

ALFONSUS VARGAS TOLETANUS, Commentary on Book I of the Sentences of Peter Lombard (*Lectura in primum librum Sententiarum Petri Lombardi*)
In Latin, with some Bohemian, illuminated manuscript on paper and parchment
Italy, Siena, copied between end of 1469 and May 1470.

201 ff., preceded by 3 paper flyleaves (watermark similar to Briquet, "Olifant," no. 7702, Florence, 1512), complete, in very regular gatherings of 10 except the first quire of 12 (collation: i¹², ii-xx¹⁰ [with before-last leaf of quire ruled and left blank and last leaf of quire blank and pasted on lower cover as pastedown]), quire structure strengthened with thin strips of parchment, the inner and outer bifolia of first quire in parchment, the rest paper (watermark of the type Briquet, "Echelle," no. 5909, Siena, 1476-1460; and no. 5911, Siena, 1476-1494), written in a very highly abridged and tight cursive bookhand, in brown ink, typically on 47 long lines, text in two columns, frame-ruled in plummet (justification 210 x 140 mm.), decorated catchwords in most quires, guide letters (space left blank for planned decorated or historiated initials, remainder of manuscript left undecorated), illuminated frontispiece page, with full decorated borders consisting of colored acanthus leaves, gold besants with hair-line decoration, colored floral and foliate motifs, two medallions, one with an orange-colored anthropomorphic face [inner margin], the other with a naked child-figure sailing on a duck's back and a island with architecture in the background [outer margin], a medallion left bare (likely designed to receive a heraldic shield or monogram of some sort) composed of a purple laurel wreath upheld by two winged putti [lower margin], also a green duck in left-hand corner of lower margin, one column-wide miniature placed in left column, unframed and introducing the text (see Illustration below), some pen flourishing, very curious circled drop-like motifs (ff. 1 and 1v) probably related to "quotational insets" (see below) with spaces left blank voluntarily, large cadel initial on first flyleaf with human face and pen flourishing in brown ink (introducing a provenance inscription), numerous marginal annotations (often revealing sources, comparisons and exact textual references, and so construed as part a prolongation of the main text), annotations mostly contemporary or near-contemporary. Bound in a contemporary or near-contemporary Italian (Florence, "Modo fiorentino"), blind-stamped binding of calf over wooden boards, sides divided into panels by quintuple blind fillets, intermediary frame decorated with curved and interlaced ropework designs, interlaced ropework design at center of boards, traces of corner and center-piece bosses (all wanting), pair of brass and leather fore-edge clasps [one clasp defective] (Upper cover almost detached, joint loose, spine torn, some scratches and tears to leather; one strip of parchment or paper cut out, e.g. f. 12, but with no loss of text; overall binding in its near-contemporary condition). Dimensions 335 x 225 mm.

This is a signed, dated, and illuminated copy of Alphonsus Vargas's commentary on Book I of the Sentences, preserved in its near-contemporary binding. Copied in an Augustinian milieu in Siena by an unknown Bohemian scribe, who adds a colophon in Czech, this manuscript contains rare indications giving the times it took the scribe to complete his copy. Still unedited, the work is important for the history of Augustinian thought and the evolution of techniques of citation. Manuscripts are quite rare: the Schoenberg Database records only three copies changing hands since 1902, the last at Sotheby's in 1958, which is now at Yale University.

PROVENANCE

1. Signed and dated between end of 1469 and May 1470, with ff. 40-200v copied during outside dates of exactly November 11 (11 Nov. Feast of Saint Martin) 1469 to May 1479,

by Augustinus Bartholomeus de Tusta OESA, a Bohemian scribe living in Siena and established at the Convent of Sant'Agostino, Order of Augustinian Hermits (OESA). Further textual, codicological, and stylistic elements confirm this origin, in particular a series of colophons (colophons transcribed below under "Text"), although for Provenance purposes we give the following one: "Scriptum et completum per me fratrem Augustinum Bartholomeum de Tusta lectorem sacre theologie ordinis fratrum heremitarum sancti augustini in die sancti martini hora .xii. anno domini Mo CCCCo LXo 9o [1469] in conventu senensis...Ich Hoff" [Written and completed by me, Friar Augustinus Bartholomeus de Tusta, reader in sacred theology, Order of Augustinian Hermits, on the day of the feast of Saint Martin, at noon in the year 1469 in the convent of Siena...*I have hope* (Motto in German)] (f. 39v). Augustinus Bartholomeus de Tusta is an otherwise unrecorded scribe (not in Bénédictins du Bouveret, 1965). The watermarks all clearly point to an Italian origin for this manuscript (Siena), and the illumination of the frontispiece evokes Siennese manuscript illumination of the last quarter of the 15th century. The designation "de Tusta" as part of the scribe's name indicates his origin: he was a monk of Czech (Bohemian) origin established and working out of the convent of Sant'Agostino, in Siena. Indeed, "Tusta" is the Latin form of Domažlice (in German, "Taus"), a town in western Bohemia, bordering with Bavaria (see *Orbis Latinus* 1971), p. 353: Tusta : Domažlice [Taus] Bohmen). The City of Domažlice was under Bavarian rule in the 14th century. Later under Hussite rule c. 1420 the Germans were expelled from the city. The proximity with Bavaria and German culture most likely accounts for the German motto "Ich hoff[e] [zu dir]" that peppers the endings of numerous columns in this manuscript, for example, ff. 39v, 118v, here repeated twice almost as a line-filler), 192, 200v, a longer version with "Ich hoff czu dir" (perhaps "I have [or place my] hope in you"). The Bohemian origin of the scribe Augustinus de Tusta is further confirmed by the presence of an uncommon vernacular colophon copied at the end of the manuscript, after the tables. Our command of Middle West Slavic or Bohemian does not allow us to give a proper translation of this colophon (f. 200v), but it appears the purpose is devotional, and the scribe is addressing a female figure, perhaps a saint. West Slavic is closely related to Slovak but also Polish which accounts for the resemblances with some Polish terms. An earlier Nicolaus de Tusta is recorded, clearly of Czech origin, as a student working in Padua, in a manuscript in Prague, Kapit. 450: "Hec est liber fratris Nycolay de Tusto per ipsum scriptus in conventu Paduano a.d. 1377...; Explicit... per fr. Nycolaum de Tusta studentem Padue..." (see Bénédictins du Bouveret, vol. IV, p. 317).

The convent of Sant Agostino was founded in c. 1201. Construction of the convent and its associated church began in 1258 and was to become the most important Augustinian convent in Italy. There has been no independent study of the scriptorium or the library of the convent of Sant'Agostino. Some manuscripts with provenance from this convent have integrated the Siena, Biblioteca comunale degli intronati (see *Codici miniati della Biblioteca comunale degli Intronati di Siena*, 1987; *Inventario dei manoscritti della Biblioteca comunale di Siena*, II, 1980, III, 1986).

2. Sixteenth-century monastic ownership inscription on recto of first flyleaf, partially crossed out in ink and written over perhaps by a German-speaking native, but legible in part: "Ad usum mei fratris Alexandri de Cutate (?) [ordinis] hermitarum Sancti Augustini."
3. A later shelfmark of some sort, repeated twice on first flyleaf in upper righthand corner and on f. 200v, in black ink: "No. 3" followed by a signature.

TEXT

ff. 1-1v, Alfonsus Vargas Toletanus, *Lectura in primum librum Sententiarum Petri Lombardi*, Collatioo Principium, incipit, "Apoc. Primo capitulo. Doctor ille gloriosus Yspalensis qui inter ceteros..."; explicit, "[...] qui sine fine vivit et regnat";

ff. 1v-39v, Alfonsus Vargas Toletanus, *Lectura in primum librum Sententiarum Petri Lombardi*, Prologus, incipit, "Circa prologum istius operis queritur primo utrum aliqua noticia..."; explicit, "[...] et hoc de prologo dicta sufficiant. Amen"; colophon f. 39v, "Scriptum et completum per me fratrem Augustinum Bartholomeum de Tusta lectorem sacre theologie ordinis fratrum heremitarum sancti augustini in die sancti martini hora .xii. anno domini Mo CCCCo LXo 9o [1469] in conventu senensis qualiter etc. Ich Hoff.";

ff. 40-193, Alfonsus Vargas Toletanus, *Lectura in primum librum Sententiarum Petri Lombardi*, incipit, "[V]eteris ac nove legis etc. quare magister..."; explicit, "[...] eo prestare qui est Alpha et O[mega] principium et finis in secula seculorum. Amen. Ich hoff" [Published in Alfonsus Vargas Toletanus, *Lectura in primum librum sententiarum*, Venitiis, Paganinus de Paganinis, 1490 (Goff, V-91; Hain, 876*; Pellechet, 566); recorded in F. Stegmüller, 1947, no. 66, 92f, 504]; colophon (fol. 193): "Explicit lectura super primo libro sententiarum reverendissimi in christo, patris ac domini deum alphonsi de hispania sacrarum litterarum doctoris per clarissimi ordinis fratrum heremitarum sancti augustini scriptum et completum per me fratrem augustini de tusta ordinis eiusdem in die sancte certis anno domini M. CCCC. septuagesimo [1470] tercia die mensis madii in conventu sen[ensis]...(passage scratched out)";

ff. 193-200v, [Tabula alphabetica and Tituli Quaestionum], Tables of contents and of questions [published in Kurzinger, 1930, pp, 25-31]; ending with colophon, in Latin and Czech: explicit, "[...] Ich hoff czu dir [in German: Ich hoffe zu dir (*I (have) hope in you*)]"; "Et sic est finis huius tabule et operis super primo libro sententiarum reverendissimi domini domini [sic] magistri alfonsii de hispania...anno domini 1470 die [sic] mensis madii in dei nomine. Amen"; beneath, in Middle West Slavic (Czech/Bohemian): "Radug sye ma myla szdeczko [...] swyte nyzadua liczko [...] gechiue zponiene [ou "zponiem"] nanye zatot prossym [...] myescz wezdi nossym dorotho.Czekani vessole".

ff. 201-201v, blank.

This manuscript contains the commentary of Alphonsus Vargas of Toledo on Book I of the Sentences by Peter Lombard. Alphonsus Vargas of Toledo (1300-1366) was an Augustinian Hermit and theologian. Not much is known about Vargas's life. Born in Toledo, Spain, he joined the order of the Augustinian Hermits. It is not clear when he came to Paris, but Thomas of

Strasbourg, who was in Paris from 1336 to 1341, could have been his teacher, since Vargas evidently was influenced by him. In 1344-1345 (presumably, then, at the age of 44) he read the Sentences in Paris. He may have obtained the title of Magister in 1346 or 1347. He was a regent master in Paris from 1348 to 1353, and eventually was appointed archbishop of Sevilla, where he died in 1366 (see Kürzinger, 1930; Glorieux, 1950; Zumkeller, 1997).

Vargas's main work is this *Lectura in primum librum Sententiarum Petri Lombardi*, which still awaits its critical edition. Apparently he wrote only on Book I, although some scholars have made the case that his commentaries on the other books are known through the abridgments made by Johannes de Wasia in 1376 (see Glorieux, 1950, col. 2535; theory debunked by Trapp, 1956, p. 213-214). An exhaustive census of the known manuscripts has not yet been undertaken, although significant elements have been provided in Kürzinger (1930); Stegmüller (1947), p. 66; Trapp (1956), pp. 215-216, who lists manuscripts known to him; and Zumkeller (1966), no. 89, p. 53. To our knowledge, there are some 17 known manuscripts, all datable in the fifteenth century, with the exception of Toulouse, Bib. Mun, MS 250, which is dated c. 1370, and perhaps also Vienna, Dominik. Kloster 84/89 of the fourteenth century. This list is not exhaustive, and more recent scholarship has uncovered other codices, such as Siena, Museo Aurelio Castelli, Convento dell'Osservanza, cod. 6. The Siena manuscript was also copied by a named scribe Cornelius Brugensis working in Siena in 1466 for a doctor Alessandro da Sermoneta. It has an illuminated frontispiece, with a miniature attributed to Francesco di Giorgio Martini. It is interesting that within the same decade two illuminated copies of Vargas on the Sentences were copied in Siena (see Kristeller, II, p. 170; entry and color plate in Aschri, 1996, p. 73, and fig. 81). Another manuscript should be added to Trapp's list; it is Valladolid, Bibl. Universitaria, cod. 16 (see Kristeller, IV, p. 658).

The *editio princeps* was printed in Venice in 1490 (Alphonsus Vargas Toletanus, *Lectura in primum librum sentetiarum*, Venitiis, Paganinus de Paganinis, 1490 [Goff, V-91]). There was a reprint of the Venice 1490 edition issued in New York, 1952. A critical edition and a study of the manuscript tradition would be an important contribution to the study of the Augustinian "Schola Moderna" and benefit greatly Augustinian Studies in general.

The commentary on Book I by Alphonsus Vargas is a good example of what is commonly referred to as the Augustinian "Schola Moderna," known for the quest for exact quoting and references to sources. The texts produced by the so-called Augustinian Modern School contain a wealth of information on theologians – preceding or contemporary – in particular Augustine. In this respect, Alphonsus de Vargas is central for understanding Augustine's reception in the later Middle Ages (see Saak, 1997, pp. 34ff.). Underscoring the significance of Vargas, Trapp wrote: "The Augustinian Modern School had a characteristic historical mentality which made it desirable or imperative to identify any doctor whose opinions chanced to be discussed" (Trapp, 1956, p. 153). In his pioneering article on Augustinian theology, Trapp was concerned with this historico-critical attitude of citing sources: the proponents of the Augustinian Modern School were no longer content with the traditional citations of Augustine as found in Peter Lombard, but made the effort to go back directly to the original sources. Trapp looked to the margins to investigate late medieval Augustinianism and found that the marginalia contained often very specific names and references,

not found in the core text. This interest in sources and precise quotation caused Trapp to label Vargas as the Order's "first literary historian" (Trapp, 1956, p. 263).

Vargas, being a proponent of the "Schola Moderna," enriched his commentary with clear references (author, title, chapter and verse) given in the margins (as in the present manuscript with numerous marginalia that give precise references to discussed authors) and progressively adopting a new technique with the inclusion of "quotation insets" whose invention is sometimes attributed to Alphonsus de Vargas ("stilus Alfonsi"), although the practice is found in other slightly earlier authors. A "quotation inset" is a blank rectangle adjacent to the dividing line between columns: the quotation was placed in this rectangle and no longer unbalanced the page layout (see Trapp, 1956, pp. 153-154). There are no "quotation insets" per se in this manuscript, although the drop-like designs of ff. 1 and 1v might be tied to the original lay-out of the fourteenth century with the practice of "quotation insets." In the present manuscript, the quotations are entirely transcribed in the marginalia, which constitute an integral part of the author's text, and have not been added by later readers. These quotations are clearly copied by the same hand that copied the core text in columns: amongst the authors quoted one notes many of the influential Augustinian theologians such as Michael de Massa, Thomas of Strasbourg, Alexander de Sancto Elpydio, Alphonsus de Portugalia *et passim* (a very useful list of sources quoted is provided in Trapp, 1956, pp. 220-222).

We know a great deal about this manuscript: who copied it, his nationality, where he worked, to which religious order he belonged to, when he copied it, perhaps even his motto "Ich hoff[e]." But, the manuscript is important in yet another respect, for indications left by the scribe permit us to estimate how long it actually took to transcribe the text. Dated manuscripts in themselves are not common, and those that offer elements informing us on what is called the "segmentation of copy" are even rarer. A number of scholars have worked on manuscripts that provide such precious information. For example, C. de Hamel studied the Giant Bible of Mainz (Washington, Library of Congress) copied between April 1452 and July 1453 and composed of 459 leaves. From scribal notations, De Hamel was able to determine that the scribe copied the Giant Bible in 462 days (15 months), averaging a page a day (De Hamel, 2006, pp. 174-175). De Hamel stresses that manuscripts dated at the beginning and end are "extremely unusual" (De Hamel, 2006, p. 175). Gullick also worked on segmentation of copy in Romanesque codices, and in his study he gives a short list of only 15 examples from the eighth to the fifteenth century that provide dates for the beginning and end of the transcription (Gullick, 1995, pp. 46-47). Gullick gives an example of a manuscript written in Paris between 2 November 1428 and 12 July 1429 over 253 days (Gullick, 1995, p. 53). According to the colophons in the present manuscript, Augustinus Bartolomeus de Tusta finished copying the first 39 leaves of this manuscript on the day of the Feast of Saint Martin (as per colophon on f. 39v). We do not have a colophon or note indicating precisely when he started copying ff. 1-39v, but he must have undertaken his task in the last months of 1469. Most of the codex, i.e. ff. 40-193, was copied between 11 Nov. 1469 and 3 May 1470. It thus took a little over 5 and half months, so give or take a day or two, some 172 days (as per colophons on f. 39v and f. 193 that give the *terminus ante quem* and *terminus ad quem* dates for copy). The tables that follow at the end of the text were copied in May 1470, but no specific day is supplied, with the word "die" expressed but missing an associated Roman numeral (as per colophon on f. 200). There are 200 written leaves in this manuscript, less the 39 leaves copied before 11 November, with 172 possible days of work, although the scribe may not have worked every day during the 5 and a half months.

Thus, the scribe copied approximately one leaf per day $[(200-39)/172=0,9 \text{ days}]$, just as the scribe of the Giant Bible did. Can we assume that one page per day was an average rate of transcription for fifteenth-century scribes? Further research is needed to confirm such a hypothesis.

Overall, this is a highly unusual manuscript that holds considerable interest for its textual, codicological, and artistic elements. It documents the traveling of scribes and their rates of transcription. It survives as a major unstudied source on page layout and citation. The relatively small group of manuscripts would make the project of a modern critical edition feasible, and this manuscript would be an important part of such a study. It also still needs to be more fully studied within the context of Sienese book production and illumination. There has been no study on the production of a scriptorium based in the Augustinian convent of Sant'Agostino where this manuscript was made.

ILLUSTRATION

f. 1, Illuminated frontispiece page, with column-wide miniature placed in left column, introducing the text. The miniature represents an Augustinian monk seated on a large throne-like seat, holding in his hands two books, in the left hand green and the right hand red. This is likely a representation of the author of the commentary, Alphonsus Vargas. If this is the case, Vargas is here represented as a simple Augustinian Friar in his monastic habit rather than dressed as the archbishop he was to become.

The frontispiece miniature and elaborate border decoration are clearly Sienese. Noteworthy is the orange-colored anthropomorphic face found in the left-hand margin border decoration, of the type often found in Siena manuscripts (for instance in manuscripts attributed to the Maestro di Cracovia or to Giovanni di Paolo and his workshop, although clearly not by either of these artists) (see Fanti (ed.), *G. Vailati Schoenburg Waldenburg*, pp. 486, fig. 133; p. 501, fig. 177). The wreathed medallion placed in the lower margin of the page was certainly destined to receive a heraldic shield, perhaps that of the Augustinian Hermits of the Convent of Sant' Agostino or of the ruling abbot of the monastery. Although we cannot yet attribute the miniature to a specific artist, the illuminated frontispiece and its beautiful borders compare with the ornamentation and decorative elements found in manuscripts made in the neighboring Augustinian convent of Lecceto (OESA), in particular with a series of Antiphonaries and Graduals now in Siena, Biblioteca Comunale degli Intronati. On Sienese manuscript illumination, see also Ascheri ed. (1996) with a discussion of university-related production as well as some monastic manuscripts.

LITERATURE

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ONLINE RESOURCES

On Alphonsus Vargas

http://www.socsci.kun.nl/~johnvdb/Philosophy_14th_Century/Vargas/Introduction.htm

http://www.bautz.de/bbkl/v/vargas_a_t.shtml

San Agostino di Siena

[http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%89glise_Sant'Agostino_\(Sienne\)](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%89glise_Sant'Agostino_(Sienne))

On Domažlice (Tusta), Western Bohemia:

<http://english.domazlice.info/about-domazlice/town-history/border-town-domazlice.html>

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TM 403