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[DIEGO HERNANDEZ DE SAN PEDRO], *Prison d'Amour [De l'amour de Leriano a Laureolle]*

In French, manuscript on parchment
[France, perhaps Paris, c. 1520]

57 folios (first folio with later title, else blank; last 3 ff. blank), on parchment, complete (collation i⁸, ii-ix⁶) written in a handsome *bâtarde* with calligraphic features, in brown ink, on up to 29 long lines (justification 105 x 170 mm.), ruled in light red ink, space left blank for decorated initials with guide-letters traced in ink. Bound in an eighteenth-century polished light brown calf, back sewn on 5 raised thongs, title labels in red and green morocco, gilt spine, gilt frame on boards composed of a triple gold fillet, edges gilt (a few scratches to boards, traces of printed text on f. 57v, discharged from former pastedown, generally very sound condition). Dimensions 175 x 255 mm.

This ex-Phillipps manuscript presents a previously unstudied version of the medieval Spanish allegorical romance, *Carcel de amor*, in a French translation called *La Prison d'amour*. Departing significantly from the early printed edition and one of only nine extant copies of the text (a tale of star-crossed lovers like Romeo and Juliet), the present manuscript fits with a group of manuscripts popular in the circle of King Francis I. Never edited, the manuscripts appear to present several different variants of the author's translation.

PROVENANCE

1. Evidently a deluxe copy, with space left for decorated initials, this exemplar is not dated and bears no dedication, heraldry or early traces of ownership. Although it is not proven that the present manuscript originated in the circle of the court of Francis I, it is accepted that all known manuscripts are datable between 1522 and 1526. The translator Francois d'Assy was employed by the early 1520s by Louise de Valentinois, daughter of Charlotte d'Albret and Cesare Borgia and, by 1526, he was secretary to Louise and Henri d'Albret, King of Navarre. It seems he composed the translation for a little-known widow, named Jacquette de Lansac, widow of Alexandre de Saint-Gelais (died 1522). Because Jacquette is represented as a widow

in the illuminated dedication copy (Paris, BnF, MS nouv. acq. fr. 7552), the translation must date after 1522, but probably before 1525, date of the privilege of the first known edition (Paris, Galliot du Pré, 1526). It could be that the present manuscript was copied for a patron close to the circle of female patrons that commissioned the other manuscripts, especially those that present an earlier prose version of the epistles (BnF, MSS nouv. acq. fr. 7552 and 24382), to which it is closest in text although it presents an abbreviated version without Leriano's mother's speech and the *Pro mulieribus* discourse. These versions likely precede the printed edition that gives a revised text, with versified epistles (see Orth [1983], p. 216).

2. Title penned in French on first folio, in a late eighteenth-century hand: "Roman. Amours de Leriano et de Laureolle. Mss. du 15e siecle." Interestingly, the first word was crossed out and replaced by the word "letre", reaffirming the epistolary nature of the work.
3. Eighteenth-century shelfmark copied in upper lefthand corner of first folio: "O. 356."
4. Robert Lang, Portland Place, London, who had formed a distinguished collection of French romances; his sale, London, Evans, 17 November 1828, lot 1311.
5. Sir Thomas Phillipps (1792-1872), England, his shelfmark MS 3631, sale London, Sotheby's Tuesday 30 November 1971, lot 524. Sir Thomas, a self-described "vello-maniac," attempted a "frenziered quest to preserve every scrap of paper and vellum fragment he could locate" (see Basbanes, *A Gentle Madness...*, 1995, p. 120). In the fifty-plus years that he collected, Sir Thomas amassed over 50,000 books and 100,000 manuscripts, perhaps the largest private library ever. In doing so, he nearly bankrupted himself and drove his family deep into debt. The complete story of Phillipps's acquisitions and the dispersal of his library required five volumes to narrate (see Munby, A. N. L. *Phillipps Studies*, 5 vols., Cambridge, 1951-60).

TEXT

f. 1, Title, eighteenth-century hand: *Romant [scratched out]. Amours de Leriano et de Laureolle, Mss. du 15e siecle.*

f. 1v, blank;

ff. 2-5, Diego de San Pedro, *Prison d'Amour*, Prologue; heading: *Ce present livre a esté translaté de langaige tosquam florantin en francoys et traicte de l'amour de Leriano a Laureolle, fille du roy de Macedoyne;* incipit, "Depuis la guerre faicte et finye de l'an passé venant tenir mon yver et me repouser

en mon pouvre repaire..."; explicit, "[...] Pour me donner aucun soulagement et confort, meslant raisons discrettes avec larmes piteuses, me commenca a dire en ceste manyere";

ff. 5-54, Diego de San Pedro, *Prison d'Amour*; incipit, "*Le prisonnier*. [A]ucune part de mon cueur desiroit tenir livre presentement pour me louer de toy..."; explicit, "[...] [*L'acteur*]. Quant a escrire les funerailles, pompe et sollempnités, debvoirs et honneurs mortuiures saichez qu'il luy furent faiz selon le merite et loyer de ses vertuz".

Diego de San Pedro's *Carcel de amor* ("Prison of Love") is a late-medieval Spanish allegorical romance or novela likely composed between 1465 and 1475. The romance ranks amongst the stories of star-crossed lovers, of which the most famous example is *Romeo and Juliet*. The first part of the text is an allegorical prose poem which presents the Prisoner Lerian, infatuated with Laureolle, daughter of the King of Macedonia. The second part of the text is a chivalric adventure revolving around the love of Lerian and Laureolle: the villain Theseus (in other versions Perseus) denounces the lovers to the king, who imprisons his daughter. Communication between the lovers becomes purely epistolary, with the "Acteur" serving as messenger. Laureolle will ultimately completely renounce Lerian, who heart-broken decides to starve himself to death. The third part of the book (not present in our version) contains a discourse in praise of women, perhaps intended for a specifically feminine audience.

The *Carcel de amor* had an immediate success. It was printed twice in Spanish before 1500 (*editio princeps*, Seville, 1492). An Italian edition, translated by Lelio Manfredi of Ferrara, was first printed in Venice in 1513. Translated from the Italian into French as the *Prison d'Amour*, the work was very popular in the circle of Francis I. Several handsome manuscripts, a few of which are illuminated, as well as a number of printed editions, were produced for the court between 1525 and 1528, when a set of tapestries depicting scenes from its story was also woven (see Kurth [1942], pp. 237-245, and Joubert [1987], pp. 127-134). The first French translation was printed in Paris by Galliot du Pré in 1526 and reprinted in Lyons in 1528. Although this translation is anonymous, the translator's name François Dassy or D'Assy is supplied in the following manuscript: Paris, BnF, MS nouv. acq. fr. 7552. A bilingual version in a different translation, for those wishing to learn Spanish from French or vice-versa, was published in Paris in 1552, and attributed to Gilles Corrozet, although his authorship has since been questioned (see the critical edition of the 1552 "Corrozet" translation, not the 1526 "D'Assy" translation, in progress and forthcoming by V. Duché [Champion, 2005]). By the end of the sixteenth century there were 15 Spanish editions, 10 Italian editions, 8 French editions of D'Assy's translation, and a further 18 editions of a late bilingual French-Spanish translation (for the publication history of the *Carcel* see Whinnom, 1971-1979, II, p. 67-70).

From Ferrara and Mantua, the vogue for this Spanish romance spread to France at the time of the accession of King Francis I (reigned 1515-47) but did not achieve real popularity until some ten years later. The preface to the French translation states that the text of the *Prison* was obtained from a "Ferrarese [Lelio Manfredi] my singular good friend" (see Prologue to the 1526 edition), who gave him a copy of the Italian edition during Francis I's first expedition to Lombardy in 1515-1516. What little we do know about the French translator of the *Prison*, François D'Assy, is contained in another translation of Jacopo Caviceo's *Dialogue treslegant intitulé Le Peregrin...* (Paris, Galliot du Pré, [1527]), where he is referred to as "conterouleur des Brys de la maryne en Bretagne, secretaire du roy de Navarre et de treshaulte et illustre dame ma dame Loyse duchesse de Valentinois" (see Picot [1884], II, p. 273, no. 1744). Thus François D'Assy was employed by Louise de Valentinois, daughter of Cesare Borgia, in the 1520s. The manuscript in Paris, BnF, MS nouv. acq. fr. 7552 contains a dedication to Jacqueline de Lansac, widow of Alexandre de Saint-Gelais (d. 1522), chamberlain to Louis XII. Since the dedication miniature found in the latter manuscript represents Jacqueline de Lansac in widow's garb accepting the book from a kneeling D'Assy, it seems likely that the translation was thus composed sometime after 1522, likely before 1526, date of the printed copy.

The manuscript tradition stands in a complicated and largely unstudied relationship to Galliot du Pré's 1526 edition. There are 9 extant manuscripts of the translation of the *Prison d'Amour* attributed to François D'Assy, each offering different versions of the text: Paris, BnF, MSS fr. 24382, 2150 and nouv. acq. fr. 7552; Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 949; Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawl. D. 591; Geneva, Martin Bodmer Foundation, MS 149; New York, Hispanic Society of America, HC 327/1425 and HC 380/636 (see Faulhaber [1983], nos. 705 and 706) and finally the present ex-Phillipps MS 3631. Interestingly, there is no evidence of a Spanish manuscript tradition.

It is difficult to determine whether all or some of the known manuscripts preceded the printed 1526 edition. Interestingly, all manuscripts and early editions are dissimilar in text, decoration and format. The present Phillipps manuscript is sometimes considerably at variance with the printed edition, for example in that it does not include the dedicatory prologue. Alone in the group of manuscripts, the second section of our manuscript is again quite different from the printed edition as it omits Leriano's mother's speech (*Complaincte de la mere a Leriano*) and Leriano's discourse *Pro mulieribus* (*Louenge des dames*). Finally, the exchange of letters between Leriano and Laureolle is presented in verse form in MS. Paris, BnF, MS fr. 2150, Chantilly, MS. 949 and the Dupré edition of 1526, whereas they are in prose in the original Italian, in the present Phillipps manuscript, as well as in the two manuscripts dedicated to Jacqueline de Lansac (Paris, BnF, MS nouv. acq. fr. 7552; Paris, BnF, MS fr. 24382). In Myra Orth's partial study of the known manuscripts (she did not have access to the Phillipps manuscript) published in 1983, she suggests the following hypothesis: "We are left in a dilemma. These manuscripts were clearly not assembly-line productions from one

prototype. I would suggest that the texts known to us represent succeeding versions of D'Assy's own work well before the publication of 1526. Thus, after the text used for n.a.fr. 7552 and fr. 24382 was established, the letters were versified..." (Orth [1983], p. 216).

Thus, the present manuscript likely presents either a different, perhaps unique version of the translation from the Italian of Lelio Manfredi or an adapted version of the French D'Assy translation with certain textual particularities that suggest the text was revised for an unknown patron. A more complete study of this rich and complex manuscript tradition would lead to a better understanding of the relations between manuscript and printed exemplars and also perhaps a better grasp of the circle of patrons that commissioned them. Further research on the translator François d'Assy and his relation to royal circles and ties to Italian courts could also offer new perspectives on this group of manuscripts.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

Very complete bibliography on the *Carcel de amor*:

<http://www.waldemoheno.net/Medioevo/Carcel.html>

On Diego de San Pedro's *Arnalte y Lucenda*:

<http://www.unc.edu/~maisch/arnalte.htm>