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PETRUS DE ALLIACO, *Expositio super septem psalmos poenitentiales*
In Latin, manuscript on paper
[Northern Europe (probably southern Low Countries), c. 1500-1510]

20 folios, preceded by [2] and [1] flyleaves, complete in itself (collation i¹² ii¹⁴ [16-2 ff. cancelled between quires, no text missing]), on paper (watermarks close to Briquet 8635, Lettre P, Brunswick or Maastricht, 1509), on up to 30 long lines per page, written in dark brown ink in a neat cursive bookhand, headings and biblical quotations underlined in bright red, large and small painted initials and capitals throughout in red. Bound in nineteenth-century paper boards, paper endleaves (fine condition, some internal paper restorations; cut-out inscription on second flyleaf). Dimensions 134 x 97 mm.

Manuscript of the influential text, a commentary on the Seven Penitential Psalms that was a central component of the Book of Hours, delivered by Petrus de Alliaco in 1417. This text is also interesting as an early classic case of misattribution of a work by a master to his more illustrious student, ascribed in a colophon in the present manuscript to Petrus's student, Jean Gerson, an attribution that long persisted in earlier literature and editions.

PROVENANCE

1. Written in a monastic context, probably Cistercian or Carthusian, to judge from the *punctus flexus* punctuation. The watermark of a Gothic P is found mostly in the Low Countries, and this particular variant is located in Brunswick and Maastricht, 1509;
2. Pencil note on front pastedown reads "Ex bibliotheca Haaseana (p. 216, no. 7330);"
3. Stamp on first flyleaf: "Dr. R. Peiper";
4. Dr. Andre Rooryck, MS 11.

TEXT

ff. 1-2, Petrus de Alliaco, *Expositio super septem psalmos poenitentiales*, preface (underlined heading), *Incipit doctrinalis compunctivaque et utilis exposition magistri Johannis Gerson cancellarii parisiensis super septem psalmos penitentiales, Prefacio*; incipit "Vera penitencia velut schala quedam est ..."; explicit, ad propositum pertinet, satis ex sequentibus apparebit" [Du Pin (1706, IV), col. 1-4];

ff. 2-4v, Petrus de Alliaco, *Expositio super septem psalmos poenitentiales*, Meditatio primo: underlined heading, *Meditacio devota super primo psalmo penitenciali*; incipit, "Domine Ihesu Christe future iudex seculi qui bonos in celeste..." [Du Pin (1706, IV), col. 5-7];

ff. 4v-7, Petrus de Alliaco, *Expositio super septem psalmos poenitentiales*, Meditatio secundo: underlined heading, *Meditacio devota super 2º psalmo penitenciali secundum 'Beati quorum'*; incipit, "O domine Ihesu Christe qui culpa offenderis..." [Du Pin (1706, IV), col. 7-10];

ff. 7-10, Petrus de Alliaco, *Expositio super septem psalmos poenitentiales*, Meditatio tertio: underlined heading, *Meditacio devota super 3º psalmo penitenciali 'Domine ne in furore'*; incipit, "Domine Ihesu Christe cui nunquam sine spe..." [Du Pin (1706, IV), col. 10-13];

ff. 10-14v, Petrus de Alliaco, *Expositio super septem psalmos poenitentiales*, Meditatio quarto: underlined heading, *Meditacio devota super psalmo 4º 'Miserere mei Deus'*; incipit, "Domine Ihesu Christe cui est proprium..." [Du Pin (1706, IV), col. 13-17];

ff. 14v-21v, Petrus de Alliaco, *Expositio super septem psalmos poenitentiales*, Meditatio quinto: underlined heading, *Meditacio super quinto psalmo penitenciali secundum 'Domine exaudi orationem meam'*; incipit, "Domine Ihesu Christe qui es verus..." [Du Pin (1706, IV), col. 17-22];

ff. 21v-23, Petrus de Alliaco, *Expositio super septem psalmos poenitentiales*, Meditatio sexto: underlined heading, *Meditacio super sexto psalmo penitenciali secundum 'De profundis clamavi ad te Domine'*; incipit, "Domine Ihesu Christe fons et origo tocius pietatis..." [Du Pin (1706, IV), col. 22-24];

ff. 23v-26, Petrus de Alliaco, *Expositio super septem psalmos poenitentiales*, Meditatio septimo: underlined heading, *Meditacio super septimo psalmo penitenciali 'Domine exaudi'*; incipit, Domine Ihesu Christe qui speravis in te non deseris..." [Du Pin (1706, IV), col. 24-26];

ff. 26-26v, Petrus de Alliaco, *Expositio super septem psalmos poenitentiales*, Oratio: underlined heading, *Oratio operis huius conclusive*; incipit, "Da ergo mihi Domine, hos quos penitentiales psalmos ecclesia tua nominat..."; explicit, "[...] perhenniterque regnare tu misericorditer prestare digneris, qui vivis et regnas in secula seculorum, Amen" [Du Pin (1706, IV), col. 26-26v];

26]; underlined explicit in red, *Explicit doctrinalis expositio magistri Johannis de Gerson cancellarii parisiensis*" [erroneously attributed to J. Gerson];

This is a commentary on the Seven Penitential Psalms, best-known in the later Middle Ages from its inclusion in Books of Hours and wrongly attributed to Jean Gerson (1363-1429), theologian and philosopher, chancellor of the University of Paris. A contemporary colophon added at the end of the present manuscript clearly identifies Gerson as the author. Attribution to Gerson is accepted by Du Pin who publishes the *Expositio super septem psalmos penitentiales* in Gerson's *Opera omnia* [Du Pin, 1706, vol. IV, col. 1-26]. Du Pin's edition is based on former BnF shelfmark St.-Victor 68. The text is equally attributed to Gerson by Stegmüller, *Repertorium Biblicum*, III, 1981, p. 333, no. 4484. Salembier (1886, p. 317; 1909; 1932, p. 374; and *Dic. Th. Cath.*, I, col. 645-46), followed by Glorieux in his modern edition (1960, p. 67), however, omits the work from the Gersonian corpus and correctly attributes it to Petrus de Alliaco or Pierre d'Ailly (1351-1420). Gerson was Pierre d'Ailly's most illustrious student, which could account for the confusion in the attribution of this work. The present work was published in the fifteenth century in *Tractatus et sermones*, Brussels, 1483 [Goff, A-487] and again in Strasbourg, 1490 [Goff, A-488].

As a young student at the University of Paris required by the Statutes of the Faculty of Theology to compose an essential commentary exercise, Petrus de Alliaco wrote in 1378 the *Expositio super Cantica canticorum*. Student-turned-Cardinal delivered in 1417 another scriptural commentary, this *Tractatus* or *Expositio super septem psalmos poenitentiales*. Pierre d'Ailly became chancellor c. 1389-95 just before Jean Gerson. He went on to become Bishop of Cambrai in 1397 and Cardinal in 1411. His works cover practically the whole domain of human knowledge, although most concern canon law and theories relative to Church politics. As a man of action, he strove hard to restore the unity of the Church during the schismatic period. His *Imago mundi* is said to have influenced Columbus's cosmographical thought (there is an incunable copy of the *Imago mundi* that belonged to Columbus in the Colombine Library in Seville). In his will, Peter of Ailly expressed the wish that all his works and treatises be assembled and "published" together.

The reattribution of the present work could lead to a better study of its manuscript and printed tradition and its firm inclusion in a complete edition of Pierre d'Ailly's writings, which has yet to be undertaken (on Pierre d'Ailly, see the excellent study by B. Guénée, *Entre l'Eglise et l'Etat. Quatre vies de prélats français à la fin du Moyen Age (XIIIe- XVe siècle)*, Paris, 1987, chap. III).

LITERATURE

Du Pin, L. Ellies, ed. *Johannis Gersonii doctoris theologi & cancellarii Parisiensis Opera omnia, novo ordine digesta, & in V. tomos distribute [...], Tomus quartus, continens exegetica & miscellanea*, Antwerpiae, Sumptibus Societatis, 1706 [reprint Georg Olms Verlag, 1987].

Emmen, A. "Peter of Ailly (Alliaco)," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. XI, Washington, 2003, pp. 193-195.

Glorieux, Palémon. "Gerson, Jean," in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique*, vol. VI, Paris, Beauchesne, 1967, col. 314-331.

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Salembier, L. *Petrus de Alliaco*, Lille, 1886.

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Stegmüller, F. *Repertorium biblicum medii aevi*, III, Matriti, 1951, no. 4025 (Stegmüller refers back to Petrus de Alliaco, no. 6406).

Tschackert, P. *Petrus von Ailli*, Gotha, 1877, p. 363.

ONLINE RESOURCES

On Petrus de Alliaco:

http://www.bautz.de/bbkl/p/petrus_v_ai.shtml