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Miscellany of Ascetical Writings, including IOHANNES DE GARLANDIA, *Carmen de misteriis Ecclesiae*; IOHANNES DE GERSONIO, *Liber secundus de imitatione Christi*; AEGIDIUS ROMANUS, *Aurea Verba*; IOHANNES DE GERSONIO, Excerpt from *De vita spirituali animae*; IOHANNES DE GERSONIO, *Tractatus de remediis contra pusillanimitatem*; AUGUSTINUS, *Sermo de caritate*; HENRICUS DE HASSIA, *Epistola de contemptu mundi*; ANONYMOUS, *Bonus modus vivendi scolarium*, et alia

In Latin, decorated manuscript on paper  
The Netherlands, Deventer, dated 1458

189 ff., missing leaf between ff. 109-110, else apparently complete (collation impracticable), on paper (watermark close to Briquet, "Lettre P," no. 8526: Utrecht, 1457; Antwerp, 1457-1458, Voorne, 1458), written by different hands in a variety of cursive scripts, in brown and black ink, variation in sizes of script (ff. 5-64) to distinguish between main text, its gloss and the commentary, paper ruled in ink (justification 105 x 65 mm.), paragraph marks, capitals stroked in red, 1 to 2-line high painted initials in red, interesting page layout on fol. 34v, with text disposed around a geometrical design of an X-shaped cross [St. Andrew's Cross] (sole example in this manuscript). Bound in a sixteenth-century (German?) polished brown calf over wooden boards, blindstamped, boards paneled to a saltire pattern composed of triple filets, stamps in losanges (eagle with spread wings) back sewn on 5 raised bands (rebacked), brass catch (missing clasp), parchment pasted on lower pastedown, reads: "[R]eligionum diversitatem ne confusionem. . ." (Some waterstaining, never affecting legibility).  
Dimensions 140 x 110 mm.

Bound in a near original binding, dated, and localized, this miscellany offers an excellent example of manuscript production within the circle of the Devotio Moderna. It contains a variety of texts, many by authors central to the movement (Thomas à Kempis, Gerson, Augustine, etc.), along with others still to be identified. It originates in Deventer, home of Geert Groote and the very "cradle" of the spiritual movement.

## PROVENANCE

1. Dated 1458 for the Convent of Canons Regular [Brothers of the Common Life], Deventer, in the Dutch province of Overijssel. Colophon reads: "Ista collatio facta est Daventrie anno domini m<sup>o</sup>. cccc. lviii. [1458] post [festum] Johannis in domo fratrum Amen" [This miscellany was assembled in Deventer, the year of the Lord 1458, after the Feast of John in the convent of the Brethern. Amen]. In order to safeguard the continuance of the new institute known as that of the "Brothers and Sisters of the Common Life," Gerhart Groot had placed the members of the New Devotion under the rule of the Canons Regular, part of the Windesheim

Congregation. There were two convents in Deventer, Heer Florishuis, founded in 1391, and the Nova Domus or Arme Fraterhuis, founded in 1398.

2. Inscription with shelfmark on first folio reads: "Liber monasterii canonicorum regularum urbis Aquensis. D. 33" [This book belongs to the monastery of Canons Regular of Aachen. D. 33]. This is the convent of the Canons Regular of Aachen, founded in 1203 (see *Dictionnaire d'histoire et géographie ecclésiastiques*, vol. I, 1912, col. 1267).

## TEXT

f. 1, List of works contained in the miscellany: "Liber monasterii canonicorum regularum urbis Aquensis"; beneath, a list of main texts contained in the miscellany: "Liber qui incipit Anglia quo fulget / Libellus de interna conversacione / Aurea verba Egidii fratris minorum / Excerptum ex libro m[agister] Iohannis Gerson de vita spirituali anime / Tractatus de pusillanimitate et scrupulo / Sermo beati Augustini episcopi de laude caritatis / Epistola magistri Henrici de Hassia ad decanum ecclesie Maguntinensis / Modus vivendi scholarium alias stella clericorum,

ff. 1v-4v, blank;

ff. 5-64, Johannes de Garlandia, *Carmen de misteriis Ecclesiae*, incipit, "Anglia quo fulget quo gaudent praesule claro / Londoniae quo Parisius scrutante sophiam..."; explicit, "[...] lucida thuribulum redolens campana sorora"; followed by an elaborate prose commentary, disposed as block paragraphs, but also interlinear;

Johannes de Garlandia (born c. 1180) was at once scholar, grammarian, and poet. English-born but having settled in France, he became one of the notable figures of the University of Paris. Composed c. 1245, this poem figures amongst the religious verse of Johannes de Garlandia: it is a hexameter poem dedicated to Fulk, Dean of York and afterwards Bishop of London (1244-1259). The poem itself focuses on the Church, on the symbolism of its buildings, its services, ministers and vestments, prayers and liturgical matters, using terms of allegory and symbolism. It is likely Johannes of Garlandia used a prose-treatise by Pseudo-Hugo of St-Victor as his source. The poem is here doubled by a gloss and commentary, still to be identified. Published in Konsgen, 2004, pp. 2-63, with facing German translation, and with a list of 30 manuscripts dating from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries (see Raby, 1953, pp. 385-388).

ff. 64v-66, blank;

ff. 66v-72, [Thomas à Kempis], *Liber secundus de imitatione Christi*, with heading, underlined in red followed by list of contents, *Incipiunt devote exhortationes ad interna trabentes* (f. 66v); heading, *De interna conversatione* (f. 67); incipit, "Regnum dei intra vos dicit dominus..."; explicit, "[...] in regum dei. Explicit liber secundus de ymitacione Christi" (published in Pohl);

Although there have been considerable disputes over authorship of the *De imitatione Christi*, most scholars now accept Thomas à Kempis as the author of the famous work that remains one of the most influential devotional books in Western Christianity. It exists in some 750 hand-written

copies, and from its first edition in 1472 down to the last century it appeared in some 3000 editions (see A. Ampe, *L'imitation de Jesus-Christ et son auteur*, Rome, 1973);

ff. 72v-73v, blank; ownership inscription penned on f. 73v: "Frater Emundiis Gualtheri, hunc librum...";

ff. 74-99, Aegidius Assiensis [Blessed Giles], *Aurea Verba*, heading, *Incipiunt aurea verba beati Egidii fratris minoris*; incipit, "Gracia dei et virtutes sunt scala et via..."; explicit, "[...] Expliciunt collaciones sancti Egidii de Roma ordinis fratris minorum" (incipit recorded in Mohan, 1976, p. 165, recording 8 manuscripts; published in *Dicta beati Aegidii Assisiensis*, Quaracchi, 1905);

The "Golden Sayings" of Brother Giles record some of his most memorable sayings, mostly answers and advice visitors received from the Blessed man. The "Sayings" were committed to writing and formed the collection of "Dicta" of Aegidius, which have often been edited in Latin and translated into different languages. St. Bonaventure held these "Sayings" in high esteem, and they are cited in the works of many subsequent ascetical writers. They are short, pithy, popular counsels on Christian perfection, applicable to all classes. Saturated with mysticism, they faithfully reflect the early Franciscan spirit and teaching.

A native of Assisi in Italy, Giles was one of the earliest followers of St. Francis, from whom he received the habit in 1208. He accompanied Francis on many of his missions around Assisi, visited Rome, the Holy Land and Tunis. He spent the rest of his life living in Italy, living from about 1243 at the Monte Rapido hermitage on the outskirts of Perugia, where he died in 1263.

ff. 99-100, Petrus Damianus, Excerpt from his *Institutio monialis*, opusculum L, cap. VI, underlined heading, *Epistola missa damasceni ad blanckam comitissam*, incipit, "Pensandum quippe est cum iam peccatrix anima..."; explicit, "[...] inclinabiliter custodire et sic est finis" (published in PL 145, 737-738; B. Hauréau, 1973, 4, 272);

Discussed in G. Rotondi, "Un opusculo di S. Pier Damiani", *Miscellanea G. Galbiati* 2, 1951 p. 280.

ff. 100v-101v, blank;

nff. 102-109v, Johannes de Gersonio, Excerpts from *De vita spirituali animae*, heading, *Excerptum ex libro .iii. Iohannis Gerson cancellarius parisiensis de vita spirituali anime ad dominum Petrum episcopum Cameracensis. . .*; incipit, "Ego vos baptizavi aqua ille vos baptizabit..."; explicit, "[...] fidei evangelium..." (ends incomplete) (full text published in Glorieux, 1962, pp. 113-202; see Stegmüller, vol. 9, no. 4487, 9, with a list of 52 manuscripts);

Adherents of the Modern Devotion fought to gain acceptance of their movement, especially amongst suspicious churchmen such as the Dominican Matthew of Grabow, who was finally reprimanded in 1417 at the Council of Constance. It is at that Council that the Modern Devotion gained the support of Jean Gerson and Pierre d'Ailly. It is thus fitting to find excerpts of Jean Gerson in a *collatio* made for the movement.

ff. 110-110v, blank;

ff. 111-117, [Johannes Gerson], *Tractatus de remediis contra pusillanimitatem (De scrupulis conscientiae)*, heading underlined in red, *Incipit tractatus de pusillanimitate et scrupulo* [added: "Johannis Gerson cancellarius"]; incipit, "Qui pusillus [sic] est et pavidus cavere sibi debet o timore nimio..."; explicit, "[...] sed liberet nos a malo. Amen";

*In principio* database records 9 manuscripts (there are in fact many more). First printed in Cologne, Ulrich Zel, circa 1470 (Goff G-265), the work was subsequently published in Du Pin, *Joannes Gersonii... Opera omnia*, Anvers (1706). Jean Gerson is the author of two treatises on scrupulous conduct, respectively *Instructio contra scrupulosam conscientiam* and the present *Tractatus de remediis contra pusillanimitatem scrupulositatem*, in which Gerson censures "scrupulous" persons for refusing, through vain fears, to obey their confessor and to overcome their scruples.

ff. 117-121, Augustinus, *Sermo de caritate*, heading underlined in red, *Sermo beati Augustini de laude caritatis*; incipit, "Divinarum scripturarum multiplicem..."; explicit, "[...] etiam brevis finit" (published in PL 39, 1532-1535);

Once considered spurious, this Augustinian sermon is now considered authentic, as stated in A. G. Hamman, in *Bivium. Homenaje a M. C. Díaz y Díaz*, 1983, pp. 125-131 (see also P-P. Verbraken, *Etudes critiques sur les sermons authentiques de saint Augustin*, Steenbrugis, 1976 (Instrumenta patristica, XII), no. 350.

ff. 121-124, Letter of Pope Gregorius I to Dominic, bishop of Carthage, on the topic of Charity, heading underlined, *Epistola beati Gregorii pape ad episcopum Cartaginensem de laude caritatis et cura pastorali etc.*, incipit, "Vere mirabilis virtus est..."; explicit: "[...] conversationis fuerint conditi suavitate" (published in the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica... Epistolarum Tomus I. Gregorii I Registri L.I-VII*, Berlin, 1899 [*Gregorii I Papae Registrum epistolarum. Tomus I, Libri I-VII*], VI, 60, pp. 435-436)

f. 124v, Inscription reads: "Amicorum sincerissimo veritatis et scientiae meritis reverendo domino de Ypebora et ecclesiae Maguntine decano domino Langenstein dictus de Hassia suorum minimus. Amicorum sincerissimo";

This inscription announces the following text by Henricus de Hassia (de Langenstein).

ff. 125-134, Henricus de Hassia (de Langenstein), *Epistola de contemptu mundi*, rubric, *Incipit epistola reverendi magistri Henrici de Hassia ad decanum ecclesie Maguntinensis* [Mainz]; incipit, "Amicorum sincerissimo veritatis et scientie meritis..."; explicit, "[...] suis legibus prudenter determinans. Vale";

Composed c. 1384, and dedicated to the Abbot of Eberbach (see Hohmann, 1976, no. 10, p. 402). On the theme of "contemptu mundi" [scorn for the world], most central to the Modern Devotionalists, see Post, 1968, p. 661. Published by G. Sommerfeldt in *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie*, 29 (1905), pp. 406-412.

Heinrich von Langenstein also referred to as Henricus de Hassia (c. 1325-1397) was a theologian, mathematician and scientist. He studied at the University of Paris, where he became professor of philosophy in 1363 and of theology in 1375. After siding with Pope Urban IV when the Western Schism erupted in 1378, Henricus de Hassia was forced to leave the University of Paris. He became rector of the University of Vienna from 1394.

f. 134v, blank;

ff. 135-142, Conditions for true penitence [Anonymous?], incipit, "Tria requiruntur ad veram penitentiam...";

There is an anonymous work listed in *Hispania Sacra*, vol. I, 1948, p. 126, with the following similar incipit: "Ad veram penitentiam requirendum tria..." entitled "Condiciones de la penitencia."

f. 142v, blank;

f. 143, Unidentified notes;

f. 143v, blank;

jff. 144-152, Franciscus de Mayronis, *De mortuis*, incipit, "Mortui enim estis et vita vestra abscondita est...Ad laudem et gloriam..."; explicit, "[...] veris religiosus que est benedictus in secula. Amen" (recorded in Mohan, 1977, p. 239);

f. 152v, blank;

ff. 153-153v, Notes for priests [?], incipit, "Non memoria sacerdotis celebraturi de hiis..."; followed by heading in red, *Confessio quotidiana per missa audienda*;

ff. 154-155v, blank;

ff. 156-159v, Unidentified text, related to rules and precepts applicable to Canons Regular (?), "Nullus legislator ecclesiasticus vel civilis...";

ff. 160-166v, Johannes Gerson, Excerpt from *De vita spirituali animae*, incipit, "Accipe regula generale super sola precepta..."; explicit, "[...] Explicit excerptum ex libro de vita spirituali anime...professoris magistrum Johannis Gerson cancellarius parisiensis..." (f. 162v); followed and intermixed with excerpts from Johannes Nider's *Preceptorium*, heading underlined: "Ex preceptorio Nyder sequitur," incipit, "Notanda sunt 13 (?) regule";

f. 167, blank;

f. 167v, Prayers, beginning, "In nomine domini nostri Ihesu Christi surgo qui me...";

ff. 168-185v, Anonymous, *Bonus modus vivendi scolarium*, heading underlined in red, Incipit bonus modus vivendi scolarium, incipit, "De mane quando suscitator statim volo surgere..."; explicit, "[...] custodiat vos nunc et in eternum. Amen"; added colophon: "Ista collatio facta est Daventrie anno domini mo. cccc. lviii. post [festum] Johannis in domo fratrum Amen."

In *Principio* database records only two manuscripts for this text: see Vennebusch, J. *Die theologischen Handschriften des Stadtarchivs Köln II* (1980): Köln, Hist. Arch. GB 4° 37 and *Köln III* (1983): Köln, Hist. Arch. GB 8° 84.

ff. 186-189v, blank.

This miscellany contains texts by a number of favored ascetic authors of the *Devotio Moderna* movement, such as Henricus de Hassia, Jean Gerson, Augustine, as well as excerpts from one of their central texts, the *Imitation of Christ* by Thomas a Kempis. It also provides evidence for the very eclectic literary interests of the movement, with the inclusion of the *Carmen de misteriis Ecclesiae* by Johannes de Garlandia, as well as texts concerning the *Contemptu mundi* theme and Charity, key to the preoccupations of affiliates of the Modern Devotion.

The *Devotio moderna* was a movement of religious revival that originated with the preaching campaign of Geert Groote of Deventer (1340-84) in 1379. In his preaching period he formed the Brothers and Sisters of the Common Life, a monastic organization, whose members were exponents of the "Modern Devotion." Before his death he asked his followers to become Augustinian Canons. His society and the Augustinians he inspired were pioneers in a general reform of monastic life. In the decades following its beginnings, the movement radiated from the northern Netherlands to the surrounding parts of Europe. The monograph by Post (1968) remains the standard comprehensive study on the movement.

The Modern Devotion initiated a massive reproduction of texts, mostly of older writings from which excerpts were copied for private meditation or for communal reading, a sort of "reading with the pen," as Thom Mertens put it. The recent work by Kock (2002) offers an in-depth study of the reading culture in the religious institutions of the Modern Devotion and explores the rich manuscript culture in the Devotionalist circles, of which the present manuscript offers an example.

## LITERATURE

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Post, R.R. *The Modern Devotion: Confrontation with Reformation and Humanism*, Leiden, 1968.

Raby, F. J. E. *Christian-Latin Poetry from the Beginnings to the Close of the Middle Ages*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1953.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

On the Devotio Moderna

<http://www.etss.edu/hts/MAPM/info3.htm>

Gerard Groote and the Brothers of the Common Life (A. Broekhuysen)

[http://wisdomsgoldenrod.org/publications/misc/gerard\\_groote.html](http://wisdomsgoldenrod.org/publications/misc/gerard_groote.html)