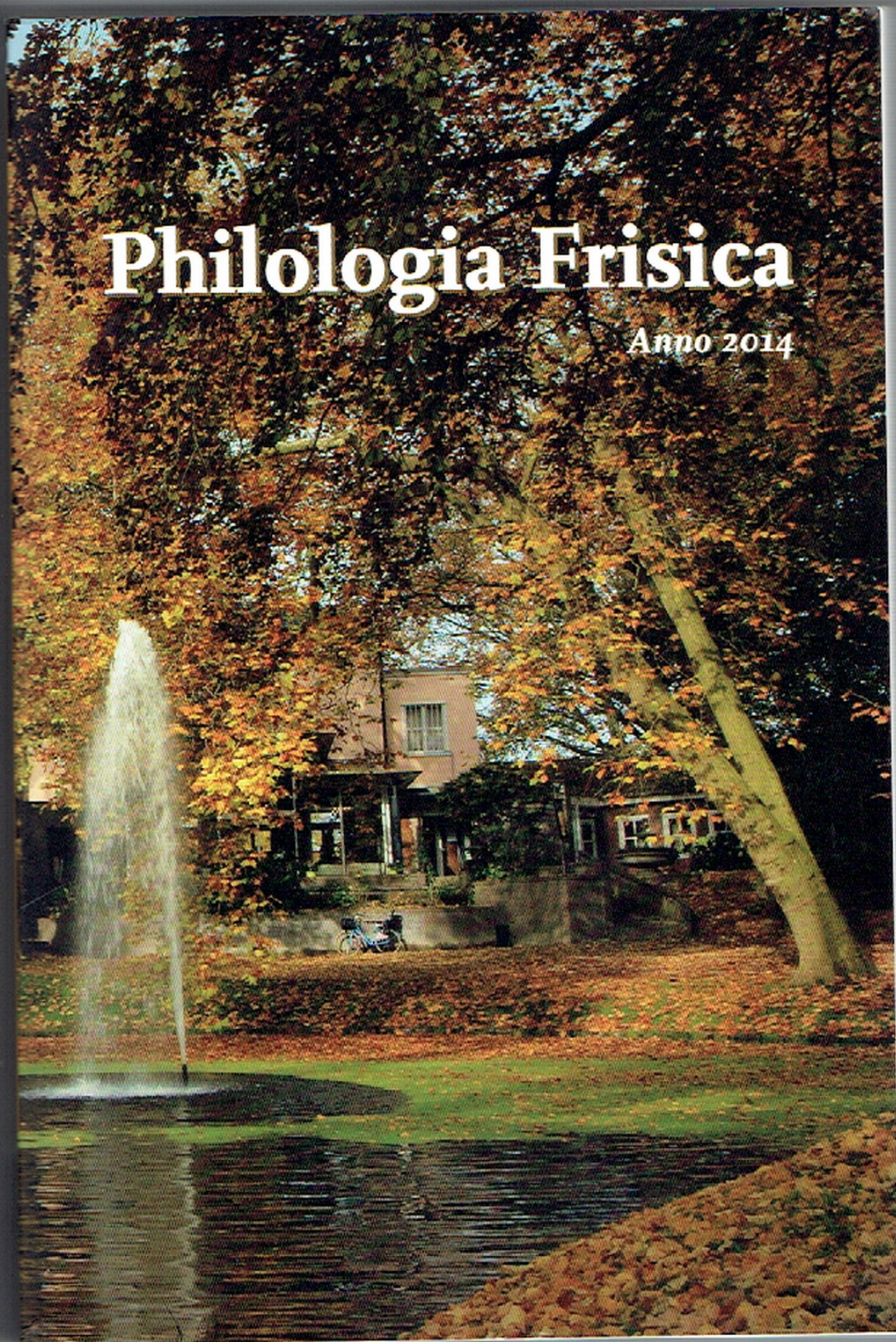


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Theological and doctrinal texts in the Old Frisian Thet Autentica Riocht

Concetta Giliberto (University of Palermo)

> Introduction¹

In Western Europe throughout the Middle Ages, the canonical biblical books, the Apocrypha, the pseudo-epigrapha, and the patristic writings offer a copious repository of contents and themes for the development of a rich literary production based on a variety of Christian subjects. Also for Frisia a number of devotional and theological works have been attested. Nonetheless, these works represent a quite erratic and limited corpus against the wider background of the Old Frisian literary tradition, which – as is commonly known – consists mainly of legal documents. The Frisian texts with such a content are usually found interspersed in law manuscripts. They appear, in one way or another, to be related to either the juridical tradition or are dealing with events and legends connected with the Matter of Frisia. Moreover, they show a clear influence exerted by both canon and Roman law and represent the fullest expression of the significant role played by the clergy within the medieval Frisian legal tradition.²

Noticeable among such religious texts are Frisian versions of the Ten Commandments, included in the *Preface to the Seventeen Statutes and Twenty-four Land-laws*³ and the legend of the *Fifteen Signs before Doomsday*,⁴

1 I am grateful to Professors Rolf H. Bremmer Jr and Patrizia Lendinara for reading drafts of this article and offering many useful comments and bibliographical suggestions.

2 Cf. T. S. B. Johnston, 'The Old Frisian Law Manuscripts and Law Texts', in H. H. Munske (ed.), *Handbuch des Friesischen. Handbook of Frisian Studies* (Tübingen 2001), pp. 571-587, at 582. The Christian literature in Old Frisian was first studied by W. J. Buma, 'Geestelijke literatuur in Oud-Friesland', *Trijeresom. Ynliedingen hâlden yn de Fryske seksje fan it Nederlânsk Philologekongres 1950* (Grins [Groningen] and Djakarta 1950), pp. 5-50.

3 B. Murdoch, 'Authority and Authenticity: Comments on the Prologues to the Old Frisian Laws', in: R. H. Bremmer Jr e.a. (eds.), *Approaches to Old Frisian Philology* (Amsterdam 1998) pp. 215-244 [Amsterdamer Beiträge zur älteren Germanistik, 49]. The Frisian version of the Ten Commandments is also included in R. H. Bremmer Jr, *An Introduction to Old Frisian: History, Grammar, Reader, Glossary* (Amsterdam 2009), pp. 138-140.

4 C. Giliberto, 'The Fifteen Signs of Doomsday of the First Riustring Manuscript', in: R. H. Bremmer Jr e.a. (eds.), *Advances in Old Frisian Philology* (Amsterdam 2007) pp. 129-152 [Amsterdamer Beiträge zur älteren Germanistik, 64 / Estrikken, 80]. The *Fifteen Signs before Doomsday* also in Bremmer, *An Introduction to Old Frisian*, pp. 136-138.

the latter only to be found in the First Riustring Manuscript.⁵ The sub-genre also includes an account, deriving from early Judaeo-Christian traditions,⁶ of the creation of Adam and Eve, surviving in the First Em-singo Manuscript (c. 1400), and the *Five Keys to Wisdom*, a brief didactic treatise, preserved in the First and Second Hunsingo Manuscripts (c. 1325-50), describing the five keys by which to disclose wisdom.⁷

In the context of devotional literature in Old Frisian there is a collection of eighteen short pieces contained in *Thet Autentica Riocht* (fifteenth century),⁸ a moral theological treatise enlarged with native legal provisions and variegated material drawn from Roman and canon law. The present essay offers an analysis of seven of these items and focuses on their thematic and structural features, in order to pinpoint common aspects and peculiarities, and to demonstrate how they shaped a homogeneous literary cluster. Hence, the study also sheds light on the intellectual and cultural framework in which these texts were produced, and furthermore aims to discover – whenever possible – new sources or analogues with which they appear to be more familiar. Finally, it seeks to identify a common thread between these items and the compilation of *Thet Autentica Riocht* as a whole, in which they are embedded.

> **The collection of theological items in *Thet Autentica Riocht***

Thet Autentica Riocht is a fifteenth-century collection of regulations excerpted from mainly Roman and canon law. It has been transmitted in

5 W. J. Buma (ed.), *De Eerste Riustringer Codex* (The Hague 1961) [Oudfriese Taal- en Rechtsbronnen, 11]; W. J. Buma and W. Ebel (eds.), *Das Rüstringer Recht. Altfriesische Rechtsquellen*, 1 (Göttingen 1963).

6 B. Murdoch, 'The Old Frisian Adam Octopartitus', *Amsterdamer Beiträge zur älteren Germanistik* 40 (1994), pp. 131-138. The account of Adam's creation also in Bremmer, *An Introduction to Old Frisian*, p. 134.

7 Leeuwarden, Tresoar, Hs R2 (H1) and Leeuwarden, Tresoar, Hs R 3 (H2). The contents of both manuscripts are the same, though arranged in a different order. W. J. Buma, and W. Ebel (eds.), *Altfriesische Rechtsquellen. Vol. 4: Das Hunsinger Recht* (Göttingen 1969); J. Hoekstra (ed.), *De eerste en de tweede Hunsinger Codex* (The Hague 1950) [Oudfriese Taal- en Rechtsbronnen, 6]. The *Five Keys to Wisdom* is also included in Bremmer, *An Introduction to Old Frisian*, pp. 134-136. See also R. H. Bremmer Jr, 'The Orality of Old Frisian Law Texts', in: R. H. Bremmer Jr e.a. (eds.), *Directions for Old Frisian Philology* (Amsterdam 2014) pp. 1-48, at 26-27 [Amsterdamer Beiträge zur älteren Germanistik, 73 – Estrikken, 96].

8 J. Brouwer (ed.), *Thet Autentica Riocht* (Assen 1941), pp. 69-74, items nos. 94-111.

three manuscripts: Codex Unia (U),⁹ Codex Aysma (A),¹⁰ and Codex Roorda (Ro).¹¹ Among the materials gathered in *Thet Autentica Riocht*, a cluster of non-legal items stands out, dealing with various issues of Christian doctrine and worship, and for the most part organized in a numerical structure.¹²

The first item of this group is a short piece on the *Three Kinds of Almsgiving*:

94. Item. Thrira handa ielmissse sinter. Dyo arste is lichaemlic: yemmen to yane dar hij byhoef is hoth zo hi byhowet.¹³

Thio other gastelijk tham ti wrjane ther io undath had to brocht.

Thio tredde thine tho biriochten ther dwaled and tho bringen in thine wei ther wirde.

(There are three kinds of alms. The first is corporal: to give someone what he needs. The second is spiritual: to forgive someone the wounds that he inflicted on you. The third is to correct the one who is erring and to lead him on to the way of truth.)

The three Kinds of Almsgiving, or Works of Mercy, are already present in the Gospel of Matthew 25:34-46, where Jesus insists on the necessity of observing them in order to gain entrance to the kingdom of God. In the Catholic tradition they are usually divided into two categories – physical and spiritual – and each category has seven elements. The Kinds of Almsgiving are listed and discussed in detail by Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa Theologiae* (*Questia* 32, Part II-II). The corporal Works of Mercy are:

9 Codex Unia is a West Frisian manuscript surviving in the form of excerpts and collations made by Franciscus Junius around 1660 from a fifteenth-century exemplar, now lost: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 49 and Junius 109. See J. Sytsema, 'Codex Unia: Edition and Reconstruction of a Lost Old Frisian Manuscript', in: Bremmer Jr e.a. (eds.), *Directions for Old Frisian Philology*, pp. 497-526. The first complete edition of Codex Unia is provided by J. Sytsema as an electronic text edition with images: *Diplomatyske Utjefte Kodeks Unia (Diplomatic edition of Codex Unia)*, 2012, <http://tdb.fryske-akademy.eu/tdb/index-unia.html> (accessed June 2015).

10 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 78 (c. 1500). Codex Aysma is edited in W. J. Buma e.a. (eds), *Codex Aysma. Die altfriesischen Texte* (Leeuwarden and Maastricht 1993).

11 Leeuwarden, Tresoar, Hs R 6 (1480-1485). M. de Haan Hetteema (ed.), *Jurisprudentia Frisica: (codex Roorda): uit Montanus (de Haan) Hetteema's uitgave, Leeuwarden, 1834-1835, voor wat de tekst betreft overgedrukt uit het gecorrigeerde exemplaar van Dr. P. Gerbenzon*, 3 vols. (Groningen 1981).

12 All quotations from *Thet Autentica Riocht* are taken from Brouwer's edition (see note 8), according to the recension of U, with a few integrations from A (whenever needed), and some slight adjustments. Every item is marked by Brouwer's numbering. All translations are mine, unless otherwise noted.

13 The sentence 'hoth zo hi byhowet' is redundant, clearly a variant of the words 'dar hij byhoef is', see Buma e.a., *Codex Aysma*, p. 272.

to feed the hungry; to give drink to the thirsty; to clothe the naked; to shelter the homeless; to visit the sick; to visit the imprisoned; to bury the dead. The spiritual Works of Mercy are: to instruct the ignorant; to counsel the doubtful; to admonish sinners; to bear wrongs patiently; to forgive offences willingly; to comfort the afflicted; to pray for the living and the dead. The text of *Thet Autentica Riocht* still distinguishes between corporal and spiritual kinds of almsgiving, but enumerates only three elements, which actually summarizes all the conventional Works of Mercy. The source of the Frisian piece is undoubtedly the so-called Gratianus's *Decretum* (also known as the *Concordia discordantium canonum* or *Concordantia discordantium canonum*), a collection of canon laws, enactments and decretals, compiled in the twelfth century, which rapidly became a standard textbook for students of canon law all over Europe:¹⁴

De multiplici genere elemosinarum.

Tria sunt genera elemosinarum: una corporalis, egenti dare quicquid poteris: altera spiritualis, dimittere a quo laesus fueris; tertia, delinquentem corrigere, et errantes in uiam ducere ueritatis. (On the multiple kinds of alms. There are three kinds of alms: one physical, that is to give whatever you can to the needy; the other spiritual, that is to forgive the one who has done you wrong; third, to correct the wrongdoers and lead them to the way of truth.)¹⁵

The second item in *Thet Autentica Riocht* of this group is a brief text listing the reasons for allowing the Jews to live:

95. Hwer omme letma tha Joden libba? Om flower sacka: om tha ewa, and om tha alda federen ther Cristus fan bern is. Thio thredde seke is om hiara bikering er junxta dei, as ther fan screwen steed 'Conuertantur ad uesperam, etc.'

(Wherefore should one allow the Jews to live? For four reasons:

14 A. Thompson e.a. (ed. and trans.), *Gratian. The Treatise on Laws (Decretum DD. 1-20) with the Ordinary Gloss* (Washington, D.C 1993) [Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Canon Law, 2], and A. Winroth, *The Making of Gratian's Decretum* (Cambridge 2001). The full Latin text of Gratianus's *Decretum* is available from the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek at <http://geschichte.digitale-sammlungen.de/decretum-gratiani/online/angebot>; a new edition of parts of the shorter first recension of the *Decretum*, is edited by A. Winroth, and accessible at <https://sites.google.com/a/yale.edu/decretumgratiani/>. Gratianus's *Decretum* was widely read in Frisia, see R. H. Bremmer Jr, *Hir is eskriven. Lezen en schrijven in de Friese landen rond 1300* (Hilversum and Leeuwarden 2004), pp. 64-65.

15 Gratianus's *Decretum*, Pars I, Distinctio XLV, cap. xii: see http://geschichte.digitale-sammlungen.de/decretum-gratiani/kapitel/dc_chapter_o_478 (accessed June 2015).

for the law, and for the forefathers from whom Christ is born. The third reason is for their conversion before the Doomsday, as is written about it: *Convertantur ad vesperam*, etc.)

The opening question as to why the Jews should be allowed to live is answered with four reasons. However, the text provides no more than three. The first reason concerns the Old Testament, and the second Christ's ancestors. The third is based on a passage from Psalm 58.7,15 "Convertentur ad vesperam, et famem patientur ut canes; et circuibunt civitatem"¹⁶ (They shall return at evening and shall suffer hunger like dogs: and shall go round about the city).¹⁷ The words of the psalmist referred to in the Frisian piece were understood to imply that the Jews would eventually be converted before the Last Judgement, though in the meantime they are condemned to roam like hungry dogs and hence they are wandering around the world.¹⁸ In all likelihood, the Frisian author was influenced by Augustine of Hippo, who – inspired by the text of this very psalm – elaborated the doctrine of the importance of the Jews in view of their crucial testimonial purpose in the Christian society. Commenting on Psalm 58, Augustine explained that only in the wake of their Diaspora – and after suffering like hungry dogs – the Jews will embrace the Christian faith at the end of the world.¹⁹ Augustine developed the so-called 'doctrine of Jewish witness', according to which the presence of the Jews amongst Christians is a necessary condition for the attainment of salvation. The keystone of the Augustinian witness theory is again to be found in Psalm 58.12: "Ne occidas eos, nequando obliviscantur populi mei. Disperge illos in virtute tua." (Slay them not, lest at any time my people forget. Scatter them by thy power.). Not only in his exposition on Psalm 58, but also in Chapter 18 of *De Civitate Dei*²⁰ (and in other works), did Augustine develop his theory on the role of the Jews in the history of salvation: dispersed from their homeland throughout the world for centuries, they had brought with them their own sacred texts (the Old Testament), which preserved the teaching and prophecies that Christ had fulfilled. In so doing, they – along with their rites and scriptures – represent a living

16 All biblical quotations are from R. Weber (ed.), *Biblia Sacra. Iuxta vulgatam versionem* (Stuttgart 1983).

17 All English translations of biblical quotations are from the Douay-Rheims version.

18 A. H. Bredero, *Christendom and Christianity in the Middle Ages* (Grand Rapids 1994), p. 318.

19 Augustinus, *Enarrationes in Psalmos LI-C*, ed. E. Dekkers and J. Fraipont (Turnhout 1956) [Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, 39], pp. 746-752.

20 Augustinus, *De civitate Dei. Libri XI-XXII*, ed. B. Dombart and A. Kalb (Turnhout 1955) [Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, 48], pp. 644-645.

witness to the roots of the New Testament in the Old, as well as to the replacement of the old covenant of Mosaic law with the new one of mercy and salvation in Christ. Therefore, the Jews should not be exterminated. Augustine's doctrine of Jewish witness had a strong impact on Western Europe throughout the Middle Ages, including Frisia, as this item of *Thet Authentica Riocht* clearly confirms.²¹

The fourth reason why the Jews should live – which is here missing – can be found in the so-called *Summula Raymundi*, a handbook on pastoral theology for priests which had a wide circulation in medieval Europe.²²

Quarta causa est quia omnis christianus fidelis quando videt iudeum debet recodari de passione Christi qui pro nobis ab eis pependit in ligno crucis et sua morte mortem nostram destruxit et vitam resurgendo reparavit.

(The fourth reason is that each Christian believer, when he sees a Jew, he must remember the Passion of Christ, who was hanged for us on the wood of the cross, and who through His death destroyed our death and who by rising restored our life).²³

The key concept expressed in this text is that the Jews are living witnesses to the cornerstones of Christianity. Therefore they must be allowed to stay alive, despite their horrible crime of deicide, to remind all Christians of the sacrifice of the Son of God, who through His death and resurrection, saved mankind from sin and eternal damnation.

21 On the Augustinian doctrine of the Jewish witness, see P. Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews: A Christian Defense of Jews and Judaism* (New Haven 2010); J. Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law: Ideas of the Jew in Medieval Christianity* (Berkeley 1999); J. Cohen, "Slay Them Not": Augustine and the Jews in Modern Scholarship', *Medieval Encounters* 4/1 (1998), pp. 78-92.

22 The *Summula Raymundi* or *Summula pauperum* is a versified epitome of Raymond of Peñafort's *Summa de casibus poenitentiae*, written around 1222. The work is now commonly attributed to Adam, a Cistercian monk of Aldersbach in Lower Bavaria (ca.1250), see F. Valls Taberner, 'La Summula Pauperum de Adam de Aldersbach', *Spanische Forschungen der Görresgesellschaft*, Reihe I, 7 (1938), pp. 69-83. Raymond of Peñafort's works also circulated in Frisia, see Bremmer, *Hir is eskriven*, pp. 156 and 160.

23 Magister Adam, *Summula sacramentorum Raymundi de Pennaforte metrificata* (Cologne 1945), fol. 29v; see also Buma e.a., *Codex Aysma*, p. 267.

The third item is the *Seven Virtues of the Mass*, a catechetical text listing the benefits of the holy Mass, that is to say the advantages (of both spiritual and material nature) coming to the believers from hearing the Mass. Such benefits or virtues consist in protection against the sins, the diminishing of pains and sorrows, and the attainment of the state of grace:

96. Sawen dugede sin ther in ther Missa.

Thio arste is thet ma also fula londis thor God gewe, so this deis moghe bigonga.

Thio othere dughede is that tha sela, ther Masse forherth, tha hwile min pina habbat.

Thio thredde dughede is thetma this deis een Missa hert, tha deihis sunda wirdat him wrjowen.

Thio fiarda is, hot hi this deis it, hit fromad him meer in siner natura.

Thio fifte is that hor sijn clane ner hi self eergiat ner aldiat.

Thio sexte is that ene bede this handis bettera is so al ther lithena.

Thio sawende thet en Missa an dha liwe bettera is herd than hundred intha dade.

(Seven virtues are in the Mass.

The first is that [hearing the Mass is as much good] as is the land that a man – with the will of God – can work in a day.

The second virtue is that, during the time that a soul is hearing the Mass, it will have less sorrow.

The third virtue is that, on the day when a man is hearing the Mass, his daily sins will be forgiven.

The fourth virtue is that, whatever he eats on that day will provide more benefit to his body's strength.

The fifth virtue is that neither his clothes nor he himself will deteriorate or grow old.

The sixth virtue is that a prayer of the hand [i.e. 'a Mass'] is better than that of all the individual body parts.

The seventh virtue is: one Mass heard during life is better than a hundred heard after death.)

In the course of the Middle Ages the belief in the benefits of hearing the Mass gave birth to a tradition of texts (mostly in Latin) which enumerate six, sometimes seven, ten or even twelve 'fruits' or 'virtues' of the Mass. The Frisian version of *Seven Virtues of the Mass* finds parallels in several thirteenth-century Latin texts preserved in a number of manuscripts

of German provenance, all dating from the fifteenth century.²⁴ Particularly striking are the analogues shared with a version contained in the above-mentioned *Summula Raymundi*.²⁵ Similarly to this Latin work, the Frisian piece highlights the benefits for the salvation of the soul, as in the third virtue (concerning the forgiveness of the sins) and in the seventh one, stating that one Mass during life counts so much more than many commanded by the relatives after death. Nonetheless, physical and material aspects of the earthly life are also pointed out, as is indicated by the references to the cultivated land (in the first virtue) or to the garments which will not wear out (fourth virtue). Remarkable is the mention of the 'prayer of the hand' in the sixth virtue, the general meaning of which is that the common prayer recited at Mass is better than individual prayers said in solitude. According to Buma,²⁶ 'this handis' (of the hand) should be emended into 'this haudis' (of the head), since the scribe erroneously wrote 'n' instead of 'u'. The expression 'this haudis' (of the head) would be more in line with the Latin version contained in the *Summula Raymundi*, which reads:

Quinta virtus est, quod missa plus petit coram divina maiestate quam omnes orationes, que fiunt in toto mundo, quia est oratio Ecclesiae, ergo est oratio capitalis. Capitalis enim oratio prevalet omnibus operationibus.²⁷

(The fifth virtue is that the Mass in the presence of the divine majesty is more valuable than all the prayers of the world, because it is the prayer of the Church, therefore, it is the prayer of the Head. For the prayer of the Head prevails over all the divine services.)

24 W. J. Buma, 'De sawn fruchten fan 'e Misse', *De Vrije Fries* 42 (1955), pp. 31-36. The alleged source of the Frisian text on the virtues of the Mass recognized by Buma is edited in A. Franz, *Die Messe im deutschen Mittelalter. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Liturgie und des religiösen Volkslebens* (Freiburg 1902), pp. 42-44. On the theme of the 'Virtues of the Mass', see also W. Simon, *Die Messopfertheologie Martin Luthers* (Tübingen 2003), pp. 100-107; W. Massa, *Die Eucharistiepredigt am Vorabend der Reformation: eine material-kerygmatische Untersuchung zum Glaubensverständnis von Altarsakrament und Messe am Beginn des 16. Jahrhunderts als Beitrag zur Geschichte der Predigt* (Siegburg 1966), pp. 118-133; and U. Schwab, 'Die Reimrede der zwölf Meister von den Früchten der Messe', *Annali dell'Istituto Orientale di Napoli, Sezione Germanica* 6 (1963), pp. 13-64.

25 See note 22.

26 Buma, 'De sawn fruchten fan 'e Misse', 33-34.

27 Franz, *Die Messe im Deutschen Mittelalter*, p. 42.

Comparable to the list in Raymund's treatise is a Latin catalogue of ten virtues of the Mass, contained in the fifteenth-century codex Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Palatinus 3732 (fol. 86):

Quinta uirtus est, quod una oracio capitis plus valet oracione omnium membrorum, quia missa est oracio Christi et nos membra eius.²⁸

(The fifth virtue is that a prayer of the head is more valuable than the prayer of all members, as the Mass is the prayer of Christ, and we are His members.)

The latter passage stems from the body metaphor in 1 Cor. 12.27: "Vos autem estis corpus Christi, et membra de membro" (Now you are the body of Christ, and members of member), and considers the Mass as a prayer uttered by the heavenly king, that is Christ our Head (oracio capitis), which – for this very reason – is much more powerful than the individual prayers of all the believers.

Another text related to ecclesiological matters contained in *Thet Authentica Riocht* is *The Ten Signs in the Host*, which offers a catalogue of the features of the holy Host, clearly intended to impart basic instructions on the sacrament of the Holy Communion and on the dogma of Transubstantiation:

97. Thian thing sinter in tha lichama ons Herens.

That arste, thet that brad and thi wiin wandelad wert in Godis flask and bloet bi ther Godis krefte.

That other, thet thet brad alle dagen wandelet wert in sijn flask and in sijn bloet, and this tha minra ner this tha mara is.

That tredde, thet ma Godis lichama alle daghan nimt, and hi this tha minra naut is.

That fiarde, al brecktma'ne, so is hi in ellik dele also machtich so hi al hel were.

That V is, thet hi naet onreen wert van sondiga liodum ther'ne nimad: hwant thio sinne biscint bethe reen loge and onreen loge, and bihalt her reeneheit aliick wol.

That VI is, thet hi alla sindiga liodum ther'ne nimat een wrdemnisse is, and alla gode liodum een trast: hwant tha spise ther krancka liodum sint scadeliiik tha ganse liodem.

That VII, hwaso'ne onwirdelike nimt that sacrement, werdt van tha

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

inghele opscert²⁹ to himele: hwant hi wt siner moder buck kom sonder seer,³⁰ and wt tha grewe op stoed, and bi slettene dorum to sine jongerum kom.

That VIII, that God also graet is end hi in also litike brade wassa mei: hwant thio sione in tha aghe grate thing sienen mei.

That IX, thet God al swens mei in also manigha logum wassa.

That X, that thet brad and wiin wandelet wert in Godis flask and bloet, and bliift in een ferwe and in een sciin. alther omme mei sinder lawa thi sacramentum wrstaen.

(Ten things are there in the body of our Lord.

The first is that the bread and wine are changed into the flesh and blood of God by the might of God.

The second is that every day the bread is changed into His flesh and into His blood, and because of it He is neither more nor less.

The third, that one takes the body of Christ every day and because of it He is not less.

The fourth, even if He is broken, still He is in each part as strong as when he were completely whole.

The fifth is that it (i.e. the holy Host) does not become unclean because of sinful people who receive it: for the sun shines both on clean and unclean places, and – nevertheless – maintains its cleanness.

The sixth is that it (i.e. the holy Host) is a condemnation for all the sinners who receive him, and a comfort for all good people: for the items of foods which are bad and harmful to the sick are helpful to the healthy.

The seventh is that, if someone receives it unworthily, then the sacrament will be carried up to heaven by the angel: for He came out from His mother's womb without pain, and rose from the grave, and came through locked doors to His disciples.

The eighth is that God is so great, and yet He can even be in such a little (piece of) a bread: for the eyesight can see great things.

29 The form 'opscert' is a *hapax legomenon* and its exact meaning is unclear. The text of A presents here the verb 'feerth op' (leads up); since 's' and 'f' as well as 'c' and 'e' are often difficult to distinguish in medieval manuscripts, a reading 'opfeert' (similar to that in A) for the text of U, is very well possible, see Brouwer, *The Autentica Riocht*, p. 212.

30 The notion belief of Jesus's painless birth – precisely according to the dogma of Mary's perpetual virginity – is supported by several Church Fathers (including Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose of Milan, and Thomas Aquinas). On this subject, see H. von Campenhausen, *The Virgin Birth in the Theology of the Ancient Church* (London 1964), pp. 70-73, and L. Ott, *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma* (Rockford 2009), pp. 205-207.

The ninth is that God can be in many places at the same time.
The tenth is that bread and wine are changed into the flesh and blood of God, and yet maintain the same colour and the same aspect. Therefore nobody can understand this sacrament without faith.)

Accounts and comments on the sacrament of the Eucharist and on the properties of the consecrated Host abound in medieval theological works, including the third part of the abovementioned Gratianus's *Decretum*,³¹ entitled *De consecratione* or *Liber de sacramentis* and specifically devoted to liturgical matters and worship, as well as the third part of Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* (1265–1274). The influence of the Bible is also noticeable, as in the case of the sixth sign, which alludes to 1 Cor. 11.29-30: "Qui enim manducat et bibit indigne, iudicium sibi manducat et bibit, non dijudicans corpus Domini. Ideo inter vos multi infirmi et imbecilles, et dormiunt multi" (For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord. Therefore are there many infirm and weak among you, and many sleep). The Frisian text was most likely patterned after a Latin source, entitled *De decem miraculis corporis Christi* (incipit: 'Decem sunt miracula de corpore christi de quibus directe ratio non potest assignari'), which has been transmitted in a large number of theological miscellaneous manuscripts of the German area, dating from the fourteenth and fifteenth century.³² The anthology of doctrinal items of *Thet Autentica Riocht* continues with a brief list of three unpardonable sins:

98. Thria thing sinther ther in thir wrald ner an ghin wrald wirdat wrgheuen. Hwa so mit god spottat. Hwa so in mishope falt. Hwa sindigat op ther nede godis.
(Three things are there which shall not be forgiven, neither in this world nor in yonder world: if one scoffs at God, if one falls into heresy, if one sins relying on God's grace.)

The notion of sins which cannot be forgiven is readily traceable to the Bible (Acts 15.20-28, 1 Cor. 10.7), and is well known since early Christian

³¹ See note 14.

³² Cf. G. List and G. Powitz, *Die Handschriften der Stadtbibliothek Mainz: Hs I 151 - Hs I 250* (Wiesbaden 1998), p. 113; W. Gehrt, *Handschriftenkataloge der Staats- und Stadtbibliothek Augsburg. Band IV: Die Handschriften 2°Cod251-400e* (Wiesbaden 1989), p. 87; H. Fischer, *Die lateinischen Papierhandschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Erlangen* (Erlangen 1936), p. 182.

times. Tertullian explicitly mentions idolatry, fornication and homicide (*De pudicitia*, xiii), while a similar list is found in rabbinic writings. The list of the Frisian text has no analogues in any other known source (so far as I know). However, its biblical origin is indisputable.

The sin of blasphemy can be associated with the first sin mentioned in the piece of *Thet Autentica Riocht*, and is referred to in Mt 12.31-32, Mk 3.28-30, Lk 12.10, as well as in Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* (*Questia* 14, Part II-II), which contains a specific section devoted to unpardonable sins against the Holy Spirit. As far as the third unforgivable sin is concerned, the versions of U and A appear to disagree. U features the sin of presumption, namely the firm belief in the full forgiveness of all sins, based on an absolute confidence in God's mercy. This sin is mentioned in Ecclesiasticus 5.5-7: "De propitiatio peccato noli esse sine metu, neque adjicias peccatum super peccatum. Et ne dicas: Miseratio Domini magna est, multitudinis peccatorum meorum miserebitur: misericordia enim et ira ab illo cito proximant, et in peccatores respicit ira illius" (Be not without fear about sin forgiven, and add not sin upon sin. And say not: The mercy of the Lord is great, he will have mercy on the multitude of my sins. For mercy and wrath quickly come from Him, and His wrath looketh upon sinners).

On the other hand, the redaction of the text of A reads as follows: "dat tredde is, hwaso nat leweth, dat God van dade op stenzen zee" (the third is, if one does not believe that God arose from the dead). This statement considers eternal sinners those who reject Christ's Resurrection, which is a central point in the teaching of the Christian faith, since it results from 1 Cor 15.12 and 17: "si autem Christus praedicatur quod resurrexit a mortuis quomodo quidam dicunt in vobis quoniam resurrectio mortuorum non est [...] quod si Christus non resurrexit vana est fides vestra adhuc enim estis in peccatis vestris" (Now if Christ be preached, that he arose again from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? [...] And if Christ be not risen again, your faith is vain: for you are yet in your sins.).

The collection in *Thet Autentica Riocht* continues with *The Seven Things that God Hates*:

99. Sawen thing sinter, ther God hattet: haechfirdicheit, leinliatighe tonghe, tha handa ther that bloet ther onnoseliikera liode wtjet, tha herta ther tha wirsta tochta thenzet, tha foten ther tel sint ti alle quaed to dwaene, and falska orkenen, and hwa so quaed ret twiska liawa friondum and twiska broderum.

(Seven things are there that God hates: pride; lying tongues; hands that shed blood of innocent people; hearts that think the worst

thoughts; feet that are quick to do all evil; and false witnesses; and whoever causes evil between dear friends and between brothers).

This passage is directly drawn from the Book of Proverbs, 6.16-19:

Sex sunt quae odit Dominus et septimum detestatur anima eius oculos sublimes linguam mendacem manus effundentes innoxium sanguinem cor machinans cogitationes pessimas, pedes veloces ad currendum in malum, proferentem mendacia testem fallacem et eum qui seminat inter fratres discordias.

(Six things there are, which the Lord hateth, and the seventh His soul detesteth: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that deviseth wicked plots, feet that are swift to run into mischief, a deceitful witness that uttereth lies, and him that soweth discord among brethren.)

The opening line states that God detests six things, but actually seven wicked deeds are listed. This is typically a Hebrew figure of style, which also occurs in Proverbs 30.15, 18 and 20, and in Ecclesiasticus 23.16; 25.7; 26.5, 28. These biblical texts belong to the genre of the 'numerical proverbs', which employ the rhetorical pattern of the ascending numbers: they declare, in the introduction, to list a certain number of elements or phenomena, but then they provide a catalogue increased by one more unit.³³ According to the meaning attributed to numbers in the Bible, six represents the concept of 'man', in association with the idea of 'imperfection, incompleteness' or of 'evil coming from the devil', while seven is the number of spiritual perfection, that is to say the 'totality of perfection', 'completeness'.³⁴ When seen in this perspective, the note presents a complete catalogue of all things which God hates in man.

The Things that God Hates is also found (quoted verbatim from the Bible) in the *Collectanea Pseudo-Bedae*, an anonymous miscellany of mostly Irish and Anglo-Saxon materials from the eighth century, differing in form and content, and devoted to a wide range of trivia (biblical lore, moral instruc-

33 Y. Shamir, 'Shared Stylistic Patterns in the Aramaic Proverbs of Ahiqar and Hebrew Wisdom' *Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 44 (2007), pp. 29-49, at 43-44, and T. Longman III, *Proverbs* (Grand Rapids 2006), pp. 527-28.

34 On numerical symbolism in the Bible, see, e.g., E. W. Bullinger, *Number in Scripture* (New York 2005), pp. 150-151 (*six*) and pp. 167-168 (*seven*), and J. J. Davis, *Biblical Numerology: A Basic Study of the Use of Numbers in the Bible* (Grand Rapids 1968), pp. 115-119.

tions, riddles, hagiographic notes).³⁵ Its biblical provenance, as well as its inclusion in such an influential compilation as the pseudo-Bedan *Collectanea*, encouraged the dissemination of the motif of the things detestable to God in Western Europe, inspiring a number of Christian works, such as two Middle Low German texts, one entitled *Dyt sint de seuen dotsunde* (c. 1490) and a poem of almost 8000 lines by a certain Joseph devoted to the same topic (c. 1420).³⁶ The Frisian text – which does not exhibit the stylistic device of the ascending number of the biblical source – has the structure of a pericope, a short extract from the Scripture usually appointed to be read at public worship.

The last theological item of *Thet Autentica Riocht* to be examined here is a short text on the usefulness of the Confession, which is said to be a blessing for the soul and a condemnation of evil, able to expel demons, to destroy Hell and to open the gates of Paradise:

101. That bichte is een heil ther sele, and is en deel thira lastere and ene winstere thera dughede, and wrdriwerstre thera dioula, and steert tha helle, and epnat op tha porta this paradijis; also als thi menscha ne mei naut wrnia tha longhe wernese ther send.
(Confession is a salvation of the soul and is the destruction³⁷ of sins and a champion of virtues and an expeller of the devil, and destroys Hell, and opens the gates of Paradise, just as a man cannot protect himself against the constant threat of sin.)

35 The *Collectanea Pseudo-Bedae* were first published by J. Herwagen in 1563 in *Opera Bedae Venerabilis presbyteri Anglosaxonis*, based on a manuscript now lost (no other manuscript of the text, as printed by Herwagen, has ever been identified). The most recent critical edition of the *Collectanea Pseudo-Bedae* is Bayless and M. Lapidge (eds.), *Collectanea Pseudo-Bedae* (Dublin 1998) [Scriptores Latini Hiberniae, 14]. The text of *The Things that God Hates*, along with a translation, is at pp. 140-141.

36 *Dyt sint de seuen dotsunde de stryden myt den seuen dogeden*, ed. S. Koch Mentzer (Magdeburg 1490); *Josefs Gedicht von den sieben Todsünden: in fortlaufenden Auszügen und Inhaltsangabe zum ersten Male nach der Handschrift bekannt*, ed. H. Babucke (Norden 1874); see also C. Heß, *Social Imagery in Middle Low German: Didactical Literature and Metaphorical Representation (1470-1517)* (Leiden 2013), pp. 81-82, and 386.

37 The interpretation of the word 'deel' as 'destruction' is suggested by a comparison with the word 'dissipatio' (dissipation, dissolution, waste) in Haymo's *De varietate librorum, sive de amore coelestis patriae*, identified as the source of the Frisian text, see Brouwer, *Thet Autentica Riocht*, p. 215; and Buma e.a., *Codex Aysma*, p. 269. Cf. also Old English *gedal* 'separation, division, destruction, devastation', see F. Holthausen, *Altenglisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg 1934). Accordingly, the Old Frisian word 'deel' might be interpreted as a *nomen actionis* derived from a verb with the meaning 'to divide in parts, to fragment, to reduce to small pieces, to break down into small particles' and ultimately 'to destroy'.

According to Buma,³⁸ the source of this piece should be looked for among the works of Haymo of Halberstadt, a Benedictine monk who was active in Fulda sometime during the ninth century, before he was appointed bishop of Halberstadt. Specifically, Buma drew attention to the affinity between the Frisian text and a passage in Haymo's *De varietate librorum, sive de amore coelestis patriae*:

O poenitentia, salus animae, restauratio virtutum, dissipatio vitiorum, expugnatrix daemoniorum, obstrusio inferorum, porta caelorum, via justorum, refectio beatorum.³⁹

(Oh, repentance, salvation of the soul, restoration of virtues, dissipation of vices, defeater of demons, obstruction of hell, gate of the heavens, way of the righteous, food of the blessed.)

The resemblance with Haymo's text is undeniable. Nonetheless, a closer relation is more likely with an extract from the pseudo-Augustine *Sermones ad fratres in eremo*, a very popular collection of sermons brought together in the fourteenth century.⁴⁰ In the *Sermones*, the sequence of the qualities of the Confession exactly corresponds to that of the Frisian version, as the consultation of the passage will confirm:

Haec est enim salus animarum, dissipatrix vitiorum, restauratrix virtutum, oppugnatrix daemonum, pavor inferni, obstaculum diaboli (...) O sancta atque admirabilis confessio! tu obstruis os inferni, et aperis paradisi portas.⁴¹

(This is the salvation of souls, dissipation of vices, restoration of virtues, fighter of demons, terror of Hell, obstacle of the devil [...])
Oh, holy and admirable confession! You obstruct the mouth of Hell and open the gates of Paradise.)

The conclusion of this note – which is different in the two manuscripts U and A – has nothing to do with either Haymo or pseudo-Augustine. The piece highlights the helplessness of man against evil, definitely an allusion to the doctrine of original sin. This doctrine asserts that human beings cannot abstain from committing sin, since they are conceived and born in a state of sin, having inherited from their fathers the ancestral

38 W. J. Buma, 'It nut fan 'e bycht', *Us Wurk* 10 (1961), pp. 49-52, at 51.

39 PL 118, col. 926.

40 S. L. Saak, *Creating Augustine: Interpreting Augustine and Augustinianism in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford 2012), pp. 81-138.

41 *Sermo XXX, De confessione peccatorum*, PL 40, col. 1289.

burden of Adam and Eve's disobedience, and as a result of which they are inevitably disposed to evil.⁴² The version in A explains the dogma of original sin with a striking simile: 'Also als di menscha mej nat vornya zine vaderlike spreke, also en mej en menscha nat vornya da wernesse der sonden' (Just as a man cannot give up his father tongue, likewise he cannot escape the persistent persecution of sins). It is as if mankind were 'genetically' damaged by original sin. The ineluctable nature of the trespass inherited from our ancestors is likened to the impossibility for men to avoid the use of the father tongue, a simile which (as far as I know) has no parallel anywhere.⁴³

> Comments

The texts I have here examined are moral and catechetical in nature, since they impart basic tenets and principles of the Christian religion. They are tools used to convey pearls of scriptural wisdom and doctrine. Their inspiration is mostly taken from the Bible, specifically from the sapiential books (Psalms, Ecclesiasticus), but also from the New Testament (Gospels, Pauline Epistles, Acts); *The Things that God hates* is even a pericope copied *in toto* from the Scriptures (Proverbs). Sources for these texts range from patristic to pseudo-patristic writings (such as Augustinian and Pseudo-Augustinian works, or the *Collectanea Pseudo-Bedae*) and from scholastic to moral and pastoral treatises (such as Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* and the *Summula Raymundi*). They concern various aspects of the divine office, insisting on the profit of such sacraments as the Confession and

42 Cfr. Buma, 'It nut fan 'e bycht', p. 52 and Buma, 'Geestelijke literatuur in Oud-Friesland', pp. 28-29. In its most complete and systematic formulation, the doctrine of the original sin was elaborated by Augustine in many of his works (*De peccatorum meritis et remissione et de baptismo parvulorum*, *De spiritu et littera*, *De natura et gratia*, *Contra Iulianum*). See, among others, J. Couenhoven, 'St. Augustine's Doctrine of Original Sin', *Augustinian Studies* 36 (2005), pp. 359-396; W. E. Mann, 'Augustine on Evil and Original Sin', in: E. Stump and N. Kretzmann (eds.), *The Cambridge companion to Augustine* (Cambridge 2001), pp. 40-48; and J. R. De Simone, 'Modern Research on the Sources of Saint Augustine's Doctrine of the Original Sin', *Augustinian Studies* 11 (1980), pp. 205-228.

43 This passage is controversial, because of the doubtful reading of both the terms *wernesse* and *vornya*. The former is a *hapax legomenon*, and its interpretations as 'persecution, threat' is a matter of conjecture. The latter could be interpreted either as a verb meaning 'to renew, renovate', or as a variant of Old Frisian *wernia* 'to guard against, defend against' but also 'to abstain from, keep off'. A different translation of this passage was proposed by Buma, *Geestelijke literatuur in Oud-Friesland*, pp. 28-29: 'Just as man cannot renew his mother tongue, at the same way he cannot renew a protection against sin'. At any rate, the global sense of the simile between original sin and mother tongue is still preserved. For a full discussion, see Brouwer, *Thet Autentica Riocht*, p. 216.

the Holy Communion (seen as powerful weapons to combat the devil and overcome sin), or on the necessity of hearing Mass, whose virtues constitute an essential help for the edification of the soul. These texts also reduce doctrinal and dogmatic issues to a manageable format, such as the Transubstantiation, the Virginity of Mary, the Resurrection, or Original Sin. Moreover, many contain instructions on the Christian rules of behaviour that any good believer should follow, as well as the salient points of religious instruction, such as knowledge of the deeds of almsgiving and the capital sins.

The didactic and moral character of such Christian texts in *Thet Autentica Riocht* is enhanced by their numeric arrangement, which aims at facilitating memorization.⁴⁴ Counting and enumeration were employed in medieval theology as methods for the development of Christian learning and morality, and particularly in the field of the catechesis they play a very important role. A variety of cardinal concepts of the Christian faith are often organized in numbered catalogues: the Ten Commandments, the Seven Works of Mercy, the Seven Capital Sins, etc. Also the scholastic tradition and the theology of Thomas Aquinas provided a fertile soil for the growth of the enumerative techniques in the catechetical literature.⁴⁵ Yet, there is more to be observed. The strong penchant for numbering – which runs through all these texts – is related to the symbolic interpretation of numbers. The belief that particular numbers have spiritual and divine significance is a concept of key importance in the Jewish tradition of the Bible, which was inherited, and elaborated upon, by medieval authors.⁴⁶ In the late Middle Ages symbolic numbers were introduced into

44 The only exception is represented by the piece on the usefulness of the Confession, which is arranged in a sequence of pairs of opposite concepts conjoined with 'and' ('deel thira lastere' versus 'winstere thera dughede', 'steert tha helle' versus 'epnat op tha porta this paradij's'), which is evidently a mnemonic device.

45 On this subject matter, see T. Lentjes, 'Counting Piety in the Later Middle Ages', in: B. Jussen (ed.), *Ordering Medieval Society: Perspectives on Intellectual and Practical Modes of Shaping Social Relations* (Philadelphia 2001), pp. 55-91, at 71-74; D. Harming, 'Katechismusliteratur. Grundlagen religiöser Laienbildung im Spätmittelalter', in: N. R. Wolf (ed.), *Wissensorganisierende und wissensvermittelnde Literatur im Mittelalter: Perspektiven ihrer Erforschung, Kolloquium, 5.-7. Dezember 1985* (Wiesbaden 1987), pp. 91-102.

46 On number symbolism in the medieval literary tradition, see, among others: R. L. Surles, *Medieval Numerology: A Book of Essays* (New York and London 1993); V. Hopper, *Medieval Number Symbolism* (New York 1938, repr. 1969); Davis, *Biblical Numerology*; C. D. Wright, 'The Irish "Enumerative Style" in Old English Homiletic Literature, Especially Vercelli Homily IX', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 18 (1989), pp. 27-74; C. D. Wright, 'The "Enumerative Style" in Ireland and Anglo-Saxon England', in his *The Irish Tradition in Old English Literature* (Cambridge 1993), pp. 49-105.

catechesis for mnemotechnical reasons.⁴⁷ The numerical pattern of the Frisian devotional literature finds parallels in various medieval traditions (both in Latin and the vernacular), for instance, in the above-mentioned *Collectanea Pseudo-Bedae*.

In the Frisian tradition, the enumerative style also finds application in the juridical sphere (cf. the *Seventeen Statutes*, the *Twenty-four Land-laws* or the *Five Exceptions to the Seventeenth Statutes*), and this matter provides a link with the devotional anthology in *Thet Autentica Riocht*. Sometimes, these texts show a concern for legal issues, such as the mention of the 'false witness' in the *Things Hateful to God* (which finds a parallel also in the *Ten Commandments*) or the reference to the law as the second reason why the Jews should be allowed to live. Finally, it is noteworthy to underline that, among the sources identified for some of these texts, there is also Gratianus's *Decretum*, a collection of canon laws, which in the course of the Middle Ages, became quite popular all over Europe. Through the syncretism of biblical and sapiential themes, knowledge of law, and numerical topoi, these morally edifying and instructive texts have found a fitting place within the legal compilation of *Thet Autentica Riocht*.

47 On this subject matter, see: Lenten, 'Counting Piety in the Later Middle Ages', p. 76; Harmening, 'Katechismusliteratur. Grundlagen religiöser Laienbildung im Spätmittelalter', pp. 99, 149-150.