

Registrum imperatorem [abbreviation of the *Flores temporum*]

In Latin, manuscript on paper

Switzerland or Southwestern Germany, c. 1450

ii (paper) + 20 + i (paper) folios on paper (watermark, flower with stem and leaves and four petals, similar to Briquet 6334, Berne 1443, and 6335, Geneva 1446, same type but smaller than Piccard 12699, Rottweil, 1441, and unidentified type, circle with intersecting lines within and fins), modern foliation in pencil top outer corner recto, complete (collation, i-ii¹⁰), no catchwords or signatures, unruled (135 x 90-85 mm.), written in an upright quick cursive gothic bookhand (semi-bybrida), without loops in thirty-one to twenty-six long lines, red line fillers between sections, two-line initials in outline filled with light red, in very good condition, minor stains on a few edges, lower edge frayed, repair outer margin f. 19. Bound in a modern limp vellum cover, in excellent condition. 209 x 145 mm.

This is the earliest of two extant manuscripts and perhaps the original copy, contemporary with its composition, of an abbreviated version of the *Flores temporum*, a widely-disseminated Universal Chronicle of the popes and emperors. No modern scholarly edition exists either of the chronicle or its abbreviation. The *Flores temporum* itself survives in over one hundred manuscripts, but very few copies are listed in Schoenberg Database; only one has been available in a recent transaction (this version not listed in the Database).

PROVENANCE

1. Based on script and watermark, the manuscript was written in Switzerland or Southwestern Germany near Rottweil (which joined the Swiss Federation in 1463), around the middle of the fifteenth century (the watermark is not a common one, and similar examples are dated 1441, 1443 and 1446).

The last full entry in the text concerns Sigismund (d. 1437), who was elected in 1410/11, and crowned Emperor in 1433. This entry is followed by two short entries mentioning Albert II, who was King of Germany from 1438-1439, but who was never crowned Holy Roman emperor, and Frederick III, referred to here as "rex romanorum" -- the title the German Kings assumed before their coronation as emperor by the Pope; Frederick III's inauguration as king of Germany was in 1440; he was crowned Holy Roman Emperor by the Pope in 1452, allowing us to date the text after 1440 and before 1452.

The date of the last full entry, followed by the two short additions, suggests that this text was probably compiled shortly after 1440, a date that agrees with the watermark evidence for this particular manuscript. It therefore seems likely that this is the original manuscript, or possibly a very early copy, of this version of the chronicle.

This is a very brief manuscript as it now exists, including only two quires of ten leaves; it may once have been bound with a larger collection of texts. This is, however, the complete text of this version of the chronicle (note the conclusion added at the end by the scribe, f. 20v).

2. Belonged to Dr. Fritz Eberhard in 1964 (bookplate, inside front cover), numbered "202" in pencil.

3. No. 6 in a catalogue from a modern German bookdealer; clipping glued inside front cover; notes in pencil from a dealer, inside front cover; front flyleaf, f. ii, "Registrum imperatorem," in a modern calligraphic hand, with decorated initials.

TEXT

ff. 1-20v, *Incipit registrum imperatorum*, incipit, "Homerus poeta describens inter omnia regna mundi quatuor fuisse maiora primum Babilonicum ab oriente secundum Carthaginense a meridie tertia macedonicum a septemtrione romanum ab occidente . . . , [f. 1], Julius cesar et primus imperator romanorum originem traxit ab eneam dite troyanorum qui non dicebatur cesar . . . , [f. 2v], Claudius imperator cepit regnatione annis domini xliii et regnavit annis xiiii. Huius tempore petrus venit romam. Huius tempore lucas et Iohannes scripserunt ewangelia sua. Eodem anno dum corpus sancti iacobi . . . , [f. 10v], Tyberius secundus imperator cepit anno domini d lxxvii et regnavit annos vii. Huius tempore beatus gregorius librum moralium scripsit. Iste typericus fuit homo . . . , [f. 13rv], Karolus magnus pipini regis francorum filius cepit anno domini d cc lxix cum fratre suo karlomano regnavit annis iiii post solus regnavit annos xlii . . . alius hominibus prebuit karolus autem corpore decoris fuit longitudinis per pedum fortis nimis . . . , [f. 16], Otto primus filius henricus cepit anno domini d cccc xxxiii et regnavit annos xxii. Hic opposuit se regni francorum et . . . Hic fundavit ecclesiasticum solempnem in magdeborg . . . , [f. 20v], Sigismundus imperator filius regis karoli elegitur in regem romanorum et coronatus est . . . , Albertus dux austrie post sigismundum in regem romanorum electus est sed non uenit ad coronam [marginal note: "quam pape nichil coronavit in cesarem"] Fredericus dux austrie rex romanum regnat etc." *Ett sic est finis amen.*

This is an abbreviated version of the chronicle known as the *Flores temporum*, which is an anonymous work first written by a Franciscan author around 1290 in Swabia in Southwestern Germany. It is often attributed to "Martinus Minorita," but the name is probably simply a confusion with the author of another very popular chronicle of the popes and emperors, Martinus von Troppau. The transmission of the *Flores temporum* is complex, and it circulated in a number of versions, including the version that circulated under the name "Hermanus Minorita" from c. 1350.

There is no modern critical edition of the *Flores temporum*, but there is a modern study that discusses its importance, the surviving manuscripts and its transmission in preparation for an edition (Mierau, Sander-Berke, Studt, 1996). These authors list 142 extant manuscripts of the complete chronicle, in various versions, and 30 manuscripts that include extracts (pp. 52-74). Versions of the *Flores temporum* were printed by Eccard in 1723, Meuschen, 1743, and Holder-Egger in 1879.

The text included here deserves careful study and comparison with other manuscripts of the *Flores temporum* and extracts of this text. A comparison with the text printed by Eccard, 1723, suggests that the author followed the text closely, omitting the entries concerning the Popes and usually shortening the text. The version described here begins with two paragraphs from Martinus von Troppau (Martinus Oppaviensis), *Chronicon pontificum et imperatorum* (Weiland, 1872, p. 398), not found in the *Flores temporum*. The text on f. 16 related to Otto I includes an account about the founding of the cathedral at Magdeburg that is not found in Eccard's text; further

research would be needed to discover whether this passage is found in other manuscripts of the *Flores temporum*, and whether there are other possible additions in this version of the chronicle.

This abbreviated version of the *Flores temporum* manuscript is found in only one other manuscript, Würzburg, UB M.ch.f 140, ff. 253-264v, a collection of historical writings including Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the British Kings*, extracts from the chronicle by Martin von Troppau, and many other works; it is a later copy, dating from the sixteenth century, probably copied in Würzburg (listed in Mierau, Sander-Berke, 1996, p. 74; described in Thurn, 1973).

The *Flores temporum* is an example of a universal history – an account of the history of the world from creation up to the time the author was writing (which varied depending on the version of the chronicle). As was the case of many universal chronicles, it concentrated on the popes and the emperors, which begin with the Roman emperors in antiquity, and then continue with the medieval rulers known as the Holy Roman Emperor. Its author was concerned not only with providing a secure chronology, but also in finding meaning within the historical narrative.

This abbreviated version of the chronicle includes only the emperors. The text calls itself a "registrum" or "register" of the emperors, which characterizes the contents well; the entries vary in length, but in general are brief, beginning with the date of the emperor's reign, followed by a few short sentences. The focus is often on events of religious significance. Discussing the emperor Claudius, for example, the text mentions that Peter arrived in Rome during his reign, and that the Gospels of Luke and John were written at that time. During the reign of Tiberius, the author mentions that the *Moralia* of Gregory the Great was written.

The text begins with Julius Caesar, and then continues through all the emperors (although in times of disputed reigns, only one will be given) through Diocletian; it then follows the Emperors of the Eastern Empire from Constantine the Great (reigned, 324-327) through Leo III (reigned, 717-741), and then proceeds with the German monarchs, including Charlemagne and his heirs, and the Holy Roman Emperors from Conrad I (911-918) to Sigismund (reigned 1410-1437), concluding with Albert II (reigned 1438-9), who was elected Holy Roman Emperor, but never crowned, and Frederick II, who had not yet been crowned when the text was written (see provenance above).

Universal chronicles of the emperors and popes were a popular genre in the Middle Ages. The *Flores temporum*, and this abbreviated version, should be seen in the context of related works, notably the *Chronicon Pontificum et Imperatorum* ("Chronicles of Popes and Emperors" by Martin of Troppau (d. c. 1278), an enormously popular text that was one of the sources used by the author of the *Flores temporum*. Interest in these chronicles continued into the fifteenth century in both university circles and in monasteries, as demonstrated by the works of a number of authors, including Thomas Ebendorfer (1387-1464), a prominent theologian at the University of Vienna, who wrote histories of the Popes and of the Roman Emperors, and Werner Rolewinck (1425-1502), a Carthusian monk at St. Barbara's in Cologne, and the author of a very popular history of the world, the *Fasciculus temporum*.

LITERATURE

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Von den Brincken, A.-D. "Die lateinische Weltchronik," in *Mensch und Weltgeschichte. Zur Geschichte der Universalgeschichtsschreibung*, ed. Alexander Randa, Salzburg and Munich, Pustet, 1969, pp. 43-86.

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Weiland, L., ed. *Matinus Oppaviensis, Chronicon pontificum et imperatorum*, MGH SS, 1872, pp. 397-475.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Repertorium Chronicarum (survey of Latin chronicles and manuscripts; listing 47 copies of the *Flores temporum*)

<https://library.msstate.edu/chronica/>

Heike Johanna Mierau. "Die Papst- und Kaiserchroniken des Spätmittelalters: Handschriftenliste," *Monumenta Germaniae Historiae*. (list of papal and imperial chronicles)

<http://www.mgh.de/arbeitsmittel/chroniken/hssliste.pdf>

Heike Johanna Mierau. "SFB 231, Projekt F1, Schriftkultur und Geschichtsüberlieferung im späten Mittelalter: Flores Temporum; Index Manuscriptorum (listing 104 manuscripts and 29 excerpts)":

<http://www.unimuenster.de/Geschichte/MittelalterSchriftlichkeit/ProjektF1/Manuscripts.html#exzerpt>

Research Instruments for Study of Franciscans; Franciscan authors (Anonymous, Alemanus):

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

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