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Vulgate Bible
In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment
Northern France, Paris, c. 1240-60

i (unnumbered parchment) + 480 + i (unnumbered parchment) folios on very fine parchment, modern foliation in pencil, top, outer corner recto, complete (collation, i-xx²⁴), horizontal catchwords, very bottom, inside margin, usually trimmed, but still visible in quires three, four, nine and ten, leaf and quire signatures through quire ten in very faint lead, lower, outer corner recto in the first half of the quire, with a letter designating the leaf, and a symbol, the quire, quires signed at the beginning of each quire with an Arabic numeral in pencil in a modern hand, ruled lightly in lead with the top, the top three, or the top first and third lines full across on some folios, single full-length vertical bounding lines, double horizontal rules for the running titles, prickings remain in the top and bottom margins on some folios, (justification, 129-126 x 83 mm.), written below the top line in a very small, skilled upright gothic bookhand in two columns of forty-eight lines, majuscules within text filled in red, some guide letters for initials remain, very inner margin, red rubrics, red and blue running titles and chapter numbers, each verse of the psalms begin with one-line alternately red and blue initials, chapters begin with two-line alternately red and blue initials with contrasting pen decoration, many almost the full-length of the page, some with the bottom trimmed, a few also with short "waterfall" decoration in the same color as the initial, ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-NINE ILLUMINATED INITIALS, at the beginning of biblical books and prologues, and SEVENTEEN HISTORIATED INITIALS, as described below, in good condition, although some folios are now darkened, usually with no loss of text: f. 1, very dark, ff. 1v-8, somewhat dark, gradually fading through f. 47, where parchment is very white and pristine, ff. 225-478, some staining from damp in outer margins, ff. 479-480v, darkened, with f. 480v, damaged with some loss of text, f. 405, small loss of text in the first column where something adhered to the parchment, stains from glue used to fix the tabs in the outer margins, some initials with white-lead (?) pigment oxidized to black. Bound in square-edged wooden (?) boards, which extend slightly past the bookblock, flat spine, now covered with modern yellow-green velvet, with two metal clasps on cloth straps, and two late medieval metal lozenge-shaped catches on upper board stamped with rosettes and the lamb and flag, medieval leather or parchment indexing tabs on many pages, in excellent condition, with edges dark and stained, small tears in cover, top, upper, front board, and lower spine, and very slight wear to the lower edges, now housed in modern drop front case. Dimensions 185 x 125 mm.

Classic example of the Bible known to historians of the Vulgate as the "Paris Bible," characterized by a new order of the biblical books, a new set of prologues, new chapter divisions, and a distinctive text, the direct ancestor of the 16th-century Clementine Vulgate. The skill required to produce this handsome volume is evident throughout, from its fine parchment, small, controlled script, and handsome painted initials by the Parisian "Vie de Saint Denis" atelier. Contemporary corrections, a few variant readings, and notes by several readers are worth further study.

PROVENANCE

1. Copied and illuminated in Paris in the middle of the thirteenth century, as indicated by the script and the style of the pen decoration and painted initials. The parchment, layout, disciplined script and decoration are all typical of books produced by the professional booktrade in Paris in these decades.
2. The Bible was used through the fifteenth century, and includes careful corrections and notes added by a number of readers (discussed in detail below). This supports the idea of de Hamel and others that so many Bibles were produced in the thirteenth century that there was no need to generate Bibles until around the time of Gutenberg.
3. Erased medieval inscription, f. 480v, late fourteenth or fifteenth century, "pertinet celestin<orum?>de senon<is?>," probably the Celestine convent of St. Mary at Sens, sixty miles south-east of Paris, which was founded in 1366 by Isabelle Biloard, wife of Jean de Maizières (L. H. Cottineau. *Répertoire topo-bibliographique des abbayes et prieurés*, Maçon, Protat, 1937-39, and 1970, vol. 2, col. 2218-2219). The Celestines were a reformed Benedictine order, founded in 1264 by Pietro di Murrone, who later became Pope Celestine V. The Celestine convent in Paris was closely tied to the royal family in the fifteenth century, and the renowned theologian Jean Gerson had close ties to the Order.
4. Likely the same manuscript as Schoenberg Database no. 10408, Leighton, 1919, lot 23.

TEXT

ff. 1-480v, Latin Bible, with prologues as follows: f. 1, [General prologue] Frater ambrosius [Stegmüller 284]; f. 3v, [prologue to Genesis] Desiderii mei [Stegmüller 285]; f. 4, Genesis; f. 23, Exodus; f. 38v, Leviticus; f. 49, Numbers; f. 64, Deuteronomy; f. 77v, [prologue to Joshua] Tandem finito [Stegmüller 311]; f. 77v, Joshua; f. 87, Judges; f. 97, Ruth; f. 98v, [prologue to Kings] Viginti et duas [Stegmüller 323], f. 99, 1 Kings; f. 112v, 2 Kings; f. 123v, 3 Kings; f. 136v, 4 Kings; f. 148v, [prologue to Chronicles] Si septuaginta [Stegmüller 328]; f. 148v, I Chronicles; f. 159v, [prologue] Eusebius ieronimus ... Quomodo grecorum [Stegmüller 327]; f. 160, 2 Chronicles, concluding with the Oratio Manasse; f. 174, [prologue to Ezra] Utrum difficilius [Stegmüller 330]; f. 174v, 1 Ezra; f. 178, Nehemiah; f. 183v, 2 Ezra; f. 189v, [prologue to Tobit] Chromatio et elyodoro .. Mirari non desino [Stegmüller 332]; f. 190, Tobit; f. 193v, [prologue to Judith] Apud hebreos [Stegmüller 335]; f. 193v, Judith; f. 199, [prologue to Esther] Librum hester; Rursum in libro [Stegmüller 341 and 343, copied as one prologue]; f. 199, Esther; f. 203v, [prologue to Job] Cogor per singulos [Stegmüller 344]; f. 204, [prologue to Job] Si aut fiscellam [Stegmüller 357]; f. 204v, Job; f. 214v, Psalms; f. 238, [prologue to Proverbs] Iungat epistola [Stegmüller 457]; f. 238, Proverbs; f. 246v, [prologue to Ecclesiastes] Memini me [Stegmüller 462]; f. 246v, Ecclesiastes; f. 249v, Song of Songs; f. 251 [prologue to Wisdom] Liber sapientie [Stegmüller 468]; f. 251, Wisdom; f. 257, [biblical introduction to Ecclesiasticus, copied as a prologue] Multorum nobis; f. 257, Ecclesiasticus, without the Prayer of Solomon; f. 272v, [prologue to Isaiah] Nemo cum prophetas [Stegmüller 482]; f. 273, Isaiah; f. 291v, [prologue to Jeremiah] Ieremias propheta [Stegmüller 487]; f. 291v, Jeremiah; f. 312v, Lamentations; f. 314v, [prologue to Baruch] Liber iste [Stegmüller 491]; f. 314v, Baruch; f. 317, [prologue to Ezechiel] Ezechiel propheta [Stegmüller 492]; f. 317, Ezechiel; f. 336v, [prologue to Daniel] Daniele propheta [Stegmüller 494]; f. 337, Daniel; f.

345, [prologue to Minor prophets] Non idem ordo est [Stegmüller 500]; f. 345, [prologue to Hosea] Temporibus ozie [Stegmüller 507]; f. 345, Hosea; f. 348, [prologue to Joel] Sanctus ioel [Stegmüller 511]; f. 348, [prologue] Ioel fatuel filius [Stegmüller 510]; f. 348, Joel; f. 349, [prologue to Amos] Ozias rex [Stegmüller 515]; f. 349v, [prologue] Amos propheta [Stegmüller 512]; f. 349v, [prologue] Hic amos [Stegmüller 513]; f. 349v, Amos; f. 351v, [prologue Obadiah] Iacob patriarcha; Hebrei [Stegmüller 519 and 517 copied as one prologue]; f. 352, Obadiah; f. 352v, [prologue to Jonah] Sanctum ionam [Stegmüller 524]; f. 352v, [prologue] Ionas columba et dolens [Stegmüller 521]; f. 352, Jonah; f. 353, [prologue Micah] Temporibus ioathe [Stegmüller 526]; f. 353v, Micah; f. 355, [prologue to Nahum] Naum prophetam [Stegmüller 528]; f. 355, Nahum; f. 355v, [prologue to Habakkuk] Quatuor prophete [Stegmüller 531]; f. 356v, Habbakuk; f. 357, [prologue to Zephaniah] Tradunt hebrei [Stegmüller 534]; f. 357v, Zephaniah; f. 358, [prologue to Haggai] Ieremias propheta [Stegmüller 538]; f. 358v, Haggai; f. 359, [prologue to Zechariah] In anno secundo [Stegmüller 539]; f. 359v, Zechariah; f. 362v, [prologue to Malachi] Deus per moysen [Stegmüller 543]; f. 362v, Malachi; f. 363v, [prologue to Maccabees] Domino excellentissimo ..., Cum sim promptus [Stegmüller 547]; f. 363v, [prologue] Reuerentissimo ..., Memini me [Stegmüller 553]; f. 364, [prologue] Machabeorum librum duo [Stegmüller 551]; f. 364, 1 Maccabees; f. 376, 2 Maccabees; f. 384v, [prologue to Matthew] Matheus ex iudea [Stegmüller 590]; f. 385, [prologue to Matthew] Matheus cum primo [Stegmüller 589]; f. 385, Matthew; f. 397, [prologue to Mark] Marchus evangelista [Stegmüller 607]; f. 397v, Mark; f. 405, Quoniam quidem [Luke 1:1-4 treated as a prologue]; f. 405, [prologue to Luke] Lucas syrus natione [Stegmüller 620]; f. 405, Luke; f. 418, [prologue to John] Hic est Iohannes [Stegmüller 634]; f. 418, John; f. 428, [prologue to Romans] Romani sunt in partes ytalie ... scribens eis a chorinto [Stegmüller 677]; f. 428, Romans; f. 433, [prologue to 1 Corinthians] Chorinthii sunt achaici [Stegmüller 685]; f. 433, 1 Corinthians; f. 437v, [prologue to 2 Corinthians] Post actam [Stegmüller 699]; f. 437v, 2 Corinthians; f. 441, [prologue to Galatians] Galathe sunt greci [Stegmüller 707]; f. 441, Galatians; f. 442v, [prologue to Ephesians] Ephesii sunt asyani [Stegmüller 715]; f. 442v, Ephesians; f. 444v, [prologue to Philippians] Philippenses sunt macedones [Stegmüller 728]; f. 444v, Philippians; f. 445v, [prologue to Colossians] Colosenses et hii [Stegmüller 736]; f. 445v, Colossians; f. 446v, [prologue to 1 Thessalonians] Thessalonicenses sunt macedones [Stegmüller 747]; f. 447, 1 Thessalonians; f. 448, [prologue to 2 Thessalonians] Ad thessalonicenses [Stegmüller 752]; f. 448, 2 Thessalonians; f. 448v, [prologue to 1 Timothy] Tymotheum instruit [Stegmüller 765]; f. 448v, 1 Timothy; f. 449v [prologue to 2 Timothy] Item Tymotheo scribit [Stegmüller 772]; f. 450, 2 Timothy; f. 450v, [prologue to Titus] Tytum commonefacit [Stegmüller 780]; f. 450v, Titus; f. 451v, [prologue to Philemon] Phylemoni familiares [Stegmüller 783]; f. 451v, Philemon; f. 451v, [prologue to Hebrews] In primis dicendum [Stegmüller 793]; f. 451v, Hebrews; f. 455v, [prologue to Acts] Lucas anthiocenses natione syrus [Stegmüller 640]; f. 455v, Acts; f. 468v, [prologue to Catholic Epistles] Non ita est ordo [Stegmüller 809]; f. 468v, James; f. 470, 1 Peter; f. 471v, 2 Peter; f. 472, 1 John; f. 473v, 2 John; f. 473v, 3 John; f. 473v, Jude; f. 474, [prologue to Apocalypse] Omnes qui pie [Stegmüller 839]; f. 474v, Apocalypse [ending f. 480v, column a; column b, fragment of an added text (a prayer?) in a slightly later hand, now damaged with portions lost].

So-called portable Bibles which include the complete text of the Vulgate in one small, although often rather thick, volume revolutionized the use and ownership of the Bible. 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. Paris was also the center of the dissemination of a new text of the Vulgate, known as the Paris Bible. Textually, the Bible discussed here is a perfect example of a Paris Bible.

Evolving from Bibles copied in the first three decades of the thirteenth century, copies of the mature Paris Bible are distinguished by a particular order of the biblical books closely resembling the order of modern Bibles, except in the New Testament where the Gospels are followed by the Pauline Epistles, Acts, the Catholic Epistles and then the Apocalypse. This, in fact, is a new order, found for the first time in Parisian Bibles dating c. 1200-1230, and then in the Paris Bibles of after c. 1230. The books of the Bible are introduced by a characteristic set of sixty-four prologues, present here without exception (also conveniently listed in N. R. Ker. *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, Oxford, 1969- , Vol. I, pp. 96-8, and Branner, 1977, pp. 154-155). The text of these Bibles is associated with certain characteristic textual readings, and the biblical books are divided into numbered chapters, which are essentially the same as the chapters still used today. This Bible diverges from the typical Paris Bible in only one aspect, i.e., it lacks the *Interpretation of Hebrew Names*, a glossary that is almost always present in copies of the Paris Bible, and indeed, in thirteenth-century Bibles copied throughout Europe.

This manuscript is also a remarkable example of a professionally produced manuscript. Thirteenth-century Paris was the home to a thriving book trade, producing hundreds of manuscripts for the court, members of the universities, and indeed, for wealthy clerics and laypeople both in Paris, and across Europe. The thought and professionalism that produced this Bible is evident in remarkable consistency of its quire structure (twenty quires of twenty-four leaves each, maintained without a break or gap in the text through the entire 480 folios), its consistent layout and ruling, the tiny, disciplined script, the careful correction of the text, and finally, in the controlled and competent illuminated initials found at the beginning of each important textual division.

The text includes formal corrections throughout in a number of contemporary hands; some are enclosed in a red box; these corrections are of the sort that were an integral step in copying the book, a final proofreading before the job of copying the manuscript was complete (examples are found on ff. 49, 217, 229v, 311v, 406, 408v, 418). Unusually long passages were omitted on f. 151, and they are added in the bottom margin. There are also occasional variant readings (ff. 59v, 238v, 446v).

This Bible was used, and thoughtfully, by a number of readers, who also left notes in the margin. The earliest additions frequently include cross references to other books of the Bible (for example, ff. 3v, 68, 70v, 73v) and occasionally longer notes (for example, ff. 59v, 66 and 72, noting the spiritual interpretation of a passage from Deuteronomy). There are also letters added in the margins on some folios, perhaps used as a reference system: f. 51, "c," f. 92, "f," f. 72, "d," f. 113v, "a," and f. 292v, "a."

In the fifteenth century a thoughtful and learned reader added a number of notes on various topics; cf. f. 198v, noting that a passage in Judith, chapter 15, was a "beautiful theme for the Virgin Mary" (that is, a theme for a sermon). On f. 474, this hand adds "Gilbertus pictavensis," next to the prologue to the Apocalypse, beginning "Omnes qui pie" [Stegmüller 839]. The attribution of

this prologue to the noted theologian, Gilbert de la Porrée (1076-1154) has been seriously questioned by modern historians, especially since no commentary on the Apocalypse survives by Gilbert. Nonetheless, the matter deserves further research. Although the commentary tradition attributing this prologue to a "Gilbertus," seems to go back at least to the thirteenth century, when it is found in Hugh of St. Cher's Commentary, this writer does not know the source of the specific attribution to Gilbert de la Porrée. Its appearance here in a fifteenth-century hand may therefore be of particular significance.

ILLUSTRATION

There are a total of one hundred and forty-six illuminated initials in this Bible, used consistently throughout to mark the main textual divisions; each book and prologue, the main divisions of the Psalms (ff. 218, 220, 220v, 222v, 224v, 227v, 230 and 232v, Psalms 26, 38, 51, 52, 68, 80, 97, and 101), and the Prayer of Jeremiah at the end of Lamentations, f. 314, begin with an illuminated initial, seventeen of which are historiated (listed below):

- f. 1, (Opening prologue) Jerome writing, hunched over a desk, extending the full-length of the page;
- f. 4, (Genesis) the seven days of creation, with quadrilobed compartments on alternately pink and blue diapered grounds, showing the stages God creating: i, the universe, ii, the land and the sea, iii, the sun and moon, iv, plants, v, animals, vi, man, and vii, God blessing his creation, extending the full-length of the page;
- f. 77v, (Joshua) Joshua with a scroll, with the face of God at the top;
- f. 87, (Judges) Judah with a scroll, with the face of God at the top;
- f. 97, (Ruth) two-compartment initial, with Elimelech traveling at the top, and Naomi, below;
- f. 190, (Tobit) the swallow flying above Tobit in bed;
- f. 204v, (Job) Job on the dungheap, comforted by his wife;
- f. 214v, (Psalms) David playing the harp;
- f. 238 (Proverbs) Solomon, club raised, a child at his feet;
- f. 273, (Isaiah) a man sawing Isaiah in half;
- f. 345, (Hosea) Hosea embracing his wife Gomer;
- f. 364, (1 Maccabees) the beheading of the idolatrous Jew;
- f. 385, (Matthew) Jesse, reclining, for the Tree of Jesse;

f. 428, (Romans) St. Paul, standing, his hand raised in blessing;

f. 455v, (Acts) Pentecost;

f. 468v, (James) St. James, standing;

f. 474v, (Apocalypse) St. John in a cave with crosses for the seven churches of Asia.

Most of the historiated initials are seven- to eight-lines, with extensions of up to eighteen-lines (initials, ff. 1 and 4, extend the full-length of the page); initials are white-patterned blue, blue and red, or dusty-pink (often darkened to gray), on blue or red grounds, heavily edged in black, terminating in simple leaf tendrils, often in a spiral pattern, some with powdered gold or copper balls at the corners of the initials, usually infilled with bright blue. The overall palette is restrained, with bright blue, brick red, and dusty pink predominating, with touches of lime green, powdered gold or copper, and beginning on f. 385, touches of bright red (initial f. 474v, also includes bright orange). Draperies are simple, heavily edged in black; figures have pronounced jaws and regular, stiff hair, combed away from the face. The remaining painted initials are executed in similar colors, and include simple vine scrolls and plants, and various drolleries, such as dragons, some with human heads, for example, ff. 359 and 441, lions' heads, and other motifs, including a fish on f. 451v. Some initials include a pigment, probably white-lead, now oxidized to black (noticeable in the body of some of the pink (?) initials, which now appear dark gray, but also evident in the Genesis initial, f. 4, and the faces in the initials on f. 204v, Job, f. 428, Romans, f. 455v, Acts, f. 468v, James and f. 474v, Apocalypse).

The painting in this Bible can be attributed to artists working in an atelier named the "Vie de Saint-Denis" atelier by Branner, 1977, pp. 87-93 and 224-27; Branner named the atelier after a manuscript of the life of St. Denis, made for the abbey of St. Denis, now Paris, BnF, MS nouv. acq. fr. 1098. Branner identified over forty manuscripts from this atelier, which he described as a "veritable factory among the Parisian paintshops of the period 1230-1250." The shop decorated many different types of manuscripts, ranging from liturgical texts, civil and canon law books, works in French, and at least thirteen Bibles of various formats. Branner did not know of this Bible. Another Bible from this shop was sold at Christies, 11-13 July, 2000, lot 15. The shop worked for many clients in Paris, but also for institutions from other parts of France, including a Breviary, use of Sens, now Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, MS 108.

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