimensionen mittelalterlicher Schriftkultur. Akten des Internationalen Kolloquiums, 26.–29. Mai 1999, ed. Christel MEIER (Münstersche Mittelalter-Schriften 79), Munich 2002, pp. 191–220, at p. 202; Duncan HARDY, Associative Political Culture in the Holy Roman Empire. Upper Germany, 1346–1521 (Oxford Historical Monographs), Oxford 2018, p. 31. On the visitations of Cistercian convents by their father abbot see Anja OSTROWITZKI, Der ›liber dictaminum‹ des Abtes von Himmerod als Zeugnis der cura monialium im spätmittelalterlichen Zisterzienserorden, in: DA 55 (1999), pp. 157–181.

46) Nigel PALMER, Daughters of Salem. The Literary Culture of Cistercian Nuns in South-West Germany, in: Frauen – Kloster – Kunst. Neue Forschungen zur Kulturgeschichte des Mittelalters. Beiträge zum Internationalen Kolloquium vom 13. bis 16. Mai 2005 anlässlich der Ausstellung ›Krone und Schleier‹, ed. Jeffrey F. HAMBURGER/Carola JÄGGI/Susan MARTIN/Hedwig RÖCKELEIN, Turnhout 2007, pp. 85–97, at p. 86.

47) Volker HONEMANN, Zisterzienser-Konstitutionen (dt.), in: <sup>2</sup>VL 10 (1999), col. 1562–1564, at col. 1562. For the use of the vernacular in a northern German Cistercian context by lay sisters see Ulrike HASCHER-BURGER/Henrike LÄHNEMANN, Liturgie und Reform im Kloster Medingen. Edition und Untersuchung des Propst-Handbuchs Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Lat. liturg. e. 18 (Spätmittelalter, Humanismus, Reformation 76), Tübingen 2013, pp. 99–112; Johannes Probus, Cronica monasterii beati Meynulpfi in Bodden. Aufzeichnungen aus dem Kloster Böödeken 1409 bis 1457, ed. and transl. Heinrich RÜTHING (Veröffentlichungen der Historischen Kommission für Westfalen N. F. 36), Bielefeld 2016, notes in the cap. on table readings for lay brothers (*Ad mensam laycis legebatur*), p. 370: *Tanta eciam diligencia predicti prioris erat circa suos laycos, ut ne in spiritualibus deficerent alimentis, ipsi circa singula refectorii sui refectioes ex teutunicali libro lectionem haberent spirituales.*

48) Universitätsbibliothek Augsburg, Codex III, 1. quart 12, fol. 2r–85v; Karin SCHNEIDER, Deutsche mittelalterliche Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Augsburg. Die Signaturengruppen Cod.I.3 und

the ›Libellus antiquarum definitionum‹ were also made for nuns in this period by the monks of Eberbach<sup>49</sup>).

Not included in Honemann's list of such translations are the Günterstal manuscript and two manuscripts from the Cistercian convent of Lichtenthal, near Baden-Baden<sup>50</sup>. Kloster Lichtenthal, Hs. 46, datable to circa 1500, contains German translations of the ›Libellus antiquarum definitionum‹ from 1289 (fol. 2r–25v), the ›Libellus novellarum definitionum‹ from 1350 (fol. 52v–69v), the Reform decrees of Benedict XII (fol. 69v–80v), bulls of Clemens VI (fol. 80v–81v) and statutes of the General Chapter (fol. 81v–93r), all texts which can be found in the Günterstal manuscript. Archiv Kloster Lichtenthal, Hs. 3, presents an adapted translation of the two ›Libri definitionum‹ from 1289 and 1350 by the Lichtenthal nun, Sister Regula, who in the second half of the fifteenth century prepared material in German for her fellow-sisters<sup>51</sup>. Maria Pia Schindele has compared the two Lichtenthal versions and shown the number of additions and explanations which Regula made to her text. A further comparison with the Günterstal manuscript is also revealing. First, both Lichtenthal manuscripts transmit only the German translations without the original Latin text, as is the case in Günterstal. Secondly, the Bernard text on convent entry is not transmitted in either Lichtenthal manuscript or any other manuscript from the convent, pointing perhaps to a particular concern about the issue in Günterstal. Lastly and significantly, apart from small variants in spelling, the translations in the Günterstal manuscript and Kloster Lichtenthal, Hs. 46 are the same.

Representative extracts from the 1289 ›Libellus antiquarum definitionum‹ section on convent entry – the Latin original<sup>52</sup>, the translation from Günterstal<sup>53</sup>, the translation

Cod.III.1 (Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Augsburg. Zweite Reihe, Deutsche Handschriften 1), Wiesbaden 1988, pp. 279–280; HONEMANN, Zisterzienser-Konstitutionen (as n. 47), col. 1563.

49) Landesbibliothek Wiesbaden, Hs. 92; Hessisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Wiesbaden, Hs. Abt. 22, 523, fol. 364r–372r; Nigel PALMER, Zisterzienser und ihre Bücher. Die mittelalterliche Bibliotheksgeschichte von Kloster Eberbach im Rheingau, Regensburg 1998, pp. 140–141; HONEMANN, Zisterzienser-Konstitutionen (as n. 47), col. 1563.

50) Kloster Lichtenthal, Hs. 46 and Archiv Kloster Lichtenthal, Hs. 3. On the former see Felix HEINZER/Gerhard STAMM, Die Handschriften von Lichtenthal (Handschriften der Badischen Landesbibliothek in Karlsruhe 11), Wiesbaden 1987, pp. 325–326 and on the latter see Maria-Pia SCHINDELE, »Die ordenung. die daz. Capitel von Zitel...hat gemacht« (Hs 3, 11r). Eine bisher unbekannte Handschrift der Sr. Regula im Archiv der Abtei Lichtenthal, in: Freiburger Diözesan-Archiv 116 (1996), pp. 79–122.

51) Gerhard STAMM, Regula, Lichtenthaler Schreibmeisterin O. Cist., in: <sup>2</sup>VL 7 (1989), col. 1131–1134; Id., Klosterreform und Buchproduktion. Das Werk der Schreib- und Lesemeisterin Regula, in: 750 Jahre Zisterzienserinnen-Abtei Lichtenthal. Faszination eines Klosters, Ausstellungskatalog des Badischen Landesmuseums, ed. Harald SIEBENMORGEN, Sigmaringen 1995, pp. 63–70; Astrid BREITH, Textaneignung. Das Frauenlegendar der Lichtenthaler Schreibmeisterin Schwester Regula (Studien und Texte zum Mittelalter und zur frühen Neuzeit 17), Münster/New York 2010.

52) Nomasticon (as n. 19), p. 468: *Moniales insuper vel conversae, si conspiratrices, simoniacae vel omnino rebelles fuerint, sub poena excessui congruenti, cum patrum abbatum vel visitatorum suorum litteris, ad domos alias ordinis emittantur, non nisi de licentia capituli generalis reversurae.*

from Kloster Lichtenthal, Hs. 46<sup>54)</sup> and Sister Regula's adaptation<sup>55)</sup> – indicate this point. The version from Günterstal and Kloster Lichtenthal, Hs. 46 are a faithful translation of the Latin, noting that choir or lay sisters who become conspiring, unruly or were accepted through simony should be sent to another house of the order and only be allowed to return with permission of the General Chapter. By contrast Sister Regula, in her adaptation, takes the phrase »accepted through simony« and makes it more specific with »all the women who are received for the sake of money and have bought their way into the order«<sup>56)</sup>. Through this the Cistercian nun was making clear the danger of being able to buy a place in the convent.

Regula's contributions have been framed within the context of the reform of the convent in 1426, when the General Chapter of the Cistercian Order had decreed its *reformatio* and called upon the Abbots of Lucelle, Maulbronn and Herrenalb to enact changes »in head as well as in members«<sup>57)</sup>. In Günterstal no such explicit mention of a reform can be found. Nevertheless there are indications that attempts were made to regulate life in the convent. In 1483, for example, Jean de Cirey, abbot of Cîteaux, conducted

53) Cod. Sang. 1344, p. 307: *Ouch klosterfrowen vnd leijgenschwestern, die zûsamenbloserin werend oder symonjesch vffgenommen oder gantz widerspennig, die sullent mit der pen die der schuld gezimen mit der vatterâbtt oder visitierer rât zû andern husern geschickt werden, nit widerkommende, denn mit vrloub des gemeinen capitels.*

54) Kloster Lichtenthal, Hs. 46, fol. 52r: *Auch kloster frouwen und leigen swester, die zû samenbloserin weren oder symonysche uff genommen oder gantz widerspenig, die süllent mit der pen die der schuld gezymen mit der vatter abbt oder visitierer rat zu andren hüßern geschickt werden, nit wider kümende, denn mit urlob des gemeinen capitels.* The manuscript has been digitised: <https://digital.blb-karlsruhe.de/blbhs/Handschriften/content/zoom/4493889> (15.05.2020).

55) SCHINDELE, Die ordenung (as n. 50), pp. 92, 114; Archiv Kloster Lichtenthal, Hs. 3, fol. 7v–8r: *Wer auch daz ein closter fraw, sie wer nunn oder leyswester widerspenig wer und ungehorsam, oder daz sie zammen globten wider des ordens gebott und recht, die sollent alle gebüßt werden, nach dem als ire schuld heischt. Die sol man auch darzu versenden in andere clöster mit irs vater aptes oder des wisers briefen und sollen nit wider umm komen, es sy dan daz sie das gemeyn Capitels des ordens beiß, wider in ire clöster farn. Also sollen auch verschickt werden und uß gewurffen von den wisern, all die frawen die umm geltz willen empfangen sint, und den orden kaufft habn, die sol man versenden und nit heissen wider komen on dz gemeinen Capitel urlob.*

56) SCHINDELE, Die ordenung (as n. 50), pp. 82–83.

57) Statuta (as n. 21), 1426:32: *Reformationem monasterii monialium Lucidaevallis, in quo regulares observantiae, prout generalis Capituli pervenit ad aures, pene penitus ruinantur, in risum populi, Ordinis irreverentiam et scandalum plurimorum, de Lutzela, de Malembrum et de Alba monasteriorum abbatibus et eorum duobus in casu quo tres simul in praesenti negotio vacare non possent, committit idem Capitulum cum omnimoda potestate ipsius Capituli et suis clausulis opportunis et rationalibus, tam in capite quam in membris requitis.* On its reform see Maria-Pia SCHINDELE, Die Abtei Lichtenthal. Ihr Verhältnis zum Cistercienserorden, zu Päpsten und Bischöfen und zum badischen Landesherrn im Laufe der Jahrhunderte, in: Freiburger Diözesan-Archiv 104 (1984), pp. 19–166, at pp. 124–125.

a visitation of the convent and interviewed every sister<sup>58</sup>). De Cirey was an abbot with strong reforming tendencies who encouraged the reorganisation of written material in Cistercian houses<sup>59</sup>). This may well have contributed to the fact that by the turn of the sixteenth century both Günterstal and Lichtenthal acquired the same translation of various normative Cistercian texts, pointing to a concerted effort to unify practice and re-affirm both convents' ties to the roots of their order.

The specific combination of the transmission of texts on simony and convent entry with the translations of statutes was characteristic across all orders in late medieval convents and the Cistercians were no exception<sup>60</sup>). This was part of a wider pattern of a deepening of religious life and reform of liturgy in the pre-Reformation church, a process which Berndt Hamm has termed »normative centering«, a desire for greater standardisation, regulation and legitimisation of the religious life<sup>61</sup>). Yet, it must also be considered within the context of changes to cultures of writing and recording within the convents at the time and the emergence of internal convent writing for the day-to-day administration of affairs. The production and transmission of this sort of material – whether by or for the nuns – was an indication of the increasingly important role of writing in the management of the community, both in terms of the religious life, not least in the liturgy, but also in material affairs, such as convent entry. These manuscripts underlined the fact that spiritual and material affairs were regarded as closely interlinked by contemporaries.

The Günterstal manuscript transmits both Latin and German versions of the text on convent entry and the statutes of the order. This is characteristic of a number of manuscripts from the convent. Three volumes of a lectionary for August through to October,

58) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 23v–24r: *Item tornoch inn der vasten kam vnser aller obrester, vnser herr von Zettels, vnd visitiert hie vnd verhort jeklichen frowen in sunderheit vnd gab vns ein kart.*

59) Emilia JAMROZIAK, *The Cistercian Order in Medieval Europe, 1090–1500*, Abingdon 2013, pp. 240–245.

60) This is noted by EISERMANN, *SOFOR* (as n. 12), p. 131. See also, for example, Eichstätt, Stiftsbibliothek St. Walburg, Cod. germ. 6 which contains a German translation of the Rule of St Benedict (fol. 8r–93v), statutes for Benedictine nuns (fol. 94r–125r) and a German translation of *Ne in vinea domini* (fol. 171v–175r) or Landesbibliothek Stuttgart, Cod. hist. 4° 177, the so-called »Pfullinger Statutenbuch«, which contains a German rule for Poor Clares (fol. 1r–30r), statutes for the order (fol. 30v–68v), including *Ne in vinea domini* (fol. 31v–33v). For descriptions see Tobias TANNEBERGER, »... usz latin in tutsch gebracht ...«. Normative Basistexte religiöser Gemeinschaften in volkssprachlichen Übertragungen. Katalog – Untersuchung – Fallstudie (Vita regularis. Ordnungen und Deutungen religiösen Lebens im Mittelalter. Abhandlungen 59), Berlin 2010, pp. 89–90, 232. On Pfullingen Bert ROEST, *Order and Disorder. The Poor Clares between Foundation and Reform*, Leiden 2013, p. 191.

61) Berndt HAMM, *Von der spätmittelalterlichen reformatio zur Reformation. Der Prozeß normativer Zentrierung von Religion und Gesellschaft in Deutschland*, in: *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 84 (1993), pp. 7–82; ID., *Normative Centering in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries. Observations on Religiosity, Theology and Iconology*, in: *Journal of Early Modern History* 3 (1999), pp. 307–354 (transl. John M. FRYMIRE).

dating from the second third of the fifteenth century, also survive in the St. Gall Stiftsbibliothek<sup>62)</sup> and contain chapters from the Rule of Benedict interspersed with extracts from a martyrology<sup>63)</sup>; pericopes from the Epistles and Gospels which also could have been used for the Hours<sup>64)</sup>; and the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, all presented in both German and Latin<sup>65)</sup>. One possible explanation for this may be found in the desire of the Dominican reformer, Bartholomäus Texery, in his ›Ordinacio‹ of 1429 for the St. Catherine nuns in Nuremberg »that all the time when you are in the refectory, when you eat or drink communally, you read the table reading in the morning in German and in the evening one part in Latin and the other part in German«<sup>66)</sup>. Entries in the surviving 1457 book list from Günterstal such as »one book, in which there is Latin« presents a less than certain picture about the scribe's (the prioress) command of Latin and indeed that of the community as a whole<sup>67)</sup>. It is equally true that vernacular literature played an increas-

62) Cod. Sang. 1140, 1141 and 1142 are all available on the E-Codices website. There were probably six more volumes, now lost, which completed the collection. It may be that the references in the book catalogue – *Item II lectenbuecher von den helgen*, *Item II lectenbuecher von den istorien*, *Item I nuw leccionbüch von den istorien*, *Item I leccionbüch von den heiligen* – refer to these volumes.

63) Cod. Sang. 1140, pp. 19–129 transmits cap. 35 to 61 of the ›Rule‹; Cod. Sang. 1141, pp. 1–94 transmits cap. 27 to 33. For an example of its transmission in German in a Cistercian convent see András VIZKELETY, *Eine deutsche Benediktinerregel für ein Zisterzienserinnenstift in Mähren*, in: *Zisterziensisches Schreiben im Mittelalter – Das Skriptorium der Reiner Mönche. Beiträge der internationalen Tagung im Zisterzienserstift Rein*, Mai 2003, ed. ANTON SCHWOB/KARIN KRANICH-HOFBAUER (Jahrbuch für internationale Germanistik A 71), Bern 2005, pp. 293–304.

64) Cod. Sang. 1140, readings from the Old Testament in Latin for September (pp. 207–259) followed by the same readings in German (pp. 349–411); Cod. Sang. 1142, ›Epistole de communi Sanctorum‹ in Latin (pp. 222–297) followed by the same in German (pp. 298–469). On German pericopes see Nigel F. PALMER, *Das Einsiedeln-Zürcher Lektionar. Untersuchungen zur spätmittelalterlichen Bibelübersetzung im südwestdeutschen Raum*, in: *Metamorphosen der Bibel. Beiträge zur Tagung ›Wirkungsgeschichte der Bibel im deutschsprachigen Mittelalter‹ vom 4. bis 6. September 2000 in der Bibliothek des bischöflichen Priesterseminars Trier*, ed. Ralf PALTE/Andrea RAPP/Heimo REINITZER (*Vestigia Biblicae* 23–25), Bern 2004, pp. 123–154; Carsten KOTTMANN, *Das buch der ewangelii und epistel. Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung und Gebrauchsfunktion südwestdeutscher Perikopenhandschriften (Studien und Texte zum Mittelalter und zur Frühen Neuzeit 14)*, Münster 2009, pp. 435–438.

65) Cod. Sang. 1142, pp. 659–695 (Latin) and 695–761 (German). See Albert SCHELBE, *Evangelium Nicodemi*, in: *VL 2* (1980), col. 659–663; Werner J. HOFFMANN, *The Gospel of Nicodemus in High German Literature of the Middle Ages*, in: *The Medieval Gospels of Nicodemus. Texts, Intertexts, and Contexts in Western Europe*, ed. Zbigniew IZYDORCZYK (*Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies* 159), Temple (Arizona) 1997, pp. 287–336.

66) Theodor VON KERN, *Die Reformation des Katharinenklosters zu Nürnberg im Jahre 1428*, in: *Jahresbericht des historischen Vereins in Mittelfranken* 31 (1863), pp. 1–20, at p. 19: *daz ir all zeit in dem refenter, wenn man da yset oder collacion trincket, ze tisch lest des morgens teütsch und ze abent einen teil latein und den andern ze teütsch*.

67) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 39v: *I büch, doran stot latnyg*; SCHLOTHEUBER, *Klostereintritt*, (as n. 8), p. 272: »Der erhaltene Bücherbestand läßt keinen sicheren Schluß bezüglich der Sprachkompetenzen der Nonnen zu.«

ingly important role in the devotional life of the convent<sup>68</sup>). Nevertheless, the book list indicates that the convent owned a number of popular teaching texts, including Donatus's ›Ars grammatica‹, Peter Comestor's ›Historia Scholastica‹, Peter Lombard's ›Libri Quattuor Sententiarum‹ and *ein abcdarius*<sup>69</sup>). The catalogue also notes the presence of *I vocabel* which, significantly, was found in the abbess's house<sup>70</sup>). The nuns heard readings in Latin and translated letters into German<sup>71</sup>). Above all, the fact that in 1490 Abbess Agnes received a Latin manuscript from Brother Johannes of Alain of Lille's ›Distinctiones‹ points to a written milieu in a south-west German convent where Latin still had a role to play and could exist alongside the increasing dominance of German. ›Cod. Sang. 1344‹ is therefore representative of the interaction between languages (Latin/German), people (monks/nuns) and issues (material/religious affairs) which characterised the world of the late medieval convent.

### III. THE DEBATE OVER CONVENT ENTRY

Included in the book list from Günterstal was a copy of John Cassian's ›Instituta‹, which contained the story of a group of Egyptian monks refusing to accept any money from those wanting to join their group, fearing that this could lead to insubordination or the abandonment of the monastic life<sup>72</sup>). The story was indicative of the concern over simo-

68) The lectionaries also include Marquard von Lindau's commentary on the Ten Commandments, ›Dekalogerklärung‹ (Cod. Sang. 1140, pp. 551–717), Berthold's ›Zeitglöcklein des Lebens und Leidens Christi‹ (Cod. Sang. 1142, pp. 13–45) and Heinrich Seuse's ›Büchlein der ewigen Weisheit‹ (Cod. Sang. 1142, pp. 490–624).

69) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 39r refers to *III buecher sententzias Petri* and 39v to *de istoria scolastica* and *I nuwen donat*.

70) The presence of these books was not unusual in convents. Lichtenthal owned two vocabularies: BLB Karlsruhe, Codices L72 and L73, dating from 1417–1420 and 1456 respectively. Two prayer books from the Cistercian convent of Kirchheim am Ries contain vocabularies (Universitätsbibliothek Augsburg, Codices III.2.8° II, fol. 94v–111r and III.3.8° 3, fol. 2r–11r) and a collection of hymns and readings containing a Latin grammar (Universitätsbibliothek Augsburg, Cod. III.3.4° 42, fol. 242v–290v): Arnold SCHROMM, *Die Bibliothek des ehemaligen Zisterzienserinnenklosters Kirchheim am Ries. Buchpflege und Geistiges Leben in einem schwäbischen Frauenstift* (Studia Augustana. Augsburgischer Forschungen zur europäischen Kulturgeschichte 9), Tübingen 1998, pp. 245, 278, 280.

71) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 25r–25v: *an sant Thomas tag dz ewangelium exiit edictum a cesare augusto* [Luc. 2,1–2]. *Item morndes noch sant Thomas tag dz ewangelium pastores loquebantur* [Luc. 2,15]; fol. 5r notes that the scribe has found an old letter written in Latin about payment to confessors and chaplains which was given to the convent by Jakob von Meringen. Gabriela SIGNORI, *Hochmittelalterliche Memorialpraktiken in spätmittelalterlichen Reformklöstern*, in: DA 60 (2004), pp. 517–548, at p. 540, stresses the active use of Latin in southern German convents.

72) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 39v; Joseph H. LYNCH, *Simoniacal Entry into Religious Life from 1000 to 1260. A Social, Economic and Legal Study*, Columbus 1976, p. 73.

nial entry in the early church, but this was an issue which continued to arise with different levels of intensity over the course of the Middle Ages<sup>73</sup>). Attempts were made to reform the practice of giving a gift on entry in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, including those made by Cistercian entrants, by trying to make it voluntary and removing any negotiation between the two parties. The fact remained, however, that there was never any question of completely abolishing the practice of giving gifts on entry, given that monastic houses were reliant on them economically to survive<sup>74</sup>). Pope Boniface VIII's papal decree *Periculoso* on the universal strict enclosure of nuns from 1298 placed renewed focus on the issue by stating that convents should not accept further candidates when they had insufficient resources to support them<sup>75</sup>). On 4<sup>th</sup> April 1369 the issue was again subject to a papal constitution, *Ne in vinea domini*, which stated that any precondition for entry into the monastery was simoniacal and that only the Pope had the right of absolution in such cases<sup>76</sup>). Fuelled by the wide reception and transmission of these texts, it was therefore perhaps not surprising that debates about entry would re-emerge with a new intensity in the later Middle Ages, since a satisfactory solution to the issue had not been reached.

Around 1455 the prolific writer Denis the Carthusian (1402–1470) of the Charterhouse of Roermond published ›Contra simoniam liber primus‹ which specified that, regardless of any pious intention, it was always simony to ask someone to pay for entry into the convent or monastery<sup>77</sup>). He was then obliged to reinforce this strict position in a second book on the subject, which began with the question at the start of the article, namely whether it was permitted to admit a female novice above the number of persons which the convent could support without falling into penury<sup>78</sup>). The question had been posed by Bernard de Reyda, Professor of Theology at the University of Cologne between

73) DEUTINGER, *Simonisten* (as n. 10), p. 146; EISERMANN, *soror* (as n. 12), pp. 121–122; Helmut FELD, Konrad Summenhart. *Theologe der kirchlichen Reform vor der Reformation*, in: *Rottenburger Jahrbuch für Kirchengeschichte* 11 (1992), pp. 85–116, at p. 107.

74) LYNCH, *Entry* (as n. 72), pp. 161–165, 222–224.

75) Elizabeth MAKOWSKI, *Canon Law and Cloistered Women. Periculoso and its Commentators 1298–1545* (Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Canon Law 5), Washington D.C. 1997, pp. 1–4, 31–34.

76) EISERMANN, *soror* (as n. 12), p. 119.

77) *Doctoris ecstatica d. Dionysii Cartusiani opera omnia, cura et labore monachorum sacri Ordinis Cartusiensis*, 42 vols., Monstrolii 1896, here vol. 39, pp. 283–305. The following section is indebted to the analysis of Kent EMERY JR., Denis the Carthusian. *The World of Thought comes to Roermond*, in: *The Carthusians in the Low Countries. Studies in Monastic History and Heritage*, ed. Krijn PANSTERS (Miscellanea Neerlandica 43. Studia Cartusiana 4), Leuven 2014, pp. 255–304, at pp. 292–295; *Dionysii Cartusianensis Opera Selecta. Prolegomena. Bibliotheca Manuscripta. IA: Studia Bibliographica*, ed. Kent EMERY JR. (Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Mediaevalis 121), Turnhout 1991, pp. 202–217; see also Dirk WASSERMANN, *Dionysius der Karthäuser. Einführung in Werk und Gedankenwelt* (Analecta Cartusiana 133), Salzburg 1996, pp. 7–12, 228–236.

78) ›Contra simoniam liber secundus‹, in: *Doctoris ecstatica* (as n. 77), pp. 307–325.



1434 and 1466, confessor to the Augustinian canonesses of Cologne's Groß-Nazareth convent, and a participant at the Council of Basle. Significantly Bernard had taught Denis when he had studied at Cologne and Denis was awarded his Baccalaureate by him in 1422<sup>79)</sup>.

The text to which the Günterstal nuns had access was made up of a question, ten conclusions and a corollary, transmitted in both Latin and German. The corollary identifies two key issues which went to the crux of the matter: »In all these things the safest thing is not to ask or demand and that one does not accept anyone above the number which may bring the convent into penury«<sup>80)</sup>. It was simony to demand temporal goods from a candidate before or after convent entry whether openly or secretly, but it was not simony if these goods were given »out of one's own will and with an open and complete freedom«<sup>81)</sup>. The corollary even includes a practical example of a candidate asking how much it is customary to pay to enter, the convent stating the amount and the candidate then offering freely to pay it: this was permitted<sup>82)</sup>. In turn, the text considered the issue of the *numerus taxatus* and argued that a convent should not exceed the number of persons it could support financially. An increase in the number of nuns did not necessarily lead to an increase in devotion. Drawing on Isai. 9,3 the text warned that »you have enlarged the nation but have not increased their joy or devotion«<sup>83)</sup>.

In the fourteenth century the canon lawyer Johannes Andreae († 1348) had cautioned against an overly liberal interpretation of the papal decree *Periculoso*<sup>84)</sup>. Denis's second work on simony was likewise written in reaction to the freer interpretation by Bernard and argued that the venerable doctor and his former teacher was mistaken. He set out in his prologue that he did not seek to undermine Bernard's honour or authority but was driven only by his pursuit of truth<sup>85)</sup>. Denis's critical response led to the Theology Faculty in Cologne coming to the defence of their professor Bernard, resulting in the publication of a ›Scriptum collectum ad praecavendum in ingressu religionis peccatum simoniae parvitatis‹ that included Bernard's question and original resolution; the Papal constitutions *Periculoso* and *Ne in vinea domini*; a defence of Bernard by his fellow Professor of Theology in Cologne, Johannes Tinctoris; and the ten conclusions and corollary which

79) Dionysii Cartusiensis Opera (as n. 77), pp. 208–209.

80) Cod. Sang. 1344, pp. 17–18: *In omnibus tamen hiis tutius est pro nichil petatur nec exigatur nec in monasterijs huiusmodi ultra numerum earum que sine penuria sustentari possunt*; p. 43: *Doch in allen disen dingen ist das sicherste, das man nit heisch noch fordern, vnd das man neman nemen uber die zal, dy das closter in mangel erziehen mag.*

81) Cod. Sang. 1344, p. 5: *sponte ac pure et plena liberalitate*; p. 28: *uß eignem willen vnd luterer foller fryhey.*

82) Cod. Sang. 1344, p. 45.

83) Cod. Sang. 1344, p. 8: *Multiplicasti gentem et non magnificasti letitiam aut devotionem prout experti sciunt*; p. 32: *Du hast gemeret dz folck vnd hast aber nit gegroßwirdiget die frowde oder die andacht.*

84) MAKOWSKI, Law (as n. 75), pp. 63–67.

85) Doctoris ecstatica (as n. 77), p. 308; EMERY JR., Denis (as n. 77), p. 292.

reinforced Bernard's original opinion. In 1456 a group of ten Doctors in Theology and Civil and Canon Law at Cologne subscribed to the ten conclusions and corollary. But in response Denis was able to secure a *Determinatio* in his favour from the Universities of Paris and Heidelberg in 1458<sup>86</sup>). This debate between teacher and pupil was marked by a clash of two cultures – that of the university on the one hand and the monastery on the other – and above all by a deep unease about attempts to legitimise a practice which had long been seen as open to corruption and misuse.

The entire ›Scriptum collectum‹ was often transmitted alongside Denis's two treatises on simony<sup>87</sup>). No doubt influenced by the Cologne context, the majority of these manuscripts had their origins in northern and western Germany, but two anonymous Carthusians monks from Basle did address the issue<sup>88</sup>). The Günterstal manuscript, which is not included in Emery Jr.'s overview, is therefore significant evidence of the transmission of Bernard's opinion down the river Rhine into a southern German female monastic context well over fifty years after its original composition<sup>89</sup>). Moreover, it is transmitted entirely without context, with no mention of the controversy with Denis which had ensued.

Within the Cistercian context, the issues of simony and the *numerus taxatus* were raised at meetings of the General Chapter over the course of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries but not with a frequency to suggest that they were the most pressing issues facing the order<sup>90</sup>). Yet on a more localised level, it is apparent that there was a great deal of concern in a number of convents and on the part of the reformers that the practice needed to be examined. The situation was particularly difficult in the convent of Wöltingerode, north east of Goslar. In 1447 the convent had been excommunicated because candidates had been accepted into the convent on the strength of material donations and in the following year the nuns turned to the Magdeburg canon Heinrich Toke for advice<sup>91</sup>). Significantly, as part of its reform in 1483, the visitation protocol, after noting that

86) Doctoris ecstatica (as n. 77), p. 326.

87) Dionysii Cartusienensis Opera (as n. 77), p. 210.

88) Universitätsbibliothek Basel, A. VIII. 29; Dionysii Cartusienensis Opera (as n. 77), p. 212.

89) On this phenomenon see Martina BACKES, Literarische Kommunikationswege am Oberrhein, in: Kulturtopographie des deutschsprachigen Südwestens im späteren Mittelalter. Studien und Texte, ed. Barbara FLEITH/René WETZEL (Kulturtopographie des alemannischen Raums 1), Berlin 2009, pp. 1–11, at p. 10.

90) Statuta (as n. 21), 1433:48; 1461:135; 1462:105; 1471:50; 1488:44; 1507:25 and 1518:39 on the *numerus personae*.

91) HAB Wolfenbüttel, Cod. Guelf. 353 Helmst, fol. 121r–124v which is dated 1475 and which also transmits Bernard's ›Scriptum collectum‹ (fol. 115rb–121rb); Hildegund HÖLZEL, Heinrich Toke und ›Wolfenbüttler Rapularius‹ (MGH Studien und Texte 23), Hanover 1998, pp. 82–104; Heinrich RÜTHING, Die mittelalterliche Bibliothek des Zisterzienserinnenklosters Wöltingerode, in: Zisterziensische Spiritualität. Theologische Grundlagen, funktionale Voraussetzungen und bildhafte Ausprägungen im Mittelalter (Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des Benediktinerordens und seiner Zweige 34), St. Ottilien 1994,

the ›Libri definitionum‹ did not supply a fixed format on the clothing of girls, declared that the number of nuns should be restricted to sixty. In 1487 Bernard's ›Quaestio‹ was one of several texts on the issue which the nuns received in a manuscript<sup>92</sup>.

In south-west Germany, the question of payment for entry was addressed in a number of different convents. The earliest transmitted version of the ›Carissima soror Agnes‹ treatise from 1411 contains a colophon showing that the text had been written by a Dominican monk with the assistance of others for a nun in the Cistercian order, providing an insight into the way reforming practices involved cross-order interaction<sup>93</sup>. The further inclusion of material on the observance of enclosure, private ownership, fasting, obedience to the Rule, the importance of the Divine Office and the benefits of meditating on the Passion placed the text firmly within a reforming tradition<sup>94</sup>. Interaction was, furthermore, apparent between the universities and the Cistercian order towards the end of the century. The ›Tractatulus pro monialibus ad vitandam symoniam in receptione novitiarum‹ by the Tübingen theologian Konrad Summenhart (1450–1502), which survives in a manuscript dated 1499, was written on the request of a Cistercian abbess, who was most likely Abbess Agnes Sauter of the Cistercian convent of Heggbach or the abbess of one of the five other convents in the region (Wald, Rottenmünster, Gutenzell, Baidt and Heiligkreuztal)<sup>95</sup>. This stated, as did the Günterstal text, that material goods could be brought into the convent, as long it was done voluntarily and without any contractual obligation on both sides. The example from Günterstal therefore fits within a wider pattern in which individual Cistercian houses were being sent material on the subject, originating in part from the university context.

In the case of Wöltingerode, Bernard's text was transmitted in Latin, but, well before the commission of the Günterstal manuscript in the early sixteenth century, translations were being made into the vernacular. Emery Jr. has identified translations into Dutch and German of the question, conclusions and corollary in two manuscripts located in convent libraries, dating from around 1475 and 1504 respectively<sup>96</sup>. Another Low German trans-

pp. 189–216, at p. 202; EISERMANN, *SOROR* (as n. 12), p. 128; SCHLOTHEUBER, *Klostereintritt* (as n. 8), pp. 69–70; Jessica KREUTZ, *Die Buchbestände von Wöltingerode. Ein Zisterzienserinnenkloster im Kontext der spätmittelalterlichen Reformbewegungen* (Wolfenbütteler Mittelalter-Studien 26), Wiesbaden 2014, pp. 130–132.

92) HAB *Wolfenbüttel*, Cod. Guelf 599 Helmst. fol. 136r–152v; KREUTZ, *Die Buchbestände* (as n. 91), p. 106.

93) EISERMANN, *SOROR* (as n. 12), p. 133.

94) *Ibid.*, p. 137.

95) FELD, *Konrad* (as n. 73), p. 109; *Conradi Summenhart Opera Omnia. Vol. 1: Tractatus Theologici et Canonistici*, ed. Helmut FELD (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für europäische Geschichte 199), Mainz 2004, p. xiv; on the Swabian Cistercian convents PALMER, *Daughters* (as n. 46).

96) *Klarissenklooster Bibliotheek Megen Cod. I, fol. 260r–266v*, which is edited in Geerte Groote, *De Simonia ad Beguttas. De Middelnederlandsche Tekst opnieuw uitgegeven met Inleiding en aantekeningen*

lation has also recently come to light in the Herzog August Bibliothek<sup>97</sup>). These translations – as well as the High German version which made its way to Günterstal – were part of a wider movement in which this sort of material came to be transmitted in the vernacular. Geert Groote's (1340–1384) treatise ›De simonia ad beguttas‹ had asked the question whether it was simony to buy a place or prebend in a Beguinage, which was addressed to a group of women and provided a legal and spiritual response to them in Dutch<sup>98</sup>). The use of the vernacular in a text full of references to canon law set a precedent for other texts dealing with the same issues.

Linked to the vernacularisation of this material, it was often the nuns themselves who were involved in the commissioning of advice on the subject with the intention that they should themselves then apply the findings. Abbess Veronica von Müllenheim of Günterstal had sent the Latin original of Bernard's text to Brother Johannes Strentzlin; Summenhart's text had been written at the request of a Cistercian abbess and the Wöltingerode nuns had requested Toke to provide advice without the intermediary of the confessor<sup>99</sup>). The style of the treatises in their discussion of legal and disciplinary issues was furthermore decidedly practical, offering clear examples to the nuns of certain situations, aided by the use of dialogue: »We do not have enough worldly goods for us and for you. We would have gladly accepted you into our spiritual life. But because of shortages or temporal things we may not«<sup>100</sup>).

As Gudrun Gleba has argued in her analysis of a similar text on entry dated 1540 from the Benedictine convent of Willebadessen, east of Paderborn, the skill of the authors of these texts lay in resolving an inherent contradiction. On the one hand, there was the need to have a convent independent of material donations. On the other hand, there was the necessity and wish, on the part of the convent and its members, to be endowed with appropriate dowries<sup>101</sup>). Helmut Feld similarly refers to the »juristische und moralische

door Willem de VREESE, 's-Gravenhagen 1940, pp. 67–88; Redemptoristenklooster Bibliotheek Wittem, Ms. sine numero.

97) HAB Wolfenbüttel, Cod. Guelf. 30.1. Aug. 2°, fol. 86r–100r.

98) Theodore P. van ZIJL, Gerard Groote, Ascetic and Reformer (1340–1384) (The Catholic University of America Studies in Medieval History. New Series 18), Washington D.C. 1963, pp. 228 f.; Koen GOU-DRIANN, Geert Groote, On Simony to the Beguines, and Church Reform, in: Die Devotio Moderna, Sozialer und kultureller Transfer (1350–1580). Vol. 2: Die räumliche und geistige Ausstrahlung der Devotio Moderna – Zur Dynamik ihres Gedankenguts, ed. Iris KWIATKOWSKI/Jörg ENGELBRECHT, Münster 2013, pp. 115–140, at pp. 123–125.

99) RÜTHING, Bibliothek (as n. 91), p. 203.

100) Cod. Sang. 1344, p. 9: *Non sufficient nobis temporalia libenter recipemus te ad spiritualia sed ad temporalia non possumus nisi haberemus plures possessiones*; p. 33: *Wir wölten dich gern enpfoben zů vnserem geistlichem leben. Aber von gebresten wegen oder zitlichem ding so mögen wirs nit.*

101) Gudrun GLEBA, Reformpraxis und materielle Kultur. Westfälische Frauenklöster im späten Mittelalter (Historische Studien 462), Husum 2000, pp. 143–145.

Tricks« which Conrad Summenhart uses in the defence of current practice<sup>102</sup>). Whether written for Günterstal, Willebadessen or a Swabian Cistercian convent, these texts provided a legal and moral justification for the status of the nuns at the very moment of entry, arguing that acceptance into the convent should be a result of purely spiritual concerns, whilst accepting that material provision must be to hand.

Within the secular context, gifts and their power in this period were closely connected to notions of »legitimacy, purity and visibility«<sup>103</sup>). This was just as true for the religious world of the convent, where attempts to legitimise the practice of entry gifts were based on openness and framed in religious terms and thus considered acceptable. Yet such attempts were to a large extent cosmetic and, rather than seeking to overhaul the entire system of payment on entry, instead merely sought to provide a legitimising cloak for the practice. Written in the context and language of reform, conclusions by authors such as Bernard provided nuns, of whom Abbess Veronica von Müllenheim of Günterstal was one, with reassurance to continue practising what had been done so far. For, as will be seen, it is imperative to examine a text such as that by Bernard not just in the context of its composition and transmission but also in its subsequent application by assessing the situation surrounding acceptance into a Cistercian convent such as Günterstal. This will demonstrate the challenges of attempting to change long-developed customs which existed between convents and families.

#### IV. THE SITUATION IN GÜNTERSTAL

»Item, in the 97<sup>th</sup> year [1497], on Thursday, the day of St. Andrew [30<sup>th</sup> November], the daughter of Ettenheim was clothed as a sister. In the morning she confessed, then she was dressed in secular garb, a wimple, a green wreath and the wreath of St. Catherine on top and went to the early Mass. Afterwards she was led in this secular garb to attend Chapter. There she prostrated herself, as one does, and was told about the three essentials [i.e. the three vows of poverty, obedience and chastity] and the order. Afterwards she was undressed and she was dressed in the spiritual garb«<sup>104</sup>).

This description on the process of admission was recorded in a notebook written in German by at least three Günterstal nuns, including the prioress and sacristan, between

102) FELD, Konrad (as n. 73), p. 111.

103) Valentin GROEBNER, *Liquid Assets, Dangerous Gifts. Presents and Politics at the End of the Middle Ages*, Philadelphia 2002, p. 1 (transl. Pamela E. SELWYN).

104) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 26v: *Item im LXXXXVII ior feria quinta in die Andree apostoli leit man des Ettenhin tochter an ze einr swester. Am morgen bichtet sy, dornoch leit man si weltlich an, ein gebend, ein grien krentzli vnd s Katerinen krantz dor vber vnd gieng also zû der friegen mes. Dornoch fûrt man si also weltlich in dz kapitel. Do nam sie die venie, als man den tût, vnd seit man ir von den drin wesentlichen vnd vom orden. Dornoch zo man sy ab vnd leit ir dz geistlich gewand an.*

1480 and 1519<sup>105</sup>). The notebook records important events in the convent life, death notices, details about liturgical practice and descriptions about the management of various aspects of everyday life, including accounts, recipes, sewing patterns, alms lists, gift lists, a book catalogue and even instructions on how to grease a wagon wheel. Much recent scholarship on convents has shown the value of such internal convent writing (»konventsinterne Schriftlichkeit«) from the period, intended for the nuns themselves as an aid to the running of a community, in illuminating how nuns conceived of the enclosed life and understood their relationship to the world outside<sup>106</sup>). Whilst there are difficulties of assigning this sort of convent writing to a specific genre, a number of characteristics nevertheless defined this body of texts: a chronological structure of events but with a clear intention not to write a complete history of an institution from its foundation; the predominance of the first-person plural narrative perspective; and an attempt to help the inner organisation of the convent, to contribute to the self-awareness and self-reflection of the community and to create a collective memory at a time when such writing practices were increasingly more common in urban and noble contexts. Such texts were moreover written primarily for the community itself or a group of convents and were not intended for a wider readership<sup>107</sup>).

Although some extracts of the Günterstal notebook have been edited, in some cases with several modifications, it has long been ignored by scholarship<sup>108</sup>). The notebook

105) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247; Michael KLEIN, *Die Handschriften 65/1–1200 im Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe (Handschriften der Staatsarchive in Baden-Württemberg 2)*, Wiesbaden 1987, p. 100.

106) See, for example, the project »Schriftlichkeit in süddeutschen Frauenklöstern«: <https://www.bayerische-landesbibliothek-online.de/sueddeutsche-frauenkloester> (11.02.2019); Heike UFFMANN, *Wie in einem Rosengarten. Monastische Reformen des späten Mittelalters in den Vorstellungen von Klosterfrauen (Religion in der Geschichte 14)*, Bielefeld 2008; Sabine KLAPP, *Pragmatische Schriftlichkeit in Straßburger Frauenklöstern des späten Mittelalters*, in: *Schreiben und Lesen in der Stadt. Literaturbetrieb im spätmittelalterlichen Straßburg*, ed. Stephan MOSSMAN/Nigel F. PALMER/Felix HEINZER (Kulturtopographie des alemannischen Raums 4), Berlin/Boston 2012, pp. 213–238, at p. 214. Parallel examples to the Günterstal notebook include Wil (Kanton St. Gallen), *Klosterarchiv St. Katharina, ohne Sign.*, *Klosterchronik*, which records entries from 1481 until 1528 and includes information as diverse as lists of books alongside the number of spoons in the convent kitchen and Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv München, Altenhohenau KL lit 12, the »Hausbuch« of the Dominican nuns of Altenhohenau, which also includes an inventory of books. On the latter see Melanie HÖMBERG, *Dominikanerinnenkloster Altenhohenau*: <https://www.bayerische-landesbibliothek-online.de/altenhohenau> (11.03.2019).

107) SCHLOTHEUBER, *Kloster Eintritt* (as n. 8), pp. 321–327.

108) Franz MONE, *Ueber die Armenpfleger vom 13. bis 16. Jahrhundert in Konstanz, Günthersthal, Straßburg, Bretten, Baden, Bruchsal*, in: *ZGORh 1* (1850), pp. 129–163, at pp. 147–148 (fol. 29r–33v); *Id.*, *Haushaltung und Sitten im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert in Konstanz, Günthersthal, Eßlingen und Rannstatt*, in: *ZGORh 2* (1851), pp. 184–194, at pp. 184–186 (fol. 11r–13r); *Id.*, *Quellensammlung der badischen Landgeschichte*, vol. 2, Karlsruhe 1854, pp. 136–138; Josef BADER, *Die Schicksale des ehemaligen Frauenstifts Günthersthal bei Freiburg i. Br.*, in: *Freiburger Diözesan-Archiv 5* (1870), pp. 119–206, at pp. 166–179; Paul LEHMANN, *Mittelalterliche Bibliothekskataloge Deutschlands und der Schweiz*. Vol. 1:

contains two passages in which the authors, specifically the prioress<sup>109</sup>) and the sacristan<sup>110</sup>), give information on their role within the community. Yet in general the narrative perspective is driven by a sense of us, the community, and is not a diary in today's sense of the word. Moreover, while the nuns do on occasion give glimpses into the method behind its compilation, such as extracting information from correspondence<sup>111</sup>), there remains a sense that this was not historical writing in the accepted sense of the word. This was not a convent chronicle aiming to chart its history from foundation to the present, or a reflection on past events within an overarching narrative. Rather it was a way for the nuns to share information about the running of a community and make sense of the world around them. This included the practice of convent entry which provides significant information when read alongside the text of Bernard de Reyda which the nuns received at the same time as the notebook was being written.

The description in the notebook by the Günterstal prioress emphasises the change in status of the Ettenheim daughter from »secular« (*weltlich*) to »spiritual« (*geistlich*), marked by the exchange of clothes<sup>112</sup>). As Eva Schlottheuber has demonstrated in her study of the northern German convent of Lüne near Lüneburg, entry into a convent was a multi-stage process which could last up to ten years, beginning with one's *introductio* as a young girl, entering the convent school, being handed over the consecrated habit (*Einkleidung*), swearing one's profession and, in northern Germany, but not Günterstal and other southern convents, being crowned as a nun<sup>113</sup>). There is strong evidence to suggest that the passage from the Günterstal notebook is recording the *Einkleidung*, a clothing ceremony in the later Middle Ages which had overtaken profession in terms of level of importance<sup>114</sup>). In the notebook this ceremony is referred to with the verb *anlegen*, whilst

Die Bistümer Konstanz und Chur, NE Munich 1969, pp. 149–152 (fol. 38v–40r). One exception is Sabine KLAPP, *Das Äbtissinnenamt in den unterelsässischen Frauenstiften vom 14. bis zum 16. Jahrhundert. Umkämpft, verhandelt, normiert* (Studien zur Germania Sacra N. F. 3), Berlin/Boston 2012, pp. 234–235.  
109) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 33v: *Item anno Domini in CCCC LXXXV vf Dominici ward ich priory.*

110) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 25v: *Item do ich har kam, do zalt man von der geburt Christi M CCCC LV jor vnd do ich XII jor alt wz, do ward ich ein novitz vnd dem selben jor gewilet. Item anno Domini M XV<sup>c</sup> vnd im VI jor vff mitwochen noch der hailigen drj kung dag do ward ich s [?] vnd kusterin.*

111) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 5r: *Ich han funden in eim alt briefli [...] wz man eim bichter vnd eim capplan solt gen, wenn ein fröw hinn stirpt.*

112) On the importance of clothes in such rituals see Eva SCHLOTHEUBER, *Best Clothes and Everyday Attire of Late Medieval Nuns*, in: *Fashion and Clothing in Late Medieval Europe – Mode und Kleidung im Europa des späten Mittelalters*, ed. Regula SCHORTA/Rainer C. SCHWINGES unter Mitarbeit von Klaus OSCEMA, Basel 2010, pp. 139–154; Désirée KOSLIN, *The Robe of Simplicity. Initiation, Robing, and Veiling of Nuns in the Middle Ages*, in: *Robes and Honor. The Medieval World of Investiture*, ed. Stewart GORDON, New York/Basingstoke 2001, pp. 255–274.

113) SCHLOTHEUBER, *Klostereintritt* (as n. 8), pp. 121–267.

114) *Ibid.*, pp. 134–138.

the verb *wilen* was used for profession<sup>115</sup>. The *Einkleidung* in both Lüne and Günterstal was a sacred act which was marked by a Mass being read. At this stage the nun was still wearing the wreaths which she had worn since her acceptance as a young girl. The Etenheim daughter then attended Chapter where she would have heard an oration (*collatio*) on the Rule. She was then taken back to the nun's choir, where her habit was blessed, her wreaths removed and the newly-consecrated habit handed over to her. The handing over of the habit was considered a »silent profession« (*professio tacita*) or oblation which had come to replace the »explicit profession« (*professio expressa*) in terms of importance, in part because the presence of the parents meant it could take place before a girl reached maturity, the end of her twelfth year.

An autobiographical note from a sacristan of Günterstal demonstrates how the age of maturity was respected in the convent: »when I was twelve years old I was a novice and in the same year I was veiled«<sup>116</sup>. The profession ceremony merely confirmed the silent profession and differed only insofar as an abbot was now present and the nun was given her consecrated veil and had to swear her vows of profession by marking a cross on a slip and vowing obedience to the abbot, the representative of the order<sup>117</sup>. Within the southern German Cistercian context, the profession ceremony still held some importance. The Günterstal notebook records the procession at the ceremony to mark Margaret Rödli's veiling in 1508: »Item on the Feast of the Cross, which was on a Sunday, we veiled Margaret Rödli. The cleric preached and then they processed out, the abbess first, then the professed sisters, the novice last«<sup>118</sup>. The ceremony's importance is further attested by a *Professordnung* which survives from Lichtenthal, being largely a translation of the 102<sup>nd</sup> chapter of the »Ecclesiastica officia« and dating from the first half of the sixteenth century<sup>119</sup>.

In Lüne parents and relatives of the girls could enter the nuns' choir to witness the *Einkleidung* for their children. The provost led a procession with two servers, followed by members of the family and the girl who took up a specially prepared place in the middle of the choir<sup>120</sup>. The *Einkleidung* was then followed by a feast for family and convent to

115) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 30r: *Item wen man eini wilet, so sol man dem abt geben ein guldi, leit er ein kind an, so git man im ein guldi.*

116) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 25v: *do ich XII jor alt wz, do ward ich ein novitz vnd dem selben jor gewilet.*

117) SCHLOTHEUBER, Klostereintritt (as n. 8), pp. 154–155. Twenty-seven profession slips survive from Günterstal, including from the years 1477, 1481, 1492, 1503 and 1508: Erzbischöfliches Archiv Freiburg im Breisgau, UH 516, no. 17.

118) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 15r: *Item vff exaltatio crucis, wz vff ein suntag, do wilet man der Margretli Rödli, da predyget der Kilcherr vnd giengen do hin vß, die äpttissin zum ersten, dor noch die eltren, die nouitz zum letschten.*

119) Kloster Lichtenthal, Hs. 117, fol. 1v–20r.

120) SCHLOTHEUBER, Klostereintritt (as n. 8), pp. 137–138.



mark the spiritual marriage of the girl to Christ<sup>121</sup>). This was also the case in Günterstal and it was expected that »when one clothes a child then the same child should give the ladies a meal« to mark the occasion<sup>122</sup>). The Günterstal notebook records the extent of the festivities. In 1488, a family provided thirty-three chickens, a calf, fish, eggs, butter, spices, pomace, mussels and saffron, as well as spending eight pennies on plates<sup>123</sup>). In a separate description the notebook records that every nun was given half a roasted chicken but, if the chicken were large, one quarter would be boiled and the other quarter roasted<sup>124</sup>). The confessor and chaplain both also had to be paid<sup>125</sup>).

The descriptions from Günterstal on the clothing ceremony demonstrate how the change of state from secular to spiritual was in fact marked by a process in which such boundaries were more fluid, underscored by the role of the families in the ceremony and celebration and the exchange of money. Such rituals were a prime opportunity to renew and reaffirm ties between families and convents which had often existed over several generations<sup>126</sup>). The meal in particular gave families the chance to organise an occasion which was befitting for their social status, marked by expensive goods such as saffron<sup>127</sup>). The example of the Ettenheim daughter demonstrates the overlap between religious and temporal affairs. Although her exact identity cannot be established, she was presumably related to Conrad Ettenheim, a bursar (*Schaffner*) of Günterstal who was responsible for the income and property of the convent<sup>128</sup>). Male relatives of nuns holding economic and legal offices in the same convent as their daughters, nieces or sisters were not without precedent<sup>129</sup>).

There were a number of ways in which convents in this period developed restrictive and exclusive policies on entry. Restricting convent numbers and the *numerus taxatus* was a central thread of Bernard's treatise which states explicitly that numbers should be lim-

121) Eva SCHLOTHEUBER, »Gelehrte Bräute Christi«. Religiöse Frauen in der spätmittelalterlichen Gesellschaft (Spätmittelalter, Humanismus, Reformation 104), Tübingen 2018, pp. 13–35, at pp. 31–34; ID., Klostereintritt (as n. 8), pp. 220–222; Sabine KLAPP, Die »Äbtissinnenrechnungen« des Klosters St. Klara auf dem Werth. Alltag und Festtag einer geistlichen Frauengemeinschaft Straßburgs am Ausgang des Mittelalters, in: ZGORh 159 (2011), pp. 211–248.

122) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 32v: *wen man ein kind an leit, dz selb kind sol den frowen ein mol geben*.

123) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 32v–33r.

124) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 32v.

125) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 30r.

126) SCHLOTHEUBER, Klostereintritt (as n. 8), pp. 13–15; GLEBA, Reformpraxis (as n. 101), p. 134.

127) SCHLOTHEUBER, Bräute (as n. 121), pp. 39–40.

128) GLA Karlsruhe 66/3213, fol. 1v, a *Berain* from 1474.

129) Gudrun GLEBA, Personengeschichtliche Verflechtungen. Annäherungen an die (Frauen)Klosterlandschaft Westfalen um 1500, in: Klosterlandschaften. Methodisch-exemplarische Annäherungen, ed. Roman CZAJA/Heinz-Dieter HEIMANN/Matthias WEMHOFF (MittelalterStudien 16), Munich 2008, pp. 87–99, at pp. 89–90 and the case of the convent of Malgarten in the diocese of Osnabrück. The father of the Dinklage family was the convent steward (*Vogt*) and four of his daughters entered the convent between 1488 and 1504.

ited to thirty or forty sisters in order to maintain the religious services<sup>130</sup>. Yet Günterstal did not exceed this number at the time: in 1482 there were twenty-nine professed sisters, and three lay sisters; and five years later there were only seventeen professed sisters, as eleven of them had died of the plague in 1485<sup>131</sup>. By 1518 this number had recovered to twenty-two<sup>132</sup>. These numbers hardly suggest that there was overcrowding. Yet this issue was of concern for other convents in Freiburg. At the same time as the Günterstal nuns received their treatise on entry and support, the reformed Dominican nuns of St. Agnes were writing to Emperor Maximilian and the city council lamenting that they did not have enough food because of their poverty. The reasons for this lay in a reduction in their annual interest by two hundred guilders whilst the number of the people in the convent had increased to thirty-seven sisters and thirteen servants. Moreover, on the request of the Emperor and his wife, secular women were staying in the convent without the financial means to fund their stay. The nuns resorted to having to eat just »porridge and bread« (*müß und brot*)<sup>133</sup>. Similarly, in the nearby convent of the Poor Clares in Basle, reformed sisters from the convent of Villingen, committed to the ideal of poverty, were accepted without sufficient dowries. The resultant loss of income forced the Basle convent to appeal to the town council to send the sisters back to Villingen<sup>134</sup>. Such cases provided the authorities with clear examples of the inherent tensions surrounding this issue. Nevertheless, there is no evidence that Günterstal was facing any such problems at the time, either in terms of overcrowding or resources.

Yet the numbers from Günterstal do suggest that the convent had an entry policy which was restrictive. The relatively low figures could perhaps be linked to the fact that the convent had not adopted a stricter enclosure, making it a less attractive proposition as a place to house female relatives. Indeed, attempts to get around the *numerus taxatus* could often be decidedly political. In 1366 the Margraves of Baden, for example, introduced a stipulation for the convent of Lichtenthal that the *numerus taxatus* could be

130) Cod. Sang. 1344, pp. 31–32: *villicht wer es gnüg, das die zal uff XXX oder uff XL gesetzet wurde in yechlichem closter, den gotlichen dienst zû volbringen*. Small convents usually had around thirty sisters who were often noble; a medium-sized institution around sixty and a large convent over eighty.

131) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 3v: *Item anno Domini M CCCC LXXXII obiit Sophia von Käppenbach. Do hiess man yedi frowwen betten III M vnd VI ½ hundert ave mara [sic] vnd die leyg schwestren yeghlich C betten. Deren woren III vnd der gewilten frowwen XXIX*; fol. 13v: *In dem jor, do man zalt M CCCC LXXXVII, do woren vnser nit me den XVII frowwen*.

132) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 6v: *Anno Domini M CCCCC XVI jor [...] vnd woren der frowen XXII*.

133) Madlen DOERR, Klarissen und Dominikanerinnen in Freiburg in 15. Jahrhundert. Sozialstruktur und Reform, phil. Diss. Freiburg im Breisgau 2012, pp. 325–326, <https://www.freidok.uni-freiburg.de/fedora/objects/freidok:10034/datastreams/FILE1/content> (28.01.2020).

134) Veronika GERZ-VON BÜREN, Geschichte des Clarissenklosters St. Clara in Kleinbasel 1266–1529. Mit einem Anhang: Das Zinsbuch St. Clara E des Basler Staatsarchivs, Basel 1969, pp. 106–107.

exceeded if one of their daughters sought entry into the convent<sup>135</sup>). The political aspect of entry into Günterstal was evident in February 1404 when Catharine of Burgundy, Duchess of Further Austria, petitioned the convent to allow Verena, the step-daughter of Berchtold Zoller from Freiburg, to enter, on account of the rights of the dukes of Austria over the religious houses of the land<sup>136</sup>).

More significant and pervasive were the regular attempts by local families to maintain a connection with a specific convent. Decisions over entry were political insofar as landed property had become a basis of power for the late medieval nobility and securing entry into a convent for female relatives was one means of preserving property and preventing its fragmentation<sup>137</sup>). At the heart of the financing of the convent was the *dos* or dowry which obliged the convent, or in the secular context the husband, to support the candidate<sup>138</sup>). Originally nuns had no right of disposal of the dowry but over the course of the later Middle Ages these dowries were bequeathed as *Leibgedinge*, trusts for life, the administration and governance of which lay in the hands of the nuns. By the fifteenth century this would usually come as an annuity and led to nuns having access to private means, nominally to cover their *Notdurft* or needs but in reality leading to discrepancies between members. Such discrepancies could be heightened by the *peculium*, or private means, including the use and ownership of private cells, cited in the Günterstal notebook<sup>139</sup>).

In Günterstal a cartulary (*Kopialbuch*) survives from the convent from the end of the fifteenth century and contains copies of a number of examples of these forms of *Leibgeding* contracts dating from 1273 to 1491<sup>140</sup>). In keeping with other convents these do not record the one-off gifts given on entry but rather the running costs paid out via an an-

135) Josef DAMBACHER, *Urkundenarchiv des Kloster Lichtenthal, 14. Jahrhundert*, in: ZGORh 8 (1857), pp. 343–357, at pp. 344–345; Maria-Pia SCHINDELE, *Frauen aus Adel und Bürgertum in gemeinsamer zisterziensischer Lebensordnung*, in: 750 Jahre (as n. 51), pp. 35–42, at p. 40; SCHLOTHEUBER, *Klostereintritt* (as n. 8), p. 22.

136) *Regesta Episcoporum Constantiensium. Regesten zur Geschichte der Bischöfe von Konstanz. Von Bubulcus bis Thomas Berlower 517–1496. Vol. 3: Die Bischöfe Mangold von Brandis bis Friedrich II. von Zollern. 1384–1436*, ed. Badische Historische Commission/Karl RIEDER, Innsbruck 1913, no. 7825, p. 129.

137) Esther KOCH, *Entry into Convents and the Position on the Marriage Market of Noble Women in the Late Middle Ages*, in: *Marriage and Social Mobility in the Late Middle Ages. Handelingen van het colloquium gehouden te Gent op 18 april 1988*, ed. Walter PREVENIER (*Studia historica Gandensia* 274), Gent 1989, pp. 99–122, at pp. 104–111; Karl-Heinz SPIESS, *Familie und Verwandtschaft im deutschen Hochadel des Spätmittelalters. 13. bis Anfang des 16. Jahrhunderts* (VSWG. Beihefte 111), Stuttgart 2015, pp. 370–379.

138) Helga SCHULLER, *Dos – Praebenda – Peculium*, in: *Festschrift Friedrich Hausmann*, ed. Herwig EBNER, Graz 1977, pp. 453–487, at pp. 453–458; SCHLOTHEUBER, *Bräute* (as n. 121), pp. 17–19.

139) GLA Karlsruhe 65/247, fol. 6r refers to [die] *von äschbach stubli* in 1516.

140) GLA Karlsruhe 67/639; KIM, *Die Grundherrschaft* (as n. 14), p. 13.

nuity<sup>141</sup>). Indeed it is not clear whether the payments were specifically intended for entry or were for other miscellaneous purposes which in most cases cannot be determined<sup>142</sup>). In all the examples from the fifteenth century, nuns received cash payments in the form of an annuity or interest on goods from family members, including parents, siblings, uncles and aunts. On the nun's death, this sum was then often divided, with a part staying in the hands of the convent, but other parts going to other relatives in the convent or being returned to the family. In this way families sought to develop particular relationships with certain convents and there was an incentive to house more than one relative in one house.

The Blumenegg family is a good example. In 1479 it was recorded that the proceeds of nine *Saum* of wine and eight *Mutt* of corn from Kirchhofen, south-west of Freiburg, for the sisters Ursula and Beata von Blumenegg of Günterstal, would continue to be paid to the convent after their deaths only if a member of the Blumenegg family remained in the convent<sup>143</sup>). The Blumenegg family belonged to the rural nobility and had a long association with the convent stretching back to the thirteenth century: twenty-eight members of the family were recorded in the convent's necrology from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries. The sixteenth-century ›Zimmerische Chronik‹ further records an anecdote that, a few days before the death of a member of the family, their coat of arms, which hung in the church in Günterstal, would fall down to foretell the imminent death<sup>144</sup>). These coats of arms were a prominent visual reminder of the connections between specific families and the convent and were representative of the more elite character of the social status of Günterstal's members. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the convent had appealed to the higher echelons of the population in and around Freiburg as it recruited and received donations primarily from the rural lower nobility, such as the Falkenstein, Stauffenberg and Keppenbach families, and the urban patriciate, most prominently in its connections with the different branches of the Snewlin family<sup>145</sup>). The

141) SCHLOTHEUBER, Bräute (as n. 121), pp. 17–18; ID., Willibald und die Klosterfrauen von Sankt Klara – eine wechselhafte Beziehung, in: Willibald Pirckheimer und sein Umfeld. Akten des gemeinsamen mit dem Verein für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg, dem Stadtarchiv Lauf a. d. Pegnitz am 20./21. Juli 2012 veranstalteten Symposions im Welserschloss in Lauf-Neunhof, ed. Franz FÜCHS (Pirckheimer Jahrbuch für Renaissance- und Humanismusforschung 28), Wiesbaden 2014, pp. 57–75, at pp. 57–58, on the dowry and running costs which Willibald paid for his sisters.

142) KIM, Grundherrschaft (as n. 14), p. 39.

143) GLA Karlsruhe 67/639, fol. 68r–69r: *wenn kein kind irs Stammes von Blümnege mee in den genanten gotzhuß wer, das denn die selben nun soum win und acht mutt korngeltz wider beer vß ain ir nechsten sjppenben vallen söllent*. One *Saum* was as much wine as a sumpter-mule could carry and a *Mutt* a unit of dry measure (*modius*).

144) Zimmerische Chronik, vol. 3, ed. Carl August BARACK, Freiburg im Breisgau <sup>2</sup>1881, pp. 49–50: *So wissen wir, das zu Güntersdal, ist ein closter im Preisgew, so die edelleut von Plumneck sollen gestiftet haben, biss anhere ein gewiss zaichen gewest, da derselbigen edelleut einer mit todt sollt abgeen, so ist gewisslich, das bei wenig tagen davor ain ufgehenkt plumegkisch wappen in der kirchen ab der wandt gefallen*.

145) DENNE, Frauenklöster (as n. 14), pp. 153–177.

convent did not recruit from guild families, in contrast to the Dominican houses of the town and the convent of the Poor Clares<sup>146</sup>).

As with the Ettenheim daughter, the connections were further cemented by male members of the Blumenegg family holding positions within Günterstal. Rudolf von Blumenegg, for example, served as the convent's steward (*Kastvogt*) and in 1511 arranged a *Leibgeding* with an annual payment of three florins from the income of a hay tithe in a farm in Mundenhofen for his daughter in Günterstal<sup>147</sup>. This came in the period after the nuns had received the text on convent entry authored by Bernard, but no indication is given whether this supposed gift from Rudolf von Blumenegg was given out of free will, demanded or expected, pointing to the ambiguity which lay at the heart of Bernard's text. Indeed, in Günterstal, as in other convents, entry was a carefully stage-managed affair, in which both convents and families sought to protect their own interests and above all maintain and renew long-held traditions. Both sides relied on each other for mutual support, which in turn helped to cement the role of the convent in society as a religious, but also a social, political and economic institution. Any attempts by the reform movement to develop a system of communal as opposed to individual ownership therefore came into direct contact with institutions holding deep-seated connections with certain families which stretched back over a long period of time.

## V. OUTLOOK: THE PEASANTS' WAR

Recent research on the resistance of nuns to the introduction of the Reformation in Württemberg has emphasised the spiritual significance of property in this period and the complex interaction of social, economic and religious factors in the decision of nuns to remain in their houses<sup>148</sup>. In turn it is a paradox that some of the best-preserved sources on the amount of money which families had to provide to secure entry are known from the Reformation when nuns were attempting to leave their convents or the institutions were being closed<sup>149</sup>. This was not, however, the case for the convents in and around

146) DOERR, Klarissen (as n. 133), pp. 37–41 (Poor Clares), 139–142 (Adelhausen), 145–148 (St. Agnes), 154–159 (St. Katharina) and 167–168 (St. Maria Magdalena).

147) GLA Karlsruhe 23/42.

148) Ryan Sayre PATRICO, The Spiritual Significance of Property and Place in Monastic Resistance to the Reformation, in: *German History* 35/2 (2017), pp. 187–205; Anna SAUERBREY, Die Straßburger Klöster im 16. Jahrhundert. Eine Untersuchung unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Geschlechtergeschichte (Spätmittelalter, Humanismus, Reformation 69), Tübingen 2012, pp. 185–203.

149) SCHLOTHEUBER, Bräute (as n. 121), p. 19; Barbara STEINKE, Paradiesgarten oder Gefängnis? Das Nürnberger Katharinenkloster zwischen Klosterreform und Reformation (Spätmittelalter und Reformation. N. R. 30), Tübingen 2006, pp. 254–255.

Freiburg since the Habsburg town remained Catholic during the Reformation<sup>150</sup>). Yet there were underlying tensions and the town council in the 1520s had increasingly become worried about the presence of confessors sympathetic to the Lutheran cause in the Dominican convents of Adelhausen and St. Agnes's and in the convent of the Poor Clares and was quick to try and suppress this threat<sup>151</sup>). More generally, south-west evangelical reformers such as the influential Johann Eberlin von Günzburg (circa 1470–1533), argued that if convents were sufficiently well endowed they should give a sister who chose to leave as much as she had brought in with her and, in the case of impoverished convents, simply let her leave and give the resources to someone else<sup>152</sup>). In this respect debates about convent entry in the fifteenth century as part of the monastic reform movement and about convent exit in the sixteenth century as part of the Reformation were engaging in similar themes.

Far more significant for Freiburg's convents was the impact of the Peasants' War, in which concerns about the material and religious power of such institutions had dramatic consequences. Indeed, for Erasmus of Rotterdam, resident in Basle in 1525 before escaping to Freiburg in 1529, the Peasants' War was a »monastery war«, and blame lay at the feet of the monasteries and convents who had provoked the peasants into destroying them<sup>153</sup>). Erasmus's observation encourages us to think of the convents as both victims and perpetrators of the uprising. Economic anticlericalism was important for the unprecedented levels of violence and destruction which were unleashed against the convents<sup>154</sup>). Yet in the convents around Freiburg there remains a sense that they were tar-

150) Tom SCOTT, Why was there no Reformation in Freiburg im Breisgau?, in: *The Early Reformation in Germany. Between Secular Impact and Radical Vision*, ed. Tom SCOTT, Farnham 2013, pp. 143–181, at pp. 148–157 who argues that the convents were one of three factors – alongside the town's ties with the Habsburgs and the foundation of the university – behind the decision to hold onto the old faith.

151) Stadtarchiv Freiburg im Breisgau, B5 XI Missiven 12, fol. 152r, a letter from the town council to the provincial of the Dominican order concerning St. Agnes's; Stadtarchiv Freiburg im Breisgau, B5 XI Missiven 13, fol. 97v–98r, a letter to the Franciscan provincial chapter in Tübingen concerning St. Clara's. Petra ROHDE, *Die Freiburger Klöster zwischen Reformation und Auflösung*, in: *Geschichte der Stadt Freiburg im Breisgau. Vol. 2: Vom Bauernkrieg bis zum Ende der habsburgischen Herrschaft*, ed. Heiko HAUMANN/Hans SCHADEK, Stuttgart 1996, pp. 418–445, at p. 432 where she notes a similar phenomenon in Adelhausen. The town council railed against the presence of Lutheran inspired confessors in both 1523 and 1527.

152) Johann Eberlin von Günzburg, 15 Bundsgenossen, ed. Michael HOLZINGER, NE Berlin 2013, p. 22: *Die klöster sind wolbegabet mit richtumb zû narung der personen, das man mag einer so vyl här vß geben, als vil sie hinein hat bracht, wo aber ein kloster so arm ist, ist besser, man laß es ab gon vnd geb es an ein anders.*

153) Heiko A. OBERMAN, *Tumultus rusticorum. Vom ›Klosterkrieg‹ zum Fürstensieg. Beobachtungen zum Bauernkrieg unter besonderer Berücksichtigung zeitgenössischer Beurteilungen*, in: *Der deutsche Bauernkrieg von 1525*, ed. Peter BLICKLE (Wege der Forschung 460), Darmstadt 1985, pp. 214–236, at p. 229.

154) Henry J. COHN, Anticlericalism in the German Peasants' War of 1525, in: *Past and Present* 83 (1979), pp. 3–31, at p. 6.

geted more because of a general feeling of anger towards their status as elite institutions. That sense of exclusivity and elitism had its roots in the recruitment practices of the convents, their links to regional noble families and their association with the political centre of Freiburg.

In 1526, following the conclusion of the revolt, the abbess and convent of Günterstal appealed to the town council of Freiburg for a reduction in the payment of the auxiliary aid tax, the *Schatzung*. The letter to the council set out how peasants had plundered food supplies from the convent storehouses, including wheat, rye and barley, and items from inside the convent itself, such as cushions, bench covers and altar cloths. The convent had yet to receive compensation for their loss and reminded the council that they had assisted the town before its eventual occupation by the peasants through providing aid in the form of wheat and oxen<sup>155</sup>. Günterstal was let off lightly in comparison to other convents in the region, claiming 2,118 florins of damage, more than the 1,268 florins claimed by the Dominicans of Adelhausen, but significantly less than the other Cistercian houses of Wonnental (6,250 florins) and Tennenbach (over 30,000 florins)<sup>156</sup>. Indeed, Tennenbach was completely burned to the ground, with accounts describing its appearance as more like an oven than a monastery<sup>157</sup>. Whilst the seizure of goods played a practical role in the logistics of feeding peasant armies, this alone cannot explain why monastic institutions were ransacked as they were.

As Tom Scott has noted, the level of hostility in the region towards Freiburg, which was seized by the peasants in May 1525, can be explained to a large extent by the town's »identification with the ruling order through its network of rural clientage amongst ecclesiastical and secular nobility«<sup>158</sup>. A convent such as Günterstal formed one part of this nexus. It had the status of rural citizen (*Ausburgher*) of Freiburg, which meant it enjoyed certain rights and obligations and was connected to the town<sup>159</sup>. Many members of the rural nobility whose castles and lands were pillaged in the war had members of their family in the convent, such as the Blumenegg family<sup>160</sup>. It is moreover striking that the

155) Stadtarchiv Freiburg im Breisgau, C1 Kirchensachen 124/4; Karl HARTFELDER, *Urkundliche Beiträge zur Geschichte des Bauernkrieges im Breisgau*, in: ZGORh 34 (1882), pp. 393–466, at p. 416: *Item man soll ein rossmuli machen, dessglichen die von Gundterstal ansuchen, das sy ir muli ouch herin fiern lassen.*

156) Karl HARTFELDER, *Zur Geschichte des Bauernkriegs in Südwestdeutschland*, Stuttgart 1884, p. 364.

157) HARTFELDER, *Beiträge* (as n. 155), pp. 414–415: *Dann in gemelter baurischen empörung anno 1525 dieses closter nicht allein geplündert und ganz spolirt, sondern auch angezündert worden, daß es zweeen ganze monat an einander gebrennt, und wie die mönche klagen, endlich einem ziegelofen gleicher als einem closter gewesen.*

158) Tom SCOTT, *Freiburg and the Breisgau. Town-Country Relations in the Age of Reformation and Peasants' War*, Oxford 1986, p. 211.

159) SCOTT, *Reformation* (as n. 150), pp. 158–159.

160) Friedrich SCHAUB, *Der Bauernkrieg um Freiburg 1525*, in: *Zeitschrift des Freiburger Geschichtsvereins* 46 (1935), pp. 83–106, at pp. 104–105, who notes how Michael von Blumneegg claimed 170 florins of damage.

peasants who pillaged the convent were seizing objects as diverse as barley, altar cloths and cushions. These all represented specific aspects of the inherent power and exclusivity of the convent, whether economic, religious or social.

The Peasants' War in many respects marked the apogee in the question of how to balance the temporal and religious affairs of the convent. The people asking this question were now decidedly different: no longer just male monastic reformers or the nuns themselves but huge swathes of the population who believed that they had a stake in such a question. Their answer lay not in practical-legal treatises on simony or attempts to find distinctions between gifts and payments but rather in outright hostility towards institutions which were considered to have a status too different from the rest of society. The monasteries and convents in and around Freiburg nominally survived the Reformation. Yet any subsequent attempts to encourage the erstwhile spirituality to flourish would have to face up to a new reality in which concerns about overcrowding gave way to new concerns about undercrowding and to the realisation that the temporal and religious power of the convents had been dealt a harsh blow and, in some cases, even destroyed.

SUMMARY: CASH FOR ACCESS: SIMONY, CONVENT ENTRY AND THE LIMITS OF REFORM IN  
THE SOUTH-WEST GERMAN CISTERCIAN CONVENT OF GÜNTERSTAL

This article explores one of the fundamental questions affecting monastic life during the period of late medieval monastic reform movement and the early years of the Protestant Reformation: how to balance the temporal needs of the convent with its spiritual functions. The moment of convent entry provides an insight into this issue. Through the example of the Cistercian convent of Günterstal near Freiburg im Breisgau in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the article shows how attempts to change practices of convent entry were hampered by divisions within the reform movement itself and by long-standing connections which convents had cultivated with specific families. As a result, convents became increasingly exclusive institutions which, within the context of south-west Germany, contributed to the violence directed towards them in the Peasants' War.