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- 10 WILLIAM OF CONCHES, DRAGMATICON, AND THE COMPOTUS, TEXTS ON SCIENCE AND ASTRONOMY, IN LATIN, MANUSCRIPT ON VELLUM
[WESTERN GERMANY (RHINELAND), C.1230]

33 leaves, 210mm. by 136mm., lacking some text at end, else complete, collation: r^{8+1} [fol.8 an added sheet], ir^{8+1} [fol.10 an added sheet], ii^8 , iv^7 [of 8, lacking viii], formed of two distinct parts, quire 1 (fols.1-9, 39-42 lines, written-space 180mm. by 108mm.) and quires 2-4 (fols.10-33, 48-51 lines, written-space 178mm. by 110mm.), both parts written in dark brown ink in very small clear early gothic bookhands, headings in red or touched in red, large initials in red, THIRTY-TWO TABLES AND DIAGRAMS in the text, up to full-page in size and other smaller rectangular and circular astronomical and circular diagrams and number tables in the text and margins, FULL-PAGE COLOURED FRONTISPICE in two compartments drawn in ink and coloured mainly in shades of orange, green and brown, some early notes and additions, very edge of the frontispiece slightly defective in one corner effecting border only, some staining especially towards the beginning, bound in old (probably seventeenth-century) limp vellum, lacking 2 pairs of ties, added green label on spine with title in gilt, in a brown fitted case, title label gilt

PROVENANCE

(1) The manuscript was written in Germany, using the Germanic 'w' form for 'uv' and 'vu', perhaps in the region of Cologne, to judge from the style of drawing. The manuscript is likely to have been made in a scholastic context.

(2) Sir Thomas Phillipps (1792-1872), his MS.3085 *bis*; bought in the 1820s from Jacob Henry Burn, bookseller in King Street, Covent Garden, London; part of the residue of the Phillipps collection sold in March 1978 to H.P. Kraus.

(3) Beck MS.12.

TEXT AND DECORATION

(1) *Compotus*, fols.1r-9r, "*Incipit compotus, Antequam ad principale propositum accedemus ...*" (the *Compotus*, Thorndike and Kibre, *Catalogue of Incipits*, 1963, col.109, anonymous, citing two manuscripts only, Vrau cod.33, s.xii, and Bern ms.519, s.xiii), opening here with a 3-LINE INITIAL 'A' in red with extensive flourishing into upper and inner margins heightened in green; the text discusses the origins of the names of the months, the seasons of the year, the calculation of the liturgical seasons, the golden numbers, etc., and on astronomy, solstices, the length of the days, the signs of the zodiac, eclipses, lunar and solar cycles, and so forth; with on fol.2r, CIRCULAR DIAGRAM OF THE PLANETS, 50mm. in diameter, drawn in red and dark brown with the outer and inner rings with yellow wash; fol.3r, CIRCULAR DIAGRAM OF THE SOLSTICES, 44mm. in diameter, drawn in red and dark brown with zig-zag colouring in yellow and red; fol.5r, SMALL NUMERICAL DIAGRAM, 16mm. by 49mm., in a grid of red and green lines with arabic numbers in dark brown, 1-7; fol.5v, SMALL NUMERICAL DIAGRAM, 21mm. by 44mm., similar with numbers partly in red, 1-9; apparently ending on fol.7v, "... tibi ab incarnatione domini, f.", but continuing straight on, "Formantur rares solares, sive feriales ...", with THREE SMALL TABLES at the foot of fol.7v, "*Tabula Concurrentium*", "*Tabula epactarum*" and "*Tabula clavium*"; fol.8r (inserted leaf, see collation above), "Si vis scire utilitatem huius cicli ...", with NEARLY FULL-PAGE TABLE for the finding of Golden Numbers, headed at top, "*Cichus minor*" and with the names of the liturgical seasons, with numbers and letters in brown and red; fol.8v (verso of the inserted leaf, see collation above), "Si vis scire concurrentem in

...medio corde ...one erisus. Vt qui est ...us. Unde ...erari. ...

...medio corde ...one erisus. Vt qui est ...us. Unde ...erari. ...
 ...medio corde ...one erisus. Vt qui est ...us. Unde ...erari. ...
 ...medio corde ...one erisus. Vt qui est ...us. Unde ...erari. ...
 ...medio corde ...one erisus. Vt qui est ...us. Unde ...erari. ...
 ...medio corde ...one erisus. Vt qui est ...us. Unde ...erari. ...

...medio corde ...one erisus. Vt qui est ...us. Unde ...erari. ...

...medio corde ...one erisus. Vt qui est ...us. Unde ...erari. ...
 ...medio corde ...one erisus. Vt qui est ...us. Unde ...erari. ...
 ...medio corde ...one erisus. Vt qui est ...us. Unde ...erari. ...
 ...medio corde ...one erisus. Vt qui est ...us. Unde ...erari. ...
 ...medio corde ...one erisus. Vt qui est ...us. Unde ...erari. ...

10 (reduced)

quolibet anno situs ...”, with NEARLY FULL-PAGE TABLE for the finding of Sunday Letters, with columns for 19 different years between 1140 and 1644, with heading and “Hic est ciclus magnus pasche per annos CCCC xxxii^{OS}”, citing a “Dionisius abbas”; fol.9r, an astronomical Calendar for the whole year, with the hours of light and darkness, the Golden Numbers, the Sunday Letters, etc.

(2) Short quotations and jottings, fol.9v, “gg. in Job. liber xii, Nulla que in hoc mundo ...” (Gregory, *Moralia in Job*, XII, ii; Migne, *Pat.Lat.* LXXV:986); “Prefixi dies singulis ...” (*Moralia* XII, lii; Migne, *loc.cit.*1013); and, in a different hand, “Petrus in scolastica ...” (Peter Comestor, *Historia Scholastica*), and other short quotations.

(3) William of Conches, *Dragmaticon*, fols.10r-33v, opening on fol.11r, “*Incipit Philosophia Magistri Wilhelmi maior, Queris venerande dux normannorum & comes Andagavensium ...*” (*Dragmaticon*, Book I, as edited by Guilielmus Gratarolus, Strassburg, 1567); preceded here on fol.10r by FULL-PAGE TABLE, with heading “*Hec est gaza poli, celi thesaurus ...*”, with *Philosophia* at the top, supporting *Ethica*, *Logica* and *Phisica* below, and these in turn supporting *Iusticia*, *Fortitudo*, *Prudentia*, *Modestia*, *Gramatica*, *Dialectica*, *Rethorica*, *Arismetica*, *Musica*, *Geometrica*, *Astronomia*, and so forth, all the liberal arts and sciences under the rule of Philosophy, and on fol.10v, by a FULL-PAGE COLOURED DRAWING, 200mm. by 120mm., in two compartments separated by a band of wavy ornament, (a) the upper compartment showing Philosophy as a woman enthroned looking towards Plato, who stands on the right, and holding scrolls on which Philosophy says “*Si quis diligit sapientiam ad me declinet & eam inveniet*” and also “*Ars aliquid sine me nequit aut valet ulla docere*”, to

apud philosophos non est res hinc equales in demum. **De Luna** Luna quae in se habet quatuordecim dies in quibus transit a seorsum in seorsum. Luna quae in se habet quatuordecim dies in quibus transit a seorsum in seorsum. Luna quae in se habet quatuordecim dies in quibus transit a seorsum in seorsum.

Sol Luna Luna Luna

Luna Luna Luna

... Luna quae in se habet quatuordecim dies in quibus transit a seorsum in seorsum. Luna quae in se habet quatuordecim dies in quibus transit a seorsum in seorsum. Luna quae in se habet quatuordecim dies in quibus transit a seorsum in seorsum.

Alia mensura est et non quae equat... Luna quae in se habet quatuordecim dies in quibus transit a seorsum in seorsum. Luna quae in se habet quatuordecim dies in quibus transit a seorsum in seorsum. Luna quae in se habet quatuordecim dies in quibus transit a seorsum in seorsum.

Sol Luna

Luna Luna

... Luna quae in se habet quatuordecim dies in quibus transit a seorsum in seorsum. Luna quae in se habet quatuordecim dies in quibus transit a seorsum in seorsum. Luna quae in se habet quatuordecim dies in quibus transit a seorsum in seorsum.

10 (reduced)

which Plato replies, “Philosophia est meditatio mortis assidua”, and (b) the lower compartment showing Geoffrey of Anjou (1113-1151) enthroned on the left with his title above, “Dux Normannie”, speaking to William of Conches (“Magister Wilhelmus”) seated on the right and asking him “In primis a te quid sit substantia quero” to which William replies on another scroll, “Res extans per se substantia dicitur esse”; the text in six books, Book I beginning on f.11r, as above, with CIRCULAR DIAGRAM on fol.12r on the forms of consciousness, “Animal rationale mortale visibile patibile”; Book II beginning on fol.13v, with CIRCULAR DIAGRAM on fol.15v on the four elements and their attributes; Book III beginning on fol.16v, with CIRCULAR DIAGRAM on fol.18v showing the concentric spheres of the air, water, moon, sun, planets and stars around the earth, a CIRCULAR DIAGRAM on fol.19v showing the movements of the planets and zodiac around the earth, and SIMPLIFIED MAP on fol.19v showing the five zones of climate across the earth from the cold north to the equator and down to the cold antarctic zone again; Book IV beginning on fol.20r, with TEN SCHEMATIC and CIRCULAR DIAGRAMS on fols.21r, 21v, 22r, three on fol.24v, fol.25r, two on fol.25v, and fol.26r, all showing the movements of various planets and the sun and moon and the stars of the zodiac, together with a LARGE DIAGRAM on fol.23v showing the four elements and their correspondence with the seasons and the ages of man; Book V beginning on fol.26r, with a TWO DIAGRAMS OF THE WINDS on fols.27r and 31r, and a MAP OF THE WORLD on fol.30v in very simplified form showing the Mediterranean and Indian Oceans and the Atlas Mountains; and Book VI beginning on fol.31v, with TWO DIAGRAMS on fols.32r and 32v of the course of the sun from east to west and at different times of day, and TWO DIAGRAMS on fols.32v and 33v showing the five climatic zones, all breaking off on fol. 33v, “... Illa enim quem quidem reddit... Non tamen negamus”.

This is an early and illustrated manuscript of one of the major twelfth-century secular texts, in a copy made well within a century of the author's lifetime. William of Conches (c.1080-c.1160) was probably a student of Bernard of Chartres. He was a notable neo-Platonist philosopher and scientist, was widely read in the classics (he wrote glosses on Juvenal, Macrobius, Martianus Capella, Priscian, Boethius and Plato), and was interested to a degree rare at his time in the astronomy and astrology of the Arabs. A notable feature of the present manuscript is the use of arabic numerals on fols.5r and 5v, almost as early as they are found in Europe. William's early work *De Philosophia Mundi*, written c.1125-35, was expanded into the *Dragmaticon*, composed around 1145, adding much not in the earlier version ("multa necessaria", as he says in the present manuscript, fol.11r, line 42) and omitting points found to be inaccurate. The text is written in the form of a dialogue with his patron Geoffrey Plantagenet (1113-1151), Duke of Normandy and Count of Anjou, father of Henry II of England (to whom as a boy William was private tutor). The title *Dragmaticon*, or *Drammaticon*, reflects this dramatic structure of discussion back and forth between the philosopher and his ducal master, rather as Aristotle is said to have discussed the secrets of the universe with Alexander the Great.

Approximately seventy manuscripts of the *Dragmaticon* are recorded. The present copy is not included in the lists of *Dragmaticon* manuscripts by L. Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, II, 1923, p.65, or in his supplement in *Speculum*, XX, 1945, pp.84-7; or the further lists by A. Vernet, 'Un Remaniement de la *Philosophia* de Guillaume de Conches', *Scriptorium*, I, 1946-7, pp.255-59, and by M. Destombes, *Mappemondes, A.D. 1200-1500 (Imago Mundi, A Review of Early Geography, Supplement IV)*, 1964, pp.96-109. The most recent list is G. Maurach and S. Onetti, *De 'Dragmatici' operis Guillelmi Conchis codicibus (Acta Classica, XVI)*, 1973, pp.117-28. To these can be added the fifteenth-century copy sold in the Honeyman sale in these rooms, 2 May 1979, lot 1097, afterwards Witten, cat.18 (1983), no.33, and a late twelfth-century fragment in Quaritch, cat.1147 (1991), no.120. The text was edited from two manuscripts by Gulielmus Gratarolus, Strassburg, 1567 (reprinted 1967-68). An edition prepared by C. Parra in the early 1940s was apparently never printed (Parra, *Guillaume de Conches et le 'Dragmaticon philosophie', Étude et édition, Positions des thèses de l'École des Chartes*, 1943, pp.175-81). Plans for a new edition by I. Ronca and S. Onetti-Dambe were announced in *Akroterion*, XXII, 1977, pp.2-3.

The full-page drawing on fol.10v here is both of historical interest and artistic quality. It includes detailed portraits both of the author and of a major historical figure in French and English history. It is appropriately shown in the form used in romanesque illustrations of Terence and other classical dramatists in which the interlocutors confront each other with exaggerated gestures and scrolls of speech. The style of drawing with its deep-set eyes and triangular folds of costume can be compared with manuscripts from the Lower and Middle Rhineland in the second quarter of the thirteenth century (cf. H. Swarzenski, *Die Lateinischen Illuminierten Handschriften des XIII. Jahrhunderts in den Ländern an Rhein, Main und Donau*, 1936, figs.1-29, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale ms.466, written for the church of St.Martin in Cologne, first quarter of the thirteenth century, and figs.61-149, Berlin, Staatsbibliothek MS.theol.Lat.fol.379, the Heisterbach Bible, perhaps Cologne, c.1240).