

Vulgate Bible

In Latin, decorated manuscript on paper

Southern Netherlands (Louvain?), c. 1465-1480

i (modern paper) + *iv* (paper) + 520 + *iv* (paper) + *i* (modern paper) on paper, watermarks (selected examples): letter 'y', cross above, tail with two lines and cloverleaf, similar to Piccard online 30276, Cologne 1478, 30362, Middelberg, Seeland, 1470, 30406, Arnhem, 1466-67; tower with three turrets above, Piccard Online 101098 and 101100, both Louvain 1471, similar to 101109, Arnhem, 1465; anchor with flukes, no additional motif, Piccard Online 117646, Utrecht, 1467, and 117626, Utrecht, 1468, and 117644 and 117645, Utrecht, 1469; angular letter 'P' with a vertical stroke through the shaft, many similar, including Piccard Online 108532, Louvain, 1475, and 108277, Zutphen, 1467-8, and 108278, Utrecht, 1475; unidentified shield (see f. 388), modern foliation in pencil top outer corner verso, complete, definitive collation impracticable due to the thickness of the volume and the binding, in quires of 12 (conjectural collation *i-vii*¹² *viii*¹⁴ [through f. 98v] *ix-xv*¹² *xvi*⁸ [through f. 190v] *xvii-xxiv*¹² *xxv*⁸ [through f. 296v] *xxvi-xxxii*¹² *xxxiii*⁸ [through f. 388v] *xxxiv-xxxviii*¹² [through f. 448v] *xxxix-xliv*¹²), no catchwords or signatures, frame ruled in lead (bounding lines only) with full-length horizontal and vertical bounding lines (justification 203-190 x 148-145 mm.), written on the top bounding line in skilled hybrida scripts by a number of scribes in two columns of 57 to 46 lines, contemporary formal corrections throughout in a number of hands, majuscules within text stroked with red, red rubrics and running titles, three-line red initials at the beginning of chapters, books and prologues begin with 18- to 4-line (most 4- to 6-line) red penwork initials, infilled and with pen decoration in brown text ink (f. 307, with touches of red, f. 336, with green wash), once with tabs at the beginning of biblical books (remnants often visible in outer margins), excellent condition, occasional insignificant soiling in the margins, a few leaves with very minor damage to outer edges. Bound in the nineteenth century before 1860 by P. C. Schavye or his son, J. C. E. Schavye for Th. De Jonghe in heavy wooden boards covered with blind tooled brown leather in the style of fifteenth-century bindings with a central panel of fleur-de-lis and the de Jonghe coat of arms, surrounded by floral stamps and an outer border of small rosettes, front cover, "Biblia integra/ manu scripta" on a label covered with clear horn(?) framed in metal, braided head and tail bands, spine tooled with seven raised bands, in excellent condition, slight scuffing on hinges and corners, housed in a pebbled leather slip case, with a fitted sleeve of leather and marbled paper, spine tooled in gilt with "Biblia Sacra" and the coat of arms of Th. De Jonghe. Dimensions 282 x 206 mm.

A lectern-size Bible representative of new trends in the presentation of the Latin Vulgate in the Netherlands and Germany in the fifteenth century. This remarkably thick book (c. 120 mm. or 4 ¾ inches wide, including the heavy wooden boards) is written on paper (with numerous easily visible watermarks) and in excellent condition. Compared with thirteenth-century examples, fifteenth-century Bibles are uncommon, and certainly rare on the market (the most recent sale identified in the Schoenberg Database was in 1993).

PROVENANCE

1. Written in the Southern Netherlands c. 1465-1480, possibly in or near Louvain, based on the evidence of the script, watermarks, and decoration. There are a remarkable number of watermarks present, suggesting the paper may have been imported from various regions in the Northern and Southern Netherlands, and even from the Rhineland. The script is a disciplined cursive gothic script, without loops, or in other words, a hybrida script, resembling the type of Netherlandish hybrida scripts used so often in religious houses and monasteries associated with the Brethren of the Common Life in the in the fifteenth century from the second quarter of the century on, but with

some distinctive variation that points to an origin in the Southern Netherlands (for example, the slight 'horns' on the 'g', and the use of round 'r' in initial positions).

The present order of the biblical books is almost certainly not the original order (see Text, below). Moreover, this is a very thick volume, and the clear division into sections with blank leaves at the end of certain books suggests it may have once been bound in more than one volume.

Throughout, there are contemporary corrections by a corrector (not the scribe) (see for example, ff. 45v, 62), which are very carefully entered; a fly or other insect is pressed in the upper margin of f. 87v; no marginal notes, but occasional very discrete *nota* marks (three dots, f. 76v, outer margin; f. 216, etc.).

2. Erased inscription top margin of an early owner, f. 1, "Ce <liure?> ..." (illegible under ultra violet).
3. Belonged to Jean-Baptiste-Théodore De Jonghe (1801-1860) of Brussels. The descendant of a patrician family and heir to a great fortune, De Jonghe was one of the preeminent Belgian book collectors of the nineteenth century; he devoted over thirty years to forming his library, which was primarily devoted to the law, history, and heraldry of the Low Countries, but also included early books and manuscripts. De Jonge had our manuscript bound by P. C. Schavye or his son, J. C. E. Schavye; De Jonge coat of arms, front cover, and on the slip case; for his collection see "Notice," by the Société des bibliophiles Belges, 1861; his book plate with coat of arms, and motto, "Fortune ne vieillit pas," inside front cover. His library was sold in Brussels by F. Heussner in 1860; this manuscript was described vol. 1, no. 2 of the sale.
4. Belonged to Mathieu Varille (1885-1964) a writer and collector from Lyons; his bookplate, inside front cover; inside back cover, Ex Libris Mathieu Varille lyonnais (Online Resources).
5. Belonged to Jean Varille (1914-2003); front flyleaf, f. i, book plate: Ex Libris Jean Varille, with motto, "Orando Perseverando Laborando Nec Timide Nec Timide"; front flyleaf, f. i verso, in ink, note in his hand stating that his father, Mathieu Varille, purchased this manuscript because of connections his grandfather had with the De Jonghe family.
6. Belonged to Eric Gruaz; his bookplate with dragon, inside front cover, "Perseverare/ Ex Libris/ Eric Gruaz."
7. Inside back cover, clipping from a sales catalogue in French, no. 184.

TEXT

Latin Bible, with prologues, in sections as follows:

ff. 1-98v, Genesis-Ruth:

f. 1, [General prologue, divided into eight chapters] Frater ambrosius [Stegmüller 284]; f. 3v, [prologue to Genesis] Desiderii mei [Stegmüller 285]; f. 4, Genesis; f. 23v, Exodus; f. 40,

Leviticus; f. 50, Numbers; f. 64 [rubric, text, f. 64v], Deuteronomy; f. 76v, [prologue to Joshua] Tandem finito [Stegmüller 311]; f. 77, Joshua; f. 86, Judges; f. 95, Ruth [ends f. 96v, col. a; remainder and ff. 98-98v, blank];

ff. 99-190v, Major and Minor Prophets:

f. 99, [prologue to Isaiah] Nemo cum prophetas [Stegmüller 482]; f. 99, Isaiah; f. 117, [prologue to Jeremiah] Iheremias propheta [Stegmüller 487]; f. 117, Jeremiah; f. 139, Lamentations; f. 141, [prologue to Baruch] Liber iste [Stegmüller 491]; f. 141, Baruch; f. 143v, [prologue to Ezechiel] Ezechiel propheta [Stegmüller 492]; f. 144, Ezechiel; f. 164v, [prologue to Daniel] Danielelem prophetam [Stegmüller 494]; f. 165, Daniel; f. 173v, [prologue to Minor prophets] Non idem ordo est [Stegmüller 500]; f. 173v, Hosea; f. 176, Joel; f. 177, Amos; f. 179, Obadiah; f. 179v, Jonah; f. 180, Micah; f. 181v, Nahum; f. 182v, Habbakuk; f. 183, Zephaniah; f. 184, Haggai; f. 184v, Zechariah; f. 188, Malachi [ending f. 187v; ff. 188-190v];

ff. 191-296v, 1-4 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah:

f. 191, [prologue to Kings] Viginti et duas [Stegmüller 323], f. 191v, 1 Kings; f. 205v, 2 Kings; f. 216v, 3 Kings; f. 230v, 4 Kings; f. 244, [prologue to Chronicles] Si septuaginta [Stegmüller 328]; f. 244v, 1 Chronicles; f. 257v, 2 Chronicles, concluding with the Oratio Manasse; f. 275, [prologue to Ezra] Utrum difficilium [Stegmüller 330]; f. 275v, 1 Ezra; f. 280, Nehemiah; f. 289, 2 Ezra [ends f. 294, mid. col. b; remainder and ff. 294v-296v, blank];

ff. 297-388v: Five Wisdom Books, Job, Tobit, Judith, Esther, 1-2 Maccabees:

f. 297, *Incipit tabula in librum proverbiorum salomonis*, incipit, "Affectu patris alloquitur ... De virgine a morte ... que sunt investigabilia [capitula list, unnumbered, not in De Bruyne]; f. 297v, [prologue to Proverbs] lungat epistola [Stegmüller 457]; f. 298, Proverbs; f. 307, *Incipit tabula libri ecclesiastes*, incipit, "Quod vanitas vanitatum sit ... [capitula list, unnumbered, De Bruyne, series A]; f. 307, [prologue to Ecclesiastes] Memini me [Stegmüller 462]; f. 307, Ecclesiastes; f. 310v, Song of Songs; f. 312, [prologue to Wisdom] Liber sapientie [Stegmüller 468]; f. 312, Wisdom; f. 318, *Tabula libri ecclesiastici*, incipit, Omnis sapientia a domino deo ... [unnumbered capitula list, De Bruyne, series A]; f. 318v, [biblical introduction to Ecclesiasticus, copied as a prologue] Multorum nobis; f. 318v, Ecclesiasticus, with the Prayer of Solomon; f. 335v, *Incipit tabula in librum iob*, incipit, "De origine iob ... [unnumbered capitula list, de Bruyne series A]; f. 336, [prologue to Job] Cogor per singulos [Stegmüller 344]; f. 336v, Job; f. 346v, *Incipit tabula libri thobie*, incipit, "De bonis operibus thobie ..." [unnumbered chapter list, De Bruyne series Am (Fr)]; f. 347, [prologue to Tobit] Cromacio et heliodoro ..., Mirari non desino [Stegmüller 332]; f. 347, Tobit; f. 351, *Incipit tabula libri iudith*, incipit, "Afaxat rex medeorum ..." [unnumbered capitula list, De Bruyne series Am (Fr)]; f. 351, [prologue to Judith] Apud hebreos [Stegmüller 335]; f. 351v, Judith; f. 356v, *Incipit tabula libri hester*, incipit, "De convivio regis assueri ... [unnumbered capitula list, De Bruyne series Am (Fr)]; f. 356v, [prologue to Esther] Librum hester; Rursum in libro [Stegmüller 341 and 343, copied as one prologue]; f. 357, Esther; f. 361v, *Incipit tabula primi libri machabeorum*, incipit, "Ubi euersa iherusalem ... [unnumbered capitula list, De Bruyne, series A]; f. 362, [prologue] Machabeorum librum duo [Stegmüller 551]; f. 362, 1 Maccabees; f. 374v, *Incipit tabula libri secundi machabeorum*, incipit, "Ubi occisus est ... Ubi caput et manum ... mitti [unnumbered capitula list, De Bruyne, series A]; f. 375v, 2 Maccabees [ending top col. b, f. 384v; remainder and ff. 385-388v, blank];

ff. 389-448v, Gospels:

f. 389, Beatissimo pape damaso ... , Novum opus ... [prologue to Gospels; Stegmüller 595]; f. 389v, Sciendum etiam ... [prologue to Matthew; Stegmüller 601]; f. 389v, [prologue to Matthew] Matheus ex iudea [Stegmüller 590]; f. 390, Matthew; f. 406v, [prologue to Mark] Marcus evangelista [Stegmüller 607]; f. 407, Mark; f. 416v, [prologue to Luke] Lucas syrus natione [Stegmüller 620]; f. 417, Quoniam quidem [Luke 1:1-4 treated as a prologue]; f. 417, Luke ; f. 434, [prologue to John] Hic est Iohannes [Stegmüller 624] ; f. 434v, John [ending f. 448; f. 448v, blank];

ff. 449-520v: Pauline Epistles, Acts, Catholic Epistles, Apocalypse:

f. 449, [prologue to the Pauline Epistles], Primum queritur [Stegmüller 670]; f. 449v, [prologue to Romans] Romani sunt in partes ytalie ... scribens eis a chorinto [Stegmüller 677]; f. 449v, Romans; f. 456, [prologue to 1 Corinthians] Chorinthii sunt achaici [Stegmüller 685]; f. 456, 1 Corinthians; f. 462v, [prologue to 2 Corinthians] Post actam [Stegmüller 699]; f. 462v, 2 Corinthians; f. 467, [prologue to Galatians] Galathe sunt greci [Stegmüller 707]; f. 467, Galatians; f. 469v, [prologue to Ephesians] Ephesii sunt asyani [Stegmüller 715]; f. 469v, Ephesians; f. 471v, [prologue to Philippians] Philippenses sunt macedones [Stegmüller 728]; f. 471v, Philippians; f. 473v, [prologue to Colossians] Colocenses et hii [Stegmüller 736]; f. 473v, Colossians; f. 475, [prologue to 1 Thessalonians] Thessalonicenses sunt macedones [Stegmüller 747]; f. 475, 1 Thessalonians; f. 476v, [prologue to 2 Thessalonians] Ad thessalonicenses [Stegmüller 752]; f. 476v, 2 Thessalonians; f. 477, [prologue to 1 Timothy] Thymotheum instruit [Stegmüller 765]; f. 477, 1 Timothy; f. 478v, [prologue to 2 Timothy] Item Thymotheo scribit [Stegmüller 772]; f. 478v, 2 Timothy; f. 480v, [prologue to Titus] Titum commonefacit [Stegmüller 780]; f. 480, Titus; f. 481, [prologue to Philemon] Phylemoni familiares [Stegmüller 783]; f. 481, Philemon; f. 481v, [prologue to Hebrews] In primis dicendum [Stegmüller 793]; f. 481v, Hebrews; f. 486v, [prologue to Acts] Lucas antiocensis natione syrus [Stegmüller 640]; f. 487, Acts; f. 504, [prologue to Catholic Epistles] Non ita ordo est [Stegmüller 809]; f. 504v, James; f. 506, 1 Peter; f. 507v, 2 Peter; f. 508v, 1 John; f. 510, 2 John; f. 510v, 3 John; f. 510v, Jude; f. 511, Apocalypse, [ending top col. b, f. 518v; remainder and ff. 519-520v, blank].

The fifteenth century saw the revival of large-format "lectern" Bibles, often copied for use in newly-reformed monasteries associated with the reforms of the Carthusians and the Bursfield and Windesheim congregations (de Hamel, 2001, pp. 194-196). There is currently no detailed study of this important phenomenon, nor is there a complete census of the surviving manuscripts. Selected examples of large fifteenth-century Bibles from the Netherlands include Keble College Oxford, MS 67-68 (de Hamel, 2011, no. 31, with plate; Parkes, pp. 294-297); London, British Library, MS Royal 1 C VI, a large two-volume Bible copied in 1451 by the Brethren of the Common Life at Zwolle (Online Resources); and the Vulgate once owned by William Morris (formerly Los Angeles, Getty Museum, MS Ludwig I.12, Getty Museum; now Museum of the Bible), copied at Hattem c. 1420-1430 for the Brethren of the Common Life (see Nishimura, 2000, no. 5, for additional examples of Bibles of this type from Hattem). Our manuscript departs from these examples since it is on paper and is not illuminated.

The Bibles associated with Windesheim congregation are of particular interest since Johannes Busch in his Chronicle (c. 1464), tells us that the Canons prepared a new, corrected text of the Vulgate for use within the congregation, based on a comparison of the text found in a number of different manuscripts of the Bible (Post, 1968, pp. 305-308; Greitemann, 1937). Greitemann, in his study of these Bibles, concluded that the success of their effort was limited, both in terms of

the quality of their corrections, and its broader influence (a new study of the Windesheim Bibles in the context of other fifteenth-century Bibles is long overdue).

Although further research is needed, we conclude that at least in terms of the order of the biblical books and the choice of prologues, the text in our manuscript was likely related to the Windesheim recension as represented by Darmstadt, Hessische Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek, MS 324, a five-volumes Bible copied by Thomas a Kempis in Zwolle, at Angietenberg, between 1427 and 1439, arranged as follows: v. 1, Genesis-Ruth; v. 2, Kings-3 Ezra; v. 3, Proverbs-Ecclesiasticus, Job, Tobit, Judith, Esther, Maccabees; v. 4, Prophets; v. 5, Gospels, Pauline Epistles, Acts, Catholic Epistles, Apocalypse (described in Staub and Knaus, 1979, available at Manuscripta mediaevalia, Online Resources). The present unusual order of the biblical books in our Bible, and the fact that it is divided into discrete sections (separated by blanks) that correspond exactly with the volumes in Thomas a Kempis's Bible, allow us to conclude that our Bible is now bound out of order, and originally it must have followed the order of Thomas's Bible (and indeed, it may even have been bound in several volumes). Our Bible also includes the same prologues as the Thomas a Kempis Bible in Darmstadt (with the possible exception of Ecclesiastes).

The text in our Bible was both an attempt to get closer to the original text of St. Jerome's Vulgate, and also a reaction against the text of the Paris Bible that circulated widely from the thirteenth century on, especially in Bibles copied in Paris and Northern France. The order of the books and the choice of prologues here are not that of the Paris Bible, and an examination of selected readings suggest the text is different as well. The order of the biblical books, the prologues, and the presence of chapter lists betray the influence of Bibles copied before the thirteenth century (chapter lists are found in other fifteenth-century Bibles from the Netherlands in Germany, although not the Bible copied by Thomas a Kempis, and in Bibles copied before c. 1230; they are quite rare in thirteenth-century Bibles).

The movement known as the *Devotio Moderna* (the Modern Devotion) was founded by Geert Groote (1340-1384) and included groups of lay men and women living communally as Brothers and Sisters of the Common life, as well as clerics in monasteries of the Augustinian Canons Regular of the Windesheim Congregation. Voices for renewal and reform within the fifteenth-century Church, the followers of Geert Groote stressed the importance of interior piety, focused on spiritual reading and a return to the sources, the most important of which was the Bible. The Bible described here reflects these concerns in both its text and physical characteristics.

LITERATURE

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Van Engen, John H. *Sisters and Brothers of the Common Life: the Devotio Moderna and the World of the Later Middle Ages*, Philadelphia, 2008.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Ex Libris/ Matheiu Varille/ Lyonnois

See http://numelyo.bm-lyon.fr/f_view/BML:BML_06PRV01000ChomaratA8197771

Repertorium biblicum medii aevi (digital version of Stegmüller)

<http://repbib.uni-trier.de/cgi-bin/rebihome.tcl>

Manuscripta mediaevalia, Online description of Darmstadt Hessische Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek, MS 324

<http://www.manuscripta-mediaevalia.de/>

London, British Library, MS Royal 1 C VI, a large two-volume Bible copied in 1451 by the Brethren of the Common Life at Zwolle
(<https://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=5344&CollID=16&NStart=10306>)

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