

The “Auffahrtabend” Prophecy and Henry of Langenstein:
German Adaptation and Transmission of the “Visio fratris Johannis”

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Eschatological prophecies rate among the richest and most complex cultural sources available to medievalists. Rarely designed from scratch, such predictive writings were usually tailored and transformed adaptations of existing materials which circulated widely in manuscript copies across European lands through and beyond the Middle Ages. Uniquely adapted to fit specific times and particular places, pagan and Christian prophecies alike (such as the *Tiburtine Sybil*, the *Cedar of Lebanon*, the *Toledo Letter*, and the *Genus Nequam* and *Ascende Calve* “Pope Prophecies”) circulated for centuries in a dazzling multitude of versions and attributions, translations and alterations.

Once primarily the domain of theological and intellectual studies, medieval prophecies have in recent decades received thoughtful treatment as representative of the *mentalités* of an age, intricate channels not only of the prevailing spiritual concerns and political fears of the day, but also of their authors’ own apocalyptic anticipation and historical hopes.¹ Yet the very flexibility and apparent immediacy of prophetic texts which so appealed to the medieval imagination pose significant problems to the modern historian, not least of which is the unavoidable need to distinguish between ‘original’ and ‘adapted’ texts and to map their labyrinthine journeys across time and space. One can make little interpretive headway without

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¹ See Robert Lerner, *The Powers of Prophecy* (Berkeley: University of California, 1983); Bernard McGinn, *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages*, 2nd edition (New York: Columbia University, 1998); and Marjorie Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages: A Study in Joachism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).

solid evidence of where, when, why (and ideally, by whom) a prophecy was altered, prompted by what motivation, and for which purpose. The enigmatic nature of medieval prophecies has thus allowed the neglect or misinterpretation of important texts, an outstanding example of which is the “Auffahrtabend” prophecy.

One of the most widely circulating prophecies of the fifteenth century, the “Auffahrtabend” text was adapted into German from a late thirteenth-century Latin prophecy known as the “Visio fratris Johannis.” Disseminated widely across northern Europe, the German text was attributed to notables including Hildegard of Bingen, the Emperor Sigismund, and the celebrated German theologian Henry of Langenstein. Extant in twenty-three known manuscript copies² and at least ten early printed editions,³ the prophecy also circulated throughout the early modern period as part of the *Reformatio Sigismundi*.⁴ A neat illustration of the genre’s daunting malleability across space, time, and production technique is the sixteenth-century reformulation of the “Auffahrtabend” text back into Latin manuscript form via the vernacular printed tradition.⁵ However, this popular prophetic text has surprisingly received only sporadic and often misleading scholarly treatment. In order to clarify the origins, context, and significance of the “Auffahrtabend” prophecy, let us begin with basics: where and when and how was it adapted, by whom, and, perhaps most intriguing, why? Why did the individual adapter choose the “Visio fratris Johannis” to revamp in German? Why were certain portions of the original retained and others deleted? Why did he decide to write and insert brand new material into the

² See Appendix A

³ For a brief but useful discussion of the prophecy in both manuscript and printed traditions, see Christine Stöllinger-Löser, “Vision auf das Jahr 1401,” in *Die deutsche literatur des Mittelalters; Verfasserlexikon*, Bd. 10/2, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1999), 425-29. For a list of the early printed sources, see Appendix B.

⁴ The standard critical edition of the *Reformatio* is Heinrich Koller, *Reformation Kaiser Siegmunds* (Stuttgart: A. Hiersemann, 1964). See also his “Untersuchungen zur Reformatio Sigismundi” I-III, *Deutsches Archiv* 13 (1957), 482-524; 14 (1958), 418-468; 15 (1959), 137-162.

⁵ Stuttgart Landesbibliothek, Cod. Donaueschingen 704, f.230r-231f. The manuscript dates from the second half of the sixteenth century. Catalogued in K. A. Barack, *Die Handschriften der fürstlich-fürstenbergischen Hofbibliothek zu Donaueschingen* (Tübingen: Laupp & Siebeck, 1865), 486-492.

existing text? And why is it reasonable for scholars to draw historical conclusions from such a complex and cryptic source?

The aims of this article are threefold: first, to augment the known list of manuscript and early printed copies and to rectify the mistakes and omissions of previous research; second, to pin down with textual and codicological evidence the provenance and transmission of the German text from its Latin progenitor; and third, to explore the “Auffahrtabend” prophecy for clues as to its historical milieu and meaning. In the following, I propose that the text was translated and adapted roughly between the years of 1386 and 1396 by a member of Henry of Langenstein’s circle in Vienna, and that its contents were shaped by the fusion of anxieties about the Great Schism, fourteenth-century German and Bohemian political concerns, and apocalyptic expectations of the looming century’s end.

I. Historiography

Aptly described as a “particularly protean pseudonymity,”⁶ the “Auffahrtabend” text bears a complicated past which has hitherto thwarted systematic analysis. The earliest modern researchers to pursue the prophecy worked from incunabula, unaware either of the text’s original Latin exemplar (the “Visio fratris Johannis) or the German text’s circulation in manuscript form. In 1876, Willy Boehm published the first study of the prophecy, having discovered a text identified as the “Vision Kaiser Sigmunds” in printed copies of the *Reformatio Sigismundi*.⁷ In 1893, Richard Schröder briefly mentioned the text in his study of the “Kaisersage;”⁸ in the same year, Wilhelm Altmann edited a version of the prophecy attributed to Hildegard of Bingen, one

⁶ Robert Lerner, “Medieval Prophecy and Religious Dissent,” *Past and Present* 72 (1976): 3-24, at 11.

⁷ Willy Boehm, *Friedrich Reisers Reformation des Kaisers Sigismund* (Leipzig: Verlag von Veit & Comp. 1876), 13-16.

⁸ Richard Schröder, *Die deutsche Kaisersage und die Wiedergeburt des deutschen Reiches* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1893): 27.

which he located in a manuscript copy of Eberhard Windeck's history of the Kaiser Sigismund (*Denkwürdigkeiten zur Geschichte des Zeitalters des Kaisers Sigmunds*).⁹ Shortly thereafter, Franz Kampers noticed the similarities between the virtually identical prophecies discussed by Boehm and Altmann.¹⁰

In the final years of the nineteenth century, researchers began to fit together the pieces of the "Auffahrtabend" puzzle. In 1897, Carl Koehne suggested the existence of an earlier Latin exemplar for the German text,¹¹ and published the first stemma of known manuscript sources for the "Prophetie auf das Jahr 1401," a title which he derived from the date's consistent appearance in the text's explicit. This stemma incorporated four medieval copies of the "Auffahrtabend" prophecy,¹² the Windeck text attributed to Hildegard, the incunable tradition attributed to Kaiser Sigismund,¹³ and one copy of the prophecy's subsequent translation back into Latin via the printed sources.¹⁴ Koehne also significantly expanded the list of incunabula and early modern sources containing copies of the prophecy.¹⁵ In the following year, 1898, Friedrich Lauchert published a critical edition of the "Auffahrtabend" text, adding two medieval manuscript copies to the four identified by Koehne,¹⁶ and incorporating late manuscript and early printed versions into the edition: first, an incomplete text of the prophecy attributed to the German theologian

⁹ Wilhelm Altmann, *Eberhart Windeckes Denkwürdigkeiten zur Geschichte des Zeitalters des Kaisers Sigmunds*, (Berlin: Gaertners Verl.-Buchhandlung, 1893), 357-60.

¹⁰ Franz Kampers, *Kaiserprophetien und Kaisersagen im Mittelalter: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der deutschen Kaiseridee* (München: Lüneburg, 1895), 190.

¹¹ Carl Koehne, "Die Weissagung auf das Jahr 1401," *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, n.F., 1 (1897): 352-62.

¹² Here and elsewhere, manuscripts are listed according to their abbreviations in Appendix A. Koehne built his stemma on the following manuscript copies: (M2), (M3), (V2), and (V3).

¹³ Koehne, 356-57. For a brief list of the known early printed traditions, see Appendix B.

¹⁴ Stuttgart Landesbibliothek, Cod. Donaueschingen 704, f.230r-231f.

¹⁵ Koehne, 354-56. I have incorporated his list into the survey of early printed sources in Appendix B.

¹⁶ Friedrich Lauchert, "Materialien zur Geschichte der Kaiserprophetie im Mittelalter," *Historisches Jahrbuch*, 19 (1898): 844-872. To the four manuscript copies discovered by Koehne, and thus also to his edition, he added (G), (V1), and (V4), bringing the total to seven as of 1898. On the "Auffahrtabend" prophecy, see 852-67. Lauchert's critical edition of the manuscript copies (pp.856 – 867) remains to date the only one, and there is a need for a comprehensive new edition incorporating all known extant copies.

Henry of Langenstein and printed in 1547 in Vienna by the antiquary Lazius;¹⁷ the copy attributed to Emperor Sigismund and printed with the *Reformation des Kaisers Sigmund* c. 1497;¹⁸ and third, a copy of the Windeck text from a sixteenth-century manuscript.¹⁹

Twentieth-century scholarship on the “Auffahrtabend” prophecy and its relationship to the Latin “Visio fratris Johannis” has proceeded in similar fits and starts, as well as with occasional steps backward. A second modern edition appeared in 1905, when Alexander Reifferscheid published a single copy of the German prophecy, although he apparently did not know of Lauchert’s earlier and more inclusive work.²⁰ While both Koehne and Lauchert had surmised the existence of an original Latin text, none was identified until 1932 when Emil Donckel published an edition and short study of the “Visio.”²¹ Donckel based his edition on a single early copy of the Latin text, however, and was unaware of at least six other copies. His edition has since been replaced by Samantha Kelly’s study of the “Visio,” which includes a new critical edition based on four additional Latin sources (including Donckel’s copy) and an illuminating analysis of the prophecy’s origins.²²

After a pause of nearly forty years, scholarly interest in the “Auffahrtabend” text picked up once again in 1975 when Thomas Hohmann added seven more manuscript copies to the list in

¹⁷ Wolfgang Lazius, *Fragmentum vaticinii cuiusdam Methodii* (Vienna, 1547), 52b-53b.

¹⁸ Lauchert used the edition by Boehm, *Friedrich Reiser*.

¹⁹ Hannover MS XIII 917, catalogued in *Handschriften der Niedersächsischen Landesbibliothek Hannover*, ed Helmut Härtel, vol. 2, (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1982), 214-15.

²⁰ Alexander Reifferscheid, ed. *Neun Texte zur Geschichte der religiösen Aufklärung in Deutschland während des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts* (Greifswald: J. Abel, 1905), here pp.43-6. He added (M1) as the eighth known manuscript copy.

²¹ Emil Donckel, “Visio seu prophetia fratris Johannis. Eine süditalienische Prophezeiung aus dem Anfang des 14. Jahrhunderts,” *Römische Quartalschrift* 40 (1932): 361-79. Donckel did not know of at least six other Latin copies, and thus his edition has many errors. See also his “Die Prophezeiung des Telesforus,” *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 26 (1933): 65-66.

²² Samantha Kelly, “The *Visio fratris Johannis*: Prophecy and Politics in Late Thirteenth-Century Italy,” *Florentia*, anno VII-IX (1994-1995): 7-42. Most recently on the “Visio” in its 13th-century Italian context, see Robert Lerner, “Reception of Prophecy in Bologna: The *Visio fratris Johannis* in a Hearing of 1299,” *Rivista di storia della Chiesa in Italia* 61 (2007), 67-74.

his pursuit of texts attributed to the University of Vienna theologian Henry of Langenstein.²³ While his contribution usefully brought the known number of manuscript copies to fifteen, he was unaware of the German text's derivation from the "Visio;" thus it was not until Robert Lerner's 1976 article on the role of prophecy in medieval religious dissent that the relationship between the Latin prophecy and subsequent German versions was finally illuminated.²⁴ In 2000, Ernst Voltmer usefully traced the literary redeployment of the "Auffahrtabend" text by the fifteenth-century writer Michel Beheim. However, in the most recent research tangle, he overlooks Kelly's 1995 critical edition of the "Visio" and draws instead on Donckel's flawed 1932 edition. With the 21st-century addition of eight more copies of the "Auffahrtabend" prophecy, the total now stands at twenty-three known extant manuscript copies;²⁵ of early printed copies, we now know of at least fourteen (not including the widely-circulating Windeck text attributed to Hildegard of Bingen) ranging in date from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, and bearing a variety of attributions. Given the text's brevity, enduring popularity and broad circulation, moreover, one may confidently expect more manuscript copies to come to light in future years.

The transformation of the Latin "Visio" into a vernacular German format a century after its original penning provides an intriguing opportunity to compare the two texts, and to determine how, and to what purpose, the translator altered the prophecy. Aiding this analysis is the startling fact that the known "Auffahrtabend" manuscript copies bear virtually interchangeable readings with surprisingly minor variations which appear to derive more from

²³ Thomas Hohmann, "Deutsche Texte unter dem Namen 'Heinrich von Langenstein': Ein Übersicht," *Würzburger Prosastudien II: Kurt Ruh zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Peter Kesting (Medium Aevum, 31), (Munich: Fink, 1975), 232-33. Hohmann adds to the list (B1), (B2), (D), (E), (L), (M4) and (WB). However, he incorrectly cites (V2) (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Cod. 4477) as 4447.

²⁴ Lerner, "Medieval Prophecy and Religious Dissent," 11.

²⁵ Robert Lerner identified the existence of (C), (H), (HB), (K), (MU), (P), (S), and (W); I am most grateful to him for sharing this research with me.

regional dialect and scribal error than conscious editing.²⁶ The format and language of the early printed copies follow suit, with a few exceptions which will be discussed further below. While the copies' identical narrative structure and few contested readings make it impossible at this point to develop a stemma, their internal consistency fortunately simplifies the task of reconstructing the original German text. Moreover, Kelly's new critical edition and study of the "Visio" pave the way for a new investigation of the translation and circulation of the Latin prophecy's Germanic offspring. Of particular interest will be the many portions central to the "Visio" that our adapter consciously chose to omit from the "Auffahrtabend," and conversely, the several crucial reformulations and additions with which he supplemented or embellished the text. By tracing the metamorphosis from Latin original to Germanic offshoot, one finds textual clues which yield insight into the interests and motives of the translator, and the eschatological pressures of his day.

II. The Texts

The *Visio fratris Johannis*

Before moving on to issues of provenance and interpretation, let us simply begin where our German-speaking translator started: with the original Latin prophecy which caught his eye and provided the raw material for a new prognostication. Consisting of roughly five folio pages, the text presents the following account: in the earliest hours of the morning before Ascension Day, 1292,²⁷ a certain "Brother John" is alone "on a desolate isle" after concluding the office of matins. As he begins to recite Psalm 79:1 ("Deus venerunt gentes"),²⁸ his heart is pierced with

²⁶ The few variant readings are discussed in more detail below (see n.99).

²⁷ Kelly has persuasively fixed the original writing of the "Visio" between mid-May and July, 1292.

²⁸ Kelly, 36, Appendix, lines 1-11. Psalm 79:1-5 reads: "God, the heathen have come into your inheritance; they have defiled your holy temple; they have laid Jerusalem in ruins; They have given the bodies of your servants to the birds of the air for food, the flesh of your faithful to the wild animals of the earth. They have poured out their blood like water all around Jerusalem, and there was no one to bury them. We have become a taunt to our neighbors,

anguish as he contemplates the fall of Acre to the Saracens less than a year earlier, and the death of Christians overseas. Choking back tears, he is unable to complete the psalm and begins instead to pray passionately to God for mercy and redemption: “Do not be angry at your people forever, Lord. . . .”²⁹ And as he cries and prays, Brother John suddenly receives a vision: a “venerable” stranger holding a cross and garbed “in habitu pontificali”³⁰ appears before him, and urges the supplicant to stop weeping and to listen. Typical of medieval eschatological prophecies, the message which the vision bears is one of both terror and hope, of defeat and victory, of catastrophe and salvation.

After the man explains to Brother John that Acre fell due to Christian sins, he predicts a series of further divine penalties and punishments which will be inflicted across the world by an army of infidels. Mapped geographically, this swath of destruction begins with the devastation of Armenia, moving on through “many islands and ports”³¹ until arriving in the Italian peninsula, where specific calamities await. Here the “venerable man” pauses to focus his oracular powers on Rome, stained by simony since the pontificate of Nicholas III,³² and soon to be riven by civil war via its corrupt cardinals. A highly emblematic passage follows with allusive religio-political imagery ranging from serpents and bears to cows and columns, all portending humiliation and woe for the Eternal City.³³ Moving on from Rome, the vision rejoins the tour of destruction in the “Kingdom of Apulia,” whence it proceeds to France and Spain, and then to the northeastern realms of Hungary, Poland, and certain German regions. God’s instrument in these lands is the king of the Tartars who, allied with other infidel kings, will overwhelm the Christian population,

mocked and derided by those around us. How long, O Lord? Will you be angry forever? Will your jealous wrath burn like fire?”

²⁹ Psalm 79:5; Kelly also cites Jeremiah 3:5.

³⁰ “in habitu pontificali,” Kelly, 37, Appendix, line 23.

³¹ Kelly suggests that these are Cyprus and the Greek Islands, 17.

³² Pope Nicholas III, born Giovanni Gaetano Orsini, reigned from 1277 to 1280 and was criticized for nepotism and simony.

³³ Analyzed by Kelly in terms of Roman ecclesiopolitical events, 23-26.

sparing no one. The apparition here returns to anticipate the spiritual crisis that will beset the city of Rome and its Church: many Christian lands will turn from Roman obedience, he foresees, few will do the pope's bidding, and the blood of Christ will be for sale. God will punish haughty clergy for their greed and pastoral failures, and priests will not dare to show their tonsures. "People will rise up against princes in many places, and will kill some and flee others, and there will be tribulation across the entire world."³⁴

When his noncorporeal guest falls silent, Brother John timidly asks him whether God wills the destruction of the faith and Church. In a final oracular burst, the man responds that while the infidels will triumph temporarily, they will ultimately be driven out by combined French, German and imperial forces. The Roman church will be restored, along with the righteousness of its leaders, and all Christians will return to obedience; this joyful time will end with the (undated) coming of Antichrist, the "filius perditionis."³⁵ Before the arrival of Antichrist, however, a series of popes will reign and Rome will once again be afflicted with bloodshed, sin and despair. "These things will come to pass in the year 1300, and in your time," the ghostly man concludes. And as the apparition vanishes before Brother John's eyes, so too ends the prophetic text.³⁶

In her 1995 analysis of the textual origins, content and transmission of the "Visio Fratris Johannis" prophecy, Kelly traces the bonds between the authorial "Brother John" and the concerns of late thirteenth-century Rome.³⁷ Demonstrating the author's emotional attachment to and specific knowledge of the city, she persuasively argues from textual and codicological evidence that he not only lived in Rome, but that he also crafted the prophecy within this milieu

³⁴ Kelly, 38, Appendix, lines 97 – 100.

³⁵ Kelly, 39, Appendix, line 109.

³⁶ Kelly, 40, Appendix, lines 125-27.

³⁷ Kelly, Appendix, 17-19.

between mid-May and July of 1292.³⁸ By the end of the decade, the prophecy of “Brother John” had evidently spread by both oral and written means: in 1299, for example, excerpts appeared in the inquisitorial testimony of one Donna Lucia in Bologna.³⁹ Interest in the prophecy appears to have waned for a few decades after the anticipated year of 1300 had come and gone, yet it flared again at roughly mid-century. Between c.1330 and 1400, the *Visio* continued to circulate in manuscript copies across the continent and in England.⁴⁰ The provenance and transmission of manuscript copies represent an important strand to pursue as we unravel the relationship between the “Visio” and the later “Auffahrtabend” prophecy. What did our German translator make of the Latin text as it lay open before him? What portions struck him as relevant, or revelatory, and why? And what do his considerable editorial decisions and revisions suggest about his own historical perspective?

The “Auffahrtabend” Prophecy

The title “Auffahrtabend” or “vigil of Ascension Day” derives from the German text’s incipit (“an dem Auffahrtabend”) which follows the Latin “in vigilia namque Ascensionis,” and represents the first of numerous significant parallels between the two versions. From the beginning of the “Auffahrtabend” text, one encounters a familiar scenario: shortly after matins on the morning before Ascension day, an individual recites the prayer that “Davit in dem Psalter gemacht hat.”⁴¹ Weeping as he contemplates the terrible loss at Jerusalem and pleads to God for mercy on Christians (“Herr mein Gott, bis nit zornig ewiglich über dein Volck”), he is suddenly

³⁸ Kelly, Appendix, 19-26.

³⁹ Lerner, “Reception of Prophecy in Bologna,” 68.

⁴⁰ As discussed further below, the origins of the four earliest known extant copies have been pinned down to Bohemia “V”, Nürnberg “N”, Basel “B” and England “C”. Abbreviations in quotation marks here refer to manuscripts containing the “Visio fratris Johannis” as cited in Kelly, “Visio”; they should not be confused with those in parentheses, which refer to manuscripts containing copies of the “Auffahrtabend” prophecy, as cited in Appendix A.

⁴¹ Appendix C provides an edited copy of (H) for reference. Here, see line 2.

confronted by an “erber Mann” holding a cross. And as in the Latin original, the German visionary figure proceeds throughout the rest of the text to warn the supplicant of the perilous times ahead. Yet there are also intriguing omissions and alterations from the very first sentence which merit sustained attention. In order to clarify the relationship between the two texts, let us consider first the correspondences and similarities (what the German adapter chose to retain from the Latin original), and then explore the deviations and variations (what he chose to delete, reformulate, or create anew). The thematic material may for convenience be separated into three categories: regional/political struggles, ecclesiastical issues, and pastoral concerns, all of which are inflected with apocalyptic expectation.

III. Textual Analysis

Correspondences between the “Auffahrtabend” and “Visio” Texts

Adopting the structural, topical and narrative parameters of its Latin parent, the “Auffahrtabend” prophecy also centers upon the same tense interaction between the praying supplicant and the “venerable” man. As in the original, the apparition describes a multitude of tribulations besetting the papacy and cardinals, and laments the simony and greed rampant among the higher clergy. He predicts a crisis in Rome, for which quarrelling cardinals are to blame, and anticipates an insincere and temporary truce. In both versions, the laity refuse to obey their leaders, no one wishes to become pope or cardinal, and priests are afraid to reveal their tonsures. While the “ungläubigen,” or infidels, storm Christendom and battle European kings and princes, corrupt clergy neglect their spiritual responsibilities. And in both accounts, clerics turn their backs upon humility and poverty; thus, claims the man, will their silver and

gold be taken from them, and they will be given iron for gold and glass for gems.⁴² Finally, the “Auffahrtabend” text follows the “Visio” in its closing prediction of ecclesiastical restoration, the renovation of Christian obedience, the expulsion of the infidel through joint French, German, and imperial effort, and a subsequent time of peace and happiness before the final arrival of Antichrist, “der sün der verdamnuß.”⁴³

Retaining almost exactly half of the original text (rendering into German the meaning of 677 out of 1138 Latin words), our adapter decided to translate those passages directly from the Latin. For example, where the “Visio” reads “corpora mortuorum foris proficient. In ecclesiis lupanaria facient, et stabula, et immunditias circa altaria in Christi vituperium,”⁴⁴ the German text provides “die laichnam der christen menschen werden sy verwerfen für die wilden tier und in den kirchen werden sy machen frawen heüser und stell des vichs und ander unerberkait werden sy treiben vor dem altar gotes zu einer unerung.”⁴⁵ Similarly, just as the Latin version predicts that “Roma bellis intestinis vexabitur, procurantibus quibusdam cardinalibus. . . iusto Dei iudicio quia”⁴⁶ and “Ve tibi, Roma, quia per istos tuos. . . humiliaberis et prostereris. Erit tamen aliquando pax. . . simulate non vera,”⁴⁷ the “Auffahrtabend” echoes the content: “Rom wirt mit krieg umbgeben und daz selb wirt zü geen von etlichen cardinalen. . . Wee dir, Rom, wann du wirt bald gediemütigt von deinen veinden. Und understunden wirt ain frid gemacht, und ist doch kain stäter frid.”⁴⁸ And where Brother John was informed that “a tempore infelicis Nicolai tertii, pauci aut nulli facti sunt prelati absque symoniaca pravitate,”⁴⁹ the German translator renders the passage as “von dem das ein Baupbst der Nicolaus gehaissen, was der drit

⁴² Appendix C, lines 62-64.

⁴³ Appendix C, line 77.

⁴⁴ Kelly, 37, Appendix lines 34-35.

⁴⁵ Appendix C, lines 17-19.

⁴⁶ Kelly, 37, Appendix lines 49-50.

⁴⁷ Kelly, 38, Appendix lines 58-60.

⁴⁸ Appendix C, lines 30-32

⁴⁹ Kelly, 39, Appendix lines 90-91.

Babst desselben namens, kain prelat ist on die sünd simony.”⁵⁰ Thus the many directly-translated passages survive the transmission from Latin to German with both context and meaning intact.

Our German adapter borrowed significantly yet also selectively from the Latin “Visio,” particularly from those passages in which the ghostly visitor speaks of ecclesiastical failings and the joint military forces through which God’s justice will be enacted. Clerical simony and greed, ecclesiastical corruption, strife among cardinals, warfare and destruction, the falling away of Christians from obedience to the Church, and concern for the perishing of the faith all clearly resonated for our unknown reader. The sinful reputation of Pope Nicholas III (d. 1280), whom Dante would later assign to the eighth circle of hell for simony, struck him as sufficiently meaningful to render into the German version. So, too, did the appeal of military force through German, French, and imperial secular leaders, action with which the infidel would be expelled and the time of peace initiated before the coming of Antichrist.

From “Visio” to “Auffahrtabend”: Omissions, Deletions and Additions

However, while the adapter employed direct translation in much of his project, he also edited liberally, consciously omitting from his adaptation extensive sections integral to the original Latin text. The content of these deleted passages is illuminating and particularly useful for localizing our German writer’s geographical location, time frame, and ecclesiopolitical preoccupations. In particular, the Latin text’s emphasis on Mediterranean crises and the travails of Roman ecclesiopolitical leadership is here shifted north and refocused rather on the lands of Germany, France, Hungary and Bohemia.

As Kelly demonstrated, the author of the Latin text completed his work near Rome c. 1292, and his work is steeped in concern for lands in the vicinity and the influence upon them of

⁵⁰ Appendix C, lines 56-58.

eastern peoples. In contrast, the “Auffahrtabend” text suggests indifference to southern Europe, Roman politics, and the regions of the middle or far east.⁵¹ The unnamed supplicant does not pray on a “desolate isle,” for example, and while he does specifically bemoan the fall of Jerusalem, all reference to Saracens, Armenia, Italy, the “Kingdom of Apulia” and maritime ports are deleted. Whereas the Latin text identifies Italy specifically as ruled by “falsitas, perdicio, heresis, inobedientia et incontinentia” and subjected to “omnia mala et multa alia,”⁵² the German version relocates these evils more generally to “wälischen landen,” or Latinate regions.⁵³ And while the “Auffahrtabend” text does retain predictions of Rome’s affliction – “woe to you, Rome!” – the brief passages pale in comparison to the extended treatment of the Eternal City in the “Visio.”⁵⁴

Yet because the adapter did not stop after simply omitting Mediterranean regional references, a variety of other alterations provide other important geographic clues and insights. First, he recasts the frightening “rex Tartarorum” (whom the “Visio” anticipates will conspire with other infidel kings to crush Hungary, Poland and parts of Germany) as the “klain/st König,”

⁵¹ For example, three significant passages which the German adapter does *not* incorporate from the Latin “Visio” include: “Armeniam subiugabunt, viros et mulieres, cuiuscumque conditionis sint, sine misericordia interficient. Multi, tam religiosi quam alii, apostabunt. Iuvenes aliquos et iuenculas ad suum abusum reservabunt. Multas partes Orientis destruent” (Kelly, 37, Appendix lines 31-34); “(Nicolaus tertius) vir mire superbie, credens sedem Petri in suo sanguine hereditario possidere, et suos regnis aliquibus proficere, et Romam restaurare, cum hec per se non posset, quosdam de suis fecit cardinals. Inter quos fecit unum serpentem qui suos catulos et ursellos cauda sua ad terram trahet et opprimet, et ursum rufum vituperabit et decipiet. Sed unus ex urso et vacca natus qui adhuc in stercoribus suis dormit, serpentem et catulum eius immundissimum fetidum et mendosum pede suo conculcabit. Et inclinabitur columpna usque ad terram, nec erit sublevans, nec substentans per tempora longiora” (Kelly, 37-38, Appendix, lines 50-58); and “Et ante has tribulationes erunt pape plures, inter quos erit unus ex Germanico et Gallico semine oriundus, nobilis. Hic multas paces faciet in Christianitate et dilectus erit ab hominibus. Et faciet plures cardinals Romanos, Campanos, Ytalicos, et Transmontanos. Et vivet quatuor annis, et quinto morietur, sexagenarius. Post hoc erit Romanus ex vacca natus genere et ursi, qui in pace reget ecclesiam et ursos exaltabit et faciet cardinals sui generis. Et a religione sumptus vivet sex annis. Post hunc erit alius Romanus sub quo multa mala et tribulationes evenient. Et in urbe Roma cedet et effusion sanguinis multa erit, multaue symoniaca pravitas falsitates multe. Et incipient multe tribulationes in mundo et eiectio ecclesie. Vivet annis quatuor et in quinto morietur” (Kelly, 39-40, Appendix lines 110-122)

⁵² Kelly, 37, Appendix, lines 45-48.

⁵³ Appendix C, lines 26-27.

⁵⁴ Kelly notes that the author of the *Visio* not only treats Rome in three lengthy passages, but that the city “enjoys a prominence surpassing Europe’s major kingdoms, surpassing even Italy itself, and its description is full of both intense feeling and knowledgeable detail,” 18.

or “small/est king.” As merciless as the “Visio’s” infidel king, the “klainst König” is consigned to the same defeat by German and French princes.⁵⁵ Second, the adapter replaces a reference to Poland in the “Visio” with a reference instead to “Beheimland,” or Bohemia.⁵⁶ Third, and perhaps most subtly, the adapter modifies the role of France from the Latin original. For example, he omits a “Visio” passage describing the French monarch’s oppression and abuse of his kingdom,⁵⁷ and instead simply states that “the land of France will have its honor and power taken away.”⁵⁸

Koehne and Donckel interpreted these alterations as indicating that the “Auffahrtabend” text was intended as French propaganda,⁵⁹ but the textual adjustments do not justify such a claim. In the passage conveying the final prediction of the “venerable man,” for example, the adapter slightly but significantly readjusts word order to privilege German over French leadership: the original Latin “per Francos et Alamanos et imperatores eorum”⁶⁰ is adapted to “von den *teütschen* und von den francken und von dem Kaiser” (emphasis added).⁶¹ Moreover, references in the “Auffahrtabend” text to France and French leadership remain relatively

⁵⁵ In the *Visio*, the passage reads: “unus rex Tartarorum conspirabit cum quibusdam aliis regibus infidelibus qui vicini sunt illis partibus. Et hii cum potentia magna et multitudine innumerabili venient, et nemine parcent. . . Sed in find per quendam principem cum adiutorio principum Alamanie et Francie debellabuntur” (Kelly, 38, Appendix lines 69-73). The adapter rendered the passage into German as “Item der klain künig wirt kumen mit etlichen künigen und nahent dem selben land sind, und die selben künig werden auch ziehen mit grossem volcke, und werden über ain ander kain erbarmung haben. Aber zum letzten werden sie vertreiben von einem fürsten mit ander fürsten hilf von teutschen landen und auch des künigs von Franckreich” (Appendix C, lines 35-38). The symbolic meaning of the “small(est) king” is not clear, although Koehne notes that a prophecy of one “Jung Hester” cited in the *Reformatio Sigismundi* refers to a “sacer pusillus” who will reform the world as emperor (362, n.1). See also Boehm, 238-39.

⁵⁶ Appendix C, line 34.

⁵⁷ “Regnum Francie virtute et potential debilitabitur propter ecclesiarum et subditorum et pauperum oppressiones, et exactiones, excommunicationes, quas rex eisdem faciet. Et quia in aliis regnis suum volet extendi dominium per malum consilium, multi vicini eius impugnabunt ipsum et impingnet in eum.” Kelly, 38, Appendix, lines 62-66.

⁵⁸ “Item dem land von Franckreich wirt vile er und gewalcz genomen,” Appendix C, line 33.

⁵⁹ Koehne, p. 352-62; Emil Donckel, “Die Prophezeiung des Telesforus,” *Archivum franciscanum historicum* 26 (1933): 29-104, at 66. More convincing as French propaganda, for example, are the pro-Avignon visions reported by Marie Robine in 1387. See Laura Smoller, *History, Prophecy, and the Stars: The Christian Astrology of Pierre d’Ailly, 1350-1420* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 93.

⁶⁰ Kelly, Appendix, 39, lines 104-105

⁶¹ Appendix C, line 73.

peripheral, even within the German text's emphasis upon northern lands. If the German adapter had wished to write a propaganda piece for the French crown, it is reasonable to assume that he would have done so by supplementing the existing text with dramatic new language and symbols (as he did in passages relating to ecclesiastical catastrophe and corruption, as discussed below). That the individual writer was willing to contemplate German, imperial *and* French leadership as the necessary means to an apocalyptic end suggests not Gallic propaganda, but rather an interestingly moderate stance on joint secular intervention in a time of crisis.

As he transformed the "Visio fratris Johannis" into the "Auffahrtabend" text, our German adapter made a number of other significant omissions and alterations specifically addressing the state of the Church and Christendom. Vigilantly retaining every passage from the Latin original pertaining to ecclesiastical strife and spiritual uncertainty, he also heightened the anticlerical tone even further and inserted new, and frequently scathing, observations of his own. Of particular concern to him are the clerical sins of simony and greed, abandonment of the apostolic model, lapses in pastoral care, and the evident need for a renewal of Christian unity.

In a passage translated directly from the Latin,⁶² for example, the adapter predicts the humiliation, imprisonment and death of certain arrogant cardinals whose pride condemns them to hell: because of their mendacity and greed, he continues, few will wish to be a pope or cardinal, the divine service will falter, and Christ's blood will be sold to enrich clerical friends and

⁶² "Aliqui cardinales capientur, aliqui interficientur. Et tunc auferetur eorum Gloria et superbia que tanta est ut non solum Deo assimilari sed dii esse volunt, et ut dii adorari nec inter homines computari volunt. Et ideo Dominus deiciet eos in infimum et auferet ab eis omnem decorum et honorem. Nec vocabuntur cardinales sed presbiteri et dyaconi Romani. Et vix inuenietur qui volet esse cardinalis vel papa, quia nomen eorum vile erit coram omni gente, quia in eis est omnis falsitas, nulla veritas: que ore dicunt, corde non intendunt. Tanta est avaritia eorum quod satiari non valent. Omnis iustitia apud eos est venalis nec aliquis consequitur eam nisi per pecuniam. Et plus danti assistant. Obmissa iustitia beneficia, episcopatus et spiritualia absolutions et alia ecclesiastica vendunt. Et de sanguine Christi quem vendunt, suos nepotulos ditant. A tempore infelicis Nicolai tertii, pauci aut nulli facti sunt prelati absque symoniaca pravitate" (Kelly, 38-39, Appendix lines 78 - 91)

relatives.⁶³ However, he also inserts a *new* passage that specifically chastises sinful prelates for their refusal to follow the apostolic model of humble evangelism and dedication to the love of God.⁶⁴ Rewriting a key Latin passage about the general dissolution of clerical status and freedom and the falling away of Christian obedience, the adapter also extends it to include his own specific reference to the destruction of “der gottes dienst” or divine office.⁶⁵

Another intriguing addition to the text is the reformulation of its first sentence. Whereas the “Visio” simply locates the man on a desolate isle, the “Auffahrtabend” visionary is described in a more specific position: “als ich lag an meinem gebet.” Significantly, this phrase suggests that the adapter rearranged the opening on the basis of Hildegard of Bingen’s letter to Werner of Kirchheim, “in lecto egritudinis.”⁶⁶ In the opening sentence of this letter, Hildegard describes lying ill in bed before receiving a vision of a beautiful woman who thundered forth condemnation of the sinful Church and prophesied calamity for the unrighteous.⁶⁷ The relevance of this passage to the concerns of the “Auffahrtabend” adapter are evident, and his decision to introduce, or ground, the prophecy in the visionary authority of the great 12th-century Teutonic sybil suggests a sustained interest in the medieval genre of prophetic writing generally, and in its Germanic tradition specifically.⁶⁸ Nor did the resonance between the texts and the “gebet”

⁶³ “Und auch ettleich Cardinal . . . unmässlichen leben,” Appendix C, 43-58.

⁶⁴ “Und darumb dass sy nit nachfolgen den wercken der heiligen Zwelfpoten der stat sie vertretten, dass sy nit wellen diemütig und das sy nit die ungeläubigen bekerent zu dem glauben. Und das sy ir leben nit geben umb die liebe gotz als dann ir vordern haben getan,” Appendix C, 59-61.

⁶⁵ Appendix C, line 39.

⁶⁶ I would like to thank Robert Lerner for this observation.

⁶⁷ Ed. J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia cursus completus, series Latina*, cxcvii, cols. 269-71. See also Lieven van Acker (ed.), *Hildegardis Bingensis Epistolarium*, II (Turnhout: Brepols, 1993), 149r, 1-6.

⁶⁸ On Hildegard’s prophetic work and its reception, see Michael Embach, *Die Schriften Hildegards von Bingen: Studien zu ihrer Überlieferung und Rezeption im Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit* (Mainz: Akademie Verlag, 2003); Robert Murray, “Prophecy in Hildegard”, in *Hildegard of Bingen: The Context of her Thought and Art*, ed. Charles Burnett and Peter Dronke (London: Warburg Institute, 1998), 81-8; Kathryn Kerby-Fulton, “Prophet and Reformer: ‘Smoke in the Vineyard’”, in *Voice of the Living Light: Hildegard of Bingen and her World*, ed. Barbara Newman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 70-90; Friedhelm Jürgensmeier, “St. Hildegard ‘Prophetissa Teutonica’”, in *Hildegard von Bingen, 1179-1979: Festschrift zum 800. Todestag der Heiligen*, ed. Anton Ph. Brück (Mainz: Gesellschaft für mittelrheinische Kirchengeschichte, 1979), 273-293.

reference go unnoticed, for in the *Reformatio Sigismundi* by Eberhart Windeck (d. 1442), not only is Hildegard's letter translated into German,⁶⁹ but the "Auffahrtabend" prophecy appears under the caption: "Also sant Hiltgart an irem slofe lag und got in einer erschinung liess gesehen in eins bischofs wise."⁷⁰

Finally, in the simplest but perhaps most significant addition to the text, the adapter chooses to insert one word which underpins the entire prophecy and transforms the apocalyptic scenario to better reflect the woes of late fourteenth-century Christendom. After the expulsion of the infidel by French, German and imperial forces described in both the Latin and German versions, a single but striking deviation arises in the latter: where the Latin anticipates the "renovation of sanctity and the construction of the church"⁷¹ the German instead speaks of the "renewal of the *unity* of the Church"⁷² (emphasis added). The explicit reference to restored Christian unity, "ainigung,"⁷³ pins down the "Auffahrtabend" prophecy's origins in a period of sharp disunity – in other words, within the context of schism politics.⁷⁴ With the unprecedented election of two rival popes in the fall of 1378 erupted a division of the church in which scholars and laypeople alike saw a sign of the approaching Last Judgment. "The Great Schism brought into the sharpest possible focus all the various elements of the prophetic tradition. . . the forces of Antichrist creating schism and persecution in the church, the expectation of terrible tribulation and judgement, the prophetic summons of the Pope back to Rome to fulfill the full destiny of the

⁶⁹ Altmann, *Eberhart Windeckes*, 351-357.

⁷⁰ Altmann, *Eberhart Windeckes*, 357-60. See also Lauchert, 852.

⁷¹ ". . . et restituetur Romana ecclesia. Et erunt recotres eius recti et iusti, non sequentes munera, et prelati boni. Et revertentur ad obedientiam omnes, et renovabitur sanctitas, et ecclesie tunc edificabuntur" (Kelly, 39, Appendix lines 105-8).

⁷² "Und alle gerecht prelaten werden widerkomen zü der untertanigkait, und wirt (verneut) die ainigung der Kristenhait, und wirt dann ain ainigkait saliger zeit bis das kumbt der sün der verdammuß." Appendix C, lines 75-77. (H), the text edited in Appendix C, has the variant reading "probiert," which also appears in (MU), (P), and (W). The superior reading is "verneut," as in (B1), (B2), (E), (KB), (M1), (M2), (M3), (V1), (V2), (V3), (V4), and (WB).

⁷³ All of the manuscript copies I have seen contain this crucial explicit reference to "ainigung."

⁷⁴ On the relationship between prophetic composition and medieval political developments, see Robert Lerner, "Medieval Prophecy and Politics," *Annali dell'Istituto storico italo-germanico in Trento*, 25 (1999): 417-432.

renovatio ecclesie.”⁷⁵ To put it another way, the papal schism provided both historical evidence for and literary momentum to prophetic thought in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Yet if the German prophecy is to be understood as a schism-driven apocalyptic text, why did the adapter choose to excise so many passages relevant to Roman papal crisis? How are we to understand the relative mildness of his stance on the see of St. Peter? And, assuming that the papal schism was his primary focus, why did he not paint in more vivid and detailed color the shocking circumstance of rival popes excommunicating each other and their respective followers? The author of the “Auffahrtabend” could easily have crafted a stentorian indictment of the riven Church, but he instead omitted several relevant passages and inserted only one word of his own choosing. If this is a purely schism-based text, why does the sobbing supplicant still reflect first on the loss of Jerusalem rather than the crisis of St. Peter’s see, and why does the “venerable bishop” speak more of Germany, France and northern lands than he does of Rome? Specific regional concerns provide many of the answers to these questions, so before pursuing them in more detail, let us first explore the evidence at hand for the origins and circulation of the “Auffahrtabend” prophecy.

III. Provenance and Transmission

To summarize the findings of the preceding textual comparison, the most important transformations from “Visio” to “Auffahrtabend” are a strong shift of emphasis from southern to northern Europe, the inclusion of Bohemia as a country beset by the “ungläubigen,” heightened anticlericalism, a virtual exclusion of local political affairs in Rome, and a reference to the renewal of Christian unity. In order to pursue the specific questions of regional provenance and translation date, these clues will be considered in the following along with evidence from both

⁷⁵ Reeves, *Influence of Prophecy*, 422.

Latin and German manuscript sources. While a thorough discussion of each manuscript and printed source, its contents, and probable ownership is beyond the scope of this paper, more detailed codicological information and catalogue references have been gathered in Appendices A and B. Viewed in sum, these diverse sources of evidence pin down the text's translation and circulation in the German-speaking region comprising Austria, Bohemia and southeastern Germany, and a likely point of origin in or near Vienna.

The first piece of evidence lies in the origination of the “Auffahrtabend” text from a Latin family of circulation originating in Bohemia. As determined by Kelly, the “Visio” circulated in both a full-length text and a redacted version, in which the preface and introduction were abbreviated, the conclusion deleted, and new material inserted: both versions are included in her critical edition. The fullest and most comprehensive copy of the “Visio” consists of five sections: first, a long preface; second, an introduction to the vision beginning “In vigilia namque ascensionis;” third, the vision itself; fourth, a conclusion and exhortation to prayer; and fifth, a short postscript recounting the circumstances in which the prophecy was copied. Sharing a uniformly consistent narrative structure, all twenty-three known “Auffahrtabend” copies contain only the second and third parts of the “Visio” – that is, the introductory reference to the vigil of Ascension Day and the body of the vision itself. The only known early copy of the “Visio fratris Johannis” containing all five sections is contained in a manuscript bequeathed to the Vatican by Queen Christina of Sweden; Vat. Reg. lat. 132, fols. 202r-205r⁷⁶ (henceforth cited as “V”). While a different hand wrote the second part, a collection of seven prophecies, this portion comprises the “Visio fratris Johannis” and dates from just after 1346.⁷⁷ Based upon textual analysis, Kelly argues that V is the sole representative of one family of circulation (the full

⁷⁶ Donckel used this text in his edition of the “Visio fratris Joannis.” See note 23 above.

⁷⁷ For an explanation of this dating, see Kelly, 3, n.6.

version), while the second (redacted) family is represented here by two other manuscript sources: “N” and “C.”

MS Nürnberg Cent. IV, 32 fols. 16v-18r (“N”), a fourteenth-century manuscript whose precise dating has yet to be satisfactorily determined, presents a much different textual structure than that of “V.” Of the five parts described above, “N” contains only the third section, that recounting the vision itself. Textually similar to “N” is Cambridge, CCC 404, fols. 104r-107r (henceforth “C”), dating from roughly the early 1380s. In both sources, only the body of the prophecy remains intact: a summary replaces the preface, and an entirely different introduction replaces that contained in “V.” This fact is crucial for determining the Latin prophecy’s relationship to the German copies, for neither “N” nor “C” include the necessary reference to the vigil of the Ascension, material which was clearly present in the source used by the adapter of the “Auffahrtabend” prophecy. On these grounds, the families represented by “N” and “C” can be excluded from the list of possible progenitors of the copy used by our German-speaking reader.

The fourth Latin manuscript source, MS Basel A XI 60, v. 24r-31r (“B”), was transferred from the Carthusian monastery to the Universitätsbibliothek in Basel⁷⁸ and dates from c. 1400.⁷⁹ Containing the preface and introduction as well as the body of the prophecy, “B” contains the crucial reference to the Ascension vigil as found in “V,” and structurally resembles the “Auffahrtabend” text; as noted by Kelly, however, its readings tend instead to agree with “N” and “C.”⁸⁰ Indeed, “B” omits a crucial word found in all the other early Latin sources and nearly

⁷⁸ MS Universitätsbibliothek Basel AX 60, fols. 24r-31r. See Jeanne Bignami-Odier, *Études sur Jean de Roquetaillade* (Paris: Vrin, 1952), 152.

⁷⁹ Kelly, 7, n. 19.

⁸⁰ Kelly, 12.

all of the German copies:⁸¹ where “V” reads “*multe insule timebunt*,”⁸² and the “Auffahrtabend” prophecy provides “*vil insel werden si fürchten*”⁸³ (emphasis added), “B” has only “*multi timebunt*.”⁸⁴ The German translation must derive from a Latin manuscript family containing “*insule*,” and thus one may remove the family represented by “B” from the list of likely progenitors.

Further evidence that the “Auffahrtabend” prophecy derives from the family represented by “V” is that while both “V” and “B” contain the reading “*sed in fine per quendam principem cum adiutorio principum Alamanie et Francie debellabunt/ur*,”⁸⁵ only “V” adds “*et expelluntur*.” This phrasing is clearly echoed in the German text: “Aber zum letzsten werden sie vertreiben von einem fürsten mit ander fürsten.”⁸⁶ The German “*vertreiben*,” meaning “to drive out” or “to expel,” demands the presence of the Latin “*expelluntur*” in the translator’s exemplar of the “Visio”. This conclusion is significant not only for establishing as closely as possible the original text which fell into the hands of our German translator, but also for determining provenance.

Copied by a scribe in Pilgram (Pelhřimov) in southern Bohemia in 1346, a region with many German speakers before the Hussite revolution, the family of the “Visio fratris Johannis” prophecy represented by “V” would have been easily copied and transmitted within Bohemia, Austria and southeastern Germany.⁸⁷ Additional witness to this southeastern regional origin and transmission is a later Latin “Visio” copy in Bamberg Staatsbibliothek Msc. Theol. 104, fols.

⁸¹ The German manuscript copy without “*inseln*” (B2) is otherwise nearly identical with the rest, however, and thus cannot derive from a different Latin original.

⁸² Kelly, line 38.

⁸³ Appendix C, line 21.

⁸⁴ Kelly, 37, Appendix, line 36 (see note ‘x’).

⁸⁵ Kelly, 38, Appendix, lines 74-5.

⁸⁶ Appendix C, lines 37-38.

⁸⁷ Kelly, 3, note 6.

61r-62r, dating from shortly after 1427 (“BG”).⁸⁸ Containing four out of the five possible sections (introduction, vision, conclusion and postscript), “BG” omits only the preface and is also thus structurally similar to “V” and could also be related to the family represented by “B.” In “BG,” contested passages follow both “V” and the “Auffahrtabend” prophecy, and in several cases offer better readings than “B.” For example, BG contains the reference to “multe insule” missing from “B.”⁸⁹ Viewed in sum, the preceding nails down our German translator’s exemplar as deriving from the family represented by “V,” with close association to the family of the 15th-century copy in “BG.”

Assuming then that the translator’s copy of the “Visio” was a relative of that penned in mid-fourteenth-century Bohemia, what can we deduce about his geographical context based on evidence from the later circulation of “Auffahrtabend” manuscript copies? A great deal, as it turns out, for every one of the twenty-three known manuscript copies can be definitively proven to have originated in southeastern Germany and Austria. First, each copy was written in Oberdeutsch (with variation by Swabian, Bavarian, or Frankish dialect), a fact which indicates a remarkably cohesive geography of transmission across the fifteenth century.⁹⁰ Second, analysis of manuscript contents also reveals that those who copied the “Auffahrtabend” text were consistently preoccupied not only with broad ecclesiastical and spiritual matters, but with specific political and cultural concerns local to Germany, Austria and Bohemia. For example, seven contain documents pertinent to imperial and/or Bohemian politics;⁹¹ five contain specifically Austrian chronicles or civic material;⁹² four contain texts authored by German

⁸⁸ Kelly, 12.

⁸⁹ Kelly, 39, Appendix, line 92.

⁹⁰ For information on codicology and contents of manuscript copies, see Appendix A.

⁹¹ (D), (G), (M3), (P), (V3), (V4) and (W)

⁹² (M2), (M4), (V1), (V2) and (V3)

writers;⁹³ and two were copied by people known to have worked in German lands.⁹⁴ All appear to have been compiled by people preoccupied with ecclesiastical issues, southeastern German regional concerns, and prophetic materials (over half of the manuscripts contain prophecies in addition to the “Auffahrtabend” text).⁹⁵

As mentioned above, the fact that only minor textual deviations exist between the known manuscript copies renders nearly impossible the task of establishing a stemma. Lauchert identified the copy in Codex Vindob Lat.4477 as offering the superior reading,⁹⁶ an assertion which has not been disproven even with the addition of so many newly-discovered manuscript copies.⁹⁷ Moreover, the early printed copies also incorporate the same narrative structure, and provide only enough variation to suggest that they did not tend to serve as exemplars for later renditions back into manuscript form. Three examples will suffice: first, the text incorporated into the *Reformatio Sigismundi* (edited by Lauchert) is indistinguishable from the various manuscript copies except for the unique replacement of “Inseln” (islands) with “Cristenmenschen” (Christians),⁹⁸ an alteration not found in any of the manuscript copies. Second, the Sigismund text reverses and reduces a phrase which appears consistently in the manuscript copies as “vil valschait und keczerey, und vil unkeusch, vil wuchers;” in contrast, the printed version reads “vil unkeusch und wucherey,” a formulation found elsewhere only in the

⁹³ (B1), (H), (L), (MU)

⁹⁴ (HB) and (M1)

⁹⁵ (B2), (C), (E), (H), (L), (M1), (MU), (P), (V3), (V4), (W), and (WB).

⁹⁶ Lauchert, 855. (V2) in Appendix A.

⁹⁷ The particular minor deviations between manuscript copies tend to involve only a word or two, and typically manifest in a few different forms. I have not been able to identify any pattern or consistent grouping of variants by manuscript copy. Contested readings (superior readings first) include: “vil inseln” vs. “vil” (Appendix C, line 21); “einem fuersten mit hilf der fuersten” vs. “mit der gotes hilf” (Appendix C, line 38); “eysen für gold, glazz für edelgestain” vs. “glazz fuer gold, und eysen für edelgestain” (Appendix C, lines 62-3); “stecken für pferd” vs. “stecken für Ross” (Appendix C, lines 63); and “wirt verneut” vs. “wirt probiert” (Appendix C, line 76). As best I can determine based on these and other variants, (M3), (B1), (V1) and (V2) offer superior readings, though there is no obvious relationship between them and the other copies. Of the copies I have examined, (P) contains the most consistently corrupted readings, followed closely by (MU).

⁹⁸ “vil insel werden sie fürchten und werden daraus fliehen,” (Appendix C, lines 21-22). The Sigismund text reads instead “vil *cristenmenschen* werdent yn übel vörchten und sy fliehen” (emphasis added), Lauchert, 859.

sixteenth-century Latin manuscript which we know was copied from a printed source.⁹⁹ Third, according to Koehne, the printed copies that are *not* part of the *Reformatio Sigismundi* conclude with the phrase “das ist die Wahrheit” and do not contain the reference to 1401 in the explicit.¹⁰⁰ Since none of the known manuscript copies bear that reading, it would thus appear that the early printed versions did not serve as exemplars for later manuscript copies.¹⁰¹

IV. Adaptation Date

Assuming now that our German translator lived and wrote within the southeastern region of Germany, Bohemia and Austria, what information can we glean regarding the date of his work? The task of pinning down an adaptation date is of course complicated by the problem of manuscript survival, but fortunately both codicological and textual information provide useful clues. While no verifiably fourteenth-century copies of the “Auffahrtabend” adaptation have been discovered (our earliest is dated roughly to c.1400),¹⁰² external and internal indices suggest a translation date certainly between 1378 and 1400, and more likely between c. 1386 and 1396 – that is, approximately a century after the birth of the Latin “Visio” in 1292.

The twenty-three extant manuscript copies range in date from the early fifteenth century (c. 1400¹⁰³ and 1416¹⁰⁴) up through the sixteenth century.¹⁰⁵ Twenty (87%) date from the fifteenth century, with a preponderance originating in the 1460s and 1470s; of these, seventeen (74%) contain the internal dating in the explicit to 1401, which generally reads “und das wirt

⁹⁹ Stuttgart Landesbibliothek, Cod. Donaueschingen 704, f.230r-231f. See n.5 above.

¹⁰⁰ Koehne, 358.

¹⁰¹ I have not seen every printed copy and the later transmission of the prophecy in both manuscript and printed form certainly merits further investigation. Courtney Kneupper’s forthcoming doctoral dissertation will further investigate this topic, examining ownership of medieval prophetic manuscripts in Upper Germany.

¹⁰² (M3)

¹⁰³ (M3)

¹⁰⁴ (L), followed by (B1) in 1424, (B2) in 1438 and (M1) in 1448.

¹⁰⁵ (V1) dating from 1546 and (V4) from 1560.

alles geschen wenn man zelt von Christi gepurd vierzechen hundert jar und in dem ersten jar.”¹⁰⁶

There are, however, a few variations: one reads 1400,¹⁰⁷ two copies provide both 1401 *and* another date (1417 and 1424),¹⁰⁸ and a third presents 1420 and 1470 as the endpoints of the prophecy’s apocalyptic time frame.¹⁰⁹ Yet another, from the sixteenth century, dates the events to 1397.¹¹⁰ While the latter is interesting and reinforced by the survival of a copy dated to c. 1400, none of these conclusively pin down a date of adaptation, so we must look elsewhere for evidence about the chronological window of opportunity.¹¹¹

Koehne pursued the question of dating in 1897, albeit without knowledge of the Latin original, and correctly concluded that the “Auffahrtabend” prophecy is not an *ex eventu* or backdated prophecy.¹¹² Such prophecies bear the obvious advantage of historical hindsight, for specific events to “future” (already transpired) events could greatly enhance the visionary authority of an eschatological text. Medieval prophecies often identify the century’s end as the period of crisis, transition or doom, particularly if the date is close at hand. The “Visio” text, for example, predicts that the disastrous events will transpire in the year 1300, only eight years after it was first written down by “Brother John.” Although our German adapter excises significant portions of material from the Latin original, he adds nothing which clearly and miraculously “prophecies” an event which transpired in 1401.¹¹³ On the contrary, as discussed further below,

¹⁰⁶ These copies are (B2), (C), (E), (G), (H), (HB), (K), (M1), (M2), (M4), (MU), (S), (V2), (V3), (V4), (W), and (WB). In both (L) and (H), the word “hundert” is missing.

¹⁰⁷ (M1)

¹⁰⁸ (L) has 1401 and either 1417 or 1418, depending on how the passage is interpreted: “in dem vierzechen hundert und ersten Jar und darnach in dem xvii Jar.” (B1) reads “wann man zalt von Christi gepurd vierzechen hundert jar und dar nach in dem xxiii jar. Und in dem ersten jar nach vierzechen hundert jar. . .”

¹⁰⁹ (P) reads: “In der zeit als man zelt tausent vier hundert und zwainzig iar, bis das man wirt zelt vierhundert und sibenzige iar got. . .”

¹¹⁰ (V1) “So man zalt hat Tausent dreu hundert vnd in dem sibenundneunzigsten Jar.”

¹¹¹ Reference to 1347 in the incipit of a copy attributed to Henry of Langenstein (D) can probably be chalked up to an erroneous rendering of 1397, the date of the theologian’s death.

¹¹² Koehne, 359.

¹¹³ Koehne states that he was unable to find any correspondence between the text and events of 1401, and my own attempts to do so have also yielded little.

the text's striking prediction of the end of papal tribulations and the renewal of Christian unity in the year 1401 is so egregious an historical error that even if no early copy had survived, a translation date subsequent to 1400 would seem most improbable.

Attributions also provide some clues as to the temporal window during which the adapter worked. While the weeping recipient of the "Auffahrtabend" prophecy's message is never identified in the text itself, the vision was frequently and intriguingly credited to the theologian Henry of Langenstein (c.1325 – 1397).¹¹⁴ Also referred to as Henry of Hesse (due to his birthplace in Haimbuch in Hesse), Langenstein studied at the University of Paris and quickly rose to prominence as a professor of philosophy in 1363, and of theology in 1375. Upon the outbreak of the Great Schism in 1378, Henry allied himself with the Roman camp and defended Urban VI in both spoken and written form against the French antipope Clement VII. Between 1382 and 1384, he spent significant time at Kloster Eberbach in the middle Rhineland.¹¹⁵ By 1384, the climate at Paris had grown intolerable for Roman supporters, and Langenstein accepted the invitation of Duke Albert III of Austria to join the faculty at the University of Vienna. He spent the remainder of his life there, teaching theology and canon law, and prolifically writing sermons, pamphlets, letters and treatises on topics ranging from astronomy and asceticism to conciliarism and the historical-political nightmare of the papal schism.¹¹⁶ Langenstein died in Vienna on February 11, 1397.

¹¹⁴ On Langenstein's writings and the university milieu in Vienna, see Shank, *Unless You Believe, You Shall Note Understand: Logic, University, and Society in Late-Medieval Vienna* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

¹¹⁵ F. Falk, "Der mittelhheinische Freundeskreis des Heinrich von Langenstein," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 15 (1894), 517-28.

¹¹⁶ The literature on Henry of Langenstein's writings is extensive. In order of publication date, useful studies include: Otto Hartwig, *Untersuchungen über die Schriften Heinrichs von Langenstein* (Marburg: Elwert, 1857); Lynn Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, vol. 3 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1929), 472-520; Hubert Pruckner, *Studien zu den astrologischen Schriften des Heinrich von Langenstein* (Berlin: B.G. Teubner, 1933); Thomas Hohmann, *Initienregister der Werke Heinrichs von Langenstein* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1976); Georg Kreuzer, *Heinrich von Langenstein: Studien zur Biographie und zu den Schismatraktaten unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Epistola pacis und der Epistola concilii pacis* (Paderborn:

Twelve of the twenty-three known manuscript copies (52%) are attributed to him,¹¹⁷ and 92% (12 of 13) of those bearing any attribution at all.¹¹⁸ The common attribution of this prophetic text to the theologian, mathematician and university professor not only provides further evidence of its origination within the southeastern region discussed above, but also plays a role in establishing a translation date prior to 1397. One manuscript copy originating in Austria open with the statement that the vision appeared specifically to Henry of Langenstein on the day of the Vigil of Ascension, 1397, the year of his death.¹¹⁹ Another mid-15th century copy reads in the explicit: “die hernach geschriben propheczey ist gefunden worden nach maister Heinrichs von Hessen tod in seinem pett zu Wien.”¹²⁰ A further witness to the likelihood that the “Auffahrtabend” text was written prior to Henry’s death comes from sixteenth-century Viennese antiquary Wolfgang Lazius. In his *Fragmentum vaticinii cuiusdam Methodii* (1547), Lazius includes a copy of the “Auffahrtabend” prophecy under the title: “Revelatio cuiusdam religiosi facta illi a Deo inter preces et post mortem M. Heinrichi de Hassia, primi Theologi Academiae Viennensis inter eius libros reperta, et nobis nuper adeo in antiquissimo libro sub finem Apocalypseos in membrane observata.”¹²¹ While one cannot prove that the manuscript in which Lazius found the “Auffahrtabend” text belonged to the renowned theologian, it is certainly possible given the theologian’s professional interests in conciliarism, prophecy, and reform after coming to Vienna in 1384 and prior to his death in 1397.

F. Schöningh, 1987). Thomas Hohmann provides a useful reference to Langenstein’s writings in his *Initienregister der Werke Heinrichs von Langenstein* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1976).

¹¹⁷ (B2), (D), (E), (G), (H), (L), (M4), (S), (V1), (V3), (V4), and (W)

¹¹⁸ The sole exception of which I am aware is (P), in which the “Auffahrtabend” prophecy is attributed to a certain “Reymundus,” possibly Raymond Lull.

¹¹⁹ (V1), dating from 1456. “In Nomine Domini Jhesu Cristi amen, Anno eisdem, so man zalt hat Tausent drew hundert vnd in dem sibendundneunsten Jar, an dem heiligen auffart abent. . . “ Lauchert, 855, note 2.

¹²⁰ (G)

¹²¹ Lazius, *Fragmentum*, 52b-53b. The text is included in Lauchert’s critical edition, 856-67.

As one moves back chronologically from the *terminus ad quem* of 1400, associations between the prophecy's contents and current events and *mentalités* rapidly emerge. Most compelling is evidence that the eschatological text resonated within the context of the Great Schism. Stemming from political feuds within the college of cardinals, the schism bifurcated papal authority, and shook Western Christendom to its very core. Indeed, Koehne claimed in his analysis of the "Auffahrtabend" text that there could be no doubt of the prophecy's connection to the schism.¹²² To illustrate his claim, he cited the following passage which does indeed seem to address the current pontifical crisis: "Rome will be beset by war due to certain cardinals. Woe to you, Rome! You will soon be humiliated by your enemies, after which peace will be established. . . but not an enduring peace."¹²³ Koehne did not know of the "Visio," and thus could not have perceived that this passage (in addition to many others) was a *direct translation* from the Latin original rather than material crafted anew in the German vernacular. Yet his argument still holds, for the very resonance between the circulating Latin prophecy and Christian tribulations post-1378 seems to have been what sparked the German adapter's interest. In other words, we may still operate under the assumption that the "Auffahrtabend" prophecy was birthed in part by the ecclesiastical debacle and spiritual trauma of late-fourteenth-century papal schism.

Assuming now that the German text originated within the context of schism politics, let us consider now the *terminus ad quem*, or the earliest date at which the "Auffahrtabend" might have been reformulated from the Latin. The "Visio" was circulating by the mid-fourteenth century, as evidenced not only by manuscript distribution but also by two additional witnesses discussed by Kelly.¹²⁴ First, the Brabantine poet who wrote the Middle Dutch *Boec van der*

¹²² Koehne, 360.

¹²³ "Wee dir Rom, du wirt bald gediemütigt von deinen veinden. Und understanden wirt ain frid gemacht und ist doch kain stäter frid. . ." Appendix C, lines 30-32.

¹²⁴ Kelly, 12-17.

Wraken or *Book of Vengeance* (1345-1352) drew on three prophetic texts for his apocalyptic piece, one of which was a copy of the “Visio” in a Latin pamphlet.¹²⁵ Second, the Franciscan John of Rupescissa had a version of the Latin prophecy before him as he wrote his *Liber Ostensor* in Avignon c. 1356, as he quotes from it both accurately and extensively.¹²⁶ Both men appear to have drawn on copies similar in structure to the family represented by “V” – that is, a copy containing both the crucial introductory and concluding sections. From these windows into the early circulation history of the “Visio,” one may be reasonably certain that the “Visio” had reached a German-speaking audience by the 1360s or 1370s. Moreover, the palpably schism-related content in the “Auffahrtabend” version makes a powerful case for positing an earliest date of translation at 1378 or 1379 – more likely the latter, given the election of Robert of Geneva as Clement VII in the fall of 1378 and the probability that the adapter, like most of his contemporaries, could not immediately have foretold the impending decades-long struggle. Within a year or so, however, the potential for long-term crisis had become clear: Pierre d’Ailly, for example, preached an eschatological sermon in August of 1379, in which “there is already a vague link between the Schism and eschatology.”¹²⁷ In the same year, moreover, he preached a sermon drawing on Hildegard of Bingen’s exposition of the apocalypse – as Smoller puts it, “the schism now appears in the context of the descriptions of Revelation.”¹²⁸

By 1386, however, the connection had been firmly made between the coincidentally apt prognostications of the “Visio fratris Johannis” and the fourteenth-century papal disaster, now

¹²⁵ Kelly, 12-13. He mentions the date of Ascension Day, 1292, so his exemplar must have included the introduction and conclusion found in B, though it also contains the reference to Brother John in the preface. P.C. van der Eerden, “Eschatology in the ‘Boec van der Wraken,’” in *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, ed. W. Verbeke et al (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1988), 425-440.

¹²⁶ Like the author of the *Boec van der Wraken*, Rupescissa must have had a copy of the “Visio which (like”V”) contained both the introduction and conclusion. Kelly, 14. On Rupescissa’s text, see Robert E. Lerner, and Christine Morerod-Fattebert. *Liber secretorum eventuum* (Fribourg, Suisse: Éditions universitaires, 1994).

¹²⁷ Smoller, 96

¹²⁸ Ibid. On dating the sermon, see p.189, n.66

nearly a decade old. In that year, reference to a Latin text with the incipit “*In vigilia namque ascensionis*” (the “Visio”) surfaced in a tract written by the pseudonymous prophet Telesphorus of Cosenza.¹²⁹ Described by one scholar as “the star prophet of the Great Schism,”¹³⁰ Telesphorus claimed to have received inspiration about the papal crisis and Last Things, and his immensely popular treatise, “Regarding the Schism and the preceding tribulations of the Church” (the *Libellus de causis*), blended earlier prophetic and apocalyptic works such as the “Visio fratris Johannis” with those of Joachim of Fiore, John of Rupescissa, and many others.¹³¹ Donckel described it as a “Florilegium of Joachite, Pseudo-Joachite and Francophile writings.”¹³² Though the original text of Telesphorus’ prophecy no longer exists, many manuscript copies survived from the fourteenth through seventeenth centuries, and it spread quickly across France and Germany by the fifteenth century.¹³³ Of particular interest for our purpose is that sometime between 1386 and 1391,¹³⁴ it came to the attention of Henry of Langenstein whose *Liber adversus Thelesphori eremitaie vaticinae* (1392) refuted Telesphorus in scathing terms as a false prophet.¹³⁵ The complex relationship between Langenstein and the prophetic tradition will be further investigated below, but for our immediate purpose of establishing a date of adaptation, Langenstein’s tract is particularly useful. Considered with the evidence above for a *terminus ante quem* of 1396, therefore, the evident circulation of the “Visio

¹²⁹ Donckel, “Die Prophezeiung,” 65-66.

¹³⁰ Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Poets, Saints, and Visionaries of the Great Schism, 1378-1417* (University Park: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 184.

¹³¹ Koehne, 359. Koehne cites the exemplar of the Hamilton collection of the K. Museum of Berlin (Nr. 628), fol. 4 Z.15. On the contents, sources and transmission of Telesphorus’s writings, see Kampers, *Kaiserprophetien und Kaisersagen im Mittelalter* (Bamberg: Buchner, 1895), 235-249. The text exists in numerous manuscripts, and was first printed as the “Liber de magnis tribulationibus in proximo futuris, etc.” in Venice, 1516.

¹³² Donckel, “Die Prophezeiung Telesforus,” 32

¹³³ Donckel, “Telesforus,” 96. The oldest known copy was made by a member of the University of Paris c. 1396. Donckel, 77.

¹³⁴ Donckel, 48.

¹³⁵ Edited in Bernhard Pez, “Thesaurus Anecdotorum Noviss,” I, II, (Augsburg, 1721-9), 507-64 (Donckel cites 505-68 instead).

fratris Johannis” throughout German-speaking regions by the mid-1380s suggests that our German adapter completed his project between c.1386 and 1396.

V. Henry of Langenstein and the “Auffahrtabend” Prophecy

Having narrowed the provenance and date of the “Auffahrtabend” prophecy’s translation to the southeastern German-speaking region of Europe roughly between 1386 and 1396, let us finally turn to the puzzle of our adapter’s identity and motivation – or, at least, the identity and motivations assumed by manuscript copyists. Many questions remain, particularly regarding the myriad attributions of the text to Henry of Langenstein. Lauchert, for example, observed that the association between Langenstein and prophecy appeared most unlikely given the scholar’s “known resistance to this sort of prophetic belief.”¹³⁶ Why, then, would the theologian who scathingly dismissed the prognostications of Telesphorus in 1392 be so markedly linked with a prophetic text? What led contemporary and later copyists to think that this was not only a possibility, but a certainty? And what might we glean from the text’s additional attribution to Hildegard of Bingen in the widely-circulating 15th-century *Reformatio Sigismundi* of Eberhard Windeck? While it may initially appear odd for the text to be associated with a theologian noted for an anti-prophetic treatise, two major arguments speak to the attribution’s appropriateness. The evidence does not allow one to identify the adapter definitively, but it does strongly point to a member of Henry of Langenstein’s circle.

First, Langenstein was not necessarily hostile to all prophets or prophecies, only “false” ones, an important distinction shared by other academic notables at universities across Europe. “True” prophecies, particularly those predicting the apocalypse, had by the late-fourteenth

¹³⁶ Lauchert, 853.

century become a topic of serious intellectual attention.¹³⁷ Smoller observes not only that “many scholars were obsessed by the study of the Last Things,” but that “their apocalyptic notions found a focus in and drew inspiration from the appearance of the Great Schism.”¹³⁸ Among the prophets whom Langenstein regarded as genuine were Hildegard of Bingen and, at least during the earlier years of his career, Joachim of Fiore. Along with his colleague at Paris, Pierre d’Ailly, Langenstein drew extensively on Hildegard’s writings, in particular her prediction of a Christian schism. When in 1382 the French court compelled the professors of the University of Paris to acknowledge Clement VII, Langenstein left the university and spent some time at the Cistercian monastery of Eberbach near Wiesbaden where he became close to Bishop Eckard of Worms.¹³⁹

As Hartwig has observed, the theologian drew during this time on Hildegard’s epistolary writings in his own texts, particularly her letters to the clergy of Cologne and Trier;¹⁴⁰ he knew and used her prophetic works as well.¹⁴¹ This is particularly clear in a letter he wrote to Bishop Eckhard in 1383 – the “Epistola de Schismate,” as Langenstein himself titled it – a letter which decries the ecclesiastical abuses of the day.¹⁴² In this letter he excoriates false prophets of the day, distinguishing between them and “true” ones, such as Joachim of Fiore, “said to have had

¹³⁷ Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski addresses the relationship between medieval prophecy, the Great Schism, and university theologians including Pierre d’Ailly and Henry of Langenstein in her, *Poets, Saints, and Visionaries of the Great Schism, 1378-1417* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), especially Chapter 6 (“Prophets of the Great Schism), 165-200. However, the “Auffahrtabend” text does not appear in her analysis.

¹³⁸ Smoller, 92

¹³⁹ Falk, “Freundeskreis Heinrichs von Langenstein”

¹⁴⁰ Hartwig, *Henricus de Langenstein*, II, p.31; see also Sommerfeldt, “Die Prophetien der hl. Hildegard von Bingen in einem Schreiben des Magisters Heinrich v. Langenstein (1383), und Langensteins Trostbrief über den Tod eines Bruders des Wormser Bischofs Eckard von Ders (um 1384),” *Historisches Jahrbuch* 30 (1909): 43-61, at 34 and 53.

¹⁴¹ Sommerfeldt, 45.

¹⁴² “Epistola magistri Heinrichi Langenstein dicti de Hassia de scismate,” edited in Sommerfeldt, “Die Prophetien,” 46-61. Another letter which he wrote here to the same bishop, on the occasion of the death of the bishop's brother, is entitled “De contemptu mundi” and was edited by Sommerfeldt in “Zeitschrift für kath. Theologie” (Innsbruck, 1905), XXIX, 406-412. A second letter of condolence, written about 1384, was edited by Sommerfeldt in *Historisches Jahrbuch* 30 (1909): 298-307 (the same issue containing his article on Langenstein and Hildegard).

the spirit of prophecy.”¹⁴³ Langenstein here refers not only to Hildegard’s letters to the clergy of Trier, but also to her “vaticiniis et hortamentis” in the *Scivias* and the *Liber divinorum operum*.¹⁴⁴ In fact, Blumenfeld notes that the phrase “durabit usque ad magnum schisma” which appears in Henry’s 1383 letter uses the exact words that Gebeno of Eberbach had extracted a century and a half earlier from Hildegard’s *Liber divinorum operum*.¹⁴⁵ In the same year, Langenstein drew once again upon Hildegard’s predictions of upcoming tribulations prior to the advent of Antichrist in his *Epistola de futuris periculis ecclesiae, 1383 ex dictis sanctae Hildegardis*. Finally, Langenstein also incorporated Hildegard’s prophetic writings in his Ascension Day sermon (*Sermo de ascensione Domini*) which he preached before the entire University of Vienna in 1390.¹⁴⁶ For years now, his mind had apparently been not only focused on building the university program in Vienna, but also on schism and prophecy and Hildegard’s relevance and the apocalyptic expectation of Last Times. In this sermon, he explores various methods of determining the Last Things, and places full confidence in divine revelations to “true prophets” such as Joachim.¹⁴⁷ Reeves, however, notes here a slight tone of defensiveness, suggesting that he had perhaps met with skepticism from his audience and colleagues.¹⁴⁸ Within two years, he would effect a dramatic reversal vis-à-vis Joachim in his treatise against Telesforus, which rejected all recent prophets (including the Calabrian Abbot). “Who is this Joachim who is of no reputation in the Paris schools?”¹⁴⁹ Hildegard, however, retained her privileged sybilline status. While the transformation in Langenstein’s position on prophecy

¹⁴³ Sommerfeldt, “Die Prophetien,” 51.

¹⁴⁴ See, for example, Sommerfeldt, “Die Prophetien,” 59.

¹⁴⁵ Blumenfeld, 198.

¹⁴⁶ “Sic veniet quemadmodum vidistis. . .” For the contents and manuscripts of the sermon, see Hartwig, *Henricus de Langenstein*, 21ff. See also Kreuzer, *Heinrich von Langenstein*, 123.

¹⁴⁷ Reeves, *Influence of Prophecy*, 426.

¹⁴⁸ Reeves, *Influence of Prophecy*, 426.

¹⁴⁹ As Reeves notes, “the bitterness of the attack suggests the extreme disillusionment of one who had placed his hope and faith in a quarter where they had been shattered.” *Influence of Prophecy*, 426.

cannot adequately be explored here, it is nonetheless evident for our purposes that prior to 1392 he assembled the prophetic writings not only of Hildegard of Bingen but Joachim and others in order to ascertain the arrival of Antichrist, an event which both the twelfth-century visionary and the fourteenth-century theologian clearly linked to ecclesiastical schism.¹⁵⁰

The second and perhaps most immediately evident correspondence between Langenstein's interests and the text lies in the theologian's active and diverse attempts to find a solution to the Schism, the tribulation "which no doubt set his mind both on the signs of approaching Antichrist and the hope of *reformatio*."¹⁵¹ In the first year of the schism while still at Paris, he wrote the "Epistola pacis" in which he advocated conciliarism as a means to ending the crisis and asserted that the schism was due to Pope Urban VI's reformist tendencies.¹⁵² In mid-1381, he wrote the "Epistola concilii pacis" (more frequently called the "Concilium pacis)," in which he lambasted the current abuses within the church and, in keeping with the voices of reform coming out of Bohemia, called specifically for the reformulation of the Church.¹⁵³ During the late 1380s, however, a pause set in – a "breathing space" as Swanson has put it.¹⁵⁴

Langenstein's attention was directed to other, local matters at the University, and like many of his peers across Europe, he fell temporarily silent on the issue of the bifurcation of the see. "All over Europe, the apparent entrenchment of the schism seems to have produced a sort of hopeless

¹⁵⁰ Sommerfeldt, "Die Prophetien," 47.

¹⁵¹ Reeves, 425.

¹⁵² Kreuzer, *Heinrich von Langenstein*, 107 ff.; Swanson, *Universities*, 38

¹⁵³ Based on Conrad of Gelnhausen's "Epistola Conciliae." The "Epistola concilii pacis" is printed in von der Hardt's "Concilium Constantiense", II, 1, 3-60, with the exception of the first and the second chapter, which were afterwards published by the same author in "Discrepantia mss. et editionum" (Helmstadt, 1715), 9-11. These two treatises of Henry, and the "Epistola Concordiae" of Conrad, formed the basis of a discourse delivered by Cardinal Pietro Philargi, the future Alexander V, at the first session of the Council of Pisa (26 March, 1409); see Bliemetzrieder, "Langenstein auf dem Konzile zu Pisa (1409)," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 25 (1904); 536-541. For more on Langenstein's schism-related letters, see Sommerfeldt, "Zwei Schismatraktate Heinrichs von Langenstein: Sendschreiben an König Wenzel von 1381 und Schreiben an Bischof Friedrich von Brixen, um 1384," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 7 (1907): 436-69.

¹⁵⁴ Swanson, *Universities*, 70-71

acceptance of its permanence.”¹⁵⁵ Yet pauses are not permanent, and the debates and discussions had picked up again furiously by 1390 when Langenstein preached his Ascension Day sermon.

During the first years of that decade, Langenstein was moving in the direction of the *via cessionis*, and wrote to the elector of the Palatine Rupert III specifically to propose German princely intervention.¹⁵⁶ The theologian’s disenchantment with that solution emerged soon thereafter, for in 1395/1396, he rejected the selection of either pope, as expressed in his “*Epistola de cathedri Petri*.”¹⁵⁷ One might plausibly argue that in the few years prior to 1396, Langenstein’s increasing interest in secular intervention and cession might have rendered even more eye-catching the “*Auffahrtabend*” text’s clear but highly generalized depictions of a riven church brought to restoration via combined princely and royal forces. By 1396, therefore, nearly twenty years into the schism, the foremost concern for Langenstein was not the specific ecclesiopolitical details of conciliation, but rather the deeper need for Christian renovation and reunification – an emphasis he apparently shared with the German adapter of the “*Auffahrtabend*” prophecy. It is inconceivable that the learned and elite scholar would have deigned to translate such a document into the vernacular, and the myriad attributions to Langenstein himself may be confidently dismissed as fictive. However, given the evidence above, it is not only plausible but indeed likely that the adapter was a member of Langenstein’s circle of colleagues and associates in Vienna.

As Marjorie Reeves, the great historian of eschatology put it, “prophecies seem to be indestructible.” Initially crafted to address various Christian disasters of the 1290s, the “*Visio*”

¹⁵⁵ Swanson, *Universities*, 71.

¹⁵⁶ Gustav Sommerfeldt, “Die Stellung Ruprechts III von der Pfalz zur deutschen Publizistik bis zum Jahre 1400,” *Zeitschrift fuer die Geschichte des Oberrheins*, NF 22 (1907): 301-11.

¹⁵⁷ See Hartwig, *Heinricus de Langenstein*.

was sufficiently elastic and evocative to be perceived as relevant to ecclesiastical catastrophes at the end of the fourteenth century. Reconsidering authorship, it seems that we have someone associated with Henry of Langenstein in Vienna during the final decades of the fourteenth century, a Latin scholar who cared about papal schism and the renovation of Christian unity and was familiar with the prophecies and letters of Hildegard of Bingen.

Perhaps it was simply a matter of time before someone rendered the “*Visio fratris Johannis*” into the vernacular, trimming and reshaping the original to fit more exactly the contours of their own hopes, fears, and apocalyptic expectations. Imported from its Roman home, the text, once redesigned into Germanic form, circulated widely throughout western Europe, transformed in language, formulation and purpose. This process simultaneously illustrates the complexity of eschatological texts and their value to scholars pursuing the relationship between medieval prophecy and cultural/political *mentalités*. Such short prophetic texts provided the material which, shot through with the miraculous authority and urgency of divine revelation, could be molded to the fears and hopes of a rapidly changing Europe. As such, they offer historians an impression of what different people valued as relevant, as revelatory, to their times and places. The endurance and apparent indestructibility of such prophecies also bears witness to the equally durable medieval tension between pessimism and optimism, between human history and divine will, and between what is and what yet may be.

APPENDIX A

Manuscript Copies

- (B1). Berlin, Staatsbibliothek., Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms germ 4° 1484, f. 224ra-226rb; c.1424-1428; Oberdeutsch; Steiermark/SE Austrian provenance; unattributed. Catalogued in *Neue Erwerbungen der Handschriftenabteilung, 2: Die Schenkung Sir Max Waechters*, 1912, in *Mitteilungen aus der Königlichen Bibliothek*, 3 (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1917), 91-101. In addition to the “Auffartabend prophecy,” with its unusual internal dating to both 1401 and 1424, the manuscript contains theological, devotional and natural/medical texts. These include an excerpt from the *Gesta Romanorum*, the “Schachbuch” of Dominican Jacob von Cassalis, Athanasius’ “Glaubensbekenntnis,” Konrad von Megenberg’s *Buch der Natur* and other texts on natural science, a “Klage über die Sittenverderbnis der Zeit” (follows the “Auffartabend” prophecy), a discussion of the elements, temperaments, and a regimen for health, and a collection of sayings, including attributions to the “German Cato” and Hugo von Trimberg. The copy of the “Auffartabend” prophecy contained in this manuscript is similar to (C) in that both omit the word “insel” (see Appendix C, line 21).
- (B2). Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms germ 8° 101, f. 142v-148r; c. 1438; Oberdeutsch (Swabian?); attributed to Henry of Langenstein. The manuscript is catalogued in H. Degering, *Kurzes Verzeichnis der germanischen Handschriften der Preußischen Staatsbibliothek (Mitt. aus der Preuß. Staatsbibl. 7-9)*, Leipzig (1925-1932), vol. 3, p. 42f; see also Klaus Graf, “Die Weimarer Handschrift Q127 als Überlieferung historiographischer, prophetischer und erbaulicher Texte,” *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur*, v. 118 n.3 (1989), here 207-8. The manuscript is a collection of Latin and German materials on various topics: the first half focuses primarily on medical and scientific texts, including treatments for plague and instructions for bleeding and fasting; it also contains a copy of the “Disticha Catonis.” The second half of the manuscript turns to dreams, visions, calls for reform, and meteorology. The “Auffartabend” prophecy is here attributed to Henry of Langeinstein, contains the reference to 1401, and can be dated roughly to 1438 based on the manuscript’s other contents. It is preceded by a “Letter to Lord Raymond” and followed by three other prophecies: one vernacular text attributed to “the Calabrian bishop” Anselm in 1278; a “Vaticinium de Anno 1420” dated to 1438; and a vernacular prophecy of reform to come in the year 1450.
- (C). Coburg, Landesbibliothek, Ms Sche. 16, f. 315r-316v (old signature: 8790); c.1480s; Oberdeutsch (Frankish); unattributed. The manuscript is catalogued in Franz Georg Kaltwasser, *Die Handschriften der Bibliothek des Gymnasium Casimirianum und der Scheres-Zieritz-Bibliothek*, Coburg (1960), pp.192-197. The manuscript contains various texts, including city chronicles, travel accounts, historical descriptions (such as accounts of the lives of Alexander and Charlemagne), Roman politics, and several prophecies. The manuscript is clearly related to (M1), as the two include nearly identical contents. The

- “Auffartabend” copy here contains the internal reference to 1401, and is sandwiched between two other prophetic texts: an “Offenbarung discovered in 1488” and a German version of the Gamaleon prophecy. Oddly, the text begins on folio 315r-316v, but the prophecy’s conclusion is copied onto the preceding page (315a). Thus the catalogue mistakenly describes the text as two separate prophecies (item 22 “Weissagung für das Jahr 1401” and 23 “Weissagung”). Similar to B1 in that it omits the word “Inseln” in a key passage (Appendix C, line 22). See also Koehne, 357.
- (D). Dresden, Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Cod. M 69m, f.297v-299v; 15th century. Oberdeutsch; attributed to Henry of Langenstein. The manuscript is catalogued in Franz Schnorr von Carolsfeld, *Katalog der Handschriften der Königl. öffentlich. Bibliothek zu Dresden*, v. 1 Leipzig (1882), pp. 469-70. The manuscript is written in two different hands, the first of which copied materials relating to episcopal activity, imperial and Bohemian politics, the council of Basel, and the “Auffartabend” text (the second hand made a copy of the “Schwabenspiegel” on folios 307r-390v). This copy of the “Auffartabend” prophecy contains an unusual reference in the incipit to the year 1347, probably an erroneous rendering of 1397, the year of Langenstein’s death. Given that the subsequent entry on the council of Basel was written in the same hand in 1461, we can estimate a date of copying c. 1460. Due to the condition of the manuscript, however, I was unable to obtain a legible copy; I have thus not incorporated this text into my analysis of the prophecy’s content.
- (E). Eichstätt, Staats u.- Seminarbibliothek, Cod. st 384 II, f.43r-45r; 1462 / 1456 / late-15th century; Oberdeutsch; Southern Bavarian or Austrian provenance; attributed to Henry of Langenstein. The manuscript is catalogued in Karl Heinz Keller, *Die mittelalterlichen Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Eichstätt*, vol. 2, Wiesbaden (1999), pp.144-48. The Staats-und Seminarbibliothek is now merged with the Universitätsbibliothek, although the collections remain separate. The manuscript consists of three sections. The first (folios 1r-43v) contains a copy of Rabbi Samuel’s letter to Rabbi Isaac dated to 1462 (edited in M. Marsmann, *Die Epistel des Rabbi Samuel an Rabbi Isaak. Untersuchung u. Edition* (Diss. München), Siegen (1971). Section two (folios 1r-39r) contains a copy of the “Visiones Georgii” made c. 1456 (see Nigel F. Palmer, *Visio Tnugdali: The German and Dutch Translations and their Circulations in the Later Middle Ages*, München (1982), p.419f). The third and briefest section (f.1r-8v) consists of prophetic texts, including the “Auffartabend” text, political prophecies, a prediction for the year 1462, and a “new year’s prognosis” (Esdras Weissagungen). The “Auffartabend” copy contains the internal reference to 1401, and reads “dy hernach geschriben prophecy ist gefunden nach maister Heinrichs von Hessenntodt zw Wienn.”
- (G). Graz, Universitätsbibl., Ms 1748, f.239v-242v; (formerly Dresden, Sächsische Landesbibliothek., Cod. Dresd. M. 63, f.218v-222r); c. 1469; Oberdeutsch; Steiermark/SE Austrian provenance; attributed to Henry of Langenstein; copied by the notary Ulrich Klenecker in Rottenmann in the Steiermark; catalogued in *Die Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Graz*, ed. by Anton Kern, v. 2, Vienna (1956). The older catalogue is *Katalog der HS der Königl. öffentlich. Bibliothek zu Dresden*, ed. by Franz Schnorr von Carolsfeld, vol. 1, Leipzig (1882), pp. 436-65. Discussed in

Friedrich Lauchert, “Materialen zur Geschichte der Kaiserprophetie im Mittelalter,” 844-51. It is one of the six manuscript sources on which Lauchert based his edition of the “Auffartabend” text. Described as a legal formulary, the manuscript contains various materials on the political activity of the emperor Frederick III and the Bohemian crown. The prophecy’s caption reads “die hernach geschriben propheczey ist gefunden wordenn nach maister Heinrichs von Hessen tod jn seinem pett zu Wienn.” The text contains the standard reference to 1401 as the anticipated date of events to come.

- (H). Harvard MS Ger 74 f.46r-50v; 15th century; Oberdeutsch (E. Swabian); attributed to Henry of Langenstein. While no complete catalogue description exists, codicological information and a list of the manuscript’s contents can be found in Eckehard Simon, “Eine neuaufgefundene Sammelhandschrift mit Rosenplüt-Dichtungen aus dem 15. Jahrhundert,” *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur* 2:2 (1973), 115-33. Simon places the copying date between 1474-1476. The manuscript contains poetry by Hans Rosenplüt, as well as various texts including several vernacular prophecies (“Umsturtzprophezeiung,” “Prophetische Vision auf das Jahr 1401,” “Prophezeiung von dem Fridericus Orientalis,” “Umsturtzprophezeiung zum Jahre 1439,” and “Prophezeiung: Gallorum Levitas”). The manuscript was written in five hands, four in Swabian dialect and the fifth in northern Bavarian or Frankish; the copyist of the “Auffartabend” prophecy wrote in what appears to be an East Swabian dialect. Captioned “Das gesicht Maister Hainrichs von Hessen geschechen in Wien,” the text contains the internal reference to 1401.
- (HB). Heidelberg Universitätsbibliothek, Altd. HB 280, f.201a-203a; 15th century; Oberdeutsch; unattributed. The manuscript is briefly described in *Die Altdeutschen Handschriften der Universitäts-Bibliothek in Heidelberg*, ed. by Karl Bartsch, Heidelberg (1887). Formerly Vat. Pal. germ. 571, the manuscript was copied in part by Peter Gensschopf, a cleric of the Regensburg diocese c.1422. Its contents include a long section of “Evangelien und Episteln,” travel hints for pilgrims going to Palestine c.1449, and the “Auffartabend” text. This copy of the prophecy is unattributed, but does contain the usual internal reference to 1401.
- (K). Klosterneuberg, Codex Clastro. 552, f.1v-3r; 15th century; Oberdeutsch; unattributed. No thorough printed catalogue description exists, although a brief handwritten description is in Hermann Pfeiffer and Berthold Černík, *Catalogus codicum mancriptorum qui in Bibliotheca Canonorum Regularium S. Aug. Clastroneoburgi asservantur*, vol. 3: Codex 453-636, Vienna (1922-1931), pp.423-24. The manuscript of 245 folio pages begins with the “Auffartabend” prophecy, followed by a lengthy section of “Sermones Dominicales” (f.4r-236r), a brief “Sermo de dedicatione ecclesiae” (f.236r-238v), several blank pages (f.239r-245r) and a single page index of the sermons (f.245v). The copy contains the usual internal reference to 1401.
- (L). Lindau Stadtbibliothek, Cod. P I 30, f.222rb-224ra; 1416; Oberdeutsch; attributed to Henry of Langenstein. No thorough catalogue description of the manuscript exists, and the only printed information comes from an exhibition catalogue, *Kostbarkeiten der*

Reichsstädtischen Bibliothek Lindau, Lindau (1988), p.28. According to the cursory description, the manuscript consists primarily of a tract entitled “Die zehn Gebote” attributed to the Franciscan mystic Marquard of Lindau. The “Auffartabend” copy here near the end of the manuscript has the caption “Diss ist erschinen Maister Hainrichen von Hessen, dem grossen lerer und obersten priester auf dem Colayum.” Containing the usual internal reference to 1401, the Lindau copy also has an unusual additional reference to 1417 as well: “in dem vierzechen hundert und ersten Jar und darnach in dem xvii Jar.”

- (M1). Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm 267, f.247r-249r; c.1448 / 1449; Oberdeutsch (northern Bavarian); unattributed. The manuscript is catalogued in Karin Schneider, *München Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Catalogus Mano Scriptorum, Die deutschen Handschriften der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München*, v. 5, pt. 2, Wiesbaden (1970), pp.180-85. Copied by the cleric Caspar von Landau, the manuscript contains several anti-papal and reform texts, including the “Brother Sigewalt,” “Gamaleon,” and “Auffartabend” prophecies; the latter is edited in Alexander Reifferscheid, *Neuen Texte zur Geschichte der Religiösen Aufklärung in Deutschland während des 14 und 15 Jahrhunderts*, Greifswald (1905), pp.43-46. This copy of the “Auffartabend” text contains the usual internal reference to 1401. (M1) would seem a likely the exemplar for (C), since virtually every text appears in the same order in the later manuscript, but there are small but significant variations in the text that complicate transmission. (M1) shares a corrupted reading with (M2): “und vil ynnsel werdent sy fuerchten und auch vlihen und werdent auch daraus fliehen” (emphasis added to indicate extra material added in error).
- (M2). Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm 425, f.49r-52v; c.1460s; Oberdeutsch (Bavarian); unattributed. The 57-page manuscript is catalogued in Karin Schneider, *München Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Catalogus Mano Scriptorum, Die deutschen Handschriften der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München*, v. 5, pt. 3, Wiesbaden (1970), pp. 230-231. Contents include the Austrian chronicle of Leopold Stainreuter who died in 1439 (f.1r-18r), “Fürstenlehre” on nobility (f.184-48v), and the “Auffartabend” prophecy (f.49r-52v). The caption reads “Verschriben ain gesicht das ain andächtiger an dem auffert abent gesehen hat;” in this case, the “andächtiger” or “honorable” recipient of the vision is not specified as Henry of Langenstein. This copy of the prophecy is one of the six manuscript sources that Lauchert used for his edition, and bears the internal reference to 1401. See (M1) for note on shared corruption in the two copies.
- (M3). Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm 1113, f.77v-78v; c. 1375/1400; Oberdeutsch (österreichische); unattributed. The 134-page manuscript is catalogued in Karin Schneider, *München Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Catalogus Mano Scriptorum, Die deutschen Handschriften der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München*, v. 5, pt. 6, Wiesbaden (1991), pp.85-95. Consisting of two differently-dated parts, it contains a wide variety of materials, including city government regulations, a Prester John account, behavioral and moral rules for princes, poetry for the Bohemian king, and notes on a comet in 1402. This copy of the prophecy is one of the six manuscript sources that

Lauchert used for his edition, evidently originated in or near Vienna, and contains the internal reference to 1401.

- (M4). Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm 1134, f.267-271 c.1465; Oberdeutsch (österreichische); attributed to Henry of Langenstein; Catalogued in Karin Schneider, *München Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Catalogus Manuscriptorum, Die deutschen Handschriften der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München*, ed. by Karin Schneider, v. 5, pt. 6, Wiesbaden (1991), p.148-50. Probably originating in Austria, if not specifically Vienna, the manuscript contains Gregor Hagen's *Chronik von Österreich* (up to 1398), letters by Rabbi Samuels, the "Auffartabend" prophecy ("Gesicht Meister Henrich's von Hessen), a brief note on comets, and a long (120 folio) section on the knight Jörgen von Hungern. This manuscript copy also has the internal date of 1401.
- (MU). Munich, Universitätsbibliothek, 2° Cod. Ms. 684, f.92r-94r; c. 1465; Oberdeutsch (dialect bridging Middle Bavarian and Swabian); unattributed. The manuscript is catalogued in Gisela Kornrumpf and Paul-Gerhard Völker, *Die Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek München, Die deutschen Mittelalterlichen Handschriften*, v. 1, Munich (1968), pp.56-61. It was copied by a south-German layman named Jörg Zimmermann and may have originated in Nürnberg. Roughly the first half of the 125-page manuscript is occupied with an excerpt from Marquard von Lindau's "Zehn Gebote" (see L above), as well as a variety of materials on ecclesiastical and clerical life, and St. Bridget of Sweden. The second half contains a collection of nearly twenty prophecies such as "Gamaleon," "Auffartabend," and "Gallorum Levitas;" the many prophetic attributions range from Hildegard of Bingen to Bishop Anselm of Marsico, Priester Siegwalt, Merlin, Bridget of Sweden, Dietrich von Zengg (OFM), Telesforus of Cosenza, John of Rupescissa, Anton Zipfer, and Meister Theodorus. This unattributed copy of the "Auffartabend" also bears the internal reference to 1401, although it offers a slightly different reading: "und das wirt geschechen wan man zelt von der geburd Christi vierzehen hundert yär und indem ersten yär" (f.94v).
- (P). Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Allem. 129, f.35r-39v; c. 1460; Oberdeutsch; attributed to an unidentified "Reymundus." The manuscript is catalogued in Gédion Huet, *Catalogue des Manuscrits Allemands de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, Paris (1895), pp. 60-61. Composed in German and Latin, the manuscript's origin in southeastern Germany is apparent from its contents, which include a letter from Pope Pius II (1458-1464) to King Georg Podiebrad of Bohemia regarding communion in both kinds, a letter to Emperor Frederick III by Brother Ludwig of Pannonia in Hungary, and a prophecy for the year 1463 written by Meister Theodorus (see MU) which originated from the milieu of Duke Ludwig the Rich of Bavaria-Landshut (see Robert Lerner, "Medieval Prophecy and Religious Dissent, *Past and Present*, 72 (1976): 3-24, esp.1-9.) The manuscript also contains astrological predictions for the years 1422, 1458 and 1462-1464. The "Auffartabend" text appears here under the caption "Die offenbarung Reymundus." Unlike the other copies, this version does not contain the reference to 1401, but rather to 1420 and 1470: "das wirt also geschechen in der zeit als man zelt tausent vierhundert und zwainzig jar bis das man wirt zelt vierhundert und sibenzige jar" (f.39r).

- (S). Stuttgart, Württemb. Landesbibl., HB X11 22, f.93r-94r; 1452-56; Oberdeutsch (Swabian); attributed to Henry of Langenstein. The manuscript is catalogued in *Die Handschriften der Württembergischen Landesbibliothek Stuttgart, Die Handschriften der Ehemaligen Hofbibliothek Stuttgart*, v. 4, pt. 2, Stuttgart (1972), p.72. Composed in three different hands, the bulk of the 94-page manuscript consists of the “Disticha Catonis” in both Latin and German, with introductory Latin commentary (fols.1r-92v) and a one-page index (f.4v); the only other content is the “Auffartabend” prophecy on the final folios of the manuscript (f.93r-94r). This copy contains the internal reference to 1401.
- (V1). Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 2820, f.172r-173v; c. 1546; Oberdeutsch; attributed to Henry of Langenstein. The 175-page manuscript is catalogued in *Tabulae Codicum Praeter Graec. et Orientales in Bibl. Palat. Vindobonensis*, v.2, Vienna (1965), p. 138. It contains materials pertaining to the reign of Emperor Charles IV (including a copy of the Golden Bull), Gregor Hagen’s *Chronicon Austriae* (a vernacular German copy is in M4); the “Auffartabend” prophecy; and a German copy of the apostle’s creed. This copy of the prophecy is one of the six manuscript sources that Lauchert used for his edition. Unlike any other copy, the incipit to this text states that the vision took place in 1397: “so man zalt hat Tausent dreu hundert vnd in dem sibendundneunzigisten Jar” (f.172r). This text follows V2.
- (V2). Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 4477, f.162r-163v; 15th century; Oberdeutsch; attributed to Henry of Langenstein. The 183-page manuscript is catalogued in *Tabulae Codicum Praeter Graec. et Orientales in Bibl. Palat. Vindobonensis*, v.3, Vienna (1965), pp.279-80. Encompassing ecclesiastical materials such as penitentials, Innocent III’s “De miseria humanae conditionis,” and prayers, the manuscript also contains more mundane texts such as Viennese municipal laws (see M3) and medical recommendations. Despite the absence of any caption in the text itself, the cataloguer entitled the “Auffartabend” prophecy here “Visio secundum quietem oblate M. Heinricho de Hassia et lingua germanica enarrata.” This copy of the prophecy is one of the six manuscript sources that Lauchert used for his edition. It contains the standard reference to the year 1401. This copy closes with the note that “do hat ein end dy weyssagung dy maister Haynrich von Hessen ist fur chomen in seyнем schlaff.”
- (V3). Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 4764, f.157r-157v; c. 1465-1470; Oberdeutsch; attributed to Henry of Langenstein. The 195-page manuscript is catalogued in *Tabulae Codicum Praeter Graec. et Orientales in Bibl. Palat. Vindobonensis*, v.3, Vienna (1965), pp. 380-81. See also M. Denis, *Codeces manuscripti theologici Bibliothecae Palatinae Vindobonensis latini*, vol.I, 2 (1794), p.1572. Of Bohemian provenance, as identified by Lerner, “Popular Justice: Rupescissa in Hussite Bohemia,” in Patschovsky and Šmahel (eds.), *Eschatologie und Hussitismus* (Prague: Historisches Institut, 1996), 39-52. The manuscript contains anti-Hussite materials, acts of the Council of Basel, excerpts from Latin Austrian chronicles, a fictional letter from the Turkish emperor to Maximilian, and prophetic texts attributed to Langenstein, Rupescissa and Eistoldus de Melodia. This copy of the “Auffartabend” prophecy is one of the six manuscript sources that Lauchert used for his edition. It contains the standard reference to 1401, albeit in a slight variant with the Latin ‘primo’ replacing the German “ersten”:

“wann man zalt nach Christi gepurd MCCC primo” (f.157v). Here it is the explicit that associates the text with Langenstein: “dy weyssagung dy maister Haynrich von Hessen ist fur chomen in seynam schlaff” (f.157v)

- (V4). Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 9042, f.37r-39v; c.1560; Oberdeutsch; attributed to Henry of Langenstein. The 39-page manuscript is catalogued in *Tabulae Codicum Praeter Graec. et Orientales in Bibl. Palat. Vindobonensis*, v.6, Vienna (1965), p.7. It is a rough copy of V3. The “Auffartabend” text bears the caption “Weissagung maister Heinrichs von Hessen,” and an explicit like that of V3: “dy weyssagung dy maister Haynrich von Hessen ist fur chomen in seynam schlaff” (f.39v).
- (W). Weimar, Zentralbibliothek, Chart. Ms. Q127, f.127v-130v; c. 1460-70; Oberdeutsch (dialect bridging middle Bavarian and Swabian); attributed to Henry of Langenstein. The library has a thorough 11-page printed but unpublished catalogue description. Klaus Graf also discusses the manuscript’s provenance and contents in “Die Weimarer Handschrift Q127 als Überlieferung historiographischer, prophetischer und erbaulicher Texte,” *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur*, v.118 n.3 (1989), 203-16. The 127-page manuscript consists of three sections in three different hands: first, a variety of chronicle materials (some of which were excerpted from incunabula); second, the “Gmünder Kaiserchronik” only through the reign of King Rupert; and then a series of prophetic texts attributed to Hildegard of Bingen, Henry of Langenstein, Anselm of Marsico, and Pope John XXIII; and third, astrological prophecies. The “Auffartabend” text in the second section bears the caption “Visio magistri Hainrici de Hassia facta Wienne” and contains the standard reference in the explicit to the year 1401.
- (WB). Wolfenbüttel, Herzog-August-Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 86.3 Aug., f.154r-155v; c. 1472; Oberdeutsch; unattributed. The 171-page manuscript is catalogued in Otto von Heinemann, *Kataloge der Herzog-August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel, Die Augusteischen Handschriften, Codex Guelferbytanus*, 77.4 Aug.2, v.7, pp. 98-100. Containing a variety of clerical materials ranging from prayers, services for laity, Rabbi Samuel’s letter (see E), and Mellibeus’ book for monks, the manuscript also has a prophecy attributed to Saint Bridget of Sweden and the “Auffartabend” text. The caption reads “ein prophecy oder ein Erscheinung, wie es zu zukunfftigen tagen wirt gon” (f.154r), and the explicit provides the standard reference to 1401 (f.155v).

APPENDIX B

Printed Sources¹⁵⁸

Attributed to Hildegard of Bingen

The version of the “Auffartabend” prophecy incorporated into Eberhart Windecke’s *Denkwürdigkeiten zur Geschichte des Zeitalters Kaiser Sigmunds* is attributed to Hildegard of Bingen. The earliest of the many known copies dates from 1447. For a discussion of its origins and transmission, see Wilhelm Altmann, *Eberhart Windeckes Denkwürdigkeiten zur Geschichte des Zeitalters des Kaisers Sigmunds* (Berlin: Gaertners Verl.-Buchhandlung, 1893).

Early Printed Copies of the “Auffartabend” prophecy in the *Reformatio Sigismundi*

1. Augsburg, Lucas Zeissenmair (1497); Hain 14730, unattributed. Description in M. Georg Wolfgang Panzers, *Annalen der ältern deutschen Litteratur*, I, (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1961) Nr. 429, pp.225-26. Exemplar in the Kgl. Biblioth. zu Berlin. The vision is not attributed specifically to Sigismund, but the prophecy (and the book) end: “Hier endet sich das Buch der Reformation, so. . . herr Sigmund, Römischer keyser,. . . fürgenommen het” (Koehne, 354). Reprinted in *Bibliothek Seltener Bücher (Neudrucke)* edited by the Deutschen Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, 1, with epilogue by Ursula Altmann (Leipzig, 1979).
2. Basel (1521) (Panzer II, 47, Exemplar in Berlin Biblioth.) The “Auffartabend” text is entitled “Eine erscheinung geschehen einem frummen geistlichen man zu offenbarunge künftige ding.” It is unattributed and seems to bear no relationship to Sigismund, who was clearly no pious cleric.
3. Weller Rep. typ. Nr. 1932, Wittenberg? (1521) (Ex. In Munich under the signature Conc. 36): “Offenbarung und gesichte, so dem frommen fursten, Kaiser Sigmund ym schlaff zu Bressburg am abent der Himmelfart Christi furkomen ist.”
4. Augsburg (c.1522) Weller Nr. 2243 (Exemplar in Berlin). Here, the prophecy is specifically attributed to the emperor in its title: “Wie unser her kayser Sigmunden erschinen ist.”

Other Early Printed Copies of the Auffartabend text

According to Koehne (358), all of the following have “das ist die warhait” at the end and no 1401 date

5. (No date or location), Weller 1614. The text bears the title “Ein offenbarung und gesicht, das geschehen ist dem durchlauchten hochgebornen Fursten unnd hern Sygismundus

¹⁵⁸ Compiled from Koehne, Lauchert, and Stöllinger-Löser

konig tzu Ungern und Behem tzu Pressburg auff dem auffartz abent, als yr hernach horen werdet von der tzerstorung land unnd konigreich und verfolgung der Priesterschaft”

6. (No date or location), Exemplar in Berlin (B. Diez 1856). “Ein offenbarung un Gesicht, das geschehen ist dem Durchleuchtigsten Fürsten. . . zu Pressburg uff dem Uffart abent.”
7. Weller 1613 (Exemplar in Munich). According to Koehne, the text is similar to #5 above, but bears the title of that in #4.
8. Weller 1615 (Exemplar in Berlin). “Reymundus offenbarung. Ist gefunden worden jn einem alten Buch vor vil Jaren geschriben.” Koehne notes that the text (and 12 below) concludes with a patriotic alternation: “Zuletzt werden die Deutschen das römische Reich, die Ungläubigen und die Welschen zerstören und die christliche Kirche wieder aufbringen.” A connection is possible between this printed copy and the manuscript copy (P), also attributed to a “Reymundus”
9. Weller, Supplement 177 (Ex. In Berlin). Version that deviates only slightly and orthographically from 7 above.
10. 1532, Weller 1615. It might be reprint of 4 above, given reference to “Reymundus”
11. (No date / location) “Offenbarung und Gesicht, das geschehen ist dem Durchl. Fürsten und herrn Sigismundo König zu Hungern und Behem uff dem Uffart abent (1403). Al sir hernach hören werden von der zerstörung land und Künigreich, und verfolgung der Priesterschaft.” Similar to number 2 above except that it is dated to 1403.
12. Strassburg (1544) by “M. Jacob Cammer Lander” containing: a) “Practica unnd prognostication zweier fürnehmlichen unnd weit berühmten inn der Mathematick M. Johan Carionis und M. Salomon der statt Rüemund Physicum...” b). “Eine Christliche ermanung an K.M. König, Churfürsten, Fürsten, Gravenhenn und alle stände Christlicher versamlung Joh. Carionis” c). “Offenbarung Raimundj, darinn allen ständen geystlich und weltlich landten und leuten viel schwerer straffen getrawt. Desshalben inn diser letzten zeit ein jeder sein lebel wol mag bessern.” Koehne notes that this text (and 8 above) concludes with a patriotic alternation: “Zuletzt werden die Deutschen das römische Reich, die Ungläubigen und die Welschen zerstören und die christliche Kirche wieder aufbringen.” Ex. In Berlin Bibliothek. Much like 4 and 5 above.
13. (No location) (1545) “ein Gesicht welches dem Kaiser Sigismundo erschienen sein sol, al ser nach der erbarmlichen Nidderlag zu Nicopoli im 1395 jar am abent Michaelis geschehen, wiederumb herauff gen Presburg kommen.”
14. W. Lazius, *Fragmentum vaticinii cuiusdam Methodii*, Vienna (1547), 52b-53b: “Revelatio cuiusdam religiosi facta illi a Deo inter preces et post mortem M. Henrici de Hassia, primi Theologi Academiae Viennensis inter eius libros reperta, et nobis nuper adeo in antiquissimo libro sub finem Apocalypseos in membrane observata.”

APPENDIX C

Harvard MS Ger 74 f.46r-50v

Das gesicht Maister Hainrichs von Hessen geschach zü Wien

1 In dem Namen gotes Jhesu Christi, an dem auffartabent nach metten zeit, do ich lag an
2 meinem gebet und die wort sprach die Davit in dem Psalter gemacht hat, do gedacht ich in
3 meinem gemunt und herczen an die schwerlichen rauch und clauglichen die da ist geschehen
4 inhalb des mers zü Iherusalom, das ich des gebetes vor wainen nit volbracht und (sprach)¹⁵⁹:
5 “Herr mein Got, bis nit zornig ewiglich uber dein volck, sonder erparme dich uber sy, wenn due
6 sie erlost hast mit deinem plüt und die ere deins heiligen namen gib nit dem ungelangen¹⁶⁰ volck
7 dass deinen heiligen namen uner(t).

8 Und do ich fürbas vast wainet, so erschain mir ein erber man im bischofs gewand und
9 hett ain creucz in seinem hannd. Und do ich den ersach, do erschrach ich ser und was mir gleich
10 ways, als ich von den sinnen komen were, und mocht nit gereden. Der selb sprach zu mir:
11 “Fürcht dir nit und wain fürbas nit mer von des schlages wegen, der geschehen ist von dem
12 ungelaubigen, wann das ist geschehen von ir sünd wegen und von dem gerechten gericht gotes.
13 Hör auf und wain nit mer, und merck vil boser ding und trübsal die da künftig sind und werden
14 in der kristenhait.

15 Die ungelaubigen und die haiden von dem gerechten gericht gotes werden
16 widersterben¹⁶¹ und gros rauch tün wider die cristenhait, und die kirchen die inhalb des mers
17 sind werden sy zerstern. Und die laichnam der christen menschen werden sy verwerfen für die

¹⁵⁹ Scribal error: “sprach” is omitted

¹⁶⁰ Scribal error which does not appear elsewhere in manuscript copies: should be “ungläubigen”

¹⁶¹ Scribal error which also appears in M2: should be “widerstreben”

18 wilden tier und in den kirchen werden sy machen frawen heüser und stett des vichs, und ander
19 unerberkait werden sy treiben vor dem altar gotes zü einer unerung.

20 Vil menschen werden kumen unter iren gewalt. Dem selben werden sy vil böser ding
21 erczaigen, und darnach werden sy komen uber mör und vil insel werden sie fürchten, und werden
22 daraus fliehen und werden gefangen. Wann sy in nit widerstreben mügen von ire sund wegen,
23 die da uffgegangen sind für got und besunder die sünd des wüchers und der geittigkait, die nun
24 so gros sind das sy alle dise welt ubergangen haben. Und von diesselben wegen sind vil leüt
25 gepeiniget. Wie wol das ist, das sy nit geoffent werden offenlich mit dem pann. Item die auch
26 die gar vil goczgab besiczent boslich und aller maist in walschen landen, das ist vil valschait und
27 keczerey, und vil unkeusch, vil wuchers, und davon vil boser ding werden kumen gen walschen
28 lannden.

29 Wee euch, walische land, wann vil trübsalen werden ire leiden von dem gerechten gericht
30 gotes. Wann Rom wirt mit krieg umbgeben, dasselb wirt zügen von etlichen Cardinalen. Wee
31 dir Rom, du wirst bald gediemütigt von deinen veinden. Und understanden wirt ain frid gemacht
32 und ist doch kain stäter frid, und das reich des babstlichen stüls wirt vil trübsal leiden und damit
33 umbgeben. Item dem land von Franckreich wirt vile er und gewalcz genomen und gancz
34 Yspania wirt betrübt. Item Unger und Behmerlannd werden zerstort, und etlich tail teütscher
35 lannd werden bestritten von dem Ungelauben. Item der klain küng wirt kumen mit ettlichen
36 künigen, die nahent dem selben land sind, und die selben künig werden auch ziehen mit grossem
37 volcke, und werden über ain ander kain erbarmung haben. Aber zum letzten werden sie
38 vertreiben von einem fürsten mit ander fürsten hilf von teutschen lannden und auch des künigs
39 von Franckreich.

40 Und der gotzdienst wirt zerstört und auch gros gebrechen wirt an der priesterschaft. Item
41 vil reich der christen menschen werden sich keren von der untetanigkait der römischen kirchen,
42 und vil gaistlicher menschen werden abtrünig von ire obersten boshait willen, die als gross ist
43 das sie die ganczen welt ubergangen hat, und selten ain mensch wirt nachfolgen den geboten
44 seins Bischoffs. Und auch etlich Cardinal werden gefangen und ettlich ertöt, und also von dem
45 werden genomen alle hoffart und ere, wann die als gros ist das sie nit wellen got zuglaichen sein
46 ere, und sie wollen auch nit den menschen gleich sein, und darumb werden sy von got verstossen
47 in abgrund der hell. Und in wirt auch genomen alle zier und werden auch fürbas nit gehaissen
48 Cardinal sunder nur römische priester (und)¹⁶² diacken.

49 Auch wirt geschechen das man wirt selten ainen finden der gern Baubst oder Cardinal
50 wolt sein, wann ir nam wirt gar schnied vor allen leüten, und darumb das in in¹⁶³ ist hoffart und
51 nit diemütigkait, und alle boshait und valschait und nindert kain warhait. Wann was sy mit dem
52 mund reden, das mainen sy nit mit dem herzen. Und auch als gros ist ir geittigkait das sy in
53 kainerlay wais mügen erfüllt werden, und alle gerechtigkait ist bey in enwicht. Und volget ir
54 kainer der gerechtigkait nach. Wann sy alweg die reichen lieber hand¹⁶⁴ dann die armen. Und
55 auch die in geben bistum und ander goczgab verkauffen sy und also von unsers Herr und von
56 seinem rosenvarben plüt, das in also verkauffen, machent sie ire kinder und ander ir freund reich.
57 Und claiden sich selbs davon mit costperlichen gewand, und nit unmässlichen leben was von
58 dem das ein Baupbst der Nicolaus gehaissen, was der drit Babst desselben namens, kain prelat ist
59 on die sünd simony.

60 Und darumb das sy nit nachfolgen den wercken der heiligen zwelfpoten der stat sie
61 vertretten, das sy nit wellen diemütig und das sy nit die ungelaubigen bekerent zü dem glauben,

¹⁶² Scribal error: "und" is missing

¹⁶³ Scribal error: "in" is repeated, an error that also appears in (M1).

¹⁶⁴ Scribal error: should be "haben"

62 und das sy ir leben nit geben umb die liebe gotz als dann ir vordern hand¹⁶⁵ getan. Darumb wirt
63 in genomen silber und gold und alle ir hab. Und also das in wirt geben eysen umb gold, glas für
64 edelgestain, stecken für pferd. Und die künig werden sich sammen wider sie und betrüben ir
65 freund, und werden zerstört ir vessten und ire heüser werden zerstört, und ire gedechtnüss wirt
66 vergessen mit einander. Und auch etlich priester werden nit sehen lassen ir blaten, und auch bey
67 etlichen leute wirt das volck sein wider ire fürsten und werden etlich erschlagen und also wirt
68 trübsal in aller welt.

69 Und do mir der man also erschain und mir das also gesagt hett, do sprach ich mit
70 vorchten: “Lieber herr, es vil villeicht got den glauben lassen untergan und erstören, wann die
71 ungelaubigen den Babst und die priesterschaft also zerstören so werden sie vast herschen, und
72 die gerechtigen werden vast untergedruckt.” Nach dem antwort mir der selb Bischof: “Die
73 ungelaubigen werden ettlich zeit herschen uber den Babst, an dem end werden sy zerstört von
74 den teütschen und von den francken und von dem Kaiser, und die romisch kirche wirt¹⁶⁶
75 widerpracht und dann ire ausrichter werden gerecht und schlecht und werden auch nymmer
76 nachvolgen dem golt und der symony. Und alle gerecht prelaten werden widerkomen zü der
77 untertanigkait, und wirt probiert¹⁶⁷ die ainigung der Kristenhait, und wirt dann ain ainigkait
78 saliger zeit bis das kumbt der sün der verdamnuß. Und das wirt alles geschen wenn man zelt von
79 Christi gepurt xiiii jar¹⁶⁸ und in dem ersten jar so wirt es sich anheben. Und da er mir das alles
80 und yedes gesagt het, do verschwand er vor mir.

¹⁶⁵ Scribal error: should be “haben”

¹⁶⁶ Scribe began to write “wider”, then crossed it out

¹⁶⁷ (MU), (P), and (W) also read “probiert”. The other manuscript copies all show “verneut”/“erneut”, or a minor variant instead.

¹⁶⁸ The word ‘hundert’ is missing here, just as in (M1)

