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**PHILIX STOS, [Handwriting Manual] *Ein gute Ordnung*
In German and Latin, manuscript on parchment
Germany, Nuremberg, signed and dated 1555**

25 folios [last 2 parchment ff. 24-25 blank], on parchment, preceded by [1] paper flyleaf and followed by [24] paper blank folios (with some paper folios cut out, likely equally blank), complete (collation i¹², ii¹⁰, iii³ (6-3) [with last two parchment ff. blank]) [watermark for added blank paper close to Briquet, no. 916, Armoiries, parti au 1 à la demi-aigle, au 2 bandé de six pièces = Arms of Nuremberg, 1544; similar to a variant, Nuremberg, 1544-1563], text written in a variety of calligraphic scripts mostly in black ink, occasionally in red (e.g., f.), copied recto-verso, except ff. 20v, 21v, 22v, 23v (justification 138 x 60 mm.). CONTEMPORARY BINDING of blind-stamped dark brown calf over thick pasteboards, of oblong format, back sewn on 4 raised thongs, covers divided into a broad frame and an inner rectangle by triple and single fillets, with four tools at each corner of the inner rectangle and an erased central tool in the center of each board, brass cornerpieces and catches (missing clasps) (binding a bit worn, some restorations, but in its original condition). Dimensions 280 x 205 mm.

Previously unknown and highly accomplished "Schreibmeisterbuch" from the golden age of Nuremberg calligraphy by an unrecorded writing master and pupil of Johann Neudörffer, "the greatest of the Renaissance writing masters in the north," whose edition *Ein gute Ordnung* (Nuremberg, 1538-43) he emulates, its text complete and in fresh condition, including abundant flourishing in gold, and in its original binding (though rubbed and worn).

PROVENANCE

1. Signed and dated by Philix [Felix] Stos on f. 1, who identifies himself as follows: "... Unnd durch mich Philix Stos met fleis nachgemacht int Jar der geburt Jhesu Christi unnsers herren und seligmachers. M.D.L.V." (... And by me Philix Stos with industry copied [counterfeited] in the year of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. 1555). Unidentified among Johann Neudörffer's students (not in Doede, 1958), Stos may have been a member of the important Nuremberg family active in the arts (e.g., Veit Stoss, sculptor, died 1533, his relatives and heirs) and recorded throughout the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

2. Private Collection, Europe.

TEXT

f. 1, [title page], incipit, "Ein gute Ordnung vnd Kurzevuntritt ..."; explicit, "Im Jahr geburt Ihesu Christi unsers herzen und seligmachers. M.C.LV";

f. 23r, [handwriting sample in italic script], incipit, "Aaaa ..."; explicit, "...Tremium aruerunt."

Of the 23 folios, all are copied recto-verso except for the last 4, giving a total of 42 writing samples. Following the title page, 16 of these pages supply, exactly as in Neudörffer's editions, on the versos sample alphabets for three types of writing, printing ("Zusammensekung"), cursive ("Anhengkung"), and capitals ("Aigentliche anhengkung"), the labels from the editions not included in the manuscript. On the facing rectos appear prose writing samples copied in the juxtaposed alphabet and mostly in German (ff. 11, 12, and 13 in Latin). A few pages are written in red (ff. 12v, 13), and most are beautifully highlighted in gold. Following these paired pages comes a double spread of capital letters (ff. 19v-20), other capitals (f. 21), and additional writing samples in Italic script (ff. 22 and 23).

Johann Neudörffer (1497-1563) is considered "the greatest of the Renaissance writing masters in the north" (Anderson, p. 141). Published in Nuremberg in 1538 and again in 1544, *Ein gute Ordnung, vnd kurtze Vuntritt ...* is Neudörffer principal work, and it represents the earliest use of intaglio techniques in a writing book. A total of 62 separate sample leaves are represented, with 49 of these existing in two orientations. Doede's suggestion that the reverse sheets served as models to be directly traced by the student on the verso of each leaf may find confirmation here, since the sheets conform closely to Neudörffer's editions. Morison (see ed. Barker, p. 115) notes that although there are "two plates of Roman capitals and one of classical Roman Chancery, used for Latin texts, the body of the work [Neudörffer's *Ein gute Ordnung*] ... was devoted to German Chancery scripts, with German texts, that originated in the court of the Emperor Maximilian." He concludes "They represent a nauseous hybrid of gothic and baroque."

Neudörffer's work stands at the beginning of a long tradition of German copy-books. It was followed by that of Wolfgang Fugger, a printer in Nuremberg, who published an important handwriting manual in 1553; the son of Johann, Antonius Neudörffer in 1598; then Houthusius (Aachen, 1591), Roelands (Vlissingen, 1616), Grahl (Dresden, 1670), along with many Dutch writing masters including Van den Velde and Strick, etc. Manuscript copies of these writing books are less well-known and, understandably, much rarer than the printed editions (compare for example a manuscript by Anton Neudörffer, in

Leuchtendes Mittelalter VI [Heribert Tenschert], 1993-94, no. 64). Some printed copy books had manuscript samples bound into them, including those of Neudörffer (for a brief discussion of these, see Becker, no. 49).

The present manuscript still needs to be more closely studied in comparison with Neudörffer's Nuremberg editions, and perhaps further research in the town archives would turn up his schoolmaster-student Philix Stos, who does not appear to be recorded in published sources.

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