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SAINT JEROME, [Miscellany] *Regula monacharum, ad Eustochium; De Lapsu Virginis; Aduersus Jovinianum; De perpetua Virginitate Beatae Mariae, etc.*

In Latin, decorated manuscript on parchment

Northern Italy, c. 1450-1500

i (paper) + 79 + *i* (paper) folios on parchment, modern foliation in pencil, top outer corner recto, complete, (collation, *i-vii*¹⁰ *viii*¹⁰ [-10, following f. 79; now the frontispiece in a separate manuscript, formerly Bergendal Collection, MS 38]), horizontal catchwords, center lower margin, contemporary quire signatures (some have been cropped), ruled in lead with single vertical bounding lines (justification 166 mm. x 105 mm.), some prickings visible, written in a humanistic script in black and red ink on up to 39 long lines by two scribes, the second beginning on f. 21, two different decoration styles are present in this manuscript, the first (ff. 1-28v) features one 4-line initial (f. 1) in red, green, and blue with heightening in silver of a human head surrounded by acanthus leaves and floral sprays and a sketch of a hangman's noose that stretches across the top of the top margin, numerous two-line initials alternatively in red and blue with pen decoration in the opposite color and yellow highlighting, f. 20 has a marginal sketch of acanthus leaves, the second campaign (ff. 29-79v) has one 13-line initial (f. 29), one 6-line initial (f. 21), one 5-line initial (f. 59) and numerous 2- to 3-line initials, all in red ink with yellow pen decoration, f. 20v shows some rubbing and ink loss, some medieval marginal notes. Bound in an early twentieth-century binding of vellum over pasteboards, spine retains leather labels from a previous binding, "Regula vivendi in Monasteriis" and "Manoscritto in pergamena," binding in good condition with exception of a small hole in the vellum on the bottom, left corner of the back cover. Dimensions 242 x 164 mm.

Remarkably well-preserved religious miscellany from Italy, featuring works by, and attributed to, Jerome. The clear script, idiosyncratic decoration, and ample margins suggest that it was produced for a wealthy lay-person to serve as an overview of Jerome's works. There are numerous Italian compilations of Jerome's works in institutional collections but few have been offered for sale in the past decade, and fewer feature the works in the present manuscript; the Schoenberg Database lists *De Lapsu Virginis* as a particularly scarce work, with only one other copy available for sale in 1957.

PROVENANCE

1. The evidence of the script, decoration, and parchment together suggest this manuscript was copied in Northern Italy, during the second half of the fifteenth century. The manuscript has short marginal notations, showing use in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Originally bound with Bergendal Collection MS 38, also a collection of Jerome's works, the leaf that was originally the last leaf of this manuscript is now the frontispiece of MS 38. This separation occurred before ownership by the Bergendal collection.
2. Saint Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie, N.Y. Their ink stamp on the first leaf, "Bequest of the Rev. Patrick Brady of the Diocese of New York, 1894. To St. Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie, N.Y." Rev. Patrick J. Brady's (d. 1913) donation formed a large part of the original library at St. Joseph's Seminary (*Saint Joseph's Seminary*, p. 215).

3. Archbishop Corrigan Memorial Library. Book-plate on front pastedown "Gift of Countess Mary Young Moore and the seal of Saint Joseph's Seminary. Mary Young Moore's donation formed a large part of the library at St. Joseph's Seminary (Online Resources).
4. Joseph Pope of Toronto (1921-2010), investor banker and prominent collector of medieval manuscripts. Purchased from Sam Fogg in February 1996; Bergendal Collection MS 39 (described online, Bergendal Collection; an account of the collection is given in Pope, 1997; Stoneman, 1997, lists another, unrelated manuscript as MS 39—presumably the "Summary Guide" went to press before the current Bergendal Collection MS 39 was described).

TEXT

ff. 1-16v, *Incipit prologus in regula vivendi in monasteriis monialium*. . . , incipit, "Tepescens in membris proclivum corpus ad terram ex qua exiit. . . hospitalitatem sectantes, invicem in caritate sine murmuratione";

Ps. Jerome, *Regula monacharum, ad Eustochium sacram Deo uirginem*. Printed in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, 30: 391-426; Lambert, 1970, no. 560. Lambert, 1970, lists over 50 surviving manuscripts of this work, which purports to be a discussion between Jerome and his follower, St. Eustochium, regarding Jerome's experiences as a hermit.

ff. 17-20, *Contra susasnam [sic]*. . . , incipit, "Suto [sic] levius esse crimen, ubi homo peccatum suum ultro confitetur, quam ubi celans mala, invitus detegitur, et nolens publicatur. . . ab ipso solo te convenit in die iudicii expectare [sic] remedium";

Ps. Jerome, *De Lapsu Virginis*. Printed in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, 16: 367; Lambert, 1970, no. 320; edited in Gamber, 1969. Lambert, 1970, lists over 50 surviving manuscripts of this work, which takes the form of a letter to the biblical Susanna, who was unjustly convicted of adultery and saved by the prophet Daniel.

ff. 20-20v, *De cathalago[sic] Sancti Jeronimi*. . . , incipit, "Somphronius [sic] vir apprime eruditus laudes Bethlehem adhuc puer. . . voluminis quasi abortivum et minimum omnium Christianorum posui . . . [the last four lines of text are illegible]";

Jerome, *De viris illustribus*. Includes chapters 34 and 35 of Jerome's *De viris illustribus*. Printed in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, 23: 715-719; Lambert, 1970, no. 260. In this work, Jerome catalogues the great authors past and present, and includes himself in the survey. Lambert, 1970, lists over 100 surviving manuscripts of this work. This particular manuscript includes Jerome's entries on two second century writers: Pope Victor I, who was the first pope to be born in Africa; and Irenaeus, Bishop of Lugdunum in Gaul, who wrote *Adversus Haereses*, an attack against the Gnostic Valentinus.

ff. 21-28v, *Primus liber contra iuvenianum*. . . , incipit, "Super [sic] rogatus a fratribus ut adversus libellum cuiusdam helvidii. . . et caninam facundiam servus domini pariter experiatur et magister. Amen";

Jerome, *De perpetua Virginitate Beatae Mariae, adversus Helvidium*. Printed in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, 23: 183-206; Lambert, 1970, no. 251; English translation in Online Resources. With over 100 surviving manuscripts listed by Lambert, 1970, this work—which is structured as a reply to Helvidius, who questioned Mary’s virginity and thus the miraculous nature of Jesus’ birth—was quite popular with late-medieval readers.

ff. 29-79, incipit, “Pauci admodum dies sunt quod sancti ex urbe roma fratres cuiusdam Joviniani. . .sub consulibus Epicuri luxuriam susceperunt. Amen.”

Jerome, *Aduersus Jovinianum*. Printed in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, 23: 211-338; Lambert, 1970, no. 252. Over 100 manuscripts survive of this work according to Bernard, 1970. The work is a response to Jovinianus, who questioned the sanctity of virginity and abstinence.

One of the Church Fathers, Saint Jerome (c. 342-420) is widely known for his contributions to early monasticism and his many writings include letters, treatises, commentaries on the Scriptures, and a revision of the Vulgate. The items in this manuscript form a miscellany of works by, and attributed to, Jerome.

Including works such as *De Lapsu Virginis*, *De perpetua Virginitate Beatae Mariae*, *Aduersus Jovinianum* in this collection suggests that its initial owner may have been interested in the dynamics of gender, female virginity, and religious life and speaks to Jerome’s continued importance to late-medieval society. *Aduersus Jovinianum*, was an especially popular work throughout Europe in the later Middle Ages. In Geoffrey Chaucer’s *The Canterbury Tales*, the Wife of Bath’s husband owns a copy of Jerome’s *Aduersus Jovinianum* and the Wife herself responds to Jovinianus’ claim—that a woman’s virginity and marriage are of equal worth—throughout her “Prologue” (for more information on the Wife of Bath, Jerome, and Jovinianus, consult Hanna’s *Jankyn’s Book of Wikked Wyves*).

LITERATURE

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ONLINE RESOURCES

Bergendal Collection of Medieval Manuscripts

<http://www3.sympatico.ca/bergendalcoll/contents.htm>

Saint Joseph's Seminary, Archdiocese of New York

<http://www.archny.org/seminary/st-josephs-seminary-dunwoodie/mission-statement/>

An English translation of Jerome's *De perpetua Virginitate Beatae Mariae, adversus Helvidium*

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf206.vi.v.html>

An English translation of Book 1 of Jerome's *Aduersus Jovinianum*

<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/30091.htm>

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