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BREVIARY (use of the Carthusians)

In Latin, manuscript on parchment

[Southern France, Lyons (?), c. 1300-25; then Villeneuve-lès-Avignon, c. 1350-1400]

214 folios, complete (collation i6, ii2, iii-xii8, ix9 [of 10, blank x canceled], xiv-xxviii8, xxix7 [of 8, blank viii canceled]), medieval foliation in the center top margin begins after the calendar i-clxxii, continuing with modern foliation in pencil, written in dark brown ink in a gothic bookhand on 28 long lines, ruled in plummet (justification 140 x 80 mm.), capitals touched in red, a few horizontal catchwords, rubrics and underlining in red, 1-line capitals alternately in blue and red, 2- and 3-line capitals alternately flue with red calligraphic penwork and red with purple calligraphic penwork throughout, 6 large red and blue puzzle initials of four lines each with red and purple calligraphic penwork, 7-line LARGE BLUE AND RED PUZZLE INITIAL on f. 9 with red and purple calligraphic penwork and a border of fleur-de-lis extending the length of the text, original parchment tabs stitched to margins marking text divisions, a medieval repair to a tear in the lower margin of f. 63 using a fragment of a fifteenth-century Italian manuscript, marginal notations in various hands, medieval finding tabs, parchment yellowed and somewhat stained, edges cockled and worn, general signs of wear and tear, else in sound condition. Bound in nineteenth-century French calf blind-stamped and gilt, marbled endleaves, spine defective, in a fitted box. Dimensions 191 x 120 mm.

Breviary from the important Carthusian monastery Villeneuve-lès-Avignon, unlisted in the modern literature, perhaps made locally and then transformed for the specific use of the monastery, whose customary ex-libris is found on f. 10, showing many signs of use with numerous notes, additions, and corrections, dating from the fourteenth century

PROVENANCE

1. Made in southern France for use in a Carthusian milieu perhaps in the area of Lyons or

Grenoble (Blandina, martyr of Lyon in the litany; and Hugo, bishop of Grenoble, in the calendar), perhaps before 1333 (Thomas Aquinas added to the calendar, canonized in 1333). Script and decoration are consistent with a date in the opening years of the fourteenth century.

2. Probably not long after its transcription still in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century, the manuscript was taken to and used in the celebrated Carthusian monastery of Villeneuve-lès-Avignon, founded in 1356 by Pope Innocent IV, with their late medieval ownership inscriptions on f. 10r (the second page of the text): *Cartusiens vallis benedictionis* and *Carthusien vallis benedictionis prope avinonis* (corresponding to the first type of ex-libris from this foundation, that of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; see Forbin, p. 39, note 1). Adaptations to the text of the manuscript were made when it was acquired by the monastery. The text of the dedication of the abbey is correctly entered in the calendar on f. 4v under 19 August (as in Marseille, Bibl. Mun., MS 120, and other manuscripts). The calendar has been adapted and graded for Carthusian use, and includes, for example, the Carthusian St. Hugh of Lincoln, with 12 readings (17 November), and the feast of relics on 8 November. St. Agricola, Bishop of Avignon is added on 2 September with 3 readings. About 120 manuscripts survive from the once-great library of Villeneuve-lès-Avignon. In 1812, after the French Revolution, the manuscripts were first transferred to the Hotel de Ville in Villeneuve, but they were afterwards sold en bloc to the Montpellier bookseller, Felix Seguin, in November 1853 (see his catalogue, with a list of the manuscripts, most of them liturgical). About half are in the Bibliothèque municipale de Marseille; Viellard, pp. 441-50; and Forbin, pp. 39-63).

TEXT

ff. 1-6v, Calendar (for Carthusian use);

ff. 7-8, blank;

ff. 9r-97v, Ferial Psalter, incipit, "Beatus vir qui non ..."; many medieval notes and corrections, including antiphons and some capitulum added in a small neat script to the Psalter; "explicit psalterium david deo gratias deo gratias amen. Amen. Amen";

ff. 98r-113v, Canticles and Hymns, incipit "Domine miserere nostri te enim ...; explicit, "... nunc et imperpetuum. Amen";

ff. 113v, Temporal for the liturgical year beginning with the first Sunday in Advent; rubric, *Sabbato ante adventum*; incipit "Ecce dies veniuit dicit dominus ...";

ff. 174-202, Sanctoral from St. Silvester (December 31); rubric, *Incipiunt orationes in festis sanctorum. In festo beati silvestri oratio*; f.189v, added Feast of Saint Hugo of Lincoln in lower margin;

ff. 202-203, Dedication of a Church; rubric, *In dedicatione ecclesie ad usus superiorus*;

ff. 203-206v, Mass of the Dead (for Carthusian use and identical with Marseille, Bib. mun., MS 119, a late-fourteenth century Breviary from Villeneuve-lès-Avignon), rubric, *In agenda mortuorum ...*, with nine readings and responses: 1) Credo quod redemptor, 2) Induta est caro 3) Memento mei domine, 4) Paucitas dierorm meorum, 5) Ne abscondas me domine; 6) Homo cum dorminerit, 7) Nocte os meum, 8) Versa est in luctum, 9) Ne vitres mi iudicum.;

ff. 206v-207v, Prayers for priests, laymen, and women;

ff. 207v-209v, Litany, including Blandina, f. 208;

ff. 2010-212v, rubric, *In sollemnitate eucharistie ad vespervas*;

ff. 213-215v, (in another later hand), Added prayers and the Office of the Virgin.

Four Breviaries recorded from Villeneuve-lès-Avignon bear further study in comparison with the present manuscript: Avignon, Bib. Mun. Ms. 6718; Marseille, Bib. Mun., MSS 119 (late fourteenth century) and 120 (beginning fifteenth century); and Villeneuve-lès-Avignon, Musée Municipal, no. 314 (disappeared between 1931 and 1979) (see Forbin, pp. 51, 60, 63). The Office of the Dead in the present copy is identical with that in Marseille, Bib. mun., MS 119 (f. 306).

A handwritten list of the manuscripts in the library at Avignon still in the seventeenth century was compiled by Joseph-Marie de Suarez (see below and studied by Maier) and records 139 titles, but omits the liturgical manuscripts. In 1854, Seguin listed for sale 69 manuscripts, mostly liturgical, of which only about 20 can be identified today in public institutions. Further research is required to identify the present work in the earlier catalogues of manuscripts from this foundation. For the manuscripts (14) from Villeneuve housed today in Avignon, Bib. mun., see Vielliard, p. 442, note 5; and for a full list of identified manuscripts with present locations, see Forbin, pp. 58-63.

LITERATURE

Forbin, F. de. "Les manuscrits de Villeneuve-lès-Avignon," *Les Chartreux et l'art, XIVe-XVIIIe siècles, Actes du Colloque de Villeneuve-les-Avignon*, ed. D. Le Blevec and A.

Girard, eds., 1988, pp. 39-63.

Librairie Felix Seguin, Montpellier. *Premiere partie du catalogue des ouvrages provenant de la bibliotheque des anciens chartrux de Villeneuve-lez-Avignon*, Montpellier, 1854.

Maier, A. "Ein Handschriftenkatalog der Kartause Vallis Benedictionis bei Avignon," *Studi offerti a R. Ridolfi*, Florence, 1973, pp. 347-67.

Suarez, Joseph-Marie de. "Manu scripti libri cartusianorum Villenove Secus Avenionem" [before 1627]. Handwritten catalogue preserved in the Vatican Library.

Viellard, J. "Manuscrits de la Chartreuse de Villeneuve-lès-Avignon conservés à la bibliothèque Vaticane," *Mélanges Eugene Tisserant*, VII, 1964, pp. 441-50.