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Choir Psalter; Hymnal

In Latin, decorated manuscript on parchment with musical notation

Spain (Segovia), c. 1500-1550

169 folios on parchment, early foliation (17th- or 18th century?) in Roman numerals in ink copied on small squares of paper, pasted in the upper middle margin, some now obscured, 1-80, 82-114, 116-117, 119-148, 157-171, plus nine late leaves, numbered in modern pencil 172-180, parchment pastedown unnumbered, traces of earlier foliation in ink top outer corner recto, now lacking eleven leaves, ff. 81, 115, 118, 149-156, ff. 73 and 168-169 also now lacking, but replaced in the 17th-18th century with no loss of text (collation, i-ix^s x^s [1, f. 73, a later replacement leaf, text is complete] xi^s [-1, f. 81, with loss of text] xii-xiv^s xv^s [-3 and 6, ff. 115 and 118, with loss of text] xvi-xviii^s xix^s [ending f. 148] xx^s [beginning f. 157] xxi^s xxii^s [original structure uncertain, 2 and 3, ff. 168-169 are later replacement leaves] xxiii^s [added later, beginning f. 172] xxiv^s [3, unnumbered text leaf as pastedown]), layout varies, ff. 1-88v, (justification 360-350 x 216 mm.), ruled in lead with double full-length vertical bounding lines, written in a rounded formal gothic bookhand in 21 long lines on 42 rules (each line of text written between two ruled lines, followed by a blank line), square musical notation on red five-line staves, ff. 89-148v, (justification 380-370 x 220 mm.), ruled in red ink with double full-length vertical bounding lines, copied in a similar but larger rounded formal gothic bookhand in 21 long lines, majuscules highlighted with yellow wash, large (1-line of text and one stave) strapwork pen initials (or cadels) throughout, 1-line alternately red and blue initials with penwork of violet or red respectively throughout, 2-line red or blue initials infilled and on square or rectangular grounds filled with contrasting penwork (violet or red) in the distinctively Spanish vermiculated style, eleven large (3- to 7-line and equivalent to two lines of text and musical staves) parted red and blue initials in the same style on grounds and infilled with red and violet or red and blue, ff. 2, 30, 45 (Vespers, 7-line, very rubbed), 50v, 55v, 59, 62v, 79, 89, and 165, f. 1, ILLUMINATED INITIAL WITH FULL BORDER: red initial (equivalent to two lines text and two staves), decorated with fleshy leaves in colors, on purple rectangular ground infilled with Spanish style vermiculated pen decoration, full border of delicate pen work in purple and red with green wash of flowers and stems, ff. 172-178v, added later, copied in a formal rounded gothic bookhand in 18 long lines, 5-line red staves, red initials, f. 172, large (equivalent to two lines of text and two musical staves) red initial infilled with a large red flower, ample evidence of use throughout, including extensive soiling in the lower outer corners, later additions in many hands (some formally adding liturgical texts, others adding liturgical directions, some in Spanish), about 77 leaves with later parchment patches to reinforce/repair leaves, some rather small, but some very large and even occasionally obscuring a few lines of text, f. 1 darkened and somewhat abraded, many leaves stained and/or cockled, but text and almost all decoration survive in good condition. Early, likely CONTEMPORARY BINDING of massive wooden boards covered with brown leather extending generously beyond the bookblock, spine with five raised bands, the top, outer edge, and bottom of both boards with metal protectors, extending along the edge of the boards, flat, undecorated apart from scalloped edges (two corner pieces, and rectangular pieces at the top, outer, and lower boards), two partial tawed leather ties remain upper board, edges decorated with red chevrons, covers scraped and scratched, top of the spine damaged, two rips lower cover, worm holes, but in pretty good sturdy condition. Dimensions 500 x 355 mm.

Choir Books continued to be written and painted by hand long after the invention of print and represent an important, understudied category of early modern manuscripts – in part because so many were dismantled for the beauty of their illumination. Including numerous liturgical

directions of scholarly interest, this massive, yet sturdy volume used by the choir in a church in Segovia in Spain contains the psalms, which were at the heart of the Divine Office. Centuries of use have left marks on its pages, waiting to be unraveled, layer by layer like an archaeological dig.

PROVENANCE

1. Written in Spain in the first half of the sixteenth century, as suggested by the style of the script and the decorated initials. We know this was made for a church in Segovia, since the text includes the feast for the "dedication of the church of Segovia" on f. 126. The litany includes numerous Spanish saints (see Text, below), including St. Fructus, the patron saint of Segovia. Only the final nocturn of the Office of the Dead (beginning on f. 157) remain, so its liturgical use cannot be identified with certainty, although Use of Segovia is one of the many possibilities. The text appears to follow secular, rather than monastic use, given the cursus of the psalms (see Hughes, 1982, p. 52; however, there are differences, and the matter needs further study). The archives of the cathedral of Segovia preserves 82 Choir Books dating from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries (studied by Ruiz Torres, 2018; see also Sanz y Sanz, 1972), but we have not been able to identify which church in Segovia (or in the diocese of Segovia) this was made for.
2. The last two quires of the manuscript, ff. 172-180, are later additions, and the abundant evidence of many centuries of use is one of the charms of this manuscript; folio numbers and a few liturgical notes were copied on paper and pasted in, multiple folios were repaired, some very extensively, with later parchment (sometimes neatly, other times quite haphazardly), in one case, on f. 125, a small fragment from an earlier manuscript, copied in an exceptionally tiny script, mentioning heretical brothers ("duos fratres hereticorum"), was used as a patch.
3. Lower margin f. 1, early modern hand "Salmos de < >, with a shelfmark(?), "Fl. -07"; liturgical annotations in this hand are found throughout
4. f. 21v, "Lo firmo Manuel Anaya Siendo uno Closmeno res Ano 1723"; cf. f. 47v, written upside down, "Manuel ortigo//," in a different, perhaps earlier, hand.
5. USA Private Collection.

TEXT

ff. 1-88v, *Incipit psalterii pars ad horas diurnas et uespertinas ac completorias. Ad primam. Hymnus*, incipit, "Iam lucis orto sidere ...";

Choir Psalter in liturgical order for the daytime hours, Vespers, and Compline. Text begins with Prime. The Litany beginning on f. 23 includes Julianus, Facundus and Primitivus, Servandus and Germanus, Justus and Pastor, Romanus, Zoilus among the martyrs, Leander, Isidore, Ildefonsus, Torquatus, Frutosus, Fructus, Emilianus, and Gerald among the monks and confessors, Mary Magdalene (first), Christina, Iusta, Rufina, Leocadia, Eufragia, Eulalia, Eufemia, Eugenia, Marina, Margarita, and Columba, among the virgins.

ff. 89-148v, Hymnal, beginning with the Temporale beginning with the first Sunday in Advent through Pentecost, Ascension, Trinity Sunday, and Corpus Christi; f. 104v, Sanctorale, with Christmas, Translation of St. James, Epiphany, Anthony abbot, Vincent, Conversion of Paul, Purification, Agatha, Chair of Peter, Gabriel (March 18), Joseph (March 19), Dismas, f. 126, *In dedicatione ecclesie segobiesis [sic]* (f. 127, with Mary Magdalene, July 22, on this feast's Vespers), Joachim and Anne (July 25?), Martha "hospite Christi" (July 29), Transfiguration (August 6), Lawrence, Augustine, Michael, All Saints, Martin, Catherine, Nicholas (December 6); f. 193, Common of Saints, with "unius contincertis" following many virgins;

Vesper hymn, "Quicumque christum queritis," for the feast of the Transfiguration has been added in the lower of ff. 130v-132.

ff. 157-164v, Office of the Dead, beginning imperfectly at the end of the second nocturn; the remaining responses do agree with the Office according to many liturgical uses, including that of Segovia. The responses as follows: 7, "Peccantem me cotidie"; 8, "Memento mei deus"; 9, "Libera me domine de morte eterna" (Ottosen, 1993, responses nos. 68, 46, 38, see pp. 168, Use of Segovia).

ff. 165-171, Psalms 5, 6, 7, 22, 24, 26, and 40 (ending imperfectly);

ff. 172-178v, [added later], *Ad tertiam*, ...; Hymns, Antiphons, and Psalms for Terce;

ff. 179-180v, and unnumbered parchment pastedown, [added in another later and less formal hand], incipit, "Dirige domine deus ..."; and "Credo quod"

The psalms were central to religious practice during the Middle Ages. Psalters copied throughout the period for private devotion, for both lay people and clerics, include some of the most celebrated illuminated manuscripts known today. The Psalter described here was not for private devotional use but is rather an example of a large volume copied for use in the choir during the Divine Office, complete with musical notation. Liturgists call books such as this one Ferial Psalters or Choir Psalters.

The chanting of the psalms lay at the heart of the Divine Office, the prayers said throughout the day and night by members of the secular clergy and religious orders. Each week the entire Psalter was recited during these services. Our manuscript is a Diurnal Psalter, that is, it includes only the Psalms and accompanying texts for the daytime Offices (Prime, Terce, Sext, and None), along with Vespers and Compline, intentionally omitting Matins and Lauds. Ferial Psalters (also called Liturgical Psalters or Choir Psalters), include the psalms together with the other texts chanted daily during the office, including antiphons and hymns, thus providing a complete repertoire of the ordinary texts for the Office. (They do not include the "proper" texts for the Office, that is the texts that change according to the varying cycle of the liturgical year, the feasts of the saints and other liturgical occasions, that would be found in Antiphonals and Breviaries).

In some Ferial Psalters, like the Psalter described here, the psalms were copied in the order in which they were recited in the Office, rather than in their biblical order, suggesting that they were used in the Choir for performance. As was common, the text here includes two main

sections, the Psalter and a Hymnal that includes hymns for important feasts. In this manuscript, the inclusion of musical notation for many of the texts (although not the psalms, which were chanted according to a very simple tone), including the beginning of the Hymns (also a text often found without notation), is of special interest.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

Susan Boynton and Consuelo Dutschke, "Liturgical Books"
<https://liturgical.columbia.edu/>

Jean-Baptiste Lebigue. "Livres de l'office Le Psautier et l'ordinaire de l'office," in *Initiation aux manuscrits liturgiques*, Paris-Orléans, IRHT, 2007 (Ædilis, Publications pédagogiques, 6)
<https://cel.archives-ouvertes.fr/cel-00194063/document>

"Singing the Antiphony," Pablo Alvarez, University of Michigan, Special Collections
<https://www.lib.umich.edu/online-exhibits/exhibits/show/singing-the-antiphony--mich->

For comparison with the penwork in our volume, see Biblioteca nacional de Espana, MS MPCANT/76 (s. XVI 1/2)
<http://bdh.bne.es/bnearch/detalle/bdh0000168379>

Archives Segovia Cathedral
<https://catedralsegovia.es/archivo-capitular/>
TM 1222