

**TWINGER VON KÖNIGSHOFEN, JAKOB, Chronik**  
In German, manuscript on paper  
Eastern France (Alsace), c. 1455 (additions, 1542-1566)

*ii-196 ff., original foliation in Roman letters i-eli, in the center of the upper margin, continued by modern foliation in pencil with letters for blank folios (e.g., ff. 154a-154b, 158a-158b, 159a-159f, 162a-162b, 165a-165b, 168a-168d, 169a-169c), (collation, i<sup>2</sup> ii-xvi<sup>12</sup> xvii<sup>10</sup> [ff. 165d-168b] xviii<sup>6</sup> [169c is the flyleaf]), without signatures or catchwords, on paper (ten watermarks, ff. 1-152 et 169, letter P, Piccard P III 741, III 748, III 751, and close to Piccard P III 739 et III 740, Strasbourg and Baden 1450-1455, and , ff. 158-end and flyleaves, letter Y with a cross and trefoil, four watermarks, of which one is close to Piccard 030025, Baden 1453), written in black ink in a Gothic cursive script on a single column of 46 to 50 lines (justification (justification 220 x 150 mm.), ruled in ink, red initials of two to four lines and red rubrics and marginalia in Latin (ff. 65v, 166v). Binding of the eighteenth century, the spine and corners of brown morocco with a piece of red morocco for the title gilt "KCNIGSHOVE / CHRONICA / MSC." avec parchment strips reinforcing the quires and written in Caroline minuscule (height 265 mm., 25 lines, height of justification 195-200 mm.), binding rubbed, two first leaves restored, some traces of humidity, not seriously affecting condition or text, in general condition is very good. Dimensions 285 x 210 mm.*

Called the "first German prose history of the world in Upper Germany," this engaging work fuses the world chronicle with the local history of Strasbourg and Alsace. It was written expressly for the cultivated laity and achieved great success in the later Middle Ages. There is no modern critical edition, taking into account the c. 82 manuscripts, and the present copy combining features of all three versions of the text and original, perhaps unique, additions merits further study. Copies are exceptionally rare on the market.

#### PROVENANCE

1. Written in Alsace in the middle of the fifteenth century according to the script and the watermarks, the manuscript remained in Alsace until at least the second half of the sixteenth century, according to the additions that concern the region.
2. One owner, already in the fifteenth century, who knew Latin, added two passages (f. 65v, life of Saint Maternus, incipit, "Anno Domini lxxxiiij sanctus Maternus migravit ad Cristum, sepultus in Colo[nia]..."; and f. 156v, epitaph of Sigismund, incipit, "O Roma nym war / das ich Sigmunt din keyser zwar...").
3. Collection of Isaak Haffner (1751-1831), professor of theology and collector of Alsatian material; he constituted a collection of 30,000 works mostly annotated by him (see *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, VII, 1966, p. 462; and *Nouveau dictionnaire de biographie alsacienne*, 14, 1989, 1373-1374). Although there is no evidence of this provenance directly in the manuscript, it is indicated in a description of the manuscript inserted in it. The manuscript corresponds perhaps to n° 4237 of the *Catalogue systématique de la Bibliothèque de feu M. Isaac Haffner, ... Première partie*, Strasbourg, 1832, p. 206 ("Königshoven, Chronik. (Ein altes Manuscript.) 4.").

## TEXT

f. 1, Prologue, rubric, *Hie vohet an die vorrede in diser Cronica*; incipit, "Man vindet in latine vil cronicken geschriben das sint bücher von der zit die do sagent von keisern, babsten und von künigen und ouch von anderen herren wie ir leben ist gesin... aber zu tutsche vindet man solicher bücher gar wenig, wie doch etliche kluge layen gern lesen von solichen dingen als gelert pffaffen... Harumb wil ich Jacob von Kunigshofen, ein priester zu Strasburg zu tutsche schriben..."; the second chapter is indicated with the date 1390 ("man zalt tusedt dryhundert und nunzig jar");

ff. 1v-20, Chapter 1 on Creation, Jewish and Oriental antiquities, with the rubric, *Dis ist der anevang wie got die Engel beschuff zum ersten*, incipit, "Got in ewikeit nach siner grossen miltikeit der wolt im selber nit behaben allein sinen schatz...";

ff. 20v-62v and ff. 155-158, Chapter 2 on the Emperors, rubric, *Hie vohet an das ander Capittel von den keysern und künigen zu Rome*, incipit, "Hie vohet an das ander capitel dis buchs in dem geschriben stet von allen römeschen künigen und keysern die von gotz geburte gevesen sint"; on f. 62v, a mention in red ink indicates that the text is completed further on: "O++ von dissen und anderen kunigen und stu her nach zo dissen zeychen O++"; and on f. 155, continuation of the text with the rubric, O++, incipit, "Wenzelaus künig zu Behem. Diere ist der böse künige..."; the continuation goes to the coronation of the Emperor Frederick II and the ceremonies that followed in March 1452;

ff. 62v-83v and 159-159v, Chapter 3 on the Popes, rubric, *Hie vohet an das dritte capittel von allen bebesten die sit Gottes Geburt gewesen sint. Ihesus Cristus was der erste bobest*, incipit, "Unser Herre Ihesus Cristus der erste und der oberste bobest was in dirre welte..."; the text stops at f. 83v, according to Version A (ed. Hegel, p. 599), and the conclusion is copied according to Version C on ff. 159-159v (*ibid.*, p. 600-603);

ff. 83v-103 and 160-162, Chapter 4 on the Bishops of Strasbourg, rubric, *Hie vohet an das vierde capittel dirre croniken und seit von den byschofen von Strosburg und etwas von den künigen von Frangrich*, incipit, "Vor ist geseit von den römeschen künigen, keysern und bobesten. Nu wil ich sagen von den byschofen von Strosburg wann ich bin von Strosburg geborn"; the continuation is independent of that of Jakob Twinger von Königshofen and extends the text to the double Episcopal election of 1439-1440, rubric, *Zwen wordent zo bisschoff erweelt*, incipit, "Wilhelm von Disch niderlender wart von dem bobeste zu bischoffe gegeben zu Strosburg do man zalt M. CCC. LXXXXV jor...";

ff. 103-151v, Chapter 5 on the History of Strasbourg and its region, rubric, *Hie vohet an das fünfte Capittel von Strosburg und von disem lande by dem Ryne*, incipit, "In disem fünften capittel wil ich sagen von weme dise stat Strosburg und dis lant by dem Rine ursprung und anefang heit..."; the chapter concludes with the arrival of the King of Cyprus in Strasbourg in 1363 (f. 150v, rubric, *Der künig von Zypern kam gen Strosburg*, ed. p. 858-859) and that of the King of Denmark, according to Version A (f. 150v, rubric, *Der künig von Tennemarg kam gen Strosburg*). The chapter is augmented by an original paragraph on the event 1399 (f. 151, rubric, *Von den Ammeistern zu Strosburg und auch atwas das by inen bestehen ist*, incipit, "In dem jore do man zalte M CCC XC IX jore, do wart zu Strosburg ammeister herr Rülin Barcpfenning der junge, do kam meister und rat für das fünff gesellen werent die zusammen hettent gesworn zu haben einen briefe, den sie selber gedihet hettent...") and brief notes on money and taxes for the years 1396 to 1446 (f. 151v, rubric, *Von der muntz zo Strasborg*, incipit, "Do man zalte M. ccc. lxxxxvi jor do viengent die von Strosburg an grossen und vierer zu slahen...");

f. 151v, Poem on the dangers incurred by Strasbourg, incipit, "Heimlicher und kuntlicher ratt, Iherusalem und Troy zerstöret hatt / Exemplum Mentz, Luttich, Bopparten, Wurms, Wissenburg, hüt dich / ... / Sint alle gemahnt von einem Duch"; poem of 16 verses in rhymed couplets (added in the sixteenth century);

ff. 152-154, annalistic notes for the years 1542-1556, incipit, "Do man zalte M. V<sup>c</sup> xlviij, do hatt keiser Carolus der fünffte die evangelisten Churfürsten unnd Reichsstett bezwungen...", explicit, "Do man zaltt 1566 uff mittwuch den 8 januarii zu 2 urenn nach mittag ist ein schöner Regenbogenn am himel gestandenn, welches nitt vil zu diser zeit im jar gesegenn württ";

ff. 155-158, 159-159v, 160-162, Continuation of Chapters 1 to 4 copied in the same hand;

ff. 163, 164-165v, 166-168, Additions to Chapter 5, copied in the same hand for the events from 1404 to 1441 (f. 163, incipit, "Die vierde wyterunge zu Strosburg. Donoch in dem jore do man zalte von Gotz gebürte M CCCC und III jor wart Strosburg aber ein michel teil witer gemacht wann Krutenowe..."), from 1405 to 1454 (f. 164, incipit, Die Rinbrucke wart gewonnen. Do man zalt M. CCCC. xxviii jor uf montage früg vor unser frowen tag nativitas wart die Rinbrucke gewonnen von junckherr Ludewig von Liechtenberg..."), f. 165v, explicit, "Do man zalt M. CCCC xlviij jor uff Sant Martins tag do gewan der apt von Murbach die statt Gebwiler by nacht unbewart der eren die doch zu sinem closter gehorte und trengete sie von iren fryheiten und alt herkomen mit gewalt"); from 1438 to 1445 (f. 166, rubric, *Von den erten gecken*, incipit, "Do man zalte M<sup>o</sup> CCCC<sup>o</sup> xxxviiij jor uff den nechsten dunrstag noch sant Mathis tag in der vasten, do kam über Zabern steige in Eilsas ein unzellich gros volk, die nante man die armen gecken..."), f. 168, explicit, "es worent als arme knechte als vor geseit ist"); the most recent event in on f. 165 (rubric, *Von Mutzich wie es erstigen wart und wider verlorn*, incipit, "Do man zalte M. CCCC liij jor uff sant Dorothen tag und uff mittwoch wart Mutzich erstigen vor tag unwiderseit von dem bischoff von Mentze und herzog Ludewig von Peyern, des byschoffs von Strosburg bruder...");

f. 169, Chapter 6, alphabetic index for the Chronicle, letter Z, incipit, "IX. Zehen gebot die enpfieng Moyses von Gotte," explicit, "lxxvi. xlix. ein grosse zweygunge zwisschent leigen und pfaffen."

This manuscript contains the text of the German prose Chronicle begun by the priest-canon, Jakob Twinger von Königshofen in 1382 and twice revised to include events up to 1415. This is the first German prose history of the world in Upper Germany, and it combines a universal chronicle or *Weltchronik* with the local history of Strasbourg and Alsace. Quite a storyteller, Twinger von Königshofen combined fables, legends, and jokes with a narration from historical sources that include the German chronicler Ekkehard of Aura, but also Eusebius, Bede, Martinus Polonus, Petrus Comestor, and others. For his local history, he relied heavily on the work of his older contemporary and countryman Fritsche Closener, whose chronicle of 1362 represents one of the "first attempts to associate the history of a particular town with a general history." Written for the *Klugen*, that is, cultivated laymen, "who read such things as eagerly as learned parsons," his lively narrative was highly popular especially in Alsace but also throughout Germany, and it was even translated into Czech.

Not a great deal is known about Jakob Twinger von Königshofen. Born in 1346 Königshofen, a village near Strasbourg in Alsace, he died in Strasbourg on December 27, 1420. He became a priest in 1382, for a time being in charge of the Church of Drusenheim. In 1394, he became

notary Apostolic, and in 1395 a canon of St.-Thomas in Strasbourg. There he was placed in charge of the archives, and he kept the stock books and registers. Among his writings, there is a Latin Chronicle, which never achieved great circulation, perhaps because it was not highly original, containing extracts from various authors, as well as a Latin-German grammar, sometimes attributed instead to Closener.

Twinger von Königshofen's chronicle fits in the tradition of the German universal or world chronicle that begins with the Latin work of Ekkehard of Aura completed in 1125, which he certainly knew, and continues with the German versions of Eike von Repgow and Rudolf von Ems of the thirteenth century. By the fourteenth century, when Twinger von Königshofen wrote, the world chronicle was especially popular and versions written in Lubeck, Ulm, and Nuremberg already existed. One of the earliest examples of a world chronicle that combines universal history with local history appears to be the *Magdeburger Weichbildchronik* written in the mid-thirteenth century. Constantly emended, revised, and expanded, vernacular chronicles were extremely popular in German-speaking lands, judging from the number of surviving manuscripts, for they offered educated readers a view of past that provided a context for the present day. Most begin with the history of Creation and end with some version of current events, as does that of Jakob Twinger von Königshofen. The history of the town of Strasbourg in the face of the power of the bishops is one of the themes underlying Twinger's Chronicle.

Composed of five chapters, Jakob Twinger von Königshofen's *Chronik* begins with the Creation of the World and a history of Jews and Orientals, mainly from the Bible (Ch. 1), and continues with the history of the Emperors, beginning with Julius Caesar (Ch. 2) and the Popes (Ch. 3). It concludes with two chapters on Strasbourg, a history of the Bishops (Ch. 4) and of the town and region (Ch. 5). The mythical founders of Strasbourg, Trebeta and Saint Maternus, are joined to the world history. Often circulating separately and quite innovative for its day was an alphabetical list of historical events and dates contained in the Chronicle (Ch. 6, a fragment, the letter "Z" included in this copy). There are three versions of the *Chronik*: Version A, dates 1390; Version B, dates 1391 and circulates from c.1393. In 1400, the author undertook a third revision of the chronicle continuing its text to 1415, Version C. Version C was never placed in circulation and the author's original manuscript, which was left to Notre-Dame de Strasbourg, burned in 1870.

The textual tradition is quite complex, and no modern scientific edition or accurate list of the extant manuscripts exists. Already in the incunabular period, the Chronicle of the Emperors and Popes (Chs. 2 and 3) was published by Johannes Bämler in Augsburg from 1474 to 1487 (GW 3163-3165), attesting to the early success and importance of the work. It was not until 1698 that Schilter published the entire text, but this edition is full of inaccuracies. A nineteenth-century philological edition by Hegel relied on about forty manuscripts (another nineteenth-century edition, that of Mone, includes only selected transcriptions after a few manuscripts of interest for local history). Evidently approximately eighty (82) manuscripts now survive (cf. Klein and Melville, 1995), and these are located mainly in Germany, Switzerland, and eastern France (Alsace). There are at least three copies in Paris, and apart from one copy at the Beinecke Library, Yale University (MS 421, see B. Shailor, *Catalogue of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts*, vol. 2, this is an abbreviated form of Version A), there are none in North America.

This manuscript presents unusual textual peculiarities in that it combines Versions A, B, and C of Twinger von Königshofen's Chronicle: the Prologue and Chapter 1 correspond to Version B (date of 1390 in the Prologue, f. 3v, "ein webelin und ein menlin," cf. ed. Hegel, p. 242, line 16; f. 4v, long addition, cf. ed., p. 248, line 18, modifications of the order of the displaced passages

on f. 5r, including the additions, cf. ed. p. 252, p. 275, line 25, p. 99, line 15, p. 312, line 17). Chapters 2 to 5, however, present Version A (f. 20v, ed. p. 317, line 14; f. 43, "Also ignote ein künig von Behem das rich besitzt und us tutschem geslehte ist und sin mus," cf. ed. p. 422, f. 62v, ed. p. 493, end of Ch. 2; f. 65v, ed. p. 507 line 1; f. 83v, ed. p. 599, end of Ch. 3, etc.). The blank passages on ff. 110v, 112r, 114r, and 114v correspond also to Version A.

The additions coming from Version C sometimes complement the text, such as Ch. 2 (f. 155r, the beginning from C until ed., p. 496, line 14, then diverges) and Ch. 3 on the Popes, on ff. 159-159v (ed. p. 600-603). Others seem completely independent and place the manuscript in relation to MS germ. qu. 53 of Frankfurt am Main and that of Donaueschingen (cf. Mone, vol. 3, pp. 504-522, Hegel, p. 203-204). The end of Ch. 3 on the Bishop Frederic of Blankenheim is given for the years 1392 to 1393 in a redaction that is shorter than the one found in Version C (ed. Hegel p. 678-696) and corresponds to that edited by Mone, vol. 3, p. 505-508. The same holds for passages on ff. 164 and thereafter, which correspond to the edition of Mone, vol. 3, p. 520 § 7 (the bridge of the Rhine, Waldsberg, Freudeneck, Benfeld). If the beginning of f. 166 (*Von den ersten Gecken*) differs from the edition of the corresponding text from the Danaueschingen manuscript (Mone, vol. 3, p. 522 § 13), the end is very close (*ibid.*, p. 527 § 26 to p. 529 § 34). The same is true for ff. 146-147v; this manuscript has two chapters that include a long passage on the Battle of Nicopolis not found in either Versions A and B (cf. ed. Hegel, pp. 854-857) and does not occur either in Version C but rather appears in the version of the Donaueschingen manuscript with a list of the knights (ed. Mone, vol. 3, pp. 511-2).

The most original parts of the text of the present manuscript are those on the "ammestres" (Administrators of Strasbourg) in 1399, on the one hand, and on the other hand, that concerning the double Episcopal election to the See of Strasbourg in 1439, after the death of William II of Diest, on ff. 160-162. The struggle between the Canon Conrad de Busnang (whose epitaph is still in view in the Cathedral of Strasbourg) and the Palatine Count, Ruprecht von Simmern-Zweibrücken (1420-1478) follows a narration that is quite different from that found in the edition of Mone, vol. 3, p. 517-518. These observations could lead to a better identification of the original patron or circumstances of transcription of the present manuscript within the milieu of Strasbourg itself.

In spite of the relatively large number of extant manuscripts, this chronicle is of the greatest rarity on the market, and its textual peculiarities, coupled with the lack of a modern edition, make it ripe for further study. With the exception of a copy owned by Kraus (now Beinecke, MS 421), the Schoenberg Database does not record another copy changing hands in the last fifty years and lists only three other copies on the market from 1744 to 1965.

## LITERATURE

Hegel, Carl, ed. *Die Chroniken der oberrheinischen Städte: Straßburg*, 2 vols., Leipzig, Hirzel, 1870-1 (Die Chroniken der deutschen Städte vom 14. bis ins 16. Jahrhundert, 8-9) (reprint, Stuttgart, 1961).

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Schilter, Johann, ed. *Die alteste teutsche so wol allgemeine als insonderheit elsassische strassburgische Chronicke von Jacob von Königshoven, ... von Anfang der Welt biss ins Jahr... 1386 beschrieben, an jetzo zum ersten Mal heraus und mit historischen Anmerkungen in Truck gegeben*, Strasbourg, J. Städel, 1698.

Strobel, A. W. and L. Schneegans, eds. *Code historique et diplomatique de la ville de Strasbourg*, Strasbourg, 1843, 1-236.

### ONLINE RESOURCES

*Catalogue systématique de la Bibliothèque de feu M. Isaac Haffner, ... Première partie*, Strasbourg, 1832  
<http://books.google.fr/books?id=5FEVAAAAQAAJ>

Handschriftencensus. Eine Bestandsaufnahme der handschriftlichen Überlieferung deutschsprachiger Texte des Mittelalters:  
<http://www.handschriftencensus.de/werke/1906>

Watermarks :

<http://www.piccard-online.de/start.php>

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