BOOK OF HOURS, in Latin and French, Paris use (Hours of Virgin, Office of Dead), with some Parisian features in calendar and litany. Paris, c. 1490.

Description

Vellum, 144 leaves (174 x 115 mm.). 1 col., 20 lines (104 x 60 mm.). Script: hybrid bastard and humanistic. 20 large and 22 small miniatures, 617 scenes in borders. Collation: binding too tight to permit examination (system of 8 leaves per gathering?). Binding: eighteenth-century reddish brown morocco with gold-tooled border lines.

1-6v Calendar. Monthly feasts, saints, occupations, and zodiacal signs depicted in compartments of architectural borders.
7-13 Gospel Sequences.
7 JOHN BOILED IN OIL BEFORE LATIN GATE. John with poison cup in boat. John writes on Patmos. [fp]
7v-8v Borders: Additional episodes from life of John.
9 LUKE PAINTS VIRGIN. Luke preaching. [fp]
9v-10 Borders: Old Testament types of life of Virgin.
10v MATTHEW WRITING (SYMBOL HOLDS INK POT). Christ calls Matthew. [fp]
11-12 Borders: themes relating to infancy of Christ.
12v MARK WRITING. Mark heals Anianus. [fp]
13-13v Borders: Mission and power of apostles,
14-17 'Obsecro te'.
14 VIRGIN AND CHILD ENTHRONED. Musical angels. [fp]
14v-17, 18-20v Borders (continuing also throughout margins of '0 intemerata'): Tiburtine Sibyl and Emperor Octavian's Vision of Virgin and Child (2 scenes). Story of Heliodorus (II Macc iii, 7-39; 22 scenes).
17v-20v '0 intemerata'.
17v LAMENTATION. [fp]
18-20v Borders: see above.
21-29v  Passion according to St. John.
21    BETRAYAL. Christ before fallen soldiers. Agony in garden. Christ carrying cross. [fp]
22v    Christ mocked. [s]
25    Flagellation. [s]
25v    Christ crowned with thorns. [s]
26v    Christ before Pilate. [s]
28    Christ carrying cross. [s]
29    Crucifixion. [s]
21v-29v  Borders: Stories of Jason; Menelaus; Antiochus; Eleazar; Martyrdom of seven Maccabees and their mother (II Macc iv, 7 - vii, 42).
29v    Tree of Jesse [larger miniature, appendage to full-page illustration, f. 30].
30-46  Hours of Virgin, Matins.
30    ANNUNCIATION. Meeting at Golden Gate. Virgin ascends steps of temple. Betrothal of Virgin. Birth of Virgin. [fp]
30v-46, 30v-78v  Borders for entire Hours of Virgin:
(a) Scenes from lives of Virgin and Christ paired with Old Testament types (Matins, f. 30v - None, f. 67v). In most instances, the same antetype appears twice (in mirror-image compositions) and is coupled with two different Old Testament themes (as in Biblia Pauperum - see Comments).
(b) Narrative cycle from Book of Joshua (Josh i-x; end of None through Vespers and Compline, ff. 68-78v).
46v-54v  Hours of Virgin, Lauds.
46v    MEETING AT GOLDEN GATE. Annunciation to Anne. Annunciation to Joachim. Visitation. [fp]
47-54v  Borders: see Matins.
55-59  Hours of Virgin, Prime.
55    NATIVITY with ADORATION OF SHEPHERDS. Adoration of shepherds. [fp]
55v-59  Borders: see Matins.
59v-62v  Hours of Virgin, Terce.
59v    ANNUNCIATION TO SHEPHERDS. [fp]
60-62v  Borders: see Matins.
63-65v  Hours of Virgin, Sext.
63    ADORATION OF MAGI. Magi's journey. Magi before Herod. [fp]
63v-65v  Borders: see Matins.
66-68v  Hours of Virgin, None.
66    PRESENTATION IN TEMPLE. Jeremiah, David and Amos. [fp]
66v-68v  Borders: see Matins.
69-74  Hours of Virgin, Vespers.
69  MASSACRE OF INNOCENTS. Flight to Egypt, with cornfield miracle. [fp]
69v-74  Borders: see Matins.
74v-78v  Hours of Virgin, Compline.
74v  CORONATION OF VIRGIN. Annunciation of death of Virgin. Assumption of Virgin. Death of Virgin. [fp]
75-78v  Borders: see Matins.
79-84  Hours of Cross.
79  CRUCIFIXION. [fp]
79v-84, and till end of manuscript  Borders: From here the border iconography no longer breaks for new texts. It is described in a separate, continuous section at the end of the list of textual content and major miniatures.
84v-87v  Hours of Holy Spirit.
84v  BAPTISM OF CHRIST. Pentecost. [fp]
85-87v  Borders: see below.
88-101v  Penitential Psalms and Litany.
88  WAR, PESTILENCE AND FAMINE BEFORE DAVID AND GAD (II Kings xxiv, 11-13). David slays Goliath. [fp]
88v-101v  Borders: see below.
102-134  Office of Dead.
102  RAISING OF LAZARUS. Soul in Abraham's bosom; Hell scenes. [fp]
102v-134  Borders: see below.
134v  Blank.
135-144v  Suffrages of Saints.
135  St. Michael fights demons. [s]
135v  St. John Baptist beheaded. [s]
136  St. John Evangelist with poison cup. [s]
136v  Sts. Peter and Paul. [s]
137  St. James Greater dressed as pilgrim. [s]
137v  St. Stephen stoned. [s]
138  St. Lawrence with grid. [s]
138v  St. Christopher carries Christ Child. [s]
139v  St. Sebastian pierced with arrows. [s]
140v  St. Nicholas raises three youths. [s]
141  St. Anthony reading. [s]
141v  St. Anne with Virgin as child. [s]
142  St. Mary Magdalene with ointment jar. [s]
142v  St. Catherine beheaded. [s]
143  St. Barbara with tower and palm. [s]
143v  St. Margaret emerges from dragon. [s]
144v  St. Genevieve with candle and angel. [s]
Border scenes, Hours of Cross through Suffrages:

79v-83  Stories of David, Abigail, Nabal, and Saul (I Kings xxv; xxviii, xxxi).

83v-85v  Story of David, Bathsheba, Uriah, and Nathan (II Kings xi-xii).

86-89  Stories of Thamar, Amnon, Absalom, and Ahitophel (II Kings xiii-xviii).

89v-92v  Story of Solomon (III Kings i-iii).

93-100  Stories of Jeroboam, Ahijah and Achab (III Kings xii-xvi).

100v-122v  Stories of Elijah and Elisha (III Kings xvii-IV Kings vi).

123-143v  Themes from I Maccabees i-ix.

144  St. Margaret flagellated and beheaded.

144v  St. Genevieve tends sheep; scene with devil extinguishing Genevieve's candle (?).
Comments

While at least three artists worked on this large repertoire of pictures, their hands are almost indistinguishable. The main artist, who painted many of the large miniatures, was a follower of Maître François. Similar hands occur in the so-called "Hours of Marguerite de Valois" (Yale University Library, Ms. 411) and possibly the hand of the main artist in a Horae offered by Leo S. Olschki in a catalogue of 1910 (item 42).

Although the iconography of the full-page miniatures in H.5 is less unusual than in the Yale Horae, the cycle includes occasional rare subjects, such as War, Pestilence, and Famine Standing Before David and Gad (for the Penitential Psalms, f. 88). The over six hundred small miniatures in the borders are placed two to a page next to decorated panels with grotesque figures. Rhymed French legends between the miniatures explain their significance. While the border miniatures are painted with considerable care throughout, their iconography is far less even in quality. The scenes in the borders, which are mainly of biblical subjects, relate to the text and its full-page illustrations in several different ways. They are usually arranged in narrative order, but are sometimes paired as type and antitype.

A particularly inconsistent approach is noted in the Gospel Sequences (ff. 7-13v), where the border subjects for the four separate textual passages were selected as follows: (a) to add further narrative episodes on the same theme as the full-page miniature (Life of St. John; for Johr i, 1-14); (b) to show Old Testament types relevant to the text and its full-page miniature (Life of Virgin; for Luke i, 26-38); (c) to include rare narrative scenes relating indirectly to the topic of the text (Christ's infancy; for Matt. ii, 1-12); and (d) to illustrate a portion of the text literally (mission and power of apostles; for Mark xvi, 14-20).

The most carefully conceived of the marginal cycles occurs in the Hours of the Virgin, where scenes from the lives of the Virgin and Christ are paired with Old Testament types (Matins, f. 30v - None, f. 67v). In most instances, the same antitype appears twice, in mirror-image compositions, and is coupled with two different Old Testament themes, an arrangement familiar from the Biblia Pauperum. In fact, H.5 follows Biblia Pauperum iconography so closely that it is safe to assume that its border cycle was modelled after a Biblia Pauperum, probably after a printed copy as H.5 includes some subjects that were apparently introduced first in the blockbook versions.
Nearly all the remaining marginal subjects were taken from the Books of Joshua, Maccabees and Kings. They are arranged in narrative order, and most often the cycle does not break for the beginning of new texts. A typological reference to the text or its full-page illustration is clearly intended only occasionally (see, e.g., in the borders of the Office of the Dead: Elijah resuscitating the son of the widow of Sarepta, ff. 102v-103, and Elisha reviving the Shunammite's son, ff. 116-119, both being prefigurations of the Raising of Lazarus, f. 102).

It remains to be thoroughly investigated how H.5 and other comparable hand-produced Horae relate to contemporary printed Books of Hours with similar iconography and layout.

The liturgical localization evidence in H.5 points to Paris. Both the Hours of the Virgin and the Office of the Dead are for use of Paris; also the calendar and litany have some Parisian features (St. Denis in gold in calendar; Sts. Denis and Genevieve, who is not mentioned in text, depicted in margins of calendar; illustrated suffrage of St. Genevieve).

Selective Bibliography of Related Manuscripts
L.S. Olschki, Manuscrits sur vélin avec miniatures du Xe au XVIe siècle (catalogue LXXIV), Florence, 1910, no. 42, pp. 56-57, pl. XXV.

Provenance

Bibliography


[May 1979]
KC
Morgan MS. No. H.5

For printed text or notices of this MS. see:

New York, Research Center for Musical Iconography, Inventory of Musical Iconography 3: The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts, comp. Terence Ford and Andrew Green, New York, 1988,

no. 564, [fol. 14].
no. 565, [fol. 29v].
no. 566, [fol. 37].
no. 567, [fol. 43].
no. 568, [fol. 55].
no. 569, [fol. 55].
no. 570, [fol. 59v].
no. 571, [fol. 69v].
no. 572, [fol. 71, 71v, 82, 82v].
no. 573, [fol. 88].
no. 574, [fol. 90, 90v].