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CANON OF CAMBRAI (Canonicus Cameracensis), Abridged Chronicle of the Bishops of Cambrai [*Gesta pontificum Cameracensium abbreviata*]

In Latin, manuscript on paper

France (French Flanders), Hainaut or Artois (Cambrai or Arras?), c. 1520-1530 and later additions in the late 16th century

21 ff., preceded and followed by three modern paper flyleaves, complete although text interrupted towards the end (collation impracticable since leaves are remounted), on paper with two watermarks (respectively ff. 1-13v, Briquet, "Oiseau et croix," no perfect match but very close to no. 12169, Utrecht, 1529; Antwerp, 1533; Maastricht, 1538; ff. 14-21v, Briquet, "Main," again no ideal match, but close to the type no. 11434, Ponthieu, 1575; Brussels, 1583), written in brown ink in a cursive script, by two different hands (hand A, ff. 1-13v; hand B, ff. 14-19v), on up to 42 long lines (justification 240 x 160 mm.), a few catchwords (e.g. ff. 17v, 18v), some pen flourishing to capitals, numerous marginal notes by a variety of hands, some clearly contemporary, others added later, numerous corrections (interlinear and marginal). Bound in a late nineteenth- or early twentieth-century binding of mauve (or purple?) small-grained morocco over pasteboard, covers with gilt filets and large fleurons, smooth gilt spine with gilt lettering: "Gesta Pontific[icium] Camerac[ensium]," gilt turn-ins, gold and dark red patterned paper endpapers, tricolor silk marker, binding unsigned but clearly the work of an excellent craftsman (Some restorations to paper, with a bit of loss to text on outer edges). Dimensions 295 x 223 mm.

This is a Latin abridgment and continuation of the Chronicle of the Prelates of Cambrai, itself a continuation of a work well-known to medievalists, the eleventh-century Chronicle of the Bishops of Cambrai. These two chronicles were anthologies of panegyric biographies of deceased bishops. The critical editions do not include part of the present text. Moreover, the whole tradition of the Chronicle and its continuations merits closer examination in light of two other manuscripts of this Abridged Chronicle of the Bishops of Cambrai and in the context of the tradition of rich historical writing in Flanders.

PROVENANCE

1. Subject and codicological evidence all suggest an Hainaut (Cambrai or Arras?) origin for this manuscript. The watermarks clearly point to Flemish-Walloon regions of paper production.
2. Bound in the 19th century, by a bibliophile or owner who had the initial "B" placed on the spine and on the covers at the angles, in association with a fleur-de-lys.
3. European Private Collection.

TEXT

ff. 1-8v, [ANONYMOUS (Canonicus Cameracensis)?], [*Gesta pontificum Cameracensium abbreviata* (*Abridged Chronicle of the Bishops of Cambrai*)], heading, *Sequitur nonnullae cronice quarum alique concernunt ecclesiam Cameracen[sem]*; incipit, "Auctores et Camerace et Attrebatii civitatis penitus ignorantur licet antiquitas in defensione ...," explicit, "[...] illius decenter super pectus sue re collocavit." [apparently unpublished portion of the *Gesta pontificum Cameracensium abbreviata*; this text contains the same incipit as Cambrai, Bib. Mun, MS 986 (884), ff. 1-12v; and Paris, BnF, MS lat. 10968, ff. 90-116];

This is the portion of this text that is not accounted for in critical editions, and that is most likely unpublished, although apparently found in the sole other confirmed manuscript containing this text, that is Cambrai, Bib. Mun., MS 986 (884) [see discussion below].

ff. 8v-13v, [ANONYMOUS (Canonicus Cameracensis)], [*Gesta pontificum Cameracensium abbreviata* (*Abridged Chronicle of the Bishops of Cambrai*)], incipit, "Post beatum istum deo et hominibus commendabilem Gerardus nepos eius..."; explicit, "[...] alius quem adhuc vagina concludit, efficaciter conseratur" [published portion of the *Gesta pontificum abbreviata* as found in Delisle, 1869, pp. 534-542; Bethmann, 1846, pp. 504-510: "*Gesta Pontificum abbreviata per canonicum Cameracensem*"; on f. 13v, added passage, not found in cited editions, but published as a note in Arndt, 1877, pp. 294-295, with incipit, "Domine Rogero felicis memorie successit..."; explicit, "[...] sepultus inquam est in ecclesia beate Gertrudis virginis" (ends incomplete; explicit in Arndt: "[...] alterata locis et temporibus transmutantur."

The town of Cambrai was the seat of a diocese, initially set up in the sixth century, whose jurisdiction was immense during the Middle Ages. The territory of the Bishopric of Cambrai roughly coincided with the region of Brabant and Hainaut, including Arras; it included the central part of the Low Countries, and even extended to Brussels and Antwerp. Cambrai's bishops had certain limited secular power and were invested with authority over the counts as of 1007. The dual bishopric of Cambrai-Arras ended in 1904 with the creation of an independent diocese of Arras.

The present manuscript contains a Latin abridgment of the *Gesta Pontificum Cameracensium*, baptized *Gesta pontificum abbreviata* (title given by Bethmann, 1846, p. 504) and composed by an anonymous canon of Cambrai (known in the literature as "Canonicus Cameracensis"). The *Gesta Pontificum Cameracensium* is a twelfth-century continuation of the important Latin *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium* from the eleventh century commonly attributed to Baldericus or Baudry, cantor of Therouanne but now also attributed to a canon of Cambrai (published by Le Glay, 1834; Bethmann, 1846, pp. 393-489; see De Smedt, 1880, pp. i-ii). The continuation *Gesta Pontificum Cameracensium* was thought to be lost until the discovery by De Backer and De Smedt of an unknown manuscript in the College Notre-Dame in Antwerp [now shelfmark Paris, BnF, MS n.a.l. 264, ff. 116-158 (12th c.), donated by the Duc de la Tremoille to the BnF]. De Backer and De Smedt published this *Gesta Pontificum Cameracensium* [*Gestes des évêques de Cambrai de 1092 à 1138*] in 1880, written partly in verse and partly in prose, and in their edition, which also provides an overview of the different known continuations and the different known codices. They characterize the present text as follows: "Un autre abrégé des mêmes *Gesta Pontificum Cameracensium*, fait par un chanoine de Cambrai, et qui va jusqu'à l'année 1191; mais Bethmann a remarqué, avec sa sagacité habituelle, que le document primitif suivi dans cette composition n'allait probablement que jusqu'à l'évêque Nicolas,

mort en 1167, et que le reste est l'œuvre originale du chanoine" [Another abridged version of the *Gesta Pontificum Cameracensium*, composed by a Canon of Cambrai, and going until the year 1191; but Bethmann has remarked that the older document followed in writing this abridgment probably went only up to Bishop Nicolas who died in 1167, and so the rest of this work is an original work by the Canon...] (De Backer and De Smedt, 1979, p. 458).

The *Gesta Pontificum Cameracensium*, of which the present manuscript is apparently an abbreviation, is a continuation of the *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium* covering the episcopates after that of Gerardus I (1012-1051) when the *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium* (ex-Baldericus) ends. The *Gesta Pontificum Cameracensium* covers the episcopates of Gerardus II (1076-1092) until that of Nicolaus I (1137-1167). Hence if our present manuscript is an adaptation or abridgment of the *Gesta Pontificum Cameracensium* discovered in 1879-1880, it should begin with the episcopate of Gerardus II. But in fact, our copy begins before, with the first episcopate of Saint Vaast. This is puzzling. It means that the present manuscript contains the abridged continuation entitled *Gesta pontificum abbreviata* as published by Delisle in 1869 and Bethmann in 1846, but here preceded by an entire part of text that is apparently unpublished, perhaps an abbreviated version of the original source *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium*. Our text begins with the incipit "Auctores et Camerace et Attrebatii..."

Interestingly, there are two other recorded manuscripts that offers such an incipit, that is Cambrai, Bib. Mun., MS 986 (884), 16th c., ff. 1-12v, heading "*Chronica quorum nonnulla concernunt Ecclesiam Cameracensem...*"; incipit: "Auctores et Cameraci et Attrebatii civitatum..." [CGM, Cambrai, XVII, p. 412]; Paris, BnF, MS lat. 10968, 14th c., ff. 90-116, "Auctores et Camerace et Attrebatii civitatis penitus ignorantur...": "Beginnen dann die *Gesta pontificum abbreviata per canonicum Cameracensem...*" (see Arndt, 1877, pp. 294-295). Apparently the whole first part of this work was either not recognized as the beginning of this *Gesta episcoporum abbreviata* or was overlooked by past editors (Delisle and Bethmann who based their partial edition without having access to the manuscript, a twelfth-century cartulary: "Chartularium saec. XII...sub initium continebat quam ille inde edidit abbreviationem Gestorum a canonico Cameracensi confectam...Codex quo devenerit, nescimus" [A cartulary from the 12th c...which contains at the beginning an abbreviation of the *Gesta* by a canon of Cambrai. We do not know the current whereabouts of this manuscript] (as quoted Bethmann, 1846, p. 400). It seems however that this cartulary is none other than Paris, BnF, MS lat. 10968 as identified by Arndt, 1877, p. 294. In sum, the present text is apparently recorded in only two other manuscripts (Cambrai Bib. Mun., MS. 986 (16th c.); Paris, BnF, MS lat. 10968 (14th c.)) and the partial critical editions available only start with the episcopate of Gerardus II, leaving the first half of the present *Gesta pontificum abbreviata* still to be edited, based on the only three extant manuscripts (Paris, BnF, MS lat. 10968; the present manuscript, copied in the sixteenth century and perhaps that of Cambrai, BM., MS 986, also a sixteenth-century copy, which we have not seen).

The textual tradition of the Latin and vernacular Chronicles of the Bishops of Cambrai needs to be studied in the context of medieval historiography in Flanders. Shopkow suggests some of the reasons for the rich historical writing tradition in Flanders between the tenth and thirteenth centuries, characterizing Flanders as preserving a veritable "treasure trove" of such writings. During this period, Flanders was a strong territory that witnessed the co-existence of and cooperation between powerful rulers, monasteries that survived intact from the Carolingian era,

and active episcopal dioceses. Within this context, Shopkow briefly surveys the larger picture of Flemish histories, be they monastic, episcopal, or lay, citing the present chronicle among other serial biographies of bishops (Shopkow, 2001, especially pp. 20-24; see also Giordanengo, 2007). Georges Duby is another important reader of the *Gesta Pontificum*, which figured in his exploration of noble and religious behavior in the eleventh and twelfth centuries (see Duby, 1980, pp. 21-27).

The tradition of medieval chronicles is often quite complex, with numerous abridgments and continuations that render exact identifications difficult and sometimes impossible. However, the successive copies of medieval historic chronicles and lives of prelates, transcribed well into the sixteenth century allowed for the preservation of some of these chronicles thought to be lost. Further research on the present manuscript might solve the question of its first eight leaves of the *Gesta pontificum abbreviata*, which appear to be unaccounted for in the complex tradition of continuations, adaptations, abridgments and translations of the eleventh century *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium* and its continuation, the twelfth-century *Gesta Pontificum Cameracensium*. The present copy is exceedingly rare, one of only three manuscripts, and there is no modern critical edition, which, considering the restricted number of manuscripts, presents itself as a feasible and worthwhile project.

ff. 14-21v, Unidentified notes on the Lives of bishops of Cambrai, added in a later hand (late 16th c., with watermarks in paper corroborating this later dating), incipit, "In annalibus Cameracensis reperitur scriptum quod quidam Servius Tullius Romanus..."; followed by "Summarium ex quodam cathalogo pontificum cameracensem et atrebatensem vicarii a tempore persecutionis wandalorum" [Summaries taken from the catalogue of prelates of Cambrai and Arras during the times of persecution incurred by the Vandals], beginning with S. Vedastus (Vaast), and ending with Gerardus I [1012-1051] (ff. 15-21v). The name "Liebertus" is copied at the end, but the text has not been supplied, indicating the copy of this text was likely interrupted.

These texts are in the same spirit as the ones in the first part of the manuscript datable in the sixteenth century, they are abridged and condensed versions of the *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium* and its continuation the *Gesta Pontificum Cameracensium* (the manuscript speaks of "summarium" on f. 15). However, interesting to note is that some of these later additions are composed in rimed quatrains, recalling the *Gesta Pontificum Cameracensium* mentioned above. The notes cover the mythological origins of Cambrai, founded by Cambro, Duke of the Huns who lived at the time of Servius Tullius, king of Rome, as well as biographies for bishops Vaast to Gerardus I (1012-1051). These Lives were copied in a later hand. Also noteworthy is the copy of a charter addressed to Heribert of Cologne and issued by King Henry II in 1007 with a transcription of his monogram (f. 20v). This is Henry II (973-1024), fifth and last Holy Roman Emperor of the Ottonian dynasty, King of Germany in 1002. He is the only German King to have been canonized. In 1007, Henry II had granted and invested the bishop of Cambrai with authority over all the counts of Cambrésis.

Further study of this textually peculiar portion of the manuscript in the context of the historical-religious situation of Cambrai in the early sixteenth century might help account for the renewed interest in the Cambrai Chronicle at this later date and suggest motivation for the transcription of the present copy.

LITERATURE

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Supplementum seu continuatio Chronici Cameracensis Balderico adscripti, ab anno MLIV ad annum MCXCVI, Cameraci, apud S. Berthoud, 1786 [quoted by Le Glay (1834) and Bethmann (MGH (1846), p. 397), but not seen].

ONLINE RESOURCES

On Cambrai:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cambrai>

List of the Bishops of Cambrai:

http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liste_des_%C3%A9v%C3%AAques_de_Cambrai

De Smedt, *Gesta pontificum cameracensium* (ed. 1880) – Edition of Paris, BnF, n.a.l 264 and study of the complex textual tradition of the abridgments, continuations and translation of the 11th c. *Gesta* originally attributed to Baldericus and now referred to as *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium*.

<http://www.archive.org/details/gestapontificumc00cambuoft>

De Backer and De Smedt, Note published in the Bibliothèque de l'école des chartes (1879):

<http://visualiseur.bnf.fr/CadresFenetre?O=30000000124150&M=tdm>

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