

PRINT AND CHANGING TASTE ON THE THRESHOLD OF MODERN FRANCE

Printed Book of Hours (use of Rome)
In Latin and French, printed on paper
Paris, Thielmann Kerver, 1556 (almanac for 1556-1563)
18 large woodcuts and 1 small woodcut

Large in-12, 179 ff., preceded and followed by a paper flyleaf, complete (although certain editions have appended French texts, considered a separate work but sometimes bound with the 1556 Horae [see Mortimer, 313: "[...] probably it was intended to accompany this 1556 edition but not issued with all copies" (Mortimer, vol. II, p. 408); see also Lacombe, 448]) [collation: A-M12; [2nd] A-C12], printed on paper in red and black, Roman letter type, paper ruled in light red, use indicated by "Rom" on first leaves of signatures B-M, and "Romme" sig. [2nd] B-C, a few emblematic, decorated and historiated initials [e.g. initial "D" with Flight into Egypt (sig. C2)], borders on each page, including title-page, of headpieces, side-strips and footpieces with birds, flowers, animals and a variety of French Royal insignia (Crowned "F" for Francis I, Crowned Salamander (Francis I), Arms of Louise de Savoie, Crown and "L" for Louise de Savoie, Cordelière (of Louise de Savoie), French Royal Arms), Arms of Bourges). Bound in a sixteenth-century binding, of gilt-tooled brown polished calf over pasteboard, preserving contemporary boards, smooth spine with gilt fleurons and filets (rebacked), edges gilt (Edges cracked, likely due to rebacking, first quire loose although not detached, some foxing, a few stains, but overall in good condition). Dimensions 160 x 100 mm.

Printing made it easy to duplicate images and pass them down to successive generations. This attractive Horae, printed more than a century after Gutenberg, offers a fascinating glimpse of commerce in the print industry and the evolution of artistic taste. Thielmann Kerver the Younger inherited his famous father's material. He also bought the designs (or woodblocks) from the printer Geoffroy Tory, favored by the royal court. This edition combines old-style Paris taste of the elder Kerver with Tory's innovative Italo-Flemish designs, influenced by major French Renaissance painter-illuminators such as Noël Bellemare and Godefroy le Batave.

PROVENANCE

1. Printed in Paris in 1546 by Thielmann Kerver II (died 1572/1573), active in Paris as libraire-juré from 1544 to 1566. His shop was located "Rue Saint-Jacques, à l'enseigne du Gril" [*In vico sancti Jacobi sub signo Cratis*]. Thielmann Kerver II was the son of Thielmann Kerver I of Coblenz (active 1497-1522). See Renouard, 1965, pp. 226-227. It is interesting to see the son of the great Thielmann Kerver using Tory material (see Text below) which originated in reaction against the haphazard quality of certain Horae issued in the first decades of the sixteenth century by major Horae publishers like Thielmann Kerver the Elder.
2. No apparent trace of previous ownership, although one notes the presence of a discreet little collector's stamp in purple ink with initials "SM" or "MS" on sig. A1 verso, repeated twice on sig. D3 verso, unidentified.
3. European Private Collection.

TEXT

sig. A1, Title-page with Kerver's device, with two unicorns upholding a gril (cratis) and initials T.K. (Renouard (1928), 524; Silvestre, 961): *Hore // in laudem bea//tissime virgi//nis Mariae ad usum // Romanum* [printer's device] *Parisiis, // apud Thielmannum Kerver in vi//co sancti Jacobi sub signo Cratis // 1556;*

sig. A1v, Almanac, for 1556-1563

sig. A2-sig. A9, Calendar, in red and black ink,

sig. A9v-B1, Prayers, including *Pater noster*, *Ave Maria*, *Credo* etc.

sig. B1-B5v, Gospel Sequences;

sig. B6-C1, Passion according to Saint John;

sig. C1v-H7, Hours of the Virgin, interspersed with the Hours of Week (sig. C4-C12v), the Hours of the Cross and the Hours of the Holy Spirit; Matins (sig. C1v-D4); Lauds (sig. D4v-E1); Prime (sig. E1v-E6); Terce (sig. E6v-E10v); Sext (sig. E10v-F3); None (sig. F3v-F7); Vespers (sig. F7v-G2); Compline (sig. G2v- G 9); Hours of the Cross (sig. G10-H3); Hours of the Holy Spirit (sig. H3v-H7);

sig. H7v-K2, Penitential Psalms and Litany;

sig. K2v-M11, Office of the Dead (use of Rome);

sig. M11v-A4v, Prayers;

sig. A4v-B7, Suffrages and Prayers;

sig. B7-B10, *Obsecro te*;

sig. B10-B11v, *O intemerata*, with rubric attributing the prayer to Edmund Archbishop of Canterbury;

sig. B11v-C7, Prayers, including *Stabat Mater*;

sig. C7-C8, Pseudo-Publius Lentulus, *Epistula ad senatum romanum de iesu christo* [Letter from Jesus Christ to the Roman Senate], rubric, *Epistola P. Lentuli Romani proconsulis. . .*;

sig. C8-C8v, Remedy against the Plague, incipit, "Recipe quantum potes. . . ". This recipe was first printed in the Hours for the use of Rome, Paris, O. Mallard, 1541 (A. Bernard, 1865, pp. 162-163; Exhibition Geoffroy Tory, 2011, no. 50 and pp. 66-67, fig. 44).

sig. C8v-C12v, Hours of the Holy Sacrament.

Recorded in:

Mortimer, *Harvard*, vol. II, 313; Lacombe, 447 [Chantilly, Musée Condé, VIII. C. 24] and Lacombe, 448 [Paris, Bibl. Mazarine, B-23920]; Bohatta, 1252, without the French addenda; Brunet, V, 1662, no. 334, also without the French addenda.

See also Bernard (1865), p. 322 [for a 1556 edition, but apparently with a different collation and only 130 ff.] and pp. 312-313 [for the Paris, T. Kerver, 1550 edition (Lacombe, 441)].

Not in Tenschert and Nettekoven, 2003, but see vol. III, "Studenbücher von Geoffroy Tory und Seiner Nachfolge ab 1525," pp. 1082-1091.

ILLUSTRATION

sig. A1, Title-page with Kerver's unicorn device; Title-border composed of a headpiece and side-strips of birds, flowers, and animals, with royal insignia (Francis I and his mother Louise de Savoie);

sig. B6, Small woodcut, Christ on the Cross;

sig. C1v, Archangel Gabriel [first scene of the Annunciation];

sig. C2, Virgin Mary [second scene of the Annunciation];

sig. D4v, Virgin Mary [first scene of the Visitation];

sig. D5, Elizabeth [second scene of the Visitation];

sig. E1v, Nativity [first scene of the Nativity];

sig. E2, Shepherds [second scene of the Nativity];

sig. E6v, Annunciation to the Shepherds [first scene of the Shepherds];

sig. E7, Shepherds in the fields [second scene of the Shepherds];

sig. E10v, Three Magi;

sig. E11, Adoration of the Magi;

sig. F3v, Purification of the Virgin;

sig. F4, Circumcision;

sig. F8, Massacre of the Innocent

sig. G2v, Coronation of the Virgin

sig. G11, Crucifixion;

sig. H3v, Pentecost;

sig. H7v, David and Bathsheba;

sig. K2v, Triumph of Death;

This elegant Book of Hours for the use of Rome, printed in Paris by Thielmann Kerver II (the Younger), is a good example of how printer's material and woodblocks were passed on and reused throughout the sixteenth century. The material here is all the more interesting because it can be traced back to the famous printer and graphic artist Geoffroy Tory (c. 1480-1533), something of a "French Leonard," who was reared in Bourges but soon settled in Paris and began printing circa 1507. He was proof-reader first for Gilles de Gourmont and then for Henri Estienne. He was made "imprimeur du roi" in 1531 and was established "Au Pot cassé en la rue Saint Jacques" [*Ad insigne vasis effracti, in via Jacobaea*]. Tory is interesting because after time spent in Italy, he came back to France and radically renewed the presentation of French printed books. The woodcuts reused here from his stock are good examples of this new Italianate aesthetic (with a clear interest in ornaments "à l'antique") that existed parallel to the traditional Gothic "French" aesthetic. Tory made contributions to the lucrative market of printed books of hours, as well as books containing vernacular texts (for instance he was one of the first to codify the French language, to introduce the French cedilla, etc.), applying the "new" humanist principles he so admired in Italy with such printers as Aldus Manutius before the activity of the School of Fontainebleau in France. Tory was a humanist actively in search of new graphic forms for the imprints he offered to French readers; he is renamed "graphiste-libraire" rather than simple "imprimeur-libraire" in the latest exhibition catalogue (see [Exhibition] Geoffroy Tory (2011), pp. 40-41).

Tory appears to have sold or at least passed on his printing business as well as his prestigious title of "imprimeur du roi" in 1532 to Olivier Mallard (1535-1543). Member of the important Mallard family from Rouen, Mallard soon also started printing in Paris, using the fonts and woodblocks from the former Tory officina. It is said that he married Geoffroy Tory's widow Perrette Le Hullin but this has been contested because the archive that confirmed this is not to be found (stated in Renouard, 1965, p. 291; contested in [Exhibition], Geoffroy Tory (2011), p. 141, note 44). After the death of Olivier Mallard in 1543, Tory's printing business passed on to Denis Janot (?), and was subsequently acquired by Jacques Kerver, the son of Thielmann Kerver I and Yolande Bonhomme. Jacques Kerver was the brother of Thielman Kerver II (see Renouard, 1965, p. 230 and 291; see also [Exhibition] Geoffroy Tory (2011), pp. 64 and 66).

The "genealogy" of the present Book of Hours should be related to two previous imprints. The first imprint is the **Hours for the use of Paris, printed in Paris, Simon du Bois for Geoffroy Tory, 1527** (Bohatta, 330; Mortimer, Harvard, vol. II, no. 304; Lacombe, 364-371; Bernard, 1865, pp. 160-163; Tenschert and Nettekoven, 2003, III, no. 131; [Exhibition], Geoffroy Tory (2011), p. 57 and cat. 36 and 136). Indeed the borders, including the title-border, are reduced free copies of Tory's designs "à la moderne," first used in his quarto edition of 1527 (see Mortimer, vol. II, 304; see also [Exhibition], Geoffroy Tory (2011), p. 57). They are composed of side-strips and headpieces of birds, animals, insects and flowers, with emblematic and armorial footpieces for Francis I and Louise de Savoie, his mother (Crowned F, Crowned Salamander; Crowned L; Arms of France; Parti Arms of France and Savoy; Louise of Savoy's Widow's

Cordelière). These borders, called “à la moderne,” which are not Italian or *all’antica* in style, are influenced by Ghent-Bruges *trompe l’oeil* illuminated borders with strewn flowers and animals.

The second imprint, which is more closely related to the present book, is the **Hours for the use of Rome, Paris, Olivier Mallard, 1541** (Lacombe, 420 [copy, Paris, BnF, Res. B-27747]; Bernard, 1865, pp. 280-282; Tenschert and Nettekoven, 2003, III, no. 135 and 136; [Exhibition], Geoffroy Tory (2011), fig. 44, cat. 50). Olivier Mallard chose to associate borders and woodcuts, all from Tory’s stock. The borders in the 1541 Mallard edition are apparently copied after Tory’s 1527 borders “à la moderne” but reduced and adapted to a duodecimo format (the original woodblocks for the Tory 1527 borders seem to have been sold off to a Portuguese printer Luis Rodrigues, see [Exhibition], Geoffroy Tory (2011), p. 66, fig. 43). The border blocks appear to be from Mallard’s stock, and A. Bernard discusses the possibility of their originating in a previous Tory edition. The latest suggestion is that perhaps Tory had prepared a smaller in-8 (after his quarto edition of 1527 and after his in-16 edition of 1529/1530), adapting the borders “à la moderne” with the insignia related to Louise de Savoie, only to abandon the project when the King’s mother passed away in 1531. The borders are a bit “heavier” than the original borders in the 1527 edition and appear to have been adapted to fit this duodecimo format. With regards to the illustrations, most of the blocks were used by Tory in his 1529 in-16o edition (Bernard, pp. 129-126; Tenschert and Nettekoven, III, “Tory’s kleine Holzschnittserie von 1529,” p. 1088). Some of these blocks were clearly based on drawings or models associated or at least influenced by Noël Bellemare and Godefroy le Batave (see [Exhibition], Geoffroy Tory (2011), p. 57, discussing the 1527 and 1529 Tory editions: “[...] il est clair que s’y ressent fortement l’émulation des livres d’heures manuscrits produits par lui [Noël Bellemare] et ses associés après 1520” [(...) It is clear that [Tory in 1527 and 1529] was strongly influenced by the Books of Hours produced in manuscript form by Bellemare and his associates...]).

After the death of Olivier Mallard in 1542 or 1543, his stock and woodblocks were eventually acquired by Thielmann Kerver II, who published first in 1550 (Bernard, p. 218) and then in 1556 (the present edition, Bernard, pp. 251-252), a revised version of the Olivier Mallard, 1541 *Horae*. Thielmann Kerver the Younger uses here the same adapted and slightly reduced borders “à la moderne” and the interesting woodblocks (probably related to Noël Bellemare and also perhaps Godefroy le Batave) from the 1529 Tory *Horae*. Tenschert and Nettekoven describe the woodblocks as follows: “Holzschnitt-Serie der 1520s Werkstatt in Kleinoktav für Tory, 1529/1530” (see Tenschert and Nettekoven, 2003, III, no. 135).

The present 1556 later edition is a fine specimen of the alternative aesthetic first initiated by Geoffroy Tory – certainly less successful than the more traditional Gothic forms of *Horae* that triumphed throughout the sixteenth century – but that Thielmann Kerver the Younger kept alive by offering a new edition with the material inherited from the great Tory.

LITERATURE

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ONLINE RESOURCES

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