



"Help, our lady of Aachen!" | "Hilf fraw von Ach"

Text Information

Author | Erhard Oeglin

Language | Early New High German

Period | 16th Century

Genre | Lyric Verse/Song

Source | Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München 00082229 Rar.27 Stimme T f.6r

Collection | Love Songs of the Medieval World: Lyrics from Europe and Asia

URL | sourcebook.stanford.edu/text/oeglin_help_our_lady_aachen/

Translation by Christopher Hutchinson.

Introduction to the Text

The first printed songbook with songs primarily in German was printed in July 1512 by the Augsburg printer Erhard Oeglin (ca.1470-1520). The songbook consists of four partbooks – it is also the first German song collection with four voices throughout - and contains 49 songs with a mixture of spiritual and secular content; 43 of which are in German and 6 in Latin. Oeglin was an innovative printer, credited as one of the first printers to print musical notation with movable type and as one of the first printers of "Zeitungen" – news-sheets. Oeglin does not attribute any of the songs to particular composers but some of these songs do appear in other songbooks of this period where they are attributed to various composers active at the Imperial court, including Ludwig Senfl, Paul Hofhaimer and Heinrich Isaac. These songs are collectively known as tenor lieder, as the melody is usually carried by the tenor line. This was the prototypical song type in Germany at the turn of the sixteenth century and enjoyed particular prominence at the court of the Emperor Maximilian.

Introduction to the Source

Digitized copies of these partbooks, from the Bayerische StaatsBibliothek in Munich, are available online here.

Further Reading

Saunders, Steven. "Music in Early Modern Germany." *Early Modern German Literature 1350-1700*, edited by Max Reinhart, Rochester: Camden House, 2007.

Keyl, Stephen. "Tenorlied, Discantlied, Polyphonic lied: Voices and instruments in German secular polyphony of the Renaissance." *Early Music*, vol. 20, no. 3, 1992, pp. 434–445.



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Hilf fraw von Ach

Hilf fraw von Ach / wie schwach / on masz ich armer
sünder bin / und pald ist hyn / mein syn / on gwyn / zû
verfüren / spüren / mag ich grüntlich / das got misfelt /
der welt / undanckparkait / O rayne mayt / Maria zart /
wie hart / mir das zû hertzen / will dringen zwar / gnad
mir nit spar / vnnd nymb meinn war / fraw durch dein
syben schmerzen.

O iungkgfraw rayn / on nayn / alzeit der sunder tröster-
inn / was ich begynn / dennck synn / von hynn / müß
ich mich wenden / enden sol sich / umb mich / der wel-
de lust / umb sust / ist aller mût / unnd hilfft kain gût
/ ich muß daran / unnd kann / den tod nit fliechenn /
dan das ich bitt / versag mit nit / und tayl mir mit / dein
gnad on alls verziechen.

Der welde hayl / on mayl bistu Maria ewiklich / und
frew auch mich / der täglich dich / mit fleiß thût eren /
geren / ertzaygst / und naygst / dich gottes arch / und
sarch / dem sünder zûe / O fraw das thûe / ytz in der
nott / zum todt / vill kranckhait schweben / erwirb mir
huld / das ich mein schuld / mit rew und duld / mûg
püssen hye in leben.

Help, our lady of Aachen!

Help, our lady of Aachen! How immeasurably weak
I, poor sinner, am! Soon I will lose my senses in vain,
I'm being led astray. I can definitely tell that God is
displeased at the world's ingratitude Oh, immaculate
maiden, tender Mary! How hard this weighs on my
heart. Don't spare me your mercy and hear me, My
Lady, by your seven sorrows!

Oh, immaculate virgin, who without doubt always con-
soles sinners. Whatever I start, think or come up with, I
have to turn myself away from it; around me the world's
pleasure has to come to an end. All bravery is in vain,
no wealth can help, I must face it and I can't flee from
death, so I ask you: don't deny me, and impart on me
your grace without delay.

You, Mary, are forever the immaculate salvation of the
world, and bring joy to me, who diligently honors you
each day. You, the ark and casket of God gladly appear
and tend to the sinner to the sinner. Oh, my lady, do this
now in my distress, for illness will hover over death.
Grant me favor, so that I might atone for my guilt with
repentance and forbearance while I'm alive.