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BERNHARD VON BREYDENBACH, *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* (Journey to the Holy Land, in German)

In German, manuscript on paper

Mühlhausen (Thüringen), Germany, 1527

ii (modern) + 124 + ii (modern) folios on paper in quarto, with a single watermark pair present in the paper stocks, a crown, of the type Piccard, Krone, IX 49 (1524-30), the paper from a mill in the upper Rhineland or the Vosges, contemporary foliation in brown ink in Roman numerals, upper margin, right, ff. i-cxvii, the last seven leaves unfoliated, lacking four leaves at the end as the index breaks off incomplete (collation i-xv⁸ xvi⁴ [final leaves cancelled with loss of text]), unruled (justification c.170 x c.130 mm), written in one sixteenth-century cursive book-hand throughout on usually 32-38 long lines in black and red inks, rubrication and underlining in red throughout. Modern glued binding in card boards over which leaves from a missal in an earlier to mid-fourteenth century textualis formata with melodies in Hufnagel notation on parchment (on the front: chants for Thursday in the second week of Lent, albeit with alternative chants in first position, Cantus ID g02026, g02026.1, g01554, g00707a, and g01192; on the reverse: chants for Saturday and then Sunday in the first week of Lent, Cantus ID g00715, g00715a, g00717, g00718, g02020, g00698, g00643(?), and g00726) have been stretched for decoration and varnished, in rather poor condition with the back cover now quite blackened, bearing traces of use in an earlier sewn binding, and re-using the front pastedown from an earlier binding; three sheets laid in: modern paper bifolium with a list of content in German in a nineteenth-century hand in black ink, and a single modern paper leaf with additional bibliographical information in German in a late nineteenth-century hand in black ink and in a more recent hand, in pencil (see Provenance below). Dimensions 192 x 150 mm.

The pilgrimage travelogue of Bernhard von Breydenbach was not just a masterpiece of early print technology for its fold-out woodcuts, but one of the most extensive and informative accounts of the faiths and history of the entire Eastern Mediterranean from the later Middle Ages. This is a particularly interesting example of a manuscript copied from a printed exemplar. The Dominican friar who made it did so to reorder and repurpose the textual content, unfixing it from its printed form, to meet his own pastoral needs. He did so at a time and place – the Saxon lands of the mid-1520s, at the heart of the Reformation – when Catholic religious practices like pilgrimage came under intense and sustained scrutiny.

PROVENANCE

1. The manuscript was copied by the Dominican friar Mathias Sartoris (lat. *sartor*, “one who hoes” or “tailor”) or Arbus (presumably lat. *aruus*, “ploughed field”) of the convent in Halle an der Saale, at the time preacher in Mühlhausen, around sixty miles to the west. Written on one coherent paper stock, the manuscript was planned and executed as a single operation undertaken across a period of a few weeks in July-August 1527, as indicated by the notations Mathias made throughout the manuscript: *mulhausen. 1527* (f. 1); *1527 Mathias arbus* (f. 40v); *Marthe virginis* [29 July] .1527. (f. 71); *frater Mathias sartoris ordinis predicatorum Conuentus Hallensis predicator in Mulhaußen anno domini 1527. scripsit hec omnia* (f.

71); and *finis in vigilia b. Augustini episcopi* [27 August] *ante completorium in Mulhausen anno domini 1527. Mathias* (f. 117).

The production of this manuscript came in the midst of tumultuous years for the Dominican friars of Halle (for the Dominican friary in Halle in this period see Rütter, 2008, pp. 85, 90-91 and 93-94, and Müller, 2012, pp. 273-74). They had been relocated from their magnificent church in 1520 by cardinal Albrecht von Brandenburg (1490-1545), archbishop of Magdeburg (r. 1513-45) and of Mainz (r. 1514-45), who claimed it for his cathedral in his residential city of Halle and transferred the friars to the church of St. Moritz (the "Moritzkloster"). It was Albrecht who had commissioned the infamous Leipzig Dominican friar Johann Tetzl (d. 1519), whose trade in indulgences had attracted the especial ire of Martin Luther in 1517, in part to finance his grandiose architectural and political schemes. In 1525, during the tumult of the Peasants' War, the mendicants in Halle had come in for fierce local criticism; the Dominican friars in Mühlhausen had even been expelled from their convent and went into exile in Leipzig, only restored after the revolts were suppressed (see Springer, 1994, p. 309 n. 9 (on Halle), and pp. 206, 301, 310-11, 337 n. 12 and 338 n. 17 (on Mühlhausen)).

2. Ellwangen an der Jagst, private collection, in 1626: on the inside front pastedown, a near-illegible note of ownership in faded red crayon: "Hannß E:::: :elsch? In Ellwangen anno 1626 dis buch gesig."
3. Belonged to Hans Karl von Ow-Wachendorf (1814-1882), and then to his son, Hans Otto (1843-1921), of Schloss Wachendorf, Starzach (Landkreis Tübingen). Hans Karl wrote the list of contents on the modern paper bifolium laid into the volume, as identified by a note in a slightly later hand, very probably that of his son Hans Otto, on an additional loose leaf. That note records the inspection of the manuscript by Wilhelm Heyd (1823-1906), head librarian (Oberbibliothekar) at the then Königliche Landesbibliothek in Stuttgart, from whom information regarding its content was received on May 21, 1884.

Hans Karl and Hans Otto, members of an old knightly dynasty, became prominent regional politicians as they sought a new position for their family after the ancient rights of lordship exercised by the Reichsritterschaft had been abolished in Württemberg in 1805; after unification, Hans Otto was elected to the German Reichstag in 1878-1890. They were known for their extensive historical interests, focused around the medieval and early modern past of their knightly family around their seat at Wachendorf. They counted – not without reason – the famous later twelfth-century poet Hartmann von Aue as an ancestor. Their interests broadened to include the cultivation and preservation of regional history: Hans Karl was a meticulous archaeologist, a patron to the restoration of historic buildings and an opponent of insensitive reconstruction, the founder of a regional history association, and a prolific collector in his own right. The museum assembled by Hans Karl and continued by Hans Otto is still preserved at Schloss Wachendorf (see Gönner, 1995).

4. Hartung & Hartung, Munich, 1994; their sale 77, lot 11 (see Handschriftencensus entry in Online Resources below).

5. Inlibris (Gilhofer Nfg.), Vienna; their item 49410 (see Handschriftencensus entry in Online Resources below).

TEXT

ff. 1-117, incipit, "Von der heiligen reyse vnd heilsamen fart vber mehr / ghen Jerusalem / zu dem hailgen grabe vnnsers herren Jhesu christi / vnnd mercklich frucht / so dar aus einem andechtigem leser volgen mag. Vorrede. Auß vbertrefflickayt der hailgen landt vber alle andere landt / wurd billich dieser fart vbertrefflich ere / lob vnnd breiß zu erst ermessen..."; f. 41, incipit, "Reyß von hierusalem durch die wusteneey gegen dem berg Synay zu sant Katharina. Vorrede. Welcher des alten testaments hystorien. vnd der funff bucher Moysi vnd Josue vberlist / der findet in den selben / die großmechtickeyt der glorie vnd gutte gotes..."; f. 71v, incipit, "Von gesetzen / gewonheyten / sytten / yrthumen von vnns. die weyl wir in den landen sein gewesen / hohen vleyß angekert vnd sunderlich erforschung / hat mogen erfunden werden..."; f. 117, explicit, "...Gedencket an die wunderlich werck die er hat gethan pharaoni vnd seinem here in dem rothen mehr / vnd aller seiner erschrecktlichen vrteyl die von welt zu welt in die verkerten nacionen hat erzeiget / vnd sich an ynen gerochen / aber die seinen altzeit aus engsten erlöbet vnd behalten / der sey in eweckeyt gelobet Amen"; ff. 117v-124, index.

Bernhard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam*, in German. The great pilgrimage to the Holy Land on which Bernhard von Breydenbach (1434-97), cathedral canon in Mainz, embarked in 1483-1484 together with the painter and woodcutter Erhard Reuwich was immortalized in their co-production of an immense travelogue in collaboration with the Mainz printer Peter Schöffer. Breydenbach prepared two versions of his text, in Latin and in German, which were published successively on February 11 (Latin text, GW 5075) and June 21, 1486 (German text, GW 5077). The extraordinary technical achievement of Reuwich's fold-out woodcuts, which showed views of the Holy Land and of waystations on the pilgrimage route out from Venice in unsurpassed detail was met with particular sensation. By 1500 the German version had been reprinted twice by different printers and translations into Dutch, French and Spanish had been published (see Huschenbett, 1978, and the introduction to Mozer, 2010, with a full conspectus of the early printed editions at p. xxxi).

The pilgrimage was undertaken in two stages: first from the Rhineland to Venice and thence on to Jerusalem; second from Jerusalem onwards across the desert to the monastery of St. Catherine in Sinai, and back to Venice. In the published travelogue, Breydenbach followed his account of the first stage with an extended presentation of the peoples of the Holy Land and their faiths and customs, culminating in a plaintive call for the (Latin) Christian reconquest of the region. He drew so extensively on earlier texts – learned studies of Eastern Christianity, anti-Islamic polemic, existing travel narratives, histories of the siege of Rhodes in 1480 and of the Turkish campaigns in the Aegean – as to present a work that is perhaps more properly considered encyclopedic than a pilgrim's tale.

In this manuscript version, the sequence of sections has been re-ordered. The two parts of the pilgrimage narrative are relocated adjacent to one another, and then followed by nearly all the "appendices" to the first part, with those to the second part (primarily historical accounts of the Ottoman conquests) omitted entirely. The text thus corresponds in the diplomatic

transcription of the first German edition published by Mozer, 2010, to pp. 28-284 (ff. 1-40v), 524-658 (ff. 41-70) and 284-514 (ff. 71v-117r) but is frequently abridged and/or reworked.

This present manuscript offers a version of Breydenbach's text revised to meet the interests of its friar copyist. The content has been unlocked through his production of a detailed and extensive index specific to this copy, perhaps to facilitate thematic access to the text for use in preaching. Breydenbach's long dedicatory epistles are omitted at the start and the manuscript begins with the preface proper. The opening statement has been revised such that reference is no longer made, as in the printed text, to an account that is to be followed by a devout pilgrim, but by a devout reader. Only seven manuscript copies in various languages, not including this one, including full texts and extracts, were identified in the only list hitherto published (Röhricht, 1890, p. 132); they have never been studied. Breydenbach's text was prepared immediately for print and did not first circulate in manuscript, therefore all manuscript copies must have been made from printed editions and have therefore been regarded as secondary by scholars. Their examination as a set (and more must surely exist beyond those noted in 1890) would constitute a fine subject for a case-study in reader reception in manuscript of an outstanding monument in the printed literary culture of the incunable age (for reader reception of the incunable editions themselves see Boyle, 2021, pp. 153-191).

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Cantus: *A Database for Latin Ecclesiastical Chant – Inventories of Chant Sources*

<https://cantus.uwaterloo.ca/>

Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke

<https://www.gesamtkatalogderwiegendrucke.de/>

Handschriftencensus entry for this manuscript

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