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*Fasciculus temporum*: Extra-textual Genealogy

The [\*Fasciculus temporum omnes antiquorum cronicas complectens\*](#) was composed ca.1465-1475 by Werner Rolewinck (1425-1502), a Carthusian from Westphalia (modern northwestern Germany), who was known contemporaneously for his theological and historical works. A “true monk,” he entered a Carthusian monastery in 1447 at the age of twenty-two, and never left the abbey walls again, dying of the plague at the age of seventy-seven.<sup>1</sup> The *Fasciculus* was not an “original” work but rather a compilation of multiple earlier sources. Approximately forty editions of the work were produced in Rolewinck’s lifetime, with the last edition being published in 1726, and it survives in more than a hundred copies in libraries and private collections worldwide.<sup>2</sup> The Portland State University codex contains an edition printed 1490/1494 (ending with the year 1484 and the papacy of Innocent VIII) and bound with a second edition of the [\*Malleus maleficarum\*](#), or *Hammer of Witches*, printed in 1490.

The physical layout of the *Fasciculus* combines aspects of medieval illuminated Bibles—images of important events set in circles in line with the text—and scroll chronicles, which by their very nature, ended up forming “timelines” as they were unrolled.<sup>3</sup> The text counts forward from the biblical beginning of mankind—the sixth day of Genesis—to the birth of Christ, and then counts up from that “zero point.” In the words of one of the few anglophone scholars of the

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<sup>1</sup> Classen, “History of a Late-Medieval Bestseller,” 226; Ward, “Werner Rolewinck,” 211, 214. The Carthusian order combined Benedictine monasticism and the eremitic (solitary) practice of the early desert fathers. Monks remained alone in their cells, to pray, read, and contemplate, only coming together as a community for services.

<sup>2</sup> Aksel, 61.

<sup>3</sup> Ward, “A Carthusian View,” 26, 29.

*Fasciculus*, Laviece Ward, “...portraying history as an integration of church and empire, proceeding according to God’s divine plan, was both a reflection of his [Werner Rolewinck’s] own religious piety and his shrewd assessment of historical events; [Rolewinck] ... plotted an unbroken line of kingship, divinely invested political authority from the beginning of history to his present.”<sup>4</sup> As a monk and lifelong subject of the Holy Roman Empire—with the emperors and their administrative structures serving as worldly representatives of divine rule—orienting history around the birth of Christ would have been as natural to Rolewinck as early cartographers orienting the known world around the city of Rome.

Rolewinck succeeded in his desire to create an inclusive text which appealed to an audience beyond the cloister and classroom. The *Fasciculus* was exceptionally popular, filling a widespread desire for comprehensive historical works, and the inclusion of numerous images (woodcuts) made it entertaining and accessible to both literate and semi-literate audiences, allowing even those without access to schools to learn about historical and biblical figures and events as moral exemplars.<sup>5</sup> The *Fasciculus* was eventually translated into German, Spanish, French, Dutch, and Welsh—eliminating the need to read Latin and further broadening its potential audience.<sup>6</sup> According to Laviece Ward, “Rolewinck clearly views history as one of the important tools for the education of both the clergy and lay readers.”<sup>7</sup> She further lauds the *Fasciculus* as “...a masterful attempt to help his readers see beneath the apparently random surface of life and perceive divine connections and continuity.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Ward, “A Carthusian View,” 23.

<sup>5</sup> Classen, “History of a Late-Medieval Bestseller,” 226.

<sup>6</sup> Ward, “Werner Rolewinck,” 210.

<sup>7</sup> Ward, “A Carthusian View,” 29.

<sup>8</sup> Ward, “A Carthusian View,” 43.

Following the printed text of the *Fasciculus temporum* in the PSU codex is a concise, six-line, handwritten, verse-form of a genealogy listing the marriages and children of St. Anne, mother of Mary, grandmother of Christ. This scribal hand has been named the “poem scribe” (see: Sarah Alderson, “*Malleus Marginalia: What Can Be Learned from the Marginalia in Portland State University’s Edition of the *Malleus maleficarum**”) and only appears in the *Fasciculus*, but it appears in the entire *Fasciculus*—from the title page through to the verse genealogy addition after the printed text.<sup>9</sup> This short verse genealogy seems to come directly from chapter 131 of the *Legenda aurea* or *Golden Legend*. There are minor differences between the two in the spelling of some names, which is not at all unusual for the time and are likely just transcription, or possibly memory, errors on the part of the scribe.

The *Legenda aurea* is collection of short hagiographies (fairly formulaic biographies) of the lives of the saints. It was composed in Latin c.1270 by Jacobus de Voragine (1230–c.1298). The *Legenda* was very popular. The short, sensation-laden entries were, essentially, the superhero stories of the day, while still providing the moral instruction considered appropriate. It circulated widely throughout Christian Europe, especially in Germanic Europe, surviving in more than 500 complete manuscript copies and at least 150 printed editions in numerous vernacular languages.<sup>10</sup> Falling out of favor in the sixteenth century for being too fanciful and sensationalist, the *Legenda aurea* is now viewed by scholars as means to access later medieval popular beliefs regarding piety and sainthood.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Sarah Alderson, “*Malleus Marginalia: What can be learned from the marginalia in Portland State University’s edition of the *Malleus maleficarum**,” (unpublished paper, 2020). Three hands were identified. The other two appear to favor the *Malleus* over the *Fasciculus*.

<sup>10</sup> “*Legenda aurea*,” *Oxford Reference*; Rice, 279. The greater portion of Germanic Europe at this time fell under the Holy Roman Empire.

<sup>11</sup> Rice, 279.

The name of Mary's mother, Anne, is only recorded in apocryphal texts: the *Gospel of the Nativity of Mary*, the *Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew*, and the *Protoevangelium of James*.<sup>12</sup> The earliest of these is the *Protoevangelium of James*, which seems to be the source of the other two. According to this text, Joachim and Hannah (Anne) were a wealthy and virtuous, but childless, couple living in Nazareth. Denied access to the temple because childlessness rendered him unworthy, Joachim left for the mountains to pray and petition God in solitude. Missing her husband and discovering the reason for his hermitage, Anne begged God to give her a child, promising to return that child to the service of God. Her piety was such that her prayers were heard, and Mary was born to Anne and Joachim. Furthermore, upon being widowed, Anne is said to have married a second and third time, to Cleophas and Salomas, bearing each of them a daughter named Mary, as well.<sup>13</sup> Worshipped in the East from the fourth century, the first liturgical texts specifically for St. Anne's feast day in western Christendom were composed in the 1130s by Osbert of Clare, prior of Westminster, for Worcester Cathedral.<sup>14</sup> Although originally associated fairly consistently with Marian cults, devotion to Anne evolved to become associated not only with her virtue and as a model of female monasticism, but also recognizing her matriarchal position and authority.<sup>15</sup> The popularity of St. Anne as a focus of veneration greatly increased with the publication of Voragine's *Golden Legend* in the thirteenth century.

Added by hand to the PSU codex, this genealogical information is included in some editions of the *Fasciculus*. It is possible that the addition was made by an owner/annotator who

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<sup>12</sup> Hebrew: *Hannah*, grace; also spelled *Ann*, *Anne*, *Anna*. The apocryphal texts were texts not deemed divinely inspired, reliable, or essential to early biblical compilers and printers and were not included for these reasons. There are still differences between various Protestant denominations, and Eastern and Western Catholicism, as to which Gospels are considered authoritative and which are excluded from biblical editions.

<sup>13</sup> Adding to the confusion regarding potential siblings/cousins of Jesus.

<sup>14</sup> Ihnat, "Understanding Mary," 1.

<sup>15</sup> St. Anne is the patroness of women in labor, miners (Christ being compared to gold, Mary to silver), as well as the region of Brittany in France and the Canadian city and province of Quebec.

had seen one of these other editions and felt it was important to address the omission in the 1490 edition. This is a question we can only speculate about. However, further research needs to be done to ascertain if the addition/omission can be tied to the date or location of publication or some other consistent factor, or if it was a random choice of the printer or commissioner.

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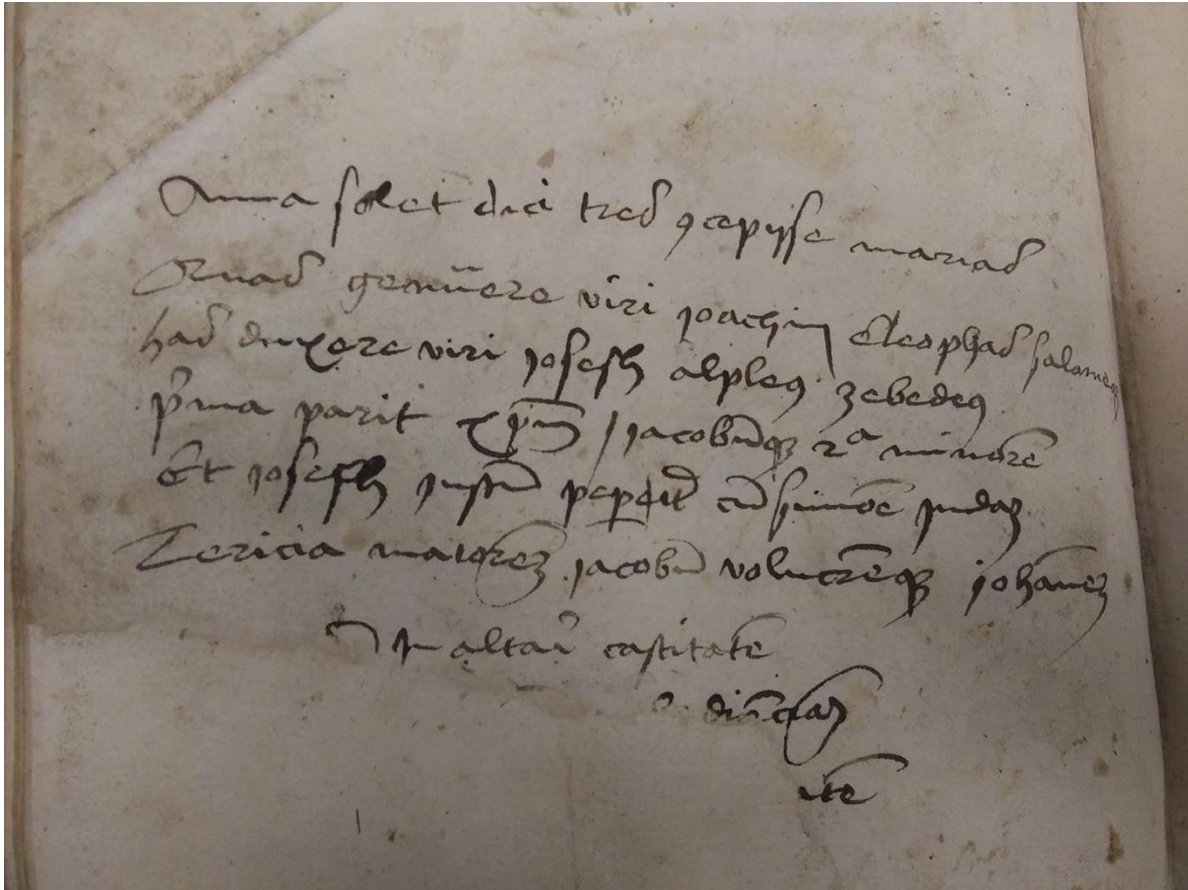
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Appendix: Images and full text with translation



Handwritten genealogical verse in the PSU Codex.

Transcription:<sup>16</sup>

*Anna solet dici tres concepisse Marias  
Quas genuere viri Ioachini Clephas Salomeque  
Has duxere viri Joseph Orpheus Zebedeus  
Prima parit XPM [Christum]: Jacobum secunda minorem  
Et Joseph iustum peperit et Simone Juda  
Tertia majorem [maiolem] Jacobum volumcreque Johanes*

*Legenda Aurea* text:<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> John Ott; Robert H. H. Cust, *Giovanni Antonio Bazzi, The Man and the Painter*, p. 48 n. 1.

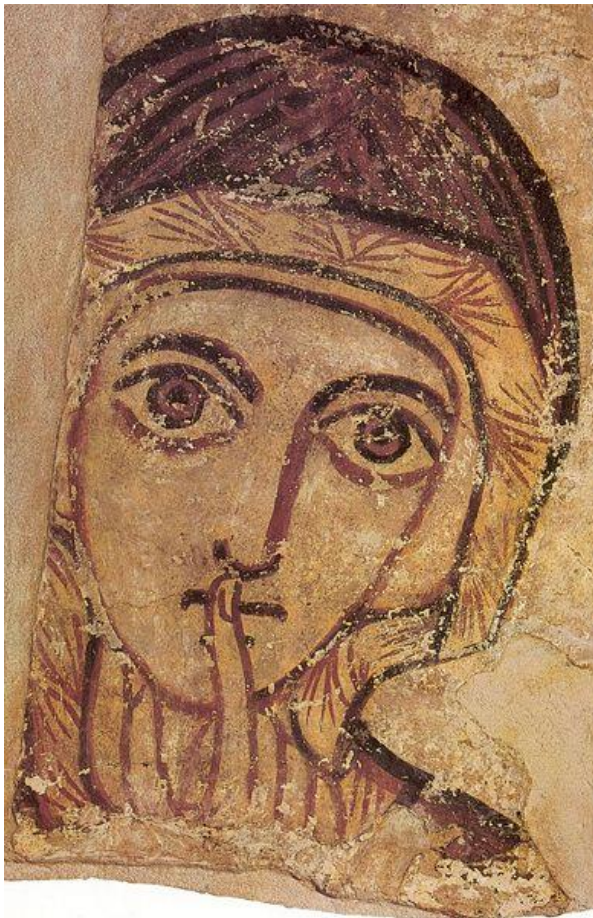
<sup>17</sup> *Golden Legend*, trans. Ryan, 536.



*Anna solet dici tres concepisse Marias,  
Quas genuere viri Joachim, Cleophas, Salomeque,  
Has duxere viri Josph, Alpheus, Zebeddaeus,  
Prima parit Christum, Jacobum secunda minorem,  
Et Joseph justum peperit cum Simone Judam,  
Tertia majorem Jacobum volucremque Joannem.*

Translation:<sup>18</sup>

Anna is usually said to have conceived three Marys,  
Whom [her] husbands, Joachim, Cleophas, and Salome, begot.  
The Marys were taken in marriage by Joseph, Alpheus, Zebedee.  
The first Mary bore Christ, the second, James the Less,  
Joseph the Just with Simon and Jude,  
the third, James the Greater and John the Winged.



St. Anne, fresco from Faras, seventh century, National Museum Warsaw.  
[https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Saint\\_Anne](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Saint_Anne)

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<sup>18</sup> *Golden Legend*, trans. Ryan, 536n.