For Joan Mertens

In honor of her years of dedication to this publication
and her exemplary erudition, generosity, and wit
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ABBREVIATIONS
MMA The Metropolitan Museum of Art
MMAB The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin
MMJ Metropolitan Museum Journal

Height precedes width and then depth in dimensions cited.
An Illuminated Fragment of the
Postil on the Lenten Gospels by
Albert of Padua

A fragment of a fourteenth-century illuminated manuscript in the collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art for more than a century is here published for the first time (fig. 1). It consists of two bifolios. The first leaf is decorated with a finely executed large figural initial depicting a preaching friar. The provenance of the fragment can be traced only from the late nineteenth century, when it arrived at the Museum as a gift to the Library from “prominent yachtsman” Louis L. Lorillard in 1896.1 In 1984 it was transferred from the Thomas J. Watson Library to the Department of Medieval Art, and on that occasion librarian William B. Walker and curator William D. Wixom catalogued it as “Two Bifolia, one with historiated initial with a Benedictine preaching.”2 Notes relating to that transfer include opinions from some decades earlier of Meta Harrsen from the Pierpont Morgan Library and art historian Richard Offner, both suggesting that the
fig. 1 Manuscript leaf from a fragment of the Postilla super Evangelia Quadragesimale by Albert of Padua with an illumination in the initial I. Northern Italy, ca. 1370–90. Tempera, ink, and gold on parchment; 11⅜ × 8 in. (29.7 × 20.3 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Louis L. Lorillard, 1896, transferred from the Library (96.32.1a)
The present research note posits that the preacher in the illumination can be identified as an Augustinian friar instead of a Benedictine monk. The figure is garbed in a black habit girdled with a brown belt, a distinctive attribute of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine (OSA). The Augustinians were founded in 1256 by decree of Pope Alexander IV in his Licet Ecclesiae Catholicae, which unified different eremitical groups in central Italy. While these groups wore a variety of habits, the papal bull prescribed for the new mendicant order a black habit fastened with a leather belt. By the fourteenth century this garment had become the Augustinians’ main attribute, used as a powerful visual tool to promote their order. In an apsidal fresco by Guariento di Arpo (1310–1370) in the church of the Eremitani in Padua, Saint Augustine is depicted being invested with the Augustinian habit. The same habit is worn by the Augustinian donor who kneels to the left of the enthroned Madonna with Child (ca. 1360–65) painted by Lorenzo Veneziano, now at the Metropolitan Museum (fig. 2).

The illuminated initial I in the Museum’s fragment introduces a Latin text, written in two columns, which can be identified as a portion of the Postil on the Lenten Gospels (Postilla super Evangelia Quadragesimalia), also called the Quadragesimalia, by Albert of Padua (ca. 1265–ca. 1328). Despite references to Albert of Padua as one of the greatest theologians of the Augustinian Order during the fourteenth century, we have only a limited knowledge of his life. He lived through a transformative period for the Augustinian Order, an amalgamation of diverse groups of simple, mostly illiterate hermits. In the later thirteenth century the order began to produce a scholarly elite, of which Albert became an important member. He commenced his studies in the order’s studium generale in Padua, and in the early fourteenth century he attended the University of Paris, where he became a doctor of theology. While many of his works, including his Sententiae, have been lost, two of his extensive Gospel commentaries survive. Both of them are so-called postillae, a form of biblical commentary that emerged in the early thirteenth century as a sort of intensification of interlinear gloss, expanding the meaning of words and short citations from the Bible. The more prominent of them seems to be the Postil on the Dominical Gospels (Postilla super Evangelia Dominicalia). Of the Postil on the Lenten Gospels, there are sixteen medieval manuscript copies known; the attribution of the Museum’s fragment expands this corpus. The earliest known reference to the Quadragesimalia appears in the 1317 inventory of the library of the convent of Santi Pietro e Agostino in Massa Marittima, and in the absence of earlier references, this offers a terminus ante quem for the work. Albert of Padua’s work was highly appreciated by his contemporaries and was praised in Jordan of Saxony’s Liber Vitasfratrum, the most extensive fourteenth-century account of the Augustinian Order. The Quadragesimalia remained popular through the late Middle Ages and the early modern period, as is shown by the several printed editions from the sixteenth century. These versions are also significant since no critical—or, indeed, modern—edition of the text has been published. Albert of Padua has mostly been discussed in art historical scholarship as a possible influence on the program for the fresco cycle by Giotto in the Arena Chapel in Padua.

The illumination on the first leaf of the Museum’s fragment depicts a friar, presumably Albert of Padua himself, preaching from a pulpit. This might seem odd since postillae and similar biblical commentaries that were intended for scholars and disciples were seldom given figural decoration, a possible reason why these manuscripts have received limited attention in art

曼努斯卡特是从波隆那，大约1350年，这似乎是很合理的。3

目前的研究笔记认为，照亮的人物可以被识别为奥古斯丁会的修士，而不是本笃会的修士。该人物穿着黑色长袍，用棕色腰带系着，这是奥古斯丁会兄弟会的特征性标志。奥古斯丁会于1256年由教皇亚历山大四世在Licet Ecclesiae Catholicae中颁布的法令成立，该法令统一了意大利中部的各隐修会团体。4 当这些团体穿着各种长袍时，教皇的法令规定了新修会成员的黑色长袍和皮带。5 到十四世纪，这件长袍已成为奥古斯丁会的主要标志，用作推广该会的一个有力视觉工具。6 在帕多瓦的Eremitani教堂的壁上画中，圣奥古斯丁被描绘成穿着奥古斯丁会的长袍。7 同样，奥古斯丁会的捐赠者跪在被圣母子神像（约1360-65年）所画的伦佐·维内赞诺的旁边，现藏于大都会艺术博物馆（图2）。8

博物馆的裱片上的照明的首字母I引入了一段拉丁文，写成两栏，这可以被识别为quadragesimalia的片段，也被称为Postilla super Evangelia Quadragesimalia，由帕多瓦的阿尔贝托（约1265-1328年）撰写。9 尽管有对帕多瓦的阿尔贝托作为十四世纪奥古斯丁会最伟大神学家之一的引用，但我们对其生平知之甚少。他生活在一个改变奥古斯丁会的时期，将不同的简单、主要是文盲的隐修士合并为一个会。在十三世纪后期，该会开始生产学者精英，阿尔贝托成为其中的重要成员。他在帕多瓦的研修馆开始了他的学习，而在十四世纪初他参加了巴黎大学，成为神学博士。11 虽然他的许多著作，包括Sententiae，已丢失，其中两种详细的福音书注释幸存下来。12 其中较为显赫的是Postil on the Dominical Gospels (Postilla super Evangelia Dominicalia)。14 奥古斯丁会的福音书注释在中世纪晚期和早期现代时期流行，如显示的几个十六世纪的版本所示。这些版本也很重要，因为没有批评版，或者，事实上，现代版，文本已出版。阿尔贝托·帕多瓦的著作主要在艺术史领域讨论为可能影响乔托在帕多瓦的阿雷纳教堂的壁画周期。19
historical scholarship. Further, illuminated examples, such as the copy of the Postil on the Whole Bible by Nicholas of Lyra (ca. 1270–1349) that originated in the convent of San Francesco in Pesaro before 1402, usually represent the author as a seated, writing friar.20

The Museum’s fragment of the Quadragesimalia contains the preface and three subsequent sections, followed by a sermon introduced by a note written in red.21 The sermon is missing from the printed version of the text from 1544 that the present author consulted.22 A manuscript of the Postil on the Dominical Gospels of Albert of Padua from 1470, probably originating in northern Italy or perhaps Austria, however, follows the same pattern, presenting the exegetical commentary on the Gospels followed by two or three sermons.23

The stylistic features of the illumination in the Museum’s fragment place the origins of the manuscript in the second half of the fourteenth century in northern Italy. The execution of the habit and the head of the friar, painted in a rudimentary but expressive manner, resembles Bolognese illuminations from the mid- and later trecento, while close parallels with the gilded foliate ornamentation can be seen, for instance, in contemporaneous Venetian manuscript art.24 Although it will take further research to pinpoint the origins of the Museum’s fragment, Bologna seems a convincing possibility. The convent of San Giacomo Maggiore was one of the largest and most significant Augustinian houses during the fourteenth century, and its extensively decorated choir books are prominent examples of Augustinian manuscript patronage.25 A feature of the Museum’s illumination that seems characteristically Bolognese is the thick white undergarment visible around the neck of the figure’s black habit. The same detail can be seen on Augustinian friars depicted by Nicolò di Giacomo da Bologna (act. 1349–1403) in a miniature representing a church consecration in a choir book in the Museo Civico Medievale in Bologna (fig. 3).26 Another parallel is offered by an illumination in an antiphony from the 1360s that shows two Augustinian friars singing; visible around their necks is the white of the garments beneath their habits.27 Also notable in this illumination is the fine white linear decoration in the blue background, which is similar to that in the Museum’s illumination. Another illumination by Nicolò di Giacomo, in a copy of the Decretals of Gratian, depicts a preacher, a confessor, and penitents (fig. 4). It enables us to compare the figure of Albert of Padua with that of the preaching bishop. While the pulpit in the Decretals was depicted as more elaborately carved than that in the Quadragesimalia, the three-dimensional wooden pulpits and the posture of the preachers raising their right hands while resting their left on the edge of the pulpit are similar. The more rounded eyes and the modeling of the head in the Museum’s illumination are somewhat different from the elaborate examples by Nicolò di Giacomo. The preaching gesture and the execution of the profile of the friar are perhaps closer to a cutting depicting Saint Augustine from another Bolognese choir book attributed to Nicolò di Giacomo.28 Bologna is not the only possible place of origin for the Museum’s fragment, however: Nicolò di Giacomo and trecento Bolognese illumination art were influential in such other contemporary northern Italian schools as Padua and the Veneto.29 The vivid style of the illumination of the Museum’s fragment also resembles, for example, the work of the Master of the Brussels Initials (act. ca. 1390–ca. 1420), who was trained in Bologna but then worked in Padua.30

Two rounded holes were cut from the top of each of the four leaves of the Museum’s bifolios. The shape and position of the holes suggest that they may be the result of an effort to eliminate traces of ownership. Coats of arms and donor portraits, usually on the lower edges of folios, are present on numerous contemporary Bolognese manuscripts.31 When these have been cut
making it likely that the manuscript from which the Museum’s fragment originates was created for an elaborate convent library or a learned friar. There are numerous notes and the main text is underlined at some places, showing that it was studied intensely. We must also acknowledge the possibility of a commission from outside the Augustinian Order. There were copies of Albert’s *Quadragesimalia* in the libraries of other mendicant orders, such as the Sacro Convento of Saint Francis in Assisi, where it appears in a 1381 inventory of the library. The more likely scenario, however, is that the manuscript was intended for, or at least later obtained by, an Augustinian convent, for an eighteenth-century note in the margin at the bottom of the first folio attests to further interest in Augustinian theology by reminding the reader of the Gospel commentary by Simone Fidati (1295–1347), an Augustinian friar from Cascia. In this respect, the Museum’s fragment could shed light on a new segment of Augustinian manuscript patronage. While antiphonaries and graduals from Augustinian convents were often decorated with friars singing or writing—in some cases even preparing the parchment for manuscripts—the Museum’s illumination offers one of the earliest depictions of an Augustinian friar preaching and a rare example of figural decoration in an Augustinian Gospel commentary.

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NOTES

3 Ibid., sheet for MMA 96.32.1a–d.
4 For an introduction to the history of the Augustinian Order, see Grossi, Marin, and Ciollini 1993. On the artistic patronage of the Augustinians, see Bourdua and Dunlop 2007.
6 Warr 2007.
7 Ibid., pp. 22–23.
9 The illumination is at the beginning of the preface (praefatio) of the Postilla super Evangelia Quadragesimalia: “In Christi nomine. Quod dudum michi propositum fuerat vosque pluris excitasti ut facerem, quadragesimalium evangeliorum, cum his quoque, quem de passione domini in maiori, et ipsius resurrectionem in paschalis [s is crossed out] septimannis leguntur.” The Quadragesimalia consists of five sermons commenting on the Lenten Gospel, John 13:1–3, which is included in the liturgy on Holy Thursday. On the works of Albert of Padua, see Schneyer 1969, pp. 124–50, especially pp. 130–46; see also Zumkeller 1966, pp. 50–52, especially p. 51; and Ossinger 1768, pp. 668–70. On his Postilla super Evangelia Quadragesimalia, see Delcorno 1997, pp. 92–94.
10 In addition to Augustinian scholarship, literature on theology and on sermons in general notes Albert’s significance; see, for example, Delcorno 1974, p. 45. For the most recent and thorough account of Albert’s life, see Bottin 2014.
11 Albert is first mentioned in notarial acts and testaments dated 1299 and 1300 as frater; then in 1316 as baccalaureus; documents published in Bonato and Bottin 2014, pp. 193–201. He was probably deceased by 1328, and he is remembered in the conventual obituary as a “most worthy professor of holy writ” (“Alberti de Padua sacre pagine dignissimi professores”); Pisani 2008, pp. 204–5, 340n25.
12 Saak 2012, p. 220.
15 The manuscript copies are listed in ibid., p. 146; and Bonato and Bottin 2014, pp. 191–92. They are Staatsbibliothek, Bamberg, MS Theol. 1 (Q. ii. 25) (15th century); Cathedral Library, Burgo de Osma, MS Cod. 36 (15th century); Biblioteca Jagiellonska, Cracow, MS 151; Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, Darmstadt, MS 1448 (last third of the 14th century); Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence, F. 4; Biblioteca Gdanska Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Gdánsk, MS 2032 (15th century, fragmentary); Badische Landesbibliothek, Karlsruhe, MS 374 (15th century); Bibliothèque Municipale, Laon, MS 590; Stadtbibliothek, Mainz, MS 151; Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, CLM 26958, 26916; Biblioteca Comunale Forteguerriana, Pistoia, MS 205 (D 307) (15th century); Ústřední Knihovna, Prague, I. C. 14, and Kap. A. LXXIX 3; Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ross. 521; Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, MS NB 4889 (15th century).
17 “Item magister Albertum de Padua, qui edidit postillas bonas super Evangelia dominicalia et quadragesimalia”; Jordan of Saxony 1943, p. 240.
18 According to Bonato and Bottin 2014, pp. 189–90, the early printed editions are Expositio evangeliorum quadragesimalium (Venice: Jacobum Pentium de Leucho, 1523); Expositio evangeliorum quadragesimalium (Venice: Nicolaum Zopinum de Aristotile de Ferrara, 1525); Expositio evangeliorum quadragesimalium (N.p.: in aedibus Petri Pauli Porri Chalcoctypii Taurini, 1527); Expositio evangeliorum quadragesimalium (Paris: per Ambrosium Girault, 1543); Sermones quadragesimales (Venice: apud Marcum Antonium Zalterium et Michaelem Zenattum, 1584). In addition, I stumbled on an edition from 1544 in the University Library in Cambridge: Albert of Padua, In evangelia quadragesimalia utilissimae conciones (Paris: apud Audoenum Petit, 1544); Cambridge University Library, G*6.13-(E).
20 This copy of the Postil on the Whole Bible by Nicholas of Lyra is in the University of Manchester Library, Latin MS 29, 30, 31; see James 1921, vol. 1, pp. 81–87. The illumination is on MS 29, fol. 1r, described in ibid., p. 83.
24 An example of similar foliate decoration connected to a nonfigural initial can be seen on fol. 5v of Statuti e legge di Venezia (Venice, 1346–52), Cambridge University Library, MS Add. 7463; Binski and Zutshi 2011, pp. 408–10, no. 427.
25 See Benevolo and Medica 2003, pp. 231–84, nos. 11–25, for descriptions of the surviving choir books.
27 Nicolò di Giacomo, illumination in an initial A (Alleluia) depicting two Augustinians singing, in Antifonario del tempo (Venice, 1553), Museo Civico Medievale, Bologna, MS 600, fol. 40r; Benevolo 2003, p. 19, and Benevolo and Medica 2003, p. 258.
29 For codex illumination in Padua and the Veneto, see Mariani Canova 1992.
31 One example is fol. 3v of Antifonario dei Santi, MS 603, Museo Civico Medievale, Bologna, along the bottom of which two coats of arms, a saint, and two donors are depicted. Next to the donors an illumination was cut out from the folio. Medica 2003b, p. 278.
33 Hackett 1992. Later literature takes this suggestion as a fact; see, for example, Saak 2002, p. 244.
36 Another early parallel to an Augustinian preacher, also represented standing in a wooden pulpit, can be seen in the wall painting depicting the preaching of Fra Reginaldo attributed to the workshop of Pietro da Rimini in the Cappellone di San Nicola in Tolentino. Benati 2005, pp. 118–19.
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ARTICLES
Coloring the Temple of Dendur
Erin A. Peters

Inscriptions on Architecture in Early Safavid Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum
Barry Wood

The Significance of Azurite Blue in Two Ming Dynasty Birthday Portraits
Quincy Ngan

Manet’s Boucher
Emily A. Beeny

The Wet Nurse in Daumier’s Third-Class Carriage
George D. Sussman

RESEARCH NOTES
Inscribed Kassite Cylinder Seals in the Metropolitan Museum
Gina Konstantopoulos

The Silver Stag Vessel: A Royal Gift
Theo van den Hout

An Illuminated Fragment of the Postil on the Lenten Gospels by Albert of Padua
Krisztina Ilko

Two Embroideries Used as Liturgical Cuffs
Alice Isabella Sullivan

Scenes from the Life of Jean de La Barrière by Matthieu Elias
Catherine Phillips

Eighteenth-Century Ironwork from Great George Street, London
Max Bryant

A Hidden Photograph by Julia Margaret Cameron
Nora W. Kennedy, Louisa Smieska, Silvia A. Centeno, and Marina Ruiz Molina

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Nobuko Shibayama, Dorothy Mahon, Silvia A. Centeno, and Federico Carò