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JOHN COLONNA O. P. LIFE AND WRITINGS

(1298-c. 1340)

BY

STEPHEN L. FORTE O. P.

The Italian John Colonna seems to be the last of a long series of well-known Dominican chroniclers of the thirteenth and first half of the fourteenth century: John de Mailly, Vincent Beauvais, Gérard de Frachet, Martin of Troppau, Tolomeo di Lucca, Bernard Gui. Less known than his predecessors, his works are not however devoid of interest and value.

He was in fact a man of his century: a humanist, a lover of books and antiquities, in search always of valuable literary works and information worthwhile preserving for posterity. Like Petrarch and all the humanists, he travelled to distant countries, such as Cyprus and Jerusalem, and studied in different centres of learning, like Chartres, Troyes, Amiens and Paris. It is therefore greatly regrettable that his main work, the *Mare Historiarum* left incomplete, does not reach to the author's own times when he should have been able to embellish the description of events with examples of his own experience, as he himself says: "usque ad hec tempora historiam texui, in qua non solum lecta, sed etiam audita et visa conscripsi":

A complete study of Colonna's life and writings has not yet been attempted, though some scholars have from time to time written about his relation to Francis Petrarch or Landolph Colonna, or even about his bio-bibliographical treatise, the *De Viris Illustribus*. Nevertheless John Colonna is still a shadowy figure, whose real personality is not yet cleared of all the confusions in which it was involved.

In the following pages we shall try to adduce some more evidence to what has been said previously by other writers, and to give some more information about Colonna's life and literary activity. The main difficulty which we shall encounter in the course of this study will be the question of the identity or non identity of the Dominican John Colonna correspondent of Petrarch, with the John Colonna biographer

and bibliographer. There are strong reasons to support both opinions, but that upholding the identity seems to be sounder and better proved, as we shall see later on. For the sake of clarity we shall proceed thus: first, we shall try to construct Colonna's life; secondly, show the relation of Petrarch with his Colonna correspondent, and decide the latter's identity; and finally we shall enumerate the works attributed to Colonna, discuss their authenticity and give a list of extant manuscripts.

I. Life of John Colonna

The *Curriculum vitae* of John Colonna has long been confused with that of his homonymous, himself a member of the Order of Preachers (and Archbishop of Messina) but older than he by three quarters of a century.

Because of this confusion our author does not figure in the great literary history of the Order, and his works were attributed to John Colonna *Senior*¹. We pass over this question: the simple enumeration of the dates concerning our Dominican will be enough to show evidently the impossibility of a confusion with a person who had received the habit of the Order at the time of Jordan of Saxony².

More recent historians, who welcome the distinction of the two Dominicans John Colonna, hesitate on the date of the birth of the second: some put his birth at about 1265, others a little later; a few venture to suggest the year 1298, which is given among other notes of an historical character belonging, as it seems, to John Colonna himself³.

¹ J. Quéatif-J. Échard, *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum* I, Paris 1719, 418-421.

² John Colonna in the *Mare Historiarum*, lib. VII, cap. 163, speaking of Jordan of Saxony and the large number of friars who joined the Order during his period, says: "Inter quos fuit frater Johannes de Columpna nepos domini Johannis cardinalis, qui fuerat legatus in Graecia, qui postmodum fuit archiepiscopus Messanensis in Sicilia. Legitur enim de hoc fratre Jordano quod ultra mille fratres manu sua vestivit in ordine".

³ The long chronology is followed by R. Sabbadini, *Giovanni Colonna biografo e bibliografo del sec. XIV*, in *Atti della Reale Accademia delle scienze di Torino*, XLVI (1910-1911) 278-307; and also in his *Le scoperte dei codici latini e greci nei secoli XIV e XV*, II, Firenze 1914, 51-58; I. Taurisano, *Discepoli e biografati di S. Tommaso*, in *S. Tommaso d'Aquino O. P., Miscellanea storico-artistica*, Roma 1924, 170-174. Those for the short chronology are: U. Balzani, *Landolfo e Giovanni Colonna secondo un codice Bodleiano*, in *Archivio della Reale Società Romana di Storia Patria*, VIII (Roma 1885), 223-244; L. Delisle, *Nouveau témoignage relatif*

We feel bound to accept this apparently late date. Here are our reasons.

In the margins of a copy of Lactantius in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS. Canon. 131, there is a letter of Landolph Colonna to his nephew who had recently entered the Order of Preachers⁴. Landolph, Canon of the Cathedral Church of Chartres (1290-1328), where he lived from 1299 to 1328, is well known as the author of a historical compilation called *Breviarium Historiarum*⁵. Now, we know from John Colonna himself, that he had also lived at Chartres (we shall return to this point instantly). It seems therefore natural to think that he is the nephew of Landolph. This is more probable from the fact that both Landolph and our Colonna belonged to that branch of the great and noble family, called *de Gallicano*. It is very unlikely that Landolph had two Dominican nephews, precisely at the same time. If therefore the letter was addressed to John Colonna, it is almost certain that the historical notes, to which we have referred above, preserved in the same manuscript of Lactantius, were John Colonna's. Now the author of these notes when recording the events of 1298 says: "quo anno ego natus sum". Evidently it is not the question of the author of the letter: in 1298 Landolph is already at Chartres.

Against the adoption of this date it is to be remarked that John Colonna became Preacher General in his Roman Dominican Province in 1324, and that his correspondence with Petrarch supposes that about

à la mission de Jeanne d'Arc, in Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes 46 (1885) 658-660; Abbé Clerval, Les écoles de Chartres au moyen âge, Chartres 1895, 411-412; P. Pelliot, Les Mongols et la Papauté, in Revue de l'Orient Chrétien, 3^e série, t. VIII (XXVIII) n^{os} 1 et 2 (1931-1932) 41.

⁴ Balzani published only a part of the letter, op. cit., pp. 19-21. Prof. Billanovich is preparing a study on Landolph Colonna and he will publish the whole letter. He tells me that the name "Johannes" to whom the letter is addressed, can be clearly read. I take this opportunity to express my thanks to Prof. Billanovich for his kindness and valuable help.

⁵ For Landolph Colonna and his works, see U. Balzani, op. cit.; Delisle, Bibl. de l'École des Chartes, pp. 658-660; A. Molinier, Les sources de l'histoire de France III, Paris 1903, pp. 209-210, n. 2910, 2911; Abbé Clerval, op. cit., 406-411. The last time we hear of him is in August 6, 1329, when he was granted a plenary indulgence, and was still called Canon of Chartres (G. Mollat, Jean XXII (1316-1334), Lettres communes, t. VIII (Paris 1924) 343, n. 45931). He must have died shortly afterwards, because on September 30, 1331 a benefice vacated "per obitum Landulphi de Columna" was conferred on another (G. Mollat, Jean XXII, Lett. comm., t. XI [Paris 1912] 37, n. 55213).

1340 he was an old man, things which do not suit a man born in 1298. To which we reply that what seems to be likely is not always true. If we do not accept the date 1298, then we shall have to distinguish two John Colonnas, both historians, both related to Landolph, both Dominicans, both of whom had even stayed at Chartres. The objection put forth against the title of Preacher General conferred on John Colonna when he was only twenty-six years old has not the value one should think it has. In that period the offices in the Order, especially distinctions such as that of Preacher General, had lost their original character; it was enough that Colonna belonged to a great Roman family that he should be given that title. Every Chapter of his Province created about twelve Preachers General, and among those created with Colonna we find two who were still living about half a century later. They could not therefore have been much older than he in 1324 ⁶.

John Colonna went to Chartres in his youth and lived with his uncle Landolph. The date of this sojourn is not given by documents, but it may be possibly established by means of other certain dates. First of all, the two extreme dates are determined by those of Landolph's sojourn at Chartres: 1299-1328 ⁷. Now the second part of that period is excluded because John would have gone back to his Dominican Province of Rome before 1324, most probably between 1318 and 1320. He would not have gone there in his childhood; from which we may conclude that his stay at Chartres with his uncle must be placed between 1310 and 1318.

From his uncle John inherited the taste for history and antiquities. He tells us that he had seen at the Cathedral library a copy of Livy containing the fourth decade now partly lost; the manuscript was old, and the ink so faded that reading was almost impossible: "Vidi ego tamen quartam decadem in archivio ecclesie Carnotensis, sed littera adeo erat antiqua quod vix ab aliquo legi poterat" ⁸.

Then Colonna relates that he had met at Chartres one of the members of the embassy sent by the King of France, St. Louis, to the Grand

⁶ We may mention Ugo de Ugorogeriis: student of theology in 1318, socius of the diffinitor 1323, preacher general 1324 (Mon. O. P. hist. XX, 207, 229, 233) Nicolaus Corbacioni: student of philosophy in 1313, preacher general in 1324, Prior of Foligno and socius of the diffinitor general in 1343 (Mon. O. P. hist. XX, 190, 348).

⁷ Cf. Delisle, *op. cit.*, 658-660; Abbé Clerval, *op. cit.*, 406-409.

⁸ De Viris Illustribus, Bibl. S. Marci, Venet., MS. lat. X. 58 f. 34^v. This passage was first indicated by J. Valentinelli, *Bibliotheca manuscripta ad S. Marci Venetiarum, Codices mss. latini*, t. 6, Venetia 1873, p. 52.

Khan of the Tartars in 1249-1251. The name of this companion of André de Longjumeau O. P., who was at the head of the mission, would have passed unknown if John Colonna had not recorded it for us. Robert was succentor of the Cathedral, but very old when Colonna saw him. If Colonna met him about 1315, as suggested by Paul Pelliot, the old traveller of Central Asia must have been then eighty years old⁹, which explains the way Colonna had written:

“Fuerunt autem nuncii domini regis Francorum ad Tartaros quidam pater predicator Andreas nomine cum duobus aliis patribus sui ordinis; quibus adiuncti fuerunt duo clerici seculares; quorum unum adhuc viventem ego vidi aetate jam valde decrepitem, qui erat subcantor in ecclesia Carnotensi, Robertus nomine”¹⁰.

Such meeting must have roused the spirit of the young man and inspired him with the liking for travel and adventure.

Landolph's letter to his nephew tells us that John Colonna studied at Troyes and Amiens. As we have no other information about this, it is difficult to discover whether he was in search of manuscripts in the libraries of that time, or was stopping in these places to follow the course of ordinary studies.

However, the terminology of Landolph's letter seems to imply that Colonna was not yet a Dominican at the time of these journeys. The uncle writes to his nephew shortly after his entry in the Dominican Order; it is very likely that the events referred to may have taken place previously.

When did John Colonna receive the Dominican habit? In what Priory? We are in complete darkness regarding these questions. The fact that John Colonna was made Preacher General with the designation of Roman, leads us to believe that he belonged to the Priory of S. Sabina in Rome. It was therefore in this Priory that he had received the habit. The date is less certain. However, his entry into the Order took place before 1320, because in that year John was already in Paris, and a Dominican. It is there that the letter was addressed to him by his uncle Landolph. The date 1320 has been copied by Father Ligiez O. P., then Archivist of S. Sabina, from a manuscript exposed for sale in an

⁹ It should be noted that the long chronology brings John Colonna to Chartres about thirty years earlier, which makes it difficult to explain how Colonna at that time could call Robert “aetate jam valde decrepitem”.

¹⁰ On this mission and its members see the excellent study of P. Pelliot, *Les Mongols*, pp. 3-84.

antiquarian's shop in Rome; we do not know what happened to that manuscript, but Father Ligiez took note of a precious information added at the end of the text by the author of the copy, John Colonna himself:

"Explicit liber qui dicitur Via Paradisi compilatus ex diversis dictis et tractatibus beatissimi doctoris Gregorii pape. Quem libellum ego fr. Johannes de Columpna de Gallicano ordinis predicatorum propria manu scripsi in conventu Parisiensi anno domini MCCCXX. Laudetur Deus. Amen¹¹."

Was John Colonna at Saint Jacques to make his theological studies? It is very likely; he will in fact later on be lector at the Priory of Tivoli. He does not however appear to have taken university degrees such as Bachelor and Master in Theology: no authority gives him those titles.

He is more interested in historical sciences and fine arts. His *De Viris Illustribus* shows a vast culture, and the *Mare Historiarum* includes some personal research together with the traditional compilations. We shall give some extracts of his personal research when we come to deal with his works¹².

His stay at Paris must have been short. John had certainly returned to Italy when he was elected Preacher General together with fourteen of his confreres by the Chapter of the Roman Province held in 1324¹³. About that time he was chosen as chaplain by John Conti O. P., Archbishop of Nicosia in Cyprus.

Sabbadini thought that the relations of John Colonna with Conti started much more early, in 1300¹⁴. This seems inadmissible. Sabbadini, no doubt, puts Colonna's birth about 1280 (or even 1265), which we can no longer accept, but he does not prove his hypothesis. If John Colonna had been in the suite of Archbishop Conti from 1300, it would be impossible to justify his presence at Chartres and Paris during the second decade of the century. The date 1320 given for the sojourn at Paris is a certain point: it focusses the whole setting of Colonna's life so well and with more certainty than the date of his birth in 1298. Can we suppose that the young man went to France before he knew Conti?

This would be to forget that Landolph Colonna did not go to Char-

¹¹ A note left by Fr. V. Ligiez, now at the Inst. Hist. at S. Sabina. Cf. infra p. 408.

¹² See on pp. 409 ss.

¹³ "Facimus predicatorum generales: fratres... Johannem de Columpna et Petrum de Ciottis Romanos]. Mon. O. P. hist. XX, 233.

¹⁴ Sabbadini, Giovanni Colonna, 285; Sabbadini, Le scoperte, 51; Taurisano Discepoli, 171.

tres until 1299, and his nephew would only have stayed in that city at the time when his uncle was living there.

The return of John Colonna to Italy is therefore posterior to the year when he copied at Paris the *Florilegium* of St. Gregory, may be even in the course of 1320. At that moment John Conti took actual possession of his Archiepiscopal See of Nicosia¹⁵. In 1320 he had as chaplains the Dominicans Benedict of Burgo S. Sepulchri and James of Orvieto; and in 1325 Raynaldus de Narnio O. P. was his socius at Nicosia¹⁶. It is not therefore until after the death, or even the return of one of them in Italy, that John Colonna was chosen to fill up the place with the Archbishop of Nicosia. We suspect that this was the reason why John Colonna was made Preacher General by the Chapter of Rome in 1324.

So far John Colonna's actual stay at Nicosia has not been well treated of by those who have written his *curriculum vitae*. On the supposition that the relation with Conti was much earlier, they thought that the details given in the *De Viris Illustribus* about the venerable Archbishop, which suppose the author's presence with him, should be referred to the period when Conti was Archbishop of Pisa 1299-1312¹⁷.

¹⁵ John Conti was elected Archbishop of Pisa by Boniface VIII on February 10, 1299 (Les Registres de Boniface VIII, II, Paris 1904, 327 n. 2896), whence he was transferred to that of Nicosia in Cyprus by Clement V on March 10, 1312 (Regestum Clementis V, Romae 1887, ann. VII, 96, n. 8013) but for some unknown reason Conti did not go to his new See until after nearly seven years. On Sept. 4, 1318, John XXII ordered him "ut infra unius mensis spatium ad suam ecclesiam se transferat Agarenae nationi conterminam". (G. Mollat et G. de Lesquen, Jean XXII, lettres communes, II, Paris 1905, 271 n. 8356). Finally Conti arrived in Famagosta on August 31, 1319, and made his solemn entry in Nicosia on Sept. 6th. (Comte de Mas-Latrie, Histoire des Archevêques Latins de l'île de Chypre, in Archives de l'Orient latin, II, Paris 1884, 255-256).

For the period of Conti's Archbishopric of Nicosia see Comte de Mas-Latrie, Histoire, 255-261; M. René de Mas-Latrie, Chroniques d'Amadi et de Strambaldi, I, Chronique d'Amadi, Paris 1891, 400-406.

For that of Pisa see N. Zucchelli, Cronotassi dei Vescovi e Arcivescovi di Pisa, Pisa 1907, 109-114.

¹⁶ For the first two Dominicans see Ph. Labbe, Sacrosancta Concilia, t. XI², Paris 1671, col. 2428; and for the other cf. L. de Mas-Latrie, Histoire de Chypre, II, Documents, Paris 1852, 143.

¹⁷ Taurisano, Discepoli, p. 171. Sabbadini, Le scoperte, 52, identified our John Colonna with a certain "messer Giovanni di Gallicano... familiare e domicillo" of John Conti, Archbishop of Pisa, on whose son the Archbishop conferred a fief. (Zucchelli, Cronotassi, 113). We must say that this is a very hasty identi-

Having put aside the old chronology, the same details require that the presence of Colonna with Conti at Nicosia should be placed between 1324, probable date of his going in the retinue of the Archbishop, and 1332, year of the latter's death.

This conclusion finds decisive confirmation in a passage in the *Mare Historiarum*. Speaking of Fagorius, comedian of Emperor Aurelian and gifted with a capacity for eating enormous quantities of food, John Colonna writes:

"Et licet ista supra humanam credulitatem esse videantur, tamen ista in Historia Flavii Vopisti scripta repperi. Et licet hoc michi quasi impossibile videatur, vidi meo tempore in insula Cypri quendam Sirum in curia regis Cypri, qui tantum una die comedit quod de eo cibo potuissent decem magni commestores ad sacietatem habere¹⁸."

Moreover, in want of this indisputable testimony, the notice consecrated by Colonna to Conti in his elogium of Innocent III in the *De Viris Illustribus* affords a no less solid proof of his presence at Cyprus with the old Archbishop. This is so evident that it is surprising how it was overlooked by the biographers of Colonna. Everything that is said in that notice of the virtues of Conti, the events recorded, refer manifestly to the period when Conti was Archbishop of Nicosia and not of Pisa. Colonna reports these facts as an eye-witness:

"Veniens ergo in insulam Cypri multas ordinationes sanctas in clero instituit et cum divitiis ibidem se conspiceret habundare, cepit magis quam solito pauperibus esse munificus, adeo ut ibidem ab omnibus pater pauperum diceretur. Nec immerito, nam ut eius affectum erga pauperes uno verbo complectar: plura dabat quam etiam haberet. In hoc enim quidquid habere poterat expendebat. Dicebat enim me audiente frequenter: omnia dabo ut propter pauperes cogar etiam mendicare... Semel autem cum quidam pauper clericus coram eo venisset et diceret quia non posset in publicum comparere quia verecundebatur nudus coram aliis apparere, cum in promptu nec pannus aliquis nec forte pecunia non esset, me cappa propria expoliari iussit et dicto clerico tribuit... Omni mense maritabat unam pauperem orphanellam cui XX flo-

fiction: it is founded on the exaggerated interpretation of Landolph's letter to his nephew, who is made to have spent his youth not very scrupulously, so much so that he had a son before becoming a friar. This "messer Giovanni" is certainly not John Colonna, the historian; he is rather his grandfather, and Oddone is his uncle, brother of Landolph Colonna of Gallicano (cf. Litta, *Famiglie Celebri Italiane*, II, 187).

¹⁸ *Mare Historiarum*, MS. Vat. Lat. 4963, f. 242^{vb}. This passage has not been published yet.

renos ad minus dabat pro dote. In illis partibus multos captivos christianos de manibus Saracenorum redemit..."¹⁹

It is a magnificent eulogium of Conti: the natural delicacy of the author of the *De Viris Illustribus* has prompted him to leave us a record of the examples of virtues of which he was a witness, especially concerning the Archbishop's solicitude towards the poor²⁰. The fact of Colonna's stay at Cyprus is therefore certain; and this strengthens considerably the chronology which we have adopted, since it is impossible to fit in anywhere except between 1319 and 1332, the date of Conti's death.

It is almost certainly about this time, or even immediately after the death of the Archbishop of Nicosia, that a journey of John Colonna to the Holy Places should be fixed.

In the eulogium of Conti, Colonna speaking of the transfer of the Archbishop from the See of Pisa to that of Nicosia, says:

"Ad quem locum quamvis confectus senio accessit hoc animo ut terram illam promissionis quam Christus sua presentia dignatus fuerat illustrare, corporali presentia visitaret, quod semper desideravit."

From Nicosia, nine tenths of the journey from Italy to Jerusalem were over; it is not unlikely therefore that John Conti visited the Holy Places before his death. It was no doubt on this occasion that John Colonna himself made the journey to Jerusalem. In fact a passage of the *Mare Historiarum* gives to understand that the author had seen the Holy Places. Describing the capture of Jerusalem by the Saracens, and the pillage of the churches which followed after, John Colonna writes:

"Intrantibus igitur Saracenis in improperium nominis Christiani in ipsis ecclesiis stapulaverunt iumenta... Ecclesiam vero Sancte Resurrectionis mire devotionis multo auro... Templo vero Domini miram venerationem exhibuerunt... Sed Saladinus... parietes illius fecit aqua optime lavari ac odoribus perfundi. Quo facto omnes ecclesiarum campane malleis confrangi fecit. *Vidi ego* in campanili ecclesie Sancti Sepulchri adhuc campanas confractas, que usque ad diem hodiernum in vituperium Christianorum Saraceni suspensas tenent²¹."

¹⁹ *De Viris Illustribus*, Bibl. S. Marci, Venet. MS. lat. X. 58, f. 67^v.

²⁰ The whole eulogium has been published several times, and it is not necessary to give it here again. Cf. De Rubeis B. M., *Opera Omnia S. Thomae*, editio leonina Romae 1882, vol. I, pp. LXXIX-LXXX; Sabbadini, *Giovanni Colonna*, 7-9.

²¹ *Mare Historiarum*, MS. Paris Nat. Lat. 4914, f. 295^{va}. In the margin beside the "*Vidi ego*", a later hand has added "*non vidi ego*".

This visit of Colonna to the Holy Land does not appear to have left any other traces in his work. The precise moment of its taking place cannot be determined. It is very unlikely, however, that it took place at any other time in our Dominican's life.

On his return to Rome after the death of Conti, Colonna seems to have been sent to the Papal Curia at Avignon. In the Preface of the *De Viris Illustribus*, certainly written after Conti's death, the author says that he is so distracted by the various duties at the Curia that he hardly finds time to write:

"Variis igitur occupationibus sic in curia distractus sum ut vix aliquid quandoque scribere liquerit."

It is evident that it is not the question here of the Archiepiscopal Curia at Nicosia, because Conti was dead when this was written. John must have therefore obtained office at the Court of Avignon. What was it? Was it an office of the Dominican Order? A professorship in the schools attached to the Curia? We possess no evidence concerning these questions, nor can we determine the length of this service. Sabadini thought that the sojourn of Colonna at Avignon commenced in 1312, at the time of the nomination of Conti to the See of Nicosia. We must put the beginning of this sojourn at least twenty years later, because the *De Viris Illustribus* was written after the death of the Archbishop of Nicosia, and the return of the author. If therefore, this sojourn at Avignon was of such a long duration, we should certainly expect some traces of it in the works of Colonna. Now, neither in the *Mare Historiarum*, nor in the *De Viris Illustribus*, does he make any allusion which proves the point in question. Considering the character of John Colonna, such a silence gives us to understand that nothing important had marked his time with the Curia, and consequently that it was relatively short.

The limit of this sojourn is fixed by a decision of the Provincial Chapter held at Prato in 1338. John Colonna is nominated Vicar at the Priory of S. Sabina in Rome, pending the election and the arrival of the new Prior²². We cannot state exactly when this sojourn occurred between the death of Conti in 1332 and the Roman Vicarship of Co-

²² "Curam conventus sancte Sabine committimus fr. Johanni de Columpna... quorum conventuum curam gerant quousque priores in dictis conventibus confirmati fuerint et presentes extiterint in eisdem, quos etiam vicarios [in] conventibus [quibus] deputati [sunt] conventuales esse deputamus". Mon. O. P. hist. XX, 294.

lonna in 1338. If it were possible to date with some exactness the letters of Francis Petrarch, we should be in a position to restrict more closely the problem of the end of Colonna's service in Avignon. We have in fact a letter of the famous humanist sent in reply to a letter written by John Colonna at Nice on his way back to Italy, in which he complains that the journey had to be broken at Nice for some weeks, because of the rough weather. It seems very likely that these events refer to the expiration of his service at the Curia of Avignon. If we could date Petrarch's reply to his friend, we should have the desired limit²³.

It is no doubt in the course of the same journey that our Dominican fell seriously ill at Pisa; a fact which we know too from the correspondence of Petrarch, about which we have no other details²⁴.

The vicarship of John Colonna at S. Sabina was not long. The Provincial Chapter held at Arezzo in 1339 assigned him lector in the Priory of Tivoli²⁵. This nomination is an evident proof that a long chronology is unsustainable. If Colonna were born about 1265, he would have been seventy-four years old by 1339. Is it conceivable that the Chapter would assign him conventual lector at that age? Once admitted the short chronology, and it would seem more probable that a similar charge was assigned to Colonna in order to leave him free to occupy himself with his personal works, notably the redaction of the *Mare Historiarum*. We have in fact a declaration of the author (Bk. VII, ch. 30) that the year 1339 had already elapsed when he was still busy writing it²⁶.

²³ "Molestissimam moram traxisse te Nicie velut indignando describis, per mensem integrum expectantem navem aliquam qui te in Italiam perferret". Fr. Petrarca, *Le Familiari*, lib. II ep. 7, ed. V. Rossi, vol. I, Firenze 1934, p. 85, lin. 3-5.

²⁴ "Altera litterarum tuarum pars, non minus delicate ac flebiliter te, cum iam Pisis applicuisses, in morbum diutinum incidisse memorabat, non aliter quam si in etate tam longa quid morbus esset ignorares". Fr. Petrarca, *Le Familiari*, lib. II ep. 8, p. 89, lin. 36-40.

²⁵ "Assignamus lectores... in conv. Tiburtino fr. Johannem de Columpna" Mon. O. P. hist. XX, 308.

²⁶ "Post hos ego omnium minimus hoc opus aggressus sum ingenti labore omnia retro tempora complectens usque ad hec tempora historiam texui, in qua non solum lecta sed etiam audita et visa conscripsi, scil. usque ad annum qui fuit incarnationis benedicti Filii Dei MCCCXL sedente in cathedra Petri domino Benedicto VI (lege: XII)" *Mare Historiarum*, MS. Vat. Lat. 4963, f. 265^{ra}.

In another place he writes: "Anno autem precedenti quo horribilis illius famis pestifera lues Romanam urbem ac totam Tusciam usque ad hominum internicionem affecit, qui fuit ab incarnatione Domini MCCCXXXIX, cometes de mense julii per mensem et ultra apparuit, que ad austrum suos radios dirigens magnam celi partem

At that same period we find a last mention of John Colonna in the will of the Dominican Cardinal Matthew Orsini, who died in August 18th. 1340, and bequeathed to John Colonna and other Dominican Friars "15 florenos"²⁷.

The exact date of the death of John Colonna is unknown. The state in which the *Mare Historiarum* has come down to us proves that it did not proceed much further than the point it had reached in 1340, which makes one think that the pen had fallen from the author's hand not long afterwards²⁸. The correspondence of Petrarch enables us to fix the last term beyond which our Dominican could do no more. In a letter to Guido Sette, Archbishop of Genoa (1358-68) (Fam. XXIII, 12, 215-221) Petrarch says that he had seen for the last time his friend John Colonna at Palestrina, who died not long afterwards:

"Ego enim postea nisi semel hominem non vidi; idque perbreuiter Pre-nestina sub arce, et michi solito letior atque equanimior visus erat cum incommodis suis omnibus et cum senectute luctari; michi autem sic gratias egit ut diceret meum esse quod sine lamentis in pace senesceret et terribilem illum diem interritus expectaret; nec ita multo post obiit".

Now we know from the *Curriculum vitae* of Petrarch that that meeting at Palestrina took place in October 1343²⁹. Thus we can conclude, with probability, that his friend John Colonna died sometime at the end of 1343.

John Colonna was a man worn out at forty-five. His correspondence with Petrarch supposes that his health was broken years before. Petrarch indeed, addresses him as an old man well advanced in years; but we must keep two things in mind, namely, the literary form of the let-

occupare videbatur, quo etiam anno fuit eclipsis solis hora diei ix". Ibidem, f. 346^v^a. This passage is published for the first time.

²⁷ In the Codicillus made by Cardinal Matthew Orsini on July 31, 1340, we find "fr. Johannes de Columpna de Urbe" and other Dominicans, to whom the Cardinal left "15 florenos". The copy of the will and codicillus is in the Archives of the Orsini family at Villa Catena (Poli), marked I. A. Pro. I. no. 10. Fr. Käppeli, who is preparing the edition of this copy, has kindly given me this reference.

²⁸ At that place John Colonna was describing the events of the time of St. Helen, mother of Constantine, and he left his work incomplete when he was describing the dispersion of the Shepherds' Movement in France, 1250.

²⁹ V. Rossi, Di un Colonna corrispondente del Petrarca, in Archivio della Società Romana di Storia Patria, 43 (1920) 103; and his Scritti di critica letteraria. II. Studi sul Petrarca e sul Rinascimento, Firenze 1930, 86-88, where he republished the same article. We shall therefore refer to this edition only.

ters, as well as the familiarity and the friendly jokes we find in them; thus one cannot take too seriously all one reads in them. The general impression, however, is very clear: Petrarch addresses a prematurely old man, broken by illness, particularly by the gout. But we shall deal at length with the relations of Petrarch and Colonna in the following chapter.

Here is the chronology:

Date of birth: 1298.

Student at Chartres with Landolph Colonna: 1315....

Received in the Dominican Order before 1320 (at Rome?).

Student at Paris in 1320.

Preacher General in 1324.

Chaplain with John Conti at Nicosia in... 1332.

At the Papal Curia in Avignon after 1332.

Vicar at the Priory of S. Sabina in 1338.

Lector at the Priory of Tivoli: Autumn of 1339.

Working on the *Mare Historiarum*: 1340.

Mentioned in the will of Card. Matthew Orsini: 1340.

Death shortly after October 1343.

II. Francis Petrarch and John Colonna O. P.

The relation between Francis Petrarch and the illustrious Roman family of Colonna have been the subject of study of several scholars of the Italian humanist. Petrarch found in the Colonna family not only patronage but real friendship; proof of this is the comparatively large number of letters addressed to its members, and particularly the familiar way in which he wrote to them: 1 letter to Stephen senior, 16 to John, Cardinal of St. Angelo, 3 to James, Bishop of Lombez, 2 to Agapitus, Bishop of Luni, 2 to Stephen junior, 1 to Agapitus and 2 to Stephen of Peter of Sciarra, and 8 to John Colonna, a mendicant friar.

Petrarch's friendship with the Colonna started with James³⁰ at Bologna where both were studying law; later c. 1326 when both returned to Avignon, James took Petrarch under his special patronage. When

³⁰ James Colonna was elected Bishop of Lombez on May 28, 1327 when he was still in Minor Orders. He was dispensed from residence for two years in order to finish his studies and be ordained priest. Then in 1329 he took possession of his new See. Cf. F. Lo Parco, *Il Petrarca e Giacomo Colonna a Tolosa*, in *Memorie della R. Accad. di Napoli di Archeologia, lettere e belle arti*, I (1911) 231.

James took possession of the See of Lombez in 1329 († 1341), Petrarch passed to the service of John, James' brother, the newly elected Cardinal. In a letter, in fact, Petrarch tells James: "ego meipsum tibi dederam, parvum quidem sed perpetuum munus, tu me alteri parere voluisti, si alter proprie dicitur talis et tam unanimis germanus" (II, 9).

The Cardinal of St. Angelo († 1348) well-known in Avignon as patron of men of letters among whom we find also the Dominican Luca Mannelli³¹, took Petrarch under his patronage, and introduced him to the other members of his family, whose friendship and hospitality Petrarch always enjoyed in their respective properties in Rome, Palestrina and Tivoli.

We are concerned here only with the last of the above given list of correspondents, namely, John Colonna, the mendicant friar, to whom Petrarch seems to have been especially attached; so much so that he could write to him: "si es amicus, imo vero si pater — neque enim alium te pietate eximia et paternis semper affectibus comprobasti — nullus tibi me locus, nullum tempus eripiet" (VI, 3).

Who is this John Colonna to whom Petrarch addressed eight letters?

Since De Sade³², it has been repeatedly asserted, even quite recently, that Petrarch's Colonna correspondent must be identified with John Colonna of S. Vito³³.

Fracassetti³⁴ and Golubovich³⁵ after him added that this John Colonna of S. Vito became a Franciscan Friar, but no proof is given.

V. Rossi³⁶ says against De Sade's identification, that nothing is known of this John Colonna of S. Vito except that he was included with the other Colonnas in the Bull of excommunication of Boniface VIII; all other information comes either from Petrarch or is mere conjecture.

³¹ For Luca Mannelli see Arch. fr. Praed. XVIII (1948) 237-264.

³² F. P. A. de Sade, *Mémoires pour la vie de François Pétrarque*, I, Amsterdam 1764, 17c-171; P. Nolhac, *Pétrarque et l'humanisme*, I, Paris 1907, 189; even recently S. Prete, *Il frammento della "Philologia" di F. Petrarca in Studi Petrarceschi*, I, Bologna 1948, 141.

³³ Other minor and arbitrary identifications have been made which are not worth mentioning.

³⁴ J. Fracassetti, *F. Petrarcae Epistolae de rebus familiaribus et variis*, I, Firmi 1890, CXXXII.

³⁵ G. Golubovich, *Fr. Giovanni Colonna di San Vito viaggiatore in Oriente*, (c. 1260-1343-44) in Arch. Franc. Hist. XI (1918) 32-46.

³⁶ V. Rossi, *Scritti di critica letteraria*, II, Studi sul Petrarca e sul rinascimento, Firenze 1930, 86-88.

Then against Fracassetti and Golubovich he concludes that: "Pur troppo non era così... mentre in realtà quello degli ordini mendicanti non è il francescano, bensì il domenicano. Lo attestano le rubriche delle lettere in tutti i codici" (VI, 2: Ad Joh. de Columna ord. pred. non sectas amandas sed verum, et de locis insignibus urbis Rome) (VI, 3: Ad eundem...) (VI, 4: Ad eundem...).

E. Carrara³⁷ agrees with Rossi that Petrarch's correspondent was a Dominican friar, but differs from him in a further identification, as we shall see later on.

A. Foresti³⁸ while rejecting De Sade's identification with John Colonna of S. Vito, and admitting that John Colonna became a friar, still does not specify to what Order he belonged, doubting whether the headings belong really to Petrarch.

Nevertheless until further contrary evidence on the subject comes up, we maintain with Rossi that the headings are authentic, and therefore prove that Colonna was a Dominican Friar.

Let us now see what Petrarch has to say about his Colonna correspondent and friend. In the eight letters which he addressed to Colonna, he gives plentiful information about his friend's character, interests, journeys, and illness, but in a rather vague way, which together with the lack of fixed chronology of the letters, make a definite identification difficult without further evidence.

According to Rossi the eight letters are certainly posterior to 1330, and the last months of 1336 may even be the *terminus a quo* of the first four letters (III, 5, 6, 7, 8), and the *terminus ad quem* the Spring of 1337.

The Spring of 1337 is also the *terminus a quo* of the second four letters (III, 13; VI, 2, 3, 4) which are certainly anterior to 1344. We can therefore say that the eight letters were written between the end of 1336 and 1343 when Petrarch met Colonna for the last time.

We must note beforehand that all the letters of Petrarch are replies to Colonna's³⁹.

³⁷ E. Carrara, in *La Rassegna*, serie IV, ann. XXX (Maggio-Giugno 1922) 155-159.

³⁸ A. Foresti, *Aneddoti della vita di Francesco Petrarca*, Brescia 1928, 40.

³⁹ We shall follow the chronology of Petrarch's letters given by E. H. Wilkins, *Modern discussions of the dates of Petrarch Prose Letters*, Chicago University Press 1929, 30; and in his *Chronological Conspectus of the writings of Petrarch*, in *The Romanic Review*, April 1948, 89-101.

Petrarch tells us that John Colonna had spent some time in Avignon, where both enjoyed the patronage of Cardinal John Colonna "nostri ducis" (II, 5, 6, 7, 8); that John Colonna had to leave Avignon a little perturbed by reason of somebody whom Petrarch noticed looking triumphant on Colonna's departure (II, 5)⁴⁰. When at Nice Colonna had to wait a whole month for a boat to Italy, or rather to Rome where he desired to end his last days (II, 7). At Pisa Colonna fell ill "in diutinum morbum incidisse" (II, 8). What this illness was Petrarch does not say, but we may conjecture that it was the gout, because from now onwards Colonna is always complaining of the gout. Petrarch rebukes Colonna for being querulous about insignificant things and incidents, and reminds him of his long and distant journeys and their dangers (II, 8); after all Colonna had studied philosophy (II, 7), is an erudite elderly man (II, 8) who must therefore use his experience and stop his garrulity. Petrarch reminds him of a play "Philologia" now lost, which he had written for Colonna's amusement (II, 7).

In a letter written after June 1337 Petrarch, having come to know of Colonna's gout, tells him the story of the gout and the spider, the one was living in a farmer's cottage, and the other with a rich and delicate man. Each became tired of his master and left him. Fortunately they met in the road, and began to tell their own unhappy stories, finally discovering that each was living in the wrong place. They therefore decided to change places, and so from that time the gout is always found with rich and delicate people, whereas the spider stays in poor and squalid dwellings. Petrarch draws the conclusion from the story, and tells Colonna that he is surprised to hear that the gout entered his sober house, and therefore doubts whether she is in the right place. Then he gives him an advice about the cure of the gout, telling him to exercise poverty, though he admits that there is no need to give such an advice because Colonna knew all about poverty, which he had vowed. He reminds him that "opulentia et mendicitas" cannot live together, so if he wants to get rid of the gout, he must be poor: "Si pellere vis podagram, pelle delitias; si malum omne vis pellere, pelle divitias" (III, 13).

⁴⁰ Petrarch finished his letter II, 5 in this way: "et geminae sollicitudinis dimidia parte liberatus sum". Foresti interprets these to be a reference to the twofold amorous passions of Petrarch, but we must say with Carrara, *op. cit.* 156 that: "Egli (Petrarca) temeva dianzi per l'amico e per se: ora salvatosi il primo, una metà della sua preoccupazione se n'è andata". In fact Petrarch says: "Deinceps expeditior casibus meis occurram".

Sometime in 1337 Petrarch went to Rome, where he met Colonna, and both visited together the historical places and monuments⁴¹.

In a letter addressed to John Colonna sometime between May 1341 and February 1342 Petrarch reminds Colonna of the pleasant time they had together in Rome, of the visits and walks among the historical monuments and ruins, of the interesting discussions about history, both ancient i. e. before Christ, in which Petrarch seems to have been more expert, and modern, i. e. after Christ, in which Colonna was more versed. They talked even about ethics and arts, their authors and origins; and on another day they talked and discussed the origin of liberal and mechanical arts.

John Colonna had previously asked Petrarch to send him in writing all that they had discussed in that day, but Petrarch replied that a letter would not be enough, it would require a book; secondly, that he is unable to write books unless he is in a quiet place and in solitude; nevertheless he promised to fulfil his desire later on (VI, 2), but this was probably never done.

Sometime after receiving letter VI, 2, John Colonna must have written another letter in which garrulity as usual is the predominant characteristic; but to Petrarch's surprise instead of the three well-known grievances, namely, old age, gout and poverty, Colonna adds a fourth: "totam malorum summam tribus in finem aut quattuor verbis includeris: esse te Tibure, senem pauperem podagricum" (VI, 3).

Petrarch replies from Vaucluse between the Spring of 1342 and September 1343, and after a friendly reproach, takes up one by one the four sources of Colonna's grief, giving examples of illustrious men.

For instance, about old age Petrarch mentions several illustrious men who lived to old age, "quibus te iam nunc meque non multo post ascriptos cupio" (VI, 3), and he forestalls Colonna's probable answer to his reproach in this way, namely: "illud dolere quod ante tempus senueris". Colonna got old before his time, as did all of their generation. Petrarch agrees with him and says: "sed quod incunctanter affirmem, solito citius canescunt".

From this Petrarch passes to poverty, and tells him that poverty is absolutely necessary to him as "evacuatio pregravato corpori"; so

⁴¹ Foresti, op. cit. 83, gives Nov. 30, 1341 as the date of letter VI, 2, and dates the visit to Rome and the meeting of Petrarch with Colonna in April of the same year, because, he says, it seems strange that Colonna should ask Petrarch to write down all they had discussed together in 1337.

much so that "sine illa neque salvus esse neque creatori tuo poteris pacta servare". Colonna has been running away from poverty, but poverty has been following him, and now she has taken hold of him.

As to the gout, Petrarch tells Colonna that it is a necessary remedy for his excessive desire to move from one place to another. He travelled so much in Persia, Arabia and Egypt, and would still be travelling at this moment, were it not for the gout.

Regarding Tivoli, Petrarch tells Colonna that he must be glad to be there although he would prefer to stay in Rome where he is well-known, either because of his own personality, or even because of his illustrious family. Still Tivoli is not far from Rome, and friends could easily come to see him, without annoying him too frequently. Moreover "libri tui, ingenium tuum... animum mulcere queant".

Finally Petrarch describes to Colonna the easiest way to get to Vaucluse from Tivoli, in case Colonna would decide to go and stay with him (VI, 3).

In a last letter written from Avignon (viii kal. octobris) sometime after the previous letter, Petrarch replies to John Colonna and to some others who were with him, that he uses a large number of examples in his letter, because he hopes that they will be of profit to others as they had been to himself.

The last mention of Colonna is made by Petrarch in a letter to the Archbishop of Genova, Guido Sette (1358-68), written between 1358-61. The Archbishop was suffering from gout and asked Petrarch to send him the letter which he had written to Colonna, namely VI, 3. Petrarch sends it to the Archbishop and tells him:

"hac in re utilem tibi profiteris epistolam unam quam ante tot annos religioso illi seni scripseram, qui pressum se podagra paupertate senio et super omnia mei quoque, qui longe aberam, desiderio, in litteris questus erat. Quorum tu duobus tantum, primo premeris atque ultimo... et epistolam tibi illam profuisse gloriolius quam an illi profuerit ad quem scripta est, ipse tunc senserit. Ego enim postea nisi semel hominem non vidi, idque per breviter Prenestina sub arce, et michi solito letior atque equanimior visus erat cum incommodis suis omnibus et cum senectute luctari; michi autem sic gratias egit ut diceret meum esse quod sine lamento in pace senesceret et terribilem illum diem intrepidus expectaret; *nec ita multo post obiit*" (XXIII, 12).

The occasion mentioned in this letter when Petrarch met Colonna was during his journey to Naples in October 1343.

This is all the information given by Petrarch in his letters to his friend John Colonna; plentiful information, but rather vague, which does not permit any identification without further evidence.

We know that the correspondent of Petrarch was a Dominican; is it possible now to take a further step in the identification?

Divergence of opinion exists here as well. V. Rossi⁴², after long researches in preparation for the edition of the *Familiars* of Petrarch, came to the conclusion that Petrarch's correspondent must be identified with the Dominican historian John Colonna, who was with Archbishop John Conti O. P., of Pisa (1299-1312), and of Nicosia (1312-1332), and was still writing his *Mare Historiarum* by 1340. Rossi says that the identification of the two Dominicans has far more solid arguments than all the others suggested so far: "e anzi l'unica che abbia un fondamento. La direi dimostrata, se in questo esasperante genere di studi, non credessi salutare lo scetticismo più ostinato".

E. Carrara⁴³ receives a different impression from his reading of the eight letters; he agrees with Rossi that Colonna was a Dominican, but rejects the identification with Colonna, the Dominican historian. He says: "il bibliografo e storico domenicano non si ravvisa davvero ai dati se non biografici almeno psicologici che ci sono forniti dall'epistolario petrarchesco".

In a later publication Rossi⁴⁴ acknowledges the serious objection of Carrara against the identification of the two Dominicans, but remains firm in his opinion: "non mi ha persuaso, e così io rimango nella mia posizione di incertezza fortemente incline all'identità".

Foresti⁴⁵ refuses to accept the identification of the two Colonnas, and gives two reasons: 1) because in the correspondence of Petrarch there is nothing which proves any personal or literary contact between Petrarch and the learned Dominican, author of historical works, scholar and collector of books, who though belonging to an earlier generation, was pursuing the same studies so closely at heart to Petrarch.

2) because Petrarch's Colonna did not become a friar before 1337, whereas the author of the *De Viris Illustribus* was a friar from youth, and certainly many years before 1337.

These two reasons are too arbitrary to weaken the identification of the two John Colonnas, as we shall see presently.

The new evidence which we have given on the *curriculum vitae* of the Dominican historian John Colonna leaves no doubt about his iden-

⁴² Rossi, Scritti, 91.

⁴³ Carrara, in *La Rassegna*, 159.

⁴⁴ Rossi, Scritti, 91.

⁴⁵ Foresti, *Aneddoti*, 40.

tification with John Colonna the correspondent of Petrarch. It is most unlikely to find that most of the important details of information given by Petrarch in his letters to Colonna would fully agree with proved data and details of the Dominican homonymous historian, unless they were one and the same person.

Arbitrary interpretations of Petrarch's letters do not weaken our opinion unless guaranteed by good and well established reasons.

We must admit, however, that some details given by Petrarch about his correspondent would seem to disagree with the *curriculum vitae* which we have adopted of the Dominican historian, unless they are rightly explained with reference to the context and to the chronological evidence. Here is the conspectus of the chronologies of John Colonna.

Petrarch's Colonna

Colonna is Roman by birth

Colonna is a mendicant friar

Colonna is with Petrarch at Avignon after 1326

Colonna left Avignon sometime in 1336

Petrarch met Colonna again in Rome in 1337

Colonna is at Tivoli before 1342

Colonna is an erudite man, a student of philosophy, and keen on Ethics, a lover of books and antiquities from youth, an expert in history after Christ, and a writer of some elegance

Colonna had travelled from his youth to Arabia, Persia and Egypt, and was of a restless character

Colonna met Petrarch in October 1343, and soon after died.

Colonna O. P.

Colonna is Roman of the Colonna branch of Gallicano

Colonna is a Dominican

Colonna is at Avignon c. 1332

Colonna is already in Rome in September 1338

Colonna is in Rome Vicar at S. Sabina in September 1338

Colonna is assigned as Lector to Tivoli in September 1339

Colonna is an erudite friar, the preface of the *De Viris Illustribus* shows him interested in Ethics, a lover of books and antiquities, a historian, mostly interested in Christian history, of which the *Mare Historiarum*, *De Viris Illustribus* and the intended *Nova Ecclesiastica Historia* are good specimens

Colonna is reproached by his uncle for his moving about from one Studium to another. Was at Chartres, Amiens, Troyes, Paris, Cyprus and Jerusalem

Colonna is still alive in 1340, but nothing is heard of him later, and he left his works unfinished.

This clear conspectus of the two chronologies with their details speaks for itself. Their identity is a solid proof of the identity of the two John Colonnas, mendicant friars, and of the impossibility of a third, who will answer better to all the above details. Nevertheless some points of information given by Petrarch must be explained.

When reading the eight letters of Petrarch to John Colonna one should keep in mind two important things: first, that Petrarch is writing to an intimate friend, with whom he could talk with confidence, intermingling jokes and irony freely; Petrarch in fact points to this when he says:

“ ut familiares epistolas ludens... scribere soleo ” (VI, 2), “ nolo autem indigneris me quod in meis sepe soleo in tuis malis etiam iocari ” (VI, 3), “ numquam id, si apud alium loquerer, ausurus ” (VI, 3).

Secondly, Petrarch's letters are literary writings, in which we find his poetical outbursts full of continual ironical and exaggerated expressions. We cannot therefore take too literally every single detail that is given therein as a historical event without further evidence, but we must consider also the poetical amplification of the grievances of Petrarch's correspondent.

Two things have given rise to so many speculations about John Colonna: old age and poverty.

It is clear that Petrarch gives one to understand that he is writing to an old man; he always uses the words “ senex ” “ senescere ” “ senectus ”, but are we to take for granted the strict and proper meaning of these words?

Two passages in two different letters of Petrarch betray contradiction on this point. Petrarch in II, 7, tells Colonna:

“ Tu itaque senior, de te videris; ego junior, de me loquar, qui adolescentia jam exacta, *etatem tuam adhuc longe-* siquid hic longum est- *ante me video* ”.

Petrarch therefore is far younger than his friend Colonna.

In another letter VI, 2, Petrarch talking about illustrious old men writes to Colonna:

“ cum optimis atque lectissimis senibus, *quibus te iam nunc, meque non multo post* ascriptos cupio ”.

Petrarch therefore is not much younger than Colonna.

Which is nearer to reality? The second indication is certainly more founded and guaranteed; we know in fact that Colonna was born in 1298, and Petrarch in 1304, consequently Colonna was six years older than Petrarch, which justifies Petrarch in saying “ non multo post ”.

When therefore Petrarch addresses Colonna as an old man, we must understand that Colonna was a prematurely old man, whose health does not seem to have been very strong, and what is more, the gout broke his health completely. When Petrarch reproached Colonna for his garrulous complaints about getting old, he forestalls also his friend's answer, and says: "illud dolere quod ante tempus senueris", and Petrarch tells him that he agrees with him that people in their time were getting old before the time: "sed quod incunctanter affirmem, solito citius canescunt" (VI, 3).

Foresti himself admits this when he says: "Similmente a consolar il Colonna dell'essere invecchiato anzi tempo"⁴⁶; why does he therefore assert that Colonna belonged to generation before Petrarch?

Colonna therefore was an old man before his time, and consequently not much older than Petrarch, and this was most probably one of the reasons why Petrarch treated Colonna so familiarly, as to reproach him facetiously for his garrulity.

The second point is poverty. The first time Petrarch mentions it is when he heard that Colonna had the gout, and writes to him suggesting poverty as the most efficient remedy, but he tells him:

"Non audeo iubere ut sis pauper, quamvis iubere non sit necesse, si sapis. *Inter cetera professus es, ut audio, spontaneam paupertatem.* An mentior? certe intra religiosum limen et presertim intra cellulam mendicantis, nullus divitiis locus est; opulentia enim et mendicitas non habitant simul... De hoc tecum ipse delibera, qui federum cum Christo habes, optime meministi; si oblitus es, relege pactorum cyrographum, invenies quid tu illi promiseris, quid ille tibi" (III, 13).

This passage has been taken to mean that John Colonna sometime after reaching Rome became a mendicant friar. Foresti asserts that this must have happened after Petrarch wrote the first four letters II, 2, 3, 4, 5, but before III, 13, when Colonna is referred to as a mendicant friar.

Petrarch however seems to say more than that. In fact in VI, 2, written according to Foresti in November 30, 1341, and following immediately after III, 13, written according to Foresti in June 12, 1338 or 1339, Petrarch discussing the three grievances of Colonna, namely, old age, poverty and gout, tells Colonna that he had already written another letter on poverty, i. e. III, 13: "quando nondum ad me nisi

⁴⁶ Foresti, Aneddoti, 86.

podagre solius fama pervenerat". Does he mean that he did not yet know that Colonna had become a mendicant friar? Certainly not, because he mentioned it in III. 13. Does he mean perhaps that no lamentation had reached him yet on poverty? This seems to be the proper meaning of Petrarch's words; but this does not mean that Colonna started lamenting about his poverty, because he was weary of his vocation as a mendicant friar. It would seem difficult to explain how Colonna's fervour for his new state of life died out so quickly between 1338 or 1339 and 1341.

It is psychologically hard to believe, and arbitrary.

The chronology of John Colonna, the Dominican historian, which we have adopted in the first chapter gives evidence to the contrary of what had been previously asserted without foundation about the supposed entry of John Colonna, Petrarch's correspondent, in a mendicant order.

John Colonna had entered the Dominican Order in his youth; having completed his studies, he was taken some time afterwards as a chaplain by John Conti O. P., Archbishop of Nicosia; later on after the death of Conti he went to Avignon; finally after such a long time away from his priory, and free from any conventual restriction, on the contrary used to a somewhat worldly life, he returned to his old Dominican home in Rome. The life of a friar attached to an Archbishop's or Papal Curia is evidently quite different from that of an ordinary friar living in a Priory.

What would have been the first impression of Colonna, when after a long time free from any conventual and monastic observance and restriction, he would have to begin again his old life according to a definite routine? Moreover poverty, admitting even any laxity in its observance which was creeping in communities at that time, was still a fact, which made a clear distinction between the life of a friar living in community and of another living with an Archbishop or at the Papal Curia.

Colonna must have certainly felt a little difficult to settle down, especially troubled by his gout. A mere lamentation however, or just a word about his discomforts, or a reference to his previous life with Conti or at Avignon, was enough to give Petrarch matter for his poetical outbreaks: amplifying a little the situation, embellishing it with examples taken from the lives of illustrious philosophers, and extracts from their writings on the matter in question.

We must therefore say that from Petrarch's letters we cannot draw the conclusion that Colonna had entered a mendicant order when away

from Avignon, and sometime after he reached Rome; but it is more according to truth and more guaranteed by chronological data, that Colonna had been a Dominican long time before he left Avignon, but having been away for a long period from his mendicant observance in community life, and then returning to it again in Rome, he lamented about his gout and also about his state as a friar in a letter to Petrarch, who in turn reproaches him in friendly fashion for his garrulity, and reminds him of his vow of poverty, from which he had been running away all the time, but poverty had been equally following him, and now she keeps him in chains, i. e. he is obliged to observe it.

It is therefore clear that there is nothing either psychologically or chronologically, which contradicts the identification of John Colonna, Petrarch's correspondent and friend, with his homonymous Dominican historian.

III. John Colonna's writings

What did medieval and later bibliographers know about the literary works of John Colonna? The anonymous author⁴⁷ of the treatise "Dialogus de Hierarchia subcoelesti" written sometime between 1387 and 1389 and still unpublished, used the *Mare Historiarum* of John Colonna, and enumerated him with the Italian Historiographers of the Roman Pontiffs. He writes: "Hoc docet cronica Jo[hannis] de Columpna Ro[mani] et tangitur in Marciana" (Madrid, Bibl. Nac., Cod. 54. Lib. II, cap. XVI, f. 12^v). And again:

"Lege si libet, obsecro, ut ceteras sileam, Romanorum historias S. Damasi ad S. Jeronimum, cronicas Ptholomei de Lucha, Guicardi de Cremona, Jo[hannis] de Columpna, qui fuerunt Ytalici, si forte non velles credere quasi de se perhibentibus testimonium veris et notabilibus historiographis gallicorum". (Ibid. Lib. IV, cap. IX, f. 19^v).

Louis of Valladolid, a Spanish Dominican of the first half of the fifteenth century, in his *Tabula*⁴⁸ writes of Colonna: "Frater Johannes de Columpna, Romanus, scripsit stilo eleganti chronicam a creatione

⁴⁷ About this treatise and its author see Quéatif-Échard, *Scriptores Ord. Praed.*, I, Paris 1719, 684-686; Noël Valois, *La France et la Grand Schisme d'Occident*, I, Paris 1896, 398-399.

⁴⁸ H. Ch. Scheeben, *Die Tabulae Ludwigs von Valladolid im Chor der Predigerbrüder von St. Jakob in Paris*, Arch. fr. Praed. I (1931), 258-259; M. Canal, *Cronica Fratris Ludovici de Valleoleti O. P.*, *Analecta s. Ord. Praed.* 40 (1932) 805.

mundi usque ad sua tempora". And a little below, immediately after Bernard Gui, of whom Louis says that he had written a *Speculum Sancto-rale*, writes: "Frater Johannes Romanus modo consimili scripsit". These two notices, which probably Louis related to two different writers, obviously refer to the same person, though John never wrote a *Speculum Sanctorale*. As we shall see later on Louis possessed a copy of Colonna's *Mare Historiarum*, a chronicle which ends at the year 1250. If therefore he says that Colonna wrote "usque ad sua tempora", it would seem that he thought John Colonna a thirteenth century writer, and probably confused him with his homonymous Archbishop of Messina.

The same conclusion may be inferred from the two passages in the *Summa Historialis* of St. Antoninus of Florence (1459). John Colonna is first mentioned among the dignitaries of the Order:

"Aliqui alii assumpti sunt ad archiepiscopatum... frater Johannes de Columna Archiepiscopus Messanus".

Then among the writers:

"Post eum (Vinc. Bellovacensem) scripsit historias frater Johannes de Columna, Romanus, ab initio mundi usque ad tempus suum, non multo tamen post eum: abbreviavit autem addens ad gesta principum et imperatorum et dicitur *Mare Historiarum*"⁴⁹.

So far only the *Mare Historiarum* is attributed to John Colonna, which gained rather more fame than his other writings. To this work Philippus Bergomensis O. E. S. A.⁵⁰, and after him Trithemius⁵¹, add the *Epistolae ad diversos*. Later bibliographers like Mandosius⁵² and Quétif-Échard⁵³, increase the list of Colonna's writings with the *De Viris Illustribus*, *De infelicitate curialium*, *De gloria paradisi*. Oudin⁵⁴ and Fabricius⁵⁵ attribute to him a *Historia Romanorum Pontificum*.

⁴⁹ S. Antoninus, *Summa Historialis*, III; Lugduni 1586, Tit. XXIII, cap. XI, 1-2; 680, 681.

⁵⁰ Supplementum supplementi chronicarum ab ipso mundi exordio usque ad mcccccx editum et novissime recognitum et castigatum a venerando patre Jacobo Philippo Bergomate..., Venetiis 1513, lib. XIII, 244^v.

In the early editions v. g. Venetiis 1483, he does not mention John Colonna.

⁵¹ J. Trithemius, *De Scriptoribus ecclesiasticis*, Parisiis 1512, f. cxx^v, fa. II.

⁵² P. Mandosius, *Bibliotheca Romana*, II, Romae 1692, Cent. VII, 101, 102.

⁵³ J. Quétif-J. Échard, *Scriptores Ord. Praedicatorum*, I, Paris 1719, 419.

⁵⁴ C. Oudin, *Commentarius de scriptoribus ecclesiae antiquis*, III, Lipsiae 1722, 185-7.

⁵⁵ J. A. Fabricius, *Bibliotheca mediae et infimae Latinitatis*, Florentiae 1858, I, 373, III, 353.

Moreover the Italian bibliographer Joseph Allegranza O. P. ⁵⁶ († 1785) mentions a *Quodlibeta theologiae* composed by Colonna. Finally Lecoy de la Marche ⁵⁷ ascribes to John Colonna, the chronicler, a sermon on the biblical text: *Hauri tibi aquam!*

To this list of works are to be added the *Historia Ecclesiastica Nova*, certainly authentic, because it is mentioned by Colonna himself in the *Mare Historiarum*, and some short historical notes which are found in an Oxford Manuscript of Lactantius, and which are most probably also by Colonna, as we have shown before.

In order to give a critical list of all the writings attributed to John Colonna by the bibliographers, we shall pass them in review and take them up one by one, discuss their authenticity, date, value and their diffusion in extant or lost manuscripts.

1. *Mare Historiarum*.

We start with the *Mare Historiarum* because it gives evidence of other prior works of Colonna. This is meant to be a universal history, political and religious, from the beginning of the world to the author's own times, but it stops abruptly in 1250 with the description of the Shepherds' Movement in France. It chronicles the events of the different kingdoms, their rulers, people and illustrious men who flourished in the respective periods and is divided into seven books. Philippus Bergomensis and after him Trithemius affirm that the *Mare Historiarum* consists of ten books, but it is very unlikely that they had seen a complete copy in ten books, because all the extant manuscripts known to us, end abruptly in the seventh book, and thus we may with all probability maintain that the work was left unfinished by the author himself.

The date of the *Mare Historiarum* is approximately 1340. John Colonna writing the seventh book, and mentioning Eusebius, Jerome, Sigisbertus Sublacensis and Vincent de Beauvais, says:

" Post hos ego... omnia retro tempora complectens usque ad hec tempora historiam texui... scilicet usque ad annum qui fuit incarnationis benedicti Filii Dei MCCCXL, sedente in cathedra Petri domino Benēdicto VI (lege: XII) (MS. Vat. Lat. 4963, f. 265^{ra}).

⁵⁶ J. Allegranza O. P., *Corrigenda et Addenda ad Script. ord. Praed.*, (1758). MS apud Institutum Historicum ad S. Sabinae, p. 30 n. 47.

⁵⁷ A. Lecoy de la Marche, *La Chaire française au Moyen Age*, Paris 1886, 276, 515.

He was therefore writing in 1340, and at least had the intention of completing the chronicles with the events of that year, which in fact he left unfinished. Since Colonna refers to the *De Viris Illustribus* as completed we may safely say that the *Mare Historiarum* is posterior to 1332, may be it was started when Colonna returned to Rome about 1338.

The value of the *Mare Historiarum* is that of so many other compilations of that period. The author does not claim to be original, but tells us plainly that he will summarize what had been said before him, continue the chronicles by means of other compilations, inserting here and there "visa lecta et audita". Vincent of Beauvais O. P. is the principal source of the *Mare*, from whom Colonna takes whole chapters literally, especially regarding the biblical history. For example:

Ch. I. De Essentia Dei — corresponds to Spec. Hist. Ch. I.

Ch. II. De mundi creatione » » » » Ch. VIII.

Ch. III. De creatione angelorum » » » » Ch. IX, X.

Ch. IV. De opere sex dierum » » » » Ch. XVII-XXXI.

But he does not copy blindly, wherever he can he inserts something of his own or completes Vincent. For example in the Chapter *De Hominis formatione*, he adds the opinions of philosophers, poets, which are not found in Vincent. In many other places he even goes to the source itself and gives a complete version of the narrative. Thus Vincent and Colonna talking of Papirius Cursor, write:

Vincent

Hic Papirius cum esset puer cum patre suo in curia fuerat,

Colonna

De hoc... Papirio Cursore refert Macrobius in libro Saturnalium quod cum esset puer frequenter cum patre suo senatore senatum Rome ingrediebatur. Contigit autem ut die quadam res quempiam maior consuleretur, que in diem proximum proferri deberet placuitque senatui ut hanc rem nullus ante pronunciacionem denuntiaret. Pater autem cum post actum senatum domi cum puero redisset, mater percunctatur filium quidnam in senatu egissent patres. Puer autem matri non pueriliter respondit: Tacenda esse que in senatu a patribus dicerentur, nec dici licere... (MS. Vat. Lat. 4963, f. 71^{va}).

illum revertentem percunctari cepit mater, quid in senatu egissent patres? Puer respondit, tacendum esse, neque id dici licere. (Spec. Hist. [Ed. Duaci 1642] lib. V. cap. VII, p. 139).

Moreover Josephus is the source for the history of the Jewish people, Lactantius and Livy for that of Rome and the Roman Emperors, St. Jerome for the biographies of the early Christian philosophers and illustrious men, Martin of Troppau O. P. for the lives of the Popes. Several other historical works have been used by John Colonna, but it is not our purpose here to go into the matter in detail. It is, however, worth mentioning the Arabic chronicle translated into latin by the Spanish Dominican, Alphonsus Buenhombre († 1353). John Colonna speaking of the capture of the city of Akka by the Christians in 1191, says that among the Saracen prisoners there was Karakush, the wise minister of Saladin: "ut in quadam cronica in arabico scripta, quam frater Alfonsus Hispanus transtulit in latinum, repperi" ⁵⁸.

Judging from the small number of manuscripts known to us we should say, as Waitz ⁵⁹ has pointed out, that the *Mare Historiarum* did not achieve great fame, nor did it exercise any great influence on contemporaries and posterity. The reason for this may be found in the fact that the work was left incomplete, and perhaps even more because it was a period of compilers and chroniclers, many of whom did not have a more widespread literary popularity.

Of the few who are known, so far, to have used the *Mare* as a source for their compilations we mention: Belcardus ⁶⁰, an Augustinian, who manipulated and extended the history to the years 1378; the anonymous author ⁶¹ of the Dialogus *De Hierarchia Subcelesti* in 1387-9; St. Antoninus of Florence O. P. ⁶² in his *Speculum Historiale*. It is interesting to note that the only vulgarization of the *Mare* was made in Spain in the fifteenth century. Under the title "*Mar de Historias*", Fernan Perez de Gusman

⁵⁸ For A. Buenhombre and his works see M. A. van den Oudenrijn, *De opusculis arabicis quae latine vertit fr. Alphonsus Buenhombre O. P.*, *Analecta S. O. Praed.* XIV (1920) 32-44, 163-168; G. Meersseman, *La chronologie des voyages et des œuvres de fr. Alphonse Buenhombre O. P.*, *Arch. Fr. Praed.* X (1940) 77-108 F. Halkin *La légende de Saint Antoine traduite de l'arabe par Alphonse Bonhome O. P.*, *Analecta Bollandiana* LX (1942) 142-220. This is, as far as we know, the first contemporary author mentioned by name by Colonna. See an extract of this chronicle in Appendix II, pp. 443-4. For Karakush see *Encyclopédie de l'Islam*, II, Paris 1925, 786-787.

⁵⁹ Waitz, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores*, XXIV, 268.

⁶⁰ Paris Nat. Lat. 4916 (Chart., s. XV, bin. col., ff. 288, 395×275 mm). On f. 268^r^{a-b} there is: "Et sic explicit Mare Historiarum fratris Johannis de Columpna ordinis predicatorum, cuius scribendi modum ego fr. Belcardus penitenciariorum ord. heremitarum S. Augustini sequens, ea que a notabilibus viris de rebus ex post gestis subiunxi, quibus non minus precor o lector, adhibeas fidei quantum in ipsis veri reperiis".

⁶¹ Cfr. supra p. 392 n. 47.

⁶² For St. Antoninus' use of Colonna's *Mare Historiarum* see J. B. Walker O. P.,

(1377-1460)⁶³ extracted from Colonna's work all the biographies of emperors, kings, philosophers and saintly men, and translated them into Spanish. The collation of Fernand's work with the *Mare* justifies us in calling the former a vulgarization of the latter; in fact he copied Colonna literally, in such a way that he left blank those places where Colonna's *Mare* is defective. Fernan ends his treatise with the notice on St. Peter of Verona O. P. which suggests that he had at his disposal an incomplete copy of the *Mare*, as it is now extant. This copy was almost certainly the one which Louis of Valladolid had bought in Avignon, and was later kept at the University Library of Madrid, but it is now lost.

The rather modest popularity of Colonna's work appears from the list of extant and lost manuscripts of the original and of the Spanish vulgarization.

A - *Manuscripts*⁶⁴.

1. Vatican Library, MS. Vat. Lat. 4963⁶⁵. Vellum, XIV-XV cent., ff. 359 in-folio. Of the seven books only the first, second and third are clearly marked, whereas the fourth has only the *incipit*, the fifth is not marked at all, the sixth only the *explicit*, and the seventh only the *incipit*. The chapters are not numerated. Initial letters of the first, second, third and fourth books are nicely illuminated, of which the first and third represent a Dominican holding a book. The work is incomplete, and many parts are missing and left blank: ff. 350^r^b-350^v^{a-b}, f. 135^r^a (half)-135^r^b.

Inc. f. 1: In nomine Domini Amen. Incipit mare historiarum compositum a fratre Johanne de Columpna, romano, ordinis fratrum predicatorum. — Sicut dicit magnus pater arriopagita Dionysius: Deus est archanum bonum rationi omni superessentiale...

Expl. f. 359^v: ...Nostri autem triduo apud Ramulam consumato (ms. consumaretur) iter arripientes civitati appropinquare ceperunt. Scientes autem loca venerabilia pro (ms. pia) quibus tot pertulerant labores, iam esse in proximo, cum non multo processisset...

The chronicles of Saint Antoninus, a study in historiography, Dissertation at the Catholic University of America, Washington 1933, pp. 53-100, particularly the notes on pp. 61-88, where the *Summa Historialis* is analysed according to its sources.

⁶³ For Fernan Perez de Gusman see N. Antonius, *Bibliotheca Hispana Vetus*, II, Matriti 1788, lib. X, cap. VIII, 268-270. See note 72.

⁶⁴ Extracts of the *Mare Historiarum* are published in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, *Scriptores*, XXIV, 269-284: Liber VII. De domesticis moribus Karoli... to the end; *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France*, XXIII, 107-124: Liber VII, cap. 162. De Ludovico iuniore... to the end; *Monumenta ord. Praed. historica*, VI, 1, 5-7: Vita S. Raymundi de Pennafort.

⁶⁵ Cf. G. Mercati, *Codici latini Pico Grimani Pio* (*Studi e Testi* 75), Vaticano 1938, 115, 127.

2. Vatican Library, Vat. Ottob. 1541, 1542, 1543.

These three manuscripts are a transcription of the third, sixth and seventh books of the *Mare Historiarum* made in the XVII century on paper.

A) Ottob. 1541, ff. 359.

f. 1: Joannis de Columna Historia. Tom. I.

Unus ex codicibus bibliothecae altempsianae a Paulo quinto manu regia excerptis, nunc vero a Joanne Angelo ab Altaemps duce propriis sumptibus fidelissime ex originalibus transumptis, ut bibliotheca praedicta tanto honore iam decorata non careret.

f. 2: Incipit liber tertius Maris Historiarum fratris Joannis de Columna ordinis praedicatorum. — De Alexandro Magno rege Macedonum, et ini-regni eius.

Anno igitur quinte etatis 151, mundi vero 3624, Occhus rex Persarum moritur...

f. 359 ... Aurum uel argentum quod igni superesse potuisset, apud pauperes numantinos non fuit. Arma et vestes ignis absumpsit. Explicit liber tertius.

B) Ottob. 1542, ff. 383⁶⁶.

f. 1^r: Historia Fratris Joannis de Columna ordin. Praedicatorum. Liber sextus.

f. 2^r: Liber sextus Maris Historiarum fr. Joannis de Columna.

Incipit Cronica Summorum Pontificum, que incipit a beato Petro apostolo et imminente sibi passione substituit sibi Clementem, de Seneca et de viris illustribus illius temporis. — Sub Neronis tyranni persecutione Rome passi sunt apostolorum principes Petrus et Paulus...

f. 383^v: ... Marcellus factus est papa, natus Romanus, qui sedit annis quinque, mensibus septem. Hic sub Maxentio martyrio coronatus est. Explicit liber sextus.

C) Ottob. 1543, ff. 364.

f. 2^r: Historia fratris Joannis de Columna ordinis Praedicatorum: Libri 7^{mi} tom. III.

f. 3^r: Incipit liber septimus historiarum fratris Joannis de Columna: De imperio Castantini Magni et qualiter vocatus a senatu populoque romano contra Maxentium tyrannum, signo crucis illi divinitus ostenso, eius fudit exercitum, et de morte eiusdem tyranni. — Mortuo autem Constantio Augusto, qui occidentale imperium annis 13 cum omni tranquillitate gubernaverat...

(ult. cap.: De Bello quod Carolus Magnus cum Saxonibus gessit...).

⁶⁶ This manuscript is referred to as a separate work, and is enlisted as such among the chronicles on the Roman Pontiffs, see Francesco Cerrotti, *Bibliografia di Roma medievale e moderna*, I, Roma 1893, parte III, *Biografie generali e particolari dei Papi*, 109, n. 1203.

f. 364^v: ...et miserabiliter clamans, adhuc vivens igni inextinguibili traditus animam miseram reddidit... (incomplete).

(at bottom of f. 364^v: catchword— *De Leone*).

3. Paris, Bibl. Nat., Lat. 4914 (Formerly Regius 4684.2, and Codex Telleriano-Remensis 61). Vellum, XIV cent. (1381), double col., ff. 320, 440×310 mm; ff. A-N Table of contents.

This is a complete copy, whose chapters are numerated. The division and number of chapters in each book is reduced to a lesser number than in the Vatican copy.

f. 1: In nomine Domini Amen. Incipit Mare Historiarum compositum a fratre Johanne de Columpna romano ordinis fratrum predicatorum. — De Essentia Divina. Sicut dicit magnus...

f. 319^v: ... quo mortuo ceteri huc et illuc dispersi, et sic eorum conventicula evanuerunt. — Explicit liber intitulatus Mare Historiarum quem scripsi ego frater Guillelmus de Verduno, monachus mon. sancti Victoris Massiliensis reverendissimo in Christo patri et domino, domino G. de Agrifolio tituli S. Stephani in Celiomonte S. R. E. Cardinali, tunc pro sancta romana ecclesia in partibus Alamannie legato, sub anno domini mcccclxxx primo de mense augusti in vigilia S. Bartholomei, pontificatus SS. in Christo patris et domini nostri domini Clementis divina providentia pape VII, anno tertio. Amen.

4. Paris, Bibl. Nat., Lat. 4915 (Formerly Regius 4684). Belonged to the family Jouvenel des Ursins. Vellum, xv cent., double col., ff. 414, 450×330 mm. Beautifully illuminated, with 800 miniatures. Bound in red, with coat of arms of Louis XV.

f. 1^r^a-17^v^b. Table of contents (ff. 18-18^v: Compendium of contents and notes on the seven ages of the world; ff. 19-20 blank).

f. 21^r^a: Inc: In nomine domini Amen. Incipit Mare Historiarum compositum a fratre Johanne de Columpna romano ordinis fratrum predicatorum — De Essentia divina. Primum capitulum. Sicut dicit magnus...

f. 414^v^a: ...quo mortuo ceteri huc et illuc dispersi... que perpetraverant sunt suspensi et eorum conventicula evanuerunt.

5. Florence, Laurenziana, Aedil. 173 (Paper, XV cent.).

B — *Manuscripts now lost*

6. Madrid, Bibl. Univ., Cod. 136. Paper, XIV cent., ff. 219, 411×287 mm., with table of contents on the first 12 ff. Mutilated in some parts ⁶⁷.

⁶⁷ At the end of the manuscript there was a list of Dominican writers, among whom figured Vincent of Beauvais, fr. Ulricus de Orfodonia, Jacobus de Susato and a note indicated: "Ludovicus de Valleleti emit hunc librum historiarum

7. Rome, Bibl. Conv. Minervitani O. P., *Mare historiarum fratris Joannis Romani de Columna* ⁶⁸.

8. Avignon, Bibl. Papae Benedicti XIII (1394-1423) ⁶⁹.

9. Cod. Bibl. Caroli Montchal., Archiep. Tholosan., n^o 221 ⁷⁰.

C - *Extract* ⁷¹

10. Paris, Bibl. Nat. Lat. 4912 (Formerly Regius 4727). Vellum, XIV cent., double col., ff. 235 (ff. 191-194 missing), 435 × 320 mm.

This is the *Breviarum Historiale* of Landolph Colonna completed by the *Mare* of John Colonna.

f. 1: Inc: Sanctissimo patri et domino suo, domino Johanni dei gratia... Landulphus de Columpna, canonicus carnotensis... Cum hystoriarum multitudinem... Post fabricam ornatumque mundi quem Deus propter hominem pulcerrimum optimum...

f. 177^v: ... que Romam se transferens ibidem eleganter trivium legit magnosque magistros... (left incomplete).

magistri Johannis de Columna Ro(man)i ordinis predicatorum in civitate Avinionensi anno Domini 1418, cum rediret de concilio". Cf. J. Villa-Amil y Castro, *Catálogo de los manuscritos existentes en la biblioteca del Noviciado de la Universidad Central, Madrid 1878*, part. I, 53; *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde* VI, (1881) 327-8; *Arch. fr. Praed.* I (1931) 236, n. 26.

⁶⁸ G. Meersseman O. P., *La Bibliothèque de la Minerve au xv^e s.*, *Mélanges Auguste Pelzer*, Louvain 1947, 618.

⁶⁹ F. Ehrle, *Historia Bibliothecae Romanorum Pontificum*, I, Romae 1890, 172; A. Pelzer, *Addenda et emendanda ad Fr. Ehrle Historiam Bibl. Rom. Pont.*, Vaticano 1947, 109.

⁷⁰ Ph. Labbe, *Nova Bibliotheca MSS. Librorum*, Paris 1653, No. 3, n. 221

⁷¹ MS. Vat. Lat. 3511 (a beautiful volume of 37 ff. written c. 1557, which originally belonged to Card. G. Sirleto, and later to Card. A. Carafa) contains a collection of extracts from the Fathers and other writers on Simony. On ff. 36^v-37^v we find: "Ex chronicis Martini magistri ord. praed. et Johannis de Columna magistri eiusdem ordinis". The first extract from Martinus Polonus "Chronica Rom. Pont." says that Leo II ordained that whoever is consecrated Archbishop is not bound to remunerate the officials for the use of the pallium. The second extract from John Colonna's *Mare Historiarum* is a letter of Innocent III sent on April 27, 1211: *Abbatissae et conventui Auregnacensi*", by which he makes it clear that the Diocesan Bishop or the Archdeacon should not ask any remuneration for the blessing of the Abbess, consecration of altars or churches, Holy oil or other sacrament. For this letter "Justis petentium desideriis", cf. Potthast, *Reg. Rom. Pont.*, I, Berolini 1874, 365, n. 4237.

For the description of this manuscript see Pio Paschini, *Tre ricerche sulla storia della chiesa nel cinquecento*, Roma 1945, 230-231.

f. 178^{ra}: Ista que sequuntur sunt de cronica composita per fratrem Johannem de Columpna que dicitur Mare Historiarum, que hic sunt adiuncta quia Landulphus de Columpna, qui precedentem cronicam componebat, preventus morte non potuit ultra precedentia complere.

178^{ra}: Ludovicus autem Lotharii filius...

f. 235^{vb}: ... quo mortuo ceteri huc et illuc... sunt suspensi et illorum conventicula evanuerunt etc.

D - *Spanish vulgarization of the Mare*⁷²

1. Madrid, Bibl. Nac. 9564. Paper, XV cent., ff. 152. This was the copy used for the Valladolid edition in 1512.

f. 1^r. Frey Juan de Colupna natural de Roma de la orden de los predicadores fue muy grant doctor, et compuso un libro muy notable que se intitula mar de las ystorias del qual asi como de un grant prado se cogen diversas flores, asy del dicho libro se sacaron algunas cosas en el presente tractado contenidas.

(Cap. 1). De como estando todos los reyes et principes de grecia ayuntados para venir sobre Troya...

Quando los grecos fueron ayuntados para venir sobre Troya...

f. 151^v: Del grant soldan de Yconia...

En el anno dela encarnacion...

f. 152^r: ... seys mill ropas de pannos de oro et de xamete. Deo gratias.

2. Madrid, Bibl. Nac. 7575. Paper, XV cent., double col., ff. ix-cxxvi-3.

f. ix^{ra}-xvi^{rb} (Tabula capitulorum. Incomplete at beginning).

f. xvi^{va}: Frey Juan de Columpa... (as above).

f. xvii^{ra}: Quando los griegos... (as above).

f. cxxv^{ra}: (ult. cap.). De como el soldan de Yconia...

f. cxxv^{va}: ...seys ropas de pannos et de xamete. Deo gracias.

3. Madrid, Bibl. Nac. 7557. Paper, XV cent., double col., ff. 170.

f. 1^{ra}-12^{va}. Table of contents.

f. 13^r: Aqui comiença un libro muy notable el qual compuso un grant

⁷² Fernan Perez de Gusman's complete work consists of three parts: I. lives of emperors, kings and princes; II. lives of saints and illustrious men; III. lives of Spanish knights and prelates during the reign of Don Enrico III and Don Juan II. The first and second parts are taken from John Colonna's *Mare*, and were published recently by J. Rodriguez Arzua, *Mar de Historias*, (Coleccion Cisneros 79), Madrid 1944. In the introduction the Editor seems to exalt unfairly the merit of Fernan for the vivid portraits; physical and psychological, of the illustrious men recorded in the *Mar de Historias*, without realizing, as it seems, that they were copied word by word from John Colonna.

doctor que se llamava frey Juan de Colupna natural de Roma de la orden de los predicadores el qual se yntitula mar de las ystorias...

f. 170^{ra}: cap. ccxliiii. De como el soldan de Yconia...

f. 170^{vb}: ...de pannos de oro et de xamete. Deo gracias.

4. Madrid, Bibl. de Palacio 3094. Paper, XV cent., ff. 148.

f. 1^r: Frey Juan de Coluna natural de Roma de la orden de los...

(Cap. 1) La proposicion que... Quando los griegos fueron ayuntados...

f. 148^v: De como su el imperio de Corrado florescio el venerable doctor Ricardo de santo Victor de Paris canonigo reglar... en la qual obra al juysio de muchos asy en fuertes et provables... (incomplete).

5. Bibl. del Conde de Haro. Paper, XV cent., ff. 152, 279 × 195 mm.

f. 1: Frey Juan de Colupna natural de Roma de la orden de los...

(Cap. 1). De como estando todos los reyes et principes...

f. 152^r: (cap. ccxliiii) ... De como el soldan de Yconia... ⁷³

2. *De Viris Illustribus*.

In this treatise John Colonna gave us a sort of gallery of some three hundred and thirty illustrious pagans and Christians: a short biographical notice, a list of works, and some noteworthy excerpts, are given for each of them. Two redactions of the *De Viris Illustribus* have come down to us: one gives the pagan and Christian writers arranged in alphabetical order, the other separates the pagans from the Christians, and arranges them respectively in alphabetical order.

Are these two redactions the work of John Colonna himself or of an interpolator? Which is the first redaction of the treatise?

Sabbadini ⁷⁴ has rightly observed that the change in the two forms of the *De Viris Illustribus* was made by John Colonna, and not by an interpolator: this is shown by the identity of the text and also by the diversity of the notes written at the beginning of the series of Christians after that of the pagans.

⁷³ The anonymous history of the world called "Mer des Histoires", published several times, and attributed to John Colonna (Cf. Coppinger, Supplement to Hain's Repertorium Bibliographicum, Part. II, vol. I, Berlin 1926, 401, N^{os} 3990, 3991, 3992) is certainly not a French version of the Mare Historiarum of John Colonna. This false attribution has been already refuted by Quétif-Échard, Script. ord. Praed. This work is entirely different from the Mare Historiarum, and its author, judging from his knowledge of, and interest in, Dominicans, may have been a Dominican. He frequently refers to Vincent of Beauvais, Martin of Troppau and Henry of Herfordia, but we did not detect a single reference to John Colonna.

⁷⁴ Sabbadini, Giovanni Colonna, 279.

As to the second question Sabbadini suggested hypothetically that Colonna made fusion of the two series of illustrious men after the example of William of Pastrengo (1294-1362), who had also written a similar treatise, called "De originibus rerum".

This hypothesis would hold grounds at the time when the oldest known manuscript, the Venetian, of the *De Viris Illustribus* represented the redaction with the distinct series of pagans and Christians; but what about the Bologna copy, which has not yet been referred to, and which represents the other redaction of the treatise? It was considered by experts of the time to have been written "vitam adhuc agente Joanne ipso"⁷⁵, and thus it is the oldest manuscript of the *De Viris Illustribus*. The order of the redactions in so far as the manuscripts are concerned, is therefore inverted: first the fusion-redaction, and then the distinction-redaction; but whether they were written originally in that order is not evident.

The purpose and nature of the treatise are well illustrated in the preface:

"De vita et moribus vivorum illustrium, tam sanctorum quam aliorum philosophorum tractaturus, que in diversis libris de eisdem sparsim scripta reperi, in unum colligere laboravi... ut documenta virtutum sumere volentibus longe inquisitionis labor absit".

Its purpose is therefore moral, namely, "ad corrigendos mores corrigendamque vitam".

The sources of the *De Viris Illustribus* are various, some known to John Colonna directly, others indirectly. Here as in the *Mare Historiarum* he does not accept everything blindly, but sometimes criticizes the sources themselves and expresses doubts as to the identity of some persons and the authenticity of their works.

When did John Colonna compose the *De Viris Illustribus*? In his *Mare Historiarum* he refers several times to this treatise as a finished work. For instance:

"Huius (Parnecii) multe sunt preclare sententie, quas in opere nostro de viris illustribus reperies" (Vat. Lat. MS. 4063, f. 102^rb).

"Multa preterea de isto Varrone apud diversos reperi, que omnia plenius in libro de Viris Illustribus collegi" (Ibid., f. 153^{va}).

"(De Augustino) Quorum librorum titulos ex hiis que invenire potui, in libro quem de Viris Illustribus scripsimus plenius invenies" (Ibid. f. 291^{va}).

⁷⁵ Cf. MS Bologna, Univ. 296 (491), Letter of dedication to Benedict XIV.

We find similar references when writing about Pythagoras (f. 37^{va}), Socrates (f. 44^{ra}), Theophrastus (f. 76^{vb}), and Philo (f. 178^{va}).

It was therefore written before the *Mare Historiarum* and so before 1340. The *terminus a quo* is 1332, the death of Archbishop John Conti. Moreover Colonna says in the preface: "variis igitur occupationibus sic in curia distractus sum, ut vix aliquid quandoque scribere licuit"; which means that, when he was writing this treatise, he was at the curia; but in which, the papal curia or that of the Archbishop? Probably that of the Pope in Avignon, where he must have gone after the death of John Conti in 1332, which he left sometime before 1338, the year that we find him instituted Vicar of the Prior at S. Sabina in Rome. So the treatise must have been composed between 1332 and 1338, while Colonna was still at the Papal Curia at Avignon.

This bio-bibliographical treatise has not exercised, as far as we know, a greater influence and popularity than the *Mare Historiarum*. Most of the material found therein was used and inserted by Colonna in his *Mare Historiarum*, and it became in fact a preparatory work for the latter.

Manuscripts of the *De Viris Illustribus* ⁷⁶.

1. Bologna, Bibl. Univ., cod. 296 (491) ⁷⁷. Vellum, XIV cent., double col., ff. 72+3, 290×200 mm.; ff. I-XVI only are numerated. Initial letters in red and blue, first 26 are also in gold. The initial letter of the title-D is nicely miniated with a Dominican friar holding a book on his knees. The volume was rebound in red leather, decorated with gold and papal coat of arms, at the time of Pope Benedict XIV, and two vellum folios at the beginning, and one at the end were added, on which we find a long letter of dedication on behalf of the heirs of Card. Henry Henriquez, Ferdinand Maria de Rubeis, Patriarch of Constantinople, and William Palotta, Count, to Pope Benedict XIV.

f. 1. Incipit prohemium super librum de Viris Illustribus editum a fratre Ioanne de Columpna romano ordinis predicatorum. — De vita et moribus

⁷⁶ Extracts of the *De Viris Illustribus* are published in S. Thomae Aquinatis Opera Omnia, I, Romae 1882, Dissert. II, pp. LXXVII-LXXXI: Vita et scripta S. Thomae, S. Alberti, Johannis de Polo, Arch. Nicos.; R. Sabbadini, Giovanni Colonna... 282-305; P. Mandonnet, Des écrits authentiques de S. Thomas d'Aquin, Fribourg 1910, 98-99; I. Taurisano, Discepoli, Append. VII, 185-186; M. Grabmann, Die Werke des hl. Thomas von Aquin (Beitr. z. Gesch. d. Philos. d. Mittelalt. XXII, 1-2), Münster 1949, 112 s.

⁷⁷ C. Frati, Indice dei Codici Latini conservati nella R. Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (Studi Ital. di Filol. class. XVII), Firenze 1909, 222.

virorum illustrium, tam sanctorum quam aliorum philosophorum tractaturus, que in diversis libris de eisdem sparsim scripta repperi, in unum colligere laboravi... Explicit prohemium.

Incipit liber de Viris Illustribus editus a fratre Iohanne de Columpna de Roma ordinis fratrum predicatorum.

f. vii^v: Incipiunt hic narrationes virorum illustrium secundum ordinem alphabeti, incipientes ab A. Et primo in qualibet littera ponuntur gentiles et pagani, demum christiani...

f. 72^v: ... (de Zeno). Unde mox manus sibi intulit ut post mortem felicius viveret, sicque gladio proprio vitam finivit.

Explicit liber de Viris Illustribus editus a fratre Iohanne de Columpna romano ordinis fratrum predicatorum. (two lines erased).

2. Rome, Vat. Barberin. 2351. Vellum, XV cent., ff. 145+3. First folio illuminated, with the initial letter of the title miniated, representing a Dominican friar holding a book.

On verso of first flyleaf: Fratris Mariani Episcopi Cortonensis. Emptus f. largis 6.

f. 1^r: Incipit prohemium libri de viris illustribus editi a fratre Iohanne de Columna romano ordinis predicatorum. – De vita et moribus virorum illustrium... f. 1^v: Explicit prohemium. Incipit liber.

f. 2: Primum itaque dicam quid inter philosophiam et sapientiam...

f. 14^v: Incipiunt hic narrationes virorum illustrium secundum ordinem alphabeti, incipientes ab A. Et primo in qualibet littera ponuntur gentiles et pagani christianique demum. – Nunc de Anaximandro milesio.

f. 145^v: ... De tertio Zenone philosopho... mors ergo malum non est, unde mox manus sibi intulit ut post mortem felicius viveret, sicque gladio proprio vitam finivit.

Explicit liber de viris illustribus.

3. Venice, St. Mark's Library, MS. X. 58 (Formerly of SS John and Paul Priory O. P.) Paper, with some vellum folios, XIV-XV cent., double col., ff. 81. Cf. I. Valentinelli, *Bibl. manuscripta VI*, 52.

De vita et moribus virorum illustrium, tam sanctorum quam...

f. 38: Explicit liber de Viris Illustribus infidelibus editus a fratre Iohanne de Columpna ordinis fratrum predicatorum.

f. 81: Explicit liber de Viris Illustribus christianis editus a fratre Iohanne de Columpna romano ordinis predicatorum.

4. Rome, Bibl. Casanatense, MS. 2396 (XX. VI. 34). Paper, XVIII cent., ff. 376, written on half page. It is an imperfect copy of the Venetian manuscript made by order of the then Prefect of the library, John B. Zuanelli O. P., with the hope of publishing it.

f. 1^r: Fratris Iohannis de Columna ordinis Praedicatorum Liber de Viris illustribus. Prima pars continet illustres Ethnicos, altera illustres describit Catholicos viros (que deest).

f. 2^r: Liber de Viris illustribus christianis editus a fratre Iohanne de Columna Romano ordinis FF. Praedicatorum. – De vita et moribus virorum...

f. 4^r-37^v: (Prohemium).

f. 37^v: (Incipit elenchus virorum) Anaximander... Zeno.

f. 201^v: Explicit liber de Viris Illustribus infidelibus...

ff. 202-204^v: (Blank).

f. 205^r: Catholici auctores hic incipiunt. – Nota lector quod qui inferius sub litera A subvocantur similiter et aliis litteris, christianae fidei fundatores fuerunt...

f. 205^v: Aristides...

f. 375: Ypolitus... f. 375^v: claruit autem hic venerabilis doctor temporibus Alexandri imperatoris Romanorum.

Explicit liber de viris illustribus christianis editus a fratre Ioanne de Columna Romano ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum. Finis.

3. *Nova Historia Ecclesiastica.*

The authorship of this *Nova Historia Ecclesiastica* is attested by John Colonna in his *Mare Historiarum*, in which, whenever fuller information is required on a particular subject which he is treating, he refers the reader to the *Nova Historia Ecclesiastica*. For example:

“De autem misterio incarnationis Christi plenius, concedente Domino, in nostra nova ecclesiastica historia dicemus” (Vat. Lat. MS. 4963, f. 165^{rb}).

“Quorum (SS. Petri et Pauli) sacros actus et gesta in nostra ecclesiastica historia plenius edocentur” (Ibid.; f. 185^{ra}).

“Horum (Dyonisii...) gesta in nostra ecclesiastica historia latius reperies” (Ibid., f. 200^{ra}).

“Cuius (Dunscarii) vitam et actus gloriosos plenius in nostra ecclesiastica historia posuimus” (Ibid., f. 342^{va}).

Can we safely infer from these citations that John Colonna actually composed the *Nova Ecclesiastica Historia*? Three times he announces it as still to be written “concedente Domino”, and only the last citation may possibly authorize us to infer the execution of the project, or at least the collection of the material in view of it. The idea to write, besides the *Mare Historiarum*, a history of the Church, is a “pendant” to what John Colonna did with the *De Viris Illustribus*, separating in the second redaction the pagans from the illustrious Christians. In the same manner he would have taken from the *Mare* all that concerns Christianity, and have given a fuller and more detailed history of it. The fact that no extant manuscript attests the completion of this projected work, and having in view also the manner in which John Colonna refers to it, would rather suggest that it was not completed. This is probably no great

loss. John's main sources would have been the *Speculum Historiale* of Vincent of Beauvais, Martinus Polonus, and for the later decades Ptolemy of Lucca ⁷⁸.

That which was passed over by John Colonna in the *Mare* to be treated in the *Nova Ecclesiastica Historia*, is fully dealt with in Vincent's *Speculum*, as for instance the life and deeds of St. Dunstan (called above Dunsca rius).

4. Other writings attributed to John Colonna.

A) *De Infelicitate Curialium*. – John Colonna spent some time at the Papal Court of Avignon, and knew by experience the sort of life led by the members of the curia:

“ Nullam igitur in rebus humanis iucunditatem aut utiliore m occupationem invenies. Experto crede: quia omnia mundi dulcia hiis collata exercitiis amarescunt. Variis igitur occupationibus sic in curia distractus sum ut vix aliquid quandoque scribere licuerit; sed illud volvens in animo quod Seneca epistola 82 (82, 3): Ocium sine litteris mors est et vivi hominis sepultura ”, ista aggredi coegit (S. Marci Venet., MS. lat. X. 58, f. 1).

Can we see in these words an echo of the “ infelicitas curialium ”? Nothing would therefore contradict the attribution of such a treatise to Colonna, if it were warranted by extant manuscripts or early authorities.

B) *Epistolae ad diversos*. – We have no proof that Colonna, who had certainly made many friends, collected his correspondence, as his friend Petrarch did later on, and published them; consequently this collection of letters remains dubious until further evidence.

C) *De Via Paradisi*. – On what authority did Mandosius attribute such a treatise to John Colonna? The reply is found in a manuscript, formerly in possession of the prelate DD. Taggiasco ⁷⁹, which Father

⁷⁸ Ptolemy of Lucca O. P. (c. 1236-1327) wrote a *Nova Ecclesiastica Historia* called also *Summa Romanorum Pontificum*, which ends at the time of John XXII. It has been published in *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, XI, Milano 1727, 740-1242. It is interesting to note that MS. Vat. Lat. 3766 contains: “ Ptolomei de Lucca Summa Romanorum Pontificum usque ad Benedictum XII ”. The addition could not be made by the author; would it be rash to suggest John Colonna as the continuator? We know that he had the intention of writing his *Mare Historiarum*, and presumably also his *Nova Ecclesiastica Historia*, down to the time of Benedict XII.

⁷⁹ Mons. Taggiasco was “ Cam. segr. soprannumerario ”, and was still living in 1891, cf. *La Gerarchia Cattolica per l'anno 1891*, Roma 1890, 424.

Vincent Ligiez O. P. saw in a Roman Antiquarian's shop in 1884. In a paper left by him, he describes the manuscript as follows:

"Cod. MS. in-8° sec. XIV.

Incipit liber florum ex dictis beati Gregorii pape.

Incipit liber qui intitulatur Via Paradisi compositus ex diversis libris beati Gregorii pape, qui est multum utilis ad predicandum.

f. 169^va: ... Explicit liber qui dicitur Via Paradisi compilatus ex diversis dictis et tractatibus beatissimi doctoris Gregorii pape.

Quem libellum ego frater Iohannes de Columpna de Gallicano ordinis predicatorum propria manu scripsi in conventu Parisiensi anno dom. mill^o CCCXX^o. Laudetur Deus. Amen".

The only thing we may deduce from this colophon is that John Colonna copied this anonymous *Florilegium S. Gregorii* probably for his personal use, but his authorship is by no means asserted. Thus Mandosius either interpreted inexactly this colophon, or he saw another manuscript where the copyist had already taken the place of the author⁸⁰.

D) *Cronica Summorum Pontificum*. — The following rubric of Book VI, ch. I (MS. Vat. Lat. 4963, f. 185^{ra}) of the *Mare Historiarum* may have given rise to the error to call this a separate work:

"Hoc in loco incipit cronica summorum pontificum romanorum, que incipit a B. Petro apostolo, et imminente sibi passione substituit sibi Clementem".

In fact in this chapter, when dealing with St. Peter and St. Paul, Colonna says that he intends "summorum pontificum romanorum gesta breviter perstringere", but refers the reader for fuller information to his *Nova Ecclesiastica Historia*.

E) *Quodlibeta Theologiae*. — Joseph Allegranza O. P.⁸¹ (1713-1786) saw a copy of this with the attribution to John Colonna in the Barberini Library, Rome MS. 136. Unfortunately the manuscript has since been lost and is not even mentioned in the catalogue of this collection, so that any check upon it is impossible. But all we know of John's career does not favour his authorship of theological questions, and *a priori* the Augustinian Giles Colonna is far more likely to be their author than the historian John Colonna or his thirteenth century homonymous.

⁸⁰ A treatise called "De Via Paradisi" is attributed to the Dominican Remigio de' Girolami, and is found in MS. Firenze, Bibl. Naz. 940. C. 4, ff. 207-351^v. See M. Grabmann, *Mittelalterliches Geistesleben*, II, München 1936, 531.

⁸¹ J. Allegranza, *Corrigenda*, 30, n. 47.

F) *Sermo*. – MS. Paris Nat. Lat. 15750, f. 2^{ra}, contains a sermon on the biblical text “Hauri tibi aquam”, where on the upper margin there is: *Johannes Romanus*. Lecoy de la Marche⁸² who examined the manuscript, identified this Johannes without further evidence with our Colonna, and thus ascribed the sermon to him. But we must say that the Johannes Romanus seems to denote rather the possessor of the manuscript than the author, so much so that we find it repeated later (f. 254^v) at the margin besides the *Summa* of Alexander of Hales.

APPENDIX

I – Ex Mari Historiarum (MS. Vat. Lat. 4963)

In fine autem horum dierum cepit aqua minui, orbeque exsiccato requievit archa super montes Armenie, cuius reliquie ibi apparere dicuntur (f. 4^{rb-va}).

Multaque alia de hoc Solone preclare dicta reperies, que omnia in libro quem de Viris Illustribus composuimus plenius posita sunt (f. 32^{rb}).

Huius autem serpentis mandibula usque ad hanc nostram etatem Sancte Marie que dicitur Cosmedin, ad pedes montis Adventini (asservantur) (f. 78^{vb}).

(Angli) Utebantur autem nummo aureo vel argenteo, ut nunc eciam incole illius insule utuntur, nam dicta insula argenteis mineriis habundat (f. 139^{vb}).

(De Cesare Octav. Augusto) Sepultum est tandem corpus eius via flaminea, inter ipsam viam et fluminis ripam, in sepulcro quod ipse sexto consulatu suo construxerat. Cuius sepulcri adhuc reliquie extant (f. 162^{va}).

De autem misterio Incarnationis Christi plenius concedente Domino in nostra nova ecclesiastica historia dicemus (f. 166^{rb}).

(De Virgilio) Creditur tamen ab aliquibus eius studio Rome fuisse constructum illud mirabile templum quod Rome adhuc hodie cernitur, quod Pantheon dicitur, quod satis verisimile videtur... quamvis quidam historias ignorantes asserant tempore Domiciani imperatoris fuisse constructum (f. 166^{va}).

(De Seneca) Cum vero in aliquibus locis commendare paupertatem incipit et ostendere quod quidquid communem usum excesserit pondus est supervacuum et grave ferenti, verum ad ipsam non solum tollerandam, sed etiam amplectendam et diligendam me sepius provocavit (f. 185^{va}).

(De Septimio Severo) Eius opera Rome pauca fuerunt, nec etiam in provinciis, exceptis termis, que adhuc Severiane dicuntur. Edificavit preterea

⁸² A. Lecoy de la Marche, *La Chaire française*, 276, 515.

Rome Septizolium ut ex Africa venientes suum opus viderent. In cuius edificii medium suum simulacrum posuit ex lapide porphirico. Quod quidem edificium nostra etate corruens ex magna parte, dictum simulacrum sive statua que adhuc integra stabat, comminuta est (f. 218^{va})⁸³.

Edificavit autem Bassianus Rome thermas sui nominis, reliquit et porticum patris sui nomine... Qui porticus adhuc Rome quasi integer extat sub Capitolio ad orientalem plagam inter ecclesias Sancti Adriani et Sergii et Bachi. In cuius porticus sculptura ego huius operis actor multa gesta Severi recognovi (f. 221^{rb}).

(De Heliogabalo) Ferunt multi ab hoc Heliogabalo repertum ut in vindemiarum festivo, multa in dominos et dominas ioculariter impropria et maledicta ipsis audientibus a vindemiatoribus dicerentur. Qui mos usque ad hanc nostram etatem Neapoli servatur, ubi etiam ipsis regibus et reginis non parcutur (f. 225^{ra}).

(De Maximino Imp.) Opera publica aliqua Rome edificavit, scilicet terras sui nominis. Item Theatrum quod fuit iuxta Sanctam Mariam Rotundam ad austrum, ubi adhuc reliquie eius magnifici operis apparent (f. 228^{va}).

(De Origene) Quod autem erratum est ab Origine... opinor hoc illi accidisse quia nimio lectionis studio philosophos est amplexus... Quare valde vigilanter cavendum est ecclesiasticis viris ne nimis philosophicis institutis dent operam, ne forte cum inebriati fuerint eorum inanibus poculis et tumidis sensibus, difficilius retracto pede ad Christi humilitatem revocentur. Nec hoc dicendo lectores artium dampnamus, alias depravamus; nam et ipse non inutiliter leguntur ad enodandas theologie difficiles questiones; nam ipsa domina artium, cetera illi ut pedissece obsequuntur et serviunt (f. 237^{va}).

(De Fagorio) Et licet hoc michi quasi impossibile videatur, vidi meo tempore in insula Cipri quandam Sirum in curia regis Cipri qui tantum die una commedit, quod de eo cibo potuissent decem magni commestores ad sacietatem habere (f. 242^{vb}).

Zenobiam autem post triumphum ferunt in summa veneratione apud Romanos cum filiis diu vixisse, data sibi possessione Tybure, que hodie Zenobiana dicitur, non longe ab Adriani palatio in loco qui conche dicitur (f. 245^{ra}).

Aurelianus autem imperator, postquam Romam victoriosus rediit atque triumphavit... primoque ipsam urbem validioribus muris cinxit. Insuper et templum solis magnificentissimum edificavit, in quo infinitum auri gemmarumque thesaurum constituit (f. 245^{ra})⁸⁴.

⁸³ In Fam. VI. 2, Petrarch tells John Colonna: "Hoc Severi Afri Septizonium quem tu sedem Solis vocas, sed meum nomen in historiis scriptum lego". John Colonna must have changed his opinion on the name of this monument after Petrarch's suggestion. In another place he attributes the "Templum Solis" to the Emperor Aurelian (cf. infra f. 245^{ra}).

⁸⁴ Cf. note 83.

(De SS. Petro et Paulo) Quorum effigies cum in picta tabula beatus pontifex Silvester Augusto Constantino exhibuisset, didicit imperator illos vere esse quos in visione aspexerat. Que quidem tabula usque ad nostram etatem super altare maius Lateranensis ecclesie videtur (f. 261^{ra}).

(De Constantino Imp.) Vas autem illud pulcherrimum ubi Constantinus baptisatus est, in quo adhuc squame lepre lapidi adherentes apertissime apparent, quas pluries propriis aspexi oculis (f. 261^{rb}).

Historiam scribit Eusebius Cæsaree Palestine episcopus... Inter que et cronicam temporum a primo anno Abrahe usque ad annum Domini CCC qui fuit XX Constantini Augusti, quam beatus Ieronimus transtulit de greco in latinum; et ulterius prosecutus est usque ad annum Domini CCCLXXX; post quem Sigibertus Sublacensis monachus usque ad annum Domini MXXIII. Post hunc frater Vincentius Beluacensis ordinis predicatorum MCCXXI. Post hos ego omnium minimus hoc opus aggressus sum ingenti labore omnia retro tempora complectens, usque ad hec tempora historiam texui, in qua non solum lecta, sed etiam audita et visa conscripsi, scilicet usque ad annum qui fuit incarnationis benedicti Filii Dei MCCCXL, sedente in cathedra Petri domino Benedicto VI (lege XII) (f. 264^{vb}-265^{ra}).

Hec s. Doctoris (Gregorii Naz.) verba ideo inserere huic operi volui, ut eius humilitatem atque prudentiam in fugiendo animarum curam ostenderem simul et aliquorum presumptuosam ambicionem et ambiciosam presumptionem detegerem, qui dignitates et prelaturas ac animarum regimen non solum indigni humiliter non refugiunt, sed etiam importune se ingerunt. De quibus hic doctor in predicto Apologico (!) sic dicit: " Erubesco enim de quibusdam quos video nichil penitus ad vite eruditionem pertinens habere, qui tamen immunis pedibus in sancta certatim irruere (f. 277^{va}).

(De Crisostomo) Vidi etiam ego super Actus Apostolorum, quem quidam nostra (etate) de greco in latinum transtulit (f. 286^{rb}).

(De Cassiano) Quod certe opus multam continet edificationem animarum, nec inter multa antiquorum opuscula quicquam ad spirituales profectus atque perfectionem (!) apicem tendenti utilius arbitror me legisse. Nam et beatus pater noster Dominicus, vir utique apostolicus, librum hunc qui Collationes patrum inscribitur studiose legens ac vigilanter intelligens, salutis in eo rimatus sententias, magne in eis incrementum perfectionis invenit (f. 292^{ra}).

Sub hoc Celestino beatissimo presule Petrus episcopus quidam Rome in monte Aventino edificavit ecclesiam Sancte Sabine, in qua ecclesia hic beatus presul multa sanctorum corpora condidit, ipsamque consecravit multisque decoravit. Hoc idem auree littere indicant, que exarate versibus usque ad hodiernum diem in facie ipsius ecclesie interioris leguntur. Qui versus hoc ordine scribuntur:

Culmen Apostolicum cum Celestinus haberet
 primus et in toto fulgeret episcopus orbe,
 hanc quam miraris fundavit presbiter edem,

Illirica de gente, Petrus, vir nomine tanto
dignus, ab exortu Christi nutritus in aulam;
pauperibus locuplex, sibi pauper, qui bona vite
presentis fugiens, meruit sperare futura (f. 293^{va}).

(De Papa Eugenio) Hic fecit in ecclesia Sancte Sabine ciborium ex argento purissimo (f. 332^{ra}).

(De Johanne XI) Hoc autem an licitum an illicitum sit ut vivente papa alius in Petri sede ponatur, non est meum determinare, nam in presenti opere nostri propositi fuit quanto verius res gestas describere, non rerum gestarum reddere rationem (f. 341^{va}).

Consideravi frequenter quod quotiens sidus illud quod cometes dicitur apparet, totiens vel fames vel mortalitas sequitur, et hoc diligens lector in multis cronicis reperies. Anno autem precedenti quo horribilis illius famis pestifera lues Romanam urbem ac totam Tusciam usque ad hominum intericionem affecit, qui fuit ab incarnatione Domini MCCCXXXIX, cometes de mense Julii per mensem et ultra apparuit, que ad austrum suos radios dirigens, magnam celi partem occupare videbatur; quo etiam anno fuit eclipsis solis hora diei ix^a (f. 346^{va-b}).

(De Roma diruta) Cui vir Dei (Benedictus) Spiritu Sancto plenus respondisse fertur: « Non pater, nam hec civitas a gentibus exterminabitur, sed tempestatibus corrustis turbinibus ac terroribus fatigata, pa(u)latim in seipsa marcescet ».

Cuius prophetie mysteria iam facta sunt nobis luce clariora.

Quot enim nunc dissoluta menia, eversas domos, dirutas ecclesias cernimus; eiusque miranda edificia a Romanis edificata principibus longo iam senio lapsata ad solum usque redacta vidimus.

Hec fuit, proch dolor, civitas de qua dictum est: Quanta nec est, nec erit, nec visa prioribus annis. De qua alibi scribitur: Nulla unquam respublica nec maior nec sanctior nec bonis exemplis ditior fuit. Que regum civitas etiam ab hoste dicta est. De cuius populo scriptum legimus: Magna est fortuna populi Romani, magnum et terribile nomen eius.

De cuius venturo imperio verissime predici potuit: Imperium terris, animos equabit Olympo, septemque una sibi muro circumdabit arces, felix prole virum.

Et de presenti iam et incomparabiliter aucta, predicari decuit: Hec tantum alias inter caput extulit urbes quantum lenta solent inter viburna cypressi. Sed heu, non est hec Roma que fuit, nec populus ille gentium terror. Si michi non credis, ruinas aspice et menia semirute civitatis. Atque utinam ruine ipse non pereant, ut saltem ex eorum aspectu fides veris laudatoribus habeatur (f. 305^{va-b}).

II - Ex Mari Historiarum

(Paris, Bibl. Nat. MS. Lat. 4914, ff. 299^{ra}-^{va})

Eodem tempore inventus est inter captivos Sarracenos qui apud Acchon capti fuerant unus de administris soldani, Caracux nomine, vir inaudite prudentie et sapiencie apud eos, cuius consilio atque astucie Salahadinus optemperans, ut in quadam cronica in arabico scripta quam frater Alfonsus hispanus transtulit in latinum reperi, totum fere orientem et Siriam occupaverat. Et ut Sarraceni qui cum eo capti fuerant dicebant, ut ipsum Salahadinus rehabere posset, libenter Christianis loco eius unum de filiis tradidisset. Is igitur super captivos suos a rege Francie deputatus erat, qui auditis post hiis, ante se eum adduci fecit, quem cum vidisset vultu deformem, statura pusillum, ultra modum admiratus est qualiter in tam despicabili homine tanta potuisset residere prudentia. Attamen valde honoravit eum prepositus, atque vocando interpretem una cum captivo Caracux in cubiculo solus intravit, dixitque illi: « Audivi a tuis te virum esse prudentissimum ac secundum tuam legem in consiliis fidelissimum. Adiuro ergo te ut mihi fideliter consulas de hiis que nunc ad presens a te peciero ». Cui Sarracenus respondit: « Non fuit necessarie domine ex quo sacramentum consilii tui communicare decrevisti me adiurare, quia omnis consiliarius tenetur esse fidelis ». Et adiunxit Sarracenus: « Domine non sit tibi grave aliquantulum expectare ». Recedens ergo ad horam, Sarracenus lavit se et humiliavit coram domino et oravit, post orationem autem rediit ad prepositum. Cumque ambo consedissent, dixit illi prepositus: « Hoc est consilium quod ad te peto, ut tu secundum a Deo tibi datam prudentiam mihi detegas atque manifestes qua via, quo modo, quo eciam ingenio, cum minore difficultate posset regnum Jerosolimitanum recuperari, servari ac pacifice possideri ». Hiis auditis vehementer opstupuit Sarracenus, ac petebat ab illo absolvi consilio. Cumque Christianus instaret ut quid super hoc sentiret exprimeret, dixit Sarracenus: « O Alla, i. e. per Deum, destruxisti hodie Sarracenos, et ego concilio coactus dicam tibi de cetero veritatem, daboque consilium quod genti tue, et pro nunc et pro tempore futuro proderit, et genti nostre desolationem et excidium operetur. Summa autem consilii mei hec est, ut si Christianus populus vult terram, quam sanctam dicitis recuperare, recuperatamque in perpetuum possidere, expedit vobis ut prius capiatis Egiptum ». Hoc cum dixisset, tacuit Sarracenus. Tunc prepositus: « Edicito ergo mihi qua via regnum Egipti poterit occupari ». Cui Sarracenus: « Constat Christianos in mari super omnem aliam gentem esse potentissimos, unde ipsi cum eorum classe facile possunt mare, quod Egipto adiacet, continuis incursionibus infestare ne mercimonia per mare veniant in Egiptum. Sed si classis fuerit potens, poterit interdum eciam per fluvium Nili discurrere ac infestare et prohibere navigia que ad Gadum et Babiloniam ex tota Egipto comportant.

Et hoc modo absque gladio et ferro destruent Sarracenos; deinde conentur totis viribus optinere Damiacam, qua capta, vere domine, si Christiani habeant bonum regimen, facillimum erit eis in brevi totum Egipti regnum eorum subicere ditioni ».

Sed sciendum est quod tempore quo dictus Sarracenus hec dicebat, Damiacam erat civitas fortissima, sed quia Christiani postea illam bis ceperant, ex cuius captione Sarraceni crediderunt totam perdere Egiptum, quam ob causam illam funditus destruxerunt, ipsamque et muros eius, atque longe a mari rehedificaverunt eam; et est nunc civitas valde opulenta.

Tunc Christianus: « Placet quod dicis, sed si non videretur exercitui Christiano Damiacam obsidere, ad quem locum deberet eorum exercitus declinare? »

Respondit Sarracenus: « Tunc nec non habebunt terram capere in Bucha Raxeti, que est valde larga et apta navigio, quia optenta hac Bucha, facile esset postmodum optinere Alexandriam ». Nam iuxta locum predictum est quoddam castrum antiquissimum ubi fuit antiquitus sedes Pharaonis, in quo loco est aqueductus, ille qui fluit de Nilo usque in Alexandriam, et tempore inundacionis Nili aqua influit per illum aqueductum, et replentur tunc cisterne pro toto anno in usum hominum; nam aque que apud Alexandriam ebullunt in puteis omnes sunt salse et insipide et inhabiles ad potandum, unde si Christiani illum locum optinerent, facile illis esset interdicere aqueductum, et sic civitas siti deperiret, vel possent per illum aqueductum immittere aquam marinam et corrumpere aquas cisternarum civitatis, et eo modo Julius Cesar dictator optinuit Alexandriam.

Verumtamen hodie nostra etate hic Soldanus, qui dicitur in prudentia omnes orientales excedere, in Alequenacer(?) fecit fieri de novo alveum quendam, qui habet XXX in longum miliaria, per quem veniunt magne barche de Babilonia ad unum miliare in Alexandriam.

Multa alia docuit hic Sarracenus hunc Christianum, qualiter Christiani, si eis desuper datum, possent non solum terram sanctam recuperare, set etiam Egiptum facilliter occupare.