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ANONYMOUS, *Itinerarium seu peregrinatio beatae virginis Mariae* (Itinerary or Pilgrimage of the Blessed Virgin Mary)

Decorated manuscript in Latin on paper

Austria, c. 1487-1500

ii + 16 + vi folios on paper, first and last flyleaves of modern card paper, watermark of a scale enclosed in a circle topped with a standard with a six-point star very similar to Briquet 2450 (e.g. Innsbruck, Vienna and Graz, 1467-1474), complete (i^s ii^s), modern foliation in pencil at top recto corner, no catchwords or quire signatures, frame ruled in brown ink (justification 170 x 100 mm.), written in 36-40 long lines in a dark brown Gothic semi-cursive by one expert scribe, majuscules touched with red, alternating red and blue paraphs, ten three- to six-line initials at major text openings in red with brown penwork or blue with red foliate and floral penwork in letter bodies with vines extending into margins, mild flecking and staining, single incidence of worming through all folios at top inner margin unaffffecting text, overall in very good condition. Late nineteenth- or early twentieth-century green morocco with gilt filleting and stamps signed on front bottom turn-in by Morrell (London), green card paper pastedowns with minor staining, some very minor abrasions at corners but in otherwise excellent condition, accompanied by contemporary red velvet storage box. Dimensions 225 x 140 mm.

One of only two known manuscripts of the *Itinerarium seu peregrinatio beatae virginis Mariae* in Latin, this is a very interesting example of a manuscript copied from an incunable, dating shortly after it was printed. The incunable is known today for its woodcuts, which were omitted in our manuscript, and replaced by short captions, not found in the incunable. There is no modern edition of the text, a seven-step devotion to the Virgin Mary meditates on her life from the Immaculate Conception to her Coronation in Heaven.

PROVENANCE

1. Written in the late fifteenth century, c. 1487-1500. Based on its watermarks this manuscript was produced in Austria, probably by a professional workshop, as is suggested by the expert quality of its cursive script and penwork initials. It is without doubt a direct copy of Johann Reger's incunable of *Itinerarium seu peregrinatio beatae virginis Mariae* printed in Ulm c. 1487-1488 (on which, see below) and was probably copied not long after this date. There are no indications of its original owner; one can only assume the reader had a strong Latin education as the text is very heavily abbreviated (a German version was simultaneously available for those who preferred or could only read the vernacular). As it is an attractive but not luxurious manuscript, it may have been produced for a monastic community or one of its members. No medieval or early modern inscriptions, notes, or other written evidence of use or ownership is apparent.
2. As noted, the manuscript's modern binding bears the signature of the bookbinder Morrell. The business was founded when William T. Morrell took over the shop of binder Charles Lewis in Soho, London in the 1860s (conflicting dates of 1861 and 1868 are found online). Upon his father's death in 1887, William J. Morrell continued the business, with his brother John eventually joining him. A 'pattern book' of the firm was produced in 1891 (see the

British Library's collection in Online Resources below). The shop closed in the 1970s. This binding is undated but was probably made close to 1900.

3. The bookplates of James R. P. Lyell (1871-1948) and the Libreria la Biliofila are found on the inside front pastedown. Lyell was a solicitor, book collector and bibliographer; the manuscript's current binding may have been added during his ownership. A bequest following his death established Oxford's renowned book history Lyell Lectures (properly The Lyell Readership in Bibliography) in 1952, an annual series which continues today. Some of Lyell's collection was bequeathed to Oxford, while other books, including this one, were sold through Bernard Quaritch (1952, cat. 699). It may have sold directly to the Libreria la Biliofila in Milan, about which no information is readily available.

TEXT

f. 1r-v, *Prefacio in Itinerarium seu Peregrinationem beatae virginis et genetrrix Mariae*, incipit, "Subsequens oratio de Beata virgine et dei genitrice Maria ... [f. 1v] *Potest si placet subsequens lamentatio preponi et promeam mens tepida ad orandam disponi* Miserationum deum ac laudum eius recordabor in omnibus que redditit nobis dominus deus ... voco virginem mariam";

Itinerarium seu peregrinatio beatae virginis Mariae, ed. Ulm 1487, ff. a2-a3v. Preface in the form of a first-person devotional prayer to God to prepare the votary for the following meditational prayers to the Virgin Mary.

ff. 2-3v, *Prima pars commemorans gesta virginis in primo vite sue statu videlicet a die creationis seu conceptionis sue usque ad annunciationem ...* incipit "O Pulcherrima famatissima et excellentissima semper virgo et in eternum benedicta dei mater maria ... [f. 3v] in presidium ab eterno predestinavit. Amen. *Salutatio marie per angelorum. ... Purificatio Marie*";

Itinerarium seu peregrinatio beatae virginis Mariae, ed. Ulm 1487, ff. a5-a7v. A first-person devotional prayer meditating on the Virgin's life from her Immaculate Conception to the Annunciation. Following the prayer text is a set of six short captions underlined and touched with red in two columns: these are not found in the incunable but describe its woodcut illustration cycle (on two folios, each bearing a panel with three stacked scenes, without captions). There are, however, no illustrations in the manuscript: the captions stand in the place of the incunable's illustrations.

ff. 3v-5v, *Secunda pars commemorans gesta virginis in secundo vite sue statu videlicet ab annunciatione dominica usque ad completionem purificationis eius ...* incipit, "Opyssima felix et ducissima virgo maria dei mater intacta ... [f. 5v] natus ante secula Amen";

Itinerarium seu peregrinatio beatae virginis Mariae, ed. Ulm 1487, ff. b1-b4; a first-person devotional prayer meditating on the Virgin's life from the Annunciation to the completion of the Purification.

ff. 5v-7v, *Tertia pars commemorans gesta virginis in tertio vite sue statu videlicet a purificatione sua et oblatione filii sui in templo ...* incipit, "O Sanctarum omnium sanctissima gloriosissima ac potentissima agelorum imperatrix ... [f. 7v] qui castitatis tue olim sugebat ubera Amen";

Itinerarium seu peregrinatio beatae virginis Mariae, ed. Ulm 1487, ff. b5v-8; a first-person devotional prayer meditating on the Virgin's life from Purification to the Presentation of infant Jesus in the temple.

ff. 7v-9, *Quarta pars commemorans gesta virginis in quarto vite sue statu videlicet a baptismo salvatoris usque ad tempus passionis eius et mortis peracta est ...* incipit, "O Virgo generosa omnium virtutum ditissima moribus ... [f. 9] vita omniumque bonorum laborum fructus gloriosus. Amen. *Cena dominum ... Sepulchra*";

Itinerarium seu peregrinatio beatae virginis Mariae, ed. Ulm 1487, ff. c2-c4v; a first-person devotional prayer meditating on the Virgin's life from the Baptism of Christ to the Passion. Like the second part, the fourth part also has a list of captions that describe the illustration cycle in the incunable for the fourth and fifth parts, for a total of twelve captions, underlined and touched with red, written continuously in a single column.

ff. 9-12, *Quinta pars commemorans gesta virginis in quinto vite sue statu videlicet ad hora cene novissime filii sui usque ad descensum eius in limbum peracta est ...* [f. 9v] incipit, "O Clementissima misericordissima et benignissima virgo ... [f. 12] qui pro nobis in ligno mori ac te secum pati voluit Amen";

Itinerarium seu peregrinatio beatae virginis Mariae, ed. Ulm 1487, ff. c6-d2; a first-person devotional prayer meditating on the Virgin's perspective of the Last Supper (briefly, as she was not present) through the Passion and Deposition of Christ.

ff. 12-14, *Sexta pars commemorans gesta virginis in sexto vite sue statu videlicet a resurrectione filii eius usque ad ipsius assumptionem peracta est*, incipit, "O Virgo praestantissima virga celesti florum speciosissima ... [f. 14] ac orbem terrarum eo replevit Amen.";

Itinerarium seu peregrinatio beatae virginis Mariae, ed. Ulm 1487, ff. d4v-d7; a first-person devotional prayer meditating on the Virgin's perspective of Christ's Resurrection and Ascension.

ff. 14-16, *Septima et ultima pars commemorans gesta virginis in septimo vite sue statu videlicet ab assumptione sua gloria et usque in eternum renatura peracta et pagenda est ...* O Lumen celi praeclarissimum sydus que poli clarissimi ... [f. 16] ac te sibi conregnare constituit et vidit in eternum. Amen";

Itinerarium seu peregrinatio beatae virginis Mariae, ed. Ulm 1487, ff. d8v-e3v; a first-person devotional prayer meditating on the Virgin's Assumption to her Coronation in Heaven at Christ's side. Whereas other parts took a laudatory (and, in the context of the Passion, an empathetic) tone, this prayer is especially focused on Mary's intercession on the votary's behalf.

f. 16r-v, *Subsequens exclamatio de beatitudine eterna potest (si placet) ad petitionem illius ultime partis: ut puto ante conclusionem que incipit ...* incipit, "O Preclarum illum diem. Quando veniet ut appaream in conspectu eius gloriosus ... [f. 16v] ac te sibi conregnare constituit et previdit in eternum. Amen. *Finis itinerarii seu peregrinationis beate marie virginis*".

Itinerarium seu peregrinatio beatae virginis Mariae, ed. Ulm 1487, ff. e3v-e4v; concluding laudatory prayer of the *Itinerarium*, addressed to God rather than Mary.

The author and origin of this manuscript's text, *Itinerarium seu peregrinatio beatae virginis Mariae* (Itinerary or Pilgrimage of the Blessed Virgin Mary) are thus far unknown, and there is no modern critical edition of the text. Still, the text belongs to a rich tradition of the late medieval devotional cult of Mary, within which she was venerated as both the Virgin Mother of Jesus Christ and the primary intercessor between humans and God. Marian devotion reached its height by the fifteenth century among both monastic audiences and the broader pious public (Reynolds, 2012, v. 1 p. 242). Christian mysticism was also then in its heyday and focused on the humanity of Christ and on his physical suffering at the Passion. This focus was bolstered by texts that encouraged devotees towards affective meditation on the Life of Christ: 'pilgrimages' of prayer took the place of actual travel for those who could not undertake such journeys. Increasingly, Mary's role in the events of Christ's life, and especially her maternal suffering at the Passion, were emphasized (Rubin, 2009, esp. pp. 336-38). The *Itinerarium seu peregrinatio beatae virginis Mariae* was produced within this context.

Our manuscript is a direct copy of Johann Reger's edition of *Itinerarium seu peregrinatio beatae virginis Mariae*, printed in Ulm in c. 1487-88 (ISTC No. ii00218700; Online Resources). This edition is well-known today for its series of woodcuts by the artist known as the Master Haintz Narr, a wood-engraver active in Basel from around 1490, who, along with a young Albrecht Dürer, contributed woodcuts to the *Ship of Fools* by Sebastian Brant printed in 1494 in Basel. But our manuscript does not include any illustrations; it is a copy only of the text of the incunable. As mentioned above, however, it does include short captions following the first part of the text and following the fourth part of the text. These captions (which are not found in the incunable) describe its woodcuts following part one, four, and five, and stand in the place of the incunable's illustrations. Without knowledge of the incunable's illustration cycle, the manuscript's captions are inexplicable; they serve no other purpose than to describe the omitted illustrations. Their presence in the manuscript is evidence that the manuscript was copied from the incunable, as there is no other identifiable reason for these short phrases to have been included if the copyist had not encountered them in his or her exemplar. The fact that the captions in our manuscript do not describe all the woodcuts in Ulm edition is puzzling; perhaps the manuscript's exemplar was lacking some of the illustrations?

The Ulm imprint, in quarto format, is the first edition; another in octo format was made shortly thereafter in c. 1489 by Lienhart Ysenhut of Basel. That this manuscript is a copy of the Ulm incunable, and not the Basel version, is evident. The format and *mise en page* correspond to the Ulm incunable but is very different from that of the Basel imprint. Further, the short captions following parts two and four in the manuscript describe the illustration cycles of the Ulm, but not the Basel, incunable. Further, our manuscript contains almost all of the same orthography (or errors) and punctuation as the Ulm print; see, e.g., "ortus conclusus" in place of "hortus conclusus" on f. 2v (f. a5v of the incunable) and "ortus omnium deliciarum" for "hortus omnium deliciarum" on f. 3 (f. 6v of the incunable), and the parentheses used on f. 1 (f. a2 of the incunable), f. 11v (f. d2v of the incunable) and many other places, all of which are absent from the Basel imprint.

There is only one other known manuscript containing this text in Latin: New York, Hispanic Society of America, MS 371/256. It is dated 1487 and was copied at Wiblingen Abbey in Ulm, perhaps also from the Ulm incunable (Faulhaber, 1983, no. 39). It is somewhat unusual for

medieval texts in the age of print to appear in so few handwritten copies, which makes the present manuscript unusually rare. According to the ISTC, there are 41 copies of the Ulm incunabula located in institutions throughout Europe (especially in Germany) and the US. Both Reger and Ysenhut printed contemporary German translations of the *Itinerarium*. According to the Handschriftencensus, the German translation is also rare; there are only five known manuscript copies. There is, moreover, a dearth of scholarly research about the *Itinerarium*, its textual tradition, and its place within Marian devotion in southern German-speaking regions. This especially rare manuscript is, therefore, a particularly strong candidate for deeper study.

LITERATURE

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ONLINE RESOURCES

Bookbindings by Morrell of London at the British Library, available at <https://www.bl.uk/catalogues/bookbindings/Results.aspx?SearchType=AlphabeticSearch&ListType=Bookbinder&Value=1620>.

Llywelyn, D. "Mary and Mariology," *Oxford Handbooks Online*, 2016. Available at <https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935420.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199935420-e-62>.

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