Introduction

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

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

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


2 The only published study of Guibert’s life is Hippolyte Delehaye, “Guibert, abbé de Florennes et de Gembloers, XIIe et XIIIe siècles”, Revue des questions historiques, 46, 1889, p. 5-90 (reprinted in Hippolyte Delehaye, Mélanges d’hagiographie grecque et latine, Brussels, 1966, p. 7-83). I hope to publish my doctoral dissertation on Guibert of Gembloux, entitled De horizonten van Guibertus van Gembloers (ca. 1124-1214). De wereld van een benedictijns brieveschrijver in tijden van een verschuivend religieus landschap (Ghent University, 2014).

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


5 Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum bibliothecae regiae Bruxellensis, 1, Brussels, 1886, p. 578-582.
the period in which he lived. In addition, the text addresses some important issues concerning authorship in the central Middle Ages.

Content, authorship, date

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

12 Guibert decided to join the community of Marmoutier in Tours, founded by his favourite saint, Martin of Tours. For more information on Guibert’s stay, see his letters to the community of Marmoutier and to Philip of Heinsberg, archbishop of Cologne, in Guibertus Gemblacensis, *Epistolae, op. cit.*, n. 4, Ep. 3-9, p. 59-151 and Ep. 12-14, p. 179-209.
However, *De destructione* is more than an account of the fire and destruction of the monastery of Gembloux. Within the framework of this historiographical narrative, Guibert provides the readers of MS 5535-37 with information on the genesis of the letter treatises that follow *De destructione* in the codex. In fact, the codicological analysis of *De destructione* (see below) demonstrates that the text was written on a single quire that was probably added to the collection of letters at a later stage. It is thus likely that Guibert meant *De destructione* to function as an introduction to this collection of letter treatises. In fact, by describing what motivated him to write and collect these letter treatises Guibert indirectly instructed readers how to interpret his work. The letters were written “when he was younger” for the benefit of his friends and family, because the sad destruction of the monastery in 1157 had inspired in him the desire to exhort others to the imitation of Christ. At the request of others, Guibert later collected these letters into one manuscript, by his own account without having revised them first due to his frail health. This implies that he normally did “correct” his works before composing them into a manuscript. However, he clearly felt ill at ease with the lack of sophistication of his earlier letter treatises, as he tried to excuse the uncultivated style of the letters. Of course, assertions of one’s lack of talent are typical examples of the humility topoi with which medieval texts are replete. As such, they firmly place Guibert in the traditional discourse on writing and authorship and prove that he was well acquainted with the expectations of a monastic audience.

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

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

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

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

The emphasis in *De destructione* on authorship renders the question of the attribution of the text highly pertinent. Whereas the Bollandists just assumed that Guibert of Gembloux was the author of *De destructione*, Hippolyte Delehaye voiced serious doubts about the ascription of the text to Guibert. Instead, Delehaye claimed that the text was written by a monk from Gembloux in imitation of Guibert’s *persona* and style.  

He substantiated his hypothesis with four arguments. First, he pointed out that the manuscript itself contained no definitive ascription of the text to Guibert, for example by way of a title. Second, he objected that *De destructione* formed a separate codicological unit that was only added to the codex after the collection of letter treatises was completed. However, neither of these arguments necessarily invalidates Guibert’s authorship of the text. Another of the manuscripts forming Guibert’s literary legacy, MS 5397-407, also opens with a separate codicological unit that was added to the main manuscript, which is devoted to Saint Martin. This unit contains a single text known as *Apologia sancti Sulpicii archiepiscopi*. This text is generally acknowledged as the work of Guibert of Gembloux, yet it also lacks a title ascribing it to Guibert. Furthermore, the *Apologia* too is intended as an introduction to the main part of the manuscript. *De destructione* thus bears remarkable similarities in function and production to the *Apologia*, Guibert’s authorship of which nobody has disputed.

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

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16 For example, in the prologue of his verse *Vita sancti Martini* Guibert apologized for his “mediocre and rather humble style” and in his *Apologia sancti Sulpicii archiepiscopi*, he spoke of the limitedness of his talents, his crude style, his verbosity and his roughness. See *Die rhythmischen Martinsschriften Guiberts von Gembloux (BHL 5636 / 5637)*, ed. Peter Orth, Leiden and Boston, 2017 (Mittellateinische Studien und Texte, 50), (see p. 43.
Finally, Delehaye repudiated Guibert’s authorship of *De destructione* because of a pertinent chronological error in the events mentioned in the text. In the second paragraph the text states that the fire of 1185 was the cause of Guibert’s abandonment of his community. Indeed, Guibert did leave Gembloux for Tours after the fire, yet *De destructione* does not speak of his stay in Tours, but of his sojourn with Hildegard of Bingen. In fact, Guibert stayed at the Rupertsberg in 1177-1180, long before the fire. Here Delehaye did touch upon an important issue for the attribution of the text to Guibert. It was not uncommon for Guibert to distort certain facts if this suited his purpose, yet what purpose the chronological “blunder” in *De destructione* could have served, remains unclear. However, considering Guibert’s care in composing his literary legacy, the content and the apologetic tone of *De destructione* – both consistent with Guibert’s other writings – and the striking parallels to Guibert’s *Apologia sancti Sulpicii archiepiscopi*, it seems more far-fetched to posit, as Delehaye did, the existence of another monk of Gembloux monk who was apt at imitating Guibert’s style and cared enough about his literary legacy to compose an introduction to MS 5535-37, than it is to accept Guibert’s authorship.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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21 See Karine Ugé, *Creating the Monastic Past in Medieval Flanders*, York, 2005, e.g. p. 74 or p. 113; Steven Vanderputten, *Monastic Reform as Process: Realities and Representations in Medieval Flanders*, 900-1100, Ithaca & London, 2013, e.g. p. 27.
In *De destructione* Guibert made ample use of the concept of decline. For example, he extensively lamented the detrimental effects on the communal life at Gembloux of the fire that had destroyed his abbey, thus inscribing the monastery into a discourse of waning discipline. Yet this period of sadness had one positive outcome, he claimed, because it made him realize the importance of letter-writing and moral exhortation. He also justified his stays away from Gembloux by referring to the morosam nimis ordinis restitutionem, a phrase conspicuously absent from the edition by the Bollandists. In other words, Guibert used the discourse of crisis as a literary strategy, either to excuse his disobedience to his abbot or to account for his literary ambitions. However, the reform measures Guibert took during his abbacy at Gembloux indicate that he considered the situation at Gembloux in need of severe corrections and suggests that he was indeed concerned about the state of monastic discipline in the monastery. The discourse of decline was thus not merely a literary strategy; it also reflected Guibert’s own evaluation of the situation at Gembloux.

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

**Description of the manuscript**

*De destructione monasterii Gemblacensis* is preserved in only one manuscript, MS 5535-37 of the Royal Library of Belgium in Brussels. This parchment manuscript, indicated with the siglum *T* in the present edition, was produced in the monastery of Gembloux at the beginning of the thirteenth century, probably around 1204-1214. The final folium,
fol. 163v, bears an ownership mark (*Liber sancti Petri Gemblaco*) and a note stating that the manuscript was composed by Guibert of Gembloux, “abbot of our monastery”.

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

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

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

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28 I would like to thank Valeria Van Camp and Els De Paermentier for their advice and expertise in identifying the hands of MS 5535-37.
29 For a description of this manuscript, see Albert Derolez, “Introduction”, in Guibertus Gemblacensis, *Epistolae, op. cit.*, n. 4, p. xiii – xxiii; for his analysis of the hands involved in the production of the manuscript, see p. xviii – xx.
The second and third unit, containing Guibert’s letter treatises, were in all likelihood produced together. It consists of 20 quires of 8 folia, \(^{31}\) numbered from A to U. The lack of quire numbering on the first quire, containing \textit{De destructione}, indicates that this quire was only added to the letter treatises after the production of the second and third codicological unit was completed. The second unit (fols. 5-100, 12 quires) contains the first ten letter treatises and was written by hand B. Letters 9 and 10 are incomplete and end rather abruptly in the middle of a sentence. The third codicological unit (fols. 101-163, 8 quires) contains the remaining four letter treatises, written by hand B until fol. 104r and continued by hand C until the end of the manuscript. One folium, fol. 107, was written by another hand. At the bottom of fol. 163v a formula of anathema was added together with the ownership mark mentioned above.

**Previous edition**

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

\[^{31}\text{With the exception of the ninth quire, which comprises nine folia, and the tenth and thirteenth quires, each of which comprises seven folia.}\]
\[^{32}\text{Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum, \textit{op. cit.}, n. 5, p. 578-582.}\]
\[^{33}\text{Frédéric de Reiffenberg, “Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la bibliothèque royale. Lettres de Guibert, abbé de Gembloux (1194), et de Florennes”, \textit{Annuaire de la Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique}, 7, 1846, p. 51-73, see p. 70-72.}\]
The present edition

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

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

This means, for example, that I have included pietatis sua dexteram porrexit (fol. 1v) in the apparatus as a reference to Gregory of Tours’ Libri de virtutibus sancti Martini episcopi, a text well known to Guibert as it deals with his favourite saint, Martin of Tours. On the other hand, I decided against including rabie luporum (fol. 2r), which could derive from the letters of Ambrose, Jerome, or Alcuin of York, or even from more recent authors such as Peter the Venerable or Bernard of Clairvaux. To give another example, variations of de exilio in patriam, de labore ad requiem, de tenebris ad lucem, de morte ad uiam (fol. 2r) were frequent throughout the Middle Ages. To pinpoint one or two texts as
“the source” for this phrase would be highly arbitrary and therefore I chose to omit it from the apparatus. In order to keep the apparatus concise, I abbreviate references to the sources in the footnotes. A list explaining the abbreviations used in the notes, with full bibliographical reference, is included below.

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

Augustinus, *Enarr. in ps.*

Augustinus, *Epist.*

Augustinus, *Serm.*

Cyprianus, *Epist.*

CAO

Gregorius Magnus, *Hom. in euang.*

Gregorius Turonensis, *Libri de virt.*

Guibertus Gemblacensis, *Epist.*

Guibertus Gemblacensis, *Apologia*

Hieronymus, *Contra Ruf.*
Hieronymus, *Comm. Es.*


Hieronymus, *Epist.*


Horatius, *De arte poetica*


*Miss. Rom.*

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

*Regula Ben.*


*Regula magistri*


Vergilius, *Bucolica*

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

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

Date of the text:
1204-1214

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

Previous editions:
Frédéric de Reiffenberg, “Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la bibliothèque royale. Lettres de Guibert, abbé de Gembloux (1194), et de Florennes”, *Annuaire de la Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique*, 7, 1846, p. 70-72 (partial).
*Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum bibliothecae regiae Bruxellensis*, 1, Brussels, 1886, p. 578-582 (partial).

///f°1v Cum[ Reiff. — (°) edax| etiam Reiff. — (°) tectum| lectum Reiff. — (°) circumquaque| circum quoque Reiff. — (°) disgregatione| Dei gregatione Reiff. — (°) meo] omitted by Reiff.

1 Decorated red initial.
2 i.e. Gembloux (in the modern-day province of Namur, Belgium).
3 i.e. Abbot John of Gembloux?
maxime illud augebat quod dejectionem eiusdem domus pre ignauia et negligentia curatorum nostrorum difficillime et in longum, in antiquum decorum uel statum, quod dolens dico, releuandum atque reformandam non ignorarem. Quid putas tunc animi in talibus posito et ista uersanti inesse michi posset? Permanere dolor, gemitus et penuria, fugere confusion et infamia et, quod his pernitiouis est, obedientie transgressio, sine qua peruenendi ad Deum nulla uia. Hec et his similia sepius animo reuoluente, benignus et clemens ille misericordialarum pater et Deus totius consolationis, qui fideles suos in temptationibus et tribulationibus sui titubantes, ne desperent, munire et fulcire semper consueuit, michi quoque in hac tribulatione mea, ne caderem et alliderer, pietatis succedexteram porrexit et gressus meos pene effusos in uiam salutis dirigendo corregit et ne ulterius male mouerentur uestigia mea, affectus intentionum mearum in uirtute fortitudinis aliquantisper solidauit. Spiritu enim bono consolatore illo, quem dare Patrem suum fideliter petentibus Dominus ipse Christus pollicetur, ut credo, suggeste ut si in perturbationibus suis optimum solatii genus habere cuperem, ad meditationem sacrarum scripturarum animum meum transferre, quia sicut ait apostolus: 'Omnia que scripta sunt ad nostram doctrinam scripita sunt ut per patientiam et eruditionem scripaturam spem habeamus'9. Quod dum aliquantisper IIë2r actitate cepissem – id est meditari in scripturis ut (6) ex carum frequentatione tristium eventuum meorum solamen et (6) refugium utilis consili(7) percipere(7), sollicitus inquirerem – saluberrimum michi esse frequenter expertus sum, quia cum legissem uel audissem illud psalmiste: 'Sperantem in Domino misericordia circumdabit'10 et illud apostoli: 'Tribulatio probabat, probatio uero spem operatur, spes autem – scilicet in Deo fixa – non confunditur', uiri quoque constantis animi et in tribulatione sua ad Deum fidenter clamantis: 'In te, Domine, speravi, non confundar in eternum'12, quanti putas ista michi profuerint et quantum me nutantem(8) firmauerint? Lectis enim predictis sententiis et similibus quae in scripturis habundant, mira cordis alacritate et fiducia perfusus et quasi ex decidente erectus et ac si ex mortua in spem rediviuam renouatus sum. Adeo enim supradicta scripturae uerba in me conualerunt meque mutauerunt ut(7) de promissione et protectione supera et de retributione Dei pro qualitate meritorum iustis reddenda me certum fecerunt ut pro his adipiscendis quicquid michi gerendum uel tolerandum foret pro minimo ducerem. Hinc est quod Apostolus ad imitationem

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6 obedientie ... uia] cf. Regula magistri, cap. 7, p. 394, l. 1467-1468.
10 Sperantem - circumdabit] Ps. 31, 10 but Sperantem] Sperantem autem.
11 Tribulatio ... confunditur] Rom. 5, 4-5 but Tribulatio] Patientia autem.
12 In - eternum] Ps. 30, 2; Ps. 70, 1.
passionum Christi inter persecutores pro nobis laborantis auditores suos ammonens inconcuussos et interritos stare hortatur, ubi dicit: 'Vigilate, state in fide, uiriliter agite',

13 quia non sunt condigne passiones huius temporis ad futuram gloriam quæ reuelabitur in nobis.

14 Ad quam scilicet gloriam non inanem uel transitoriam, sed inmarcessibilem et ęternam sanctis in cęlo repositam ut michi quoque peccatori adipiscendum spes suppeteret et facultas, quid salubrius uel utilius michi agendum est? Sed quis pre multitudine et tedio ferret, si cuncta que hinc dici possent simul congrere uellem? Vnum tamen adhuc inferam quod et auidentes ad promerenda cęlestis patriae gaudia prouocetur et prouocatos, nisi insensati et attoniti et etiam plusquam ferrei sint, in referendis illie perpetuo confirmet. Quid utrum illud?

15 Qui sequitur me, ait Dominus, non ambulat in tenebris, sed habebit lumen uite. Oues, inquit, meę uocem meam audiunt et ego Dominus uitam eternam do eis. O predicanda semper, ueneranda simul et amplectenda boni pastoris erga oues suas uigilantia, quas non alio quam adorandi sanguinis sui precio ab eterno redemit interitu quasque obedientia sua pro eis patri exhibita et laboribus quos hic – id est in mundo isto – a mortifero prime prua- ricationis seu inobedientie reat eu expediet et sollicite cura pastorali perhenniter intendit! Pascit enim semper eas per doctores, quos sibi succedere facit spiritualibus sacre scripture dubibus tanquam herbis uirentibus, et quamdiu uersantur in deserto huius seculi ab incursu uel rabie luporum – hoc est malignorum uel hominum uel demonum – protegit et defendit. Nec in his suffragia diligentie suo terminare decernit, sed cum his terminus extreme diei ut ad uile reducantur aduenerit, de exilio ad patriam, de labore ad requiem, de exilio ad patriam, de labore ad requiem, de morte ad uitam per angelos reducit perpetuam //f°2v ut iocunda uisionis et faciei sui claritate, in quam desiderant angeli prospicere, frui tribuenus clarificet in ęternum. Quis tantorum largitatem munierum benignissimi redemptoris et respectum misericordie eius in eos quos, nisi nimia pietatis sue caritas reuocaret, ob ingratitudinem uel inobedientiam et cetera mala ipsorum iuste punire posset, si uellet; quis, inquam, ista bonitatis eius insignia digne perpendens non statim mutetur et exuens ueterem hominem cum actibus suis nouum – id est ipsum Christum – festinet induere et eum imitando propter speu futuri retributionis quali alteratus exultet, legetur et interno gaudio tripudiet totusque in amorem Dei eliquesceat, et transeat in gratiarum actiones, laudens eum perhenniter super inenarrabilibus beneficiorum eius donis. Ex his autem quod nunc – id est in diebus senectutis meę – dico uel profero aliqua iam ab adolescentia mea actitare inchoaui, nesciens quando de medio me factor meus uellet tollere et utrum ad

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(4º utrum] added above the line. — (6º eliquesceat] my correction, eliqueset T. — (cº inchoaui] before correction incoaui.

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13 Vigilate - agite] I Cor. 16, 13.
14 quia - nobis] Rom. 8, 18 but quia] quod.
15 Qui - uię] Ioh. 8, 12 but ambulat] ambulabit; Dominus] omit.
16 Oues - audiunt] Ioh. 10, 27.
17 et - eię] Ioh. 10, 28.
18 in - prospicere] I Petr. 1, 12 but in quam] quem.
20 gratiarum ... donis] cf. II Cor. 9, 15.
Guibert of Gembloux's De destructione monasterii Gemblacensis

senium peruenirem; hoc autem certissimum habens quod quantumcumque uiuerem uel laborarem, nullis operibus aut exercitiis magnitudinem retributionis eius superarem. Sed ne iactanter loqui et gloriarm quere uidear, a iuuentute quidem mea illi me cepisse servire confiteor, sed nec tam feruenter, nec tam sedule sicut expendisset et oportuisset ideoque bonitatem eius obsecro ne delicta ipsius iuuentutis meę et ignorantias meas meminerit uel imputet, sed clementer ignoscat et perdonet. Si qua vero ei placita – quod uix credo – aliquando exercui, ipse michi ea, ne a dyaboli fraudibus aut insidiis corrumpantur uel auferant sua gratia, ad quantulamcumque mercedem consueveret dignetur. Cum igitur adhuc junior frequenti lectione sacri eloquii instructus et iustos premiis remunerandos perhennibus et inustos supplantis tartareis puniendo didicissem, hinc delectatus, inde perterritus lasciarias iuuentutis et ineptias cepi deserere et abhominari, seria uero que grauiors etatius emulari et amplexi, uigilando scilicet, ieunando et orando, missis quoque audiendis insistendo et earum celebratoribus deuere ministrando et(\textsuperscript{a}) sepulsus quam eatenus feciscim ecclesias frequentando(\textsuperscript{b}), quę quidam peruersi magis ypochrisi deputabant quam simplicitati uel puritati. Ego autem inter hec immotus manens et sciens quia vir otiosus in desideriis est\textsuperscript{c} et quoniam otiositas inimica est anima\textsuperscript{d}, cepi mecum cogitare quomodo et Deo gratius et michi utilius atque honestius uiuere possem uenitque in mentem ut premisso Dei amore, cui nichil prorsus conferendum est, et subiuncta mei cura, terció de salute proximi, quem precepto divino uniusquisque sicut sepulsus ibetur diligere\textsuperscript{e}, competentem pro posse gererem sollicitudinem et bona atque iusta uisa est hius sermonis suggestio ingerens hominem fidelem non sibi soli, sed quibuscumque preualet(\textsuperscript{f}) utilem esse debere et in lucrantis Deo animalibus ipsum qui per earum salute tanta in carne sua pertulit studiere semper imitari. Hoc instinctum cum, ut predixi, adhuc esset junior habereamque plures amicos, nepotes, coetaneos diversis michi rebus confederatos fidemque, quam Deo proponerent, non ei, sed mundo cui abrenuntauerant malo suo consuerant et non satis curantes quod scriptum est: 'Adulteri, nescitis quod quicumque uoluerit amicus esse hius mundi, inimicus Dei constituitur'\textsuperscript{g} grauiertque super his dolorum, uidens eos ab illecebris mundi reuocare et ad amorem Dei prouocare, non causa iactantie uel ostentationis scientie que fere in me nulla est, cepi eis scriptitare et gratia sincere dilectionis et salutis eorum multas eis scripsit epistulas, in quibus ad eos inscrivendo perplura scripturarum tum lenia, tum mordatia inserui testimonia; de quibus uidelicet epistulis si quis querat ad quomodo ut utilitatem scripserim eas cum sufficiet et superhaberant scriptura lectoris suos ab amore mundi pernicioso retraheant et ad salutiferam Dei dilectionem reducentes, sed et ad bonorum probitates morum sectandum quoslibet optime informantes, breuiter respondeo quia et michi non nichil et eis quibus misse sunt plarium profuerunt(\textsuperscript{h}). Michi

(\textsuperscript{a}) consuerare[ before correction seruare. — (\textsuperscript{b}) et] added above the line. — (\textsuperscript{c}) Note added in the margin, partly cut off: [hu]cucus. — (\textsuperscript{d}) preualet[ before correction ualet. — (\textsuperscript{e}) michi] in Boll. — (\textsuperscript{f}) profuerunt[ profecerunt Boll.

\textsuperscript{21} uir - est\textsuperscript{p} Prou. 13, 4 (Vetus Latina).

\textsuperscript{22} otiositas - anime\textsuperscript{p} Regula Ben., cap. 48, p. 598, l. 1.

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

\textsuperscript{24} Adulteri - constituitur\textsuperscript{p} Iac. 4, 4 but quod] quia; uoluerit] ergo uoluerit.
Sara Moens

quidem quoniam ex otioso studiosum fecerunt, illis autem multo magis qui earum ammonitionem libenter suscipientes et a cenosa peccatorum conversa-
tione sese proripientes ex uiciosis viros uirtutum, ut auctori suo placerent et (c) salui fient, ad alta celestis uite se transtulerunt. Nec solum illis quibus olim eadem epistule misse sunt profuerunt, sed et his deinceps si ab aliquibus legantur, non tam insulse sunt, quin aliquatenus prodesse possint. Si quis autem prolixitatem earum culpem, cum magis volumina vel libri quam epistule dicendu,sint, causetur pro tedious parere solet ipsa prolixitas\(^{25}\) dicatque uideri et (c) sonare iactantiam tantam (c) uerborum congestionem (c) et putandum onerasse potius auditores quam instruxisse, audiat huiusmodi reprehensor et sciat quia, teste conscientia mea, in his que tunc temporis scribeam non gloriam inanem nec ullam appetisse ostentationem, sed quoniam amici erant solam eorum quesisse salutem. Quod ipsi quoque intelligentes non uerbum uel scripturarum mearum prolixitate causabantur onerari, sed gaudebant se (c) uehementer et testabuntur (d) edificari. Scribeam autem litteratis quidem, sed seculari litteratura imbutis, diuina uero aut parum aut nichil instructis, sed mundanis occupationibus et illicebris et obligationibus miserabili irredempta ideoque necessarium erat ut multiplicibus sacris doctrinis et testimonii erudirentur ut quod pauca non possent, multe \(/\!/^{26}\) in eis perficerent. Et harum etiam sententiarum compilatio ideo utilis uisa est quatinus his conuenti et conuicti terrerentur, mutarentur, purgarentur et eam quoque Deo inimica est sapientiam\(^{27}\) contemnentes, humilem magistrum qui dicit: ‘Discite a me, quia mitis sum et humilis corde’\(^{28}\) fideli mente sectantes ad sublime regnum illud, in quo regnat ipse, cum eo et eternum regnaturi preuenire mererenent. Rogo in omnibus que premisi, etiam si diligenter discutiantur quid uiuere possit, quod iure reprehensibile uideantur? Si reprehendor homutzio cum sim idiota et indoctus, cur iactanter officium doctorum scribendo usurpare presumperim, respondeo nec iactante, nec ostentationis seu presumptionis, sed caritatis fraterne fuisse ut scriberem, que me urget ut quia ui non possem amicos meos cogere, saltem scriptis ac precibus ammonerem mortiferas seculi uoluptates respueru et disciplinarem conversationem qua celestis gloria adquiritur apprehere. Scientiam uero quam impericia denegat, imperiosa proculdubio caritas Dei nutu ministrat\(^{29}\). Quapropter si quid in hoc commissi esse putitur, non michi, sed caritati que me ad id compellebat inpetentur. Si autem in culpam ducitur molesta prolixitas, super hoc iam paulo ante satisfeci, dicens me ideo plura scripture diuine compilasse testimonia, ut quia ignarus sacri eloquii scribem, quos pauca non possent, multa ad quod intendebam compungendo incitarent. De utilitate uero aut rusticitate dictaminis excusari non indigeo, quia omnes qui me nouerunt sciunt me non esse rethorem aut grammaticum, sed segnem, ignarum et inertem (c) et totius secularis scientie

\(^{(c)}\) et\] added above the line. — \(^{(c)}\) et\] added above the line. — \(^{(c)}\) tantam\] I followed the correction proposed by Boll., tanta T. — \(^{(c)}\) congestionem\] I followed the correction proposed by Boll., congestioni T. — \(^{(c)}\) se\] omitted by Boll. — \(^{(c)}\) testabuntur\] se testabantur Boll. — \(^{(c)}\) inerrem\] before correction inertem.

26 eam - scientiam\] cf. I Cor. 8, 1.
27 illam - sapientiam\] cf. Rom. 8, 7.
28 Discite - corde\] Matth. 11, 29.
29 quam ...ministrat\] cf. Gregorius Magnus, Hom. in euang., liber II, hom. 21, p. 174, l. 9-10.
Guibert of Gembloux’s De destructione monasterii Gemblacensis 295

expertem. Sed ad quid ista? Etiam si proficiens liberalium artium facultate affluere et pollere et propterea decenter possem perorare et persuadere amicos quæ vellem, attamen michi tunc utilius et salubrius uidebatur eisdem qui ignorantem et errabant, ut puris et simplicibus usibus instruerem quam omni cultu defloratis et coloratis sermonibus fauorem eorum michi affectarem. Sed inter hec de obtructatoribus qui nullis pene scriptoribus desunt, ut quid ego, qui nullus sum, causarum, cum summi et sancti ecclesie doctores et magistri calumniias et derogationes inuidorum non potuerint euadere? Ut enim in uno discatur quid de aliis sentiendum sit, legere uel audire possunt qui super his mouentur qua acriter maximus eorum beatus scilicet Iheronimus in prologis quos diuinis libris de Hebreo in Latinum a se translatis prefixal calumniatores operum suorum suggilare. Qui uidelicet elegantissimus sacre scripture interpres Iheronimus et sua modeste commendans et reprehensuros suos grauiter obiurgans: ‘Legant, inquit, prius que scribimus et postea despiciant’ 30, sciebat enim et ueraciter et luculentely dicta susto sensores non posse despicer, ne uideantur non equitate iudicii, sed iniquitate ignora, rogo, inquam, uos uelum quatinus pristinos, cum quibus scribendo et eos ad meliora prouocando delectari solebam, imitemini amicos, ut quia morte subtrahente obuente me hic merentem reliquerunt, uos quasi pro patribus nascentes filii uicem illorum in me consolando suscipiat et senectam meam morti proximam, quibus potestis, officiis sustenit. Suscipite mea et communi uos ut diligentem scripsisse diffuso quidem, sed — ut reor — non inutili sermone, que si legere dignemini an legentibus prodesse possint experiemini. Recipite et uos illa uice illorum qui dormierunt obsecro et quia iam pro etatis antiquitate deficiens nova cudere 34 non ualeo, prisca illa que iuuenis scripsi ac si uobis specialiter dicta pio animo sepuitius evolutus et secundum monita que illic inueneritis uos totos componite, quatinus ad consortium correctorum et in pace quiescentium feliciter ualeatis pertingere. Et quia non in sermone, sed in uirtute caritatis est regnum Dei 35, queso ut in eorum scriptorum meorum

32 Sober red initial.
33 alter - adimpleamus Gal. 6, 2 (Vetus Latina) but portemus portate; legem Christi adimpleamus adimplebim legem Christi.
34 noua cudere cf. Hieronymus, Contra Ruf., lib. 2, par. 31, l. 7.
35 non - Dei I Cor. 4, 20 but non] non enim; sed in uirtute caritatis est regnum Dei est regnum Dei sed in uirtute.
sententiis non queratis eloquium, sed consilium et patienter feratis insipientiam et imperiam meam supportetis, memores uerbi predicti beati Iheronimi dicentis tam imperitum nullum esse scriptorem quin similem sui quandoque inueniat eique imperitum lectorem. Que uidelicet scripta mea uel epistule cum post obitum illorum quibus directe fuerant, alique imperfecte, omnes uero incorrecte, quasi nullius precii diu iacuissent disperse magisque eas abolendas quam reseuerantas et cuncta sic se haberi sciens et in eisdem epistulis nichil reprehensione dignum, nisi inculturn et prolimum stilum, reperiri, unde supra satis fecisse me puto, tandem in hoc cessi petentibus ut quia pre infirmitate corporis et angore animi eas corrigeret et pericere non possem, saltem et a situm) dispersione recollectas et in unum corpus redactas legere uolentibus traderem. Et factum est ita.

SED 37 ut et de ipsis epistulis et de aliis opusculis meis adhuc pauca subjungam, in secunda combustione ecclesie nostre – id est Gemblacensis – quod post aliquot annos – hoc est uno minus a – prima necdum ad integrum restructa, quod ex guerra ducis Louaniensis et comitis Namucensis accidit, non ita sicut in priore me habui, sed e cauernis, in quibus instar noctu vel bubonis ignavi diu delitueram, egressus non uagando, sed meliora explorando propter morasam ordinis restitutionem et propter tardam claustri restaurationem alias demagri. Comperta autem fama celeberrime uirginis Hildegardis nomine, fundatricis et magistræ cenobii quod secus Binguiam oppidum in monte sancti ut cernitur Roberti situm est, illo tantum deuotionis causa me contuli, noticia et orationum eius suffragiis sicut et ceteri qui ad eam simili pro causa numerose confluebant, scire ulens utrum in ea conversationis sanctitas et nominis celebritas concordarent et quia eui preponderaret subtiliter experiri cupiens. Proinde ueni ad eam meus post humilem consalutationem benigne suscepto cum aliquantum collocuti fuissemus, gratia – ut reor – Christi faciente, complacuit nobis in alterutrum – id est michi in eam et ei in me – et uultus nostri non sunt amplius in diuersa

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37 Sober red initial.
38 i.e. Count Godfrey III of Brabant, also count of Louvain and duke of Lower Lotharingia (c.1142-1190).
39 i.e. Count Henry I of Namur, known as Henry the Blind (c.1112-1196).
40 i.e. Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), magistra of the monastery at Rupertsberg.
mutati\textsuperscript{41} quin nos inuicem diligeremus. Ut uero multa pretreem, ipsa procu-
ranter et multum super hoc laborante, rogatu religiosorum uiuror et maxime
suasu episcoporum qui ad eam uisendam gratia deuotionis conueniebant, mansi
cum ea quoad\textsuperscript{42} uixit – id est per duos annos – et uhehmenper deprecantibus
et cogentibus abbatibus et reliquis qui ad eius exequias aduenerant et maxime
sororibus quas illuc ipsa ad seruiendum Deo numero LV aggregauerat instan-
tibus, continuau et tercium. Et cum in alis quibusque necessariis obedienti-
sime eis paruissem, in hoc tantum quod summa intentione extorquere nitebautur
– uidelicet ut cum eis perpetuo degerem – ab obedientia defeci, quoniam consiliu
non fuit, conscientia reuocante, ut hoc\textsuperscript{43} eis concederem. In eadem tamen mora
qua inter illas conuersatus sum, non parum profeci, uidens et admirans et me
ipsum quasi segnem despiciens si non in aliquo imitarer sacram conuersationem
glorioso illius multitudinis omni genere uirtutem refugentis et in sexu\textsuperscript{44} fragili
meritis Hortatu et exemplum magistre suq hostem illum triumphantis, de cuius
magnitudine Deus ad Iob dicit: ‘Non est potestas super terram que comparari
possit et qui factus est ut nullum timeret et ipse est rex super omnes filios super-
bie’\textsuperscript{45}. Sed ne episcopis qui me et sua dignatione et dominę Hildegardis sedula
commendatione diligenper susceperant et quasi in filium adoptauerant inutilis
et ingratus apparerem, non – ut supra dixi – ostentationis causa, sed pie deuo-
tionis gratia multas eis scripsi epistulas inculto – ut michi moris erat – et prolixo
stilo; inculto quoniam non \textit{et}tate, scientia \textit{pater} ego sum et \textit{nescio}\textsuperscript{46};
prolixo autem quia eos quibus scribebam et terrere et instruere uolebam.
Terrere quidem pluribus et minacibus scripturam sententiam, ne \textit{in officio et
dignitate pontificali non uicarii Christi}\textsuperscript{47}, sed mercernaris inuenti\textsuperscript{48} in iudicium
illud grauisssimum quod in his qui male presunt fiet inciderent; instruere uero
lenium uerorum multipli\textsuperscript{49} horatu prouocando eos ad eius imitationem qui
uenit querere et saluum facere quod perierat\textsuperscript{50} quicke posuit animam suam pro
ouibus suis\textsuperscript{51} et pro suo grege mori dignatus est\textsuperscript{52}, quatins hoc retractando et
faciendo ad illorum pertingerent consortium, de quibus canitur: ‘Gaudent in
cesus sanctorum anime qui Christi uestigia sunt\textsuperscript{53,4f secuti}’\textsuperscript{54}. Scripsi preterea
uolumen unum panegericum\textsuperscript{55} ad dominum\textsuperscript{56} Phyllippum Coloniensem archi-

\textsuperscript{41} uultus - mutati I Reg. 1, 18 \textit{but} nostri eius.
\textsuperscript{42} Non - superbie\textit{ cf.} Iob 41, 24-25.
\textsuperscript{43} puer - nesio\textit{ ler. 1, 6} \textit{but} puer – nesio\textit{ nescio loqui quia puer ego sum.}
\textsuperscript{44} ne - inuenti\textit{ cf.} Cyprianus, \textit{Epist.}, ep. 8, cap. 2, p. 41, l. 22.
\textsuperscript{45} uenit - periera\textit{ Luc. 19, 10} \textit{but} uenit\textit{ enim filius hominis.}
\textsuperscript{46} posuit - suis\textit{ cf.} Ioh. 15, 13.
\textsuperscript{47} posuit - est\textit{ Miss. Rom.,} feria 2 infra octavam Paschae, respons.
\textsuperscript{48} Gautent - secuti\textit{ CAO III, p. 234, 2927} \textit{but} sanctorum animel\textit{ anime sanctorum}
\textsuperscript{49} i.e. Guibert’s verse \textit{Vita sancti Martini} recently edited in \textit{Die rhythmischen Martins-
schriften Guiberts von Gembloux (BHL 5636 / 5637)}, ed. Peter Orth, Leiden and Boston,
2017 (Mittellateinische Studien und Texte, 50), p.39-152. Guibert also wrote a \textit{Vita sancti
Martini} in prose, preserved in MS 5387-96 of the Royal Library of Belgium in Brussels,
which remains unpublished.
episcopum de interioribus animi uirtutibus et de miraculorum signis exterioribus, quibus pre multis sanctis excellens in diebus carnis suæ beatissimus confessor Christi Martinus resplenduit, ulens et ipsum archiepiscopum et quoscumque lectores cum ipso uel post ipsum ad admirationem et uenerationem sancti pontificis et ad promerenda beneficiorum eius suffragia incitare. Scripsi et aliis aliqua quæ, quoniam necdum sunt correcta et perfecta sicut uellem, propalare adhuc supersedeo. Quod cum Deo iuuante factum fuerit, legat ea cui placuerit et occupatio permiserit et si quid in his utilitatis inuenerit, Deo omnium bonorum largitoris gratias agat, nec in his uenustatem eloquii, sed utilitatem consilii requirat, sciens quia non in sermone culto, sed in opere iusto sit regnum Dei. Si quid autem reprehensione dignum inuenerit, non indignetur et dum a recta fide non deuiet et sanæ doctrinæ non obuiet, ignorantiæ meæ ignoscat, nec michi imputet, sed domine et imperiosæ caritati, quæ me insipientem faciens quod idoneæ non poteram — hoc est ut scriberem — et in tantum scripta diffundere multo eloquentem instantu compulit. Si amicus est ista legens vel audiens, obsecro ut si scit et potest corrigenda corrigat, aut si alteri amico qui sciat et possit emendanda commendat. Sed ut derogatoribus meis modicum quæ adhuc respondeam, certum est quoniam nulla fere est scriptura nisi diuina que non cum necessariis et utilibus aliqua superflua continet. Numquid omnes qui ante me scripserunt tam circumcisa labia habuerunt et tam considerate locuti sunt ut nihil omnino proferrent superflu? Nullo modo. Si ita est, cur ego omnium minimus non solum de superfluis, sed et de manibus redarguar quasi in scriptis meis nulla penitus inueniantur utilia quibus edificari possint legentes vel audientes? Quid dicande talibus? Esto scripta vel dicta mea sint paleæ, sint folia, sint qualibuscumque uilibus rebus similia. Proinde facile exemplis patentibus detractores meos concludam. Numquid paleæ quamuis leues ex toto sunt inutiles? Non, quia ex ipsis aluntur pecora et inter eas latent et saluantur grana in agris, ne auriginæ dum in spicis sunt ledantur, aut ab auibus diripiantur; in areis, ne a transeuntibus nuda conculcentur et contuerunt; in arboribus uero fructiferis non habentur fructus sine foliis et plerumque ipsi fructus per folia ab imbribus defenduntur et auctulis. Duris nucum testis boni saporis includunt nuclei et aluearibus fimo oblitis mirabili apum opere fabre-facti faui proferunt mellifiui. In mensis diuitum inter preciosa et diuersa


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

52 non - Dei cf. I Cor. 4, 20.

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

54 mensis diuitum cf. Luc. 16, 21.
ferculorum obsonia infirmis abilia agrestium herbarum aliquando inferuntur holera et ut citius et auidius lauta et delicata repetantur fercula, interdum grossiora et austera pergustantur cibaria. Ista me hic congressisse derogatorum stulticia compulerit, qui non considerantes multiformem scripturarum diuersitatem nec scribentium inequalem scientiæ facultatem, si non summis magistris paria uel maiora et rethoricis deflorata coloribus conscripserint, despiciunt, subsanant et irritent, obliito quod dicit poeta: ‘Non omnia possimus omnes’\textsuperscript{55} et quod in operibus suis ‘Quandoque bonus dormitarit Homerus’\textsuperscript{56} est.

\textsuperscript{(3) Homerus] before correction omerus, ‘h’ added above the line.}

\textsuperscript{55} Non - omnes] Vergilius, \textit{Bucolica}, ecl. 8, p. 48, v. 62.
Samenvatting. – De benedictijn Guibertus van Gemblloers staat vooral bekend als de laatst secretaris van de befaamde Rijnlandse profetes Hildegard van Bingen. Hij liet echter ook een rijke literaire erfenis na die de leefwereld van een traditionele monnik tijdens de centrale middeleeuwen belicht. Een van zijn werken is De destructione monasterii Gemblacensis, bewaard in hs. 5535-37 in het Handschriftenkabinet van de Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België. Deze tekst geeft inzicht in Guibertus’ visie op auteurschap, in het bijzonder van een collectie van veertien traktaatbrieven die in het handschrift volgen op De destructione. Aan de hand van verschillende topoi en Bijbelse voorbeelden verantwoordde Guibertus zijn eigen literaire ambities en plaatste hij zichzelf binnen het traditionele geleerde discours rond auteurschap. Daarenboven biedt De destructione een bouwsteen in het onderzoek naar de staat van het traditionele kloosterleven in een tijd waarin het zich geconfronteerd zag met toenemende concurrentie van andere monastieke groepen. Guibertus maakte gebruik van het discours van verval van het traditionele cenobitisme, deels als een literaire strategie waarmee hij zijn daden wou verantwoorden.


Summary. – The Benedictine Guibert of Gembloux is mostly known as the last secretary of the renowned Renish visionary Hildegard of Bingen. However, he also left behind a rich literary legacy that sheds light on the world of a traditional monk during the central Middle Ages. One of his works is De destructione monasterii Gemblacensis, preserved in MS 5535-37 of the Manuscripts Department at the Royal Library of Belgium in Brussels. The text sheds light on Guibert’s concept of authorship, in particular of a collection of fourteen letter treatises that follow De destructione in the manuscript. By employing topoi and biblical exempla, Guibert justified his literary ambitions, placing himself within the traditional learnt discourse on authorship. In addition, De destructione offers insight into the debate on the state of traditional coenobitism during a period in which it was encountering increasing competition from other monastic groups. Guibert employed the discourse of decline of traditional monasticism partly as a literary strategy in order to justify his actions.
Sara Moens (Universiteit Gent) verdedigde in april 2014 haar doctoraat getiteld “De horizonten van Guibertus van Gembloers (ca. 1124-1214). De wereld van een benedictijns brieftenaar in tijden van een verschuivend religieuze landschap” (promotor J. Deploige). Sinds oktober 2014 werkt ze als postdoctoraal medewerker van het FWO – Vlaanderen aan een nieuw onderzoeksproject rond cisterciënzerinnen en de cura monialium in de zuidelijke Nederlanden, 1150-1275.

Sara Moens (Université de Gand) a soutenu en avril 2014 sa thèse de doctorat sur «De horizonten van Guibertus van Gembloers (ca. 1124-1214). De wereld van een benedictijns brieftenaar in tijden van een verschuivend religieuze landschap» [«Les horizons de Guibert de Gembloux (env. 1124-1214). L’univers d’un épistolier bénédictin dans les décennies après la crise du cénobitisme traditionnel»] (dirigée par J. Deploige). Depuis octobre 2014, elle travaille comme chercheuse postdoctorale chez le FWO – Vlaanderen à un nouveau projet de recherche sur les cisterciennes et la cura monialium dans les Pays-Bas méridionaux, 1150-1275.

Sara Moens (Ghent University) defended her Ph.D. “De horizonten van Guibertus van Gembloers (ca. 1124-1214). De wereld van een benedictijns briefschrijver in tijden van een verschuivend religieus landschap” [“The horizons of Guibert of Gembloux (c 1124-1214). The world of a Benedictine letter-writer from the decades after the ‘crisis’ of traditional coenobitism”] (supervisor J. Deploige) in April 2014. Since October 2014 she has been employed as a post-doctoral fellow of the Research Foundation – Flanders on her new research project on Cistercian nuns and the cura monialium in the southern Low Countries, 1150-1275.