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GEORG SCHERER, *Mysteria Passionis Domini nostri Iesu Christi*
In Latin, manuscript on parchment and paper
Austria, Vienna, dated MDXCI [1591]

36 folios, ten quires of binions preceded by a single parchment flyleaf (collation: i-ix⁴), on parchment with 19 folios of contemporary paper bound in at the back, with watermark of the type close to Briquet, "Aigle à deux têtes", no. 302: Vienne, 1596-1597, written in a fine rounded Roman script by DANIEL MELZER [identified on the title page], in a light brown ink on 17 lines, pages framed with a calligraphic border (justification 113 x 73 mm.), catchwords at the bottom of each page, signatures A1 to C1 written in ink in the lower center margin, NINETEEN 6-line calligraphic initials on floral and foliate grounds at the opening of each text, calligraphic cul-de-lampes at the end of each text, title page framed with a calligraphic border, 16 COPPER-ENGRAVINGS AFTER ALBRECHT DÜRER on paper, pasted onto the leaves facing each text, numbered, sometimes in the upper left and sometimes in the lower left, engravings framed with sequences of circular or oval motifs repeating the motifs on the binding. Bound in a contemporary Austrian binding (likely Viennese) of light brown calf, tooled in gold (oxidized) with an outer frame composed of triple filets and an inner frame of an ornamental frieze of alternating floral and oval motifs set between single filets, fleurons at outer angles of inner frame, arms at the center of boards on the upper and lower covers, back sewn on four thongs with traces of fleurons between bands, spine lined with purple silk under leather, once visible before restoration, edges gilt (Binding minimally restored, rebacked, corners retouched). Dimensions 134 x 89 mm.

Manuscript copy of Georg Scherer's prayers on the Passion, before its publication in 1594, illustrated with a full set of engravings after Albrecht Dürer from his *Engraved Passion* and evidently presented to the thirteen-year-old Ferdinand, archduke and future emperor by his Jesuit tutor. Of great beauty, finely conceived as a harmonious object, the manuscript has come to light as a previously unknown example of the continued appreciation of Dürer at the Hapsburg court.

PROVENANCE

1. Made in Vienna, Austria, as the title page states: "MYSTERIA/ PASSIONIS DO/ mini nostri Iesu Chri/sti./ authore/ Georgio Scherer Societatis/ Iesu Theologo/ VIENNAE/ Scribebat Daniel Mel/ zer Anno/ MDXCI." The manuscript is signed by the scribe Daniel Melzer, not recorded in Bénédictins du Bouveret, *Colophons de manuscrits...* (1965). Written by the controversial preacher Georg Scherer (born Schwatz, 1540; died at Linz, 30 November 1605), member of the Society of Jesus since 1559, and at the time the present book of written Rector of the Jesuit College at Vienna, since 1590. The manuscript was copied during the reign of Kaiser Rudolph II (1552-1612) who abdicated in 1611, replaced by his brother Matthias (1557-1619). Scherer was appointed Court preacher to the

Archduke Matthias and remained close his entire life to the Archduchy of Austria (see Backer and Sommervogel, VII, col. 746). Arms on both covers can be identified as following: the upper cover, arms of Austria (Alt-Österreich and Neu-Österreich); the lower cover, arms of a member of the Habsburg Austro-Hungarian imperial dynasty, those of Ferdinand, Archduke of Austria (before he was appointed Kaiser, since the arms are surmounted by a princely coronet) (1578-1637). Ferdinand, Archduke of Austria (later Kaiser Ferdinand II) was a cousin to Matthias, to whom he succeeded as Kaiser in 1619. Interestingly, the future Kaiser Ferdinand II was a devout Catholic educated by the Jesuits.

2. Notes in Italian (front flyleaf: "Le incisioni sono di Alberto Durer"), including an early twentieth-century (?) signature on f. 34v, on the back of the facsimile of engraving, bound after text, "Proprieta artistiche [ed] riproduzione per l'estato et per l'estero riservati [signed] F. Canziano (?)." A printed flyer announcing and commenting an exhibition "Alberto Durer. La Passione di Gesù Cristo" held in the Galleria Umberto I (Naples) is also folded and bound after the manuscript.

TEXT

f. 1, Title page, "Mysteria / Passionis Do/mini nostri Iesu Chri/sti / authore / Georgio Scherer Societatis/ Iesu Theologo / Viennae / Scribebat Daniel Mel/zer Anno / MDXCI [1591]";

f. 2-3, incipit, "O Domine Iesu Christe, fili Dei vivi, per amarissimam illam ... "; explicit, "... quam tecum habent sancti in Gloria. Amen";

ff. 3v-5, heading, *Alia*; incipit, "Clementissime Iesu, pastor aeternae, qui gregem tuum ... "; explicit, "... suspirem atque anhelem, in te sol requiescam. Amen";

ff. 6-7, incipit, "Dulcissime Iesu, quis ego sum, ut tu Deus omnipotens et immensus ... "; explicit, "... obtemperare, et tibi inseparabiliter adhaerere. Amen";

ff. 8-9, incipit, "Aeternae gloriae splendor Iusu elegantissime, et prae filiis ... "; explicit, "... profundissima humilitas et perfectissima charitas. Amen";

ff. 10-11, incipit, "Fidelissime amator, nostraeque salutis author, Christe Iesu, adorote ... "; explicit, "... ante conspectum et tribunal maiestatis tuae. Amen";

ff. 12-13, incipit, "Gloria et corona sanctorum omnium, Done mi gratiosissime Christe Iesu... "; explicit, "... Deum vivum, qui es benedictus in saecula. Amen";

ff. 14-15, incipit, "Humilime Iesu Christe, rex coeli et terrae, adoro supplex te Deum ... "; "... quam tu spinea illa corona promeruisti, et diligentibus te praeparasti. Amen";

ff. 16-17, incipit, "O speciose inter filios hominum. O splendor gloriae Dei ... "; explicit, "... Spiritus sancti Deus, per omnia saecula saeculorum";

f. 16v-17, heading, *Alia*; incipit, "Contemplare anima mea odium ..."; explicit, "... et cunctis afflictionibus proximi mei";

ff. 18-19, incipit, "Contemplare mater moestissima filium tuum unigenitum ..."; explicit, "... perturbatas, consolationem firmam capiamus. Amen";

ff. 20-21, incipit, "Mansuetissime agnelle Christe Iesu, quid fecisti ..."; explicit, "... inordinatae in omnibus iudiciis et censuris suis";

ff. 21v-22, incipit, "Tremende iudex vivorum ac mortuorum, qui te in iudico ..."; explicit, "... Innocentem et iustum non interficies: fideliter et religiose custodiam. Amen";

ff. 23-24, incipit, "Ecce amantissime Iesu, sicut ovis ad occisionem duceris ..."; explicit, "... si commorimur, convivemus, si sustinemus, conregnabimus";

ff. 25-28, incipit, "Adoro te Domine Iesu Christe, et glorifico benedictum nomen tuum ..."; "... patri commendasti, exclamans: Pater in manus tuas commendo spiritum meum";

ff. 29-30, incipit, "Considera Ô anima mea, quomodo duo nobiles ..."; explicit, "... inordinata liberer tristitia, et aeterna perfruar laetitia";

f. 31, incipit, "O clementissime ac misericordissime Iesu, cuius corpus aromatibus ..."; explicit, "... horrorem et abominationem illius ademeris";

f. 32, incipit, "Fortissime Imperator, Iesu Christe, qui es mors mortis et morsus inferni ..."; explicit, "... sanctis tuis in aeternum: quia pius es";

ff. 33-35, incipit, "Qui es creator noster, salvator noster, liberator, adiutor, dux, legifer noster Christe Iesu..."; explicit, "... fons vitae per misericordiam tuam largiaris, supplices postulamus. Amen";

f. 36, incipit, "Princeps Apostolorum Petre, qui in nomine Iesu Christi Nazareni ..."; explicit, "... Non enim aliud nomen est sub coelo datum in quo oporteat nos salvos fieri. Finis."

This is a copy in manuscript of a work of devotional prayers written before 1586 by the famous Jesuit Georg Scherer (born in the Tyrol, 1540; died in Linz in 1605). Scherer entered the Society of Jesus in 1559, and he was famed for his preaching. In 1577, he became court preacher to the Archduke Matthias, a post he retained until 1600. He was rector of the Jesuit College in Vienna, a man of boundless energy, strength of character, and belief in prayer. His works were collected and published by the Premonstratensians of Bruck in Moravia (1599-1600) and again issued at Munich (1613-14).

Scherer's *Mysteria Passionis Domini* is first included as an added work to a publication in 1586 written by Father Dominique Mengin, *Enchiridium Christianarum peccationum ... Accessere Preces ad Meditationes in Passionem ac Resurrectionem Christi R. P. Georg Schereri, Ingolstadt, ex officina Davidis Sartorii, evidently*

without illustrations. Scherer's work was published with illustrations eight years later first in 1594 under the title *Preces ac meditationes piae In mysteria Passionis ac Resurrectionis . . . Georgium Scherer* in Vienna, mentioning the engravings by Albrecht Dürer in the title ("figuris aeneis ab Albrecto Durero olim artificiose sculptis ornatae") (Backer and Sommervogel, VII, col. 752-753, no. 13). It underwent another edition in 1612 in Brussels, this time with engravings after Dürer by Wilhelm d. Haen in 1611. Perhaps there was an edition as early as 1593, that is otherwise unrecorded but cited by Meder: "einem Gebetbuch des Jesuiten Georg Scherer, gedruckt zu Augsburg durch Val Schöning 1593," with engravings by the Monogrammist IF colored and with gold (sale, Vienna, Lanna, 1909; Meder, p. 70).

The present manuscript must be a presentation copy made under Scherer's direction, before the work was printed with illustrations, for one of his special patrons, Ferdinand, the archduke of Austria, the future Kaiser II and a devout Jesuit, perhaps for his religious education (Ferdinand was thirteen years old when the manuscript was written).

ILLUSTRATION

The sixteen engravings come from one of the series of copies of Albrecht Dürer's *Engraved Passion*. Dürer worked on the *Engraved Passion* from 1507 to 1512, and he sold many of the sheets individually. According to Panofsky, the *Engraved Passion* had a different audience than the *Small Woodcut Passion*: "The format of the *Engraved Passion* differs from that of the *Small [Woodcut] Passion* by what may be called an aristocratic slenderness of proportion: It is about 4.5 by 3 inches as against 5 x 4. No text was considered necessary since it was not conceived as an edifying book but rather as a 'collectors item,' to be relished by the art lover instead of by the devout. In spite of its brevity (as compared to the *Small [Woodcut] Passion*) it has something sumptuous about it. It stresses spiritual suffering rather than physical torture and never loses sight of the preterhuman dignity of Christ." (Panofsky, 1955). In his 1568 edition of the *Lives*, Vasari calls these engravings "the ultimate in perfection and quality attainable in the medium as regards beauty, variety of vestments, and composition." Meder records upwards of fifteen copies after the *Engraved Passion* made during the sixteenth century; the exact date of these copies in the tradition remains to be determined.

f. 1v, Agony in the Garden, 1508 (compare Bartsch 4) 113 x 72 mm.;

f. 5v, Betrayal of Christ, 1508 (compare Bartsch 5), 117 x 75 mm.;

f. 7v, Christ before Caiaphas, 1512 (compare Bartsch 6), 118 x 74 mm.;

f. 9v, Christ before Pilate, 1512 (compare Bartsch 7), 117 x 75 mm.;

f. 11v, Flagellation, 1512 (compare Bartsch 8), 117 x 73 mm.;

f. 13v, Christ Crowned with Thorns, 1512 (compare Bartsch 9), 117 x 73 mm.;

f. 15v, Ecce Homo or Christ Presented to the People, 1512 (compare Bartsch 10), 116 x 75 mm.;

- f. 17v, Man of Sorrows by the Column, 1509 (compare Bartsch 3), 119 x 75 mm.;
- f. 19v, Pilate Washing his Hands, 1512 (compare Bartsch 11), 117 x 75 mm.;
- f. 22v, Bearing of the Cross, 1512 (compare Bartsch 12), 116 x 78 mm.;
- f. 24v, Crucifixion, 1511 (compare Bartsch 13), 114 x 74 mm.;
- f. 28v, Lamentation over Christ, 1507 (compare Bartsch 14), 115 x 69 mm.;
- f. 30v, Deposition, 1512 (compare Bartsch 15), 115 x 74 mm.;
- f. 31v, Harrowing in Hell or Christ in Limbo (compare Bartsch 16), 115 x 75 mm.;
- f. 32v, Resurrection, 1512 (compare Bartsch 17), 117 x 74 mm.;
- f. 35v, St. Peter and St. John Healing the Cripple (compare Bartsch 18), 116 x 74 mm.

Other manuscripts include prints from the original Engraved Passion as follow: 1) a Prayerbook of Frederick the Wise, manuscript bound between 1512 and 1525, with fifteen prints (Princeton University, Inv. no. x1934-269), probably ex-Collection Hofmann, Boerner auction, 8 May 1908; see Meder, p. 70; and "Online Resources," publication in preparation by Todor Petev; 2) a Prayerbook written in 1578 and bound with engravings from Dürer's Engraved Passion (Liege, Univ. Bib., MS 1096); 3) Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (CBL WEP 112-127) set of engravings with transparent washes and body colors, highlighted with gold and silver, signed and dated HM 1585 (see Dackerman,, pp. 197-199; mounted in window mats in a modern album); 4) Seven sheets mounted on parchment with marginal ornamentation of similar style, transparent washes and body colors, highlighted with gold and silver, other sheets in other collections, signed "GM" [Georg Mack the Elder, active Nuremberg, c. 1556-1601] (Josefowitz Collection; Dackerman, pp. 223-225).

Care has been taken in our manuscript to create a harmonious whole, with gold decoration surrounding and framing the pasted-down plates, decoration that repeats the stamped and gilt motifs on the presentation binding. Gmelin claims that by 1600 Dürer's paintings and drawings were no longer available to aristocratic collectors, whereas they continued to be sought after, so they commissioned hand-painted impressions of his prints as surrogates (1983, p. 186). The present manuscript provides excellent testimony to the continued interest in Dürer at the Hapsburg court.

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Schoch, Reiner, et al., eds. *Albrecht Durer. Das Druckgraphische Werk*, Vol. 1, Munich, London, New York, Prestel Verlag, 2001 (article by Anna Scherbaum, pp. 125-128).

ONLINE RESOURCES

National Gallery of Victoria Engraved Passion

<http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/ngvcollection/durer/browseCategoryArtworks.do?category=7>

On Georg Scherer

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13527c.htm>

On Ferdinand II

http://www.bautz.de/bbkl/f/ferdinand_ii_r_k.shtml

The Wedding Festival Book of Archduke Ferdinand II of Austria

<http://www2.arcs.ac.at/dissdb/rn039595>

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