

BARTOLOMEO DA SAN CONCORDIO, *Summa de casibus conscientiae* (Compendium of Cases of Conscience)

In Latin, manuscript on paper

Northern Italy (Milan?), c. 1475-1500

ii + 272 + ii folios on paper, modern foliation in pencil top outer recto corner, complete, watermark visible on inner margin f. 224, an eight petalled flower, Briquet 6599 (Alessandria 1475, Milan 1475, Pavia 1481), complete (collation i-iii¹⁰ iv⁴ v-vii¹⁰ viii¹⁴ ix-xiii¹⁰ xiv¹² xv-xx¹⁰ xxi¹² xxii-xxvii¹⁰), catchwords at the end of every gathering, ruled in ink, vertical bounding lines in lead (justification 204 x 130mm), writing starting above top line, the main text is written in three hands, both Gothic Semitextualis, the first writing from ff. 1-34 and 45-271 in broad strokes, the second hand writing from ff. 35-44 with a finer pen and more compact aspect, a third semitextualis hand writing on f. 271v in a somewhat rapid libraria, two columns, 36-37 lines per column, occasional glosses and corrections to the text through f. 76v, a humanist hand supplying 10 lines of missing text on f. 34v, 8-line decorated initial on f. 1 in red and blue ink, alternating red and blue 2-line initials at chapter headings, alternating red and blue paraps throughout, except for ff. 35-44 where only red initials appear, sentence initials highlighted in yellow ink, a monogram(?) HSO(?) appearing in the right margin of f. 69; there is a tear on the bottom of f. 1 and on the side f. 91, some smudging and thumbing on f. 1, otherwise excellent condition. Nineteenth-century brown calf binding, title on spine in gilt, "BARTHOLOMAEUS PISAMUS (sic)," marbled pastedowns. Dimensions 271 x 192 mm.

A large, well-executed, and attractive manuscript copy of one of the most popular manuals of confession from the Middle Ages – truly a bestseller with 600 extant manuscripts. Glosses, additions, and corrections to the text show that this manuscript was studied and read carefully. The *Summa* has never been critically edited, nor the subject of a thorough study. Its popularity, especially in Italy, offers a detailed picture of penitential theory and practice in the later Middle Ages, easily studied by consulting its alphabetical organization of terms related to virtue and vice.

PROVENANCE

1. Probably produced in Northern Italy c. 1475-1500, perhaps in Milan, as suggested by the evidence of the watermark and script.
2. A sixteenth-century inscription on f. 272 records the book belonging to the Cathedral of Sant' Ambrogio in Vigevano, Lombardy, Italy: "Iste liber est ecclesie sancti Ambrosii de Vigleuano." The diocese of Vigevano (in Latin, Viglevanensis) was created in 1530, at the behest of Duke Francesco II Sforza, who also sponsored the construction of the current cathedral, dedicated to Saint Ambrose, and the home to a cathedral chapter. Construction on the cathedral, designed by Antonio da Lonate (c. 1456–1541), began in 1532 but was not completed until 1612. Manuscripts, mostly liturgical Choir Books, once belonging to the Cathedral, are preserved in the Biblioteca diocesana in Vigevano and in the Cathedral Museum, Tesoro del Duomo (see Manus online, Online Resources). The collection from Sant' Ambrogio is not described in Mazzatinti's *Inventari*.

3. According to Marvin Colker the manuscript belonged to the collection of Edward Harbord, 3rd Baron Suffield, (1781-1835). Edward Harbord is mostly remembered today for his role in the passage of the *Slavery Abolition Bill* in the House of Lords in 1833. His collection of books has not been the object of a modern study.
4. Acquired from Maggs Bros. in 1943 by Martin Colker (1927-2020), Professor of Classics at the University of Virginia, and renowned paleographer, who catalogued the manuscripts of Trinity College Library, Dublin, and who assembled an impressive collection of medieval material. Colker's shelfmark is at the bottom left of f. I, "MLC 8"; described when in his collection in Bond and Faye, 1962, pp. 516-17.

TEXT

ff. 1-268v, *Incipit summa de casibus que dicitur magistrucia compilata per fratrem Bartholomeum de Pisis ordinis predicatorum anno domini M^oCCC^oXXXIX. de mense februario tempore Benedicti pape duodecimi*, incipit, "Quoniam ut ait Gregorius super Ezechielem. Nullum omnipotenti deo tale est sacrificium quale est zellus animarum ... Sed allegationes solum ad confirmationem ponuntur," *Explicit summa de casibus edita a fratre Bartolomeo de Sancto Concordio de Pisis ordinis praedicatorum*.

ff. 268v-271, [Table of contents to the *Summa de casibus*], *Incipit tabulla super capitula siue titulos capitulorum eiusdem summe secundum alphabetum*, incipit, "Abbas, ..., Zellus," *Deo gratias*.

Bartolomeo da San Concordio's *Summa de casibus conscientiae* survives in nearly 600 manuscripts from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries; Kaeppli lists 508 copies (Kaeppli, 1970, I, no. 436), to which four copies were added by Bloomfield and his colleagues (Bloomfield *et al.*, 1979, no. 5052). Neddermeyer mentions 575 copies without providing a list (Neddermeyer, 1998, vol. II, p. 729; see also "Fama," Online Resources). It was translated into German in 1456, Spanish in 1482, and Italian as early as 1431. The *Summa de casibus* was also among some of the first books to be printed in Europe, the *editio princeps* dates 1473 (GW [=Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke], nos. 3450-6), probably before this manuscript was written (Kaeppli, 1970, no. 436, pp. 157-165). Notwithstanding its medieval popularity, the text has not been the subject of a modern critical edition.

f. 271v, [Eugenius IV, *Bulla de communione pascale*], *Eugenius Papa Quartus*, incipit, "Dilecte fili salutem et apostolicam benedictionem fide digna relatione percepimus... Data Rome apud Sanctum Petrum sub anulo piscatoris viii kal. Iulii 1446 pontificatus nostri anno xvi^o."

The bull added to the end of this manuscript discusses some borderline cases of annual confessions made near the date of Easter. Eugenius explicitly cites the canon from the Fourth Lateran Council (*Omnis utriusque sexus*) that decreed annual confession for all members of the Church. Eugenius urges confessors to allow confession within a reasonable amount of time up to Holy Saturday and even after Easter in some cases so that believers do not commit mortal sins or are even excommunicated because of technicalities. The bull was probably added to the manuscript as supplemental, recent material on the practice of annual confession.

Bartolomeo da San Concordio (1262-1347) became a Dominican friar in 1277 and devoted his vocation to classical and sacred learning. At Bologna and Paris, he studied law and theology and

in 1299 he was sent to Rome to teach the Lombard's *Sentences* (Mulchahey, 1998, p. 330). He was the author of a number of works, but his most lasting contribution to the Church and the Dominicans was his confessional handbook, the *Summa de casibus conscientiae*, also known as *Bartolina*, *Pisana*, *Pisanella*, or *Maestrizzo*. The *Summa de casibus conscientiae* quickly became an immensely popular manual of confession used by Dominican Friars from when it was composed c.1338. In the *Chronica* of St. Catherine's the author writes that "in every country no religious of any order, or any secular, considers himself a cleric without it [i.e. the *Summa*]" (cited in Segre, 1964).

When the church formalized the requirement of confession at least once a year for all its members in the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 (in the 21st Canon, *Omnis utriusque sexus*), it created a powerful impetus for the creation of new penitential guidebooks for the newly created Franciscan and Dominican Orders. Thus, the genre of the *Summa confessorum* came into being. Many different *Summae* arose during the first half of the thirteenth century, but the most influential for Bartolomeo's *Summa* were Raymund of Peñafort's *Summa de penitentia*, written for Dominican Friars (ca. 1225, second edition 1234) and John of Freiburg's *Summa confessorum* (c. 1297-8). Leonard Boyle remarks that Raymund's *Summa* dominated Dominican education, and, as the thirteenth century goes on, the *Summae* "get fatter and fatter" (Boyle, 1982, p. 228).

Bartolomeo frequently cites Raymund's *Summa* in his own, almost as frequently as he cites Thomas Aquinas, and takes John of Freiburg's *Summa* as his starting point, but, significantly, presenting his text in alphabetical order. This was a vast improvement over earlier *Summae* that organized their entries thematically. Now, confessors could quickly and easily find entries thanks to both the alphabetic scheme and the table of contents at the end of the work. Bartolomeo lists terms relevant to secular and sacred life, sin, and virtue, from *Abbas* to *Zelus*. In each entry, there appears a brief definition or question, followed by different ways of interpreting the head word and its relation to formulating penance. For example, the headword *Ebrietas* (Drunkenness), asks first whether it is a mortal sin and then follows a threefold response taken from Aquinas's *Summa theologiae*; another question poses the problem of giving wine to a sick as a remedy and whether that involves the sin of drunkenness, and so on. A confessor using this manual would thus be able to determine whether the penitent had in fact committed a sin, what was the gravity of the sin, and, after taking into consideration "the willingness and ability of the penitent to sustain the penance enjoined," would decide upon a suitable penance, usually a mixture of "prayers, alms, fasts, and corporal disciplines" (Goering, 2004, p. 198).

This manuscript displays the continuing and enduring importance of Bartolomeo da San Concordio's *Summa de casibus conscientiae* to confessors more than a century after it was composed. The glosses and corrections show that the manuscript was carefully studied and read and held its place as the premier confessional guidebook of the later Middle Ages. The large size of the manuscript and its clean execution suggest that it was used as a reference copy, probably intended for confessors to consult and study when difficult questions of penance arose. The addition of Pope Eugenius IV's bull on paschal communion and its requirements of penance also show an active interest in keeping penitentiary practice up to date.

LITERATURE

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ONLINE RESOURCES

FAMA: Œuvres latines médiévales à succès (IRHT, CNRS)

<http://fama.irht.cnrs.fr/oeuvre/268395>

Manus Online: Manuscripts in Italian Libraries

https://manus.iccu.sbn.it/en/risultati-ricerca-manoscritti?progetto=Censimento+dei+manoscritti+medievali+della+Lombardia&b_mono_campo=1&monocampo=vigevano#1700514398109

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