

MARTINUS POLONUS [MARTIN OF TROPPAU or OPPAVIENSIS], *Chronicon Pontificum et Imperatorum* [Italian translation: *Cronica degli pontifici e degli imperatori*
In Italian, decorated manuscript on paper
Italy, Veneto [Vicenza], dated 1472

[II] + 138 folios, complete, on paper, mostly in quires of 12 (collation: i8, ii12, iii12, iv12, v12, vi12, vii12, viii12, ix12, x12, xi12, xii10 [quire of 8 + 1 folio parchment encarted, last folio of quire pasted to initial quire of 8], of which ff. 76-80v and 134-138v are blank [no text missing]), written in a rounded humanistic script in brown ink on up to 24 long lines (justification 90 x 130 mm), copied in at least three different hands, light plummet ruling, some contemporary quire signatures, vertical catchwords, rubrics in pale red ink, numerous capitals in bright red set off to the left in the margin, 2-line high painted blue initial (f. 10), 3-line high painted red initial on fol. 12, 6-line high painted blue initial marking the beginning of the "Chronicle of Emperors" (f. 81), 7-line high painted red initial marking the beginning of the "Chronicle of Popes" (f. 9), some contemporary or sixteenth-century corrections or annotations (interlinear and marginal), modern commentaries on fol. 1, of which: "This contains the account of Popess Joan," occasional foxing to paper but very good overall condition. Bound in nineteenth-century reddish calf over pasteboards, smooth spine with title gilt and Phillipps collection shelfmark "3087" pasted at the bottom of spine, bound by Bretherton in 1847 (see upper left-hand corner of front pastedown: "Bretherton ligavit 1847" Dimensions 150 x 215 mm.

Dated copy of Martin of Troppau's tremendously popular *Chronicon Pontificum et Imperatorum* in an Italian translation written by an unrecorded scribe, Dom Lodovigo da Cha da Fan, who was perhaps also its translator. There is no modern critical edition, and the relationship between the vernacular and the Latin copies remains to be fully studied (among the hundreds of extant Latin manuscripts only 5 copies are recorded in North American collections).

PROVENANCE

1. Painted arms beneath text on fol. 9: *D'azur a la bande d'or chargé du chiffre F*. Could these arms be those of the scribe, Dom Lodovigo da Cha (da Ca) da Fan, as quoted in the colophon? Script, language and watermark all confirm an Italian origin. Colophon on f. 133 suggests the chronicle was copied, and may also have been translated, by Dom Lodovigo da Cha da Fan, prior of San Vi[t]o de Vicentia [San Vito di Leguzzano], dated 1472.

2. Cheltenham, England [Middle Hill], Sir Thomas Phillipps (1792-1872), no. 3087, his collector's stamp on fol. II (second flyleaf). Sir Thomas, a self-described "vello-maniac," attempted a "frenzied quest to preserve every scrap of paper and vellum fragment he could locate." (see Basbanes, p. 120). In the fifty-plus years that he collected, Sir Thomas amassed over 50,000 books and 100,000 manuscripts, perhaps the largest private library ever. In doing so, he nearly bankrupted himself and drove his family deep into debt. The complete story of Phillipps's acquisitions and the dispersal of his library required five volumes to narrate (Munby, 1951-60).

TEXT

ff. 1-2, blank;

ff. 2v-6, Table of contents; rubric, *Tavola de questa opera deli summi pontifici & de li imperadori per che nel numerar ordinatamente lo fo errato non vogliendo qui [...] se corregie lo error*;

ff. 6v-8v, blank;

ff. 9-75v, Chronicle of the Popes; rubric, *Commincia la cronicha de frate Martino del ordine deli predicadori et del stato degli summi pontifici et degli imperatori. Et prima del modo de la creation de Roma, secondo la oppinion de diversi auctori et scriptori de le cosse antique*; incipit, "Come dice Orosio lo qual scrive al glorioso Augustino da la creation del mundo perfina a la hedification de Roma... "; explicit, "[...] Sixto de nation genovese da Savona stete papa anni 12 mesi 0 giorni 0 fo general deli frati minori lo dito fo fato cardenal per papa Paulo suo antecessor corendo li anni del signor .M. CCCC. LXVIII";

ff. 43-44, Pope Joan; rubric, *Ioanni che fo femina non e nel numero di papa*; incipit, "Dapoi questo sancto papa per heror el fo fato papa prima femina francese la qua fo mena de Franza in Ytalia essendo piccola da uno cortesan lo qual la fece imparar de molte scientie et doventa in ogni scientia molto mirabile questa sempre in habito de homo mai algun non pote chomprehender che la fosse femina..."

ff. 76-80v, blank;

ff. 81-132v, Chronicle of the Emperors; heading, *Havendo dicto in breuita de lo stato de li summi pontifici bora diro de lo stato deli imperadori li quali sono choessi in uno medesimo tempo & per che lo stato temporal a fato la cita de Roma diro secondo li auctori del suo chommenzamento*; incipit, "El tempo che Roma comenzo fo da poi la creation del mondo anni M. IIII. CCCC. LXXXIIII & da poi la destruction de Troia... "; explicit, "[...] Frederico tercio de nome, centesimo octavo imperator [...] anchora lo dito prese la isola de Negroponte la qual era de la signoria de Venesia 1440 ".

f. 133, colophon: "Cronicha vulgar schritta per mi Dom Lodovigo da Cha da Fan prior de San Vi[t]o de Vicentia del 1472." [the placement of the colophon on a facing page could suggest authorship as well as transcription].

ff. 134-138v, blank.

This is an Italian translation of *Chronicon Pontificum et Imperatorum* ("Chronicles of Popes and Emperors") by Martin of Troppau (died c. 1278), who entered the Dominican order in Prague, was appointed papal chaplain by Pope Clement IV, and became archbishop of Gnesen. He wrote the *Chronicon* for Clement IV between 1265 and 1268; and he composed a second edition extending to the death of this pontiff, and a third to 1277. Martin's sources were to a great extent legendary, and he employed his material in an uncritical fashion. For example, he was one of the writers to popularize the legend of Pope Joan called John VIII, who is said to have held the holy see between Leo IV, who died in 855, and Benedict III, who died in 858. Nevertheless, his work became a favorite handbook of the later Middle Ages, perhaps because of its legibility, as it offered short excerpts historical excerpts. Rarely exceeding a paragraph, the entry for each pope and emperor lists succinctly the precise length of the reign and its chief religious or

political events.

Copies of the Latin recensions are numerous (for a complete list see Repertorium Chronicarum, below), showing that the work enjoyed great popularity in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (von den Brincken studies 275 manuscripts from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries). The chronicle seems to have been popular amongst vernacular historians. It was edited in *Monumenta Germaniae Historia* (XXII, 1826, pp. 397-475), but there is no modern edition with a study of the extant manuscripts. The Latin version was printed in 1474 in Rome by Johannes Philippus de Lignamine (Polain, 7719; Hain, 10857).

LITERATURE

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ONLINE RESOURCES

Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. Pal. Germ. 149 (German translation)
<http://www.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/helios/fachinfo/www/kunst/digi/lauber/cpg149.html>

Kirchenlexikon: On Martin of Troppau
http://www.bautz.de/bbkl/m/martin_v_t.shtml

Repertorium Chronicarum (list of the Latin manuscripts)
<http://www.chronica.msstate.edu/chronica/search.asp?type=author&id=4446>

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