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**Franciscan Miscellany, including BONAVENTURA, *Legenda Maior; Regula bullata* 1223; THOMAS DE CELANO, *Vita sanctae Clarae*
In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment
Italy, Umbria (probably Perugia), c.1315-1330**

194 ff., on parchment, mostly in quires of 12 (collation: i¹², ii¹², iii¹², iv¹², v¹², vi¹², vii¹², viii¹², ix¹², x¹², xi¹², xii¹⁰, xiii¹⁰, xiv¹², xv¹², xvi⁶, xvii^{10 (12-2)} [lacking last 2 ff.]), contemporary foliation, written in a very regular littera textualis in brown ink on up to 22 long lines (justification: 70 x 105 mm), change of hands after f. 185v, some prickings still visible, decorated catchwords, headings in red, paragraph marks in red or blue, passages underlined in red, rubrics in red (textual indications for rubricator copied at bottom of certain folios), contemporary foliation in upper righthand corner, 2 to 3-line high initials in red or blue with opposite blue or red penwork extending in the margins, 14 PAINTED DECORATED INITIALS, 3 to 4-line high with foliate or acanthus motifs in pink, pale purple, blue, orange (some extending in the margins) highlighted with white tracery ornamentation (ff. 20, 50, 59, 65v, 71, 78v, 86, 93, 97v, 102, 143 [2 initials], 149, 171v), 5-line high decorated initial (f. 173), painted pink on a blue and burnished gold ground, with blue, orange and pink foliate or acanthus motifs extending into the margin, highlighted with white tracery ornamentation, HISTORIATED OPENING INITIAL A, 5-line high in pink on a burnished gold ground, orange and blue foliate or acanthus motifs extending in the margin with gold besants, contemporary marginal corrections and addenda as well as readers aids, some underlined in bright red ink. Bound in a later fifteenth century northern Italian Franciscan binding of profusely blind-tooled brown goatskin over wooden boards, covers decorated outer and interior borders of fillets with blind tools and center of panels with a cross design on a pedestal made up of "crocette," remnants of leather straps and star-patterned nails, paper title label on upper cover [This is a highly original binding which offers few satisfactory comparisons, but see Breslauer, Catalogue 110, no. 13, Verona, circa 1504, decorated in the style referred to as "modo fiorentino", based upon oriental models, with very similar "crocette" motifs, on Islamic sources in humanist bindings see Hobson, A. Humanists and Bookbinders, CUP, 1989] (Binding very worn, spine perished showing raised bands, waterstain on first folio; faded ink on first and last folio; scratched out inscription in bottom margin of first page). Dimensions 115 x 160 mm.

Early illuminated copy of the "official" Life of Saint Francis, likely copied in Umbria, place of origin for the Order of the Brothers Minor, and in a rare and evidently unique Franciscan binding. It is unusual to combine the lives of Francis, Clare, the Rule, and the Papal Bulls in a sort of Franciscan Miscellany. The final treatise in the Miscellany remains unpublished.

PROVENANCE

1. Script and illumination all point to an Italian origin. The suggested dating of this manuscript is inferred from the style of its historiated and decorated initials, close to the work attributed to the Maestro Venturella da Pietro active in Perugia between 1311-1323. Franciscan works and fifteenth-century binding also confirm its Franciscan origin. The unusual design of this binding appears to derive directly from Islamic models and boasts a clear Franciscan symbol of a cross on both panels. This highly original binding remains to be properly studied and compared.
2. Nineteenth-century brown ink inscription copied on pastedown of upper board: "Codex sec. XIV conscriptus continet vitam S. Francisci a divo Bonaventura scriptam. Item complura miracula eiusdem sancti caute legenda. Item constitutiones fratrum minorum a Nicolao papa confirmate."
3. Unidentified nineteenth century heraldic label with motto: "[Ut] arundo" (Like a reed), pasted in upper corner of upper board, and added name in ink: "Mosters" (?). Not in Riestap.

TEXT

ff. 1-4, Bonaventura de Balneoregio, *Legenda maior*, Prologus and List of chapters, rubric, *Incipit prologus in vitam beati Francisci*; incipit, "Apparuit gratia Dei Salvatoris nostri diebus istius novissimis in servo suo Francisco omnibus vere humilibus et sanctae pauperatis amicis..."; explicit prologus: "[...] postremo de miraculis post transitum eius felicem ostensis aliqua subnectuntur"[published in AF, X, pp. 555-627; *Acta Sanctorum*, oct. II, pp. 742-783; Quaracchi, Bonaventura, *Opera omnia*, VIII, pp. 504-564; *Fontes Franciscana* (1995), pp. 777-911];

ff. 4-8v, Bonaventura de Balneoregio, *Legenda maior*, chapter 1, rubric, *Explicit prologus De conversatione beati Francisci in habitu seculari capitulum I*; incipit, "Vir erat in civitate Assisii Franciscus nomine cuius memoria in benedictione est pro eo quod Deus ipsum...";

ff. 8v-14, Bonaventura de Balneoregio, *Legenda maior*, chapter 2, rubric, *De perfecta conversatione eius ad deum et de reparatione trium ecclesiarum. Capitulum .ii.*; incipit, "Quam autem servus altissimi...";

ff. 14-20, Bonaventura de Balneoregio, *Legenda maior*, chapter 3, rubric, *.iii. capitulum. De institutione religionis et approbatione regule*; incipit, "In ecclesia igitur virginis matris dei moram faciente...";

ff. 20-24v, Bonaventura de Balneoregio, *Legenda maior*, chapter 4, rubric, *.iiii. capitulum. De perfectu religionis submanu ipsius et confirmatione regule prius approbate*; incipit, "Fretus exinde Franciscus superna...";

ff. 27v-34v, Bonaventura de Balneoregio, *Legenda maior*, chapter 5, rubric, *De austeritate vite et quomodo creature prebebant ei solatium. Capitulum .v.*; incipit, "Cum igitur cerneret vir dei Franciscus...";

ff. 34v-42v, Bonaventura de Balneoregio, *Legenda maior*, chapter 6, rubric, *De humilitate et obedientia et de condensationibus divinis sibi factis adnutum .vi. capitulum*; incipit, "Omnium virtutum custos et decor...";

ff. 42v-49v, Bonaventura de Balneoregio, *Legenda maior*, chapter 7, rubric, *.ca. vii. De amore pauperatis et mira supplectione defectum*; incipit, "Inter cetera carimatam dona...";

ff. 50-58v, Bonaventura de Balneoregio, *Legenda maior*, chapter 8, rubric, *De pietatis affectu et quomodo ratione carentia videbantur ad ipsum affici. viii. capitulum*; "Pietas vera que secundum apostolum...";

ff. 58v-65v, Bonaventura de Balneoregio, *Legenda maior*, chapter 9, rubric, *De fervore caritatis et desiderio martirii. ix. capitulum*; incipit, "Caritatem ferventem qua sponsi amicus...";

ff. 65v-71, Bonaventura de Balneoregio, *Legenda maior*, chapter 10, rubric, *ca. x. De studio et virtute orationis*; incipit, "Sentiens Christi servus Franciscus corpore...";

ff. 71-78v, Bonaventura de Balneoregio, *Legenda maior*, chapter 11, rubric, *De intelligentia scripturarum et spiritu prophetie. ca. xi.*; incipit, "Ad tantam autem mentis serenitatem...";

ff. 78v-86, Bonaventura de Balneoregio, *Legenda maior*, chapter 12, rubric, *De efficacia predicationis et gratia sanitatum .xii. ca.*; incipit, "Fidelis reverenda famulus et minister Christi Franciscus...";

ff. 86-93, Bonaventura de Balneoregio, *Legenda maior*, chapter 13, rubric, *De stigmatibus sacris .ca. xiii.*; incipit, "Mos erat angelico viro Francisco...";

ff. 93-97v, Bonaventura de Balneoregio, *Legenda maior*, chapter 14, rubric, *De patientia ipsius et transitu mortis .ca. xiiii.*; incipit, "Christo igitur jam cruci confixus Franciscus tam carne quam spiritu...";

ff. 97v-102, Bonaventura de Balneoregio, *Legenda maior*, chapter 15, rubric, *.ca. xv. De canonicatione et translatione ipsius. In festo translationis beati Francisci. Lectio prima*; incipit, "Franciscus igitur servus et amicus altissimi ordinis minorum fratrum..."; explicit, "...suum magnificentia virtutis altissimi cui est honor et gloria per infinita secula seculorum. Amen";

Bonaventure (1217-1274), also called the 'Seraphic Doctor' was elected in 1257 as minister general of the whole Franciscan Order, a position he filled almost to his death. The Order was at the time internally divided between *Spirituales* or zealots for the literal observance of the Rule and the *Relaxati* who were for adaptations of the Rule. At the General Chapter held in Narbonne in 1260, Bonaventure gave the Order its first constitutions. The same Chapter asked Bonaventure to write a new biography of St-Francis: the *Legenda Maior S. Francisci* was presented at a subsequent Chapter held in Pisa in 1263. The *Legenda Maior* was declared the "official" Life of Francis, to the point that in 1266 a decree of the Chapter of Paris ordered the destruction of all other biographies preceding the *Legenda Maior*. The work was likely a political tool in the hands of Bonaventure to reconcile the Community with the Spirituales. The first set of copies of the *Legenda maior*, all 34 of them for each one of the 34 provinces, was executed in Paris, under the surveillance of Bonaventura. The Chapter held in Paris in 1266 further ordered that each convent was to receive a copy of the *Legenda maior*, which explains that there are approximately 400 copies still extant from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The first edition of the *Legenda Maior* was published in Florence in 1509.

ff. 102-141, Bonaventura, *Legenda maior, Miracula*, chap. I-X: rubric, *Explicit vita beati Francisci. Incipiunt quedam de miraculis ipsi postmortem ostensis. Primo de virtutibus sacrorum stigmatum*; incipit, "Ad omnipotentis Dei honorem et gloriam beati Patris Francisci post glorificationem ipsius in caelis..."; rubric, *Explicit vita et legenda beati patris nostri Francisci* [see Little, A.-G. *Initia operum latinorum quae saeculis .xiii. xiv. xv. attribuntur*, New York, 1904; *Acta Sanctorum*, oct. II, pp. 783-798; AF X, p. 627-652; *Fontes Franciscana* (1995), pp. 912-961];

f. 141v-142v, blank;

f. 143v-149, *Regula Bullata* of 1223 [Rule], incipit, "Nicholaus episcopus servus servorum dei...licteras felicis recordationes Honorii pape tertii..."; "Honorius episcopus servus servorum dei, dilectis filiis..." [Papal bull, Honorius III (1216-1227), *Solet annuere*, dated 29 nov. 1223]; rubric, *In nomine domini. Incipit vita et regula minorum fratrum* [see Sbaralea, *Bullarium Franciscanum*, I, pp. 15-19];

ff. 149-171v, Declaration of pope Nicholas III (1277-1280) on the Rule of saint Francis, 14 Aug. 1279, rubric, *Incipit declaratio domini Nycholai pape .iii. super regula beati Francisci*; incipit, "Exiit qui seminat seminare..."; explicit, "...Data Suriani decimo nono kalendas septembris pontificatus nostri anno secundo" [published in Sbaralea, *Bullarium Franciscanum*, III, pp. 404-416];

ff. 171v-172, Confirmation by pope Nicholas III of bull granted by pope Gregory IX (1227-1241) on 5 April 1237: incipit, "Nicholaus episcopus servus servorum dei universis Christi fidelibus... Litteras felicis recordationis Gregorii papae IX praedecessoris nostri..."; rubric, *De stigmatibus beati Francisci privilegium dei pape*; incipit, "Gregorius episcopus servus servorum dei...Data Viterbii nonas apostolice pontificatus nostri anno .xi." [published in Sbaralea, *Bullarium Franciscanum*, III, pp. 417; for text of bull granted by Gregory IX, "Confessor Domini gloriosus Beatus Franciscus...", see Sbaralea, *Bullarium Franciscanum*, I, p. 214];

ff. 173-183v, Thomas de Celano, *Vita sanctae Clarae*, rubric, *Legenda beate Clare*, incipit, "Venerabilis Christi sponse deoque dicte virginis clare..."; explicit, "...cui cum patre et spiritu sancto est omnis honor et gloria per infinita secula seculorum. Amen" [published in Pennachi, 1910, who attributes the work to Thomas de Celano; see also Vorreux, D (ed.). *Sainte Claire d'Assise. Documents* (1983), pp. 39-92];

Long-debated, the authorship of the *Life of Saint Clare of Assisi* (once attributed to Bonaventure) has been securely assigned to Thomas de Celano, disciple and biographer of Saint Francis. He likely wrote this *Life of Saint Clare* between 1255 and 1260. The present work was commissioned by Pope Alexander IV during Claire's canonization between 1255 and 1256. The *Vita sanctae Clare* is structured in two parts, the first part treating the life of Saint Clare and the second part dealing with the miracles.

ff. 184-185, blank;

ff. 185v-194, Anonymous, *De indulgentia Sanctae Mariae de Angelis*: incipit, "Dum [Cum] staret beatus Franciscus apud sanctam Mariam de Portiuncula fuit sibi de nocte revelatum a domino..."; explicit, "...reverendam sunt conversi adorna ut expedit [...]" (lacks ending) [recorded in Mohan, G.E. "Initia operum Franciscalium," in *Franciscan Studies*, 35 (1975), p. 277].

Unpublished, this treatise is easily confused with Francesco Bartholi de Assisio, *Tractatus de indulgentia S. Mariae de Portiuncula...*, published by P. Sabatier, Paris, 1900. A similar incipit is also recorded by Mohan, G. E. (1976), p. 121-122, *Dum staret beatus Franciscus in cella sua apud sanctam Mariam...*: this work is attributed by Mohan to Bartholomaeus de Pisis, *Liber*

conformitatum II, Oxford, Bodl. Can. Misc. 5 (1512). The three works are quite distinct and the present one is unpublished.

ILLUSTRATION

f. 1, Saint Francis portrayed with a book and stigmata and burnished gold halo.

The historiated and decorated initials with their delicate coloring and modeling and very fresh palette reveal a likely origin in Umbria. The representation of Saint Francis in the opening initial, haloed with the stigmata and a book in his hands, offers comparisons with certain historiated initials painted by artists such as Maestro Venturella di Pietro, active in Perugia (or his workshop Ambiente di Venturella ?) (see Pirovano (ed), *Documenti...* [1982], pp. 377-378, no. 126 and 127; see also Subbioni [2003], pp. 39-71).

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ONLINE RESOURCES

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http://www.san-francesco.org/fonti/leggenda_maggiore_lat.html

Research Instruments for Study of Franciscans

<http://users.bart.nl/~roestb/franciscan/index.htm>