

## *Concordantie bibliae* (Verbal Concordance to the Bible)

In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment

Northern France, likely Paris, c. 1250-1275

*i* (paper) + (parchment) + 277 + *i* (paper) folios on parchment (extremely thin), early foliation in ink top outer corner recto, with errors as follows, 1-145, 145 bis, 146-166, \*170-174, 174 bis, 175-278, probably missing text (at least a leaf) at the end, although the last quire is complete (collation, *i-vi*<sup>16</sup> *vii<sup>20</sup>* *viii<sup>15</sup>* [beginning f. 117, -2, probably cancelled with no loss of text] *ix-x*<sup>16</sup> *xi<sup>12</sup>* *xii<sup>2</sup>* [beginning f. 177, ff. 177v-178, in a different hand] *xiii-xiv*<sup>16</sup> *xv<sup>20</sup>* *xvi-xviii<sup>16</sup>*), horizontal catchwords, usually boxed, very bottom inside margin (some trimmed), quires signed in lead in roman numerals on the last leaf (often quite faint), ad hoc leaf and quire signatures, some trimmed, with a letter designating the leaf in the first half of the quire and a mark designating the quire, ruled in lead, pattern varies, most often with the top and bottom horizontal rules full across, and full-length single vertical bounding lines, or with top two and bottom horizontal rules full across, and extra double rules framing the text in all four margins, occasional prickings remain in the upper and lower margins (justification 88-83 x 66-62 mm.), written below the top ruled line by a number of scribes in a gothic noting hand in forty- to thirty-seven long lines (many changes of hand, e.g. ff. 118, 128v, 177, 180, 199, line 3, 247), two-line alternately red and blue initials with contrasting pen decoration, illuminated initial, equivalent to 8-lines of text on f. 1, initial is blue with white highlights, on a dark pink ground, infilled with foliate design in brushed gold, now in rather poor condition, rubbed and darkened, with gold cracking, f. 1, darkened and stained, initial rubbed (see above), and with small holes from rust, ff. 252-253 with stain within text area (text remains legible), f. 253 torn and then sewn together in green thread, minor staining and darkened parchment in the top and bottom corners, early (original?) parchment repairs on ff. 91, 93, 190, 244, and some original holes in the parchment avoided by the scribe, e.g. f. 90, with another early repair, and f. 233, overall in good condition. Bound in eighteenth-century (?) vellum over pasteboard, both boards partially covered with vellum painted in a red and green checked pattern, leaving the corners and spine bare, smooth spine with title on a darker label in gilt, "Concor/ Biblicae", floral paper (later?) glued inside the front and back covers, in very good condition. Dimensions 120 x 81 mm.

This is a remarkably diminutive and compact early copy of a Biblical Concordance (a verbal index to the Bible). The creation of this reference tool was one of the great achievements of the Dominicans in the thirteenth century, and at least three versions survive. This is a previously unstudied one, known in only one other manuscript, related to the second version, which itself survives in very few manuscripts, all different. Manuscripts of the Biblical Concordance of any type are rare on the market (only eight listed in the Schoenberg Database since the nineteenth century).

### PROVENANCE

1. Copied in Northern France, almost certainly in Paris, in the third quarter of the thirteenth century, based on the evidence of the script, style of decoration (cf. Stirnemann, 1990, cat. 40, 41) and perhaps even the type of parchment. The format and parchment are directly comparable to those found in the pocket Bibles produced in such numbers in Paris by professional shops in the thirteenth century; the script in the manuscript is even smaller than that found in most Bibles, and less formal. The use of "ad hoc" signatures to keep the quires in order is also the type found in Parisian manuscripts (Ruzzier, 2013, p. 117). Numerous scribes collaborated in the copying of the volume, and it seems likely that it was made at the Dominican House of Studies of St. Jacques in Paris. One of the hands is certainly rather English in its *ductus* (ff. 118-

128), and the purple pen decoration found on ff. 192v-197, are of a type found in Italian manuscripts (note that Ruzzier, 2013, also observes that at least in Bibles, quires of sixteen and twenty leaves – the type used here -- are more common in England than in Paris, see p. 116; whether this applies to books other than Bibles remains for further research). It does not seem fanciful to imagine this being copied at St. Jacques, and was the result of the collaboration of many Friars from different countries.

It is worth noting that one scribe who finishes his stint at the bottom of f. 117v (the first leaf of quire eight), may have signed his name, since an informal note that begins with "frater" in the lower margin is just discernible (now mostly erased). The next scribe that begins on f. 118, is the scribe with the English-looking script; he copies through f. 128v, and then another scribe takes over and completes the quire (a leaf is cancelled between ff. 117v and 118, but there is no apparent loss of text).

Contemporary corrections throughout, and a few marginal annotations, ff. 83v-84, 138, adding entries.

2. Front flyleaf, f. i, s. XVII? "Hic liber est <erasure>, Conwentate <...?>; Et primae Compositae a domino Cardinali fratrem Vgoni ..."; followed by another line, carefully erased – so we can assume this likely remained in a Dominican or another religious house into the seventeenth century. The attribution to Cardinal Hugh, which must be Hugh of St. Cher, is of interest.
3. Private Continental Collection.

## TEXT

ff. 1-277v, incipit, [heading in upper margin, "Abstinencia," probably contemporary], "Abstinere. Numeri xxxv f [30:14]. Si uoverit, et iuramento se constrinxerit, et per ieiunium, et ceterarum rerum abstinentiam affligat animam suam in arbitrio viri erit ut faciat, sive non faciat; ii pe. i b [1:5-6]. Ministrare in fide uestra uirtutem in uirtutem scientiam in scientia autem abstinentiam; ii pe. ii d [2:11] Obsecro uos tamquam aduenas et peregrinos abstinere uos a carnalibus ... Vox. gen. iii g [3:10]. uocem tuam domine audiui in paradisu et timui ... Ps [Ps. 54:3-4]. conturbatus a uoce inimici."

*Concordancie biblie* (Biblical concordance), listing biblical words, arranged in alphabetical order, identified by biblical book, chapter number and a-g reference, followed by the biblical passage where the word occurs, here quoted fairly extensively. Another copy of this text is found in Assisi, Bibl. Communale, MS 388, ff. 1-305 (see Online Resources), which also begins with "abstinere" and concludes with "uox," followed by added entries out of alphabetical order and a table of the words included; a comparison with the two manuscripts suggests that the manuscript described here now ends imperfectly, since its concluding entry is found on f. 302v, col. a of the Assisi manuscript, where the entries for "uox" continue and conclude on f. 303v; see Stegmüller, 1950-1980, no. 8452.

ff. 177-178v, is a curious quire of two leaves; the text on f. 177, which has entries for "peccatum," continues on f. 179, with entries for "penitentia"; the text on ff. 177v-178v, copied by another scribe, using a rather English-looking script, consists of entries beginning with "prior," and continuing with a number of other entries beginning with "pr," which are not found elsewhere in the text (presumably representing a contemporary correction supplying entries omitted).

The use of this reference system with letters of the alphabets, a-g, is a system that provided a guide to the approximate place of the biblical word within a chapter. It was quite likely developed for the first version of the concordance (discussed below), and it was necessary in an era before the use of numbered verses (which are a sixteenth-century innovation). These letters were only occasionally written into Bibles. They were intended as approximate guides to the place within a chapter, applied "virtually" according to the judgment of each user.

The verbal concordance to the Bible was an essential reference tool for the Bible, which allowed users quick access to lists of biblical words and their location in the Bible. It proved to be an especially valuable tool for preachers, who structured their sermons around the words present in their biblical theme and their use in different passages. Its creation by the Dominicans in the thirteenth century was one of their most important contributions to biblical scholarship. The pioneering modern work on the verbal concordance is by Richard and Mary Rouse, who established that there were at least three versions of the text (Rouse and Rouse, 1974).

Summarizing their findings, we can say that the first version of the concordance was prepared at the Dominican House of studies in Paris at St. Jacques, and is thus often referred to as the St. Jacques concordance (or St. Jacques I). It was almost certainly the work of Hugh of St. Cher, working with a team of friars – producing this tool was an ambitious undertaking, but well in-keeping with the other major projects undertaken with Hugh's leadership, including postills on the entire Bible and a biblical correctoria. This concordance, which was probably completed by 1239, begins with "A, a, a." and concludes with "Zorababel." Notably, each biblical word is cited only with a reference to book, chapter number and a-g reference, completely without context (Rouse and Rouse, 1974, and 1991, p. 225). It survives in at least twenty-two manuscripts (Rouse and Rouse, 1974; a few additional copies have surfaced since then, including TM 44 on this site). The second version of the concordance, St. Jacques II, or the *Concordantiae anglicanae* (the English Concordance), was the work of Richard of Stavensby and possibly other English Dominicans at St. Jacques. Unlike the first version, it provided extensive contexts for each word, making it a lengthy and complicated text; it also begins with an entry for "A, a, a." It survives in fewer than ten manuscripts, and importantly, no two seem to be identical (manuscripts listed in Rouse and Rouse, 1974, pp. 26-27, but compare 1991, 225, where they say around seven manuscripts). The third version – St. Jacques III -- was completed by 1286, and was a compromise, providing each word with a brief context; its entry begin with "A.a, a." and end with "Zelpha." It was also a success, published by the university stationers, and surviving in over eighty manuscripts, and in early printed editions (one example in Online resources, below).

The manuscript described here, which was not known to the Rouses, can be probably be best seen as either a new version of St. Jacques II, or the *Concordantiae anglicanae*, or possibly a completely new, hitherto unrecorded version. The fact that the second version has yet to be carefully studied makes it difficult to be certain. The Rouses have provided us with a general description and list of surviving manuscripts, of which they report examining only a few in person. Their important observation that all the copies differ suggests further study of this version is important, and the existence of this new copy and Assisi MS 388 underline this fact. Even the date for this version has yet to be established. One source, writing around 1500, suggests it dates from 1252, although it is difficult to determine on what basis, and the Rouses conclude only that it dates after the first concordance, and before the third (Rouse and Rouse, 1974, p. 13).

Two important features distinguish the text in this manuscript. First, the words are listed with extensive context. Secondly, this is a very select list of words. Our manuscript has only twenty-eight words total from "A" (Abstinere, Adducere, adhere, adimplere, adiuuare, adueniare, alienare, and so forth). Both the first St. Jacques concordance and the third have many, many more entries for each letter of the alphabet. If one compares the printed concordance, that is, St. Jacques III, and the entries in the manuscript described here for "Abstinentie" -- the first entry in our concordance, but with many entries preceding it in the third concordance -- both include the same list of passages where the word is used, although our manuscript provides much longer contexts for each word, and as is often the case, lists them in an order that does not follow the order of the biblical books (a curious fact, which deserves further exploration),

The textual complexity of the concordances and the various versions is illustrated by one more example. The entries for "tabernaculum" are found here on f. 243, incipit, "Tabernaculum. gen. ix g. bibens noe vinum et inebriatus est et nudatus in acurincabulo [sic, the scribe seems, remarkably, to have written nonsense here, but he must have meant "tabernaculo"] suo."

Compare that with the entry in Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine, MS 282, a manuscript classified by the Rouses as an example of the third concordance, incipit, "Tabernaculum. Gen ix c. Inebriatus est et nudatus in tabernaculo suo," and note the much shorter *lemma*. The entry for Mazarine, MS 285, one of the few copies of the second concordance, is difficult to interpret. It seems to say, incipit, "Tabernaculum. Ge. ix g. "Habitet [sic, for "biberet"?] in t[abernaculo] sem [sic, for suum?]," which really doesn't quite reflect the passage in question, but note in this case at least, the context provided is quite brief.

The other difference in the three versions in this case is the number of entries. In our manuscript, the citation from Ge.ix g, is followed with, incipit, "Gen. xviii. a [18:1], "apparuit deus Abraham in conualle Mambre sedenti in hostio tabernaculi. Gen. xx g [cf. Gen 25:27]. Iacob u[ir?] habitabit in tabernaculo." These are the only verses for this word from Genesis, and the next citation is from Job.

Mazarine, MSS 282 and 286, both versions of the third concordance (their text agrees with minor scribal differences), include many more entries, incipit, "xvi f . . . , xviii a, apparuit deus abrahe sedenti in hostio tabernaculi, xviii b. . . , xxv d. iacob uir simplex habitabant in tabernaculo, and xxxii c . . ." [so they include six entries from Genesis for this word, although with shorter *lemmata*].

Mazarine, MS 285, the second concordance, has even more entries, but with very short *lemmata*, including, "ge ix g . . . , xii c . . . , xvi f . . . , xviii a, in ostio t[abernaculo], c . . . , b . . . , c . . . , xxxiiii g . . . , and then, xxv f, Iacob uir simplex habitat in tabernaculo . . ." And finally, the first concordance, or St. Jacques I, found for example in Munich, CLM 14060, has thirteen entries from Genesis for *tabernaculum* on f. 250 (gen. ix g, xii d, xvi f, xviii a, b, c, xxiv g, xxv g, xxvi f, xxxi d, e xxxiii g xxxv g), and no *lemmata* – characteristic of this concordance.

In the case of this one entry, "tabernaculum," the text in Mazarine, MS 285, St. Jacques II, appears to include all the entries in the first concordance, more or less, but supplies them with brief *lemmata*. The third concordance includes fewer entries, but rather longer contexts. Our manuscript in this example has the fewest number of passages with the word "tabernaculum," but provides each with much longer contexts. This is only an example, which happens to contradict the accepted characterization of the second concordance (other examples could be

chosen that would very likely support it). What seems most important, however, is that the study of only one example in these few manuscripts of the various versions of the verbal concordance demonstrates that a great deal of more research on the topic is needed – and the fact that the new, unstudied text found in the manuscript described here should play an important part in the story.

## LITERATURE

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Stirnemann, Patricia. "Fils de la vierge. L'initiale à filigranes parisienne, 1140-1314," *Revue de l'Art* 90 (1990), pp. 58-73.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

Stegmüller, *Repertorium biblicum*, online edition

<http://repbib.uni-trier.de/cgi-bin/rebihome.tcl>

Digital facsimile of Assisi, Biblioteca comunale, MS 388

[http://88.48.84.154/bbw/jsp/images/ShowVolumeImages.jsp?id\\_volume=11696252209200](http://88.48.84.154/bbw/jsp/images/ShowVolumeImages.jsp?id_volume=11696252209200)

Digital facsimile of Munich, Clm 14060

<http://daten.digital-sammlungen.de/~db/0003/bsb00034253/images/index.html?id=00034253&fip=xdsydenyztsfsdreayafsdasxszts&no=24&seite=501>

Digital facsimile, *Concordantiae bibliorum*, Reutlingen, Michel Greyff, not after 1481

<https://opacplus.bsb-muenchen.de/metaopac/search?query=BV035497651>

"Liber floridus": images from Bibliothèque Mazarine, MS 282

[http://liberfloridus.cines.fr/cgi-bin/affich\\_planche?Paris,\\_Bibl.\\_Mazarine/ms.%200282/2/16/0+0,0,0](http://liberfloridus.cines.fr/cgi-bin/affich_planche?Paris,_Bibl._Mazarine/ms.%200282/2/16/0+0,0,0)

Bibliothèque Mazarine, MS 285

[http://liberfloridus.cines.fr/textes/biblio\\_fr.html](http://liberfloridus.cines.fr/textes/biblio_fr.html)

Bibliothèque Mazarine, MS 286

[http://liberfloridus.cines.fr/cgi-bin/affich\\_planche?Paris,\\_Bibl.\\_Mazarine/ms.%200286/1/0](http://liberfloridus.cines.fr/cgi-bin/affich_planche?Paris,_Bibl._Mazarine/ms.%200286/1/0)

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