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Vulgate Bible
In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment
Southern France, c. 1230-1250

i (paper) + i (parchment) + 359 + i (parchment) + i (paper) folios on parchment, very fine, prepared in the manner of southern Europe, modern foliation in pencil, top, outer corner recto, (collation, i¹² ii-xv¹⁰ xvi¹⁰ [-7, following f. 158, cancelled, with no loss of text] xvii¹⁰ [beginning f. 162] xviii⁸ xix-xxxvi¹⁰), most quires through quire 13 (ending f. 132v), signed at the end with a small roman numeral, middle, bottom margin, quires after quire 19 (ending f. 189v) end with a horizontal catchword, very bottom, inner margin, ruled lightly in lead with single full-length vertical bounding lines, in the inner and outer margins and between the columns, top two and bottom two horizontal rules full across, with an extra set of double rules for the running titles, (justification, 120 x 82 mm.), written below the top line in a very small, precise, upright gothic bookhand in two columns of fifty-three lines, red rubrics, running titles in red and blue, chapters numbered in red and blue roman numerals, usually set within the text space, two-line initials, alternately red and blue, with pen decoration in the opposite color, some with additional red and blue decorative motifs, fifty-eight initials at the beginning of prologues with four- to eight-line red and blue parted initials infilled red and blue vines and leaves with touches of green on a purple-brown wash, on grounds of the same color, edged in green, EIGHTY-TWO ILLUMINATED INITIALS: books of the Bible begin with very handsome illuminated initials, ten- to six-line, with extensions up to nineteen lines, white-patterned pink and blue, infilled with simple vine spirals in the same colors, ending with small white-edged leaves and animal heads, on heavily polished gold grounds edged in black and green, following the shape of the initials, about half of the initials also include dragons and other grotesques, divisions of the Psalms marked by gold initials infilled and on quartered grounds of pink and blue, with white-tracery; f. 1, ten-line initial extending into the outer margin, full-length of the page, with decorative running headline adorned with red and blue pen decoration which continues in the outer margin, f. 3, Genesis begins with a thirty-one line initial between the columns, continuing into red, blue and gold pen decoration in the inner and outer margins; in excellent condition with most folios very white and clean, bottom margin trimmed, with occasional slight loss of pen decoration, opening folios darkened and with slight staining, medieval sewing repairs, for example ff. 264 and 265, modern repair, top margin, f. 179. Bound in early nineteenth-century pink velvet over pasteboard, spine, now markedly concave, with four bands and decorative head and tail bands, joints cracked and both covers are almost detached, housed in a modern red morocco case, lettered in gilt, "Biblia sacra, Saec. XIV." Dimensions 174 x 120 mm.

Portable copies of the Bible including the complete Old and New Testaments in one volume are one of the great achievements of thirteenth-century book making. This volume—skillfully written and beautifully illuminated—would be an asset to any collection simply as an item of exquisite craftsmanship. Moreover, elements of its text and decoration, which suggest an origin in Southern

France perhaps for a wealthy member of the Church, also make it well worth scholarly attention, since Bibles from this area have yet to be carefully studied.

PROVENANCE

1. The evidence of the script, parchment, and details of the preparation of the manuscript, together with the style of the decoration, suggests that this Bible was probably copied in Southern France in the second quarter of the thirteenth century. The preparation of the parchment, and the use of quires of ten leaves, is characteristic of thirteenth-century manuscripts from southern Europe. The very tiny script, which is rounded and extremely regular, also suggests an origin in southern Europe, but the characteristic southern abbreviations are not present. Surprising for a manuscript of this date, the scribe abbreviates "et" (the Latin word for "and") using both the tironian "7" and the ampersand (presumably a personal idiosyncrasy). The decoration, in contrast, is certainly derived from Parisian models, with influence from southern Europe as well.
2. Front paper flyleaf, notes in pencil, including, "A 2039," and "D."
3. Printed English sales catalogue description laid in, suggesting this manuscript is French, and citing Eric Millar, *English Illuminated Manuscripts from the Tenth through the Thirteenth Century* (Paris, 1926).
4. Harry and Virginia Walton Collection, Covington, Virginia, USA; Walton MS A-2039 (Faye and Bond, p. 522).

TEXT

ff. 1-357v, Latin Bible, with prologues as follows: f. 1, [General prologue] Frater ambrosius [Stegmüller 284]; f. 2v, [prologue to Genesis] Desiderii mei [Stegmüller 285]; f. 3, Genesis; f. 17v, Exodus; f. 29, Leviticus; f. 37, Numbers; f. 48v, Deuteronomy; f. 58v, [prologue to Joshua] Tandem finito [Stegmüller 311]; f. 59, Joshua; f. 66, Judges; f. 73v, Ruth; f. 74v, [prologue to Kings] Viginti et duas [Stegmüller 323]; f. 75, 1 Kings; f. 85, 2 Kings; f. 93, 3 Kings; f. 102v, 4 Kings; f. 112, [prologue to Chronicles] Si septuaginta [Stegmüller 328]; f. 112, [prologue] Eusebius ieronimus ... Quomodo grecorum [Stegmüller 327]; f. 112v, 1 Chronicles; f. 121, 2 Chronicles; f. 131v, [prologue to Ezra] Utrum difficilium [Stegmüller 330]; f. 131v, 1 Ezra; f. 134v, Nehemiah; f. 138v, 2 Ezra; f. 142v, [prologue to Tobit] Cromatio et heliodoro .. Mirari non desino [Stegmüller 332]; f. 143, Tobit; f. 146, [prologue to Judith] Apud hebreos [Stegmüller 335]; f. 146, Judith; f. 150, [prologue to Esther] Librum hester; Rursum in libro [Stegmüller 341 and 343, copied as one prologue]; f. 150, Esther; f. 153v, [prologue to Job] Cogor per singulos [Stegmüller 344]; f. 154, Job [ending top col. a, f. 161v]; f. 162, Psalms [ending top col. b, f. 179; f. 179v, blank]; f. 180, [prologue to Proverbs] lungat epistola [Stegmüller 457]; f. 180, Proverbs; f. 186, [prologue to Ecclesiastes] Memini me [Stegmüller 462]; f. 186v, Ecclesiastes; f. 188v, Song of Songs; f. 189v, Wisdom; f. 194, [biblical introduction to Ecclesiasticus, copied as a prologue] Multorum nobis; f. 194, Ecclesiasticus; f. 205v, [prologue to Isaiah] Nemo cum prophetas [Stegmüller 482]; f. 206, Isaiah; f. 219v, [prologue to Jeremiah] Ieremias propheta [Stegmüller 487]; f. 220, Jeremiah; f. 235v, Lamentations; f. 236v, [prologue to Baruch] Liber iste [Stegmüller 491]; f. 237, Baruch; f. 239, [prologue to Ezechiel] Ezechiel propheta [Stegmüller 492]; f. 239, Ezechiel; f. 253v,

[prologue to Daniel] Daniele prophetam [Stegmüller 494]; f. 253v, Daniel; f. 259v, [prologue to Minor prophets] Non idem ordo est [Stegmüller 500]; f. 259v, Hosea; f. 261v, [prologue to Joel] Sanctus Iohel [Stegmüller 511]; f. 261v, [prologue] Iohel filius fathuel [Stegmüller 510]; f. 261v, Joel; f. 262v, [prologue to Amos] Ozias rex [Stegmüller 515]; f. 262v, [prologue] Amos propheta [Stegmüller 512]; f. 262v, [prologue] Hic amos [Stegmüller 513]; f. 263, Amos; f. 264v, [prologue Obadiah] Iacob patriarcha; Hebrei [Stegmüller 519 and 517 copied as one prologue]; f. 264v, Obadiah; f. 264v, [prologue to Jonah] Sanctum ionam [Stegmüller 524]; f. 265, [prologue] Ionas columba et dolens [Stegmüller 521]; f. 265, Jonah; f. 265v, [prologue Micah] Temporibus ioathe [Stegmüller 526]; f. 265, Micah; f. 266v, [prologue to Nahum] Naum prophetam [Stegmüller 528]; f. 266v, Nahum; f. 267, [prologue to Habakkuk] Quatuor prophete [Stegmüller 531]; f. 267v, Habbakuk; f. 268, [prologue to Zephaniah] Tradunt hebrei [Stegmüller 534]; f. 268v, Zephaniah; f. 269, [prologue to Haggai] Ieremias propheta [Stegmüller 538]; f. 269, Haggai; f. 269v, [prologue to Zechariah] In anno secundo [Stegmüller 539]; f. 270, Zechariah; f. 272, [prologue to Malachi] Deus per moysen [Stegmüller 543]; f. 272v, Malachi [rubric incorrectly labels as Zechariah; corrected in margin in later hand]; f. 273, [prologue to Maccabees] Domino excellentissimo ..., Cum sim promptus [Stegmüller 547]; f. 273, [prologue] Reuerentissimo ..., Memini me [Stegmüller 553]; f. 273v, [prologue] Machabeorum libri [Stegmüller 551]; f. 273v, 1 Maccabees; f. 282v, 2 Maccabees; f. 288v, [prologue to Matthew] Matheus ex iudea [Stegmüller 590]; f. 288v, Matthew; f. 297v, [prologue to Mark] Marcus evangelista [Stegmüller 607]; f. 297v, Mark; f. 303, [prologue to Luke] Lucas syrus natione [Stegmüller 620]; f. 303, Quoniam quidem [Luke 1:1-4 treated as a prologue]; f. 303; Luke; f. 312, [prologue to John] Hic est Iohannes [Stegmüller 634]; f. 312v, John; f. 319, [prologue to Romans] Romani sunt parties ytalie ... scribens eis a chorinto [Stegmüller 677]; f. 319v, Romans; f. 322v, 1 Corinthians; f. 326, 2 Corinthians; f. 328v, [prologue to Galatians] Galathe sunt greci [Stegmüller 707]; f. 328v, Galatians; f. 329v, [prologue to Ephesians] Ephesii sunt asiani [Stegmüller 715]; f. 329v, Ephesians; f. 330v, [prologue to Philippians] Philippenses sunt macedones [Stegmüller 728]; f. 331, Philippians; f. 331v, [prologue to Colossians] Colosenses et hii [Stegmüller 736]; f. 331v, Colossians; f. 332v, [prologue to 1 Thessalonians] Thessalonicenses sunt macedones [Stegmüller 747]; f. 332v, 1 Thessalonians; f. 333, [prologue to 2 Thessalonians] Ad tessalonicenses [Stegmüller 752]; f. 333, 2 Thessalonians; f. 333v, [prologue to 1 Timothy] Timotheum instruit [Stegmüller 765]; f. 333v, 1 Timothy; f. 334v, [prologue to 2 Timothy] Timotheo scribit [Stegmüller 772, omitting "Item" at the beginning]; f. 334v, 2 Timothy; f. 335v, [prologue to Titus] Titum commonefacit [Stegmüller 780]; f. 335v, Titus; f. 335v, [prologue to Philemon] Phylemoni familiares [Stegmüller 783]; f. 335v, Philemon; f. 336, [prologue to Hebrews] In primo dicendum [Stegmüller 793]; f. 336, Hebrews; f. 338v, [prologue to Catholic Epistles] Non ita est ordo [Stegmüller 809]; f. 338v, [prologue] Quia in circumcisionem ordinatus [Stegmüller 810]; f. 339, James; f. 340, 1 Peter; f. 340v, 2 Peter; f. 341v, 1 John; f. 342, 2 John; f. 342v, 3 John [with incorrect rubric, corrected in later hand]; f. 343, [prologue to Acts] Lucas medicus anthiocenses [Stegmüller 640]; f. 343, Suspiciantur quidem <quoteni?> paulus in epistolis; f. 343, Acts; f. 352v, [prologue to Apocalypse] Omnes qui uoltus pie [Stegmüller 839]; f. 353, Apocalypse [ending top col. a, f. 357v; remainder blank];

ff. 358-359, [Table of Epistle and Gospel readings for the Temporale], Incipit, "Dominica in aduentum domini, epistola ad ro. xiii. Scientes quia hora, Ew. Math. xxi, Cum appropinquasset ierosolimis; Dominica ii. Ep. Ad ro xv. Fratres quecumque scripta est, Ev. Luce xxi. Erunt signa in sole ..." [ending top col. a, f. 359; remainder and f. 359v, blank].

Small, portable Bibles, which include the complete text of the Vulgate in one volume, revolutionized the use and ownership of the Bible, and were one of the great achievements of thirteenth-century bookmaking. The earliest examples of these portable Bibles were copied in Paris at the end of the 1220s or the early 1230s, and the format was adopted quickly throughout Europe. This Bible is an exquisite—and relatively early—example of a thirteenth-century portable Bible, and it is of special interest because it was copied not in Paris, but in southern France.

Both the text and decoration of this Bible are intriguing and deserve to be the subject of a more thorough study. Although elements of its text are clearly related to the Paris Bible (a Bible with a particular order of the books of the Bible, a certain set of prologues, a distinctive text, modern chapter divisions, and the inclusion of the glossary of Hebrew Names, created in Paris c. 1230), there are also important differences.

The order of the books in this Bible is identical with that in the Paris Bible, with the exception of the New Testament, here arranged as follows: Gospels, Pauline Epistles, Catholic Epistles, Acts and then the Apocalypse. Other Bibles with this order include a number of early Spanish Bibles as well as some copies of the Theodulfian Bible (see Samuel Berger, *Histoire de la vulgate pendant les premiers siècles du moyen âge*, Paris, Hachette, 1893; reprint Hildesheim, 1976, p. 340, number 7), which seems interesting given this Bible's probable origin in Southern France. The text known as the *Oratio Manasses* is lacking in this Bible (it follows 2 Chronicles in the Paris Bible), as if the Prayer of Solomon following Ecclesiasticus (also lacking in the Paris Bible, but found in many medieval Bibles).

The prologues used before the biblical books in this Bible are especially interesting. The Paris Bible circulated with a standard set of prologues, which are included here with the following exceptions: lacking are Stegmüller 357 (Job); Stegmüller 468 (Wisdom); Stegmüller 507 (Hosea); Stegmüller 589 (Matthew); Stegmüller (685) 1 Corinthians; and Stegmüller 699 (2 Corinthians). There are also two prologues not found in the Paris Bible, Stegmüller 810 (Catholic Epistles), and the prologue to Acts, cited above (not found in Stegmüller). Although these differences are noteworthy, it is equally important that five of the six prologues that are not found in manuscripts of the unglossed Vulgate before the Paris Bible, or its direct ancestor, the proto-Paris Bible, are included here (ie. Stegmüller 463, Ecclesiastes; Stegmüller 513, Amos; Stegmüller 547 and 553, Maccabees; and Stegmüller 839, Apocalypse). The presence of these prologues is a strong indication that the maker of this Bible knew a manuscript of the proto-Paris Bible or the Paris Bible.

The Bible is divided according to modern chapters. The glossary known as the *Interpretation of Hebrew Names* which followed the Apocalypse in the Paris Bible, and indeed, in many other thirteenth-century Bibles, is not included, but a table of epistle and gospel readings for the Temporale is (similar texts are a common accompaniment to Bibles copied throughout Europe). The actual text of the Bible, insofar as one can tell by checking a handful of characteristic passages, is not that of the Paris Bible in the Old Testament; the readings in the New Testament, are, however, characteristic of the Paris Bible.

Taken together, the various components of this Bible tell us an interesting, if far from clear-cut story. The makers of this Bible must have had some access to copies of the Paris Bible, as the

prologues, and to a lesser extent, the order of the books, and the New Testament readings, indicate. However, the discrepancies between this book and the Paris Bible are great enough to indicate that it was copied from an exemplar (or exemplars) of independent textual traditions. Our present state of knowledge of the text of the later medieval Vulgate, which has traditionally focused on the Paris Bible, is such that we can only point to the potential interest of the text of this manuscript, which may be related to other Bibles copied in Southern France.

This is a very lovely, carefully written and illuminated manuscript; it is interesting that it includes almost no later notes, or other signs of use, suggesting it was not a Friar's or student's Bible. It may have belonged to an important member of the Church, or indeed, to a wealthy lay person.

ILLUSTRATION

The decoration of this manuscript is as interesting as its text; although there are strong echoes of contemporary Parisian decoration, numerous details suggest other influences from southern Europe. Each chapter begins with a red or blue initial with pen decoration in the other color. Most of these initials are very similar to the type of pen decoration found in Parisian manuscripts of the same date. A number of the initials also include, however, fanciful extensions in red and blue, with double-sided herringbones, beading and other motifs (including a red bird on f. 123v).

The fifty-eight initials at the beginning of prologues are red and blue "puzzle" or "parted" initials, infilled with red and blue vines with touches of green wash on a brownish-purple wash, on grounds of the same color. Very similar initials are found in British Library, Harley MS 2816, from Southern France from the second or third quarter of the thirteenth century (see the British Library, Online Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts (<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/results.asp>). Initials of this type are found in English manuscripts and on the Continent as well (see François Avril and Patricia Stirnemann, *Manuscrits enluminés d'origine insulaire VII^e – XX^e siècle* [Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1987], pp. 49-50).

The major decoration of the manuscript consists of very attractive foliate illuminated initials at the beginning of the biblical books, many with dragons and other grotesques; the initials are white-patterned pink, blue, or pink and blue, infilled with simple vine spirals in the same colors, ending with small white-edged leaves and animal heads, on heavily polished gold grounds edged in black and green, following the shape of the initials; the colors used are subdued, with dusty pink and blue predominating, with touches of green and ochre, but the gold is quite brilliant and coppery in tone; similar initials can be found in Parisian manuscripts from the second quarter of the thirteenth century (see Robert Branner, *Manuscript Painting in Paris during the Reign of St. Louis*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1977, pp. 75-86); f. 1 begins with a ten-line initial extending the full-length of the page in the outer margin, with a decorative running headline adorned with red and blue pen decoration which continues in the outer margin; on f. 3, Genesis begins with a thirty-one line initial of intertwined serpents on a gold ground in center column, with red, blue and gold pen decoration sprouting from their heads, and framing the page in the outer and inner margins.

The decoration of the Psalms, copied on two independent quires, is distinctive; the divisions of the Psalms are marked by gold initials infilled and on quartered grounds of pink and blue, with white-tracery, Ps. 1, f. 162; Ps. 26, f. 164v, with red and blue herringbone decoration extending almost

full page, terminating in blue and gold; Ps. 38, f. 166, with a bird within the initial in delicate white tracery; Ps. 52, f. 167v, with blue and gold pen work erupting from the initial, including a fleur-de-lis; Ps. 68, f. 169v, with blue and gold pen decoration; Ps. 80, f. 171v; Ps. 97 f. 173, with a bird in white tracery within the initial; and Ps. 109, f. 175; Psalms 51 and 101 begin with parted red and blue initials with red and blue pen decoration. The gold fleur-de-lis in the Psalms has an interesting echo in a manuscript recently sold in London at Sotheby's, which was painted in Paris, but may have an early Spanish provenance, with striking gold borders with fleur-de-lis, possibly added in Spain; Sotheby's Sale, 7 July 2009, lot 30.

LITERATURE

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ONLINE RESOURCES

Latin Bible:

<http://www.bible-researcher.com/index.html>

British Library, Online Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts:

<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/introduction.asp>

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