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LES ENLUMINURES

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[Miscellany in Prose and Verse of Treatises, Ballads, and Farces including]: JACQUES BRUYANT, *Le Chastel de Labour*; ALAIN CHARTIER, *Le Lai de Paix*; [JEAN, ARCHBISHOP OF SULTANICH], *La vie de Tamerlan*; JACQUES DE CESSOLES [trans. JEAN FERRON], *Le Jeu des Echecs moralisé*, etc.

In French, manuscript on paper
France, Avignon [c.1450-1460]

207 folios, complete, composed of 11 irregular quires (i12 [14–2]; ii8, iii20, iv18, v38 [40–2], vi14, vii12, viii14, ix24, x24, xi21 [24–3]), composite manuscript on paper (watermarks close to Briquet, I, no. 3536, "Char à deux roues," Provence, 1448; III, no. 11874, "Trois monts et trait en croix," Provence, c. 1427), written in a clear French *bâtarde* in light brown ink (justification poetry 140 x 80 mm.; justification prose 145 x 100 mm.), copied by a single scribe, except for ff. 122-125 copied by a later sixteenth-century scribe and added passages on ff. 206v–207v, paragraph marks in red, some initials touched in red, frequent marginal annotations or corrections, e.g., on f. 131v: "W. Margot de Raoulx et Monseigneur Grichaud son serviteur [...]". BOUND IN AN EXCEPTIONAL WELL-PRESERVED CONTEMPORARY LIMP VELLUM BINDING, smooth spine with highly original edrs6tyhorizontal stitching exposed, leather ties on front and back covers (some water stains on covers, some paper restorations, overall in clear legible condition), coat of arms traced on back of upper cover. Dimensions 200 x 145 mm.

Extremely rare compilation of late medieval French prose and verse texts, including early farces, surely compiled on commission for the private entertainment of a specific individual in Avignon, the *écuyer* and *échanson* of King René d'Anjou, and with many interesting texts, some entirely unpublished and many little known. Through the twentieth century, the manuscript remained in the same family, and it retains still its unique original binding.

PROVENANCE

1. Copied in Avignon, as confirmed by the watermarks, the textual evidence, and the names of families on the reverse side of the parchment used as limp binding. The arms traced in ink on the inside of the upper cover are those of the Cabassolle family, which ranks amongst the richest and most influential families in Avignon. The manuscript was no doubt made for the private entertainment of this family, most likely for Guillaume de Cabassolle du Real II,

co-seigneur of Barbentane and d'Entraigues, écuyer and échanson of René d'Anjou, King of Naples and Sicily, Count of Provence, who married Isabelle d'Acy and died in Barbentane in 1462. His son, Pierre-Pons de Cabassole-du-Réal, was likewise co-seigneur of Barbentane and D'Entraigues, and écuyer to King Louis XI and died in 1505. On f. 82v, at the beginning of the "Jeu Barbantane," there is an explicit reference to the Cabassole: "Comme vous orrez dire / Qu'en Avignon proprement / Mainte gent / Assamblés pour eulx desduire ... Entre tous ung en avoit / Qui faysoit / Cabasolle fu nommés...." Perhaps the characters in the play were meant to be associated with specific members of the family. (See Pithon-Curt, J-A., *Histoire de la noblesse du Comté-Venaissin, d'Avignon et de la Principauté d'Orange*, Marseille, Laffitte, 1970, vol. I, pp. 227–236: "La Famille de Cabassole connue en Provence et dans le Comte-Venaissin a produit des Hommes Illustres... ; Armes: D'or à quatre Lozanges de gueules poses en Bande & couchés, accompagnés de deux cottices d'azur; see also Lachesnaye-Desbois, *Dictionnaire de la noblesse*, XVI, pp. 496–497). On f. 207, an added passage provides further support for the Avignon provenance: "Alés en la premiere église des Celestins a Avignon et y trouverés c que cy dessus est escript en un tableau auquel est painct le corps mort d'une femme."

2. By 1599, the manuscript was in the possession of Jean-Baptiste Puget de Barbantane, through the grandson of the first owner, Francois de Cabassolle, who dies without offspring, and leaves his belongings to Anne Puget, his niece, and her son, Jean-Baptiste Puget. Name inscribed beneath text by Alain Chartier: "La Forcix (or Foreix) / Barbantane" (fol. 68); a marginal annotation reads: "Cestuy chevalier en l'an mil IIc IIIxx XVII [1297]. Il fut allié des maisons de Berbe[n]tane, de Boulban, des Gantelnies mesons aultes, nobles & anciennes" (f. 126). On the various known Marquis de Barbantane, see DBF, vol. V, col. 257–258. The manuscript remained in the Barbantane family for at least two centuries and is known as the "manuscript de Barbantane" in the scholarly literature.

TEXT

The following works are included in the manuscript:

1.
ff. 1-54, Jehan [Jacques] Bruyant, *Le Chastel de Labour [LaVoie de Povreté ou de Richesse]*; heading [partly erased], *Le chastel de Labeur*; incipit, "On dit souvent en reprochier / Ung proverbe que j'ay moult chier / Car veritable est bien le sçay..."; explicit, "Je veul sy mon livre afin traire / Appellé la voie ou l'adrese / De Povreté ou de Richesse." (ed. G. E. Brereton and J. M. Ferrier, 1994, pp. 813-37; see also Långfors, who was not aware of this copy; Tanis et al. *Leaves of Gold*, 2000, no. 70, pp. 202-05 [entry by Hindman]; and Widener, 1909).

Probably written in 1342, Bruyant's allegorical poem was directly inspired by the dream vision presented in the *Roman de la Rose*. The newlywed hero, named the Author, and his wife fall asleep and are visited in a dream by a brother and three sisters named Want, Necessity, Suffering, and Hunger. They actively scold the Author, pointing out that if he does not find

work he will be unable to pay his debts. Eventually, guided by Reason, the Author makes his way to the Castle of Work, guarded by Heed and Carefulness and run by the lord and lady named Hard-work and Pains. After a long day of work, he returns home and ends with a prayer asking that he he cannot achieve great riches, he at least can achieve competence. There are only 11 extant manuscripts of the text, of which a copy in Philadelphia is the most lavish and the only one with illuminations (Free Library, Widener MS 1). The poem was included in a moralizing domestic treatise, *Le Mesnagier de Paris*, written c. 1393 and plagiarized in Pierre Gringore's *Chateau de Labour* of 1499.

2.

ff. 54-62, Paraphrase of the Ave Maria; heading, *Ave Maria*, incipit, "Ave estoile de clarté / Ave flour de virginité / Ave royne des archanges..." ; explicit, "En toy est ma devocion / Car tu es nommee benigne / Mere de contemplacion. Amen. Cabaret" (unpublished; see K. Sinclair, 1988, no. 544, p. 38; citing this from the Collection of the Marquis de Barbantane; the only recorded copy; "Cabaret" is either the author of this text or the scribe, but in any case is unrecorded);

3.

ff. 62-68, Alain Chartier, *Le Lai de Paix*; heading, *Le Lay de Paix*; incipit, "Paix eureuse, fille du Dieu des cieus / Et engendree ou trosne glorieux / Et envoiee par le conseil des cieus / Pour maintenir la terre en unité..." ; explicit, "Leurs fays durent et leurs estas sont tieux / Sy qu'a l'essir des frailles corps mortieux / Leur ame est sainte avecque la Deyté. Sy fine le Lay de Paix que fist Maistre Alain Charetier a la requeste de monseigneur de Bourgongne" (ed. Laidlaw, 1974).

Born c. 1385-95, Alain Chartier became Master of Arts at the University of Paris, and in 1417, he became secretary to the Dauphin during the particularly turbulent reign of King Charles VI (1380-1422). He accompanied the Dauphin, who fled Paris for Bourges, serving as notary and royal secretary for ten years. Accused of the murder of Jean sans Peur, the Dauphin was directly implicated in some of the turbulence brought about not only by the civil unrest but by the Hundred Years' War. Many of Chartier's works are political in character, such as this early one, in which he praises peace. Among others are the widespread *Le Quadrilogue invectif* of 1422 and the more pessimistic Latin *Ad detestacionem belli gallici et suasionem pacis*. He also wrote traditional courtly verse and prose, such as *Le Livre des quatre Dames* in 1416, the *Belle Dame sans Merci* in 1424, and the unfinished *Livre de l'Espérance*, an analogous text to the *Ditié de Jeanne d'Arc* of Christine de Pizan, an author who greatly influenced him and whose career he mirrors. There are 48 recorded manuscripts of the present work.

4.

ff. 69-81v, Farce, *Lourdaud et Tard Habile*; heading, *Farce pour deux personnaiges, Lourdeau et Tart Abille*; incipit, "Lourdaut: 'Tart Abille sant Dieu mordieu / Que fays tu la ?' // Tart Abille : 'Que je fais Dieu ? [...]" ; explicit, "Plus a loysir leur jugement / Prenés en gré pour le present" (ed. Lecoy, 1971, pp. 145-78, based on the single surviving copy, this one from the Barbantane manuscript; and studied by Faivre, no. 86, pp. 228-229; see also on Avignon theatre, Mazouer, 1998, and Pansier, 1919, and on Barbantane, Fontaine, 1979).

The Farce in 598 verses revolves around a debate between two valets, Lourdaud and Tard Habile, who during a lavish banquet, debate the relative merits of the blessings and dangers of love. They enter into an argument especially on the licentiousness of a married woman having a male friend, and decide to submit the problem before the "doctors." This is the only surviving example (and known in a single manuscript) of a type of play performed on the occasion of the festivities that a new doctor, having just received his university degree, offers to his colleagues and acquaintances.

5.

ff. 82-94, *Jeu du manuscrit de Barbantane*; heading, *Jeu a .iiii. [4] personnaiges* [Nature, l'Amant, la Dame, le Fol]; incipit, "Pour vous cuydier mieulx complaire / Sans meffaire / Ne mesdire nullement..."; explicit, "Seigneur, dames de grant paraige / Prené en gré nous en alon. Explicit" (published by Lecoy, 1971, pp. 145-178, after this, the only manuscript; and cited by Aubailly, 1984, p. 353).

This second play in the Barbantane manuscript is neither a farce nor a *sottie* but a *jeu*, that is, a play destined for a specific public as a diversion and often performed by amateurs. Of special interest is the introduction by Nature, who announces that the play was composed in Avignon for a group of people of taste, lovers of the *belles-lettres*, and among the amateurs Nature cites seigneur Cabasolle as "the prince of the gathering." The theme of the play is a sort of *Belle dame sans merci*. Following the introduction by Nature, the Lover announces the arrival of the Lady. However, the Lady declares herself to be disinterested in the Lover. Pressed by Nature to risk his advances a second time, the Lover is again rejected and curses Nature for having deceived him. In conclusion, Nature declares that happiness will come to the Lover another time. The true interest is in the "variete et la richesse de sa versification particulièrement soigné." (cf. Lecoy, 1971, p. 156). The most recent commentary and comparisons are found in Aubailly who discusses the respective roles of the Fool, who comments on the drama, and the Lover (p. 353).

6.

ff. 94-94v, *Ballade*; heading, *Ballade sage sus le refrain dessudit*; incipit, "Ay my ! hellas ! povre ame desolee / Que tu seras par tanps trop perilleuse..." ; explicit, "Ce say je bien sans excusacion / Et sy ne puy savoir que c'est d'amer. Explicit" (published in Lecoy, 1971, pp. 145-178, after this copy, which is the only surviving one).

7.

ff. 95–105v, [Jean, archbishop of Sultanich], *La Vie de Tamerlan, empereur des Tartares*; heading, *Cy commence la vie du Tamborlant dit et nommé autrement Temurbey*; incipit, "Ce seigneur cy fut au commencement de petite condicion et de petite renomme..." ; explicit, "Et la trouva tant de tressor que nul ne saroit le nombre savoir lequel il envoya tout en son pays. Explicit" (ed. Moranvillé, 1894, vol. 55, pp. 433-64; see also Moliner, 1904, no. 3709: "La letter de Tamerlan [avec Charles VI] fut apportée à Paris par un certain Jean, archevêque de Sultanich, qui rédigea en français une sorte de vie abrégée du conquérant tartare.").

Written in 1403 and ascribed to Jean, the Archbishop of Sultanich, an Italian Dominican, this *Life of Tamerlan* was composed for the court of Charles VI. It was written during the embassy of Jean to Charles VI, who bore him a fictive letter announcing Tamerlan's victory over Bajazet, victor at Nicopolis, Turkish enemy to both the Tartars and the French. This *Vie de Tamerlan*, originally composed in French and destined to be translated into Latin, was meant to serve two purposes: first, the Archbishop wished to compose a sort of useful travel guide for those who wished to visit Tamerlan for commercial reasons; and second he wished to relate the life of Tamerlan, adding to it the products of the West that might have the greatest success at the Moghul court. Four manuscripts are recorded: Paris, BnF, MSS fr. 5624, 12201, 19028; and Ghent, Bibl. Univ., MS 418.

8.

ff. 105v-118v, Poem, *Complainte de Contantinople* (?); Incipit : "[A] vous roy de France me plains / Helas je suis Constantinoble..." ; Explicit : "Et a la Trinité sainte / Et paisible" (unpublished);

9.

ff. 118v–119v, *Ballade*; incipit, "Eternel Dieux, puis tresor infalible"; explicit, " Car le salut des hommes est trop vain" (unpublished);

10.

ff. 119v–120v, *Ballade*; incipit, "Ne pouet Dieux immortel exciter..." ; explicit, "Car quand tu veulx n'est sy grant que ne verse" (unpublished);

11.

ff. 120v–121v, *Ballade*; incipit, "O Turcz tirans d'extreme tiranie..." ; explicit, "Des infeaulx qui cuident par offence / Avoir acquis honneur et gentillesse. Explicit" (unpublished);

12.

ff. 122-125, Play: Bergerie [sixteenth-century hand]; heading, Coridon; incipit and explicit illegible, script very cursive; protagonists bear the names Cloridon, Janeton, Redon (or Bedon) (unrecorded);

13.

ff. 126-203, [Jacques de Cessoles] [tr. Jean Ferron], *Le Jeu des Echecs moralisés* [French translation of the *Liber super ludo scaccorum*]; incipit, "Au noble home Bertran Aubert de Tharascon, frere Jehan Ferron de l'ordre des freres prescheurs de Paris son petit et humble chappellain soy tout la Sainte Escripiture dit que Dieux nous at fait a chescun mandement de pourchascier a tous noz prochains leur sauvement..."; explicit, " Or recourons donc a Celui qui est vertu et m'a donné grace d'escripre aucune chose a l'honneur et a la doctrine des nobles selon mon petit povoir. Et nous doit en present grace sy que nous puissions vivre avec lui pardurablement. Ecce vivit et regnat etc. Amen. Explicit" (published Collet, ed., 1984, then again 1999).

There are only 14 manuscripts of the Ferron translation of 1347. Jacques de Cessoles original Latin treatise *Liber de moribus hominum et officiis nobilium sive super ludum scacchorum* applies the estates of society to the game of chess. The symbolic value of each chess piece and its movement on the board structures the development of a long list of moral exempla.

14.

f. 203v, Added annotation, "[...] in nomine ... fac supper noz et supper fillios ... per ...emplifierons jusques que ...puissances ...porroie sur tous ses faicts pointc ...comme/que les dieux"; f. 204v, Added annotation, "Ad te Domine levavi animam mea"; f. 205v, Added annotation, "Deus meus in nomine tuo salvatus me fac etc."

15.

ff. 206v-207, unrecorded poem [26 verses], [*Plainte d'une morte*]; incipit, "Une fois sur toustes autres belles / Mais par mort suis or demeure telle / Ma char estoit tresdoulce fresche et tendre / Or est elle toute tournee en cendre / Mon corps estoit tresplaisant et tresgent / Or est hydeux a veoir toute gent..."; explicit, "Sy pense celle qu'en beaulté va croysant / Que tousjours va sa vie en descroysant / Soit ores dame, damoiselle ou bourgeoisse / Face dont bien tandiz qu'elle en at laissé / Ains que deviengne comme moy pour voir telle / Car chascune est comme ay esté mortelle // Codidie morimur codidie / Enim demitur aliqua pars vite / Et tunc quoque contresemus / Vita descrescit. Explicit Senece." Beneath this text, reads: "Alés en la premiere eglise des Celestins a Avignon et y trouverés ce que cy dessus est escript en un tableau auquel est painct le corps mort d'une femme" (f. 207) [on the Church, see Duhamel, L., "Les œuvres d'art du monastère des Celestins d'Avignon", Caen, H. Delesques, 1888, pp. 4–6].

16.

f. 207v, Added annotations: "Un jour fu conques james..." ; "Je ne tiens pas cellui por sage qui mostre a cascun son corage car celli qui le sera a sa prison ille tendra" ; "Je me complaint de mon amy que me solloit venir..."

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