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**ANTONINUS FLORENTINUS (ANTONIO PIEROZZI), *Confessionale* [version: *Defecerunt scrutantes scrutinio*] and other texts**  
In Latin and Italian, decorated manuscript on paper.  
Northern Italy (Florence, Milan?), dated 14[6]2

112 ff., preceded and followed by a single paper flyleaf, complete (collation: i-viii8, ix8, x-xi4), on paper (watermark visible only on f. 105, close to Briquet, "Lettre S dans un cercle," no. 9050, Pavia, 1468-1473 or Milan, 1478), written in a humanistic minuscule in light brown ink, by four distinct hands, i.e. [1] ff. 1-101/110-112, [2] ff. 101v-104v, [3] ff. 105-107v, [4] ff. 108-109v, all of them apparently contemporary or near contemporary, ruled in blind (justification 110 x 80 mm.), catchwords (some of which are decorated in red), rubricated headings, paragraph marks in red, some guide letters, 2-line high red initials, 9-line high opening initial painted in blue with red penwork extending into the margin (f. 1), a few marginal notes. Binding of limp vellum, reuse of part of a leaf from a fifteenth-century Choir book, with a seventeenth-century label on the spine ("S. Antoninus, De confessione, 1402" [sic]). Dimensions 165 x 120 mm.

This pocket handbook of confession contains texts to assist the confessor in his practical and daily tasks, notably the popular manual for confessors named *Confessionale-Defecerunt*. The additional texts that complete the *Confessionale* are also of special interest, including an extract on women's dress codes and the appended model of confession redacted in the vernacular. If the date of 1462 given in two colophons is correct, the present manuscript was assembled only a few years after the death of Antoninus de Florentia, canonized in the sixteenth century.

## PROVENANCE

1. Copied and decorated in Italy as per watermarks and linguistic features, with added passages in the vernacular (ff. 108-109v). There are two colophons that provide most likely a date of 1462, although this has been misread as "1402" because the third number in the date has apparently been abraded (f. 95v, the third character was abraded; f. 101, with the upper part of a "6" probably effaced, turning "1462" into "1402"). A date of 1402 – albeit of composition – is impossible given the dates of the author Antoninus Florentinus (1389-1456), and also given the fact that the work was only composed in the years 1437-1439 (see Aranci, 1992, p. 277). When the binding was made, the mistake was copied on the title-piece pasted on the spine. The colophons read: "Hic liber compilatus fuit per reverendissimum fratrem Antonium de Florentia archiepiscopum ipsius civitatis ad honorem Domini nostri Ihesu Christi et gloriose virginis Marie matris ejus et totius curie celestis, currente 14[abraded character, probably "6"]2." (f. 95v); "Deo gratias Amen. Finitum fuit hoc opus 1462 die 2<sup>o</sup> Augusti hora vesperorum." (f. 101).
2. Continental Private Collection

## TEXT

ff. 1-23v, Antoninus Florentinus, *Confessionale*. [Liber primus: De instructione confessoris], incipit, "Incipit liber compositus per reverendissimum fratrem Antoninum de Florentia,

archiepiscopum ipsius civitatis. Defecerunt scrutantes scrutinio..."; [Pars prima]: "De auctoritate sive potestate absolvendi competentem. Quantum igitur ad primum ut habeas... - ...et idem potest inteligi de licentia seu auctoritate data ab episcopo vel prelato confessoribus" (ff.1-8); [Pars secunda]: "De conscientia confessoris. Quantum ad secundum debet confessor habere scientiam que sufficiat ad hoc opus... - ...Qui penitet ubi vide si vis (ff. 8-11v); [Pars tertia]: "De interrogatione. Quantum ad tercium debes secundum Augustinum interrogare diligenter de peccatis... - ...de dictis peccatis et de absolutione et restitutione et votis et in tertia de quibusdam statibus hominum" (ff. 11v-17); - "De excommunicatione. Item non quod due sunt species excommunicationis, scilicet majoris et minoris... - ... ubi audis confessiones ne te invenias involutum." (ff. 17-23v);

ff. 23v-95v, Antoninus Florentinus, *Confessionale*. [Liber secundus: Interrogatorium], "Postquam ille qui vult confiteri..." [Pars prima]: "De primo precepto legis prime tabule. Primo de preceptis vel votis... - ...quia tunc est mortale, quantumcumque levibus." (ff. 23v-42); [Pars secunda]: "De avaritia. De avaritia tripliciter perpetratur... - ...vide declarationem in quarta parte summe" (ff. 42-53); [Pars tertia]: "Incipit tertia pars hujus libri de matrimonio. Nunc formande sunt interrogationes... - ...in remissionem peccatorum tuorum. In nomine Patris etc." (ff. 53-95v); colophon (f. 95v): "Hic liber compilatus fuit per reverendissimum fratrem Antonium de Florentia archiepiscopum ipsius civitatis ad honorem Domini nostri Ihesus Christi et gloriose virginis Marie matris ejus totius curie celestis, currente 14[*abraded character, probably "6"*]2";

The core of this manuscript contains a copy of a manual for confessors composed by Antoninus de Florentia. The Dominican archbishop of Florence is known to have written three manuals for confessors (two in Latin and one in Italian). The third version known as *Confessionale Defecerunt* (because of its incipit) was written before 1440 and enjoyed a wide circulation. There are some 265 manuscripts which contain the *Confessionale Defecerunt* (see Howard, 1996, p. 22). On the nature of manuals for confessors, see P. Michaud-Quantin, 1962, in particular pp. 73-75 on the confession manuals of Antoninus.

The *Confessionale Defecerunt* was first published in Cologne by Ulrich Zel, not after 1468 (see Goff, A-786), and there followed many incunable editions throughout the fifteenth century (see Goff A-787-864; Hain-Copinger, 1826-1838, n° 1159-1234).

ff. 96-101, Unidentified commentaries on deadly sins and five senses, "Colige deplora fuge crimina dulcius..."; including verses on the five senses, incipit, "Visus, auditus, nares gustus quoque tactus..." (ff. 98v-97), published in *Hispania Sacra*, 1 (1948), p. 125 et sqq.; explicit, "[...] nos amonet atque Matheus"; colophon: "Deo gratias Amen. Finitum fuit hoc opus 14[*abraded character, probably "6"*]2 die 2° Augusti hora vesperorum";

ff. 101v-102v, Excerpts of canonical and patristic texts, including excerpt from the Decree of Gratian (*Tractatus de penitentia: pars secunda, causa XXXIII, quaestio III, distinctio VII*) "Quamquam de differentibus... - ...et perseverandi auctoritatem" (f. 101v); - Quotations from Augustine, from the text of the Council of Carthage (397), from the Decree of Gratian, from the canon XXVI, quaestio VII of Pope Zacharius, from Saint Ambrose (f. 102) etc.; - Excerpt from a sermon attributed to Augustine, heading, *Augustinus in quondam sermone sic ait*; incipit, "Quidem gentiles credentes... - ...arguite, corripite et castigate" (f. 102v);

ff. 103-104v, Excerpt from Antoninus Florentinus, *De ornatu et habitu mulierum*, incipit, "De ornatu mulierum. Queritur primo utrum ornatus mulierum secundum more patrie qui videtur vanus et superfluus..."; explicit, "[...] si eis facit reverentiam. Finis" [*De ornatu mulierum* is edited in Antoninus, *Summa theologica moralis* (Venice, 1477), II, tit. 4, c. 5; see also Kaeppli, *Scriptores...*, vol. 1, pp. 87-89, with a list of manuscripts];

On the *De ornatu mulierum* of Antoninus of Florence, see T. Izbicki, "The Origins of the *De ornatu mulierum* of Antoninus of Florence" (2004). The work was inspired by the case of a Franciscan who refused absolution to an artisan who was involved in the manufacture of "frivolous accessories" for women. Datable 1440, this work is to be placed in the context of the debate concerning vanity, ornament, and excess of dress for women and the development of sumptuary laws in Florence to curb excess.

ff. 105-108, Anonymous [misattributed to Antoninus Florentinus], *Compendium de doctrina Christiana*. "Incipit compendium de doctrina christiana. Quilibet christianus debet primo scire Pater Noster... - ...Vale et noli amplius peccare etc.";

This work is found appended to the present "Defecerunt" version of the *Confessionale* by Antoninus Florentinus. The *Compendium de doctrina christiana* is copied after the *Confessionale/Defecerunt* in two manuscripts (Vatican, Biblioteca Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 5067 and Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Ms A176) and printed after it in many editions. Its authorship has been examined and questioned by Aranci (1992) in his detailed study. The work provides a list of the essential beliefs for a Christian: the Ten Commandments, the Credo, the Seven Sacraments, the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit, etc. Aranci (1992, p. 285) uses the term "*tavola penitenziale*" for this text.

ff. 108-109v, [Model for confession, in Italian]: "Ciascaduna persona chi ascolta..."; explicit, "[...] prega de Dio che me perdona tuti li mey peccadi. Amen."

The core of this manuscript contains a copy of the Latin *Confessionale* by Antoninus Florentinus or Antonio Pierozzi (1399-1459) in the version known as "Defecerunt scrutantes scrutinio." If the date of this manuscript is indeed 1462 (see Provenance above), it is a witness which comes only some twenty years after the redaction of the *Confessionale*, copied only a few years after the author's death in 1459. It is augmented with ancillary texts and excerpts, including a model for confession in Italian and an index, to form a handy portable manual for confessors.

Antoninus Florentinus (Antonio Pierozzi or Saint Anthony of Florence) was born in Florence in 1389 a member of the Forciglione family. He was admitted into the Dominican order after spending his novitiate in Cortona. A partisan of Pope Gregory XII, he had to take shelter in the convent of Foligno, where he became vicar in 1414 and subsequently prior of convents in Cortona, Rome, and Fiesole. He worked for the reform of Blessed John Dominic and wrote a biography of him. He took part in the council of Florence (1439). He was subsequently named archbishop of Florence in 1446 and as such acted as ambassador of the Florentine Republic to the pope. Mandated by Pope Pius II to undertake the reform of the Roman Court, he died in 1459 and was canonized in 1523.

Confession, or the revelation of sins to another in order to receive God's forgiveness, counts amongst one of the most complex of Christian actions. Although confession and penance were recommended very early on, confession did not become compulsory until the thirteenth century. Annual confession progressively became obligatory, as well as frequent and repeated confession, and from the fifteenth century on there is a more frequent practice of confession amongst ordinary Christians. Fixed places for confession appeared first in Western churches at Pisa in the fourteenth century, but the anonymity of the later form of confession was not part of the medieval experience of confession.

The *Confessionale-Defecerunt* is composed of two books: "De instructione confessorum" and "Interrogatorium." The other tracts ("De excommunicatione," "De restitutione"; "De ornatu mulierum," and "Compendium de doctrina Christiana") are very often combined with it under the work entitled *Summa confessionis* or *Summula confessionale*. The *Defecerunt* begins with a description of the confessor's powers (first book, first part), then presents the confessor's skills (first book, second part), followed by some advice to lead the interrogation (first book, third part). The second book teaches how to interrogate the penitent for a breach of the Ten Commandments (first part), reasons related to the Seven Deadly Sins (second part), and how to interrogate differently persons of different social status (third part). Strictly speaking this marks the end of the *Defecerunt*. The following part ("De absolutione") is a separate tract that is sometimes considered as the third book of the *Defecerunt*. Pertaining to absolution, it contains more legal elements than the other parts. The *Defecerunt* is considered the most complete confessor's handbook written in the Middle Ages (see P. Michaud-Quantin, 1962, p. 74). It is remarkable for its psychological perceptiveness, far removed from mere theoretical reflections.

## LITERATURE

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### ONLINE RESOURCES

On Antoninus de Florentia (Antonio Pierozzi):

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antoninus\\_of\\_Florence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antoninus_of_Florence)

<http://www.ewtn.com/library/BUSINESS/ANTONINU.htm>

Digitized edition, Confessionale, Venice, 1483

<http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k60705v>

Paolo, Maria Pia, "Sant'Antonino 'vere pastor et bonus pastor' ... (see above citation):

<http://eprints.unifi.it/archive/00001201/01/39-Paoli.pdf>

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