

YALE UNIVERSITY
BEINECKE RARE BOOK AND MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY
MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE MANUSCRIPTS

MS 731

France (?), s. XV/XVI

Mock sermon in Latin

ff. 1r-3v Passio monachi. Sint lumbi vestri prescincti et lampades in manibus vestris. Ista describuntur Ysaye sexto, Mathei nono, recitature vero in euuangelio hodierno [Isaiah 11:5 (?); Luke 12:35; Matthew 25:1-12 (?)]. Domini et fratres karissimi, hodiernis diebus duo in nobis habundant principalia vicia evitanda, scilicet avaricia et luxuria. Unde ista duo habundant principaliter in ordine nostro, et potissime in religiosis, scilicet monachis albis et nigris. In monachis vero albis regnat avaricia, in monachis vero nigris regnat luxuria. Quorum monachorum cuiusdam dicta refferam, cuius lumbi non erant prescincti, sed pocius illusionibus imbuti ... Tunc monachus stans in medio fratrum suorum dixit illis: O vos omnes, qui transitis per viam, attendite et videte si sit dolor similis dolor meus [*sic*]. Invenerunt me custodes civitatis et percusserunt me, et denunciate hec omnibus, ne similiter penam paciantur, quia amare langueo. Amen.

Mock sermon on the misadventure of a lascivious monk. Having seen a beautiful woman in front of her house, a Benedictine monk ardently tries to ingratiate himself with her; first the lady rebuffs him, saying she has a lover, but after the monk offered her thirty pieces of silver (!) she admits him into her bedroom. In the midst of the night the lover (“dominus”) appears and orders his servants to punish the intruder. The emasculated monk returns to his convent in miserable mood. This erotic tale is entirely written in biblical language. A few corrections seem to indicate that this is an autograph manuscript.

Paper, ff. 3, 200 x 145 mm. In-4° folding. Watermark: toothed wheel, Briquet 13311?? or Briquet 758?? The outer margins are frayed, causing the loss of a few words.

Ff. 1 and 3 are an artificial bifolium, united by a strip of paper; the singleton f. 2 is pasted on a strip of paper with stub.

No ruling. Written in one column of 27-32 lines.

One hand, writing Gothica Cursiva Currens (Bastarda) difficult to decipher.

No decoration.

Unbound.

At the end of the text (lower margin of f. 3v) the signature “Bessonat” in a contemporary hand. This owner may have been also the author. From the library of Sir Thomas Phillipps according to the dealer H.P. Kraus, New York, who offered the manuscript for sale as “a pastoral letter on the trials of the monk”. Purchased on the David Wagstaff Memorial Fund.

R 14.04.10

Albert Derolez