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‘Valued most highly and preserved most carefully’: Using saintly figures’ houses and memorabilia collections to campaign for their canonisation

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ABSTRACT
In this article, I argue that the houses and memorabilia collections associated with venerated personages played an important role in campaigns to elevate popular, unofficial, saintly figures to the level of the blessed or even canonised saints. Two practices converged in these campaigns: the Catholic tradition of sacralising specific sites and endowing material remnants with special meaning, and the ‘museumification’ of memorial houses and collections. The focus here is on the use of material culture in the beatification campaigns for modern stigmatics (who carried the wounds of Christ). Of the hundreds of cases that were reported, only a few were beatified and canonised. The article concentrates primarily on one success story: the evolution of the German stigmatic Anne Catherine Emmerick (1774–1824) from a ‘living saint’ to her being officially blessed (2004) and the role that her houses and possessions played in the promotion of her cult following and image construction.

KEYWORDS
Memorabilia; relics; houses; saints; stigmatics; cults

1. Introduction

No one is elevated to sainthood immediately after his or her death. It takes years before the process of beatification and canonisation starts; years during which the names of those who had once seemed so popular, so universally admired, can easily be forgotten. Thus, there needs to be proof of a lasting interest in the saints-to-be after their deaths in order for them to be raised to the level of the blessed and holy. Memories of them need to be kept alive and their saintly reputations (fama sanctitatis) supported and promoted. While no public cults in support of saints-to-be are permitted (by the Church), private devotion to them is a conditio sine qua non. The prohibition against public cults means that individuals may not perform acts that the Catholic Church reserves for itself such as honouring God, the blessed or the saints (e.g. depicting them with an aureole or putting their image on an altar); or acts that are performed under the auspices of the Church by individuals officially charged to do so. Scholarly interest in this interim period is only gradually developing, and has focused primarily on the textual and visual...
propaganda concerning these saints-to-be. This might be due to the fact that although the material turn in Catholic historiography has been progressing since 1970–1980, it is still in its preliminary phases, as the majority of historians are still privileging texts in their reconstruction of the past. I want to argue that the houses and memorabilia collections associated with venerated personages play an important role in campaigns to elevate popular, unofficial, saintly figures to the level of the blessed or even canonised saints.

The road to sanctity is quite long and involves several hurdles that the case of the saint-to-be needs to pass. In the period under discussion here (the nineteenth and twentieth century), the canonisation procedure underwent important changes (especially in 1983 when it became more collaborative in nature). What is important for our analysis here, is that the procedure started at the diocesan level and then moved on to the Vatican level. If the reputation of sanctity continued after the death of the candidate, it was the local bishop who initiated a process. The goal of the first phase (from 1983 onwards in collaboration with staff of the Vatican Congregation for the Causes of Saints) was to provide sufficient material about the candidate - now called ‘Servant of God’. If the Vatican officials deemed a formal process merited, the Roman phase began during which arguments pro and con were raised and compiled in a positio. If the candidate made it through this phase s/he was called ‘venerable’. To be beatified or canonised, ‘divine signs’ were required. These were examined in accordance with miracle standards by which it needed to be established that God performed the miracle and it occurred through the intercession of the servant of God (since 1983 two miracles are required for the canonisation of non-martyrs). If additional divine signs were reported after the beatification, canonisation could follow.

This paper studies the use of material culture in the beatification campaigns for modern stigmatics. They were mostly women who carried marks resembling the wounds of the crucified body of Christ. While stigmatics are most often associated with the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, scholars such as Elke Pahud de Mortanges have demonstrated that the nineteenth century was, in fact, a ‘golden era’ for stigmatics. Of the hundreds of stigmatics who were reported, only a few were beatified and canonised. I suggest in this respect that two practices converged in the campaigns: the Catholic tradition of sacralising specific sites and endowing material remnants with special meaning, and the ‘museumification’ of memorial houses and collections. My focus is primarily on one success story: the evolution of the German stigmatic Anne Catherine Emmerick (1774–1824) from a ‘living saint’ to being officially ‘blessed’ (beatified) in 2004, and the role that her houses and possessions played in the promotion of her cult following. This story will be compared with less successful cases of stigmatics who did not gain official approval, but whose advocates seem to have used similar means in keeping their cults alive.

2. Preserving memorabilia and sites – creating an image

The modern stigmatics I will discuss here were part of a new trend. As Nicole Priesching and Paula Kane have pointed out, in the nineteenth century, it became commonplace to visit stigmatics – now often lay women – at home. Travelling had become cheaper and easier and so it was no longer just the happy few who could view these exceptional bodies. Reports on these visits often include elaborate descriptions of the houses and rooms of the stigmatics, and often a photograph or a drawing. What happened to these rooms and houses after the death of the stigmatic? What happened when the
‘miraculous’ body was no longer there to be viewed? Several of these houses were preserved, such as those of the German stigmatics, Therese Neumann (1898–1962) and Anna Schäffer (1882–1925), the French Marthe Robin (1902–1981), the Spanish Margalida Amengual Campaner (1888–1919), and the Italians Gemma Galgani (1878–1903), Edvige Carboni (1880–1952) and Maria Domenica Lazzeri (1815–1848). In other cases, such as those of the Belgian stigmatics, Isabella Henderickx (1844–1874) and Clara Jung (1887–1952), I found traces of unsuccessful attempts to preserve rooms from their former homes.

The tradition of preserving and visiting rooms of ‘saintly’ people developed long before the nineteenth century. The German Catholics supporting Anne Catherine Emmerick’s case referred to this tradition when discussing their initiative, but it was not their only point of reference. They also referred to the memorial houses of public personalities. ‘Belongings, houses, graves of war heroes, men of state, and scientists are kept in special veneration’. So ‘why not also those of Christian heroes and souls who God has honoured through His rarest of gifts and miracle power?’ Why not do in the ‘field of religion’ what ‘the world does for the great everywhere’? Recent work on the houses of poets and painters suggests that opening such houses to the public was primarily a trend of the mid-nineteenth century, but there are also earlier examples related to Luther, Petrarch and Shakespeare.

The role of various houses associated with Anne Catherine Emmerick in the campaign for her beatification is exceptionally well documented. Born in Flamschen, in the region of Münster, in 1774, Anne Catherine Emmerick entered the Augustinian cloister of Agnetenberg in Dülmen in September 1802. Almost ten years later, the cloister closed due to the new secularisation laws. After she left the cloister, Anne Catherine continued to live in Dülmen. When she started to experience stigmata, she attracted numerous visitors, until her death on 2 February 1824. Large crowds attended her funeral, and her grave became a place of worship. Nonetheless, her reputation as a ‘living saint’ did not guarantee success after death. In fact, as Kaspar Franz Krabbe, one of her biographers, wrote, the enthusiasm for her case was rather limited in her own region; she was more highly regarded abroad and in south Germany, where her biographies had been published.

The situation changed when the centenary of her birth drew close in 1874, and the Augustinian father, Thomas Wegener, took the first steps to create an Anne Catherine Emmerick collection. The goal was the beatification of the stigmatic, who had belonged to his own order. The preservation and display of her possessions and the rooms where she had once lived were of central importance to the ‘campaign’ to promote her biography and devotion to her. From 1 April 1877 onwards, the collection was shown in the house where Emmerick had died, with the house itself becoming a matter of local pride. In his call for donations in September 1878, Wegener, in fact, described it as one of the most important issues of Münsterland. He noted that since it had been open to the public, the house had attracted 1100 visitors. His funding efforts were in vain, however, and as the house could not be purchased, he decided to build a new house closer to her grave. In March 1898, the Emmerick House in Dülmen opened to the public. The house was designed as a place for Wegener to live and host the collection of Emmerick memorabilia. Sources on the Emmerick House allow us to study the ‘museumification’ of the collection and the rooms, or the ‘aesthetic practices that endow objects and site with “museum-like” qualities and bring the values associated with the museum to these
Two rooms are of particular interest: (1) the ‘Emmerick Room’, the exhibition room in the Emmerick House and (2) the Limberg Room, added to the house in 1900. The layout of the House can be seen in Figure 1(a,b).

Located to the left of the entryway, the Emmerick Room held a collection of memorabilia of Anne Catherine. Three cabinets displayed, among other objects, her prayer books, rosaries, textiles with blood imprints on them, as well as her pillow, clothes, letters and items she had sewn for the poor. In the same room, visitors could see portraits of the men and women who had known Anne Catherine during her lifetime or had promoted her cause after her death. Printed plaques concisely informed visitors about the relationships that the individual personalities had with the life or case of Emmerick, so one could ‘have insight into this meaningful life in only a short time.’ There was also a painting of Anne Catherine by Freifräulein von Oer, which gave the memorabilia on display additional allure, as it depicted the stigmatic with some of these objects. When we compare the description of 1903 with that of 1935, it appears that the arrangement of the room remained more or less the same for decades.

Strictly speaking, as this was not a house where Anne Catherine Emmerick had lived, the Emmerick House and Room were more of a museum than a Gedenkstätte (memorial). However, in 1900, there was an important addition to the collection, when Emmerick’s Stube (room) was removed from the Limberg house and attached to the Emmerick House (see Figure 2).

The Limberg house, where Emmerick lived from October 1813 to August 1821, was about to be renovated and the Emmerick Stube was in danger of being demolished. In Figure 1.

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**Figure 1.** (a). Dülmen, Stadtarchiv, Bauakten no. 664: Emmerick Room (right) and Emmerick Room (left). © Stadtarchiv Dülmen. (b). Dülmen, Stadtarchiv, Bauakten no. 664: Drawing for an addition to the Emmerick House in Dülmen. © Stadtarchiv Dülmen.
other words, the careful transportation of this room reflects a typical scenario for the
development of a memorial house: the danger of destruction instigates an initiative for
its preservation as a site of remembrance. The plans for the annexation of the room
to the Emmerick House have been preserved in the Dülmen city archives. They show
how one had access to the Leidensstube (room of suffering) via a small flight of stairs
from the Emmerick Room. The Stube was still as it had been in Emmerick’s time.
The owner, a baker named Limberg, had been so impressed by Emmerick’s virtue and
patient suffering that he decided to no longer use the room where she lived and also to
ensure his heirs would keep the room as it was.

The transport of the room was done with the utmost care:
Since it was primarily made out of wood and clay, it could easily be rebuilt next to the
Emmerick House, so that one could enter it via the interior of this house. The old beams
below and above the chamber, the old boards for floor and ceiling, the standing pillars,
the beams, the bolts, stones in the walls, and finally the old door and the same window

Figure 2. Anne Catherine Emmerick’s room in the Limberg house (in the basement of the Church of the
Holy Cross in Dülmen). Photograph by the author.
were recombined and as such the old room was reconstituted with the same height, length and width. To complete it all, during the demolition, the old wall render was stored in about 20 bags and was rehydrated and reused in the new building.30

Old pictures and furniture of Anne Catherine’s in the Emmerick House collection were used to refurnish the room, creating the impression that the stigmatic had only just left it.31

So what image of Anne Catherine Emmerick did Wegener try to create using the house, an architectural remnant, and memorabilia? How did he present her as worthy of beatification? What would the faithful see when they visited the Emmerick House? Those who entered the Limberg Stube would see that the window, door and one of the cupboards carried the seals that had been attached to them by the police when they searched the room in 1819 for hidden instruments or acids with which she might have created the stigmata.32 As none were found, the broken seals represented ‘the signs of the innocently persecuted maiden’.33 The portraits of Emmerick’s famous visitors, ‘important men and women’, might stimulate the imaginations of the visitors, who could easily picture these personalities sitting in the small room into which they could look.34 Other objects on display represented different aspects of Anne Catherine’s life and personality: visitors could see, for example, the small cupboard where she kept the clothes she was sewing for the poor, while the actual products of this work were also exhibited. References to her religious life, voluntary suffering and stigmata were also present. There was a crucifix, pieces of cloth with imprints of stigmata, and pictures of Anne Catherine Emmerick with stigmata. These rooms thus conveyed an image of simplicity, charity and devotion, but also of religious significance and influence.

Figure 3. The house of Louise Lateau in Bois–d’Haine. Photograph by the author.
A similar combination of conservation and promotional efforts can be found in the case of the Belgian stigmatic Louise Lateau (1850–1883). During her lifetime, she was as popular as Anne Catherine Emmerick and people visited her grave after her death. As in Emmerick’s case, significant impetus for the preservation of her memory came from a single religious man. In Louise’s case, this was a professor from Louvain, chanoine (canon) Armand Thiéry. As early as 1875, while Louise was still alive, the Tournai bishop, Monseigneur Dumont, had noted the importance of the preservation of her house (see Figure 3). However, it could not be purchased as it was also the home of her sisters who later donated it to a family friend, Egida Desmet. The latter finally sold it to chanoine Thiéry in 1925. Thiéry, who claimed to have been miraculously cured through the intervention of Louise in 1910, donated the Lateau house to a non-profit association which he had created. Desmet, however, continued to live in the house until 1940. At the time of the transaction, Thiéry was already in possession of the cemetery where Louise was buried. He wanted to reopen the process of beatification (a first attempt had been judged ‘inopportune’ in 1907) and, in addition to publishing extensively on her, including a five volume biography, he collected objects that had once belonged to her and a cherished portrait of her. Almost 20 years later, in 1943, Thiéry donated the house and cemetery to the local church council, fearing that his heirs might attempt to sell the house after his death. His condition for the transaction was that both sites would remain ‘a place of cult’. In 1948, Thiéry remarked that while he was happy with the current situation, it would be best if a museum of some kind could be created in the future. The house slowly fell into decay, until 1991, when a new parish priest, Omer Papeleux, with the Amis de Louise Lateau organisation, wanted to rekindle popular devotion to Louise Lateau and perhaps reopen the beatification process. They restored the house, added an annex and furnished it with Louise’s former possessions. They also started a press campaign (including the inauguration of periodicals such as Présence/Presence) and organised visits to her house. The campaign did not have a successful outcome as Rome responded with ‘nunc non opportunet’ (‘beatification not opportune at this moment’). Still, the promoters did not give up and an appeal to the new bishop of Tournai (Mgr Harpigny) followed in June 2005, albeit without success.

3. Sites of prayer

I always thought that it was wrong that the house of her death was sublet to private persons, and wished in myself and out loud that the son of the house, who was a parson (Pfarrer) would destine it for the veneration of the divinely blessed (Gottseligen). I and others were therefore very happy when we heard that a foreign clergyman had rented the house to open it for people’s veneration. Recorded in 1887, the testimony of Clara Zumegen documents the frustration of a local woman and shows that not all of the rooms linked to a stigmatic were automatically perceived as special sites by association, and set apart on this basis as sites of remembrance and veneration. The religious importance of a site is often something that needs to be highlighted in order for it to be recognised. Before Wegener was able to rent the house where Emmerick died in 1877, it had been sublet for 53 years. However, the moment the room where Emmerick died was opened to the public, it became – in the words of Wegener – a site for prayers. For the faithful it became a pilgrimage site and in 1887, one lady remembered: ‘We happily and frequently made visits to the grave and the house of the death of
the God-blessed, and I have also been asked by letter to pray at her grave for others.°

Even after the collection of memorabilia had been moved to the Emmerick House, the room in which she died remained a place of special importance and it was included in Emmerick tours organised by the Emmerick Society in the 1930s. A journalist who joined one of these in spring 1935, described his impressions to his readers:

The room has been preserved in its original condition, only all the furniture has been removed. The place on the floor where the bed stood is marked with white lines. The old floor boards have been preserved. That is all the eye can see. But what a life materializes in front of those who enter this room, the second one after the front door! With all might, the memories of the severely tested sufferer descend upon the visitor. Here A.K.E. exhaled her soul …

The history of the Limberg room, where Emmerick lived from October 1813 to August 1821, was a quite different story. As noted above, the Leidensstube was added to the Emmerick House in 1900. From the start, the importance of the site as a place of devotion had been clearly marked out. Its owner had kept the room exactly as it was when Anne Catherine moved out. He had turned it into a 'holy memorial site' (heiliger Erinnerung-platz). He hung images of saints in the room, installed a table with a crucifix and a prayer bench, and opened it to visits of the faithful. The format of the room changed when it was added to the Emmerick House and the old furniture was installed in the room. The report on the tour of 1935 suggests that as a visitor you could enter that chamber.

Here, every word falls silent and makes room for profound emotion (Ergriffenheit). One stands on the same floor boards that A.K.E. walked on … the rare rays of light that fall through the window seem to come from another world.

This was a site where one could feel Emmerick’s presence. The short description documents the ‘sedimentation’ of charisma, suggesting that a ‘saintly presence’ could be felt at the location, linked to her saintly personality even after her death. In an ideal situation, the religious history of a site could guarantee its conservation in original condition. However, this was not a realistic option for many. As one of them (the owner of the Roter House where Emmerick lived from April 1812 until October 1813) remarked: ‘A Jesuit pater, who visited our house in 1849, criticised my mother for having changed the house; she should have left it unchanged, as wonderful things had happened there.’ Nevertheless, as he added, ‘many people, also from the clergy, visited the house because Anne Catherine had lived there’.

The interest of the faithful in the stigmatic’s rooms documents the importance of sites. Still, the different scenarios (reinvention, preservation and lack of initiative) also point to the specificity of the perceptions and the interpretative work that needs to be in place to make a site significant. The prayers of the pilgrims at the three sites (the house of her death, the Limberg room and House Roters) seem to suggest that no strict differentiation needs to be made between Catholic sites of remembrance and sites of cult. Guidebooks for ‘Emmerick pilgrims’ (1924), leading them through the various houses of the stigmatic (or arranged sites, if the houses no longer existed) seem to confirm this idea. However, this would not be completely accurate, as the Vatican has strict rules on what is allowed in the veneration of potential saints. In particular, restrictions can be found in the instructions relating to the causes of canonisation (Novae leges pro causis sanctorum/New laws for the causes of the saints), with Rule 28 stating:
Before the inquiry is concluded, the Bishop or his delegate is to inspect carefully the tomb of the Servant of God, the room in which he lived or died and, if there be any, other places where someone can display signs of cult in his honor. He is also to make a declaration on the observance of the decrees of Urban VIII regarding the absence of cult.

In other words, while the *vox populi* (the voice of the people) is of immense importance for the approval of a case, and all campaign materials – textual, visual or house-centred – may help to achieve popular support, such support may only take the form of private devotion (see opening paragraph). No public cult is allowed before the official approval (beatification) of the Church. In the case of Louise Lateau, for example, the dream of her beatification stimulated the renovation of her house and a press campaign, but also the explicit request that devotion should be observed in a more discreet manner than had occurred thus far.

4. Memorabilia/relics

For Catholics, it was not only the sites that had a special meaning: the objects on display were also of central importance. These were meant to convey an image of Anne Catherine Emmerick and possessed the capacity of triggering what has been called the Saint Thomas effect: they could publicly authenticate or discredit a personage’s eligibility for sainthood. They were more than former possessions and they could function as keep-sakes and as a means to make contact with the deceased, to whom special powers were attributed. In other words, they could function as ‘relics’ of a saint-to-be.

In Emmerick’s case, it was the Augustinian father, Thomas Wegener, who took the initiative in 1874 to collect all the objects that had once belonged to Anne Catherine. Fifty to sixty years after her death, about 100 objects could still be retrieved, ranging from books and clothes to furniture. According to Wegener, this careful conservation of quotidian objects which had once belonged to Anne Catherine, demonstrated how great the veneration for her was. Some of the objects had been preserved by locals, but the others were spread across Germany, demonstrating the popularity of Anne Catherine Emmerick during her lifetime. By bringing them together he wanted to make the objects and the place of her death accessible for private veneration, as it was an old ‘Catholic custom, to preserve everything that concerned holy people out of veneration.’ We are well informed about Wegener’s efforts, not only through his correspondence but above all by the catalogue that he created, which listed all the objects he collected. The catalogue from these initial years documents a system of authentication. A provenance for each object was included, narrating how it had been preserved and how it had entered the collection. For some objects, there were additional sworn testimonies. This was the case for the objects donated by Luise-Hensel. She wrote on the wrapping paper of one of her donations: ‘I vouch on my conscience for the authenticity of the objects.’ So why did individuals like Hensel release their Emmerick objects to Wegener after years of personal care and preservation? Those who donated such objects did so to serve the cause of the Emmerick campaign by enabling greater veneration of her by others after the donors were no longer living. Most of the provenance details related to the objects show the special care with which they had been preserved by the faithful. However, at least one object (a small cupboard) appears to have been a rediscovery. Including it in the collection meant enhancing its worth by linking it to Emmerick’s life.
On entering the collection, the objects became visible and (sometimes) touchable for Emmerick’s devotees. In fact, this was one of the ‘dangers’ to which objects that were not locked away were constantly exposed. Thomas Wegener explicitly noted in his catalogue of the collection that no objects in the collection were to be given away, sold or ‘made smaller’. Only bed linen that had been cut into smaller pieces was to be used ‘for the distribution of fragments’. These relics were a great success, at least according to Wegener. Nonetheless, not all other objects survived unharmed, with the visitors’ need for a material reminder of the stigmatic proving to be quite destructive to Anne Catherine’s bed. Photographs document how the bed grew smaller as the visitors broke off small pieces. Their destructive visits are evidence of a tactile pilgrimage culture in which pilgrims take small souvenirs from venerated sites to be used in their own homes as devotional objects. These objects could, in turn, work miracles, and there were stories testifying that believers had been miraculously cured by putting a relic associated with Anne Catherine Emmerick on their body (e.g. on the forehead in the case of a severe headache). The objects could be deemed exceptional in themselves, for example, they might even smell clean, although they were unwashed and covered with blood.

The supporters of Marie-Julie Jahenny (1850–1941) thought of a similar use for the possessions of the French stigmatic. In particular, in 1941, a generous woman offered to donate money in order to create a society called Les amis de la servante de Dieu, Marie-Julie Jahenny, and to buy the furniture, devotional objects, clothes, etc. that had belonged to Jahenny, and perhaps also purchase the house in which she had lived. Her goal was to preserve the reminders of the stigmatic and the ‘essence of the cadre in which she had lived’. In return, however, she asked that these objects be put at the disposal of the faithful after the Church had approved Jahenny’s glorification. In particular, she was thinking of ‘a system of temporary loans of those objects’ to be organised ‘on a large scale, for those who would like to obtain a specific grace’. There was, however, one specific condition: that such loans were only to be to ‘people morally and religiously qualified to benefit from them’.

5. Opening and closing houses: vox populi, vox Dei?

The goal of opening the Emmerick house and collection to the public was not only to keep the memory of Anne Catherine alive but also to promote devotion to her and, eventually, the cause of her beatification. Did the initiatives have an effect? One hundred years after Emmerick’s death, one supporter remarked how collecting the Emmerick relics and the building of the Emmerick House, in particular, had been important in rekindling enthusiasm for Anne Catherine. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the relationship also works in the other direction. Her popularity is reflected in the number of visitors to the Emmerick House, which can be ascertained by examining its visitor books which lists the visitation dates, names and addresses of visitors. These lists seem to served several functions within the promotional campaign. A first list (started in 1875, after the centenary but before the collection was put on display) mentions the pages were intended for pilgrims ‘to get to know each other as devotees’ of Anne Catherine Emmerick (see Figure 4(a)). From 1877 onwards the books list the ‘names of the visitors of the house where the divinely blessed Anne Catherine Emmerick had died’ and from 1898 onwards those of the Emmerick House (see Figure 4(b,c)).
The visitors’ books show a continuous stream of visitors viewing the collection from 1877 to 1955. We can see an increase in the number of visitors when the Emmerick House opened, and especially after the First World War, and in the years leading up to the centenary of her death. The campaign surrounding the 100th anniversary of her death, including the publication of a map showing the different places she had lived,

Figure 4. (a). Front page of the first *Pilgerbuch* (1875); (b,c) the first pages of the 1877–1893 visitor book of the *Sterbehaus* (where the collection was put on display since 1877). Bistumsarchiv Münster (BAM), Sammlung Anna-Katharina-Emmerick-Archiv und Luise-Hensel-Bibliothek, A 48a und A 48b. © Bistumsarchiv Münster.
seems to have had a positive effect. The visitors came from European countries such as France, Switzerland and Austria, but also from North America and even China. The numbers then diminished. The visitors’ books end in 1956, when the collection was transported to the new Augustinian cloister in Wedeler (Maria Königin). The Leidensstube was moved, along with the rest of the collection, with particular care again being taken to keep the room as intact as possible and to reconstruct it carefully.

The interest in Emmerick’s case seems to have diminished from the moment the beatification process was put on hold in Rome in 1928. It did not benefit her case that, in March 1945, the city centre of Dülmen was destroyed by bombing, despite the inhabitants being convinced up until then that Anne Catherine had protected them from harm. The downward trend in interest was particularly visible in Flamschen, where Anne Catherine’s birth house was located (see Figure 5). In 1959, Emmerick’s popularity seems to have reached a low point and this was reflected in the condition of the house, which was falling into ruin. The first initiatives to preserve this house were taken by the Anne Catherine Emmerick Verein e.V. Coesfeld, created in 1966, consisting of representatives of local and ecclesiastical authorities, who preserved and renovated the house. Their interest had been sparked in 1964 by a retired teacher and devotee of Emmerick. In the renovation process, they used the expertise of the director of the open air museum of Detmold. For unknown reasons, arsonists burned down the renovated house in October 1969. It was subsequently reconstructed shortly before the 200th anniversary of Anne Catherine’s birth and the reconstruction seems to have stimulated a new interest in her life. The Emmerick-Bund, the organisation that had been working towards her beatification

Figure 5. Anne Catherine Emmerick’s birth house in Flamschen. Photograph by the author.
since 1921, but dissolved in 1954 (due to the lack of interest in the case), was reestablished. On 31 January 1973, the bishop, Heinrich Tenhumberg, asked the Roman Congregation for Canonizations to reopen the process of Emmerick’s beatification (which had been put on hold). During that year, the number of visitors peaked at around 4000.

Sadly, the house burned down again in May 1976. While nothing is known about the culprits responsible for the first fire, the second fire was probably lit by a group of youngsters who had committed similar acts in the area and wanted the local authorities to do more for the young. The house was reconstructed once more and opened for visitors in 1980. In 2004, on the occasion of her 230th birthday and 180 years after her death, Rome beatified Anne Catherine Emmerick, on 3 October 2004. By then, the Emmerick Gedächtnisstätte (Emmerick memorial) in the Augustinian cloister had been deemed to not be sufficiently accessible and plans were made to relocate it to the basement of the Church of the Holy Cross. In 2005, her room was reconstructed in the basement of the church, where it can still be visited today.

While the Emmerick Stube is exemplary of the integration of a memorial initiative into the ‘mainstream’ Catholic Church – quite literally adding the room to a church building – this was not always the case. Some of the stigmatic movements and houses operated on the margins of Catholicism (e.g. Marie-Julie Jahenny’s house). While some remained under the radar of the ecclesiastical authorities (or were silently tolerated), others triggered action. In the case of Ester Moriconi, for example, the Holy See asked the local bishop to intervene and hinder the faithful from visiting her house in Montelupone, where they could see objects related to her life (e.g. her portrait and her picture of the Madonna). The ecclesiastical authorities did not support her case. Interestingly, Moriconi was still alive at that point, but she was no longer present at the site as she had been confined to a psychiatric hospital. This action of the authorities confirms once again the importance of such houses to the cult and reputation of the stigmatic.

6. By way of conclusion

Scholarly interest in memorial houses is still rather recent and ties in with research on museums and on memorial-cultural practices as evidenced in galleries containing statues of prominent poets and philosophers. Work on the ‘cults’ of these archetypical ‘great’ men presents memorial-cultural practices similar to Christian traditions. Similarly, comparisons have been made between museum visits and religious experiences. It is important to note, however, that such comparisons can also work the other way around: museum practices also have their parallels in the religious field. For the German Catholics of the late nineteenth century, museums and memorial houses of public personalities were a point of reference. ‘Museumification’, which has been documented for other religious traditions, can also be pointed out in Catholic history, when ‘the living quarters of famous people’ were recast ‘in the “language” of the museum’, ‘to uplift ordinariness and endow it with an aura of extraordinariness’. In the initiatives promoting the stigmatics, two practices converged. Objects and sites were singled out as ‘sacred’, but were also cast in museum-like settings and explicitly compared to similar collections and houses of secular heroes.

As this story of the stigmatics’ houses has illustrated, cherished objects and spaces were as important to the preservation and creation of a saintly reputation as the rewriting of a
hagiography or the circulation of devotional cards. Their creation could function as a stimulus for devotion, but did not necessarily guarantee success for the cult or the support of the *vox populi*. Original sites were a benefit but it was not always possible to secure them. In Anne Catherine Emmerick’s case, we saw different scenarios for the houses and rooms in which she lived or with which she was associated: preservation, reinvention, neglect and reconstruction (of the birth house). However, in all cases, devotees showed an interest in visiting the sites. If we look at the houses of other stigmatics, it becomes clear that at least one other scenario has to be added here: initiatives *after* beatification and canonisation. Casa Galgani opened in 1984, no less than 44 years after Gemma Galgani’s canonisation (1940) and 81 years after her death in 1903.\(^8\) This again supports the view of the importance of these houses, collections and sites for Catholics. Opening them to the public meant making the stigmatic’s memory more visible and creating a place for the faithful to pray. Quite a few of these locations survived, and not only as sites of prayer. While most of the houses started with the ambition of becoming a shrine, their present-day tourist appeal cannot be ignored. Those interested in Anne Catherine Emmerick can now cycle the *Pilgerradweg* (pilgrim bike path) linked to her residences, while a large sign outside the house Bois-d’Haine encourages people to visit Louise Lateau’s home.\(^8\) The role of such places and collections has hitherto been ignored, but as I hope I have demonstrated here, they cannot be underestimated when considering the image construction of stigmatics and the preservation of their memory.

**Notes**

3. E.g. S. Deboick, ‘Céline Martin’s Images of Thérèse of Lisieux and the Creation of a Modern Saint,’ in *Saints and Sanctity*, ed. by Peter Clarke and Tony Claydon (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011), pp. 376–89.


18. Wegener, *Das wunderbare*, p. 365. More precisely, the use of these houses reflects what D. J. Tilson has called ‘devotional-promotional communication’. When this is religious in nature, it ‘may seek to instil great love or loyalty, enthusiasm, or zeal for a particular religious individual, living or deceased, or for a specific religion or faith’. D. J. Tilson and Y. Chao, ‘Saintly Campaigning: Devotional-Promotional Communication and the U.S. Tour of St. Therese’s Relics,’ *Journal of Media and Religion*, 1.2 (2002), 81–104, 89.


23. Dülmen, Stadtarchiv, Bauakten no. 664.


27. Breuer, p. 86.


30. Wegener, Supplement to No. 111 of the *Dülmener Anzeiger* 15 September 1900, s.p.


32. Supplement.

33. Wegener, *Das wunderbare*, p. 351.


36. Chanoine Clément, Historique du Travail accompli pour la cause de canonisation de Louise Lateau (July 1992), AET, F/2/2. It was the Vatican cardinal and secretary of state Mgr Rafael Merry del Val who – when he was consulted on the matter – called it inopportune as the Mgr Dumont crisis was still so recent. Mgr Dumont was the bishop of Tournai who was removed from office in 1879 by Leo XIII. The connotation was problematic since in the discussions that developed between the old and new bishop of the diocese, Louise Lateau had chosen the side of the ex-bishop. See T. Van Osseleer, ‘The Affair of the Photographs. Controlling the Public Image of a Nineteenth-Century Stigmatic,’ *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 68.4, pp. 784–806, p. 805.


40. Archives of the Diocese of Tournai, F/2/2, Historique du travail accompli pour la cause de canonisation de Louise Lateau.


43. Wegener, *Das wunderbare*, p. 367.

44. BAM, Sammlung AKE 40, 20, pp. 27–9, Witwe Justizrat von Zurmühlen Auguste geb. Keus, ber. 28 Dec. 1887, Dülmen (p. 27).

45. ‘Die Emmerickstätten’.


47. ‘Die Emmerickstätten’.

48. Addressing person and place as a mutually constitutive relationship: E. Mesaritou, ‘”He is among us, get into your Head, he is Alive and Always Here”: Saintly Presence at the Pilgrimage Centre of Padre Pio and the Importance of “Being There”,’ *Culture and Religion*, 16.1 (2015), 87–109, 89.

49. BAM, Sammlung AKE 40, 26, pp. 39–42: Junggeselle Hermann Pelster.


51. *Führer durch Dülmen besonders für Emmerickpilger* (Dülmen: Sievert, 1924); Reyer.

52. P. Palazzini, ‘Normae servandae in inquisitionibus ab episcopis faciendis in causis sanc-


54. Leysbeth, p. 7.


57. Anne Catherine Emmerick Gedächtnisstätte, catalogue (1878), the document was started by Wegener and completed by his successors.

58. Anne Catherine Emmerick Gedächtnisstätte, catalogue (1878), entry 152, addition in February 1954.


60. Wegener, *Das wunderbare*, p. 368.

61. Gedächtnisstätte, Catalogue, nos. 68 and 142.
64. For these practices, see, e.g. C. Notermans and W. Jansen, ‘ExVotos in Lourdes: Contested Materiality of Miraculous Healings,’ *Material Religion*, 7.2 (2011), 168–93, 188.
65. BAM, Sammlung AKE 40, 20, pp. 27–9, Witwe Justizrat von Zurmühlen.
67. Archives Historiques du Diocèse de Nantes, Fonds Marie-Julie Jahenny, 5F2/49, Association, des Amis de MJJ et de La Fraudais, projet de constitution (1941), appel (1958): in 1958, there was a renewed effort by the Association des Amis de Marie-Julie et de la Fraudais to buy the cabin (‘chaumière’) and small garden and restore it. See Graus, ‘A visit,’ p. 8. I am grateful to Andrea Graus for these references.
70. 1877–1893: 17,000 in 16 years, an average of 1062 per year; 1893–1906, 17,000–43,443 = 26,443 in 13 years, 1803 per year; 1906–1918, 43,444–61,119 = 17,675 in 12 years, 1472 per year; 1918–1923, 61,120–78,409 = 17,289 in 5 years, 3457 per year; 1923–1929, 78,410–111,701 = 33,292 in 6 years, 5548 per year; 1929–1938, 111,740–135,203 = 23,463 in 9 years, 2607 per year; 1938–1950, 150,000 = 14,797 in 12 years, 1233 per year. The last number, 150,000 is from the *Dülmener Zeitung*, 5 September 1950, p. 6.
71. Supplement to No. 111 of the *Dülmener Anzeiger* 15 September 1900, s.p.
76. Hagenbruch, ’Das Emmerick-Haus,’ pp. 65, 82.
81. Adinolfi and Van de Port, p. 287.

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