

The Epitaph of Jacques Legrand

The microfilm of Ms 542 of the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Paris, which contains seven ¹⁾ of Legrand's smaller works, arrived too late to be used in preparing the short biography we published in the preceding issue of this magazine. Had it arrived in time, we would have added the *epitaphium* from fol. 81^v; we would also have changed the date for Legrand's death from 1422/25 to 1414/5. Coville published this epitaph on p. 37 of his doctoral dissertation, but he made several emendations which changed the sense radically and induced us to disregard it. We re-edit, therefore, this interesting cenotaphic document and follow it with as literal a translation as the occasionally obscure text permits.

We call this a cenotaphic document because the inscription speaks of Legrand as a « son of this convent ». Also, Ms 542 belonged to the Parisian house of the Augustinian Order, not to that of Poitiers. The so-called epitaph was, therefore, not copied from an inscription on Legrand's tombstone in Poitiers but from some kind of memorial plaque hanging on the walls of the Parisian Grand Couvent. It is evident that this memorial was erected a considerable

¹⁾ In our enumeration of Legrand's works (*Augustiniana* VII, 1957, 320-326) his *Principium in Primum Librum Sententiarum* (Ms. 542, ff. 29r-35v) and the *Principium super Bibliam* (ff. 36r-40r) should have been numbered as separate treatises.

The *Principium* to the Sentences of the Lombard begins: « Utrum fons empyreus gurgitibus scaturiens entitatis cuiuslibet sit regula sufficiens. Er arguitur quod sic ». It concludes: « Et haec sit modica et exigua de quaestione collativa cum magistris meis, quibus quantum possum humiliter me commendo ».

The *Principium in Bibliam* begins: « Reverendi magistri et domini patresque praestantissimi. Nuper me viribus... (decernebam... duo peragere)

1^o scil. sacram scripturam laudibus extollere

2^o praesentibus singulis gratias impendere [Dominis].

It concludes: « Sed dicebam secundo quod dicti sonuerunt... beatissimi apostoli Simon et Judas ».

time after Legrand's death, for it describes his fame as « still resplendent in our times » (line 11). We assume that it was composed by an Augustinian who was impressed by the posthumous vogue of Legrand.

EPITAPHIUM FRATRIS JACOBI MAGNI, PARISIENSIS

in sacra pagina licentiati, auctoris huius voluminis et plurimorum aliorum, filii huius conventus, qui Pictavis sepultus, honorifice iacet ante altare maius.

- 1 In fluvium magnum crescentis fontis hic instar
 - 2 Sub tellure iacet Jacobi corpus venerandi
 - 3 In populos, clerum dicti cognomine Magni.
 - 4 Magnus nempe fuit non tantum nomine functus
 - 5 Parisios inter doctores ordinis huius.
 - 6 Qui innumeras hausit studiis noctesque diesque
 - 7 Aeternae referens condigna praemia laudis
 - 8 Parisius, quae tibi nunc Pictavis hospita tanti [sunt],
 - 9 Cui praefata dedit hunc parta licentia birri,
 - 10 Sed mors ante tulit quam laurea vel potiretur.
 - 11 Cuius vivit adhuc nostris sua fama superstes
 - 12 Temporibus, quem nulla queat delere vetustas.
 - 13 At quaecumque cupit eius delitescere scriptis
 - 14 Posteritas, monumenta legat, sic grandia noscet.
 - 15 Novorum, veterum interpres Jacobus loquiorum
 - 16 Magnus doctorum tot scripsit quot quis eorum:
 - 17 Carminis eloquique modos sacrique viasque,
 - 18 Et quae conveniunt multis communibus artes.
 - 19 Quo duce iam veniunt Parnassi a vertice Musae.
 - 20 Hinc eius animae dives pro munere honores
 - 21 Vera Sophia ferat conculcans Tartara, Manes.
- Amen.

Translation

« Epitaph for Friar Jacques Legrand of Paris, licentiate in Sacred Scripture, author of this and many other works, son of this convent, who lies buried in Poitiers, where he has the place of honor before the high altar ».

- 1 Faithful to his motto: « A rivulet growing into a GREAT river »
- 2 Lies here under the earth the body of Jacques, venerable
- 3 Among laity and clergy and called by the name LE GRAND.
- 4 GREAT he was and not merely so named, having labored
- 5 Among the Parisian Doctors of this Order [of St. Augustine]

- 6 He spent innumerable days and nights in his studies
- 7 Gaining rewards worthy of eternal praise
- 8 In Paris. These [rewards] grant you now a resting place of such excellence at Poitiers.
- 9 To Poitiers aforesaid Paris has entrusted him after he had obtained the licence for the birettum
- 10 But death took him away before he could (really) gain the laurea.
- 11 His fame is fully alive in our own days,
- 12 Him no hoary age can make obscure.
- 13 But should future ages forget the treasures hidden in his writings
- 14 Let them read his monumental works and they shall learn things that are GREAT.
- 15 An interpreter of the Old and New Testaments Jacques
- 16 The GREAT among the doctors wrote as many books as any of them.
- 17 [He wrote] modes and rules for poetry and sacred eloquence
- 18 And a manual of mnemonics useful for many subjects.
- 19 Under his guidance the Muses come from the height of the Parnassus.
- 20 Hence, may true Wisdom trampling under foot the infernal spirits
- 21 Bring to his soul honors divine and well deserved.
Amen.

The epitaph passes in review all the literary works of Legrand, especially those contained in Ms 542. The first line recalls the theme by which he identified his lecture on the Bible.

Ex quibus omnibus nostrum thema creditur clarum, quo dicebatur: Fons parvus crevit in fluvium MAGNUM ²⁾).

Verse 15 praises his biblical studies, verse 17 his Tract on Metrics and Sacred Eloquence, verse 18 his *Tractatus de arte memorandi* and « Vera Sophia » in verse 21 certainly alludes to his *Sophiologium*.

The epitaph includes important biographical data. Lines 9 and 10 state clearly that Legrand passed away after he got his licentiate but before his laurea. « Cui [oppido Pictavorum] praefata [civitas Parisiensis] dedit hunc [Legrand] partā licenciā birri ³⁾, sed mors

²⁾ Ms. 542, fol. 39^r. Father Damasus Trapp has again called attention to the importance of these themes or « heraldic allusions » for the identification of medieval authors », *Augustiniana* VI (1956) 269/72.

³⁾ The word *birrus* really means a cloak to which a capooch was fastened. Our modern academic gown is still a reminder of it. But as a biretta goes with the

[eum] tulit, antequam vel laureā potiretur ». Coville read *non* instead of *mors*, thus leading us to disregard this important fact in our article. The heading of the epitaph gives the additional information that Legrand was buried before the high altar in the Augustinian church of Poitiers ⁴⁾, an honor usually reserved to founders or great benefactors.

With the exception of the burial place this accords with Denifle's Cartulary of the University of Paris, where we read: « Fr. Jacobus Grandis alias Magni, August., biblicus 1401, sententiarius 1404, scripsit super Genesim, obiit 1415 Parisiis » ⁵⁾. This Cartulary mentions him as *licentiatus* in theology at the Council of Faith held in Paris between December 1413 and January 1414, but does not know him as Master Regent. His death in 1414 or 1415 would explain this omission, and it would also account for the complete silence about Jacques after 1414. Death followed prolonged ill health, a source of worry to him for many years. In the foreword to his *Postilla super Genesim* he wrote of himself as « divinae supplicans imensitati, ut

academic gown to-day, so it was in Legrand's time. The ceremony of conferring the biretta is described in detail in Denifle's, *Chartularium* IV, no 2235 for the year 1424. It took place in the 'aula episcopi Parisiensis' after the 'noviter magistrandus' had held his *Vesperiae* the night before. He is, therefore, called 'Dominus vesperiatius'. The president of the meeting was a magister senior. A number of masters and baccalarii had to be present. At the beginning of the 'aula' the magister senior said: « Domine vesperiate, antequam biretum recipiatis, vos habetis aliquid iurare ».

Thereupon the noviter magistrandus swore an oath to uphold the peace and honor of the university. He then knelt down before the magister senior who gave him the biretta with the words:

« Ego in signum honoris et reverencie magistralis post licentiam vobis datam et concessam, auctoritate, qua fungor in hac parte, impono vobis biretum doctorale in sacra facultate theologie in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti ». This was followed by the collation of the now full-fledged master.

⁴⁾ Herbert II Berland founded the Augustinian house in Poitiers some time before 1345, when he chose its church for his last resting place. The house was destroyed in 1561 and its archives were lost. Consequently neither Legrand's tomb nor any documents concerning him are preserved here. In 1598 the Community of Bourges re-established the house. B. LEDAIN, *Notice sur l'ancien couvent des Augustins de Poitiers*, in *Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de Poitiers* 7 (1895) 179-189. Ledain overlooked the important documents in the collection of Dom Fonteneau, enumerated in *Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest* 4 (1839) 298 sqq.

⁵⁾ DENIFLE-CHATELAIN, *Chartularium universitatis Parisiensis* IV (1897), no 1898, note 12.

meam suppleat fragilitatem exiguamque valetudinem augere dignetur » ⁶⁾). The *Postilla* was completed at the very latest in 1409, since it was dedicated to Michael Creney, Bishop of Auxerre, who died in that year. It seems beyond doubt that Legrand's death occurred in 1414 or 1415. When I put it a decade later I was following Coville's lead, but Coville was wrong.

While this epitaph and especially the Cartulary of Paris fix the time of Legrand's death, they give rise to confusion concerning his magisterium. They seem to contravene the document of 1412 in Rymer's *Foedera* IV, 14 where Jacques is called « in sacra pagina professor », while his companion on the legation to the English king, Peter de Versallis (Versailles) is given with pains-taking accuracy the title « in sacra pagina bachalarius formatus ». Between the bachalaureate and the magisterium an interval of five years of study and teaching was prescribed. Peter of Versailles became *sententiarium* in 1407 and was master by November 1413 ⁷⁾). Legrand should have become a licenciatus in 1409/10 and master in 1410/11, which would accord perfectly with Rymer's document. It can not be argued that his promotion was delayed on account of the great number of students from the various provinces of the Order. This was true before the Great Schism, when the promotion of mendicants to the magisterium was limited to one representative of each mendicant order every second year. Competition was no longer so keen in Legrand's time, for all followers of the Roman Obedience had been forbidden to attend the University of Paris from the year 1391 on ⁸⁾). In attendance were only a few students from France and Spain. The difficulties of earlier times had been further mitigated by the establishment of theological faculties at the universities of Toulouse, Bologna, and Padua ⁹⁾). Legrand's political activity, on the other hand, might have been something of a bar to his promotion. In

⁶⁾ We took this passage from Th. HERRERA, *Alphabetum Augustinianum* I (Madrid 1644) 429. Herrera may be mistaken when he presumes Legrand to be an old man from the words in the same foreword: « Et licet mea non possit interceptis laboribus sufficere aetas ». Just the opposite could be true: Legrand may feel that he is not old enough to undertake such a difficult task.

⁷⁾ DENIFLE, *Chart.* IV, no. 1940, no 2003.

⁸⁾ *Analecta Aug.* V, 99. See also my forthcoming article on the anti-generals during the Great Schism.

⁹⁾ On the European continent the magisterium in theology could be obtained until 1347 only in Paris. In 1360 Pope Urban V, an alumnus of the university of

1411 he was excommunicated together with all the adherents of the Duke of Orleans, whose side he had chosen the previous year.

The question is further complicated by a recent discovery of A. Combes¹⁰). It had been taken for granted that Legrand's promotion to the licentiate took place in 1413, but with his customary attention to detail Combes found that Denifle had made one of his rare mistakes in his Chartulary by publishing a list of *licentiati* in theology for the year 1413, among them Legrand¹¹). The list may be for 1403 or 1404; certainly it is not for 1413. And Legrand's name does not appear in the text but is added in the margin by a later hand. Denifle's source is Ms. 5657A of the National Library in Paris which bears the title *Registrum facultatis theologiae Parisiensis 1030-1694*. It is not a record of original entries but a 17th century compilation, as we were able to ascertain during a recent visit. It is not known when the data for Legrand were entered. Apparently this had not been done in 1664, when Father Archange Guin, O. E. S. A. composed his *Elenchus Doctorum Parisiensium Ordinis Er. S. Augustini*, now Ms. 5-H-29 of the Departmental Archives of Haute

Toulouse, gave this privilege also to his alma mater. The reputation of Paris, however, was so high that the Augustinians made little effort to obtain the doctorate in Toulouse. In 1365 the same Pope sent a sharp letter to the Order commanding its members to do so (*Analecta Aug.* V, 121/2, DENIFLE, *Chart.* III, 125). In 1366 Peter Dominic, provincial of Toulouse and Aquitaine, and Bernardus, a friar of Toulouse, are recorded as masters in theology and members of the faculty. The first known candidate of the Austins is Thomas de Reate in 1364 (M. FOURNIER, *Les statuts et privilèges des universités françaises*, Paris 1890, p. 611).

The Augustinians Hugolin of Orvieto and Bonaventura Badoer of Padua were among the nine founders of the theological faculty of Bologna, which received the papal privilege to grant the magisterium in 1362, but opened its doors only in 1364 (A. ZUMKELLER, *Hugolin von Orvieto*, Würzburg 1941, pp. 86).

On April 15, 1363 a theological faculty was also established at the university of Padua and Bonaventura Badoer was one of its first magistri. By delegation of the Pope he promoted his fellow-Augustinian Michael of Bologna on April 24, 1376. It is the first known promotion (G. BROTTO e G. ZONTA, *La facoltà theologica dell'università di Padova* (ib. 1922) 253/4).

The university of Prague had been erected by Emperor Charles IV in 1347 and the Augustinian Nicolaus of Laun was at first the only magister who had the right to promote candidates to the magisterium (J. HEMMERLE, *Nicolaus von Laun*, in *Studien zur Geschichte der Karls Universität zu Prag*, ed. R. Schreiber. Freilassing, Salzburg 1954, p. 105).

¹⁰) *Augustiniana* VII (1957) 328 note 6.

¹¹) DENIFLE, *Chart.* IV, no 1998.

Garonne at Marseille. Guin, who repeats all the other mistakes of the *Registrum*, does not mention the marginal note ; and on fol. 18^r he claims 1404 as the year in which Legrand obtained the magisterium !

There are many such lacunae in this part of the *Registrum*. For example, in his *Principium* to the Sentences Legrand mentions by name two fellow baccalarii: Gerardus de Luxemburg¹²⁾ and Johannes de Castillione¹³⁾. Neither is found in the text of the *Registrum*, nor is Peter of Versailles.

Of Legrand's academic career only one fact seems indisputable: he was still *licentiatus* when he took part in the Council of Faith held in Paris between December 1413 and January 1414. He is called Magister in this document, but with the addition « *licentiatus in theologia* ». Two explanations seem possible. He may have held the degree of Master of Arts ; in this case he must have attained the distinction before becoming an Augustinian, since members of the Order were not permitted to join the Arts Faculty. Or perhaps the title Magister was used more loosely in the 15th century than in the 13th and first half of the 14th century. We certainly should consider the possibility that a *licentiatus* was called *professor in sacra theologia*, though up to now there is no proof of this. If it could be proved then the *Registrum*, the Epitaph, and the date 1414 would accord with Rymer.

Could it be that there were two different persons bearing the name Jacques Legrand: one the political agent, the other a notable preacher and writer ? Such a speculation would not be supported by any sources known at the present time. There was, to be sure, an Augustinian contemporary and fellow student of Legrand who bore the similar Latin name, Jacobus de Liphodio Magno¹⁴⁾. He was made licentiate in 1406 and appears as master three years later¹⁵⁾,

¹²⁾ Geraldus Canonici alias Doemherre de Luxemburg, Diocese Trier, was magister artium in 1395 and made licentiate in theology in the year 1409. DENIFLE, *Chart. IV*, no 1866. He is not enumerated in the otherwise excellent index.

¹³⁾ John of Châtillon (Castillione), a priest of the diocese of Reims, was baccalareus in 1403 (DENIFLE, *Chart. IV*, p. 84). Denifle assumes that the marginal note in the *Registrum* is incorrect which calls him a member of the Franciscan Order. His doubt seems to be justified because Legrand never calls him *frater*, but only *Dominus*. He might, of course, have entered the Order later.

¹⁴⁾ I could not locate the present French name. Is it Liffol-le-Grand, Vosges ?

¹⁵⁾ DENIFLE, *Chart. IV*, no 1834, 1864, 2012.

but there is not the slightest indication that he was ever confused with Legrand. The Epitaph might be construed as offering a hint in favor of a two-persons theory, praising as it does Legrand's literary work without mentioning his « Tertullian gift of oratory » ¹⁶⁾ and political activity. But this can be more readily explained in another way. When the epitaph was written Jeanne d'Arc had given France political unity and a new national consciousness, and Legrand's political career would have impressed any true Frenchman as something better forgotten.

All this uncertainty might easily be resolved if the archives of the Grand Couvent in Paris had been preserved intact, but in the extant records Legrand's name is not mentioned even once. There seems to have been an overzealous effort to destroy all documents pertaining to the time of the Schism. Guin preserved but one item in his great cartulary of this house ¹⁷⁾. The archives of the Order in Rome are of no help ; exactly as we should expect, they contain no information about French brethren during this period.

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¹⁶⁾ « Tulliana pollens eloquentia » quoted in DENIFLE, *Chart.* IV, no 1948 from the Chronicle of the Religious of St. Denis.

¹⁷⁾ Now Ms 5-H-10 of the Archives Départementales of Bouches-du-Rhone. It is a condensation of his much larger work in folio which he composed while prior of Paris. Only vol. II has been preserved. It carries the title *Livre II des contracts du grand couvent de Paris de l'Ordre des Frères Hermites de St-Augustin, commencé l'an 1654*. It is now in the Archives Nationales of Paris with the signature S*3640. The same Archives conserve also under number LL 1471 the *Répertoire historique instructif et méthodique des titres et papiers contenus dans les archives du grand couvent royal et collège généralissime des R. P. Ermites de l'Ordre de Saint-Augustin, au bout du Pont-Neuf à Paris par M^r Pierre-Claude Poussin, avocat 1746*. It comprehends over thousand pages, is beautifully written and by far the best cartulary of the Order which we have seen. In its introductory chapter the arrangement of the Parisian archives is described in detail.