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[PSEUDO-ALBERTUS MAGNUS], *Paradis animae* or *De virtutibus veris et perfectis quas gratuitas vocant*

In Latin, manuscript on parchment
[France, likely northern, c. 1450]

79 leaves, complete, mostly in quires of 8 (2 flyleaves [bifolium] + i-ix8, x7 [8-1] + flyleaf), on parchment, written in a slightly rounded gothic bookhand in brown ink on up to 24 long lines (ink a little faded on f. 2), (justification 75 x 50 mm.), light plummet ruling, catchwords, quire signatures, rubrics in red, paragraph marks in red, chapter numbers indicated in red in margins, some initials touched in red, chapter initials in red with calligraphic blue penwork, "manicula" pointing in the margin to noteworthy parts of text; on f. 75v, approximately 6 lines have been expurgated (colophon ?); contemporary annotations on bottom pastedown: monk in prayer drawn in ink beneath the following words: "De communi vita, virtuosa sit tua dicta." Bound in a fifteenth-century contemporary full blind-stamped calf, over wooden boards, sewn on three thongs, covers with frames composed of blind-stamped tools of lions, fleur-de-lys and flowers, remains of clasps, some loss of leather on back and corners, but binding preserves nonetheless its original unrestored condition (for comparisons, see Gid, 1984, no. 36, p. 37, Atelier: Nord; no. 38, Atelier: Nord: both comparisons are dated second half of the fifteenth century). Dimensions 108 x 78 mm.

In its original blind-stamped binding, this small portable manuscript presents an uncommon treatise on the virtues and vices, this one on "false virtues," often attributed to the Dominican Albertus Magnus, but perhaps written instead in a Franciscan milieu, and extant in relatively few manuscripts, of which there is no modern edition.

PROVENANCE

1. Manuscript perhaps copied in a Franciscan environment probably in northern France,

judging from the fifteenth-century blind-stamped calf binding that is close in style to northern French workshops. A contemporary colophon, now heavily crossed out and no longer readable, undoubtedly revealed information on the original provenance of the manuscript.

TEXT

f. 1, rubric, *Incipit tractatus magistri Alberti Magni de veris virtutibus in quo homo tamquam in speculo vitam suam luculenter intueri potest. Et primo sequitur tabula eiusdem.*

ff. 1-1v, Table of contents (42 chapters, from *De caritate* to *De perseverancia*);

ff. 2-3, incipit, "Sunt quaedam vitia quod frequenter virtutum speciem pretendunt et cum vere sunt vitia credantur esse virtutis [...] Et primo de caritate que est mater et ornamentum omni virtutum...";

ff. 3-75v, [Chapter I], rubric, *Capitulum primum de caritate*; incipit, "Caritas vera est et perfecta quoniam anima cum omnibus viribus [...]" -- [Chapter XLII] rubric, *De perseverancia*; incipit, "Perseverancia vera est in bonis operibus frequens exercitatio [...]" ; explicit, "[...] quia omnes unite sunt in genera. Deo gratias. Explicit moralis philosophia theologorum. Explicit speculum virtutum."

f. 76, Added contemporary annotations; Recipe for powder against melancholia (?) to be added to food, in winter and summer: "Pulvis domini Frederici imperatoris (Frederic II Hohenstaufen ?) et utatur in cibis eo quicumque vult magna et beneficia sentire. Sed plus competitor in yeme quam in estate propter excessum flegmatum et melancholiam..."
Ingredients include: olibani (resina olibani) ; cinamoni (cinnamon); balsamite (menthe coq); cardamon etc.

ff. 76v-77, Added contemporary annotations, such as: "Numerus de errorem mulierum ducit amorem / Numerus venales sedes facit imperiales / Numerus plorentes vidi missus celebrandum..."

ff. 77v-79, blank;

f. 79v, Added quatrains: "Epilogatio materiarum libri / Bene carus humis obedia / Pati pauper castus cum abstinencia / Prudens fortis justus in temperantia / Compa pace (?) miser juncta concordia [...]"

Essentially a treatise on false virtues, the *Paradis animae* fits into the popular genre of medieval moralizing works, following Prudentius's *Psychomachia*, that characterize the

battle within an individual's soul or mind as the conflict between the virtues and vices. This particular text is distinctive because it is above all concerned with virtues that pose as vices, instead of presenting a *summa* of all virtues. The phenomenon of false virtue, the author argues, makes it difficult to distinguish readily between virtue and vice. Each of the 42 chapters, which follow in no discernable order, presents the nature of a particular virtue, followed by guidelines on how to practice the virtue, concluding with the identity of the "false virtue" to which it corresponds.

The author of this treatise cannot be identified with certainty, nor is the date of its original composition known. It is published as a work by the Dominican Albertus Magnus (b. 1193 or 1206; died 1280), the famous scholastic philosopher who was the teacher of Thomas Aquinas, in the collective works by Borgnet (*Opera Omnia*, vol. 37, pp. 447-512). Bloomfield, who lists some 20 manuscripts of the work, attributes it only tentatively to Albertus Magnus (Bloomfield, no. 5875, pp. 507-508). Glorieux also refers to it as a work by Albertus Magnus and cites Borgnet for a list of manuscripts (vol. 1, pp. 62-77). However, other attributions include St. Bonaventura, Johannes of Peckham, and Humbert de Romans. The work was printed as early as 1473 as Albertus Magnus under the title *De virtutibus animae veris et perfectis sive Paradisus animae*, [Cologne, J. Schilling (?), not after 1473], as recorded by Goff (Goff, A-290, A-292, A-294). See however the *Catalogue des incunables*: "Texte faussement attribué à Albert le Grand, à S. Bonaventure et à Johannes de Peckham ou à Humbert de Romans" (Paris, BnF: A-182, A-183). DeRicci, *Census*, p. 754 (Baltimore, the Johns Hopkins University, no. 28991) lists only one manuscript, a religious miscellany, in which a text appears with the same incipit, titled *Hortus paradisi*, without author.

There is no modern critical edition or study of this text. Using the limited number of extant manuscripts, a modern edition might well resolve the questions of authorship and address more fully the issue of the religious and geographic milieu in which the text originated and circulated.

Some of these points are raised by Vanhamme, who published a French translation with preface, in which he questions the attribution to Albertus Magnus in part because he finds the text more typically Franciscan than Dominican: "On a attribué au bienheureux Albert le Grand et au bienheureux Humbert de Romans le *Livre des Vertus* ou le *Paradis de l'âme*. Il ne semble pas que cet ouvrage soit d'origine dominicaine. Voici, je ne dis pas les preuves, mais certains indices qui font supposer que l'auteur de ce livre est un franciscain. Je les donne à titre d'hypothèses, en attendant qu'on résolve la question par l'étude des manuscrits... On trouve dans un opuscule de saint Bonaventure, des ressemblances avec certains passages du *Paradis de l'âme*. ... Il s'agit de la *Somme sur les Degrés des Vertus*. Il y a 30 vertus. ... Ces 30 vertus se trouvent dans le *Paradis de l'âme*, avec 12 en plus. ... On dirait que ces deux ouvrages se complètent. Si la *Somme sur les Degrés de Vertus* est d'inspiration

franciscaine, il est intéressant de noter ses nombreuses ressemblances avec le *Paradis de l'âme*. . . Il n'y a dans le *Paradis de l'âme* aucune allusion à un évènement qui permette de déterminer l'époque à laquelle cet ouvrage a été composé. . . Enfin la différence entre la contemplation, la méditation et la simple pensée est exprimée, presque dans les memes termes, par l'auteur du *Paradis* et par Denys le Chartreux (Denys the Carthusian, †1471). . . Denys connaissait-il le *Paradis de l'âme* ?" (Vanhamme, 1921, pp. 1-6).

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ONLINE RESOURCES

Albert the Great Home Page
<http://www.albertthegreat.com/>

The Ecole Initiative: Albert the Great
<http://www2.evansville.edu/ecoleweb/glossary/albertus.html>