



# THEORY AND CRITICISM OF LITERATURE & ARTS

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## BIBLIOTHECA & DIGITAL RECONSTRUCTION

ELEVEN SCATTERED MANUSCRIPTS  
DIGITALLY REASSEMBLED THROUGH THE  
WAYBACK RECOVERY METHOD©





*Cover*

Selection of leaves from the Research Centre for European Philological Tradition manuscript collection

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THEORY AND CRITICISM  
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**BIBLIOCLASM &  
DIGITAL RECONSTRUCTION**

ELEVEN SCATTERED MANUSCRIPTS DIGITALLY REASSEMBLED THROUGH THE  
WAYBACK RECOVERY METHOD©



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**D**eus in laudibus.  
in adiutorium meum  
intende. Domine ad

This special issue is dedicated to  
the memory of Prof. Erik Drigsdahl



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# The Franquelin-Croiset Hours

*Carla Rossi*

In Latin and French, illuminated manuscript on vellum, [France, c.1480-1510], The Hours of the Virgin are use of Paris. 188 leaves including 3 blanks, Medieval flyleaves, 172 by 123mm., apparently lacking 4 leaves before fol.167, collation: i12, iii-xx 8, xxi4 (presumably of 8, lacking iii-vi), xxii9 (8+1), xxiii8, xxiv3 (of 4, iv pasted down), many vertical catchwords, 16 lines, ruled in pale red ink, written-space 102mm. by 74mm., written in black ink in a Gothic bookhand, capitals touched in yellow, rubrics in red or blue, calendar alternately red and blue, one and 2-line initials and line-fillers in burnished gold on pink and blue grounds with white tracery on almost every page, 20 small miniatures (6- to 9-line) with three-quarter panel borders of blue and gold acanthus, flowers and fruit on parti-coloured gold grounds, 15 large miniatures in arched compartments above 3 lines of text and an initial, with frames of liquid gold scattered with jewels, and full borders as above, occasionally with birds, slight yellowing of vellum and thumbing, occasional small spots and smudging to final three small miniatures and Gabriel's face on fol.29, otherwise in very good condition when auctioned at Sotheby's, London, December 2, 2003.

For the reconstruction I am about to describe, as for both the Book of Hours of Louis de Roucy, and the De Ponthieu Hours, I started from a leaf owned by the Research Centre for European Philological Tradition (Fig. 1).

This leaf represents a very interesting case study, because it would appear to belong to a BoH of little value, but the parent manuscript turned out to be the most richly illuminated codex of which our Research Centre possesses a leaf.

**D**omine non est exalta-  
tum cor meū neq; elati  
sunt oculi mei.  
**N**eq; ambulavi in mag-  
nis neq; in mirabilib; sup  
me.  
**S**i nō hūiliter sentiebas  
sed exaltaui aīam meam.  
**S**icut ablactatus est sup  
matre sua ita retributio i  
anima mea.  
**S**peret israel in dño ex hoc  
nunc et usq; in seculū.  
**G**loria patri. *A. Scā dei ge-  
nitrix virgo semp maria inter-  
cede pro nobis ad dñm deum*

Fig. 1. The Franquelin-Croiset Hours, fol. 89r, leaf in our Research Centre's manuscript collection.

nostrum. *Hymnus*

**V**irgo dei genitrix que  
totus non capit orbis  
in tua seclausit viscera fact'  
homo.

**V**era fides geniti purga  
uit crimina mundi et tibi  
virginitas iuolata manet

**T**e matrem pietatis ope  
te clamitat orbis subuecias  
famulis o benedicta tuus.

**G**loria magna patri com  
par tibi gloria nate cu spu  
paradito gloria magna pi

**S**amen. *Capitulum*  
Sicut cynamonu et

The parent manuscript was dismembered shortly after being auctioned in the early 2000s.

It was an extensively illuminated Book of Hours from the immediate circle of the Master of Jacques de Besançon, formerly known as the 'Chief Associate of Maître François', and possibly his son.

The Jacques de Besançon Master was documented in Paris from 1472. Confronted with the challenge of printed books, he responded by producing showy volumes such as the present Book of Hours, with rich colouration and extensive liquid gold modelling. His style is a direct continuation of that of Maître François. His scenes have great poise, with figures appearing as if frozen in mid movement.

An inscription dated 1602 on the front flyleaf recorded that the manuscript was given to Élisabeth Croiset (not Crosier, as stated in the Sotheby's catalogue), the wife of the writer, by her mother (and not grandmother, as the curator of Sotheby's catalogue wrote in error) Claude Franquelin. The Sotheby's catalogue also mentions an erased inscription signed Dupyer and dated 1692 on the end flyleaf.

I conducted some historical research in the Paris State Archives, which showed that both the Croiset and the Franquelin families belonged to the Parisian upper middle class in the 17th century. Claude Franquelin was the daughter of a notary also called himself Claude I, who is reported to have died in 1579.

Claude's marriage contract (dated 16 February 1560, signed before the notaries of the Châtelet) with François Croiset, he himself a notary, can also be found in the archives [1].

[1] See Paris, *Archives notariales*, Lusson Regnault (Liasses), 1599 - 1605, fol. 141.



At the Paris archives, I also found the marriage contract of Claude's parents [2]:

Contrat de mariage entre maître Claude Franquelin, procureur au Châtelet, et Geneviève Garnier, fille de maître Charles Garnier, procureur au Châtelet. 6 janvier 1535.



Fig. 4: Franquelin-Croiset Hours, *bifolium* sold by Reiss und Sohn, On the right, fol. 118r, Job, 96mm. by 74mm., Job seated on the dung heap comforted by the three friends, in a landscape.

[2] Minutes et répertoires du notaire Guillaume I Payen, 22 avril 1530- juin 1566, MC/ET/XIX/76, 6 janvier 1535. See also ET/VIII/575 folio 74, 3 août 1609, *transaction entre les héritiers de défunts Claude Franquelin et Geneviève Garnier.*

Further historical research enabled me to find evidence of a sale for £14 by Bernard Quaritch [3] of this same Book of Hours in London 1874. In this case, the sales catalogue was far more accurate than that of Sotheby's. Indeed, it reads as follows:

This is a very interesting volume, with several memoranda on the fly-leaves, which contains a record of the ownership during the entire of the 17th century. In the year 1602, the widow of François Croiser [as we have seen the indication is wrong, because the surname is beyond doubt Croiset], to whose father it had belonged, gave it as a wedding present to her daughter Elizabeth on the latter's marriage with Guillaume Nutrat, who has inscribed a memorandum, to that effect, dated 1602. A son of Nutrat inscribes the next memorandum, ordering that the book be preserved by his descendants, giving the date 1638, but omitting his signature. Under this is a similar notice by Marie Nutrat, apparently the widow of the last writer. The final inscription is as follows: "En conformité de l'intention de mes pères et mères, ce livre a esté gradé et est parvenu jusques a moy. Je prie mes enfans de le garder de mesme et je veux que par forme et dorit de substitution graduelle et infinie il passe a laisné de mes enfans males. Fait ce 20 Febvrier, 1692. Dupuys nore [4]. septième du nom".

It is therefore possible to better clarify the Franquelin-Croiset kinship ties: the richly illuminated manuscript had belonged to the notary Claude Franquelin (perhaps he himself had inherited it). In 1602 it passed to Elisabeth Croiset, who in turn bequeathed it to one of her sons, probably Jacques, since the eldest son, Charles, pursued an ecclesiastical career.

[3] *A General Catalogue of Books: Offered to the Public at the Affixed Prices by Bernard Quaritch*, London, 1874, p. 12, Nr. 40.

[4] Note that *nore* reported in the 1692 inscription is an abbreviation for *notaire*, the writer must be Charles Dupuys.

40 HORÆ BEATÆ MARIE VIRGINIS, cum Calendario, sm. 8vo. MANUSCRIPT ON VELLUM, by a French scribe, with BORDERS and CAPITAL LETTERS richly illuminated in gold and colours, ornamented with 35 MINIATURES (15 large and 20 small) painted in gold and colours, in ancient calf, gilt edges, with clasps, £14. Sec. XV

The Joys and Mercies are given in French, as well as the Calendar which contains a great many names of Saints, including *Vaast*, on the 15 July. This is a very interesting volume, with several memoranda on the fly-leaves, which contains a record of the ownership during the entire of the seventeenth century. In the year 1602, the widow of François Croiser, to whose father it had belonged, gave it as a wedding present to her daughter Elizabeth on the latter's marriage with Guillaume Nutrat, who has inscribed a memorandum to that effect, dated 1602. A son of Nutrat inscribes the next memorandum, ordering that the book be preserved by his descendants, giving the date 1638, but omitting his signature. Under this is a similar notice by Marie Nutrat, apparently the widow of the last writer. The final inscription is as follows:—"En conformité de l'intention de mes pères et mères, ce livre a esté gardé et est parvenu jusques a moy. Je prie mes enfans de le garder de mesme et je veux que par forme et droit de substitution graduelle et infinie il passe a l'aîné de mes enfans masles. Fait ce xx Febyrier, 1692.—Dupuys not. septieme du nom."

Fig. 5. The accurate description of the manuscript in the 1874 Quaritch catalogue

Marie Nutrat, cited in the inscription, married Jean Dupuys, *notaire au Châtelet*, in 1619, and this explains why the last owner of the manuscript declared to be the seventh member of the Dupuys family to own the Fauquelin-Croiset Book of Hours.

We do not exactly know from whom the manuscript was acquired in 1874, but we do indeed know that it passed into the ownership and became part of the collection of William Foyle (the auction catalogue of his collection at Christie's, 11 July 2000, reported that his gold-stamped leather bookplate had been added to the manuscript).

The three day sale of Foyle's collection realised some £12,000,000, the most expensive item, a Medieval French work, selling for £883,750.

It was the single most valuable collection of books ever to be sold at auction in Britain or Europe.

William Alfred Westropp Foyle (1885-1963) was a British bookseller and businessman who co-founded Foyles bookshop in 1903 with his brother Gilbert Foyle. During the Second World War, Foyle bought Beeleigh Abbey, a 12th-century monastery, where he established his library.

## CONTENT:

Calendar ff.1-12v; Gospel extracts ff. 14-20: John f.14, Luke f.16, Matthew f.17v, Mark f.19; Obsecro te ff.21-25; O Intemerata ff.25-27v; Office of the Virgin use of Paris ff.29-92: matins f.29, lauds f.50, prime f.61, terce f.67, sext f.71, none f.75, vespers f.80, compline f.87; Seven Penitential Psalms and Litany ff. 93-110; Hours of the Cross f.111-114; Hours of the Holy Spirit ff.115-117v; Office of the Dead ff.118-162; Fifteen Joys of the Virgin, lacking end ff.163-166; Seven Requests to our Lord, lacking opening ff.167-169; Suffrages ff.170-187: to Trinity f.170, Michael f.170v, John the Baptist f.171, Peter and Paul f.171v, James f.172, Christopher f.172v, Sebastian f.174, Denis f.175v, Gervasius and Protasius f.176, all martyr Saints f.177v, Nicholas f.177v, Claud f.178, Anthony f.179, Fiacre f.179v, Francis f.180v, Maur f.181, Martin of Tours f.181v, Anne f.182, Mary Magdalene f.182v, Catherine f.183, Barbara f.183v, Geneviève f.184v, Opportuna f.185, Prayers to the Virgin, opening *Salve regina misericordie vita dulcedo* ff.185v-187

## ILLUMINATION:

This extensively illustrated Book of Hours shows illuminators adapting their techniques to the demands of the marketplace to produce a satisfyingly showy volume with efficiency and skill. The illumination with its darker hues enhanced by liquid gold modelling and detailing - even of Job's dungheap - is typical of conventions fashionable around 1480 in northern France. Liquid gold is also extensively used in the borders. The neatly hatched and cross-hatched gold contrasts with the more spontaneous execution of flesh areas; this gives energy to the figures which are further animated by their expansive gestures.

The subjects of the miniatures are as follows:

- f.14 St John on Patmos, writing
- f.16 St Luke, seated at a desk, reading (small miniature)
- f.17v St Matthew, seated reading from a book held by angel (small miniature)
- f.19 St Mark, seated, writing on a scroll, watched by his mustachioed lion (small miniature)
- f.21 Pietà
- f.25 Virgo lactans
- f.29 Annunciation
- f.50 Visitation
- f.61 Nativity, with the Virgin and Joseph adoring the Christ Child
- f.67 Annunciation to the Shepherds
- f.71 Adoration of the Magi
- f.75 Presentation in the Temple
- .80 Flight into Egypt, with the idol breaking
- f.87 Coronation of the Virgin
- f.93 David slaying Goliath
- f.111 Crucifixion, with the Virgin and John the Evangelist on the left of the cross and Longinus and Stephaton on the right
- f.115 Pentecost
- f.118 Job on the Dungheap
- f.163 Virgin and Child enthroned beneath a canopy held by angels
- f.170 Gnadenstuhl Trinity (small miniature)
- f.170v St Michael vanquishing Lucifer (small miniature)
- f.171v Sts Peter and Paul (small miniature)
- f.172v St Christopher (small miniature)
- f.174 Martyrdom of St Sebastian (small miniature)
- f.175v St Denis (small miniature)
- f.177 Martyr Saints (small miniature)
- f.177v St Nicholas reviving the Three Boys (small miniature)
- f.178v St Claude

- f.180 St Fiacre (small miniature)
- f.180 Stigmatisation of St Francis (small miniature)
- f.181v St Martin dividing his cloak (small miniature)
- f.182v St Mary Magdalene (small miniature)
- f.184v St Geneviève (small miniature)
- f.185v Virgin as the woman clothed in the sun (small miniature)
- f.186v Virgin, in three-quarter length (small miniature).

At the current stage of reconstruction, this iconographic apparatus has been 90% recovered, while the text leaves retrieved are over a hundred.

These leaves have been included in our research centre's database (Fig. 6) of dismembered Books of Hours, part of which is offered for free consultation at the web address: <https://www.receptio.eu/horaedb>.

If you would like to consult the entire DB for study, please contact: [info@receptio.eu](mailto:info@receptio.eu)

The Franquelin-Croiset Hours are scheduled for publication in 2025.



Fig. 6.