

NICOLAUS DE LYRA, *Postilla super quattuor evangelistas* ("Commentary on the Four Gospels");  
Sermons by an unknown author (here attributed to NICOLAUS DE LYRA); anonymous texts on the  
Passion of Christ, Mary Magdalene, and the Destruction of Jerusalem  
In Latin, decorated manuscript on paper, with diagram  
Southern Germany or Austria, 1448-1449

318 folios on paper, modern foliation in pencil top outer corner recto, 1-316, does not include the first two blank folios, watermark, bull's head with single rod ending in a flower, widespread, but same type as Online Piccard: 65163, Omstat, 1449; 65196, Kassel, 1450; 64812, Udine, 1448; 64817, Brescia, 1447; 64836, Brescia, 1445; 65213, Nördlingen, 1462; 64870, Brescia, 1447, complete, (collation, i<sup>12</sup> [1, 2, blank and unnumbered] ii-xiii<sup>12</sup> xiv<sup>10</sup> xv-xvi<sup>12</sup> xvii<sup>10</sup> xviii-xx<sup>12</sup> xxi<sup>8</sup> xxii-xxvi<sup>12</sup> xxvii<sup>14</sup>), horizontal catchwords very bottom inside margin, no leaf or quire signatures, frame ruled in ink with all rules full-length, some prickings top margin, layout varies, ff. 1-242, (justification, 245-240 x 145-144 mm.), copied in a small cursive gothic script in two columns of forty-eight to forty-three lines, ff. 243-266v, (justification, 248 x 147-145 mm.), copied by a second scribe in a more formal cursive gothic bookhand in two columns of fifty-six to fifty-three lines, ff. 267-312v (justification, 238-7 x 145-143 mm.), copied in a small cursive gothic bookhand, probably by the first scribe in two columns of forty-two to forty lines, guide notes for rubricator and letters for initials sometimes remain (alongside the initial, for example, f. 15, or in the upper margin, for example, f. 246), majuscules within text stroked with red, red underlining within text, red rubrics and running titles, six- to two-line red initials, f. 8, top half of column a (equivalent to thirty lines of text) "figura generatione christi," DIAGRAM of the genealogy of Christ from David to Joseph, with names in circles, and explanations of their relationship written in the double lines connecting each circle, overall in very good condition, edges darkened, minor staining from damp upper margins, a few worm holes, stain on f. 188 within the text (remains legible), ORIGINAL BINDING of leather over substantial wooden boards tooled in blind with diagonal double fillets intersecting in the center (visible on the lower board), boards are cut square in the three outer edges, and angled at the spine edge, sewn on three double cords, wound in thread, spine with three raised bands and head and tail bands, once fastened back to front, with metal catches on the upper board, and leather straps on the lower (now broken with partial remains of both straps), once with center boss and four corner bosses on both boards, holes only remain, modern paper label, upper board, "III.i" in pencil, heavily damaged, front cover detached, leather on both covers survives only partially, and has degraded and developed an odd, very rough texture and has probably darkened considerably, pastedowns partially cut away on the upper board, and completely removed on the lower to reveal leaves from a twelfth-century noted breviary, described below. Dimensions 311 x 206 mm.

This is large-format copy of the commentaries on the four Gospels by Nicholas of Lyra, followed by twenty-one unedited (and presumably unprinted) sermons, here ascribed to him. The question of the author of these sermons, as well as their content, and the content of the three anonymous texts that follow, make this a promising manuscript for further research. The manuscript is signed and dated by its scribe and is preserved in its original binding (of interest despite its poor condition) with two bifolia from a noted twelfth-century Breviary.



## PROVENANCE

1. Written in Southern Germany or Austria, based on the evidence of the script, decoration, and watermark, in 1448-1449; signed and dated by its scribe, Otto Kröpffel, who completed f. 86 in 1448 on the feast of Saints Crispinus and Crispinianus, or October 25; he completed f. 238 in the following year, 1449, on August 14, the Vigil of the Assumption, and f. 300, on 7 September in 1449, the Vigil of the Nativity of Mary. Although the watermark is a common one, it generally supports an origin in Southern Germany (also common at this period in Northern Italy, in Brescia and Udine).

The scribe, Otto Kröpffel, has not been identified in other manuscripts (not listed in Bénédictins du Bouveret, 1965-1982, or in Krämer, Online Resources). Further research may make it possible, however, to identify where this manuscript was copied. Among the saints included in the list of readings for the Sanctoreale on ff. 241v-242 are Peter and Paul, with both a vigil and an octave (the only saints listed with an octave), Afra and Chryogonous, and it is likely the manuscript was copied at (or for) a church or monastery where these saints were especially venerated. The inclusion of St. Afra does generally support an origin in Southern Germany; she was widely venerated, but especially in Augsburg and Munich.

Manuscripts that are signed and dated by their scribe are relatively rare even in the fifteenth century; manuscripts such as this one that include multiple notes by the scribe indicating the day when he completed a portion of text are even less common (for other examples, see de Hamel, 2006, and Gullick, 1995, as well as TM 403, 439, and 582 on this site). Based on this information, we can gauge how long it may have taken Otto to copy this manuscript. He took twenty-one days to copy the sixty-three folios between ff. 238-300, or about three folios a day. When copying the 153 folios from ff. 85-238, however, he worked much more slowly, averaging only about a page (that is, one side of a folio) per day for these 293 days. Both of these estimates, of course, assume he worked every day, which seems unlikely. Can we guess that something interrupted his work during the period when he was copying ff. 85-238? Moreover, one could even imagine (and this is certainly a guess) that this is evidence that Otto may not have been a professional scribe, but was rather someone with other duties, such as a monk.

This is a well-organized, carefully presented copy of this text, designed to be easily used by readers; the running titles, for example, not only include the text, but also the chapter numbers. Signs of use include marginal notes, for example, on f. 21, "de domini, and "Pater noster," and indications when a *questio* was posed within the text ("qu" in margin, or "question," for example, f. 8).

2. The manuscript also contains a very rare example of a contemporary note written by a reader on a scrap of paper (measuring, 180 x 120 mm, unevenly trimmed) laid in between ff. 16v-17, incipit, "Deducta 3 t, <In> securitate (?) deducta est. Iudith 13 benedixite deus in uirtute sua ..." The note cites Albertus Magnus.
3. Square parchment tabs are found at the beginning of major textual divisions (f. 86v, 106v, 152v, 238v); the tabs are visible, but were trimmed (?) so they are now flush with the fore-edge
4. Inside front cover, in a fifteenth-century cursive Gothic bookhand: "Nos aper auditu precellit arcanea tactu/ Vultur odoratu linx visu simea gustu" ("In hearing by the boar, in touch by the spider; In smell by the vulture, in sight by the lynx, and in taste by the ape, we are outdone") the popular mnemonic

verse summarizing the animals that excel in each of the five senses, found early in Thomas de Cantimpré, *Liber de naturis rerum* (4,1,194); see Walther, 1959, 1, no. 12243, and 2, no. 18772a (the version in this manuscript in a slightly different order).

5. Modern shelf mark on paper label, upper board, "IIIi"; repeated in pencil, inside front cover. Modern owners' or dealers' annotations, in pencil, inside front cover, "14," and "7/Sfe," circled.

## TEXT

### Binding Fragments:

Two bifolium from a noted Breviary

In Latin, with musical notation, on parchment

Northeastern France or Germany, c. 1100-1150

Inside front cover, rectangle measuring 125 x 185 mm. cut from the parchment pastedown, revealing fourteen lines of text from the Offices of Felicitas (F. 23 November), and Chrysogonus (F. 24 November); inside back cover: pastedown lifted, revealing a bifolia, outer dimensions, 190 x 300 mm., trimmed with text lost along the top and at the far left, apparently ruled in hard point, (justification, now approximately 163 x 115 mm.), copied in an upright twelfth-century minuscule using e-cedilla, ampersand as an abbreviation within words, straight-'s' and straight-'d' in twenty-three long lines, staffless neumes copied above the lines of text, red rubrics and initials. The text is from an Office for St. Lucy, incipit, "//ea que leguntur crede agathen pro christi nomine passam ... [Lesson] Interea dum orarent somnum lucie ..."

Both the text and the musical notation in a Breviary from this early are of potential interest.

### Text:

ff. 1-86, *In nomine domini Amen. Incipit postilla edita a venerabili doctore Nicolao de Lira super matheum*, incipit, "Quatuor facies vni, Ezechielis primo [Ezek. 1:6]. Secundum quod scribit beatus gregorius super ezechielem prima parte omeli ... semper ipsam dirigendo per occultos instinctus spiritus sancti ut sic non deficiat fides petri ad laudem et gloriam domini nostri ihesu christi cui est honor et gloria in secula seculorum. Amen." *Explicit postilla super matheum edita a frater nicolao de lyra de ordine fratrum minorum sacra theologye doctore. Anno domini millesimo quadringentesimo quadragesimo octauo in die beatorum martirum crispini et crispiniani etc.* [Ends bottom col. a, f. 86; col. b blank];

Nicolaus de Lyra, *Postilla super Matheum*, Stegmüller, no. 5896.

ff. 86v-106v, *Incipit postilla super Marcum*, incipit, "Facies leonis a dextris ipsorum quatuor [sic], Ezech. 1[:10]. Secundum quod dictum fuit in principio ewangelii ... ac sapientibus huius mundi ad laudem et gloriam in secula seculorum. Amen. Amen. Amen." *Explicit postilla super marcum edita a fratre nicolao de Lyra de ordine fratrum minorum sacre theologye doctore* [Ends f. 106v, top col. a; remainder col. left blank];

Nicolaus de Lyra, *Postilla super Marcum*, Stegmüller, no. 5897.

ff. 106v-152v, *Incipit postilla super lucam*, incipit, "Facies bovis a sinistris ipsorum quatuor [sic] Ezechielem 1[:10]. Sicut dictum fuit in principio ewangelii secundum Mathaeum Ezechieli prophete in visione animalis quattuor

facies habentis ... In templo laudantes et benedicentes deum (Luc 24:53). Cui est honor et gloria in secula seculorum. Amen." *Explicit postilla reuerendissimi magistri Nicolai de lyra super lucam etc.* [Ends top col. a; remainder and col. b, blank];

Nicolaus de Lyra, *Postilla super Lucam*, Stegmüller, no. 5898.

ff. 153-238, *Incipit postilla magistri Nicolai super iohannem ewangelistam*, incipit, "In principio erat verbum. Intentio beati iohannis est diuinitatem domini nostri ihesu principaliter declarare ... ad contemplandum facie ad faciem. Prestante domino nostro ihesu Christo qui est bene ductus in secula seculorum. Amen." *Explicit postilla super iohannem edita a sancte nicolao de Lyra de ordine fratrum minorum sacre theologie doctore. Et finitus per me Ottone kröppsl. Anno domini millesimo quadringentesimo quadragesimo nono in vigilia assumptionis gloriose virginis marie*";

Nicolaus de Lyra, *Postilla super Iohannem*, Stegmüller, no. 5900, here lacking the prologue and beginning with the commentary on John 1:1.

There is no modern edition of Nicholas's *Postilla* on the Gospels. Indeed, of Nicholas' extensive commentary on the Bible, only the Song of Songs has been edited by a modern scholar (Kiecker, 1998); his Apocalypse commentary has been translated into English (Krey, 1997). The Strasbourg 1492 edition of the *Postilla* on the entire Bible is available in a reprinted edition (Frankfurt am Main, 1970). Nicholas composed the work c. 1322-1331, drawing no doubt on the lectures on the Bible that he prepared for his students in Paris. The *Postilla* were enormously popular and survive in hundreds of manuscripts; see Stegmüller, 1950-80, nos. 589-5900, recording about fifty manuscripts with his Gospel commentaries (most, but not all, include commentaries on all four Gospels).

Nicolaus de Lyra's *Postilla super totam bibliam* was the first biblical commentary to appear in print -- printed in Rome in 1471, and then in more than one hundred editions until 1600, including editions in Basel, Douai, Cologne, Lyons, Nuremberg, Paris, Venice and Strasbourg; Anton Koberger in Nuremberg, printed this work seven times from 1479-97 (Gosselin, 1970).

ff. 238v-242, *Sich es registrum predictorum sanctum ewangeliorum secundum capitula quatuor ewangelistarum ut patebit infra intuenti. Et primo de tempore deinde de sanctis post hoc commune sanctorum, Dominica prima in aduentum domini ewangelium, "Cum appropinquasset ihesus ierosolimis, Mt 21, Mr 21, Luc 19, Joh 12, in feria quarta, Venit iohannes waptista, Mt 3 ... In annuciatione beate virginis, Missus est angelus Gabriel, Luc 1, ecce ego mitto angelum, luc 1, mr 1"* [f. 242v, blank];

Table of Gospel readings for the Temporale, ff. 238v-241v, from the first Sunday in Advent to the twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost, the Sanctorale, ff. 241v-242, and concluding with readings for the common of saints, for the dead, and for the Annunciation; cited by book and modern chapter number; a few texts are identified in all the Gospels in which they occur, thus serving both as a list of readings, and as a Gospel concordance.

ff. 243-300, Sermons:

ff. 243-244v, *Sermones reuerendissimi nicolai de lyra de aliquibus festiuitatibus de natale domini*, incipit, "Exiit edictum a cesare augusto ut describeretur vniuersus orbis Luc. 2[:1]. In quibusdam terris est consuetudo populis ut natalem regis ...";

ff. 244v-246, *In circumcissione*, incipit, "Postquam consummati sunt dies octo ut circumcideretur puer uocatum est nomen eius ihesus quod uocatum est ab angelo priusquam in utero conciperetur luc 2[:21]. Exposita dilectissimi dominica nativitate ut nunc in die sancto cuius est hodierna octava audistis ...";

ff. 246-248v, *In epiphania domini*, incipit, "Cum natus esset ihesus in bethleem iudee in diebus herodis regis, Mt 2[:1]. Dilectissimi ysaiah propheta in epistola hodierna quamlibet fidelem animam in peccatis obtenebratam excitat ...";

Also found in Schlägl. Stiftsbibliothek 452, f. 95, attributed to Thomascus Crucifer, Ord. hosp. Jerus. (Stegmüller, 2001).

ff. 248v-251, *In purificatione beate marie*, incipit, "Postquam impleti sunt dies purgationis marie secundum legem Moysi tulerunt illum in ierusalem ut sisterent eum domino, luc 2[:22]. Benedictum[?] dulcissimus iste puer qui ut ait ysaiah natus est nobis quod post ...";

ff. 251-253v, *In dominica palmarum*, incipit, "Scitis quia post biduum pascha ... crucifigatur, mt. 26[:2]. In missa presentis dominica nota legitur ewangelium secundo titulo ewangelii si sub titulo passionis domini nostri ihesu christi et hoc fit propter statuta ecclesia ...";

Here copied with headings within the sermon, "Passio domini," and dies i-iv; also in Nuremberg, Stadtbibliothek, Cent. III, 57, ff. 349-353, a fifteenth-century miscellany from the Augustinian monastery in Nuremberg (without attribution).

ff. 253v-256v, *Feria infra passio*, incipit, "Primo die azimorum acceperunt discipuli ad ihesum dicentes ubi vis paremus tibi comedere pascha, mt 26[:17]. Vt sequentia ad precedencia coniungere possint continuari. Sciendum quod in precedenti sermone quem die dominico scilicet in die palmarum .... f. 256v, Notandum quod <?> hunc sermonem predicare voluerit populo volenti hac die communicare potest quedam in eo contenta ad suum ...";

Also in Nuremberg, Stadtbibliothek, Cent. III, 57, ff. 353v-358v.

ff. 256v-268, *In magna sexta feria*, incipit, "Egressus ihesus trans torrentem cedron cum discipulis suis vbi erat ortus est, Ioh. 18[:1]. Laudabilis est consuetudo karissimi cum aliquis paterfamilias ... de culpa ad gratiam recrearet qui cum patre ... Considerandum est autem quod quis post prescriptum sermonem predicare voluerit potest multa in eo contenta obmittere qui solum ad edificationem legencium sunt posita ... aliquam ut sibi placet";

Also in Nuremberg, Stadtbibliothek, Cent. III, 57, ff. 358v-377 (ending with the same explanatory note).

ff. 268-270v, *In die resurrectione domini*, incipit, "Maria Magdalene et Maria Iacobi et Salome emerunt aromata ut venientes unguerent ihesum, Marce ultimo [Mark 16:1]. Deus dilectissimi qui ut thobie 3 scribitur post tempestatem tranquillum facit ...";

ff. 270v-273, *Sermo secundus de resurrectione domini*, incipit, "Surrexit dominus vere, luc. 24[:34]. Humane consuetudinis est ut quando homines qui in magna tribulatione sunt ...";

- f. 273-275v, *In Ascensione domini*, incipit, "Recumbentibus undecim discipulis apparuit illis ihesus, mr ultimo [Mark 16:14]. Quando[?] aliquis rex uel dominus in magna sublimatus ...";
- ff. 275v-278v, *In die sancto pentecosto*, incipit, "Dum conplerentur dies pentecostes erant omnes discipuli partier in eodem loco, Actuum 2[:1]. Hodierna dilectissimi festivitatis una est maximarum solempnitatem ...";
- ff. 278v-281v, *Sermo secundus de spiritu sancto*, incipit, "Repleti sunt omnes spiritu sancto Actuum 2[:4]. Karissimi quia ut deuteronomii 32 dicitur dei perfecta sunt opera ...";
- ff. 281v-283v, *In solempni festo corpus christi sermo primus*, incipit, "Memoriam fecit mirabilium suorum misericors et mierserator dominus escam dedit timentibus Ps [Ps. 110:4-5]. Verba proposita dilectissimi solempnisat ecclesia per uniuersum orbem de festiuitate hodierna ...";
- ff. 283v-285v, *Sermo secundus de corpore christi*, incipit, "Ego sum panis ego uivus qui de celo descendi si quis manducaverit ex hoc pane uivet in eternum Ioh. sexto [John 6:51-52]. Amantissimi uerba proposita dicit <? > hodie festiuitatem per uniuersam ecclesiam ...";
- ff. 285v-287v, *Sermo tertius de corpore christi*, incipit, "Quoniam percussit petram et fluxerunt aque et torrentes inundauerunt, Ps 71 [Ps 77:20]. Karissimi uerba proposita conuenienter possunt summi de sacramento corporis et sanguinis domini ...";
- ff. 287v-290v, *Sermo quartus de corpore christi*, incipit, "Considera quid hodie proposuerim uitam et bonum et e contrario mortem et malum, deuteron. 30[:15]. Verba proposita potest singulis nobis hodie dicere dominus deus meus. Considera ...";
- ff. 290v-291, *De conuersatione beate marie uirginis*, incipit, "De operibus beate mariae uirginis in hac uita et de statuam et de condicione eius et de numero annorum eius ... sunt septuaginta duo anni";
- A short discussion of the topic, rather than a sermon; Graz, UB MS 1638, f. 69, includes a text with the same rubric (no incipit listed for comparison).
- ff. 291-293, *De natiuitate beate marie uirginis*, incipit, "Erat beseleel et arcam de lignis tethim ex. 37[:1]. Dicit apostolus prima ad cor. x, Omnia in figura contigebant ...";
- ff. 293-295, *Sermo secundus de natiuitate marie*, incipit, "Vas admirabile opus excelsi, Eccl. xliii[:2]. Dicit sanctus Benedictus[?] et si multa sunt facta in creatura ...";
- ff. 295-297, *Sermo tertius de beata uirgine*, incipit, "Sapiencia edificauit sibi domum excidit columpnas septem, prov. 9[:1]. Dicit sanctus Benedictus[?] sapientia diuina adueniendum desinu <? > edificauit sibi domum ...";
- ff. 297-298v, *De morte sermo*, Ecce defunctus efferebatur filius vnicus matris sue uerba pr0positur, luce vii capitulo [Luke 7:12]. Sunt <? > et in ewangelio quod presenti dominice uel septime congruunt ...";
- ff. 298v-300, *De eodem*, incipit, "Factus sum sicut homo sine adiutorio inter mortuos liber ps. [Ps. 87: 5-6]. Expediit in hosterno secundum unione tribus particulis ... et regnat deus in secula seculorum Amen." *Explicit*

*sermones festiuales editi per venerabilem sacre scripture doctorem scilicet Nicolaum de lyra sub anno domini etc. 1449 in vigilia nativitate beatissime virginis marie etc. Otto Kroppfel [f. 300v, blank];*

Twenty-one sermons, and a short passage, "De conversatione beate marie virginis"; the sermons are clearly attributed here to Nicholas of Lyra. It is likely that this attribution is based on the fact that the manuscript opens with Nicholas' Postilla on the Gospels, and they are not listed among the sermons by Nicholas in Schneyer, 1969-1990; nonetheless, it does raise a possibility that warrants further research. The three sermons on ff. 251-268 that are also found, without attribution, in Nuremberg, SB Cent III, 57, are of particular interest since they include at least two passages discussing the relationship between the written text and the actual use of the sermon as an oral discourse (see f. 256v and f. 268, the latter passage suggesting the sermon as written can easily be shortened when actually preached). Only one sermon, found on ff. 246-248v, has been found associated with a named author – Thomascus Crucifer, or Thomasco de Strakonic.

All these sermons are unedited and unpublished, and indeed, except for the sermons mentioned above, are not listed in the *Repertorium* of sermons dating from 1150-1350 by Schneyer (Schneyer, 1969-1990), in its continuation, which lists sermons from 1350-1550 (Hödl and Knoch, 2001), or in *Manuscripta Mediaevalia* (Online Resources). These are carefully structured sermons that each begin with an introductory section, or prothema; the inclusion of four sermons in this small collection for the feast of Corpus Christi is also noteworthy.

ff. 301-310v, *Sermo bonus de passione domini*, incipit, "Et moriar cum nichil horum fecerim que osti false aduersum me testificantur Daniel xiii[:43]. Litteram originaliter hec verba dixerit sancta susanna falso testimonio in mortem dampnata propter eius ...; f. 301, *Radix passio christi vnde originaliter processit*, incipit, "Originaliter radix passionis christus processit ex invidia iudeorum ut point ewageliste Mt. xxvi mr xviii lu xv et io xviii. Et matheus diffusius tractat ...; f. 301v, *De vigilia palmarum ...*, *De convivio ihesu in domo symonis leprosi ...*, *De effusione vnguenti et murmuratione discipulorum ...*, f. 302, *In die palmarum ...*, *de feria secunda ...*, f. 303, *De feria quinta et de cena domini ...*, *De prima hora noctis ...*, f. 309v, *Hora nona diei ...*, ... Igitur memoriam christi passione crebree discutiam. Et sic post hanc vitam eterne vite videbimur ascripti. Quod nobis concedat dominus meus ihesus christus. Amen";

A lengthy text on the Passion, which seems to include extensive narrative sections; unidentified in other sources.

ff. 311-312v, *De sancta Maria Magdalena*, incipit, "Quod maria magdalena sit expers et immunis ... patet ergo habet conclusion probate ex spiritali devocatione non tamen sub<?> asseptione etc.," *Finis*;

Also in Innsbrück, Universitätsbibliothek Cod. 60, f. 228.

f. 313, *Signa destructionis iberusalem*, incipit, "Hic est ordo destruccionis iheruslaem que dicta multis signis et prodigys ante predixit. Non longe ante aduentum tity. Sydus simile gladio stetit supra orbem. Cometa < > viderunt. Octavo die appotolis nona hora noctis .... Et ecce lapsus cometi venient caput eius continuit, etc." [Ends bottom column a, f. 313; remainder and ff. 313v-316v, blank].

Signs of the destruction of Jerusalem; unidentified in other sources.

Dated and signed by its scribe, Otto Kröppfel, the contents of this manuscript demonstrate the close connection between biblical commentaries and preaching. Careful study of the sermons, here attributed to Nicholas of Lyra, and all almost certainly unedited, and indeed, probably never printed, is certainly warranted.

Nicolaus de Lyra, O.F.M., (c. 1270-1349) was one of the greatest biblical scholars of the fourteenth century; indeed, many consider him one of the greatest biblical scholars of the Middle Ages. He was born in Lyre, near Évreux in Normandy. At the age of thirty, around 1300, he entered the Franciscan Convent at Verneuil, and was soon sent to the Franciscan House in Paris to study at the University; the remainder of his life was spent in Paris. He became a regent master in theology in 1308/09, and later the Franciscan provincial minister for the Province of Paris from 1319-1324, and the provincial minister for Burgundy from 1324-1330.

Nicolaus's greatest work was his massive commentary on the Bible, the *Postilla litteralis in vetus et novum testamentum*; in one of the prologues to this work, Nicolaus stresses the importance of the literal sense of the scriptures, which he argues was often neglected by other commentators. *Postilla*, a term which may derive from "post illa verba," ("after that word"), refers to a commentary written out as a continuous gloss, interspersed with scriptural *lemmata*. Throughout this commentary, he exhibits a thorough grounding in Jewish commentaries on the Bible, including the Talmud, the Midrash, and the works of Rashi (Solomon ben Isaac, 1045-1105), and some knowledge of Hebrew. Scholars have suggested that he studied with Jewish scholars in Évreux, which was an important center of Jewish learning in the late thirteenth century (for a comprehensive list of books and articles on Nicolaus de Lyra, see Krey and Smith, eds. 2000, and Krey from 1992 and 1995, listed below).

The influence of the *Postilla* extended far beyond the Middle Ages, and they were valued by Martin Luther and others. The little couplet, often cited, "Si Lyra non lyrasset Lutherus non saltasset" ("If Lyra had not played the lyre, Luther would not have danced"), whatever its origin and authenticity, aptly summarizes the importance of Nicholas of Lyra's thought to Martin Luther.

## LITERATURE

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