

Guibert of Gembloux's
De destructione monasterii Gemblacensis.
Literary legacy and issues of authorship
against the backdrop of the “decline”
of traditional monasticism

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Introduction

Most medievalists associate the name of the Benedictine Guibert of Gembloux (c.1124/25-1214) with the famous Rhenish visionary Hildegard of Bingen, whom he joined at the Rupertsberg as secretary during the final years of her life. Yet Guibert's stay at the Rupertsberg, however important, was only brief. A monk from an early age, he spent most of his life in the monastic community at Gembloux, of which he eventually became abbot. However, discontent with the way the monastery was managed by Abbot John (see below) led him to leave Gembloux, sometimes for several consecutive years, in order to visit Hildegard of Bingen, to travel to the cult site of Saint Martin of Tours, to whom he had a particular devotion, or to serve as abbot at the nearby monastery of Florennes. After his resignation from the abbacy of Gembloux he devoted his remaining years to polishing his writings and through them creating the literary *persona* that he wanted to be remembered by future generations.

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Guibert's short collaboration with Hildegard has already been the subject of extensive research.¹ In contrast, his own life story and his rich literary production – comprising letters, hagiographical works and even a few historiographical accounts – are less known and little studied.² Yet as a person whose life spanned most of the twelfth century, during which he travelled extensively, corresponded with high-ranking ecclesiastical figures, and as abbot tried to reform monastic life, he certainly deserves to be studied in his own right. Moreover, he lived in a particularly interesting period in which traditional coenobitism could no longer claim the monopoly on the monastic way of life, as it was increasingly confronted with new forms of communal religious life.

The majority of Guibert's works have come down to us in three codices that were produced under Guibert's direction at the end of his life.³ Guibert clearly put much effort into carefully selecting, revising and arranging the texts in these manuscripts. Taken together, the three manuscripts can therefore be considered the literary legacy that Guibert wished to pass on. The central text of this paper, *De destructione monasterii Gemblacensis*, is preserved as the opening text of one of these manuscripts, MS 5535-37 of the Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België (Royal Library of Belgium), the main part of which is devoted to spiritual letter treatises that Guibert had written earlier during his life as a monk at Gembloux.⁴ Published only in part by the Bollandists in 1886,⁵ *De destructione* offers a different perspective on the figure of Guibert and

¹ See for example Joan Ferrante, "'Scribe quae vides et audis': Hildegard, Her Language, and Her Secretaries", in David Townsend & Andrew Taylor (eds.), *The Tongue of the Fathers: Gender and Ideology in Twelfth-Century Latin*, Philadelphia, 1998, p. 102-135; Barbara Newman, "Hildegard and Her Hagiographers", in Catherine Mooney (ed.), *Gendered Voices: Medieval Saints and Their Interpreters*, Philadelphia, 1999, p. 16-34; John Coakley, "A Shared Endeavour? Guibert of Gembloux on Hildegard of Bingen", in John Coakley, *Women, Men and Spiritual Power: Female Saints and Their Male Collaborators*, New York, 2006, p. 45-67.

² The only published study of Guibert's life is Hippolyte Delehaye, "Guibert, abbé de Florennes et de Gemblours, XII^e et XIII^e siècles", *Revue des questions historiques*, 46, 1889, p. 5-90 (reprinted in Hippolyte Delehaye, *Mélanges d'hagiografie grecque et latine*, Brussels, 1966, p. 7-83). I hope to publish my doctoral dissertation on Guibert of Gembloux, entitled *De horizonen van Guibertus van Gembloers (ca. 1124-1214). De wereld van een benedictijns briefschrijver in tijden van een verschuivend religieus landschap* (Ghent University, 2014).

³ These three codices are preserved in the Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België (Royal Library of Belgium) as MS 5397-407, MS 5527-34 and MS 5535-37 and all date to the beginning of the thirteenth century.

⁴ These fourteen letter treatises are not included in the edition of Guibert's letters by Albert Derolez and remain unpublished. For Guibert's edited letters, see Guibertus Gemblacensis, *Epistolae quae in codice B. R. Brux. 5527-5534 inueniuntur*, ed. Albert Derolez, Turnhout, 1988-1989, 2 vols. (Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Mediaevalis, 66-66A).

⁵ *Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum bibliothecae regiae Bruxellensis*, 1, Brussels, 1886, p. 578-582.

the period in which he lived. In addition, the text addresses some important issues concerning authorship in the central Middle Ages.

Content, authorship, date

At first sight *De destructione monasterii Gemblacensis* seems to be a historiographical account of the fire that destroyed the abbey of Gembloux in 1185, when the community was caught up in a struggle for power between the county of Namur and the duchy of Brabant. Lacking children, Henry the Blind, the count of Namur, had designated as his heir his nephew, Baldwin, who was already count of Hainault. The then duke of Brabant, Godfrey III, was not at all pleased with the prospect of this personal union, for he had hoped to obtain the county himself. Gembloux was drawn into their conflict in 1185, when the town, which served as the operational base of the dukes of Brabant, was besieged and laid waste in a punitive expedition by the counts of Namur and Hainault.⁶

The association of the text with the fire of 1185 led the Bollandists, in their edition, to provide the text with the title *Guibertus Gemblacensis de secunda destructione et combustione monasterii Gemblacensis*. They based their choice of title on a table of contents on fol. 1r (added to the manuscript only later, probably in the fourteenth century) and the mention of *secunda combustione* in the text (fol. 3v), which is further said to have been the result of the war between the duke of Louvain (who was also the duke of Brabant) and the count of Namur. However, in reality the text refers to two separate incidents: first, the destruction by fire of the monastery *a quodam uiro nefario et Deum non timente*, which led to the dispersal of the monks. Guibert, however, was forced to stay at Gembloux (*uellem nollem*), which caused him great emotional suffering. Second, the text in the manuscript indeed mentions the *secunda combustione ecclesie nostre* at the beginning of the second paragraph. This destruction took place before the monastery had completely recovered from the first fire (*prima necdum ad integrum restructa*). Clearly, the text refers to two different events.

The second fire is that of 1185, but what event is meant by the first mention of the destruction of the monastery of Gembloux? *De destructione* itself provides us with a date for the earlier fire: when introducing

⁶ See Georges Smets, *Henri I duc de Brabant 1190-1235*, Brussels, 1908, p. 12-44, esp. 26-27, or Félix Rousseau, *Henri l'Aveugle, comte de Namur et de Luxembourg 1136-1196*, Liege & Paris, 1921, p. 57-101, esp. 82-83. There is a contemporary source that recounts the destruction of Gembloux. In his *Chronicon Hanoniense*, Gislebert of Mons, a contemporary of Guibert, describes how Gembloux and its abbey fell victim to the struggle for the succession in Namur. See Gislebert de Mons, *La chronique de Gislebert de Mons*, ed. Léon Vanderkindere, Brussels, 1904, p. 185-187.

the fire of 1185 the text states that it occurred 29 years after the first.⁷ So the first fire took place in or around 1156. Indeed, a fire at Gembloux is mentioned for the year 1157 in an almost contemporaneous source, the continuation of Sigebert of Gembloux's universal chronicle by the monk Gislebert of Ename (written c.1164).⁸ Little is known about the concrete circumstances of this fire, which took place during the abbacy of Odo. Odo is thought to have occupied the abbot's throne for only a very short period of time.⁹ He was deposed by a faction within the Gembloux community led by the monk John, who subsequently became the new head of the monastery. John and his supporters probably seized the fire as an opportunity to question the abbatial authority of Odo, thus weakening the abbot's position and paving the way for their coup.¹⁰ Guibert clearly disapproved of the way John obtained the abbacy, calling him an intruder and a simoniac.¹¹ Perhaps Guibert even regarded John as the instigator of the fire because he took advantage of it to claim the abbacy for himself. Could the *uir nefarius et Deum non timens* mentioned in *De destructione* as the culprit responsible for the fire be identified with Abbot John? In any case, Guibert was very distraught by the events of 1157, although as is stated in *De destructione*, he did not leave the monastery after its destruction, in contrast with his quick abandonment of the community after the fire of 1185.¹²

⁷ "in secunda combustione ecclesie nostre – id est Gemblacensis – que post aliquot annos – hoc est uno minus a xxx^{ta} – prima necdum ad integrum restructa". p. 296 of the present edition.

⁸ For the year 1157 the continuation mentions that, "Cenobium Gemblacense, quod ante annos circiter XX succensum, sed Dei clementia et suffragiis sanctorum, quorum reliquie in illa continentur ecclesia, aquis de alveo vicini fluminis elevatis et monasterio superfusus restinctum, modo tali presidio destitutum, occulto Dei iudicio cum claustro et ceteris officinis totoque oppido combustum est." See *Auctarium Affligemense Sigeberti Gemblacensis Chronographiae*, ed. Georg Pertz, Hannover, 1844, p. 304-305 (*Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores*, 6).

⁹ The precise dates of his abbacy are unknown. The *Monasticon belge* mentions an Abbot Peter who died on 14 September 1156. This is in all likelihood the earliest date possible for the start of Odo's abbacy. Odo himself is said to have died on 24 December 1159, providing the *terminus ante quem* for his abbacy. Considering that he was deposed from office, his abbacy will have ended before his death, although there is no evidence to indicate precisely when he was deposed. The earliest mention of Abbot John in charter evidence dates to 1172. See Ursmer Berlière, "Abbaye de Gembloux", in *Monasticon Belge, I: Namur, Bruges*, 1890, p. 19-20.

¹⁰ See the letter from John of Wl., a monk of Gembloux, to Guibert (published amongst the letters of Guibert as Ep. 31), in Guibertus Gemblacensis, *Epistolae, op. cit.*, n. 4, Ep. 31, l. 36-85, p. 331-332.

¹¹ See Guibert's letter to G. (Guibertus Gemblacensis, *Epistolae, op. cit.*, n. 4, Ep. 28, l. 70-72, p. 305) and his letter to Gertrude, a nun of Rupertsberg (Guibertus Gemblacensis, *Epistolae, op. cit.*, n. 4, Ep. 37, l. 69-72, p. 363).

¹² Guibert decided to join the community of Marmoutier in Tours, founded by his favourite saint, Martin of Tours. For more information on Guibert's stay, see his letters to the community of Marmoutier and to Philip of Heinsberg, archbishop of Cologne, in Guibertus Gemblacensis, *Epistolae, op. cit.*, n. 4, Ep. 3-9, p. 59-151 and Ep. 12-14, p. 179-209.

However, *De destructione* is more than an account of the fire and destruction of the monastery of Gembloux. Within the framework of this historiographical narrative, Guibert provides the readers of MS 5535-37 with information on the genesis of the letter treatises that follow *De destructione* in the codex. In fact, the codicological analysis of *De destructione* (see below) demonstrates that the text was written on a single quire that was probably added to the collection of letters at a later stage. It is thus likely that Guibert meant *De destructione* to function as an introduction to this collection of letter treatises. In fact, by describing what motivated him to write and collect these letter treatises Guibert indirectly instructed readers how to interpret his work. The letters were written “when he was younger”¹³ for the benefit of his friends and family, because the sad destruction of the monastery in 1157 had inspired in him the desire to exhort others to the imitation of Christ. At the request of others, Guibert later collected these letters into one manuscript, by his own account without having revised them first due to his frail health. This implies that he normally did “correct” his works before composing them into a manuscript. However, he clearly felt ill at ease with the lack of sophistication of his earlier letter treatises, as he tried to excuse the uncultivated style of the letters. Of course, assertions of one’s lack of talent are typical examples of the humility topoi with which medieval texts are replete.¹⁴ As such, they firmly place Guibert in the traditional discourse on writing and authorship and prove that he was well acquainted with the expectations of a monastic audience.

In the second paragraph of *De destructione* Guibert recounted his own life story as the backdrop to how he came to write his other works, in particular his letters to high-ranking ecclesiastical figures and his verse *Vita sancti Martini*. Once again, he devoted much effort to justifying his authorship, claiming that it was *caritas* that had forced him to compose texts, even though he himself hardly knew how to write. Furthermore, by developing upon metaphors drawn from the natural world he argued that his works, however insignificant they may be, were nonetheless meaningful. Again, these topoi and metaphors place Guibert within the traditional discourse on authorship. The text ends without a clear conclusion, suggesting that it was never completely finished.

The content of *De destructione* clearly indicates that the intended public of the text were the readers of MS 5535-37. Considering the topics addressed in the letter treatises, these were indubitably monastic men. The codex would have held a particular interest for the monks of Gembloux, as it celebrates the writings of “one of their own”. Outside their community, *De destructione* and the letter treatises seem to have

¹³ “*adhuc essem iunior*”. See p. 293 of the present edition. On p. 295 Guibert informs us that he wrote the letters as a *iuuenis*.

¹⁴ See for example Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, New York, 1953, p. 83-85.

roused little interest. In fact, only one other copy of the letter treatises is preserved, MS 398 of the Municipal Library of Douai. This fifteenth-century manuscript from either the monastery of Marchiennes or the priory of Zevenborren (Sept Fontaines) does not, however, include the text of *De destructione*.

The emphasis in *De destructione* on authorship renders the question of the attribution of the text highly pertinent. Whereas the Bollandists just assumed that Guibert of Gembloux was the author of *De destructione*, Hippolyte Delehaye voiced serious doubts about the ascription of the text to Guibert. Instead, Delehaye claimed that the text was written by a monk from Gembloux in imitation of Guibert's *persona* and style.¹⁵ He substantiated his hypothesis with four arguments. First, he pointed out that the manuscript itself contained no definitive ascription of the text to Guibert, for example by way of a title. Second, he objected that *De destructione* formed a separate codicological unit that was only added to the codex after the collection of letter treatises was completed. However, neither of these arguments necessarily invalidates Guibert's authorship of the text. Another of the manuscripts forming Guibert's literary legacy, MS 5397-407, also opens with a separate codicological unit that was added to the main manuscript, which is devoted to Saint Martin. This unit contains a single text known as *Apologia sancti Sulpicii archiepiscopi*. This text is generally acknowledged as the work of Guibert of Gembloux, yet it also lacks a title ascribing it to Guibert. Furthermore, the *Apologia* too is intended as an introduction to the main part of the manuscript. *De destructione* thus bears remarkable similarities in function and production to the *Apologia*, Guibert's authorship of which nobody has disputed.

Delehaye's third argument concerned the style of the text, which he considered divergent from Guibert's other writings. In particular, he pointed to the frequent apologies in the text for the prolix and uncultivated style. According to Delehaye, Guibert never had the intention of writing in a clear and lucid manner, and such apologies would therefore have been superfluous. However, claiming to write in a rustic and tedious style was, as already mentioned above, a commonplace for twelfth-century writers as a *topos* of humility. Guibert made similar apologies for his lack of writing talent in his other works.¹⁶

¹⁵ See Hippolyte Delehaye, "Guiberti Gemblacensis epistula de Sancto Martino et alterius Guiberti item Gemblacensis carmina de eodem", *Analecta Bollandiana*, 7, 1888, p. 265-320, esp. 269-270.

¹⁶ For example, in the prologue of his verse *Vita sancti Martini* Guibert apologized for his "mediocre and rather humble style" and in his *Apologia sancti Sulpicii archiepiscopi*, he spoke of the limitedness of his talents, his crude style, his verbosity and his roughness. See *Die rhythmischen Martinsschriften Guiberts von Gembloux* (BHL 5636 / 5637), ed. Peter Orth, Leiden and Boston, 2017 (Mittellateinische Studien und Texte, 50), (see p. 43

Finally, Delehaye repudiated Guibert's authorship of *De destructione* because of a pertinent chronological error in the events mentioned in the text. In the second paragraph the text states that the fire of 1185 was the cause of Guibert's abandonment of his community. Indeed, Guibert did leave Gembloux for Tours after the fire, yet *De destructione* does not speak of his stay in Tours, but of his sojourn with Hildegard of Bingen. In fact, Guibert stayed at the Rupertsberg in 1177-1180, long before the fire. Here Delehaye did touch upon an important issue for the attribution of the text to Guibert. It was not uncommon for Guibert to distort certain facts if this suited his purpose,¹⁷ yet what purpose the chronological "blunder" in *De destructione* could have served, remains unclear. However, considering Guibert's care in composing his literary legacy, the content and the apologetic tone of *De destructione* – both consistent with Guibert's other writings – and the striking parallels to Guibert's *Apologia sancti Sulpicii archiepiscopi*, it seems more far-fetched to posit, as Delehaye did, the existence of another monk of Gembloux monk who was apt at imitating Guibert's style and cared enough about his literary legacy to compose an introduction to MS 5535-37, than it is to accept Guibert's authorship.

The date of composition of *De destructione* cannot be determined precisely. Guibert himself stated that he wrote the text *nunc – id est in diebus senectutis mee*.¹⁸ The latest date that can be inferred from the text as a *terminus post quem* is 1185, the date of the second fire, when Guibert was presumably around 60 years old. The year of Guibert's death (c.1214) provides a clear *terminus ante quem*. However, considering the fact that Guibert only started to compose his literary legacy after his resignation as abbot of Gembloux in 1204, this time span can be narrowed. Guibert's *Apologia*, which shows such remarkable parallels with *De destructione* in function and composition, was completed around 1206/07. I therefore propose to date the text to the early thirteenth century, around 1204-1214.

for the quotation mentioned). Guibert's *Apologia sancti Sulpicii archiepiscopi* remains unedited. It is preserved in MS 5397-407 of the Royal Library of Belgium on fols. 1v-16v. See fol. 12r and fol. 15v for Guibert's remarks about his style.

¹⁷ For example, after the death of Volmar, the monk from Disibodenberg who served Hildegard as secretary for most of her life, another monk from Disibodenberg, named Godfrey, replaced him. In his letters, Guibert deliberately suppressed the name of Godfrey, who served Hildegard as secretary before his arrival, thus presenting himself as the direct successor of Volmar and enhancing his own prestige. See Marianna Schrader & Adelgundis Führkötter, *Die Echtheit des Schrifttums der Heiligen Hildegard von Bingen: quellenkritische Untersuchungen*, Cologne, 1956, p. 147-150, or J. Ferrante, "'Scribe quae vides et audis'", *op. cit.*, n. 1, p. 127-128.

¹⁸ See p. 292 of the present edition. A little further in the text p. 295 he refers to *senectam meam morti proximam*. Unfortunately, there is no consistent demarcation of *senectus* in twelfth-century treatises on age. Most authors associating a specific age with *senectus* take 45 to 55 years as starting point, yet others postpone this stage of life to 70. See Isabelle Cochelin, "Introduction: Pre-Thirteenth-Century Definitions of the Life Cycle", in Isabelle Cochelin & Karen Smyth (eds.), *Medieval Life Cycles: Continuity and Change*, Turnhout, 2013, p. 4-5 and p. 29-42.

Importance of the text

The text of *De destructione monasterii Gemblacensis* deserves to be published in full in a new critical edition because it offers invaluable information on Guibert of Gembloux and the period in which he lived. As has already been mentioned above, the text functions as an introduction to the collection of letter treatises that follow it in the manuscript, and on a deeper level it offers extensive reflections on the importance of authorship. By employing topoi, biblical exempla, and so forth, Guibert justified his literary ambitions and shed light on his writing practices, for example by comparing himself to Saint Jerome, placing himself in the traditional learnt discourse on writing and authorship. He also mentioned that he “corrected” his works at the end of his life, giving this text important implications for the interpretation of Guibert’s entire literary oeuvre.

In addition, the text offers insight into the deployment of the discourse of the decline of the traditional monastic way of life in the period directly after the so-called “crisis” of coenobitism (1050-1150). As a Benedictine monk, Guibert belonged to the religious group most adversely affected by the emergence of new spiritual ideals during the eleventh century and the monastic alternatives they brought forth. These new orders, in particular the Cistercians, accused the traditional monks of abandoning their ideals and lacking discipline, giving rise to a discourse of the decline of traditional monasticism, both in the sources and in secondary literature.¹⁹ However, John Van Engen has demonstrated the remarkable resilience of traditional coenobitism, at least up to 1150.²⁰ Furthermore, recent scholarship has shown that the discourse of crisis was often employed by the traditional monks themselves, for instance in order to promote reform.²¹ Researching the works of traditional monks such as Guibert of Gembloux can help clarify the debate on the state of traditional monasticism after 1150, while at the same time highlighting the motives behind the use of the discourse of decline.

¹⁹ See e.g. Germain Morin, “Rainaud l’ermite et Ives de Chartres: un épisode de la crise du cénobitisme au XI-XII^e siècle”, *Revue Bénédictine*, 40, 1928, p. 99-115; Charles Dereine, “Odon de Tournai et la crise du cénobitisme au XI^e siècle”, *Revue du Moyen Âge latin*, 4, 1948, p. 137-154; Jean Leclercq, “The Monastic Crisis in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries”, in Noreen Hunt (ed.), *Cluniac Monasticism in the Central Middle Ages*, London & Basingstoke, 1971, p. 217-242 (a translation of his “La crise du monachisme aux XI^e et XII^e siècles”, *Bulletino dell’Istituto Storico Italiano per il medio evo e Archivio Muratoriano*, 70, 1958); Norman Cantor, “The Crisis of Western Monasticism, 1050-1130”, *American Historical Review*, 66, 1960, p. 47-67.

²⁰ John Van Engen, “The ‘Crisis of Cenobitism’ Reconsidered: Benedictine Monasticism in the Years 1050-1150”, *Speculum*, 62, 1986, p. 269-304.

²¹ See Karine Ugé, *Creating the Monastic Past in Medieval Flanders*, York, 2005, e.g. p. 74 or p. 113; Steven Vanderputten, *Monastic Reform as Process: Realities and Representations in Medieval Flanders, 900-1100*, Ithaca & London, 2013, e.g. p. 27.

In *De destructione* Guibert made ample use of the concept of decline. For example, he extensively lamented the detrimental effects on the communal life at Gembloux of the fire that had destroyed his abbey, thus inscribing the monastery into a discourse of waning discipline.²² Yet this period of sadness had one positive outcome, he claimed, because it made him realise the importance of letter-writing and moral exhortation.²³ He also justified his stays away from Gembloux by referring to the *morosam nimis ordinis restitutionem*,²⁴ a phrase conspicuously absent from the edition by the Bollandists. In other words, Guibert used the discourse of crisis as a literary strategy, either to excuse his disobedience to his abbot or to account for his literary ambitions. However, the reform measures Guibert took during his abbacy at Gembloux indicate that he considered the situation at Gembloux in need of severe corrections and suggests that he was indeed concerned about the state of monastic discipline in the monastery.²⁵ The discourse of decline was thus not merely a literary strategy; it also reflected Guibert's own evaluation of the situation at Gembloux.

De destructione monasterii Gemblacensis provides a different perspective on Guibert of Gembloux than that of secretary of a famous contemporary writer, by highlighting him as an author in his own right. In this way *De destructione* enlightens us about the aspirations, writing practices and literary strategies of a twelfth-century Benedictine writer in an age in which his monastic ideals increasingly faced competition from the religious standards fostered by other groups.

Description of the manuscript

De destructione monasterii Gemblacensis is preserved in only one manuscript, MS 5535-37 of the Royal Library of Belgium in Brussels.²⁶ This parchment manuscript, indicated with the siglum *T* in the present edition,²⁷ was produced in the monastery of Gembloux at the beginning of the thirteenth century, probably around 1204-1214. The final folium,

²² See p. 290-291 of the present edition.

²³ See p. 291 of the present edition.

²⁴ See p. 296 of the present edition.

²⁵ Guibert's actions as abbot of Gembloux are related in the *Notae Gemblacenses*. This historiographical narrative dating from the early thirteenth century shows close resemblance to the genre of *gesta abbatum* and might have been written at Guibert's instigation. An edition of this text can be found as *Notae Gemblacenses*, ed. Oswald Holder-Egger Stuttgart, 1883, p. 593-599 (Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores, 14).

²⁶ The manuscript has already been described in a very concise and flawed manner by the Bollandists. See *Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum*, *op. cit.*, n. 5, p. 577-578. Their information is supplemented by my own examination of the codex.

²⁷ I have chosen this siglum as a reference to the main content of the manuscript, i.e. letter treatises, and to avoid confusion with the sigla given in the secondary literature to the other manuscripts that preserve Guibert's literary legacy.

fol. 163v, bears an ownership mark (*Liber sancti Petri Gemblaco*) and a note stating that the manuscript was composed by Guibert of Gembloux, “abbot of our monastery”.

In size (310 × 210 mm) and layout it strongly resembles the other two manuscripts of Guibert’s literary legacy, MSS 5524-37 and 5397-407, also preserved at the Royal Library of Belgium. The codex was written in two columns by five scribes,²⁸ two of whom also assisted in penning MS 5527-34 (identified by Albert Derolez as hands B and C).²⁹ The same hand B also wrote a substantial part of MS 5397-407.³⁰ MS 5535-37 was probably copied, from another manuscript or perhaps from wax tablets, as it contains a few typical copyist’s errors, such as the repetition of several words that were subsequently crossed out. A late medieval reader even expressed his discontent with the quality of the scribes’ work in a note he added to fol. 1r: *Scriptor huius libri eum multis mendis corruptit ac erratis*. However, apart from small rectifications of scribal errors, no substantial emendations were made in the texts.

MS 5535-37 differs slightly from the other two manuscripts in its decorations. The codex is decorated with multi-coloured initials with curly embellishments at the beginning of each letter treatise. The manuscript contains but one contemporaneous title, added in red at the beginning of the first letter. The remaining titles, added in black ink, were written in a later hand (possibly from the late-fifteenth or early-sixteenth century). Quite possibly it was the same hand that added a few marginal notes throughout the manuscript.

The codex consists of three codicological units, comprising in total 21 quires. The first codicological unit, containing the text of *De destructione*, comprises only one quire of four folia (fols. 1-4). Folium 1r was originally left blank and was later filled in with a table of contents. The text of *De destructione* was written on fols. 1v-4r; fol. 4v is left blank. It was written by two very similar hands. The first hand seems to be that of a slightly less experienced scribe and can be distinguished from the second hand by its marked preference for a short s at the end of a word. The first scribe was responsible for fols. 1v-2v (perhaps also the first nine lines of fol. 3r), the second scribe continued the text until the end (fol. 4r).

²⁸ I would like to thank Valeria Van Camp and Els De Paermentier for their advice and expertise in identifying the hands of MS 5535-37.

²⁹ For a description of this manuscript, see Albert Derolez, “Introduction”, in Guibertus Gemblacensis, *Epistolae, op. cit.*, n. 4, p. xiii – xxiii; for his analysis of the hands involved in the production of the manuscript, see p. xviii – xx.

³⁰ For a description of this manuscript, see Jeroen Deploige & Sara Moens, “Visiones Hildegardis a Guiberto Gemblacensi exaratae”, in Hildegardis Bingensis, *Opera Minora. Pars II*, ed. Jeroen Deploige et al., Turnhout, 2016, p. 170-178 (Corpus Christianorum. Continatio Mediaevalis, 226A).

The second and third unit, containing Guibert's letter treatises, were in all likelihood produced together. It consists of 20 quires of 8 folia,³¹ numbered from A to U. The lack of quire numbering on the first quire, containing *De destructione*, indicates that this quire was only added to the letter treatises after the production of the second and third codicological unit was completed. The second unit (fols. 5-100, 12 quires) contains the first ten letter treatises and was written by hand B. Letters 9 and 10 are incomplete and end rather abruptly in the middle of a sentence. The third codicological unit (fols. 101-163, 8 quires) contains the remaining four letter treatises, written by hand B until fol. 104r and continued by hand C until the end of the manuscript. One folium, fol. 107, was written by another hand. At the bottom of fol. 163v a formula of anathema was added together with the ownership mark mentioned above.

Previous edition

The only critical edition previously available of *De destructione* was that produced by the Bollandists in 1886 in their catalogue of the hagiographical manuscripts of the Royal Library of Belgium.³² When describing MS 5535-37 they noted that the manuscript opened with a *narratio de combustione et devastatione coenobii Gemblacensis*. Because the text contained information *ad Guiberti notitiam* they included in their catalogue an edition of those passages most informative for medievalists interested in Guibert of Gembloux. The Bollandists' edition is therefore only partial. Although the edition of these selected passages is quite reliable and the suggested emendations are excellent, the work lacks an extensive source apparatus. In addition, some changes in the text are made tacitly which it would have been better to have pointed out explicitly. The Bollandists' edition will be referred to as "*Boll.*" in the critical apparatus of the current edition. In addition, some 40 years earlier Frédéric de Reiffenberg published two short excerpts from *De destructione* in his article on the letters of Guibert of Gembloux.³³ However, he made several mistakes in his transcription and neglected to include a critical apparatus or source apparatus. His article appears as "*Reiff.*" in my own critical apparatus.

³¹ With the exception of the ninth quire, which comprises nine folia, and the tenth and thirteenth quires, each of which comprises seven folia.

³² *Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum*, *op. cit.*, n. 5, p. 578-582.

³³ Frédéric de Reiffenberg, "Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la bibliothèque royale. Lettres de Guibert, abbé de Gembloux (1194), et de Florennes", *Annuaire de la Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique*, 7, 1846, p. 51-73, see p. 70-72.

The present edition

For the present edition of *De destructione* I have chosen to remain as true to the manuscript as possible. This implies that I follow the orthography of the manuscript, including its internal inconsistencies. Whereas the Bollandists normalized the spelling in their edition in accordance with the rules of classical Latin (e.g. substitution of “e” by “ae” or “oe”; of “ch” by “h”, of “y” by “i”, etc.), I have preserved the “e” or occasional “ė”, the “ch” as in “michi”, the “y” as in “dyaboli”, and so forth. For the “u” and “v” I have consistently used “u” for lowercase letters, and “V” for capital letters, in line with the orthography of the manuscript. All abbreviations are tacitly written out in full. The use of punctuation and capital letters follows modern standards, although I have attempted to take into account the *punctus* indications present in the manuscript. Unlike in the Bollandists’ edition, the text is divided into only two paragraphs, as structured in the manuscript itself. I decided against introducing a third paragraph, although this could have been warranted by the use of a red initial in the codex (halfway through the right column on fol. 3r, at *His utcumque decursis rogo uos*). However, starting a new paragraph at this point in the narrative did not seem necessary.

The critical apparatus is added to the edition in alphabetic footnotes. In a few cases I have chosen to follow the emendations suggested by the Bollandists. A second apparatus is added in the numerical footnotes to provide further information on the events and persons mentioned in the text. In addition, this apparatus is used to highlight Guibert’s use of sources, both biblical and non-biblical. I have italicized both literal quotations and more general allusions in the text; allusions are introduced in the source apparatus with “cf.” to distinguish them from literal quotations. However, because Guibert was a man of letters who had enjoyed a thorough training in the Bible and the Church Fathers, his works are replete with echoes of biblical and patristic language. As it is very difficult to distinguish between conscious borrowings and unintended reminiscences, I have limited myself to those allusions that are more uncommon or extensive enough to warrant inclusion in the apparatus or that derive from texts that were often cited by Guibert.

This means, for example, that I have included *pietatis suę dexteram porrexit* (fol. 1v) in the apparatus as a reference to Gregory of Tours’ *Libri de virtutibus sancti Martini episcopi*, a text well known to Guibert as it deals with his favourite saint, Martin of Tours. On the other hand, I decided against including *rabie luporum* (fol. 2r), which could derive from the letters of Ambrose, Jerome, or Alcuin of York, or even from more recent authors such as Peter the Venerable or Bernard of Clairvaux. To give another example, variations of *de exilio in patriam*, *de labore ad requiem*, *de tenebris ad lucem*, *de morte ad uitam* (fol. 2r) were frequent throughout the Middle Ages. To pinpoint one or two texts as

“the source” for this phrase would be highly arbitrary and therefore I chose to omit it from the apparatus. In order to keep the apparatus concise, I abbreviate references to the sources in the footnotes. A list explaining the abbreviations used in the notes, with full bibliographical reference, is included below.

Finally, in the manuscript the text bears no title. In their edition the Bollandists provided the text with the title *Guibertus Gemblacensis de secunda destructione et combustione monasterii Gemblacensis*, basing their decision on the table of contents on fol. 1r and the mention of *secunda combustione* in the text itself (fol. 3v). However, the table of contents was only added later, probably in the fourteenth century. In fact, the Bollandists' title misrepresents the content of the text, as the scope of the text is much wider than that of a historiographical account of the destruction by fire of the monastery of Gembloux in 1185. However, in order to avoid creating confusion with earlier references to the text, I decided to keep the reference to the “destruction of the monastery of Gembloux” in the title, but to leave out the mention of the “second destruction”. Such a numerical reference is dependent on the point of view of the speaker and is thus only relative and, as explained above, the text actually refers to two different fires. I have therefore opted for the more neutral title *De destructione monasterii Gemblacensis*.

Abbreviations used in source references

Augustinus, *Enarr. in ps.*

= Augustinus Hipponiensis, *Enarrationes in psalmos*, ed. Eligius Dekkers & Jean Fraipont, Turnhout, 1956, 3 vols. (Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina, 38-39-40).

Augustinus, *Epist.*

= Augustinus Hipponiensis, *Epistolae*, ed. Alois Goldbacher, Vienna & Leipzig, 1895-1897-1904-1911-1923, 5 vols. (Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum, 34-43-57-58).

Augustinus, *Serm.*

= Augustinus Hipponiensis, *Sermones de uetere testamento*, ed. Cyril Lambot, Turnhout, 1961 (Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina, 41).

Cyprianus, *Epist.*

= Cyprianus Carthaginensis, *Epistolarium*, ed. Gerardus Frederik Diercks, Turnhout, 1994-1996-1999, 3 vols. (Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina, 3B-3C-3D).

CAO

= *Corpus antiphonarium officii*, ed. René-Jean Hesbert, Rome, 1963-1979, 6 vols. (Rerum ecclesiasticarum documenta, 7-12).

Gregorius Magnus, *Hom. in euang.*

= Gregorius Magnus, *Homiliae in euangelia*, ed. Raymond Étaix, Turnhout, 1999 (Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina, 141).

Gregorius Turonensis, *Libri de virt.*

= Gregorius Turonensis, *Libri de virtutibus Sancti Martini episcopi*, ed. Bruno Krusch, Hannover, 1885, p. 134-211 (Monumenta Germaniae Historica. SS rer. Merov, 1,3).

Guibertus Gemblacensis, *Epist.*

= Guibertus Gemblacensis, *Epistolae quae in codice B. R. Brux. 5527-5534 inueniuntur*, ed. Albert Derolez, Turnhout, 1988-1989, 2 vols. (Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Mediaevalis, 66-66A).

Guibertus Gemblacensis, *Apologia*

= Guibertus Gemblacensis, *Apologia* (unpublished) – preserved in MS 5397-407 of the Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België (Royal Library of Belgium), fols. 1v-16v.

Hieronymus, *Contra Ruf.*

= Hieronymus, *Contra Rufinum*, ed. Pierre Lardet, Turnhout, 1982 (Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina, 79).

Hieronymus, *Comm. Es.*

= Hieronymus, *Commentariorum in Esaïam*, ed. Marc Adriaen, Turnhout, 1963, 2 vols. (Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina, 73-73A).

Hieronymus, *Epist.*

= Hieronymus, *Epistolae*, ed. Isidorus Hilberg, Vienna & Leipzig, 1910-1912-1918, 3 vols. (Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, 54-55-56).

Hieronymus, *Praef. Is.*

= Hieronymus, *Praefatio in Isaia propheta – Biblia sacra iuxta Vulgatam versionem*, ed. Bonifatius Fischer *et al.*, Stuttgart, 1975, 2 vols.

Horatius, *De arte poetica*

= Horatius, *De arte poetica*, ed. Domenico Bo, Turin, 1959 (Q. Horati Flacci Opera, 2).

Miss. Rom.

= *Missale Romanum ex decreto sacrosancto Concilii Tridentini restitutum*, Rome, 1570.

Regula Ben.

= *La règle de saint Benoît*, ed. Adalbert De Vogüé & Jean Neufville, Paris, 1972, 2 vols. (Sources Chrétiennes, 181-182).

Regula magistri

= *La règle du maître*, ed. Adalbert De Vogüé, Paris, 1964, 2 vols. (Sources Chrétiennes, 105-106).

Vergilius, *Bucolica*

= Vergilius, *Bucolica*, ed. Otto Ribbeck, Leipzig, 1859 (P. Vergili Maronis Opera, 1).

<De destructione monasterii Gemblacensis> Guibertus Gemblacensis

Content:

A historiographical notice on the fires that devastated the abbey of Gembloux (in 1156/57 and in 1185) provides the framework for reflections on authorship; the text as a whole functions as an introduction to the letter treatises that follow in the manuscript.

Author :

Guibert of Gembloux, monk and abbot of Gembloux (c.1124-1214)

Date of the text :

1204-1214

Manuscript:

Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België (Royal Library of Belgium), Manuscript Department, MS 5535-37, fols. 1v-4r.

Previous editions:

Frédéric de Reiffenberg, "Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la bibliothèque royale. Lettres de Guibert, abbé de Gembloux (1194), et de Florennes", *Annuaire de la Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique*, 7, 1846, p. 70-72 (partial).

Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum bibliothecae regiae Bruxellensis, 1, Brussels, 1886, p. 578-582 (partial).

//f°1v Cum^{1(a)} Gemblacense² oppidum a quodam uiro nefario et Deum non timente³ nocturno et furtiuo incendio combustum esset simulque maius – id est cenobiale – templum cum omnibus officinis suis edax^(b) flamma penitus consumpsisset, consilio opus fuit quidnam in necessitate tanta de fratribus fieret, quibus desuper tectum^(c) nullum nisi celum nocte frigidum, die uero propter estatem feruidum, deorsum autem nec cubile, nec locus quietis, nisi solum durum et inconfectum erat. Quid multa? Necessitas ipsa citum dubiis ingressit consilium, uidelicet ut deprecatiuis et commendaticiis tam episcopi quam abbatis circumquaque^(d) missis epistulis per uicina fratres monasteria uel cellas locarentur, donec restructo monasterio et necessariis mansionibus cum gratiarum actione reuocari posset. Et factum est ita. In qua uidelicet disgregatione^(e) uel dispersione fratrum iussu prelatorum et quorumdam uasuo – uellem nollem – in desolatione illa et *in loco quasi uaste solitudinis*⁴ residere coactus sum et uim animo meo^(f) faciens permansi ad tempus, merens et gemens et eo tristior quod domum et religionem et totius diuine seruitutis officii olim insignem et, quod in locis celebribus multum acceptatur, clarorum uirorum et nobilitate generis et scientia litterarum quondam celeberrimam, omnibus his desolatam et totius pristini cultus decore spoliatam et euacuatam, *quacumque oculos uerterem*⁵ ad augmentum doloris mei cogere intueri. Quem scilicet dolorem

^(a) Cum] Quum *Reiff.* — ^(b) edax] etiam *Reiff.* — ^(c) tectum] lectum *Reiff.* — ^(d) circumquaque] circum quoque *Reiff.* — ^(e) disgregatione] Dei gregatione *Reiff.* — ^(f) meo] *omitted by Reiff.*

¹ Decorated red initial.

² i.e. Gembloux (in the modern-day province of Namur, Belgium).

³ i.e. Abbot John of Gembloux?

⁴ in - solitudinis] cf. Deut. 32, 10.

⁵ quacumque - uerterem] cf. Augustinus, *Epist.*, ep. 43, par. 24, p. 106, l.13.

maxime illud augebat quod deiectionem eiusdem domus pre ignauia et negligentia curatorum nostrorum difficillime et in longum, in antiquum decorem uel statum, quod dolens dico, releuandam atque reformandam non ignorarem. Quid putas tunc animi in talibus posito et ista uersanti inesse michi posset? Permanere dolor, gemitus et penuria, fugere confusio et infamia et, quod his perniciosius est, *obedientie transgressio, sine qua perueniendi ad Deum nulla uia*⁶. Hec et his similia sepius animo reuolvente, benignus et clemens ille misericordiarum pater et Deus totius consolationis, qui fideles suos in temptationibus et tribulationibus suis titubantes, ne desperent, munire et fulcire semper consueuit, michi quoque in hac tribulatione mea, ne caderem et alliderer, *pietatis suę dexteram porrexit*⁷ et *gressus meos pene effusos*⁸ in uiam salutis dirigendo correxit et ne ulterius male mouerentur uestigia mea, affectus intentionum mearum in uirtute fortitudinis aliquantisper solidauit. Spiritu enim bono consolatore illo, quem dare Patrem suum fideliter petentibus Dominus ipse Christus pollicetur, ut credo, suggerente ut si in perturbationibus meis optimum solatii genus habere cuperem, ad meditationem sacrarum scripturarum animum meum transferrem, quia sicut ait apostolus: *Omnia que scripta sunt ad nostram doctrinam scripta sunt ut per patientiam et eruditionem scripturarum spem habeamus*⁹. Quod dum aliquantisper //f°2r actitare cepissem – id est meditari in scripturis ut^(a) ex earum frequentatione tristium euentuum meorum solamen et ^(b) refugium utilis consilii^(c) perciperem^(d), sollicitus inquirerem – saluberimum michi esse frequenter expertus sum, quia cum legissem uel audissem illud psalmiste: *Sperantem in Domino misericordia circumdabit*¹⁰ et illud apostoli: *Tribulatio probationem, probatio uero spem operatur, spes autem – scilicet in Deo fixa – non confundit*¹¹, uiri quoque constantis animi et in tribulatione sua ad Deum fidenter clamantis: *In te, Domine, speraui, non confundar in eternum*¹², quanti putas ista michi profuerint et quantum me nutantem^(e) firmauerint? Lectis enim predictis sententiis et similibus que in scripturis habundant, mira cordis alacritate et fiducia perfusus et quasi ex decedente erectus et ac si ex mortua in spem rediuiuiam renouatus sum. Adeo enim supradicta scripture uerba in me conualuerunt meque mutauerunt ut^(f) de promissione et protectione superna et de retributione Dei pro qualitate meritorum iustis reddenda me certum fecerunt ut pro his adipiscendis quicquid michi gerendum uel tolerandum foret pro minimo ducerem. Hinc est quod apostolus ad imitationem

^(a) ut] *added above the line.* — ^(b) et] *before correction* ut. — ^(c) consilii] *before correction* consilii michi. — ^(d) perciperem] ibi percipere *Boll.* — ^(e) nutantem] *before correction* nutantim? — ^(f) ut] et *Boll.*

⁶ obedientie ... uia] cf. *Regula magistri*, cap. 7, p. 394, l. 1467-1468.

⁷ pietatis - porrexit] cf. Gregorius Turonensis, *Libri de virt.*, liber III, cap. 53, p. 195, l. 4-5.

⁸ gressus - effusos] cf. Augustinus, *Enarr. in ps.*, Ps. 142, p. 1836, l. 12; cf. Augustinus, *Enarr. in ps.*, ps. 72, par. 8-9, p. 991-992 & par. 20, p. 996, l. 14 & par. 28, p. 1000, l. 4; cf. Augustinus, *Sermones*, sermo 19, p. 256, l. 137-138.

⁹ Omnia - habeamus] Rom. 15, 4 *but* Omnia que] Quaecumque enim; eruditionem] consolationem.

¹⁰ Sperantem - circumdabit] Ps. 31, 10 *but* Sperantem] Sperantem autem.

¹¹ Tribulatio ... confundit] Rom. 5, 4-5 *but* Tribulatio] Patientia autem.

¹² In - eternum] Ps. 30, 2; Ps. 70, 1.

passionum Christi inter persecutores pro nobis laborantis auditores suos ammonens inconcussos et interritos stare hortatur, ubi dicit: *‘Vigilate, state in fide, uiriliter agite’*¹³, *quia non sunt condigne passionēs huius temporis ad futuram gloriam quę reuelabitur in nobis*¹⁴. Ad quam scilicet gloriam non inanem uel transitoriam, sed inmarcessibilem et eternam sanctis in celo repositam ut michi quoque peccatori adipiscendam spes suppeteret et facultas, quid salubrius uel utilius michi agendum esset quam illum sequi et mandatis eius obsequi qui illam humiliter et fideliter obedientibus sibi dare semper et potest et paratus est? Sed quis pre multitudine et tedio ferret, si cuncta que hinc dici possent simul congerere uellem? Vnum tamen adhuc inferam quod et audientes ad promerenda celestis patrie gaudia prouocet et prouocatos, nisi insensati et attoniti et etiam plusquam ferrei sint, in referendis illic perpetuo confirmet. Quid utrum^(a) illud? *‘Qui sequitur me, ait Dominus, non ambulat in tenebris, sed habebit lumen uite’*¹⁵. Cuius uite? *‘Oues, inquit, meę uocem meam audiunt’*¹⁶ *et ego Dominus uitam eternam do eis*¹⁷. O predicanda semper, ueneranda simul et amplectenda boni pastoris erga oues suas uigilantia, quas non alio quam adorandi sanguinis sui precio ab eterno redemit interitu quasque obedientia sua pro eis patri exhibita et laboribus quos hic – id est in mundo isto – a mortifero primę preuicationis seu inobedientię reatu expediuit et sollicite cura pastoralis perhenniter intendit! Pascit enim semper eas per doctores, quos sibi succedere facit spiritualibus sacre scripture dapibus tanquam herbis uirentibus, et quamdiu uersantur in deserto huius seculi ab incurso uel rabie luporum – hoc est malignorum uel hominum uel demonum – protegit et defendit. Nec in his suffragia diligentię sue terminare decernit, sed cum his terminus extremę diei ut ad ouile reducantur aduenerit, de exilio ad patriam, de labore ad requiem, de tenebris ad lucem, de morte ad uitam per angelos reducit perpetuam //f°2v ut iocunda uisionis et faciei sue claritate, *in quam desiderant angeli prospicere*¹⁸, frui tribuens clarifcet in eternum. Quis tantorum largitatem munerum benignissimi redemptoris et respectum misericordie eius in eos quos, nisi nimia pietatis sue caritas reuocaret, ob ingratitudinem uel inobedientiam et cetera mala ipsorum iuste punire posset, si uellet; quis, inquam, ista bonitatis eius insignia digne perpendens non statim mutetur et *exuens ueterem hominem cum actibus suis nouum – id est ipsum Christum – festinet induere*¹⁹ et eum imitando propter spem future retributionis quali alteratus exultet, letetur et interno gaudio tripudiet totusque in amorem Dei eliquesceat^(b) et transeat in *gratiarum actiones*, laudens eum perhempniter *super inenarrabilibus beneficiorum eius donis*²⁰? Ex his autem que nunc – id est in diebus senectutis meę – dico uel profero aliqua iam ab adolescentia mea actitare inchoaui^(c), nesciens quando de medio me factor meus uellet tollere et utrum ad

(^a) utrum] *added above the line.* — (^b) eliquesceat] *my correction*, eliquesceat T. — (^c) inchoaui] *before correction* inchoaui.

¹³ Vigilare - agite] I Cor. 16, 13.

¹⁴ quia - nobis] Rom. 8, 18 *but* quia] quod.

¹⁵ Qui - uite] Ioh. 8, 12 *but* ambulat] ambulabit; Dominus] *omit.*

¹⁶ Oues - audiunt] Ioh. 10, 27.

¹⁷ et - eis] Ioh. 10, 28.

¹⁸ in - prospicere] I Petr. 1, 12 *but* in quam] quem.

¹⁹ exuens - induere] cf. Col. 3, 9-11.

²⁰ gratiarum ... donis] cf. II Cor. 9, 15.

senium peruenirem; hoc autem certissimum habens quod quantumcumque uiuerem uel laborarem, nullis operibus aut exercitiis magnitudinem retributionis eius superarem. Sed ne iactanter loqui et gloriam querere uidear, a iuuentute quidem mea illi me cepisse seruire confiteor, sed nec tam feruenter, nec tam sedule sicut expedisset et oportuisset ideoque bonitatem eius obsecro ne delicta ipsius iuuentutis meae et ignorantias meas meminerit uel imputet, sed clementer ignoscat et perdonet. Si qua uero ei placita – quod uix credo – aliquando exercui, ipse michi ea, ne a dyaboli fraudibus aut insidiis corrumpantur uel auferantur sua gratia, ad quantulumcumque mercedem conseruare^(e) dignetur. Cum igitur adhuc iunior frequenti lectione sacri eloquii instructus et iustos premiis remunerandos perhennibus et iniustos suppliciis tartareis puniendos didicissem, hinc delectatus, inde perterritus lasciuias iuuentutis et ineptias cepi deserere et abhominari, seria uero queque grauioris etatis emulari et amplecti, uigilando scilicet, ieiunando et orando, missis quoque audiendis insistendo et earum celebratoribus deuote ministrando et^(b) sepius quam eatenus fecissem ecclesias frequentando^(c), que quidam peruersi magis ypochrisi deputabant quam simplicitati uel puritati. Ego autem inter hec immotus manens et sciens quia *uir otiosus in desiderijs est*²¹ et quoniam *otiositas inimica est anime*²², cepi mecum cogitare quomodo et Deo gratius et michi utilius atque honestius uiuere possem uenitque in mentem ut premissis Dei amore, cui nichil prorsus conferendum est, et subiuncta mei cura, tercio de salute proximi, quem precepto diuino *uniusquisque sicut seipsum iubetur diligere*²³, competentem pro posse gererem sollicitudinem et bona atque iusta uisa est huius sermonis suggestio ingerens hominem fidelem non sibi soli, sed quibuscumque preualet^(d) utilem esse debere et in lucrandis Deo animabus ipsum qui per earum salute tanta in carne sua pertulit studere semper imitari. Hoc instinctu cum, ut predixi, adhuc essem iunior haberemque plures amicos, nepotes, coetaneos diuersis michi^(e) rebus confederatos fidemque, quam Deo sponponderant, non ei, sed mundo cui abrenuntiauerant malo suo conseruantes et non satis curantes quod scriptum est: *Adulteri, nescitis quod quicumque uoluerit amicus esse huius mundi, inimicus Dei constituitur*²⁴ grauiusque super his dolerem, uolens eos ab illecebris mundi reuocare et ad amorem Dei prouocare, non causa iactantie uel ostentationis scientie que fere in me nulla est, cepi eis scriptitare et gratia sincere dilectionis et salutis eorum multas eis scripsi epistulas, in quibus ad eos instruendos perplura scripturarum tum lenia, tum mordatia inserui testimonia; de quibus uidelicet epistulis si quis querat ad quam utilitatem scripserim eas cum sufficiant et superhabundant scripture lectores suos ab amore mundi pernicioso retrahentes et ad salutiferam Dei dilectionem reducentes, sed et ad bonorum probitates morum sectandam quoslibet optime informantes, breuiter respondeo quia et michi non nichil et eis quibus misse sunt plurimum profuerunt^(f). Michi

^(e) conseruare] *before correction* seruare. — ^(b) et] *added above the line*. — ^(c) Note *added in the margin, partly cut off*: [hu]cuscque. — ^(d) preualet] *before correction* ualet. — ^(e) michi] in *Boll.* — ^(f) profuerunt] *profecerunt Boll.*

²¹ uir - est] Prou. 13, 4 (*Vetus Latina*).

²² otiositas - anime] *Regula Ben.*, cap. 48, p. 598, l. 1.

²³ uniusquisque - diligere] cf. Matth. 19, 19; 22, 39; Marc. 12, 31 & 33; Luc. 10, 27; Gal. 5, 14; Iac. 2, 8.

²⁴ Adulteri - constituitur] Iac. 4, 4 *but* quod] quia; uoluerit] ergo uoluerit.

quidem quoniam ex otioso studiosum fecerunt, illis autem multo magis qui earum ammonitionem libenter suscipientes et a cenosa peccatorum conuersatione sese proripientes ex uiciosis uiros uirtutum, ut auctori suo placerent et^(a) salui fierent, ad alta celestis uite se transtulerunt. Nec solum illis quibus olim eedem epistule misse sunt profuerunt, sed et his deinceps si ab aliquibus legantur, non tam insulse sunt, quin aliquatenus prodesse possint. Si quis autem prolixitatem earum culpet, cum magis uolumina uel libri quam epistule dicendę sint, causetur *pro tedio quod parere solet ipsa prolixitas*²⁵ dicatque uideri et^(b) sonare iactantiam tantam^(c) uerborum congestionem^(d) et putandum onerasse potius auditores quam instruxisse, audiat huiusmodi reprehensor et sciat quia, teste conscientia mea, in his que tunc temporis scribebam non gloriam inanem nec ullam appetisse ostentationem, sed quoniam amici erant solam eorum quesisse salutem. Quod ipsi quoque intelligentes non uerborum uel scriptorum meorum prolixitate causabantur onerari, sed gaudebant se^(e) uehementer et testabantur^(f) edificari. Scribebam autem litteratis quidem, sed seculari litteratura imbutis, diuina uero aut parum aut nichil instructis, sed mundanis occupationibus et illecebris et obligationibus miserabiliter irretitis ideoque necessarium erat ut multiplicibus sacrę doctrinę documentis uel sententiis erudirentur ut quod pauca non possent, multe //f°3r in eis perficerent. Et harum etiam sententiarum compilatio ideo utilis uisa est quatinus his conuicti et conuicti terrentur, mutarentur, purgarentur et *eam que inflat scientiam*²⁶, *illam quoque que Deo inimica est sapientiam*²⁷ contempnentes, humilem magistrum qui dicit: *'Discite a me, quia mitis sum et humilis corde'*²⁸ fideli mente sectantes ad sublime regnum illud, in quo regnat ipse, cum eo in ęternum regnaturi preuenire mererentur. Rogo in omnibus que premisi, etiam si diligenter discutiantur quid inuenire possit, quod iure reprehensibile uideantur? Si reprehendor homuntio cum sim idiota et indoctus, cur iactanter officium doctorum scribendo usurpare presumpserim, respondeo nec iactantie, nec ostentationis seu presumptionis, sed caritatis fraterne fuisse ut scriberem, que me urgebat ut quia ui non possem amicos meos cogere, saltem scriptis ac precibus ammonerem mortiferas seculi uoluptates respuere et disciplinarem conuersationem qua celestis gloria acquiritur appetere. Scientiam uero *quam impericia denegabat*, imperiosa proculdubio *caritas Dei nutu ministrabat*²⁹. Quapropter si quid in hoc commissi esse putitur, non michi, sed caritati que me ad id compellebat imputetur. Si autem in culpam ducitur molesta prolixitas, super hoc iam paulo ante satisfeci, dicens me ideo plura scripture diuine compilasse testimonia, ut quia ignaris sacri eloquii scribebam, quos pauca non possent, multa ad quod intendebam compungendo incitarent. De uilitate uero aut rusticitate dictaminis excusari non indigeo, quia omnes qui me nouerunt sciunt me non esse rethorem aut gramaticum, sed segnem, ignarum et inertem^(g) et totius fere secularis scientie

(^a) et] *added above the line.* — (^b) et] *added above the line.* — (^c) tantam] *I followed the correction proposed by Boll., tanta T.* — (^d) congestionem] *I followed the correction proposed by Boll., congestio T.* — (^e) se] *omitted by Boll.* — (^f) testabantur] *se testabantur Boll.* — (^g) inertem] *before correction inertem.*

²⁵ pro - prolixitas] cf. Guibertus Gemblacensis, *Epist.*, ep. 38, p. 369, l. 100-102.

²⁶ eam - scientiam] cf. I Cor. 8, 1.

²⁷ illam - sapientiam] cf. Rom. 8, 7.

²⁸ Discite - corde] Matth. 11, 29.

²⁹ quam ...ministrabat] cf. Gregorius Magnus, *Hom. in euang.*, liber II, hom. 21, p. 174, l. 9-10.

expertem. Sed ad quid ista? Etiam si^(a) uniuersa liberalium artium facultate affluerem et pollerem et propterea decenter possem perorare et persuadere amicis que uellem, attamen michi tunc utilius et salubrius uidebatur eisdem qui ignorabant^(b) et errabant et in seculo periclitabantur, quos intendebam corrigere, ut puris et simplicibus uerbis instruerem quam omni cultu defloratis et coloratis sermonibus fauorem eorum michi affectarem. Sed inter hec de obtreclatoribus qui nullis pene scriptoribus desunt, ut quid ego, qui nullus^(c) sum, ^(d) causerer, cum summi et sancti ecclesie doctores et magistri calumpnias et derogationes inuidorum non potuerint euadere? Ut enim in uno discatur quid de aliis sentiendum sit, legere uel audire possunt qui super his mouentur qua acriter maximus eorum beatus scilicet Iheronimus in prologis quos diuinis libris de Hebreo in Latinum a se translatis prefixit calumpniatores operum suorum suggila[re]^(e). Qui uidelicet elegantissimus sacre scripture interpres Iheronimus et sua modeste commendans et reprehensores suos grauitur obiurgans: '*Legant, inquit, prius que scribimus et postea despiciant*'³⁰, sciebat enim et ueraciter^(f) et luculenter dicta iustos censores non posse despiciere, *ne uideantur non equitate iudicii, sed iniquitate odii ignorata dampnare*³¹. Quis enim de his que ignorat certum proferre iudicium presumat? His³² utcumque decursis rogo uos, o amici qui me diligitis et quos ego uicissim diligo et quibus scribo, rogo, inquam, uos humiliter quatinus pristinos, cum quibus scribendo et eos ad meliora prouocando delectari solebam, imitemini amicos, ut quia morte subtrahente obeuntes me hic merentem reliquerunt, uos quasi pro patribus nascentes filii uicem illorum in me consolando suscipiatis et senectam meam morti proximam, quibus potestis, officii sustentetis. Suscipite mea et communicate michi uestra ut diligentur inuicem perquirentes quid desit nobis, *alter alterius onera portemus et sic legem Christi adimpleamus*³³. Caritate illorum qui obierunt, qui et utinam misericordia Dei in pace requiescant, urgente et cogente factus uelut^(g) insipiens scripsi eis multa diffuso quidem, sed – ut reor – non^(h) inutili sermone, que si legere dignemini an legentibus prodesse possint experiemini. Recipite et uos illa uice illorum qui dormierunt obsecro et quia iam pro etatis antiquitate deficiens *noua cudere*³⁴ non ualeo, prisca illa que iuuenis scripsi ac si uobis specialiter dicta pio animo sepius reuoluite et secundum monita que illic inueneritis actus uestros immo uos totos componite, quatinus ad consortium correctorum et in pace quiescentium feliciter ualeatis pertingere. Et quia *non in sermone, sed in uirtute caritatis est regnum Dei*³⁵, queso ut in eorundem scriptorum meorum

^(a) Etiam si] Etiamsi *Boll.* — ^(b) ignorabant] *before correction* ignoraban. — ^(c) nullus] *my correction*, nullus *T.* — ^(d) ego qui nullus sum] *added above the line.* — ^(e) suggilare] *added in the margin.* — ^(f) ueraciter] *my correction*, uerater *T.* — ^(g) uelut] *added above the line.* — ^(h) non] *added above the line.*

³⁰ Legant - despiciant] cf. Hieronymus, *Praef. Is.*, p. 1096, l. 22; Hieronymus, *Contra Ruf.*, lib. 2, par. 32, p. 69, l. 22.

³¹ ne - dampnare] cf. Hieronymus, *Praef. Is.*, p. 1096, l. 22-23; Hieronymus, *Contra Ruf.*, lib. 2, par. 32, p. 69, l. 22-23.

³² Sober red initial.

³³ alter - adimpleamus] Gal. 6, 2 (*Vetus Latina*) but portemus] portate; legem Christi adimpleamus] adimplebitis legem Christi.

³⁴ noua cudere] cf. Hieronymus, *Contra Ruf.*, lib. 2, par. 31, l. 7.

³⁵ non - Dei] I Cor. 4, 20 but non] non enim; sed in uirtute caritatis est regnum Dei] est regnum Dei sed in uirtute.

sententiis non queratis eloquium, sed consilium et patienter feratis insipientiam et impericiam meam supportetis, memores uerbi predicti beati Iheronimi dicentis *tam imperitum nullum^(a) esse scriptorem quin similem sui quandoque inueniat eque imperitum lectorem³⁶*. Que uidelicet scripta mea uel epistule cum post obitum illorum quibus directe fuerant, alique imperfecte, omnes uero incorrecte, quasi nullius precii diu iacuisent disperse magisque eas abolendas quam reseruandas decernerem, a nonnullis qui eas legerant uehementer obiurgatus sum // f°3v cur utilitatem tanti laboris perditam iri permetterem. Non esse uerendum quin essent quibus ea que scripseram et placerent et prodesse, maxime cum nichil in eis a fide recta deuium, nichil a doctrina^(b) christiana discrepans inueniretur nichilque in eis^(c) aliud quam Deum pura mente colere et preceptis eius fideliter obedire suaderetur. His denique persecutionibus^(d) permotus et cuncta sic se haberi sciens et in eisdem epistulis nichil reprehensione dignum, nisi incultum et prolixum stilum, reperiri, unde supra satis fecisse me puto, tandem in hoc cessi petentibus ut quia pre infirmitate corporis et angore animi eas corrigere et perficere non possem, saltem et a^(e) dispersione recollectas et in unum corpus redactas legere uolentibus traderem. Et factum est ita.

Sed³⁷, ut et de ipsis epistulis et de^(f) aliis opusculis meis adhuc pauca subiungam, in secunda combustione ecclesie^(g) nostre – id est Gemblacensis – que post aliquot^(h) annos – hoc est uno⁽ⁱ⁾ minus a^(j) xxx^{ta} – prima necdum^(k) ad integrum restructa, queque ex guerra ducis Louaniensis³⁸ et comitis Namucensis^{39(l)} accidit, non ita sicut in priore me habui, sed e cauernis, in quibus instar noctue uel bubonis ignaui diu delitueram, egressus non uagando, sed meliora explorando propter morosam nimis ordinis restitutionem et propter tardam^(m) claustris restaurationem alias⁽ⁿ⁾ demigraui. Comperta autem fama celeberrime uirginis Hillegardis^(o) nomine⁴⁰, fundatricis et magistre cenobii quod secus^(p) Binguam oppidum in monte sancti ut cernitur Roberti^(q) situm^(r) est^(s), illo tantum deuotionis causa me contuli, noticia et orationum eius suffragiis sicut et ceteri qui ad eam simili pro causa numero confluebant, scire uolens utrum in ea conuersationis sanctitas et nominis celebritas concordarent et que cui preponderaret subtiliter experiri cupiens. Proinde ueni ad eam meque post humilem^(t) consalutationem benigne suscepto cum aliquantum collocuti fuissimus, gratia – ut reor – Christi faciente, complacuit nobis in alterutrum – id est michi in eam et ei in me – et *uultus nostri non sunt amplius in diuersa*

^(a) nullum] *added above the line.* — ^(b) doctrina] *my correction, doctria T.* — ^(c) in eis] *added above the line.* — ^(d) persecutionibus] *my correction, prosecutionibus T.* — ^(e) a] *added above the line.* — ^(f) de] *added above the line; omitted by Boll.* — ^(g) ecclesie] *my correction, ecclesie T, ecclesiae Boll., Reiff.* — ^(h) aliquot] *I followed the correction proposed by Boll., aliud T.* — ⁽ⁱ⁾ Note *added in the margin, partly cut off:* ‘combustio ... a secunda infra XXIX a[nnos]’. — ^(j) a] *ann. Reiff.* — ^(k) necdum] *nondum Reiff.* — ^(l) Namucensis] *Namurcensis Reiff.* — ^(m) ordinis - tardam] *omitted by Boll.* — ⁽ⁿ⁾ alias] *alio Reiff.* — ^(o) Hillegardis] *Hildegardis Boll., Reiff.* — ^(p) secus] *pene Reiff.* — ^(q) Roberti] *Rorberti Reiff.* — ^(r) situm] *I followed the correction proposed by Boll., scitum T.* — ^(s) est] *omitted by Reiff.* — ^(t) humilem] *before correction humilit ?*

³⁶ tam - lectorem] cf. Hiëronymus, *Comm. Es.*, lib. 12, p. 465, l. 1-2.

³⁷ Sober red initial.

³⁸ i.e. Count Godfrey III of Brabant, also count of Louvain and duke of Lower Lotharingia (c.1142-1190).

³⁹ i.e. Count Henry I of Namur, known as Henry the Blind (c.1112-1196).

⁴⁰ i.e. Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), *magistra* of the monastery at Rupertsberg.

*mutati*⁴¹ quin nos inuicem diligeremus. Ut uero multa preteream, ipsa procurante et multum super hoc laborante, rogatu religiosorum uirorum et maxime suasu episcoporum qui ad eam uisendam gratia deuotionis conueniebant, mansi cum ea quoad^(a) uixit – id est per duos annos – et uehementer deprecantibus et cogentibus abbatibus et reliquis qui ad eius exequias aduenerant et maxime sororibus quas illuc ipsa ad seruiendum Deo numero LV aggregauerat instantibus, continuaui et tercium. Et cum in aliis quibusque necessariis obedientissime eis paruissim, in hoc tantum quod summa intentione extorquere nitebantur – uidelicet ut cum eis perpetuo degerem – ab obedientia defeci, quoniam consilii non fuit, conscientia reuocante, ut hoc^(b) eis concederem. In eadem tamen mora qua inter illas conuersatus sum, non parum profeci, uidens et admirans et me ipsum quasi segnem despiciens si non in aliquo imitarem sacram conuersationem gloriose illius multitudinis omni genere uirtutum refulgentis et in sexu^(c) fragili meritis hortatu et exemplis magistrę suę hostem illum triumphantis, de cuius magnitudine Deus ad Iob dicit: *'Non est potestas super terram que comparari possit ei qui factus est ut nullum timeret et ipse est rex super omnes filios superbie'*⁴². Sed ne episcopis qui me et sua dignatione et dominę Hildegardis sedula commendatione diligendum susceperant et quasi in filium adoptauerant inutilis et ingratus apparerem, non – ut supra dixi – ostentationis causa, sed pię deuotionis gratia multas eis scripsi epistulas inculco – ut michi moris erat – et prolixo stilo; inculco quoniam non ętate, sed scientia *puer ego sum et loqui nescio*⁴³; prolixo autem quia eos quibus scribebam et terrere et instruere uolebam. Terrere quidem pluribus et minacibus scripturarum sententiis, *ne in officio et dignitate pontificali non uicarii Christi*^(d), *sed mercennarii inuenti*⁴⁴ in iudicium illud grauissimum quod in his qui male presunt fiet inciderent; instruere uero lenium uerborum multipli^(e) hortatu prouocando eos ad eius imitationem qui *uenit querere et saluum facere quod perierat*⁴⁵ quique *posuit animam suam pro ouibus suis*⁴⁶ et *pro suo grege mori dignatus est*⁴⁷, quatinus hoc retractando et faciando ad illorum pertingerent consortium, de quibus canitur: *'Gaudent in cęlis sanctorum anime qui Christi uestigia sunt //f^o4r secuti'*⁴⁸. Scripsi preterea uolumen unum panegericum⁴⁹ ad dominum^(f) Phylippum Coloniensem archi-

^(a) quoad] *I followed the correction proposed by Boll., coad T.* — ^(b) hoc] *added above the line.* — ^(c) sexu] *before correction seu.* — ^(d) Christi] *Cristi T.* — ^(e) multipli] *my correction, multipli I T, multiplici Boll.* — ^(f) dominum] *domnum Boll.*

⁴¹ uultus - mutati] *I Reg. 1, 18 but nostri] eius.*

⁴² Non - superbie] *cf. Iob 41, 24-25.*

⁴³ puer - nescio] *Ier. 1, 6 but puer - nescio] nescio loqui quia puer ego sum.*

⁴⁴ ne - inuenti] *cf. Cyprianus, Epist., ep. 8, cap. 2, p. 41, l. 22.*

⁴⁵ uenit - perierat] *Luc. 19, 10 but uenit] uenit enim filius hominis.*

⁴⁶ posuit - suis] *cf. Ioh. 15, 13.*

⁴⁷ posuit - est] *Miss. Rom., feria 2 infra octavam Paschae, respons.*

⁴⁸ Gaudent - secuti] *CAO III, p. 234, 2927 but sanctorum anime] anime sanctorum*

⁴⁹ i.e. Guibert's verse *Vita sancti Martini* recently edited in *Die rhythmischen Martinschriften Guiberts von Gembloux (BHL 5636 / 5637)*, ed. Peter Orth, Leiden and Boston, 2017 (*Mittellateinische Studien und Texte*, 50), p.39-152. Guibert also wrote a *Vita sancti Martini* in prose, preserved in MS 5387-96 of the Royal Library of Belgium in Brussels, which remains unpublished.

episcopum⁵⁰ de interioribus animi uirtutibus et de miraculorum signis exterioribus, quibus pre multis sanctis excellentius in diebus carnis suę beatissimus confessor Christi Martinus⁵¹ resplendit, uolens et ipsum archiepiscopum et quoscumque lecturos cum ipso uel post ipsum ad admirationem et uenerationem sancti pontificis et ad promerenda beneficiorum eius suffragia incitare. Scripsi et aliis aliqua quę, quoniam necdum^(a) sunt correcta et perfecta sicut uellem, propalare adhuc supersedeo. Quod cum Deo iuuante factum fuerit, legat ea cui placuerit et occupatio permiserit et si quid in his utilitatis inuenerit, Deo omnium bonorum largitori gratias agat, nec in his uenustatem eloquii, sed utilitatem consilii requirat, sciens quia *non in sermone culto, sed in opere iusto sit regnum Dei*⁵². Si quid autem reprehensione dignum inuenerit, non indignetur et dum a recta fide non deuiet et sanę doctrinę non obuiet, ignorantię meę ignoscat, nec michi imputet, sed dominę et imperiosę caritati, quę me insipientem faciens quod idonee non poteram – hoc est ut scriberem – et in tantum scripta diffundere multo et uiolento instinctu compulit. Si amicus est ista legens uel audiens, obsecro ut si scit et potest corrigenda corrigat, sin autem alteri amico qui sciat et possit emendanda commendat. Sed ut derogatoribus meis modicum quid adhuc respondeam, certum est quoniam nulla fere est^(b) scriptura nisi diuina que non cum necessariis et utilibus aliqua superflua contineat. Numquid omnes qui ante me scripserunt tam *circumcisa labia habuerunt*⁵³ et tam considerate locuti sunt ut nichil omnino proferrent superflui? Nullo modo. Si ita est, cur ego omnium minimus non solum de superfluis, sed et de manibus redarguar quasi in scriptis meis nulla penitus inueniantur utilia quibus edificari possint legentes uel audientes? Quid dicande talibus? Esto scripta uel dicta mea sint paleę, sint folia, sint qualibuscumque uilibus rebus similia. Proinde facillime exemplis patentibus detractores meos concludam. Numquid paleę quamuis leues ex toto sunt inutiles? Non, quia ex ipsis aluntur pecora et inter eas latent et saluantur grana in agris, ne auruginę dum in spicis sunt ledantur, aut ab auibus diripiuntur; in areis, ne a transeuntibus nuda conculcantur et conterantur; in arboribus uero fructiferis non habentur fructus sine foliis et plerumque ipsi fructus per folia ab imbribus defenduntur et auiculis. Duris nucum testis boni saporis includuntur nuclei et aluearibus fimo oblitis mirabili apum opere fabricati faui proferuntur melliflui. In *mensis diuitum*⁵⁴ inter preciosa^(c) et diuersa

(^a) necdum] nondum *Boll.* — (^b) est] *added above the line.* — (^c) preciosa] *before correction* diuersa preciosa.

⁵⁰ i.e. Philip of Heinsberg, archbishop of Cologne (c.1130/1167-1191). Philip was a great admirer of Hildegard of Bingen: he corresponded with the visionary (see letters 15, 15r, 16, 26r and 17 of Hildegard's letter collection) and visited her at the Rupertsberg. Guibert and Philip became acquainted during Guibert's stay with Hildegard. For more information on Philip of Heinsberg, see e.g. Severin Corsten & Leo Gillissen (eds.), *Philipp von Heinsberg. Erzbischof und Reichskanzler (1167-1191). Studien und Quellen*, Heinsberg, 1991, or Stefan Burkhardt, *Mit Stab und Schwert. Bilder, Träger und Funktionen erzbischöflicher Herrschaft zur Zeit Kaiser Friedrich Barbarossas. Die Erzbistümer Köln und Mainz im Vergleich*, Ostfildern, 2008, passim. For Hildegard's letter collection, see Hildegardis Bingensis, *Epistolae*, ed. Lieven Van Acker & Monika Klaes, Turnhout, 1191-1193-2001, 3 vols. (Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio mediaevalis, 91-91A-91B).

⁵¹ i.e. Martinus of Tours (c.316-397), Guibert's favourite saint.

⁵² non - Dei] cf. I Cor. 4, 20.

⁵³ circumcisa - habuerunt] cf. Hieronymus, *Epist.*, ep. 18A, p. 95, l. 16-17.

⁵⁴ mensis diuitum] cf. Luc. 16, 21.

ferculorum obsonia infirmis abilia agrestium herbarum aliquando inferuntur holera et ut citius et auidius lauta et delicata repetantur fercula, interdum grossiora et austera pergustantur cibaria. Ista me hic congesse derogatorum stulticia compulerit, qui non considerantes multiformem scripturarum diuersitatem nec scribentium inequalem scientiæ facultatem, si non summis magistris paria uel maiora et rethoricis deflorata coloribus conscripserint, despiciunt, subsannant et irrident, oblito quod dicit poeta: *'Non omnia possumus omnes'*⁵⁵ et quod in operibus suis *'Quandoque bonus dormitarit Homerus'*^(a)⁵⁶ est.

^(a) Homerus] before correction omerus, 'h' added above the line.

⁵⁵ Non - omnes] Vergilius, *Bucolica*, ecl. 8, p. 48, v. 62.

⁵⁶ Quandoque - Homerus] Horatius, *De arte poetica*, p. 301, v. 359; cf. Guibertus Gemblacensis, *Apologia*, fol. 9r.

Samenvatting. – De benedictijn Guibertus van Gembloers staat vooral bekend als de laatste secretaris van de befaamde Rijnlandse profetes Hildegard van Bingen. Hij liet echter ook een rijke literaire erfenis na die de leefwereld van een traditionele monnik tijdens de centrale middeleeuwen belicht. Een van zijn werken is *De destructione monasterii Gemblacensis*, bewaard in hs. 5535-37 in het Handschriftenkabinet van de Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België. Deze tekst geeft inzicht in Guibertus' visie op auteurschap, in het bijzonder van een collectie van veertien traktaatbrieven die in het handschrift volgen op *De destructione*. Aan de hand van verschillende topoi en Bijbelse voorbeelden verantwoordde Guibertus zijn eigen literaire ambities en plaatste hij zichzelf binnen het traditionele geleerde discours rond auteurschap. Daarenboven biedt *De destructione* een bouwsteen in het onderzoek naar de staat van het traditionele kloosterleven in een tijd waarin het zich geconfronteerd zag met toenemende concurrentie van andere monastieke groepen. Guibertus maakte gebruik van het discours van verval van het traditionele cenobitisme, deels als een literaire strategie waarmee hij zijn daden wou verantwoorden.

Résumé. – Le bénédictin Guibert de Gembloux est principalement connu comme dernier secrétaire de la célèbre prophétesse de la Rhénanie, Hildegarde de Bingen. Il a cependant laissé lui-même un riche héritage littéraire éclairant l'univers d'un moine traditionnel pendant le Moyen Âge central. L'un de ses ouvrages est *De destructione monasterii Gemblacensis*, conservé à la Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, Cabinet des Manuscrits, sous le n° 5535-37. Ce texte élucide la conception qu'avait Guibert de son rôle d'auteur, en particulier d'une collection de quatorze traités épistolaires (qui suivent *De destructione* dans le manuscrit). Guibert justifiait ses propres ambitions littéraires à l'aide de différents topoi et d'exemples bibliques, s'inscrivant ainsi dans le discours savant et traditionnel sur le statut de l'auteur. Qui plus est, *De destructione* donne des renseignements sur l'état du monachisme traditionnel, qui à l'époque faisait face à une concurrence croissante d'autres groupes monastiques. Guibert se servait du discours de la crise du cenobitisme, en partie comme stratégie littéraire légitimant ses actions.

Summary. – The Benedictine Guibert of Gembloux is mostly known as the last secretary of the renowned Renish visionary Hildegard of Bingen. However, he also left behind a rich literary legacy that sheds light on the world of a traditional monk during the central Middle Ages. One of his works is *De destructione monasterii Gemblacensis*, preserved in MS 5535-37 of the Manuscripts Department at the Royal Library of Belgium in Brussels. The text sheds light on Guibert's concept of authorship, in particular of a collection of fourteen letter treatises that follow *De destructione* in the manuscript. By employing topoi and biblical exempla, Guibert justified his literary ambitions, placing himself within the traditional learnt discourse on authorship. In addition, *De destructione* offers insight into the debate on the state of traditional coenobitism during a period in which it was encountering increasing competition from other monastic groups. Guibert employed the discourse of decline of traditional monasticism partly as a literary strategy in order to justify his actions.

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