

[*Passio Christi*], Miscellaneous Texts and Prayers
In German, manuscript on paper
Germany, Lower Rhine (Cologne ?) c. 1510-1520

152 folios (128 written), on paper (watermark, Gothic P with a flower, compare Briquet, 8636, Cologne, c. 1509-18), complete (I-VIII, i-xviii of 8), our foliation starts with the original signature indications, written in a Gothic bâtarde script by one hand (Cologne?), in dark brown ink, on 19 lines (justification 100 x 130 mm.), rubrication, underlining, and introductory initials in red, introductory 3-line Lombard initial in red (f. 3), introductory 3-line Lombard initial in red, with brown calligraphic penwork (f. 18), overall in very clean, fresh condition. Important CONTEMPORARY BINDING of dark brown calf, by the MASTER IB or IvB, important Cologne binder of the first half of the sixteenth century, framed with triple lines blind ruled, the interior of the frame divided into four columns by blind ruled lines, each of the four inside fields decorated with candelabra scrolls, putti, and stamps with the initials IB or IvB in a shield (for the stamps, compare Goldschmidt, no. 98; Haebler, I, 53; and Schunke, p. 369, no. 2), brass clasp of the period, in excellent condition, the contemporary pastedowns on parchment on the upper and lower covers from a notarial document of 1412 signed by a public notary of Utrecht and concerning litigation between the church, parish and counselors of the city of Utrecht. Dimensions 182 x 140 mm.

Rare manuscript perhaps produced in the milieu of the *Devotio Moderna* on the border between The Netherlands and Germany and containing a pair of Passion texts in low German. Unedited, the texts are evidently recorded in only one other, later manuscript, and the signed binding in excellent condition is by the Master IB (IvB), the earliest of four (?) skilled bookbinders with these initials working in the first half of the sixteenth century in Germany.

TEXT

ff. I-VIII, 1-2, blank;

ff. 3-16v, *Passio Christi*, rubric, *.Dat Auentmail Jesu* (in red); incipit, "(U)P den fest dach dat men dat paischen solde begaen, doe quaemen die iu(n)geren tzo Jesum, explicit, "... vnd sal en nach me kontmaichn, dat die mynne dae d myt gemijnt hais in es sy, vnd ich in en. Got sy geloift."

f. 17, blank;

ff. 18-130, *Passio Christi*, rubric, *Hier begijnt dat lyden ons heren ih'u xpi.* (in red); incipit, "(O) Yr alle die gan by dem wege myrcket vnd besijet off enich lyden ind bedroiffenisse gelyck sy myme lyden vnd bedroyffenisse. Disse wort spricht vns here durch den propheet Jeremias..."; explicit, "Sent Bernard spricht. Ich gaen vnd vmbgain hemel vnd erde berch vnd dael, wasser vnd weyde, ich en vynden den heren nyrgens bes (ser) dan an hilgen crutze."

ff. 130-131, Prayers on the Passion, rubric, *Gebeth* (in red); incipit, O here jesu christe ich ermanen dich; explicit, durch dinen hilgen bitteren doyt.

These texts written in a regional vernacular on the Passion of Christ appear to be exceedingly rare. There is evidently only one other recorded copy in which they appear together, a slightly later manuscript now in Münster (MS N.R. 1450; see Overgaauw, p. 181). Bound in a dated contemporary binding (1536), the Münster manuscript is also localized, like the present manuscript, on the basis of the dialect to the region south or southwest of Cologne.

Only the third prayer on the passion of the last text is known in other copies. It occurs in a late fifteenth-century manuscript of collected prayers, including tracts on the Passion now in Munich (Staatsbibliothek, Cgm. 827; see Schneider, pp. 499-507).

The second manuscript intersperses the story of the Passion of Christ with references to Latin and Greek Church Fathers and to medieval theologians, including Ambrose, Anselm of Canterbury, Chrysostom, Peter Damian, Gregory the Great, Jerome, Origen, and above all Bernard of Clairvaux.

Our manuscript represents exactly the kind of work much appreciated within the milieu of the *Devotio Moderna*, and the script, language, paper, binding, and pastedowns all suggest its production and use within the region between the modern-day Netherlands and Germany.

No less than four German binders signed their work I.B. or I.v.B. in sixteenth-century Germany. They include Jörg Braun in Augsburg (1569-73); Jakob Bitmer (1540-54 and 1587-93, perhaps two different individuals with different periods of activity); Joachim Bruck from Nuremberg; and Jakob Bernutz from Wittenberg (died 1574). Ours is, however, close to a Cologne binding of 1540 with the arms of Cologne on it (Haebler, I, p. 53).

LITERATURE

Goldschmidt, E. P. *Gothic & Renaissance Bookbindings*, 2 vols. London, 1928.

Haebler, Konrad. *Rollen- und Plattenstempel des XVI. Jahrhunderts*. 2 vols., Leipzig, 1928-29.

Overgaauw, Eer, *Die mittelalterlichen Handschriften der Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Münster*. Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 1996, p. 181.

Schneider, Karin, *Die deutschen Handschriften der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München: Cgm 691-867*, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz 1984.

Schunke, Ilse. "Der Kölner Rollen- und Plattenstempel im 16. Jahrhundert," In *Beiträge zum Rollen- und Platteneinband im 16. Jahrhundert*. Leipzig 1937.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Database of incipits from German manuscripts and manuscript catalogues from German libraries online

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