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MS 657

Northeastern France (Metz), s. XIV^{med}

Book of Hours, use of Metz

1. ff. r-12v Calendar, two pages for each month (recto and verso), written in blue and gold. The computistical data are: length of the solar and the lunar month, Golden Number, Day Letter, Roman Calendar. Few liturgical feasts could be mentioned due to the presence of two pictures for each month within the text area. Noteworthy feasts: Translation of Clemens bishop of Metz (in gold, 2 May), Victor and Corona (14 May), Potentiana (19 May), Baudelius (20 May), Translation of Arnulphus bishop of Metz (18 July), Segolena (24 July), Invention of St. Stephen patron saint of the cathedral of Metz (in gold, 3 August), Arnulphus (16 August), Dedication of the church of St. Arnulphus in Metz (11 Oct.), Clement bishop of Metz (in gold, 23 Nov.). Note the spellings “Setembre”, “Blacius”, “Vigile”, “Exultacio sancte Crucis”, and the error “Leonardus” for “Leodegarius” (2 Sept.). The Calendar is ed. by Mark, pp. 32-33.
2. ff. 13r-19r Short Hours of the Cross.
3. ff. 19r-20v Beginning of the Gospel of St. John (John 1:1-14).
4. ff. 21r-82v Hours of the Virgin, preceded by prayer: “Sancta Maria, piissima domina, deprecare pro nobis, ut mereamur benignissimo filio tuo, Domino nostro Ihesu Christo, et tibi reddere hostiam laudis”. The variants pointing to Metz use are ed. by Mark, pp. 33-35.
5. ff. 83r-96v Penitential Psalms.
6. ff. 96v-101r Litany. Gangulphus is second among the martyrs, Arnulphus fourteenth among the confessors.
7. ff. 101r-103r Petitions. The last four lines of f. 101v are repeated at the top of f. 102r.
8. ff. 103v-159r Office of the Dead. The variants pointing to Metz use are ed. by Mark, p. 35. f. 159v blank

Parchment, ff. 159, 140 x 95 mm.

I¹² (ff. 1-12), II-IX⁸ (ff. 13-76), X⁶ (ff. 77-82), XI-XII⁸ (ff. 83-98), XIII⁶ (- 6??, ff. 99-103; ff. 102-103 are a replacement bifolio), XIV-XX⁸ (ff. 104-159). Horizontal catchwords right of center. There are various forms of signatures (signatures are not always visible): (1) 1, 2, 3, 4 horizontal strokes one above the other, in quires VII-XI (ff. 45-82) and XIII (ff. 91-98), but four vertical strokes on f. 64r in quire IX; (2) 1, 2, 3, 4 vertical strokes in quires XVI-XXI (ff. 112-159); (3) “b I”-“b IIII” in quire V (ff. 29-36).

Ruling in black ink for one column of script, ruling type 11 or 13 for the Calendar (art. 1), type 12 for the text. There are 17 lines below top line in the Calendar, 13 lines in the rest of the manuscript.

Probably copied by two hands, both writing Northern Gothic Textualis Formata: A copied the Calendar, B all the rest in a more formal script in two sizes, except ff. 102r-103r, which are in a different hand.

Rich decoration. Rubrics in gold. Calendar written in blue and gold. Majuscules stroked in yellow. Line fillers in gold and colour. Numerous 1-line versals (dentelle initials). 2-line foliate initials with marginal extensions, or with a one-margin gold and colour foliate bar border, extending into the upper and lower margins; some of them contain a human face, a flower or a geometrical design. 6-or 7-line historiated initials, always accompanied by a full gold and colour foliate bar border.

In the Calendar (art. 1) 3-line dentelle initials for the “KL” monograms; on the recto pages, a small miniature representing the Labors of the Month; on the verso pages, a small miniature representing the Signs of the Zodiac, and the rayed sun with a face; f. 1r-v Jan.: Janus feasting; Aquarius; f. 2r-v Febr.: St. Peter enthroned, with keys; Pisces; f. 3r-v March: Pruning; Aries; f. 4r-v April: Youth scattering buds; Taurus; f. 5r-v May: Hawking; Gemini; f. 6r-v June: Mowing; Cancer; f. 7r-v July: Reaping; Leo; f. 8r-v August: Threshing; Virgo; f. 9r-v Sept.: Crushing grapes; Libra; f. 10r-v Oct.: Sowing; Scorpio; f. 11r-v Nov.: Slaughtering pig; Sagittarius; f. 12r-v Dec.: Warming feet; Capricornus (pictured as unicorn).

Hours of the Passion (art. 2). F. 13r (Matins) historiated initial: Betrayal; f. 14r (Prime) historiated initial: Christ before Pilate; lower border: a running dog; f. 15r: (Terce) historiated initial: Flagellation; f. 15v (Sext) historiated initial: Carrying of the Cross; lower border: a peacock; f. 16v (None) historiated initial: Crucifixion; lower border: a dog and a squirrel; f. 17r (Vespers) historiated initial: Deposition; lower border: Harrowing of Hell; f. 18r (Compline) historiated initial: Resurrection; lower border: the Three Marys at the Tomb.

Hours of the Virgin (art. 4). Matins opens with a square picture on f. 20v below three lines of text: Madonna of Humility, and a half-page miniature on f. 21r above five lines of text: Annunciation; 3-line historiated initial representing an angel with a psaltery; lower border: the Betrothal of the Virgin; in the outer border the patroness in prayer; f. 34v (Lauds) historiated

initial: Visitation; lower border: a seated man (St. Joseph?) and a peacock; f. 48v (Prime) historiated initial: Nativity; lower border: the infant Christ in manger between ox and ass; angel musician; f. 49r lower border: Annunciation to the Shepherds; f. 55r (Terce) historiated initial: Adoration of the Magi; in the outer border an angel holding a star on a disk; lower border: child (?) with ass addressing a man; f. 59v (Sext) historiated initial: Presentation; lower border: a dog; f. 63v (None) historiated initial: Flight into Egypt; lower border: Miracle of Cornfield; in the outer border: a warrior (Herod?); f. 67v (Vespers) historiated initial: Coronation of the Virgin; outer and lower border: angels making music; f. 76r (Compline) historiated initial: Trinity (Throne of Grace); lower border: Ecclesia and Synagoga; in the outer border two angels and a prophet.

Art. 5 opens with two facing miniatures: f. 82v rectangular picture below 10 lines of text: Instruments of the Passion; f. 83r half-page miniature above five lines of text: Last Judgment: Christ between the Virgin and St. John the Baptist; 3-line historiated initial: Veronica's cloth; lower border: Resurrection of the Dead; in the outer border the patroness in prayer.

Art. 8 opens with two facing miniatures: f. 103v full-page picture in two registers: Requiem Mass and Two Souls in Purgatory; f. 104r square picture above 5 lines of text: Burial Service; 3-line historiated initial: Grave Digger; lower border: Carrying of the Coffin; in the outer border lady in mourning.

S. XX binding by Douglas Cockerell: dark red morocco over pasteboard. Spine with five raised bands, with gold-tooled title "HORAE BEATAE / MARIAE VIRGINIS // MS. SAEC. XIV". Green silk endbands. Two leather straps with silver clasps and catches engraved with the Hornby crest.

Made in the Metz area for a lady. The style of the illumination has been compared to the style of three other Books of Hours originating in Metz: Boston, Public Library, MS q. Med. 105; Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 39; and the "Hours of Jean Royère", in a private collection in Paris. Collection of Henri Auguste Brölemann, Lyons. Sotheby sale, 4 May 1924, lot 34. Collection of Charles Harry St. John Hornby (1867-1946, MS 60, inscriptions on front pastedown and flyleaf, dated 1926. Collection of Major J.R. Abbey (1894-1969, MS J.A. 3203), bought from Hornby's executors 15 Sept. 1946, inscription on rear flyleaf. Sotheby sale, 4 June 1974, lot 2921. Purchased on the Edwin J. Beinecke Fund.

Bibliography:

Shailor, *The Medieval Book*, 80.

Mark (C.M.), "A Fourteenth-Century Book of Hours from Metz", *Gazette*, October 1994, pp. 12-35.

Enlumineurs messins du XVe siècle. Les carnets de Medamothi (Metz, 2007) [not seen].