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Processional (Dominican Use)

In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment

France (Poissy), c. 1330-1350; additions c. 1500-1520(?)

66 + i (paper, marbled on the verso, marbled pastedowns front and back) folios on parchment, modern foliation in pencil top outer corner recto, missing an undetermined number of leaves following f. 40 (collation, structure of quires 2-4 conjectural, i^s ii⁴ iii⁶ iv⁶ [lower margin f. 22v signed by a corrector] v^s vi^s [through f. 40v, conclusion of the fourteenth century section, text ends imperfectly] vii-viii^s xi¹⁰), horizontal catchwords in quires 5, 6, added catchword quire 7, no signatures, I. ff. 1-40v, fourteenth century, layout varies, ff. 1-24v, ruled in lead very lightly, usually indiscernible (justification 90 x 70 mm.), written in a formal gothic bookhand with square musical notation on red four-line staves, five or six lines of text and music on every page, ff. 25-40v, ruled in lead with full-length vertical bounding lines (justification 92 x 74 mm.), written in a gothic bookhand, square musical notation on red four-line staves, six lines of text and music on most pages, ff. 1-40v, similar decorative scheme overall, but by two different hands, red rubrics, decorative majuscules highlighted in red, cadel initials with fine pen infilling, on f. 8 with a face, alternately red and blue pen initials, equivalent to one line of text and music, infilled with pen decoration in the opposite color, with red and blue 'J'-initials extending the full length of the written space, II. Sixteenth century, ff. 41-66v, ruled lightly in ink (justification 98-95 x 68 mm.), written in a gothic bookhand, square musical notation on red four-line staves, red rubrics, one-line blue or polished gold initials with contrasting pen decoration, TWENTY ILLUMINATED INITIALS, large white-patterned blue (a few red), initials, equivalent to one line of text and one musical staff, infilled with vines and leaves on polished gold on polished gold grounds, EXTENDING INTO FULL-LENGTH BAR BORDERS, some extending into the upper or lower margins, ending in vines with leaves, slightly trimmed (occasional slight loss of decoration), but in very good condition. Bound in the eighteenth-century dark brown or black leather, gold tooled with simple filets bordering the front and back covers, filigree tooled along the edges, spine with five raised bands, outlined in gold, gilt edges, two leather strap closures with silver clasps (scallop shells), upper clasp and catches missing, fastening front to back, worn along the joints and spine, lower front joint cracked, marbled pastedowns and rear endpaper. Dimensions 150 x 95 mm.

Many Processionals were made for the use of nuns. Those from the convent of St.-Louis at Poissy, home to sisters of royalty and the author Christine de Pizan, are among the best known. This example is fascinating. It joins part of an early manuscript from Poissy (only seven other Poissy Processionals pre-date 1400) with a sixteenth-century section likely undertaken by a nun at Poissy. The female scribe-illuminator imitated the style of early Poissy Processionals, paying conscious tribute to the past of the convent, an act that brings to life the creative process that inspired this woman.

PROVENANCE

1. This manuscript, made for the use of the Dominican nuns of Saint-Louis de Poissy, combines two sections from different dates. Liturgical evidence, together with the style of the script and initials, dates the early section of the manuscript dates c. 1330-1350, not long after the house was founded in 1298, likely after the consecration of the church in 1331. Noteworthy is the fact that the fourteenth century section lacks the feast of

Corpus Christi, although it does include the feast of St. Louis (cf. Naughton vol. 2, p. 323). It was updated in the early sixteenth century by adding a second section, copied in the characteristic "archaic" style of script and illumination often found in Processionals made at the abbey by the nuns themselves.

Several rubrics mention the nuns, and the rubric for the cleansing of the altars on Holy Thursday names the convent, "in ecclesia beati Ludovici de pissiaco" (in the church of blessed Louis of Poissy), and included are the three processions specific to worship at Poissy, those in honor of St. Louis (in the earlier, fourteenth century section of the manuscript), and St. John the Baptist and the Birth of the Virgin (these were introduced in the fifteenth century, and are found in the later section of the manuscript). Several rubrics mention the nuns (*sorores*).

Dating the latter part of this manuscript is difficult. It must be fifteenth century (since it includes feasts added to the convent's liturgy then), but it is very likely as late as the early sixteenth century. Many Poissy manuscripts from this date adopted a deliberately archaizing style, based on fourteenth century script and decoration. It is, however, a remarkably consistent and well-executed "archaizing" example. In contrast with the present manuscript, other sixteenth-century manuscripts from Poissy mix in contemporary initials or painting with the "archaic" style, or betray their late origin by forms and colors not quite like that found in earlier manuscripts (see for example the Processional now at Reed college). Nonetheless, the hairlines on the script, and the 's' curved stems terminating in leaves and the exaggerated spiky points evident in the illuminated initials, are evidence of its late origin.

The royal convent of Saint-Louis in Poissy in 1298, located approximately thirty kilometers outside of Paris was founded in 1298 by Philip the Fair of France (r. 1285-1314). Throughout its history, it was a prestigious religious house, reserved for women of noble birth.

2. Private ownership of the current manuscript in recent times suggests that it was among the books that the nuns took from Poissy when they left the convent in 1790-1792, instead of relinquishing them to Revolutionary authorities; f. 15v-16, "Pauline potin," "Pauline potin deumerant"; and bottom margin, f. 56v, partially erased, "Potin <?> St Germain les Arpajon 1808."
3. Belonged to Jules Bonhomme (18??-19??), curé de Saint-Jean Baptiste de Grenelles, Paris, and chaplain to the Fort de l'Est, Paris, and collector of liturgical books; his annotation on the recto of the back paper flyleaf, "Jules Bonhommes, 1876," followed by notes on the contents of the manuscript. He was a musicologist and author of numerous liturgical studies including *Principes d'une véritable restauration du chant Grégorien* (Paris, 1857) and the introduction to *Les principaux chants liturgiques conformes au chant publié par Pierre Valfray en 1669 traduits en notation musicale* (Paris, 1875); sold Bordeaux, Bartoux Dubourg Enchères, June 25, 2012, lot 179.
4. F. 66v, in pencil, "363" or "563."

TEXT

ff. 1-40v, fourteenth century:

ff. 1-5, *In purificatione beate marie uirginis. Interim dum ista antiphona canitur distribui debent candele et accendi, antiphona*, incipit, "Lumen ad reuelationem gentium et gloriam ..." [Processional chants for the Purification (Candlemas)];

ff. 5-11v, *Dominica in ramis palmarum post distributionem palmarum ad exitum processionis incipiat cantrix banc ant.*, incipit, "Cum appropinquaret dominus ..." [Processional chants for Palm Sunday];

ff. 11v-14v, *In die ascensionis ad exitum processionis, R.*, incipit, "Uiri galilei quid ..." [Processional chants for the Ascension];

ff. 14v-17v, *In festo beati dominici ad processionem, Responsorium*, incipit, "Granum excussum palea ..." [Processional chants for the feast of St. Dominic];

ff. 17v-20v, *In die assumptionis beate marie uirginis ad exitum processionis, ant.*, incipit, "Felix namque es sacra uirgo ..." [Processional chants for the Assumption];

ff. 21-24, *De sancto ludouico Responsorium*, incipit, "Felix regnum ..." [Processional chants for the feast of St. Louis]; [ending mid. f. 24; remainder and f. 24v, blank];

ff. 25-25v, *Dominica in ramis palmarum, A.*, incipit, "Pueri hebreorum tollentes ..."; *Item antiphona*, incipit, "Pueri hebreorum ..." [Processional chants for Palm Sunday (probably supplying text lacking in the section above)];

ff. 25v- 40v, *Feria v in cena domini, Responsorium*, incipit, "In monte oliueti ..."; ... f. 34v, *Ordo altarium abluendorum in ecclesia beati ludouici de pisciaco in cena domini. De sancto ludouico ant.*, ..., *De trinitate*, ..., *De assumptione marie*, ..., *De sanctis augustino et thoma de aquino*, ..., *De sanctis mauro et anthonio*, ..., *De sancto martino*, ..., *De sancto stephano*, ..., *De angelis*, ..., *De sancto dyonisio*, ..., *De sanctis petro et paulo*, ..., *De sancto blasio*, ..., *De sanctis lupo et eligio*, ..., *De sanctis dominico et petro antiphona*// [ending imperfectly with this rubric];

Processional chants for Holy Thursday, including the "cleansing of the altars at the church of blessed Louis of Poissy"; now ending imperfectly.

II. Early sixteenth century:

ff. 41-44v, *In festo sacramenti*, incipit, "Panis oblatus ..."; ff. 44, *Ad introitum ecclesie*, incipit, "O lumen ecclesie ..." [Processional chants for Corpus Christi];

ff. 44v-48, *In festo sancti Iohannis baptiste*, incipit, "Hic precursor ..." [Processional chants for the feast of John the Baptist];

ff. 48-51v, *In festo natiuitatis, R.*, incipit, "Natiuitas tua ..." [Processional chants for the Nativity of the Virgin];

ff. 52-53, incipit, "Amo christum thalamum ..." [Cantus 6084, Noted responsory for the Feast of St. Agnes, but this was sung at Poissy for the profession of nuns, see Naughton, diss., p. 357, vol. 2; and TM 1109 on this site, followed by prayers];

ff. 53-54, incipit, "Veni creator spiritus..." [Hymn for Pentecost Sunday, noted];

ff. 54-62, *Feria v in cena doemini ad pedes lauando officium*, Oratio, incipit, "Actiones nostras quesumus ..." [Office for washing of the feet on Holy Thursday, with musical notation];

ff. 62-64v, *In parascheue sacerdotes, v.*, incipit, "Popule meus quid feci tibi ..." [Good Friday, with musical notation];

ff. 64v-66v, *In die pasche et duobus diebus sequentibus. Ad uesperas Responsorium*, incipit, "Christus resurgens ex mortuus ..." [Easter, noted responsory and antiphons for Vespers].

The text in this manuscript contains the chants and prayers that accompanied liturgical processions celebrated at the convent immediately before the Mass. In her studies of Poissy Processionals from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries, J. Naughton (1998 and 1999/2000) identified twenty-seven Processionals; M. Huglo's catalogue of Processionals (1999 and 2004) added four additional manuscripts (this manuscript not included). The number has continued to grow, now including at least thirty-seven manuscripts. Some have been catalogued here on this site: TM 323, TM 524, TM 626, TM 636, and TM 649, 925, 1019, another was sold by Christies, 19 November 2003, lot 27, now Reed College Library, M2149 .C38 1510* (Online Resources).

Fourteenth-century Processionals from Poissy, however, are not common. In Naughton's list of twenty-seven known Processionals (Naughton, 1999/2000) only six date from the fourteenth century: Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, MS W. 107 (Naughton, 1999/2000, no. 1); Brussels, Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, MS S II 262 (Naughton, no. 2); London, British Library, Add. MS 14845 (Naughton, no. 3); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson liturgical MS f.35, Hours, Processional and Office of the Dead (Naughton, no. 5); Waddesdon Manor, Rothschild Collection, The National Trust, MS 2, Ferial Psalter, Processional and Liturgy for Death and Burial (Naughton, no. 6); and NY, Morgan Library and Museum, MS M.1153 (Naughton, 1999/2000, no. 4, as Sotheby's, 3 December 2002). A seventh fourteenth-century Processional was TM 524 on this site.

Processionals, which contain the texts and chants necessary for liturgical processions, are an important type of liturgical manuscript of special interest to musicologists. Many surviving Processionals were small, portable books, appropriate for the use of a particular nun. The present manuscript is a fine addition to the corpus of Processionals from the Royal Abbey of Poissy, combining a very early example of a Poissy Processional, with a much later section in the characteristic "archaic" style of script and illumination practiced by the nuns at the abbey in the early sixteenth century.

LITERATURE

Huglo, M. *Les livres de chant liturgique, Typologie des sources du moyen âge occidental* 52, Turnhout, 1988.

Huglo, M. "Les processionaux de Poissy," *Rituels: mélanges offerts à Pierre-Marie Gy*, ed. P. De Clerck and E. Palazzo, Paris, 1990, pp. 339-446.

Huglo, M. *Les manuscrits du Processional*, Volume I, *Autriche à Espagne*, Répertoire international des sources musicales B XIV (1), Munich, 1999.

Huglo, M. *Les manuscrits du Processional*, Volume II, *France à Afrique du Sud*, Répertoire international des sources musicales B XIV (2), Munich, 2004.

Moreau-Rendu, S. *Le Prieuré royal de Saint-Louis de Poissy*, Colmar, 1968.

Naughton, J. "Manuscripts from the Dominican Monastery of Saint-Louis de Poissy," 2 vols., PhD dissertation, University of Melbourne, 1995.

Naughton, J. "Books for a Dominican Nuns' Choir: Illustrated Liturgical Manuscripts at Saint-Louis de Poissy, c.1330-1350," *The Art of the Book. Its Place in Medieval Worship*, eds. M. Manion and B. Muir, Exeter, 1998, pp. 67-109.

Naughton, J. "From Unillustrated Book to Illustrated Book: Personalization and Change in the Poissy Processional," *Manuscripta*, 43/44 (1999-2000), pp. 161-187.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Joan Naughton's dissertation, "Manuscripts from the Dominican monastery of Saint-Louis de Poissy"

<https://minerva-access.unimelb.edu.au/handle/11343/39437>

Fully digitized Poissy Processional of c. 1510 at Reed College, Portland, Oregon

<https://rdc.reed.edu/c/poissy/home/>

Poissy processional at Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania, including recordings of the its chants and a transcription of the entire text

<http://poissyprocessional.brynmawr.edu/>

Cantus Index: Catalogue of Chant Texts and Melodies

<http://cantusindex.org/>

TM 1084

