

HUGO RIPELINUS ARGENTINENSIS [Hugh Ripelin of Strasbourg], *Compendium theologiae veritatis*

In Latin, decorated manuscript on parchment and paper (4 leaves)
Northern Italy, c. 1440-60

188 + ii (parchment, trimmed so stubs only remain) folios on parchment (prepared in the manner of Southern Europe), and with four paper folios in quire seven (see below), watermark obscured by text, but possibly a crown, similar to Piccard Online 51084, Ferrara 1449, and 51118, Piacenza 1435, and Briquet 4712, Genoa, 1427/9, modern foliation in pencil top outer corner recto (collation, i-ii¹⁰ iii¹² iv-vi¹⁰ vii¹⁰ [2, 5, 6, and 9, ff. 64, 67-68, and 71, paper] viii-xviii¹⁰ xix⁶), horizontal catchwords center lower margin (lacking in quire three, boxed in quires nine, ten, eleven, seventeen and eighteen), leaf and quire signatures in most quires with a letter designating the quire and an Arabic numeral the leaf, ruled lightly in ink with single full-length vertical bounding lines (justification, 101 x 65 mm), written, probably above the top ruled line, in upright Gothico-Antiqua scripts in two columns of thirty-two lines by numerous scribes: changes of scribe for example at ff. 23, 26, 28, 31, 35, 37, 37v col. 2, 39, etc., continuing throughout, guide letters for the initials, red rubrics, two-line red or blue initials, imperfectly alternating, with violet and blue pen decoration respectively, six larger three- to four-line blue initials, ff. 1, 3, 28v, 68, 92v, and 114, with decorative void space within the initial and very fine red pen decoration including ivy leaves and crossed-hatched balls, overall in excellent condition with wide, pristine margins, contemporary (?) repairs, ff. 144v, 145, ink flaking on f. 37, stain in lower margin, f. 112v, bottom margin cut away on f. 29, and outer margin cut away (no loss of text) on ff. 103, 121, 135, 151, 170; and the last seventeen leaves, ff. 172-end with some damage to the text in the outer column on seven of these leaves. ORIGINAL BLIND-STAMPED BINDING of fifteenth-century leather over wooden boards, stamped in blind with three sets of multiple fillets (five, five, and three), forming a narrow outer border, a wider inner border, filled with a pattern of Greek crosses (saltire) interspersed with small round stamps, and a central panel with a large Greek cross, spine with three raised bands, with shelf-mark (?) added early in black ink, "Liber B <vii?>", once fastened front to back, clasps missing (remnants of leather straps remain), overall in excellent condition apart from minor wear at the top of the spine and along front joint. Dimensions 173 x 120 mm.

Although not well-known today, this text was likely the most widely read theological manual in the late Middle Ages. This attractive copy of the text includes many contemporary corrections and annotations and is decorated with lovely penwork initials. The large number of scribes who copied the manuscript is noteworthy and deserves study. Its original blind-stamped binding (in unusually good condition) and its early ownership by the Franciscans at Fivizzano add to its interest.

PROVENANCE

1. The script and the style of the pen decoration suggest that this manuscript was copied in Northern Italy around the middle of the fifteenth century, c. 1440-1460. The script is an example of Gothico-Antiqua script (also called Gothico-Humanistica or Fere Humanistic; see Derolez, 2003, pp. 176-179), characterized by a mixture of humanistic and gothic traits. Scripts of this type remained common in Northern Italy throughout the fifteenth century. Unusually for a manuscript of this quality, the seventh quire from the outset included four paper leaves; the watermark is difficult to

decipher with any certainty, but it seems to be a crown of a type that was common in Northern Italy during these decades. Although no exact parallels have been identified in for the stamps used in this binding, it may present some parallels (based on the available photograph only) with the binding of Leonard de Utino's Sermons, printed in Venice 1479, Ketterer Kunst, Sale 385, 2011, lot 475 (formerly New York, Christie's, 17 April, 2000, lot 151); another (very different) binding with a Greek Cross as a center ornament, reproduced in De Marinis, 1960, volume two, plate cclxxiii, no. 1607, Venice 1473. See also Milan, Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense, AG.XIV.6, late fifteenth or early sixteenth century, from S. Vincenzo, Milan, with three Greek crosses in the central panel, http://www.braidense.it/bookbinding/small/015s_en.htm.

The frequent change of scribes (changes of scribe for example at ff. 23, 26, 28, 31, 35, 37, 37v col. 2, 39, etc., continuing throughout), often with earlier scribes returning to copy later sections, is noteworthy, and deserves further study, since it would tell us much about the circumstances under which this book was copied. It is also significant that the text was carefully corrected. See for example, f. 88v, where a portion of text was copied incorrectly, and marked "vacat"; the variant readings, on ff. 9v, 16v, 62v, 6; and the careful contemporary corrections in formal scripts, ff. 4v (an addition), 5, 10v (passages scraped and re-written), etc. A number of folios include passages added in the margins – either supplying omissions, or very formal annotations, see for example, ff. 8 (citing Augustine de Trinitate), 19v, 20, 25v, and 26.

The manuscript was certainly owned by the Franciscans at Fivizzano early in its history (see below), but was not copied for (or by) them, since the convent was founded in 1490. Was it copied in a professional workshop, or was it perhaps made at another Franciscan house in Northern Italy? The question should be studied, especially given the frequent changes of hand and the careful corrections.

2. Belonged to the Franciscan house at Fivizzano, northeast of La Spezia, about halfway between Genoa and Florence, an Observant house, founded in 1490 (Moorman, 1983, p. 183). F. 1, lower margin, early (late fifteenth or early sixteenth century) *ex libris*, "Questo libro eo dellugho de sancto francesce da fiuizano"; top margin, added later, "Della libreria di S. Francisco da Fivillo [sic]": f. 188v, (s. XVII) "Questo sie del lugo di sancto Francesce da fivizano 55"; f. 188, early modern Italian hand recorded folios and quires (incorrectly) at the end of the text.
3. Inside back cover, "15" circled, in pencil; f. 1, lower margin, "109" in ink; inside front cover, modern notes in pencil including, "#26128," and a price code (?).
4. Belonged to J. J. Marsh; presented in 1917 to the Haverhill Public Library in Massachusetts through the estate of Elizabeth C. Ames (see Bond and Faye, 1962, p. 285, no. 4 (AO96-A33), attributed in this entry to Albertus Magnus).

TEXT

ff. 1-2v, [table of chapters, books 1-7, begins without a rubric lacking], incipit, "Quod est deus. Quod unus deus est ...," ... *Liber vii de finem mundi*, incipit, *De purgatorio ... De enumeratione celestium gaudiorum,* " *Expliciunt capitula uel tabula buius libri;*

- ff. 2v-3v, *Incipit tractatus compendii sacrae theologie liber primus quod deus est capitulum primum, Proemium totius libri*, [Prologue] incipit, "Veritatis theologice sublimitas et cum superni sit ..." (Borgnet ed. 1895, pp. 1-2);
- ff. 3v-28v [Book one] *Quod deus est, capitulum primum*; incipit, "Deum esse multis modis ... ad gloriam introducit" (Borgnet ed. 1895, pp. 3-39);
- ff. 28v-68, [Book two] *Incipit liber secundus de rerum creatione capitulum primum*; incipit, "Summe bonitatis triplex est ... conculcatio principii temptationum," *Explicit liber ii* (Borgnet ed. 1895, pp. 40-89);
- ff. 68-92v, [Book three], *Capitula tertii libri sunt hec*, incipit, "De malo in genere, 1 ...;" *Incipit liber tertius et primo de malo in genere capitulum primum*, incipit, "Malum multiplex est ut culpe pene et dampni ... admonitibus non acquiescere," *Explicit liber iii* (Borgnet ed. 1895, pp. 90-121);
- ff. 92v-114, [Book four] *Incipiunt capitula 4 libri*, incipit, "De incarnatione christi ...;" *Incipit liber quartus de humanitate christi et primo de eius incarnatione c. i*, incipit, "Sicut deus est rerum principium ... qui se humiliat exaltabitur," (Borgnet ed. 1895, pp. 122-152);
- ff. 114-143, [Book five] *Capitula quinti libri, I, De origine gratie ...;* *Incipit liber 5 de sanctificatione gratiarum capitulum primum*, incipit, "Quemadmodum deus de celis non descendit ... faceret peccaret[?] mortaliter," *Explicit liber 5* (Borgnet ed. 1895, pp. 153-200);
- ff. 143-168v, [Book six] *Incipit sextus de virtute et materia sacramentorum capitulum primum*, incipit, "Celestis medicus humani ... facta retractant," *Explicit liber 6* (Borgnet ed. 1895, pp. 200-236);
- ff. 168v-188, [Book seven] *Incipit septimus de premiis bonorum, De finali iudicio et de penis dampnorum capitulum primum*, incipit, "Finale iudicium mundi quedam ... quisquis beatus secundum merita recipient sine fine. Amen. Yhesus Gratie [f. 188v blank with later ex libris] (Borgnet ed. 1895, pp. 237-261).

Hugo Ripelin Argentinensis's *Compendium theologiae veritatis* ("Compendium of Theological Truth") has been called the most widely-read theological work in the late Middle Ages, and it survives in at least eight hundred manuscripts (Kaeppli, II, 1975, no. 1982, pp. 261-269, listing this manuscript p. 263, Bloomfield, 1979, no. 6399, pp. 550-3, and Steer, 1981, pp. 47-146, listing 469 manuscripts of Germanic origin). It was also translated into the vernacular during the Middle Ages and circulated in Old French (Michler, 1982 and 1996) and German (Steer, 1981). There is no modern critical edition, but it was printed among the works of Albertus Magnus by Borgnet (1895), and Bonaventure by Peltier (1866). There is an important modern study of its author and its contents and reception in Germany in both Latin and German (Steer, 1981).

It was printed fourteen times before 1500 under the name of Albertus Magnus, the first edition in Nuremberg by Johann Sensenschmidt, c. 1470-72 (Goff A-229; GW 596; Hain, 432; a list of incunable editions is found in Steer, 1981, pp. 167-168). Hugh Ripelin's name did not appear in the printed editions, and the *Compendium theologiae veritatis* was erroneously attributed to many other scholars, most often Albertus Magnus, but also to the Dominicans Thomas Aquinas and Ulrich of Strasbourg, and even to the great Franciscan theologian, St. Bonaventure. Attribution to Hugh Ripelin, however, is accepted by modern scholars, and is confirmed by a Dominican Chronicle (the Annals of Colmar).

This is a carefully organized and corrected copy of this text. The chapter list on the opening folios includes all seven books, copied as a two column text without numbers, rather than as a list; Books three, four and five also include chapter lists copied at the beginning of books, in this case formatted as lists. The use of Roman numerals and Arabic numerals in these lists, and indeed throughout the manuscript in the chapter numbers, is interesting, since the scribes seem to choose between both types of numbers quite freely (for example, on ff. 114rv, in the chapter list each entry is numbered in Roman numerals, but the seven beatitudes are listed with Arabic numerals).

Hugo Ripelin Argentinensis, or Hugh of Strasbourg (born c. 1200-1210; died, c. 1268) was one of the earliest Dominicans from Alsace. He entered the Dominican convent in Strasbourg and became prior there in 1232, before moving to Zurich where he served as sub-prior. By 1261, he was again in Strasbourg, serving as prior of the Dominican convent where he lived until his death. The *Compendium theologiae veritatis* ("Compendium of Theological Truth") was a late work, written c. 1260-1268. It was destined to become one of the most widely-used manuals of scholastic theology in the later Middle Ages, serving as a school text for more than 400 years, and influencing numerous other texts on preaching and pastoral theology. Major theological themes are treated in a clear and concise manner in seven books that discuss God, the Creation, the Fall, the Incarnation, Grace, the Sacraments, and the Last Four Things. The influence of St. Bonaventure's *Breviloquium* is apparent, and Hugh Ripelin also cites Hugh of Saint-Victor, Peter Lombard, and Albertus Magnus.

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