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[Cistercian Legendary]. *Novum passionale*, selection from JACOBUS DE VORAGINE,
Legenda aurea

In Latin, decorated manuscript on parchment

[Southern Germany or Austria, Diocese of Passau, c. 1350-1400]

208 ff., on parchment, in regular quires of 8 (collation i-xxvi⁸[quire 20 with f. 154 partly torn with loss to Life of Wenceslas]), written in brown ink in a highly abbreviated gothic textualis bookhand, on up to 35 lines, text copied on two columns (justification 180 x 60 x 60 mm.), ruled in lead, some prickings still visible, rubrics in red, paragraph marks in red, some initials touched in red, 2 to 3-line high red monochrome initials, some with calligraphic penwork and traced with ajouré motifs, contemporary marginal corrections or addenda, some contemporary textual corrections in black ink. Bound in a modern limp "Hollandaise" parchment binding, smooth spine, edges dyed in blue (some folios cut short, affecting some marginal annotations). Dimensions 165 x 220 mm.

This selection of 100 lives of the saints taken from Jacobus of Voragine's *Golden Legend* and entitled *Novum passionale* ("New Passional") by the scribe presents a distinctive grouping of saints, different from that in the *Golden Legend*, specially honored in the diocese of Passau and of particular interest to the Cistercians. An eighteenth-century provenance placing the manuscript in the library of the celebrated Cistercian Abbey of Säusenstein (diocese of Passau) located in Ybbs-an-der-Donau could reflect the manuscript's original provenance.

PROVENANCE

1. Both the script and the selection of saints suggest a South German or Austrian origin for this manuscript. Five additional saints either not included in the *Legenda aurea* or placed out of order at the end of the sequence include the following: Saint Virgilius, bishop of Passau, 31 January (see Grotefend, II, 148); the Cistercian Saint Bernard; Saint Altman of Westphalia, bishop of Passau, 8 August (died 1091; see Grotefend, II, p. 60; *Acta SS. Augusti...tomus II*, pp. 366-378); Saint Benedict, also venerated by the Cistercians who followed the Benedictine Rule; Saint Achatius, 22 June, venerated in Passau (see Réau I, pp. 13-14; and Grotefend, II, 149). Among these, Saint Altman is especially noteworthy because he is so uncommon. Other saints

honored in Passau and present in this selection are: Stephen (twice) [Cathedral St. Stephen in Passau], Valentine, Odilia (see Grotefend, II, p. 151), and Gertrude of Nivelles. Loosely based on the order of the *Legenda aurea*, the selection of saints follows that of the calendar for the diocese of Passau, with numerous southern German saints also included such as Ulrich (Ulrich of Augsburg; also Ulricus II Alhartingensis was abbot of the Cistercian Abbey of Säusenstien [1363-1370], honored in Passau, 4 July, see Grotefend, II, p. 149), Oswald, Afra of Augsburg, Wenceslas, Othmar of Saint-Gall (honored in Passau, 16 November, see Grotefend, II, p. 150). Amongst the selection of lives chosen from the *Legenda aurea*, appear a number of typically Cistercian saints, such as Scholastica, Elizabeth (twice) of Schönau [?] and of Hungary, whose feast was adopted by the Cistercians in 1236, Benedict, and of course Bernard (twice), as well as Stephen (twice), Ludger, and Brice. The relatively unrefined quality of the parchment is typical of Cistercian manuscript production. Also typically Cistercian are the monochromatic initials in red, some with characteristic calligraphic pen flourishing (especially the opening initial A).

2. Later inscription (18th century?) in the upper margin of the first folio (partially cut but confirmed on the first folio of a sister manuscript that includes a similar selection of lives loosely following the *Legenda Aurea* of Jacobus de Voragine and equally described on this site): "Catalogo Monasterii B.V. in Valle Dei inscriptus." This monastery is identified as that of *Vallis Dei* or Säusenstein (also written Sewsenstain), near the town of Ybbs-an-der-Donau (Niederösterreich)[see Cottineau, II, col. 2960: Sausenstein, *Vallis Dei*, abbaye de Cisterciens, fondée en 1338, diocese de Passau, près de Ybbs, Autriche inférieure; on this monastery see *Austria sacra* (1780-1788), VIII, 226; L. Janauschek, *Originum Cisterciensium tomus I*, Viennae, 1877, p. 271; J. Stulz, *Geschichte des Cistercienser-Klosters*, Linz, 1840, 46, 587]. At least from the time of the eighteenth century, the two legendaries were considered as a pair. Other manuscripts with the same Cistercian provenance and the same 18th-century inscription are described in F. Lackner, *Datierte Handschriften in Niederösterreichischen...* (1988), no. 42: "Iste liber pertinet ad monasterium Vallis Dei alias Sewsenstain Cisteriensis ordinis Pataviensis diocesis 1539," no. 47, no. 94 and no. 105. These manuscripts are in the libraries of Herzogenburg and St-Pölten (see G. Winner [Herzogenburg](1978), pp. 112-113 and 132; G. Winner [St-Pölten] (1978), pp. 120ff). Further research might reveal other manuscripts once part of the library of Säusenstein and perhaps an inventory of its former holdings.

TEXT

ff. 1-1v, Index with heading: "Hic incipit tabula super novum passionale"; table begins: "De sancto Andrea; De sancta Barbara; De sancto Nycholao; De sancta Lucia [...]"; rubric, *Explicit tabula super novum passionale. Deo gratias. Amen.*

ff. 2-198, selection of the lives of the saints from Jacobus de Voragine [Jacopo da Varazze], *Legenda aurea*: rubric, *De sancto Andrea*; incipit, "Andreis interpreto decorus vel virilis cuius inveni sic descriptam..." (Maggioni [1998], no. 2); last saint in Jacobus de Voragine, *Legenda aurea*: rubric, *De sancta Katherina*; incipit, "Katherina costi regis filia..." (Maggioni [1998], no. 172);

ff. 198-208, selection of lives of the saints from Cistercian and Passau calendars: rubric, *De sancto Virgilio episcopo*; incipit, "Virgilius beatissimus in Hibernia insula..." (ff. 198-200v); rubric, *De sancto Bernhardo*; incipit, "Bernhardus in Burgundia castro..." (ff. 200v-204); rubric, *De sancto Almano* [Altmanno]; incipit, "Almannus a Saxonibus originem traxit..." (ff. 204-206v); rubric, *De sancto Benedicto*; incipit, "Fuit vir vite venerabilis gratia dei..." (ff. 206v-208); rubric, *De sancto Achacio*; incipit, "Decem milia martyrorum sub Alexandro imperatore omnes uno die..."; explicit, "[...] Et his dictis circa horam novam spiritum emisertunt Christo kalendas iulii. Explicit novum passionale Deo gratias" [not included in *Legenda aurea*] (ff. 208-208v).

A Passional, sometimes called a Legendary, contains a collection of lives of the saints recited and celebrated in the liturgy (as opposed to a *libellus* dedicated to the life, miracles, and passion of a single saint) and intended to honor the saints. Passionals, or Legendaries, vary widely in their selection of the saints and the texts devoted to them. They can contain narratives of variable length that recount the life, martyrdom, translation of relics, and miracles of the saints, but their order normally follows that of the liturgical year. The present manuscript, which is entitled "Novum passionale" by the scribe, fits with a group of texts commonly referred to as "Legenda nova" or "Passionale novum" that developed between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries composed by specific authors who, rather than borrowing from the lives that circulated in written and oral traditions, wrote new versions. The most famous of these "new lives" (*Legendae novae* or *Passionale novum*) remains that of Jacobus de Voragine (see G. Philippart [1977], p. 24).

The present Passional is a selection from the complete collection of hagiographies or lives of saints assembled by Jacobus de Voragine. His *Legenda Aurea*, or *Golden Legend*, was designed to accompany the major feasts in the church calendar, detailing the legendary lives and miracles of saints, ordered according to the liturgical year. A Dominican friar of Italian origin, "Jacopo" or Jacobus de Voragine (1230-1298) was archbishop of Genoa and a reputed hagiographer. Assembled c. 1264, his *Golden Legend* remains a valued source for assessing the later cult of the saints in western Europe. Over one thousand manuscripts of the *Legenda Aurea* survive, and it was translated into most European languages, making this collection a veritable medieval best-seller.

With its selection of 100 chapters of lives of the saints taken from the 178 to 182 chapters of Jacobus de Voragine's *Golden Legend*, this copy offers a version tailored for local use. It omits all the stories tied to the Advent of the Lord and begins directly with the Life of Saint Andrew the apostle. The concluding lives do not follow the sequence in the *Golden Legend*, which ends with the Dedication of a Church, whereas the present manuscript ends with Saint Catherine. Following the life of Saint Catherine, two chapters are devoted to Saint Elizabeth (ff. 186-190), then come a number of local or regional saints (see Provenance), as well as saints of Cistercian interest, which further define the distinctiveness of the present manuscript. Whereas recent scholarship on Jacobus de Voragine and the traditions of the lives of the saints (see Fleith and Morenzoni, 2001; Maggioni, 1998; and Boureau, 2004) has made great strides at unraveling the extensive manuscript tradition, much research remains to be done. In particular, the deviant versions of distinctly local or regional character, such as the present one, defy traditional editorial procedures and beg instead for independent study, which would evaluate them in the context of regional religious practices.

LITERATURE

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ONLINE_RESOURCES

Selections from the *Legenda Aurea*

<http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/vorag.html>

Index to the *Legenda Aurea*

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/voragine1.html>