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[ANONYMOUS], *Warhafftiger Grunt und Zeugniis unsers Cristlichen Glaubens aus der Heiligen Schrift des alten und neuen Testaments trewelich unnd vleissig zussamen gezogen allen frommen Christen zu einer Lehr und Trost. Durch einen Hochgelerten der Heiligen Schrift.* [Devotional Extracts from the Bible]

In German, illuminated manuscript on parchment  
[Germany, Saxony (Leipzig?), c. 1580, likely before 1581]

47 leaves, preceded and followed by a vellum flyleaf, gatherings mostly of 4 leaves, calligraphically written in extremely elaborate flourished calligraphic Fraktur script with some titles and headings with ample use of gold or silver outlining, each page within printed woodcut borders composed of a variety of panels and illustrated with 13 SMALL WOODCUTS inserted throughout the text, all hand-colored and heightened with gold. Contemporary panel-stamped painted binding of brown calf over pasteboard, floral outer plaques of arabesque floral and leafy patterns heightened in red, green and white, in center of boards rectangular stamps with Crucifixion (front cover) and Resurrection (lower cover), four raised bands on spine, engraved brass clasps and catches, edges gilt and tooled "au pointillé," vellum endleaves, boards of binding still in good condition, harmonizing well with the illustrative content of the manuscript (slight rubbing and thumbing, binding rebacked). Dimensions 135 x 80 mm.

Rare devotional work containing biblical extracts taken from the Lutheran 1534 German translation, illustrated by small hand-colored woodcuts. Likely realized for or in a Saxon (princely?) milieu, there exists a very rare imprint (unicum?) of the same text in Paris with a shield of the Prince Elector Augustus of Saxony. The elegant and unusual binding presents panels recorded on Leipzig or Wittemberg bindings of the second half of the sixteenth century.

## PROVENANCE

1. Germany, Saxony, likely Leipzig. The present manuscript contains the same selection of biblical excerpts as a vellum imprint, printed in Leipzig by Jacobs Berwaldts [Bärwald] Erben in 1581 (only located printed copy: Paris, BnF, Vélins-1790). There are initials in a rounded medallion placed in lower border of ff. 11v, 19v, 23v, 30v, 43v: initials B / V / E / S separated by a crossed candelabra and dagger. Also found in the lower borders of the 1581 edition, these initials have not been identified, but there is a supplementary clue in the printed 1581 edition: the blank heraldic shield simply inscribed here in ink with the letter "L" (fol. 24) [for "Leipzig?], is instead interestingly filled with the arms of the Prince Elector Augustus of Saxony (1553-1586). He collected books that would be useful in his endeavors, following the advice of professors at the University of Leipzig, and taking advantage of the great Frankfurt and Leipzig book fairs. The luxury of the

present copy suggests that it could be a presentation or preparatory copy made for or in the circle of the Prince Elector Augustus of Saxony (who ruled Saxony from 1553 to 1586), a reputed bibliophile, who commissioned manuscripts and imprints for the Electoral Library founded in Dresden in 1556.

2. Unidentified nineteenth- or early twentieth-century French bookseller's description tipped in on the front flyleaf describing it as "Très curieux manuscrit en allemand...".

3. From the collection of the late William Stuart Spaulding, Jr. (died 1961), with his signature, and his wife Angèle Louise Maggi (1925-2005), of Boston and Gstaad, Switzerland, their book plate, a serpent ("S") within an "M," the monogram contained in a circular frame, like a necklace of pearls.

## TEXT

f. 1, Title-page, *Warhafftiger Grunt und Zeugniis unsers Cristlichen Glaubens aus der Heiligen Schrifft des alten und neuen Testaments trewelich unnd vleissig zussamen gezogen allen frommen Christen zu einer Lehr und Trost. Durch einen Hochgelerten der Heiligen Schrifft* [Authentic foundation and testimony of our Christian Faith taken from the Sacred Scripture of the Old and New Testaments, attentively and faithfully chosen and gathered together for all pious Christians for their teaching and consolation. By a learned connoisseur of Holy Scripture];

ff. 1v-2v, blank;

ff. 3-6, Creation, "Schöpfung, Genes : 1. Am anfang schuff Gott himel und erden..."

ff. 6-9v, Fall of Man, "Fall Adam, Gen : 2...";

ff. 9v-12v, Conception, "Empfengnis, Genes : 3...";

ff. 12v-15v, Nativity, "Geburth, Genes : 22...";

ff. 15v-18v, Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane [Garden of Olive-Trees], "Olbergt, Esai : 53...";

ff. 19-21v, Arrest of Christ, "Befengnis, Esai: 53...";

ff. 22-25v, Flagellation, "Geisselung, Psal: 22" ;

ff. 25v-28v, Passion, "Aussfurung, Genes: 22";

ff. 28v-31v, Crucifixion, "Creutzigung, Deut: 21";

ff. 31v-34, Entombment, "Begrebniis, Psal: 16";

ff. 34-36v, Resurrection, "Aufferstehung, Psal: 16";

ff. 36v-39, Ascension, "Himelfardt, Psal: 68";

ff. 40-43v, Descent of the Holy Spirit, "Sendung des heiligen Geists, Genes: 1";

ff. 44-45v, Resurrection of the Dead, "Ausfersteung der Thodten, Ezech: 37";

ff. 46-47, On Eternal Life [On the Life to come], "Von ewigen leben, Sap: 5"; explicit: "[...] Matt: 13...Amen."

This small devotional work comprises biblical quotations in German arranged around themes such as the Creation, the Fall, the Annunciation, the Nativity etc., extending to the "Eternal Life" (Von ewigen leben). The Biblical excerpts included in this work are all quoted from Luther's German translation of the Bible, Wittenberg, 1534 (see the facsimile edition, *Biblia: das ist die ganze heilige Schrift deutsch. Mart. Luth.*, Wittenberg, 1534 [reprint Cologne, Taschen, 2002]). The selection was made by a "learned connoisseur of Holy Scripture" (*einen Hochgelerten der Heiligen Schrift*), who chose to remain mysteriously anonymous in the present manuscript as well as in the Leipzig 1581 edition.

Further research is necessary to determine exactly for whom such a work was destined, perhaps even for a younger audience, with a number of such small devotional works containing Bible selections and woodcuts made for children (see study by R. Bottigheimer [1993] on Bibles for Children in Early Modern Germany). The present example was obviously a deluxe or presentation copy made perhaps for a princely youth? This is a very unusual manuscript, decorated with small woodcuts and four-sided woodcut borders on every page, all hand-colored and highlighted in gold. It is erroneously dated on the title page "1500," and clearly the original date has been scratched out.

This date is most certainly closer to 1580, granted there is an imprint bearing the exact same title and selection of texts dated Leipzig, Jacobs Berwaldts Erben, 1581. We have viewed the imprint (Paris, BnF, Vélins-1790), which is not bound in its contemporary binding and presents no internal hand-coloring (sole known copy recorded in J. Van Praet [1822], vol. I, no. 475, p. 348; unknown to J. Benzing [1963], to *Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich...* [1983-1995] and to S. Strohm, ed. *Die Bibelsammlung...* [1987], and unrecorded in all major European public collections). The imprint contains however the same biblical extracts organized according to the same devotional themes, and it is illustrated with the same iconography, although the manuscript and the printed edition are illustrated with a different series of woodcuts (more research should be undertaken to determine the source of these woodcuts). Also, as specified above, the Leipzig 1581 edition retains the same borders as our manuscript with the additional particularity that Leipzig 1581 includes the arms of the Prince Elector Augustus of Saxony. This imprint is extremely rare, and we have not localized any other copy in any of the major institutions or collections (on the printer Jacobs Berwaldts or Bärwald Erben, see J. Benzing, *Die Buchdrucke des 16 und 17 Jahrhunderts...* [1963], p. 279; J. Bärwald Erben also printed a Psalter in 1575 and again in 1581: *Der Psalter mit den Summarien D. Marth. Luth.*, [Leipzig, Jakob Bärwalds Erben, 1575], listed in *Die Bibelsammlung...* [1987], E-492 and E-509; as well as a number of successive editions of Andreas Hondorff's *Promptuarium Exemplorum*, The Staatsbibliothek in Berlin holds a number of imprints by Jacobs Berwaldts, but there is no trace of the present *Warhafftiger Grund und Zeugnis*). It would be interesting to see whether the other titles printed by Jacobs Berwaldts use similar woodcut borders.

## ILLUSTRATION

Each devotional theme is illustrated by a selection of biblical quotes and a woodcut (except the last two themes which have no woodcuts). In all, there are 13 woodcuts, one less than in the printed vellum 1581 edition (which includes a final woodcut of Christ in Majesty, for a total of 14 woodcuts). However, one must note that the woodcuts in the manuscript copy, although placed similarly, differ entirely from the set included in the printed 1581 copy. The present woodcuts are unsigned, with the exception of two woodcuts that bear an initial or monogram "I" in the lower righthand corner (ff. 35, 42) (Monogrammist "I" is recorded in G. K. Nagler, *Die Monogrammisten...* [1858-1879], Vol. 3, no. 1745, active in Wittenberg in 1572). The woodcuts are all hand-colored in a variety of colors, highlighted with gold ("Füstenkolorit"). Further research would most certainly allow a better identification of these woodcuts, which likely figure in other imprints, perhaps a small in-octavo Bible or other devotional works of the period.

The title page, text, and woodcuts are framed by four-sided woodcut borders, highlighted in similar colors as the woodcuts, with gold outlining, repeated on each page. They strongly recall the borders found in sixteenth-century German Reformation imprints and more precisely those found in Leipzig imprints. The same woodcuts borders frame the printed text of Leipzig, 1581, with the added particularity of the arms of Prince Augustus of Saxony. The type of woodcut borders that frame each page also recall a Leipzig imprint of M. Luther, *Geystliche Lieder*, Leipzig, Valentin Bapst, 1545. Although an earlier production, the borders clearly resemble the common ornamentation favored in Leipzig (see J. Pelikan, with V. Hotchkiss and D. Price, *The Reformation of the Bible, the Bible of the Reformation*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1996, no. 4-14, pp. 171-172).

Here follow the subjects of the woodcuts:

- f. 3, Creation of Eve from Adam's rib (52 x 45 mm);
- f. 7, Fall of Adam and Eve (52 x 45 mm);
- f. 12, Annunciation (50 x 45 mm);
- f. 15, Nativity (52 x 45 mm);
- f. 17, Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane (52 x 46 mm);
- f. 21, Kiss of Judas (50 x 45 mm);
- f. 25, Flagellation of Christ (53 x 45 mm);
- f. 27v, Christ carrying the Cross (52 x 46 mm);
- f. 29, Crucifixion (52 x 46 mm);
- f. 33, Entombment (50 x 45 mm);

f. 35, Resurrection (51 x 46 mm);

f. 39, Ascension (52 x 45 mm);

f. 42, Pentecost (51 x 45 mm);

## BINDING

The work is preserved in an exceptional contemporary panel-stamped and gold-tooled binding, likely made in Saxony, in the region of Leipzig or Wittenberg, during the last quarter of the sixteenth century (c. 1580). Although further research is needed to better understand this highly original binding, here are a few preliminary elements.

The center of covers are each impressed with a panel representing on the upper cover the Crucifixion with inscription below: "Ecce . Agnus . Dei . Qui . Tollit // Peccata . Mundi" (80 x 47 mm) and the lower cover the Resurrection with inscription below: "Mors . Ubi . Tuus . Aculeus . U // bi . Victoria . Tua . Inferne" (81 x 46 mm), with initials "A.H." This monogram could be that of Ambrosius Hirsch, although the present panels are not recorded in Haebler specifically (see Haebler and Schunke [1928], vol. 1, pp. 162-164). The bookbinder identified as A.H. (Ambrosius Hirsch) was precisely active in Leipzig between 1577 and 1617 (see Haebler and Schunke [1928], Bd. I, pp. 164).

Another possibility would be panels realized in Wittenberg, as very similar panels are found in a binding realized circa 1598 in the region of Wittenberg (see Van der Vekene, *Reliures des XVIe et XVIIe siècles conservés à la Bibliothèque nationale de Luxembourg*, Bibliothèque nationale de Luxembourg, 2000, no. 61, p. 148, with plate p. 149). These panels are attributed to the MV monogram workshop, active in Wittenberg, studied by Haebler and Schunke, who record a Crucifixion with the same inscription and dimensions (see Haebler and Schunke [1928], Bd. I, "M.V. monogram": pp. 466, no. XXII or XXIII) and a Resurrection presenting the same inscription and dimensions (see Haebler and Schunke [1928] Bd I, "M.V. monogram": pp. 468, no. XLIX: inscription reads: "Mors . Ubi . Tuus . Aculeus . U //bi . Victoria . Tua . Inferne" and a variant, no. LI, with C.H. added to the inscription). The monogram C.H. in the inscription recorded in Haebler has been removed from the cartouche on our binding, and instead the monogram A.H is added, but this time is found on either side of the Christ figure, rather than in the cartouche. The C.H. workshop is closely associated with the M.V. workshop (see Haebler and Schunke [1928], Bd I, "C.H.", pp. 166-168, no. II, Crucifixus and no. III, Auferstehung). These panels are found on a binding reproduced in M. Husung, on one of Luther's works printed in Wittenberg, 1573, with the panels inscribed in a very similar painted gold-tooled frame (M. Husung, *Bucheinbande aus der Preussischen Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin*, Leipzig, 1925, S. 22-23, Abb. 92). In this case the C. H. / M.V. binder might be related to A.H. in some manner, still to be eluded.

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*Warbafftiger Grund und Zeugnis unsers Christlichen Glaubens aus der Heiligen Schrift des alten und neuen Testaments treulich um fleissig zusammen gezogen...* Durch einen Hochgelehrten der Heiligen Schrift, Leipzig, gedruckt durch Jacobs Berwaldts Erben, Anno 1581 [Paris, BnF, Réserve des livres rares, Vélins-1790].

## ONLINE RESOURCES

On the Electoral Library of the Elector Augustus of Saxony:

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/dres/dres5.html>

On Andreas Hondorff's *Promptuarium Exemplorum*, printed by Jacobs Berwaldts:

<http://www.enzyklopaedie.ch/kongress/aufsaetze/kundert.pdf>