

**JOHANNES VON FRANKFURT (?), Shorter Theological Texts and *quaestiones*; ANONYMOUS,
Commentary on theological lemmata; and Properties of the Planets and the Zodiac
In Latin, manuscript on paper**

Western Netherlands/ Northern Rhine (Westphalia?), c. 1510-1525

i + 52 + i leaves (collation: i¹⁰ + ii¹² + iii-v⁹), in quarto, with three watermarks present in the paper stock: two variants of the letter P, with split shaft, consisting in two lines, and a four-leaved clover atop a shaft, [1] most similar (with identical measurements) to Piccard-Online 109628 (1511-1512), [2] identical to Piccard-Online 110365 (1513); [3] letter P, with split shaft, consisting in two lines, and a three-leaved clover atop a shaft, present in a single example (ff. 43 + 52), similar to the group Piccard, Buchstabe P, VI 202-205 (1522-1523), corresponding to Piccard-Online 108733-37, but with a narrower distance between the chain-lines than any of this group; unfoliated, new quires marked in arabic numerals, in modern pencil, bottom, centre, recto, written in two bands, the first (ff. 1ra-44rb), a hybrida libraria in black ink on two columns of 27-30 lines, unruled (justification c.150 x c.100 mm.), the second (ff. 44rb-52vb), a hybrida libraria on ff. 44rb-51vb in black ink on two columns of 30-33 lines, unruled (justification c.150 x c.100mm.), and on ff. 51vb-52vb in brown ink on two columns of 34-50 lines, unruled, extending into the bottom margins of f. 52r-v, across both columns (justification c.175 x c.100mm.), two-line red foliate decorated initial on f. 1ra, two-line initials in red on ff. 3ra, 3vb, 4vb, 5va, 6va, 7vb, 8vb, 10ra, 14vb, 15va, 17ra, 20ra, 21va, 23ra, 24rb, 26va, 29ra, 30vb, 32rb, 33vb, 34va, 34vb, 40vb, and 44rb, with rubrication of majuscules and red underlining throughout. Modern binding of multicoloured marbled paper over pasteboard covers, half-bound in cream vellum, inlaid with modern cream laid paper contiguous with the flyleaves at front and rear. Dimensions 150 x 210 mm. (binding), 145 x 202 mm. (paper).

Containing a set of shorter theological texts and *quaestiones* on a wide range of topics – theological, legal, philosophical, natural-scientific – by an author of remarkable erudition, this codex is a product of the late-medieval university. The author of this principal collection may be the Heidelberg professor, courtier, and inquisitor Johannes von Frankfurt (d. 1440), famous for his views on demonology and magic, interests which are documented in this manuscript. If so, the manuscript emerges as a new attribution to the important pre-humanist academic author.

PROVENANCE

1. No concrete evidence for the medieval provenance of this manuscript survives, nor any indication as to whether it was once part of a larger manuscript. The facts that the manuscript in its present state shows no loss from the first or last quires, that the text on f. 1ra begins with the single foliate initial, and that the final text is compressed into the available space in the margins of f. 52vb, may indicate that it was not. The texts which the manuscript contains were certainly produced in a university context, and this may well be true of the manuscript as well. Should further study indeed demonstrate that the texts on ff. 1ra-34vb are to be attributed to Johannes Lagenator von Frankfurt, then the university of Heidelberg, where Johannes's literary "estate" would have been preserved after his death, could be brought into consideration as a possible site of origin. The paper stocks permit a dating in

the period c. 1510-1525, very probably c. 1510-1515. Their watermarks point, however, to an origin for the volume in the western Netherlands or Northern German (Westphalia), since they are found in Arnhem, The Netherlands (1088734 and others) and Wesel, Germany (109628), a proposed origin that conforms with the style of the script (albeit very archaizing) and that of the initial on f. 1.

2. European Private Collection.

TEXT

ff. 1ra-34vb, Johannes von Frankfurt (?), Shorter theological texts and *quaestiones*, rubric, *Accipiende non sunt persone*, incipit, "Nota dicitur deut^o j. Ita paruum audietis sicut magnum nec accipietis cuiusquam personam quia iudicium dei est [Deut 1,17] Quod eciam inhibet hic Non inquit consideres personam pauperis nec honores personam potentis Iuste iudicat proximo tuo Vnde quod iudex iuste iudicet hec tria obtineat que docet Rober[tus] lec lxxx. Exquisitam cause discussionem facilitatis credulitatis exclusionem deliberate sentencie prolacionum De primo et secundo Job xxix Causam quam nesciebam diligentissime inuestigabam [Job 29,16]..."

This collection of shorter theological texts and *quaestiones*, alphabetically organised by lemma from *Accipiende non sunt persone* to *Zorastes natus statim risit nec bonum signum fuit quia artem magicam adinuenit*, handles a remarkably wide range of issues, from the permissibility of the magical arts, through guardian angels, indulgences, the doctrine of the two swords, Jewish festivities, the three types of death, and many others, to predestination, the cause of sleep, and the nature of thunder. The range of authorities cited is equally broad: classical authors, both philosophical and literary (Seneca, Terence, Palladius, Solinus, Aristotle, Averroes, and Boethius; the church fathers, western (Augustine, Gregory, Jerome, Ambrose, Prosper) and eastern (Origen, John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nazianzus), and a multitude of medieval authors. Amongst the latter, we find few monastic authors, Anselm and Hugh of St Victor aside, but much use made of the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century scholastics: not just the key theological authorities (Peter Lombard, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventura, and Albert the Great), but a wider spectrum (Durand of Saint-Pourçain, Hugo Ripelin of Strasbourg, Richard of Middleton, Haymo of Faversham, and especially Robert Holcot), with frequent recourse to canon law, and occasional quotations from other literary texts (Peter Comestor, Vincent of Beauvais, and – twice – the *Horologium sapientiae* of the German Dominican Heinrich Suso).

This particular complexion of interests and sources is only conceivable in a university context. It is likely that this collection of texts constitutes a work hitherto unknown to scholarship by the Heidelberg professor Johannes (Lagenator) von Frankfurt (d. 1440), or by a member of his very close circle with similar interests and a similarly remarkable command of an enormous and distinctive body of textual sources. The evidence for this ascription is provided by the author's very frequent use of the *Lectiones super Sapientiam* of the English Dominican Robert Holcot (d. 1349), which is a particular feature of Johannes's known oeuvre, by the comparable set of interests evident between Johannes's oeuvre and this collection, and by direct textual parallels between Johannes's perhaps most famous work (the *Quaestio, utrum potestas cohercendi demones*, ed. Hansen, *Quellen und Untersuchungen*, pp. 71-82), a quodlibetal question presented at the University of Heidelberg on 9 January 1405 (for the dating, see Walz, *Johannes von Frankfurt*, pp. 227-30) in debate over the issue of whether demons can be summoned and controlled – an early work in the incipient late medieval discourse concerning witchcraft – and a text in this manuscript, presented under the heading *Ars magica utrum*

sit hominibus interdicta rationabiliter (ff. 1va-3rb), discussing whether the Dark Arts can ever be legitimately deployed.

Johannes (Lagenator) von Frankfurt, thrice Rector of the University of Heidelberg (1406, 1416, and 1428-29), and Professor of Theology from 1416, is one of the more significant German academic figures of the first half of the fifteenth century. His interest in pragmatic questions of the time led him to produce a series of texts on various issues, including a widely-transmitted treatise on the just price (*De contractibus*), which was also translated into German, and considerations of the invocation of demons, on witchcraft, and popular superstition. His position as a senior member of the court of the Count Palatine Ludwig III (r. 1410-36) took him to England in 1409, Savoy in 1419, Bohemia in 1421, and Palestine and Venice in 1427, all of which occasioned his production of texts. He was an active inquisitor and anti-Hussite campaigner of some ferocity, known to have sent several of his opponents to the stake. The manuscript circulation of his works beyond Heidelberg (for which see Walz, *Johannes von Frankfurt*, pp. xxii-xxiii and 243-84) is largely to be attributed to his pupils, and does not extend much beyond c. 1460. Should the texts in this present manuscript indeed prove to be his, we would have an important example of interest in Johannes's oeuvre in the early sixteenth century.

ff. 34vb-51vb, Commentary on theological lemmata, fragmentary (*Adam to Anime*), rubric, *ADam formatus est a deo et non manibus corporeis*, incipit, "Nota queretur quis an deus manibus corporeis formauit corpus Respondet magister [35ra] li. ij. dis. xvij. Spiritus inquit deus est nec lineamentis membrorum compositus Non ergo carnaliter putemus deum corporeis manibus formasse corpus uel faucibus inspirasse animam..."

This set of texts forms a theological commentary on a series of 22 lemmata, organized alphabetically, from *Adam formatus est a Deo et non manibus corporeis* to *Anime rationales an omnes creantur equeales in essenciali nobilitate* (ff. 34vb-44vb). Thereafter we find on ff. 44vb-51vb further subordinate notes and *quaestiones* relating to creation, the *primi parentes*, original sin, and so forth, in a relatively unrevised state: perhaps material gathered for an unrealized continuation of the commentary. The range of sources used in this set of texts is much narrower than that in the first collection on ff. 1ra-34vb, though not dissimilar, but with heavier reliance on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard. The subordinate notes on ff. 44vb-51vb consist of little more than extracts from the *Sentences*, with interpolated opinions on ff. 48ra-51vb from the *Additiones in libros Sententiarum* of the Erfurt Augustinian Heinrich von Friemar.

ff. 51vb-52vb, Properties of the Planets and the Zodiac, rubric, *Planete quomodo ordinentur*, incipit, "Distinguit enim Ptolomeus in libro de iudicijs astrorum sic planetas Quod superior est saturnus Secundus iupiter et hoc ideo quia saturnus est maliuolus frigidus et siccus merito et in mediate sequitur Jupiter qui est beniuolus calidus et humidus..." [52ra] incipit, "Nota Aquarius signum calidum humidum arreum vtile vene incendende crura excipiuntur Sub eo natus erit humidus piger sompnolentus rudis ingenui diuicijs habundabit et libenter expendit ipsas fidelis et curialis erit annos quinquaginta septem naturaliter viuet..."

A short treatise on the properties of the planets, following the *De iudiciis astrorum* of pseudo-Ptolemy (actually the Tunisian astrologer Haly Abenragel, d. after 1037), accompanied by a companion piece on the properties of the zodiac.

LITERATURE

Bulst-Thiele, Marie-Luise. "Johannes von Frankfurt († 1440). Professor der Theologie an der Universität Heidelberg, Rat des Pfalzgrafen und Kurfürsten Ludwigs III.," in Wilhelm Doerr et al., eds., *Semper apertus. Sechshundert Jahre Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg 1386-1986*, vol. 1, *Mittelalter und Friühe Neuzeit 1386-1803*, Berlin etc., 1985, pp. 136-61.

Hansen, Joseph. *Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Hexenwahns und der Hexenverfolgung im Mittelalter*, Bonn, 1901.

Haubst, Rudolf. "Johann von Frankfurt," ²*Verfasserlexikon* 4 (1983), pp. 599-603.

Piccard, Gerhard. *Wasserzeichen Buchstabe P*, Die Wasserzeichenkartei Piccard im Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart. Findbuch IV, 3 vols., Stuttgart, 1977.

Walz, Dorothea, ed. *Johannes von Frankfurt. Zwölf Werke des Heidelberger Theologen und Inquisitors*, Editiones Heidelbergenses 29, Heidelberg, 2000.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Joseph Hansen, *Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Hexenwahns und der Hexenverfolgung im Mittelalter* (Bonn, 1901) [digitized]

<http://archive.org/details/quellenundunter00frangoog>

"Lagenator, Johannes," Geschichtsquellen des deutschen Mittelalters

http://www.geschichtsquellen.de/repPers_118702920.html

Stuttgart, Hauptstaatsarchiv, Bestand J 340, Wasserzeichensammlung Piccard

<http://www.piccard-online.de/start.php>

TM 615