

Book of Hours, *Horae* [followed by] Psalter, *Psalterion*

Paris, François Estienne, 1543

In Greek and Latin, two imprints on paper

*In-16 format, 2 imprints bound together, preceded and followed by 2 paper flyleaves, complete, 96 ff. + 269 ff. [numbered 261 ff.] + [11 ff] indexes, complete, title-pages without devices, printed in Greek type in red and black, paper ruled in light red. Bound in 18<sup>th</sup>-century tan mottled calf, smooth spine gilt, title-piece: "Hora(e) B. Maria V.," marbled edges, marbled paper endleaves (Hinges a bit split, some scuffing to boards, but overall in good condition). Dimensions 110 x 70 mm.*

Very rare pair of Greek imprints, associating a Book of Hours and a Psalter, most often found bound separately, and here joined to form a "Psalter-Hours." The title-page gives François Estienne as the publisher but it is thought that the humanist printer Robert Estienne tested in these imprints his typographical fonts coined "grecs du roi" which he would use in the following year in his 1544 Eusebius. The works illustrate well the Hellenistic vogue in mid-sixteenth century Paris, paving the way to the famous subsequent Greek editions of the Estiennes.

## PROVENANCE

1. Printed in Paris by François I Estienne (active 1537 - last imprint 1548), son of Henri I Estienne (active 1502-1520) and brother of Robert Estienne (active Paris, 1526-1550; Geneva, 1551-1559). There is no printer's device, but the printer's (or rather publisher's) name figures on the title-pages of both imprints. It has been suggested that François Estienne was not a printer per se, but rather a publisher. The printing could have been ensured by Robert Estienne (Paris, 1526-1550; Geneva, 1550-1559), his brother.
2. Ex-libris on the front page, in brown ink, in a 16<sup>th</sup>-century hand: "M. Lefevre" and the date 1543 (Roman numerals of imprint explicated).
3. Another later ex-libris in black ink "Sene," also on title-page.

## TEXT

ff. 1-96v, *Horae* (use of Rome), title-page in Latin, preceded by Greek title: Ωραι τῆς' αειπαρθένου Μαρίας. *Horae in laudem beatissime / Virginis Mariae secundum consuetudinem / Romanae ecclesie / Parisiis / Apud Franciscum Stephanum / MDXLIII;*

ff. 1-261v [269v], *Psalterion*; title-page in Greek and Latin:

Ψαλτηριον προφητου και βασιλεως του Δαβιδ, του προτερου' αμολυντοτερον  
[Psalte/rion prophetou / kai basileos tou / david ... ] Parisiis / Apud Franciscum Stephanum / 1543.

[ff. 1-11v], unnumbered, Index to the Psalms.

These two imprints (extremely rare), associated here to form something of a Psalter-Hours, were published by François Estienne or Franciscus Stephanus Primus (active 1537-1548). Although he was Robert Estienne's older brother, there is apparently no evidence that François I Estienne was actually a printer. It appears rather that François I Estienne sold and published books printed by others, notably by his step-father Simon de Colines (a number of imprints are published "Apud Simonem Colinaeum & Franciscum Stephanum," witnessing their formal business association). He is the only member of the family to use a device other than variants of the famous Olive Tree. Instead some of his books bear his own personal device (see Schreiber, 1982, no. 13, p. 255), representing a vine plant sticking out of a three-legged vase standing on a book and resting on a pedestal (see Schreiber, 1982, p. 105).

These Greek Horae and Psalter, both published the same year in 1543, contain the earliest appearance in a book of any part of the celebrated "grecs du roi" (except for the rare 1543 *Alphabetum Graecum*, issued as a specimen book, copy Paris, BnF, Res P-Z-2015 (2)). Indeed, to quote Scholderer: "The lower-case of the type here used is still entirely Aldine, but the capitals are considerably larger ... the following year, 1544, these capitals recur in conjunction with a new lower-case, both together making up the first French Royal type, in an edition of the writings of Eusebius signed by Robert Estienne" (Scholderer, 1927, p. 10 and fig. 28). Indeed, when King Francis I of France appointed Robert Estienne his new printer in 1542, he also commissioned Claude Garamond to cut a new Greek font intended specifically to be used to print Greek books from unpublished Greek manuscripts in the Royal Library at Fontainebleau. These new Royal Greek types, known as the "grecs du roi" were based by Garamond on the script of the Cretan Angelo Vergecio, a calligrapher working for Francis I. The cursive Greek types are universally acknowledged as the finest ever cut (see Schreiber, 1982, p. 76). The first text selected for printing using both the lower-case and capitals of the French Royal Greek types is Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 30 June 1544, based on manuscripts in the French Royal Library. The first Book of Hours printed in Greek was published in Italy by Aldus Manutius in Venice, 5 December 1497 (A. Firmin-Didot, *Alde Manuce et l'hellénisme à Venise*, Paris, 1875, p. 92).

The first Greek type appeared in Italy with the Perottus, *Rudimenta*, Rome, De Lignamine, 10 May 1474, closely followed by Spain, Barcelona (Perottus, *Rudimenta*, Barcelona, 1475; see D. E. Rhodes, "The First Use of Greek type in Western Europe," in Slavinitis T. and K. S. Staikos, ed., 2004, pp. 129-135). The first use of Greek type in France is to be found not in Paris, but at Lyons in 1482. This occurs in an edition of Johann Reuchlin, *Vocabularius breuiloquus*, printed by Petrus Ungarus or Pierre Hongre, a Hungarian who had probably learned to print at Basel. His edition of Reuchlin was a close reprint of Amerbach's editions of 1478, 1480 and 1481 which contain small quantities of Greek (see D.E. Rhodes, in Slavinitis T. and K. S. Staikos, eds., 2004, pp. 130-131). This first Lyonnais attempt to print in Greek is described by BMC VIII as an "ungainly looking Greek, lower case only, without accents or breathings." Several other Lyons printers used Greek: a small Greek type is found in books of 1492, 1493 and 1497 printed by Johannes Treschel (Plate XLVIIF of BMC VIII). The first year in which Greek was certainly used in Paris is therefore 1496, very late, some fourteen years after Lyons. This is found in an edition of Perottus (Hain 12703) of 26 April 1496, the printers of which are Gering and Remboldt (see D. E. Rhodes, 2004, p. 130). It cannot be said that on the whole the use of Greek type was very successful in France in the fifteenth century.

It has been suggested that these Horae and Psalter may have been printed by Robert Estienne himself and published by his brother, in preparation of the use of the "grecs du roi" in the following year for the *editio princeps* of Eusebius by Robert Estienne. Robert is known to have printed other books for his brother François. The present two works, especially bound together, are of the utmost rarity.

**References:** Not in Lacombe. – Bohatta, *Heures*, "Griechisch", no. 1502. – Renouard, *Estienne*, p. 100, no. 1 and 2. – Schreiber, 1982, no. 122 (Psalterion), but discusses also the Horae: "Greek Psalter of exceptional rarity, which, with the equally rare Greek Horae of the same year, contains the earliest appearance in a book of any part of the celebrated grecs du roi" (Schreiber, no. 122, p. 108). – Delaveau, M. and D. Hillard, *Bibles imprimées...*, no. 2216 (Psalterion). - **Recorded Copies:** London, BL, C. 69. bb. 20 (1) [only Horae]; Paris, BnF, Rés. A. 6027 (1) [only Psalter]. There are 7 recorded copies in OCLC of the Psalterion and only one recorded copy in OCLC of the Horae. A complete census of the extant copies does not exist, but copies are clearly scarce.

## LITERATURE

Macrakis, M.S., ed. *From the Grecs du Roi to the Homer Greek: Two Centuries of Greek Printing Types in the Wake of Garamond*, in *Greek Letters: From Tables to Pixels*, Athens, 1995.

Renouard, Antoine-Augustin. *Annales de l'imprimerie des Estienne, ou Histoire de la famille des Estienne et de ses éditions*, Paris, 1843 (Genève, Slatkine reprint, 1971).

Scholderer, V., *Greek Printing types 1465-1927. Facsimiles from an Exhibition of Books Illustrating the Development of Greek Printing shown in the British Museum*, 1927.

Schreiber, Fred. *The Estiennes. An Annotated Catalogue of 300 Highlights of Their Various Presses*, New York, E. K. Schreiber, 1982.

Slavinitis T. and K. S. Staikos, eds. *The Printed Greek Book. 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Century.*, Acts of the International Congress, Delphi, 16-20 May 2001, Athens, 2004.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

On the Estienne

[http://renaissance.academic.ru/189/Estienne\\_Family](http://renaissance.academic.ru/189/Estienne_Family)

Nicholas Barker on Printed Books of Hours

[http://www.antiquariat-bibermuehle.ch/pdf/book\\_collector.pdf](http://www.antiquariat-bibermuehle.ch/pdf/book_collector.pdf)

A. Bernard, *Les Estienne et les types grecs de François Ier*, Paris, 1856

<http://archive.org/stream/lesestienneetles00bern#page/n7/mode/2up>

On Greek Fonts

[http://www.greekfontsociety.gr/pages/en\\_publications1997.html](http://www.greekfontsociety.gr/pages/en_publications1997.html)

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