

## Guillaume Postel

Few scholars illustrate the conflicting currents of thought which characterised the late Renaissance as clearly as Guillaume Postel, and few carried them to such extremes. On the one hand he was fascinated by esotericism and oddly credulous where apocryphal and spurious texts were concerned. He held firm beliefs in the role of the prophet and the imminence of the millennium preceding the end of the world – beliefs whose roots can be traced back to the Middle Ages and which were deeply affected by the enthusiasm attending the Reformation. He was convinced that France was destined to play a providential part in reforming the Church, and that he himself had a divine mission. This was the stuff of some of the great ‘heretics’ of the time – Giordano Bruno, Francesco Pucci and Tommaso Campanella. Postel’s visionary behaviour led to his expulsion from the Society of Jesus, his incarceration by the Roman Inquisition, and, finally, to his confinement in a lunatic asylum in Paris.

On the other hand Postel was a pioneer. He launched the study of Arabic in Europe - as a teacher he had insights into how the language should be tackled which were far ahead of his time – and he was one of the first practitioners of Samaritan and Syriac. He produced some of the earliest works on comparative linguistics. The manuscripts he collected and edited contributed to furthering biblical studies and to creating a critical attitude to the received texts ultimately due to undermine the very roots of the Christian faith.

This collection of Postel’s works was assembled over more than a decade and completed shortly before the fifth centenary of his birth. Not only does it include editions of quite exceptional rarity, to be found in few libraries on either side of the Atlantic, but it illustrates every moment of Postel’s extraordinary career and gives a remarkably complete idea of the man and his thought.

Born in Barenton in Normandy in 1510, Postel was educated at the Collège de Sainte-Barbe in Paris, where he started to learn some of his many languages, both ancient and modern, and acquired a reputation as a mathematician and a philosopher. In 1536 he was appointed to accompany Jean de la Forest to the Ottoman Empire. La Forest was the first French ambassador to Istanbul and signed the capitulations or trading agreement which would make of France the preferred European commercial partner (and occasional military ally) of the sultan. Although the ambassador and his train made brief stops in the Arab world on their way to the capital, it was in Istanbul that Postel learned Arabic from a Turkish Christian who urged him to contribute to the spread of Christianity in the East.

Postel’s journey inspired some of his first works. In 1537, on his way back to France, he stopped off in Venice, and prepared his *Linguarum duodecim characteribus differentium alphabetum introductio* (1), which came out in Paris in the following year. The twelve alphabets treated are Hebrew, Syriac, Aramaic, Samaritan, Arabic, Ethiopic (which he calls Indian), Greek, Coptic (which he calls Georgian), Southern Slavonic or Serbian, Glagolitic, Armenian and Latin. Although the title reflects the custom of early tourists of collecting exotic alphabets – a characteristic of the reports by Sir John Mandeville in the early fourteenth century and Bernhard von Breydenbach in the late fifteenth century – the book represents a major advance. Postel, like most of his contemporaries, believed that all languages descended from Hebrew, but, besides being the first European to reproduce the Samaritan alphabet, he was one of the first scholars to observe a special affinity between the languages later defined as Semitic – Hebrew, Syriac, Aramaic, Samaritan, Arabic and Ethiopic. He also inaugurated a new era by adding

observations about the grammar of some of the languages he mentions – most notably Arabic. In this connection he composed his famous little treatise on the benefits of Arabic – its immense utility for travellers and merchants, who could use it from the Canary Islands to the Moluccas, its importance for scientists, who would at last be able to read the works of their great Arab predecessors, and its value for missionaries.

Postel's next work to be published, the *De originibus seu de Hebraicae linguae et gentis antiquitate* (2), may have been the first book he ever wrote – in 1533, well before he set out for the Levant. He again presents the idea of Hebrew as the first language from which all others are descended and lists words in Greek, Latin, French and Italian which display points of community with the original tongue. Even if such a view was ultimately to prove misleading, Postel's comparative method was revolutionary.

The *De originibus* was followed by Postel's Arabic grammar, the *Grammatica Arabica* (3) of about 1538. The introduction on the uses of Arabic had already appeared in the earlier work on alphabets, as, indeed, had many of the observations about Arabic grammar, yet the book was a turning point in the study of eastern languages. It was the first grammar of classical Arabic, produced with Arabic types, to appear in print. It was unsurpassed for over seventy years, and even then, with its adaptation for a western readership of the rules set out by the Arab grammarians, it remained a model for later grammars published in Europe. In 1538 the French king, François I, gave Postel a professorship at his new foundation known then as the Collège Royal (and now as the Collège de France). As its holder and the author of the grammar, Postel can be regarded as the inaugurator of Arabic studies in early modern Europe. Two years later he published his geographical and historical study of Greater Syria, the *Syriae descriptio*, a work he would include in his *De universitate* of 1552 (18).

One of Postel's firmest convictions was the importance of Arabic for Christian missionaries, and the need for missionaries to know the Koran and to be able to confront the Muslims with simple arguments, based on tenets common to the three monotheistic faiths, which would inevitably lead to their conversion. This idea can be traced back to the Middle Ages, and, in what is perhaps his greatest work, the *De orbis terrae concordia* (12), written after his dismissal as professor of Arabic in 1542, Postel displayed his own originality, as well as his competence as an Arabist and his familiarity with Islam, by translating sizeable extracts from the Koran into Latin. The quality of his translations is far superior to that of any of the existing Latin versions. When, in 1543, Theodor Bibliander published the Latin rendering of the Koran (9) made in Toledo by Robert of Ketton in the twelfth century – the first complete translation of the text ever to appear in print – he included Postel's translation of the first sura as it appeared on the last page of his Arabic grammar.

At about the same time as his *De orbis terrae concordia* Postel also composed his *Alcorani seu legis Mahometi et Evangelistarum concordiae liber* (8) in which he compared Islam to Protestantism. This was to become an increasingly popular line of attack in Roman Catholic circles.

At this point, filled with missionary zeal, Postel tried to join the new Society of Jesus, leaving Paris for Rome in 1544. To begin with Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Society, welcomed him, and Postel was duly ordained and took the first vows as a novice. Soon, however, he antagonised his supporters with his views about France. The French king, he maintained, would have to nominate a French pope who would then usher in the millennium. Postel was consequently expelled from the Society at the end of 1545. But he remained in Rome, profiting from the many

possibilities of studying eastern Christianity, oriental languages such as Syriac, and, above all, of investigating Jewish mysticism and reading the medieval texts of the Cabala.

From Rome Postel went to Venice in January 1547 to continue his research into the Cabala (which would lead to his Cabalistic publication of the same year, the *Absconditorum a constitutione mundi clavis* (28)). In Venice his belief in his own part in reforming the Church came to the fore. His Πανθενωσια: *compositio omnium dissidiorum* (13) was similar to his *De concordia*, yet it implied a more tolerant attitude to different Christian confessions and contained the assertion that no reformation of the Church could be expected from the Roman papacy in its current state. Postel's choice of a pseudonym, Elias Pandocheus, moreover, revealed his pretensions. In the Cabala the prophet Elias had a particularly significant role. He was a harbinger of peace and concord, a herald of the messianic age, and a chastiser and purifier of the Church. With such persuasions about himself Postel encountered a fifty-year-old nun who, he believed, had a perfect understanding of the Cabala (despite the fact that she had no education), and had been sent to save the world – 'Mère Jeanne', also known as the Venetian Virgin and referred to by Postel as the 'mater mundi' and the 'new Eve'. She was due to play a part of decisive importance in Postel's life – Postel later declared that all he had written since 1547 was intended to celebrate her mission - but in the summer of 1549 he again set sail for the East with the object of propagating Christianity.

Postel went first to the Holy Land and then to Istanbul where he was assisted by another French ambassador, Gabriel de Luetz, baron d'Aramon. On this occasion not only did he proceed with his study of eastern languages, but he gathered an impressive collection of eastern manuscripts and prepared still further what was to be one of his most interesting works, his *De la République des Turcs* (22) which he had started during his first visit to the Levant and which would be published in 1560 and expanded in 1575 as the *Des histoires orientales* (26). Despite the rhetorical hatred of Islam and his call for a crusade, Postel was in fact remarkably sympathetic to the Turks, about whose faith he proved knowledgeable and whose piety and honesty, he believed, compared most favourably with the behaviour of the Christians of the West.

When he was back in France, after another visit to Venice in 1551, Postel was protected by the new king, Henri II, and by some of his leading ministers. He published his *De Etruriae regionis* (14), in which, hoping to strengthen the alliance between the French monarchy and the Medicis of Florence – Catherine de' Medici was the queen of France – he presented Etruria (or Tuscany) as the cradle of civilisation. In his *De Foenicum literis* (17) he explained the role in the dissemination of the alphabet of the French, whose descent he traced to Noah's grandson Gomer, the son of Japheth, while his *De originibus seu de varia et potissimum orbi Latino ad hanc diem incognita aut inconsyderata historia* (19) is a further study on the origins of languages, their descent from Hebrew, and their spread throughout the world. In his *De universitate liber* (18) of 1552, moreover, he included his earlier description of Syria in a more general work on cosmography, adding an initial section in which he declared that the mission of the French descendants of Gomer was to 'restore' Syria and the Holy Land. Also in 1552 he published his *Loy Salique* (32). Dedicated to Henri II, it is an impassioned defence of the Salic law concerning the rights of male primogeniture as imposed by the Gauls and their descendants, whom he describes as the 'first' people.

Postel also started to contribute to Biblical studies. The manuscripts he had brought back from the Levant included some important Arabic versions of parts of the

New Testament (which would later be published by Franciscus Junius) and the *Protoevangelion* (15). This last work was an apocryphal gospel attributed to St James and probably dating from the second century AD. Postel, however, whose susceptibility to forgery emerges from his acceptance of the spurious texts concocted by Annius of Viterbo in his *De Etruriae regionis*, was convinced of its antiquity, regarding it as a missing section at the beginning of the Gospel of St Mark. He translated the Greek text into Latin and had it edited by his Protestant friend Theodor Bibliander in Basel. Despite his own gullibility, by introducing the text into the West Postel marked the beginning of the study of the apocryphal works of the New Testament. This would have an immense impact on Biblical criticism and on the historiography of the first centuries of the Christian era.

The fine prospects which Postel once more seemed to have as a scholar were ruined by his belief that the Venetian nun, who had died while he was in the Levant, had returned to take possession of him and had passed on to him her mission and gifts. Now it was he who, with almost Christ-like attributes, would reform Christianity and usher in the millennium. This he announced in his *Vinculum mundi* (16) of 1552 and, still more boldly, in his *Très merveilleuses victoires des femmes* (31) which came out in 1553 dedicated to Henri II's sister, Marguerite de Valois.

When he found that his calls were unheeded by the Sorbonne he left France for Basel, and then for Venice, and considered allying himself with the Protestants whom he proposed to convert to Catholicism. He entered into correspondence with, and met, some of the 'magisterial' reformers such as Bullinger and Melanchthon, as well as more radical figures such as Caspar Schwenckfeld and David Joris. He also started to work on the Syriac text of the Gospels, and decided to go to Vienna where his old friend Johann Albrecht Widmanstadt was planning to publish it (20). Together with Widmanstadt he produced a Syriac primer (20 & 21), one of the first of its kind, preceded only by Teseo Ambrogio degli Albonesi's *Introductio in Chaldaicam linguam, Syriacam, atque Armenicam, et decem alias linguas* (4) which had been published in Pavia in 1539. Also a close friend of Postel, Teseo Ambrogio had himself taught Widmanstadt Syriac.

The emperor, Ferdinand I, gave Postel a chair at the university of Vienna, and Postel started to suspect that it was the Habsburg ruler rather than the king of France who would lead the Christian conquest of the world. He expressed this view in his dedication to the emperor of his *Cosmographicae disciplinae compendium* (23) of 1561 – a work in which he allowed the Germans too to be descended from Gomer.

Hearing that his works were placed on the Venetian Index by the Inquisition, Postel left for Venice in 1555, convinced of his righteousness and determined to defend himself. On his way he ran out of money and sold many of his invaluable oriental manuscripts to Ottheinrich, the Elector Palatine in Heidelberg. Once in Venice, in November, he was arrested by the Venetian Inquisition and was dispatched first to Ravenna and then to Rome. Not until August 1559, when a mob stormed the Castel S. Angelo after the death of the pope, Paul IV, was Postel liberated.

He made for Basel, and subsequently for Poitiers where he had his *République des Turcs* printed. Again he went back to Venice, and toured northern Europe before returning to Paris in 1562. There, after reverting to his former career of teaching, he was arrested as a political agitator, and in January 1563 was confined in the lunatic asylum of Saint Martin des Champs. But his confinement was moderate. He was allowed to receive visitors, to come and go freely, to provide instruction in oriental languages – he taught Arabic to Joseph Justus Scaliger and Franciscus Raphelengius – and above all to pursue his studies.

It was thus from Saint Martin that Postel corresponded with the French printer Christophe Plantin in Antwerp and, together with the Flemish scholar Andreas Masius, urged him to carry out his plan of publishing a polyglot Bible which would surpass both in excellence and in the number of languages represented the multi-lingual Bible published in Spain at the beginning of the century. The principal objective of the polyglot Bibles was to present as many different early versions of the sacred texts as possible in order to enable readers to assess the reliability of the Vulgate, the standard Latin translation attributed to St Jerome.

The Biblia Regia or Antwerp Polyglot (25) was one of the greatest scholarly enterprises of the second half of the sixteenth century, subsidised by the king of Spain, Philip II, involving some of the best orientalists of the time, and supervised by the Spanish Biblical scholar Benito Arias Montano (who himself provided a fascinating critical apparatus). Since he could not leave Paris himself, Postel dispatched two of his pupils, Nicolas and Guy Le Fèvre de la Boderie, to work on the Peshitta, the Syriac text of the New Testament. The Bible was published between 1569 and 1572, and the difficulty which Arias Montano had in getting it approved by the Catholic Church testifies to its importance in the history of Biblical studies. For it brought to light numerous variants with regard to the Vulgate sanctioned by the Church, and was considered a dangerous instrument of criticism.

Postel spent the final years of his life at Saint Martin trying vainly to carry out the tasks with which he believed he had been entrusted by the Venetian Virgin, developing his ideas on a world monarchy under which the final reformation of the Church would be carried out, and searching for a successor who could take over his mission. He died in 1581. His works continued to be reprinted long after his death. *De Magistratibus Athenensium* (5) ran through four editions between 1635 and 1699, and *De Universitate* was reissued in 1685. *De Etruriae regionis, Syriae descriptio, De Foenicum literis, and La Loy Salique* were all republished in the eighteenth century. Postel, moreover, became a subject of research in his own right. Théophile Raynaud's *Dissertatio* (29) of 1653 and Gottlieb Petzsch's *Exercitatio historico-theologica* (30) of 1704 were the first of a growing flow of studies which have continued to the present day.

Alastair Hamilton, Arcadian Visiting Research Professor at the School of Advanced Study, London University, attached to the Warburg Institute

---

POSTEL, Guillaume. *Linguarum duodecim characteribus differentium alphabetum, introductio, ac legendi modus longè facilimus. Linguarum nomina sequens proximè pagella offeret. Paris, [colophon: Pierre Vidoue] for Denys Lescuyer, [colophon: March, 1538].*

4to, ff. [38]; title printed in red and black and with six lines of specimens of foreign alphabets in woodcut, one large (56 x 56 mm) historiated woodcut initial at the beginning of the dedication, 13 further (38 x 38 mm) historiated woodcut initials in the style of Holbein in the text, with many specimens of letters and texts in oriental alphabets in the text; upper outer corner of the title with small repair, short repaired tears to the gutters of the first four leaves, lightly browned in places; a wide margined copy in 18<sup>th</sup>-century red morocco, spine lettered and ornamented in gilt triple gilt

fillets on both covers; edges gilt; later endpapers, head and tail of spine a little rubbed; three leaves with contemporary annotations in ink; Leo S. Olschki's bookplate on front paste-down. £17,000

FIRST EDITION OF POSTEL'S FIRST APPEARANCE IN PRINT, a treatise on twelve different alphabets, as a preliminary to the project of printing and distributing them: Aramaic, Syriac, Hebrew, Samaritan, Arabic, Ethiopic (which he calls *indicum*), Greek, Coptic, Southern Slavonic, Glagolitic, Armenian, and Latin.

'Like most of his contemporaries, Postel sought the affinities between Hebrew and the profane languages he assumed were descended from it. The characters of primitive Hebrew, like the divine words themselves, had been confused at Babel. Consequently the collection and comparison of alphabets might lead, it was thought, to the recovery of the primitive characters which were alleged to be in almost perfect conformity with the nature of the things they represented. More of the primitive characters were thought to be better preserved in the Semitic than in other languages. But it was recognized that the characters of every language, including Hebrew, had changed with the passage of time. Comparison of the modern Hebrew with other alphabets might therefore lead to the isolation of the universal characters of the *lingua humana*, a first step in bringing an end to the "confusion of tongues"' (Lach, *Asia in the making of Europe*, vol. II p. 510).

'For this work, which describes with some competence the alphabets and grammars of twelve languages, mostly of the Balkans and Near East, Postel has been hailed as the father of comparative philology. But it is important also for what it indicates of his opinions and concerns at this early point in his life; in a number of the typical digressions of sixteenth-century scholarship, the book presents in undeveloped form some of the most important ideas Postel later worked out more fully: the derivation of all languages from Hebrew, the urgency of the Moslem peril, the importance of languages as an instrument of world unity, and the need for sending missionaries to the Mohammedans' (Bouwsma, *Concordia mundi*, p.7).

'Postel's first publication, hailed by Benfey [*Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft und orientalischen Philologie in Deutschland* pp. 225–227] as the starting point of comparative philology. Postel is not unaware of its importance: a woodcut on the ... title-page reproduces in six exotic languages the adage *In magnis voluisse sat est*. The book presents in undeveloped form some of the most important ideas later worked out more fully: the derivation of all languages from Hebrew, the urgency of the Moslem peril, the importance of languages as an instrument of world unity, and the need of sending missionaries to the Mohammedans. The book earned Postel a lectureship of mathematics and philology in the Collège des Trois Langues, later to become the Collège de France, from 1538 to 1542' (Smitskamp).

The section on Arabic in this polyglot primer is by far the most substantial. 'The first European publication to contain an analysis of standard Arabic grammar was Guillaume Postel's guide to twelve ... scripts, *Linguarum duodecim characteribus* ..., published at Paris in 1538 on return from the visit to North Africa and Istanbul in the entourage of Jean de la Forêt. According to the title, Postel intended to provide Europeans with an introduction to the scripts of twelve different languages, including Arabic, and "by far the easiest" method for reading (but not understanding) them.

Thus each language is considered in a separate chapter with a woodcut print of the alphabet, phonetic analysis of individual letters with reference to the sounds of other more familiar languages, and reading exercises ... Postel's introduction, which was rapidly superseded by his own more extensive and more influential *Grammatica Arabica*, was nonetheless important for establishing the shape of things to come' (John Robert Jones, *Learning Arabic in Renaissance Europe (1505–1624)*, p. 149).

Another important linguistic discovery is that of Samaritan, a descendant of Biblical Hebrew: 'Postel had visited Samaritans during his travels in the East and had discussed the interpretation of the Pentateuch with them. The late Professor James G. Fraser demonstrated that the Samaritan Hebrew Grammar, now in the library of the University of Leiden, belonged to Postel. Postel, according to his own statement, had searched for the Samaritan alphabet and the Samaritan Hebrew Grammar, since Samaritan was the language of the Hebrews before the captivity and was therefore more pure and divine. Postel had found and represented correctly the ancient shekel in his *Linguarum duodecim* ...; on the ancient coin Samaritan characters were inscribed. Postel argued that the Samaritan script had been sculpted on the coin "as if to call them back to their pristine origins"' (Marion Leathers Kuntz, *The Original Language as Paradigm for the restitutio omnium*, in: *The Language of Adam. Die Sprache Adams*, Wolfenbütteler Forschungen, vol. 84, p. 126).

'The book was published by Denys Lescuyer, the son-in-law of Pierre Gromors; it was printed by Pierre Vidoue. Although Lescuyer is not well known, the printer is known because he was active for several years and because he worked for some important publishers. It is therefore not surprising that Postel wanted to entrust his publication with a renowned master-printer, as it also contains the first trials of Arabic printing. That accounts for the explicit mentioning of Pierre Vidoue's name at the end of the book' (translated from Claude Postel, *Les écrits de Guillaume Postel II*, pp. 6–7).

Adams P2029; Postel II 1538–1; Smitskamp 241a; not in NUC or OCLC.

POSTEL, Guillaume. De originibus seu de Hebraicæ linguæ & gentis antiquitate, deque variarum linguarum affinitate, liber. In quo ab Hebræorum Chaldæorumve gente tractatas in toto orbe colonias vocabuli Hebraici argumento, humanitatisque authorum testimonio videbis: literas, leges, disciplinasque omnes inde ortas cognosces: communitatemque notiorum idiomatum aliquam cum Hebraismo esse. Paris, [colophon: Pierre Vidoue] for Denys Lescuyer, [colophon: March 27, 1538].

4to, ff. [30]; one large (56 x 56 mm), and one smaller (38 x 38 mm) historiated woodcut initial, and with a few specimens of Hebrew printing; lightly browned or spotted in places; a good and crisp copy in 17<sup>th</sup>-century French speckled calf, spine ornamented in gilt and with gilt-stamped lettering-piece; shelf-mark label removed from spine, hinges a little weak; ownership-inscription in ink 'P. Morin 13 Jan 1559' on title (see below), two marginalia in same hand in the text (one cropped by the binder). £15,000

FIRST EDITION OF POSTEL'S SECOND PRINTED WORK, HIS STUDY OF HEBREW AND ITS RELATION TO OTHER LANGUAGES. 'It is not exaggerated to consider this little work as one of the first – if not the first – step towards "linguistics" in France' (translated from Claude Postel, *Les écrits de Guillaume Postel* II, p. 11).

For Postel Hebrew was the Original Language. Already in his youth he had 'an overwhelming desire to learn Hebrew which he had always considered sacred ... With the aid of a Hebrew grammar and a Hebrew-Latin copy of the Psalms which he had obtained from his Jewish friends he taught himself Hebrew and became expert in that tongue. The acquisition of the knowledge of Hebrew and the brilliance which he soon demonstrated in this language were important turning points in Postel's career and the development of his thought' (Marion Leathers Kuntz, *The Original Language as Paradigm for the restitutio omnium*, in: *The Language of Adam. Die Sprache Adams*, Wolfenbütteler Forschungen, vol. 84, pp. 124-5).

'In his *De originibus* ... (1538), Postel argued that Hebrew came directly from the sons of Noah, and that, from it, Arabic, Chaldean, Hindi and, indirectly Greek had all descended as well ... Around 1539, Postel was appointed to the post of "mathematicorum et peregrinarum linguarum regius interpres in ... the *Collège des Trois Langues* which eventually became the *Collège de France*' (Eco, *The Search for the Perfect Language*, pp. 75-6).

*Provenance:* Pierre Morin, born in Paris in 1531 was an able linguist and church historian. He joined Paulus Manutius' team of editors in Venice. He later was involved in critical editions of the Bible at the Vatican.

Adams P2021; Postel II 1538–2; Smitskamp 241b; not in NUC; OCLC locates copies at Harvard and Washington University.

A SUPERB SAMMELBAND OF THREE OF POSTEL'S EARLIEST PRINTED WORKS, INCLUDING  
'THE FIRST GRAMMAR OF CLASSICAL ARABIC IN EUROPE' (Bouwsma)

POSTEL, Guillaume. *Linguarum duodecim characteribus differentium alphabetum, introductio, ac legendi modus longè facilimus ... Paris*, [colophon: *Pierre Vidoue*] for *Denys Lescuyer*, [colophon: *March, 1538*].

[*bound with:*] POSTEL, Guillaume. *De originibus seu de Hebraicæ linguæ & gentis antiquitate, deque variarum linguarum affinitate, liber. In quo ab Hebræorum Chaldæorumve gente traductas in toto orbe colonias vocabuli Hebraici argumento, humanitatisque authorum testimonio videbis: literas, leges, disciplinasque omnes inde ortas cognosces: communitatemque notiorum idiomatum aliquam cum Hebraismo esse. Paris*, [colophon: *Pierre Vidoue*] for *Denys Lescuyer*, [colophon: *March 27, 1538*].

[*bound with:*] POSTEL, Guillaume. *Grammatica Arabica ... Paris*, *Pierre Gromors*, [c. 1538-40].

[*bound with, at the beginning of the volume:*] THEON OF SMYRNA. [*Greek text at the beginning*] Eorum, quæ in matematicis ad Platonis lectionem utilia sunt, expositio.

E bibliotheca Thuana. Opus nunc primum editum, Latina versione, ac notis illustratum ab Ismaele Bullialdo Iuliodunensi. *Paris, Louis de Heuqueville, 1644.*

Four works in one volume, 4to, ff. [38]; [30]; [22], pp. 10, [ii], 308 (recte 310) title of the first work printed in red and black and with six lines of specimens of foreign alphabets in woodcut, one large (56 x 56 mm) historiated woodcut initial at the beginning of the dedication, and 13 smaller (38 x 38 mm) historiated woodcut initials, many specimens of letters and texts in oriental alphabets in the text; a very clear impression; the second work with a repeat of the large woodcut initial, one repeat of a smaller initial, and with a few specimens of Hebrew printing; the third work with many specimens of Arabic typeset printing; E3 of the first work cropped at lower margin due to oversize of the printed surface (partial loss of one line), D3 cut close, not affecting text; title of the Theon of Smyrna printed in red and black and with woodcut printer's device, text printed in Latin and Greek, in two columns, a few geometrical diagrams in the text; Theon's work a little wormed near the gutter; the three works by Postel with a small, single wormhole only; very good copies in 17<sup>th</sup>-century French dark brown speckled calf, spine lettered and ornamented in gilt, gilt fillets on covers; sprinkled edges; some early annotations to the Syriac and Arabic parts of the *Linguarum duodecim ...* and to the *Grammatica arabica*. £55,000

AN IMPORTANT *SAMMELBAND* UNITING POSTEL'S FIRST THREE PRINTED WORKS, AMONG THEM THE EXCEPTIONALLY RARE 'FIRST GRAMMAR OF CLASSICAL ARABIC IN EUROPE' (BOUWSMA).

'THE *GRAMMATICA ARABICA* WAS THE FIRST PUBLICATION TO ADAPT ARAB GRAMMATICAL TRACTS TO A WESTERN-STYLE GRAMMAR BOOK AND SET AN EXAMPLE FOR OTHERS TO FOLLOW' (John Robert Jones, *Learning Arabic in Renaissance Europe (1505-1624)*, p. 150). Postel explains on the title-page that he was not happy with the woodcuts (*difficiles & male formati*) of the Arabic letters in his *Linguarum duodecim*. Arabic types, 'very probably the first ever cast in Paris' (Goldschmidt Catalogue 158, no. 144) were now available. The work consists of the gatherings D<sup>12</sup> and E<sup>10</sup>, which (according to Postel's announcement on the title) were intended to replace the leaves of the chapter *De lingua Punica, Arabica've* of his *Linguarum duodecim*.

'Postel praises the richness of Arabic literature, emphasizing especially works on astronomy and practical medicine. He attacks the *Neoteristae*, who dispute their value: Nobody can forego the remedies and potions of Arabic medicine; Ibn Sina was able to say on one or two leaves more than Galen in five or six large volumes ... After emphasizing the relationship between Arabic and Hebrew, which makes learning Arabic easier, he sums up the value of Arabic: one of the major languages of the world, it is useful for communication with Moors, Egyptians, Syrians, Iranians, Turks, Tartars, and Indians; Arabic has a rich literature and he who masters this language is able "to pierce all enemies of the Christian faith with the sword of the (holy) texts, to refute them with their own dogmas and through the knowledge of a single language to communicate with the whole world"' (translated from Fück, *Die arabischen Studien in Europa*, pp. 39-40).

The *Grammatica Arabica* is of the greatest rarity on the market, with no copy having appeared at auction in over 30 years.

Bound at the beginning of this *Sammelband* is a first edition of Theon of Smyrna's treatise on the philosophy of mathematics and the different mathematical disciplines, written in the second century B.C., edited in Greek and Latin, and annotated by Ismael Boulliau. Boulliau wrote works on mathematics, optics and astronomy in strong opposition to Kepler. He was the cataloguer of de Thou's immense library which contained a manuscript of the present text. 'The treatise is valuable for its wide range of citations from earlier sources ... It is ... a handbook for philosophy students, written to illustrate how arithmetic, geometry, stereometry, music, and astronomy are interrelated' (DSB).

I. Adams P2029; Bouwsma 1; Brunet IV 837; Postel II 1538-1; Smitskamp 241a; not in NUC or OCLC.

II. Adams P2021; Bouwsma 2; Brunet IV 837; Postel II 1538-2; Smitskamp 241b; not in NUC; OCLC locates copies at Harvard and Washington University.

III Adams P2027; Balagna p. 592; Bouwsma 3; Brunet IV 837-838; Postel II 1540-1; NUC locates copies at Harvard, Yale, and Newberry Library, Chicago; OCLC adds copies at Washington University, and at University of Lampeter, Wales.

IV. *Barchas Collection 2029.*

AMBROGIO'S *INTRODUCTIO*  
INCLUDING A TRANSCRIPTION OF A PASSAGE OF THE LONG LOST ARABIC QU'RAN BY  
PAGANINO

AMBROGIO DEGLI ALBONESI, Teseo. *Introductio in Chaldaicam linguam, Syriacam, atque Armenicam, et decem alias linguas. Characterum differentium alphabeta, circiter quadraginta, et eorundem invicem conformatio. Mystica et Cabalistica quamplurima scitu digna. Et descriptio ac simulachrum phagoti Afranii.* [Colophon:] *Pavia, Giovanni Maria Simonetta, March 1539.*

4to, ff. 215, [1, blank], title printed in red and black within an ornamental criblé woodcut border, text in Latin with passages or characters (some printed in red) in Syriac, Armenian, Samaritan, Arabic, Coptic, Cyrillic and Ethiopic, numerous characters added in manuscript in spaces provided within the text; two illustrations in the text; small dampstain affecting a few fore-edges, occasional very light spotting, but a very good copy in eighteenth-century vellum-backed boards; slightly soiled and rubbed; ownership inscription of the Jesuit College of Pavia at foot of title. £14,000

FIRST EDITION OF AMBROGIO'S WORK OF COMPARATIVE LINGUISTICS. An introduction to Syriac and Aramaic, it is the earliest work to contain printing in Syriac type – Postel's *Linguarum duodecim* of 1538, sometimes credited as the first book to include printing in Syriac, in fact employs woodcut letters for the 'exotic' types. There are also short notices on many other eastern languages, the characters of which have often been supplied by hand for lack of suitable types (in some copies these characters have not always been added, but the present copy has been filled in throughout). Ambrogio (1469–1540), a priest from Pavia, was the first European scholar to acquire a

knowledge of Syriac, having received tuition in Rome from Elia bar Abraham, a Maronite monk who came to Rome in 1515 as a delegate to the Lateran Council. Ambrogio in turn passed his knowledge of Syriac on to Johann Albrecht von Widmanstetter.

THE ARABIC PASSAGE IS PRINTED HERE USING SYRIAC CHARACTERS (ff. 25v–27v, the first instance of printing in so-called *Karshuni*). AMBROGIO'S EFFORTS TO OBTAIN ARABIC TYPE FROM THE VENETIAN PRINTER ALESSANDRO PAGANINO ARE RECORDED IN AN EXCHANGE OF LETTERS WITH GUILLAUME POSTEL WHOM AMBROGIO HAD MET IN VENICE IN 1537, PRINTED HERE AS AN APPENDIX (ff. 194v–200v). PAGANINO'S ARABIC TYPE HAD BEEN USED FOR THE FIRST PRINTED EDITION OF THE QUR'AN (Venice, 1537/8) AND, UNTIL THE DISCOVERY OF THE ONLY KNOWN COPY OF THAT EDITION, IN 1987, AMBROGIO'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH POSTEL WAS THE PRINCIPAL SOURCE OF INFORMATION CONCERNING IT. FURTHERMORE, THE COPY REDISCOVERED WAS AMBROGIO'S OWN, WITH HIS INTERLINEAR TRANSLATIONS; f. 84r OF THE *INTRODUCTIO* CONTAINS A TRANSCRIPTION FROM THIS QUR'AN.

'Albonesi claims to have done everything he could to convince Alessandro Paganino to sell his material, and the deal was about to be concluded when he learnt that Postel had published *Linguarum duodecim* ... which to a great extent anticipated his still unpublished *Introductio*, and in which various oriental languages were in fact printed or engraved. The Arabic type was never purchased, and it is for this reason that this short exchange of letters was printed as part of the *Introductio*: seeing himself brilliantly anticipated by the young Postel, Albonesi tried to ensure his fame for posterity as the first among oriental scholars, demonstrating that his original advantage in the field was indisputable. I believe this is true if the publishing of the *Introductio* was delayed by the author's desire to expand the contents so as to include a greater number of languages than were contained in Postel's work. Nevertheless we find no bitterness, rather there is benevolence in Albonesi's conclusion that the elders should accept and admire the success of the young' (Angela Nuovo, 'A lost Arabic Koran rediscovered', *The Library*, Sixth Series, vol. 12, no. 4, pp. 273–292, pp. 290–91).

The *Introductio* is highly unusual for having been dictated by Ambrogio to his printer, a process described on ff. 140–141. Printing began in Ferrara but was interrupted when Ambrogio took up a post in Pavia. As a result, copies vary in the setting of certain of their signatures. The present copy, an early issue, agrees with the copy cited in Mortimer in having a colophon dated March 1539 (other copies are dated April 1539), the (probably) earlier setting of signature Y and the later setting of signatures i–p.

Dedicated to Ambrogio's uncle Afranius, the *Introductio* is also of musicological significance on account of its description of the 'phagotus', a sort of sophisticated bagpipe devised by Afranius. It is described and illustrated on ff. 178–9.

Adams A957; Mortimer 20; Smitskamp 240; Sander I 319.

POSTEL, Guillaume. *De magistratibus Atheniensium liber, ad Gulielmum Poyetum totius Galliae Cancellarium ... Paris, Michel Vascosan and Galeotus, 1541.*

4to, ff. [6], 63, [1], two woodcut vignettes and one metal-cut vignette in the text; one wormhole through the entire volume, lightly browned, small portion of lower outer corner of f. 55 torn away; a good, still crisp copy in contemporary French brown calf, triple fillets, ruled in blind on covers; text ruled in brown ink throughout; extremities worn, spine restored; title with old shelfmark numerals in ink, short note at foot, and late 18<sup>th</sup>-century stamp 'Bibliothèque Prytanée', slightly later red stamp 'Bibliothèque de l'Université de France' on f. 20. £5000

RARE FIRST EDITION OF POSTEL'S STUDY OF THE ATHENIAN CONSTITUTION.

Postel's study is dedicated to Guillaume Poyet, Chancellor of France from 1538, who was Postel's patron and had probably secured him the nomination by Francois I as professor of mathematics and oriental languages at the Collège Royal in 1539. The book's subject, magistracy, is that to which Poyet devoted his life. Poyet, who was to fall precipitously from favour in 1542, introduced major changes to the French administration in 1539 through the Ordinance of Villers-Cotterets. On Poyet's fall (he was fined and imprisoned for many years) Postel left France after a failed attempt to save his benefactor.

Bouwsma refers to the work as 'the last expression of [Postel's] youthful Hellenism'. This brief, almost dismissive, note mirrors the lack of modern scholarly interest in this particular work by Postel, although it was his most successful publication. It went through nine editions up to 1700, including a Venetian reprint in octavo in the year of the first edition, and an Italian translation of 1543, proof that the work served as an influential schoolbook, and was widely read at the time.

BESIDES REFERENCES TO THE INFLUENCE OF ATHENIAN LAW ON THAT OF THE ROMANS, THE *DE MAGISTRATIBUS* ALSO CONTAINS NUMEROUS REFERENCES TO THE TURKS AND TO OTTOMAN LAW, REFLECTING THE KNOWLEDGE AND INSIGHT POSTEL HAD GAINED ON HIS RECENT VISIT TO THE ORIENT. It thus gives a glimpse at what was soon to follow, such as in the shape of *Alcorani seu legis Mahometi*, which, in turn, refers back to the present work (see *Alcorani* ... p. 12). It is also interesting to note that on leaf 42 of the present work Postel refers to the second book of his *De la Republique des Turcs* (here: 'in secundo rerum Turcicarum libro') as already published, although it was not printed until 1560.

Adams P2016; Bouwsma 5; Brunet IV 839; Caillet 8901; Postel II 1541-1; not in NUC; OCLC locates copies at Oxford, the Library of Congress, and Harvard.

POSTEL, Guillaume. *De magistratibus Atheniensium liber, ad Gulielmum Poyetum totius Galliae Cancellarium ... Venice, [Giovanni Antonio and Pietro de Nicolinis da Sabbio], 1541.*

8vo, ff. 75, [1], title with woodcut printer's device; small erasure to title; otherwise a fine copy in contemporary limp vellum, lower edge lettered in ink, endpapers renewed, spine a little worn. £2500

EXTREMELY RARE SECOND PRINTING, THE FIRST TO BE PUBLISHED IN ITALY, OF POSTEL'S MOST SUCCESSFUL WORK.

The curious printer's device shows a cabbage plant with a serpent wound around the stem above the inscription 'BRASICA' (cabbage plant).

Brunet IV 839; see Postel II 1541–1; not in Adams; OCLC records one copy only, at University of California, San Diego, COPAC records Balesden's copy at the British Library ('cropped') and one copy in the National Library of Scotland; KvK adds copies in Munich (BSB), and in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris; not in NUC, RLIN, or ICCU.

POSTEL, Guillaume. *Quatuor librorum de orbis terræ concordia primus*. Paris, Pierre Gromors for the author, [1543].

8vo, ff. [xvi], 143, [3], title within four-piece woodcut border, woodcut initials, specimens of Greek and Hebrew printing in the text; gathering p with light traces of humidity, only a little spotted in places, tiny wormhole near gutter to the first half of the volume; a very good copy in 20<sup>th</sup>-century patterned boards with gilt-stamped morocco lettering-piece; preserved in a morocco-backed cloth box; inscribed 'De Franccastel' in an early hand in the upper margin of the second leaf; contemporary annotation in ink on the verso of the last leaf; 18<sup>th</sup>-century bibliographical note in Italian on the old rear fly-leaf; a few early corrections in ink and occasional early underlining to the text. £4500

PRIVATELY PRINTED ADVANCE PUBLICATION OF THE FIRST BOOK OF POSTEL'S *DE ORBIS TERRAE CONCORDIA*, HIS VISIONARY MAIN WORK AND MANIFESTO OF HIS PLEA FOR THE UNITY OF ALL COUNTRIES AND NATIONS OF THE WORLD.

'Postel's dismissal from his readership [resulting from his support for Chancellor Guillaume Poyet, who had fallen from grace], which had occurred late in 1542, was both the first great disappointment of his mature life and its first great turning point. He had seemed well on the way to a successful and relatively sedate academic career; but now the direction of his life was abruptly altered, and he found himself without employment, patrons, or means of his own. In fact these losses, as he was to regard them in later years, proved a great opportunity. He could now devote himself wholly to his practical religious concerns. His conversion from scholarly contemplation to missionary activism was completed.

'He immediately set to work on what he was always to consider his basic and most important book, the *De orbis terrae Concordia*. He wrote at great speed, completing this large volume in two months during the winter of 1542–43, working at times in weather so severe, he complained, that he could keep his ink liquid only by melting it with his breath. In keeping with his new sense of vocation, he dedicated the work, not to an individual patron as he had done with his previous books, but to the whole

church. His general purpose was to provide a rational justification of Christian doctrine, to refute the teachings of Islam, Judaism, and paganism, and to suggest certain methods of conversion. The whole was intended as a basic manual for missionaries. In the development of Postel's thought this work is above all important as marking the emergence in his mind of the view that the fundamental method for the communication of religious truth must be rational demonstration. He had large plans for his *De Concordia*. He proposed that it be translated into the languages of the peoples against whose religions it was directed and then given some kind of official status for Catholic missionaries. Such designation naturally required official sponsorship, and accordingly Postel submitted his work to the Sorbonne for approval.'

While waiting for a favourable answer, he had the first book printed privately for his friends. 'But after six months [the manuscript of all four books] was returned to him, neither approved nor disapproved, merely marked "ad facultatem non pertinens." He was bitterly disappointed, but he would not accept defeat. Consoling himself that a prophet has never been honoured in his own country, he sent the manuscript to Oporinus at Basel, who published it.' (Bouwsma, *Concordia mundi*, p. 9).

Adams P2031; Bouwsma 6; Brunet IV 840; Caillet 8904; Postel II 1543-1; NUC locates copies at Harvard, Indiana University, Bloomington, and University of Chicago; no additional American locations in OCLC.

[POSTEL, Guillaume]. *Alcorani seu legis Mahometi et Evangelistarum concordiae liber, in quo de calamitatibus orbi Christiano imminentibus tractatur. Additus est libellus de universalis conversionis, iudicii ve tempore, & intra quot annos sit expectandum, coniectatio, ex divinis ducta authoribus, veroque proxima. Paris, Pierre Gromors, 1543.*

8vo, pp. 123 (recte 124), one woodcut initial and one large metal-cut initial, Hebrew printing on p. 118; lightly spotted or browned, the first gathering with traces of humidity; a good, unwashed copy in a recent binding of old vellum; three old ownership inscriptions on title. £13,000

FIRST EDITION, PRIVATELY PRINTED, OF POSTEL'S ATTEMPT TO RECONCILE CHRISTIANITY WITH ISLAM, at the same time critical of the Protestants, about whom his opinion 'particularly fluctuated' (Bouwsma, *Concordia mundi*, p. 196).

Following the publication of the privately printed first book, the *Quatuor librorum de orbis terrae Concordia liber primus*, and having just received a rejection by the Sorbonne of the manuscript of all four books of his magnum opus, Postel turned his hopes towards the Basel printer Oporinus. He therefore decided not to send passages offensive to Protestant circles to the Basel printer, and put the present treatise separately through the press in Paris, although it was originally intended to form part of the fourth and final book of *De orbis terrae Concordia libri quatuor*.

In the introduction Postel explains: 'because I wrote against the Cenevangelists [i.e. Protestants] at the end of the fourth book so as not to forget those who operate without the approval of the Church, I thought it not suitable to send him [Oporinus] this part

of the work which would not have been approved by the Germans and which would provoke hostility against him for having published a work which was against the laws of his state. It seemed to me sensible to publish this section at my own expense and among my own people [“apud meos”]’ (translated from p. 12).

‘When [Postel] considered the brotherhood of man in the *ecclesia generalis*, he was friendly and eager for Protestant cooperation. But when he considered that Protestant exclusivism which rejected both the Roman church and the wider community of the human race, his anger was aroused to its highest pitch. His belief in the similarity between Protestantism and Islam, which casts light on his estimate of both, constantly affected his attitude toward the Reformers. His *Alcorani seu legis Mahometi et Evangelistarum concordiae liber* spelled out the comparison in detail; and since the work was intended as a continuation or supplement of the *De orbis Concordia*, it is evident that Postel considered the Protestants a proper object of missionary enterprise in the same sense as Moslems, Jews, and pagans. He discussed the similarities between Protestantism and Mohammedanism under twenty-eight categories, among which he included, for example, their common rejection of patristic authority, lack of reference of the Virgin Mary, and abolition of feast days’ (Bouwsma, *Concordia mundi*, p. 196).

‘Both Bibliander [the editor of the first edition of the Koran, printed in the same year as the present publication] and Postel had seriously studied the Koran, and moreover had deepened their understanding of it; they did not condemn the Koran *in toto*. This is especially obvious in the case of Postel, who left out Bibliander’s polemical marginal notes in his own book on the Koran. Postel held the view, that the 28 points *Quid inter Mahumetos & Evangelistos intersit*, which separated the two religions were soon to disappear ... It is probably not coincidental that the Frenchman Postel, who was always dealing with Islam in an understanding way ... published [this work] in the year 1543, just when the fleet of the allied Turks landed in Marseille, which resulted in the publication of many polemical pamphlets’ (translated from Göllner).

IN SPITE OF POSTEL’S ATTACKS UPON MOHAMMED, HE REGARDED HIM ‘AS A GENUINE PROPHET, TO BE RANKED WITH JOACHIM AND SAINT CATHERINE. HENCE TOO, HE FELT THAT THE KORAN SHOULD BE RESPECTED AS A “MIDDLE LAW” BETWEEN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS. Even the “sensuality” of the Koran, which had for so long scandalized the Christian West, had a place in Postel’s scheme: they were to be understood as referring to the time of his own *restitutio omnium*. Finally, he liked to stress the services performed for the world by Islam: its destruction of paganism, a good which he considered far to outweigh the evils of Mohammedanism; the propagation of a certain limited knowledge of Christ; and the distinguished contributions of the Moslem world to the Christian revival of learning. POSTEL MAINTAINED, INDEED, THAT SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD, NO EMPIRE HAD DONE MORE TO PROMOTE THE GLORY OF GOD THAN THE ISMAELITES’ (Bouwsma, *Concordia mundi*, p. 204-5).

Caillet 8889; Bouwsma 7; Brunet IV 836; Göllner 809; Postel II 1543–2; not in Adams; NUC locates copies at Newberry Library, Chicago, and University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; OCLC adds one copy at University of Illinois.

## FIRST LATIN EDITION OF THE QUR'AN

[QUR'AN, *edited by* Theodor BIBLIANDER]. Machumetis Saracenorum principis, eiusque successorum vitae, ac doctrina, ipseque Alcoran, quo velut authentico legum divinarum codice Agareni et Turcae, aliique Christo adversantes populi reguntur, quae ante annos CCCC, vir multis nominibus, Divi quoque Bernardi testimonio, clarissimus, D. Petrus abbas Cluniacensis per viros eruditos, ad fidei Christianae ac sanctae matris Ecclesiae propugnationem, ex Arabica lingua in Latinam transferri curavit. His adiunctae sunt confutationes multorum, et quidem probatissimorum authorum, Arabum, Graecorum, et Latinorum, una cum excellentiss. theologi Martini Lutheri praemonitione. Quibus velut instructissima fidei Catholicae propugnatorum acie, perversa dogmata et tota superstitio Machumetica profligantur. Adiunctae sunt etiam, Turcarum, qui non tam sectatores Machumeticae vaesaniae, quam vindices et propugnatores, nominisque Christiani acerrimos hostes aliquot iam seculis praestiterunt, res gestae maxime memorabiles, a DCCCC annis ad nostra usque tempora. Haec omnia in unum volumen redacta sunt, opera et studio Theodori Bibliandri. [*Basel, Johannes Oporinus, 1542–3*].

3 parts in one vol., small folio, pp. [xxiii], [i, blank], [iii], [i, blank], 230, [9], [1, blank]; [viii], 178, [2, blank]; 163; text in Latin and Greek, with several large and small decorative woodcut initials; upper outer corners of first two leaves cut away (just touching one letter on verso of first leaf) and skilfully renewed, lower (blank) portion of final leaf of text cut away, short marginal tear (without loss) in one leaf (dd4), tiny wormhole to inner margin of last seventy or so leaves (not affecting text), a few contemporary marginal annotations; 'Liber prohibitus' and '1543' added to title in an early hand, three early ownership stamps at foot of title (see below); a very handsome, clean and crisp copy in near contemporary blind-stamped pigskin over wooden boards, brass clasps; slight wear to extremities, small hole in pigskin at lower joint, endpapers a little wormed. £45,000

A FINE, CLEAN COPY IN NEAR CONTEMPORARY PIGSKIN OF THE FIRST EDITION OF THE QUR'AN IN LATIN, THE RARE FIRST ISSUE WITH MARTIN LUTHER'S TWO-PAGE PREFACE AND WITH THE TITLE INCORRECTLY GIVING LUTHER INSTEAD OF MELANCHTHON AS THE PREFATOR TO THE VARIOUS CONFUTATIONS WHICH ACCOMPANY THE TEXT.

The Qur'an is printed here as the centrepiece of a group of translations of Arabic texts known as the Toledan Collection and the whole is edited by the Orientalist Theodor Bibliander (1504–1564). PRECEDED ONLY BY THE ARABIC PRINTING OF VENICE, 1537/38, PROBABLY INTENDED FOR EXPORT AND NOW KNOWN IN A SINGLE COPY, BIBLIANDER'S LATIN VERSION MARKS THE BEGINNING OF HUMANIST KORANIC STUDY IN EUROPE.

In 1542 Luther found a complete manuscript copy of the Latin translation of the Qur'an in Wittenberg and decided to have it printed. He entrusted the manuscript to Bibliander, who, comparing it with three other manuscript copies, prepared the present edition. Bibliander then handed the text to the distinguished Basel printer, Johannes Oporinus. Printing was carried out speedily and under pressure, without the knowledge of the authorities, but news got out before work was completed. The edition was seized and the printer arrested. After lengthy negotiations involving reformers (Luther and Melanchthon included) and authorities in Zurich and

Strasbourg, the city council of Basel released the work on condition that neither Basel nor Oporinus were mentioned on the title-page, and that the edition should be sold from Wittenberg and provided with a preface by Luther. Unlike most surviving copies, this copy contains Luther's separately-printed two-leaf preface, suggesting that it was indeed sold from Wittenberg. The preface is of great significance, as it there becomes evident how much Luther's interest in Islam or the Qur'an in particular as its most important document, was not only determined by opposition to the long established enemies, that is Judaism, and the papal church, but also those that emerged in the course of reformation: Baptists and Antitrinitarians. Only an exact knowledge of their scriptures allow for their recognition and their refutation, an argument in the debate over the release of the work from the hands of the authorities (see Bobzin, pp. 154–155). Subsequent issues of Bibliander's Qur'an, without Luther's preface, seem to have been sold in Basel.

The story of the translation of the Qur'an begins in 1141, when Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny, was visiting Toledo. After its fall to Christian forces in 1085, the city, with its libraries of Arabic books and its many Arabic-speaking inhabitants, played a significant part in the European assimilation of Arabic learning that took place, mostly through Spain and Sicily, during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Peter the Venerable commissioned the visiting English scholar, Robert of Ketton (fl. 1141–1157) and his collaborator Hermann of Carinthia (fl. 1138–43), to carry out Latin translations of certain Arabic texts (known as the Toledan Collection). 'While Hermann translated the texts *Liber generationis Mahumet* ('On the generation of Muhammad') and *Doctrina Mahumet* ('The teaching of Muhammad'), Robert translated *Chronica mendosa Saracenorum* – a brief history of the early caliphs – and the centrepiece of the collection, the Koran itself ... It is quite a free rendering of the Arabic, and breaks up the *sūrat* ('chapters') in a different way from the original. It was used by Peter the Venerable to compile his *Summa* against the Saracens, and was frequently copied. The entire Toledan Collection was printed in 1543 in Basel by Theodore Bibliander' (*Oxford DNB*).

The first *sura* of the Qur'an is also given here in Postel's translation (as it appears in his *Grammatica Arabica* printed in Paris in 1540). Postel, credited by Bobzin (*Der Koran im Zeitalter der Reformation* p. 183) as one of the very few established owners of a copy of Paganino's long lost Arabic Qur'an, was a friend of Bibliander and had introduced him to the study of Arabic. 1543–4 saw the printing, also by Oporinus in Basel, of Postel's *De orbis terrae concordia*, a large part of which is given over to a rendering and critical discussion of the Qur'an (see Bobzin, *ibid.*, p. 159 ff., and especially pp. 174–6).

The book is notably absent from many institutional holdings. It is extremely rare to find it as well preserved as here, in the first issue and in an early binding.

*Provenance*: Benedictine monastery of Petershausen, near Constance (stamp 'Monasterii Petridomo' on title and blank verso of p. [xxiii]); unidentified private library stamp; stamp of the German branch of the Congregatio Sanctissimi Redemptoris.

Adams M1889; *Europe and the Arab World* 4 (second issue); Göllner 792; İhsanoğlu 1032/1; VD16 K2584; see also Fück p. 6 ff. and Schnurrer pp. 421–22; RLIN records

additional copies at Emory University, the Huntington Library, Michigan and Princeton; OCLC adds Oxford, Indiana, Leiden and the Koninklijke Bibliotheek.

[POSTEL, Guillaume]. *Sacrarum apodixeon, seu Euclidis Christiani lib. II.* Paris, Pierre Gromors, 1543.

[bound with:] POSTEL, Guillaume. *De rationibus Spiritus Sancti lib. II.* Paris, Pierre Gromors, 1543.

Two works in one volume, 8vo, ff. [56, title in 19<sup>th</sup>-century facsimile]; ff. 53, [1, blank]; metal-cut initials to both works; the second work with woodcut device on title; a little light staining; leaf a3 of the first work with narrow portion torn away from outer margin; contemporary flexible vellum, yapp edges; a little worn; bibliographic entries, contemporary and from the early 19<sup>th</sup>-century, on endpapers (see below).  
£5500

TWO VERY RARE WORKS BY POSTEL, PRINTED IN PARIS IN THE SAME YEAR, AND BOUND TOGETHER AT THE TIME.

‘His fundamental effort to demonstrate the truth of Christianity appeared, of course, in the first book of the *De orbis terrae concordia*. He printed the book separately in Paris in 1543 before the whole of the work appeared at Basel. He also reworked its contents into two other works of 1543: *De rationibus Spiritus sancti* and *Sacrarum apodixeon, seu Euclidis christiani libri duo*’ (Bouwsma, *Concordia mundi*, pp. 242–3).

I. FIRST EDITION OF THE *DEMONSTRATION OF HOLY THINGS, OR THE CHRISTIAN EUCLID*, AN ATTEMPT TO PROVE THAT RELIGION, NATURE AND REASON FORM ONE INDIVISIBLE UNITY, PUBLISHED IN 1543, WHEN ‘POSTEL HAD ALREADY BEGUN TO THINK OF HIMSELF AS A PROPHET’ (Marion L. Kuntz, *Guillaume Postel, Prophet of the Restitution of All Things*, p. 64).

‘The essential quality of man resided, for Postel, in his reason; hence his notion of the defect in man as essentially intellectual. His humanism, therefore, is closely connected with his confidence in the powers of reason ... In various contexts *reason* meant to him all knowledge not based on the Scriptures; all knowledge merely based on sense-experience rather than on first principles; private mystical illumination; and even all truth, including the Scriptures ... Postel’s most significant use of *reason* was his persistent tendency to identify it with the methods of mathematics, and specifically with geometry. He first struck this note in a work of 1543 which bore the title *Sacrarum apodixeon, seu Euclidis Christiani lib. II*; and in his old age he was still sufficiently impressed by the method of the book to revise it in the light of his later conceptions and to republish it in a French translation [*Les premiers élémens d’Euclide*, 1579, the last work to be published during his lifetime]’ (Bouwsma, *Concordia mundi*, pp. 121–23).

In the dedication to the Pope and the Cardinals’ Collegium Postel describes the elevated mental state that compelled him to write this book. On leaf 3 he compares the axiomatic character of his philosophy with that of Euclid in mathematics.

II. FIRST EDITION. Postel's visionary theology was partly inspired by the *Apocalypsis Nova*, a mystical text ascribed to Amadeu Mendez de Silva, a converted Portuguese Jew who argued for the unity of all religions. This text had been distributed by a pupil of Savonarola, the Franciscan Giorgio Benigno Salviati. The *Apocalypsis Nova* announced the appearance of a *Pastor Angelicus*, and gained followers in Northern Italy and Portugal. Postel mentions Amadeu, together with the prophecies of Lull, and Catherine of Siena at the end of his book (see François Secret's edition of Postel's *Le thrésor des prophéties de l'univers*, pp. 14–26 on the influence of the *Apocalypsis Nova* on Postel).

The title of *Sacrarum apodixeon* was lacking from a very early date: a 16<sup>th</sup>-century owner noted the title on the front free endpaper, and again at the colophon, where he also provides the imprint. There are additional notes by an 18<sup>th</sup>-century French bookseller in ink; referring to De Bure's *Bibliographie instructive* (1763–69); another note on the same leaf is signed 'Silvestre' (early 19<sup>th</sup>-century) and refers to Brunet and the rarity of the two works. Silvestre suggested a selling price of 26–30 Francs for this volume. On both sides of the defective rear flyleaf (a square portion has been torn away) are found further 16<sup>th</sup>-century notes on the author.

I. Adams P2032; Bouwsma 9; Brunet IV 840; Caillet 8910; Postel II 1543–3; not in NUC, or OCLC.

II. Adams P2023; Bouwsma 8; Brunet IV 840; Caillet 8907; Postel II 1543–4; NUC locates copies at the Library of Congress, Harvard, Princeton, and the Hispanic Society of America; OCLC adds copies at Bancroft Library, and Wellesley College.

POSTEL, Guillaume. *Libro de magistrati de gli Atheniensi ... Nuovamente dal Latino tradotto nella nostra lingua volgare da M. Giovanni Tatti. Venice, [colophon: Comin da Trino] for Baldassar di Costantini, 1543.*

8vo, ff. 43, [1], woodcut device depicting St. George on the title and at the end, two woodcut initials in the text; tiny worm-track to lower margins of some leaves; some minimal staining; a very good copy in modern vellum. £1500

FIRST EDITION IN ITALIAN OF POSTEL'S MOST SUCCESSFUL WORK, following the Venetian reprint of 1541 of the original Latin text.

As Baldassar di Costantini, the publisher of this translation, makes clear in his brief dedication, the work is of a particular Italian interest, not only due to Greek influence on Roman law in general, but also on the Venetian Republic in particular.

Adams P2018; NUC locates copies at the Library of Congress, Harvard, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and Newberry Library, Chicago; OCLC adds copies at Emory University, University of Texas, and University of Michigan.

POSTEL, Guillaume. *De orbis terræ concordia libri quatuor, multiiuga eruditione ac pietate referti, quibus nihil hoc tam perturbato rerum statu vel utilis, vel accommodatius potuisset in publicum edi, quivis æquus lector iudicabit ...* Adiectæ sunt quoque annotationes in margine à pio atque erudito quodam viro, ne delicatioris palati aut iniquioris etiam iudicij aliquis, ut sunt ferè hodie quamplurimi, offenderetur. Proinde ut pectore candido accipere, quæ in Ecclesiæ miserè adeò afflictæ utilitatem scribuntur, lector velis, per Christum & animæ tuæ salutem obtestatum te volumus ... *No place, printer, or date [Basle, Johannes Oporinus, 1544].*

Folio, pp. [viii], 427 (recte 447), woodcut initials; single wormhole to upper outer corner of the first few leaves; contemporary wallet binding of flexible vellum, spine lettered in ink; tears along hinges; preserved in a cloth box. £9000

A BEAUTIFUL COPY IN A CONTEMPORARY VELLUM WALLET BINDING OF THE FIRST EDITION OF ALL FOUR BOOKS OF POSTEL'S VISION OF THE UNITY OF THE WORLD.

'The goal of Postel's life was expressed in a single word: *concordia*. It was at once the key to the title of his most important book and the key to his mind. The word has an obvious temporal sense: it signifies peace among men. But to Postel it was heavy with further meanings and pointed to a whole complex of ideas. He was not unaware of its immediate political significance; but Postel, who was in fact a propagandist for the crusade, was no mere secular pacifist. The *De orbis terræ Concordia* is essentially a manual for missionaries; hence *Concordia* has religious meaning. It implies agreement on the deepest level of religious unity, and is to be understood literally: unity of heart. But this is only the beginning. Ultimately, the *Concordia mundi* is an eschatological ideal; it is identical with the *restoratio omnium*, and it refers not merely to the human race but to the whole creation. It represents, therefore, the proper order of the universe, the systematic arrangement of all its elements according to the original intentions of God, the harmony and unity of nature and its subordination to the eternal purpose' (Bouwsma, *Concordia mundi*, p. 64).

'Postel was among the first to proclaim the need for a universal religion and a universal state. Postel's program for a unified world under God preceded by more than twenty years the work of his fellow countryman, Jean Bodin, who is usually credited with being the "father of universalism." At any rate, because of his problems with the Doctors of Paris, the *De orbis terræ Concordia*, in which he proclaimed the need for harmony of all men in a Christian world and a tolerant attitude, even an appreciation of Moslems and Jews whom nevertheless he hoped to convert to Christian faith, was not published in Paris but in Basle by his friend, Oporinus, in 1544' (Marion L. Kuntz, *Guillaume Postel, Prophet of the Restitution of All Things*, pp. 50–52).

BOOK TWO IS ENTIRELY ON THE MUSLIM WORLD AND INCLUDES NUMEROUS CITATIONS FROM THE KORAN, WHICH POSTEL TRANSLATED DIRECTLY FROM ARABIC, RATHER THAN RELYING ON EXISTING TRANSLATIONS. 'In his belief in a peaceful debate with Muslims who should be convinced by a rational presentation of Christian tenets, Guillaume Postel was knowingly pursuing the same tradition as Nicholas of Cusa and Dionysius the Carthusian ... This book, published by Johannes Oporinus a year after Bibliander's first edition of the Quran, was Postel's main work on the confutation of Islam and his best known call to the Muslims to convert to Christianity. IT CONTAINS

A TRANSLATION AND CRITICAL DISCUSSION OF PARTS OF THE QURAN AND A LIFE OF THE PROPHET, AS WELL AS A TRANSCRIPTION OF ARABIC TEXTS AND AN APPEAL FOR THE FOUNDATION OF ARABIC CHAIRS AT THE PRINCIPAL UNIVERSITIES' (Alastair Hamilton, *Europe and the Arab World*, p. 44).

'On p. 133 he refers to [his] grammar and emphasizes his use of Arabic originals for the discussion of the Koran text. He deplores the fact that, despite the Papal Bull of 1311 (*Clementia de magistris*) there are still no Arabic professors at all the primary universities' (Smitskamp).

This edition contains Theodor Bibliander's annotations to the first two books. 'These annotations, apparently added without Postel's knowledge, ensured that the work was put on the Lyon Index of 1550 (no. 215), and the Index of 1558 (no. 210), with the remark "Annotationes in Guilielmum Postellum de orbis terrae concordia, incerti auctoris ..."' (Claude Postel II, p. 36).

Although the present work is one of Postel's more common, a copy such as the present, perfectly preserved and in an interesting contemporary binding as here, is exceptional.

Adams P2020; Caillet 8903; Bouwsma 10; Brunet IV 840; *Europe and the Arab World* 7; Postel II, pp. 36–37; Smitskamp 242; VD16 P4481.

[POSTEL, Guillaume, *pseudonym*:] ELIAS PANDOCHEUS. Πανθενωσια. Compositio omnium dissidorum circa æternam veritatem aut verisimilitudinem versantium, quæ non solum inter eos qui hodie infidelium, Iudæorum, hæreticorum, & catholicorum nomine vocantur, orta sunt & vigent, sed iam ab admissis per peccatum circa nostrum intellectum tenebris fuere inter ecclesiæ peculiaris communis membra. Scriptore Elia Pandocheo. Tubæ penultimæ stridor. Solus erit iudex, qui meliora dabit. *No place, printer, or year [but Basle, Oporinus, 1547].*

[*bound with*:] CICERO, Marcus Tullius. Paradoxa, recognita simul, & gæcè versa, ab Ioanne Morisoto medico. *Basle, [colophon: Johannes Oporinus, 1547].*

[*bound with*:] [BECKER, Johannes, *pseudonym*:] ARTOPOEUS, Johannes Colloquia duo elegantissima, alterum sensus & rationis, alterum adulationis & paupertatis, quibus viva humane vitæ imago exprimitur ... Eiusdem, arbor eruditionis, & in eandem oratio. *Basle, [colophon: Johannes Oporinus, May, 1547].*

[*bound with*:] MILLANIUS, Clemens Philalethes. Ad eos qui iniuria de natura querentur, libellus: qui hoc à mala iuventutis institutione proficisci declarat. *Basle, no printer or year [but Johannes Oporinus, 1545].*

8vo, pp. 143; ff. [56]; pp. 175; 46, [2, blank], the first work with one woodcut initial at the beginning of the text, the other three works with woodcut initials in the text, the second work with 17 leaves of Greek text; the fourth work with Hebrew, and Greek printing; the last printed leaf of the fourth work with torn away corner, not affecting text; very fine copies, printed on good quality paper in contemporary limp vellum;

several blank leaves bound in at the beginning and at the end; titles of the works listed on front fly-leaf in a contemporary hand, a few marginalia in the same hand to Postel's work. £7500

A BEAUTIFUL *SAMMELBAND* COMBINING POSTEL'S *UNION OF EVERYTHING* WITH THREE EXTREMELY RARE BOOKS FROM OPORINUS' PRESS.

Oporinus was one of the most learned and celebrated printer's of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. After philological studies, an apprenticeship in Paracelsus' household, and a promising career as professor of Latin and Greek he founded his printing and publishing business in the 1530s. Oporinus is still renowned for the correctness of his editions, and the quality of printing. Seeing Bibliander's translation of the Koran through the press resulted in his imprisonment; the two folio printings of Vesalius (1543 and 1555) established his fame.

I. VERY RARE FIRST EDITION. '*Πανθενωσια: compositio omnium dissidorum*, written under the pseudonym, Elias Pandocheus, was a more conciliatory version of the *De concordia* and indicated that Postel was beginning to feel more tolerant to religions other than his own' (Bouwsma, *Concordia Mundi*, pp. 14-15).

'After 1547 Postel begins to reinterpret what "Christian" means, and his works after this date reflect his growing desire for a universal religion based not on dogma but the worship of the one true God. "True religion" should include all peoples, for God desired that no person be separated from His love. POSTEL WAS AMONG THE FIRST TO PROCLAIM THE NEED FOR A UNIVERSAL RELIGION AND A UNIVERSAL STATE' (Marion L. Kuntz, *Guillaume Postel, Prophet of the Restitution of All Things*, p. 50).

'Such universalist sentiments caused him, in the first place, to magnify similarities of belief among the peoples of the world and to minimize differences. So he wrote: "Let us rejoice, therefore, oh sons, brothers, fathers, daughters, sisters, mothers, in this, that Turks, Jews, Christians, heretics, pagans, and all the peoples of the world believe in God, and all either have Jesus or seek after Him." What then, he asked, could be the reason for religious differences among men? Merely "impurity, perhaps, or difference of sacraments or opinions," he answered, with the implication that such obstructions to agreement were trivial. Mankind has only to agree on few principles, he asserted, in order to reach final truths together; then there will be no longer papists, Lutherans, or (presumably) adherents of any particular religion; all men were simply Christians. He was quite certain that he knew what those few principles were, and on several occasions he listed them for his readers. The great religious truths were, he believed, already contained in the various religions of the world, waiting to be detached from the incidental superfluities of detail which keep mankind apart' (*ibid.*, pp. 194-5).

II. FIRST EDITION of Jean Morisot's annotated bilingual edition (with his own Greek translation) of Cicero's principles of stoic ethics. Morisot was a poet, and translator with a medical background in Dôle, in the Franche-Compté, which was ruled by the Habsburgs.

III. FIRST EDITION of a collection of philosophical dialogues, treatises and letters, written by a courtier of the Vice-Chancellor of the Empire and panegyric poet.

Appended are a few moral and political allegorical works by the Italian humanist Pandolfo Collenuccio (1444–1504).

IV. FIRST EDITION. We were only able to trace one other work published under this name, or pseudonym, a treatise on the Passion of Christ, printed by Oporinus in 1548. The author, unknown to our reference works, was from Lake Garda. He dedicated this work on predestination to his uncle Clemente Gicerotto, *ex Academia nostra* in July 1545.

I. Adams P2030 ('Paris ? c. 1540'); Bouwsma 12; VD 16 P4483 ('um 1560'); not in Caillet, or NUC; OCLC locates one copy at University of Missouri, Columbia.

II. Adams C1835; not in VD16, or OCLC; NUC locates a single copy, at Duke University.

III. VD16 B1359; not in Adams, NUC, or OCLC.

IV. Adams M1451; Folger XVII, p. 461; VD 16 M5234; NUC adds one copy, at Newberry Library, Chicago; not in OCLC.

POSTEL, Guillaume. *De Etruriae regionis, quae prima in orbe Europaeo habita est, originibus, institutis, religione & moribus, & imprimis de aurei saeculi doctrina et vita praestantissima quae in divinationis sacrae usu posita est, Guilielmi Postelli commentatio. Florence, [Lorenzo Torrentino], 1551.*

4to, pp. 251, [9], title within elaborate allegorical woodcut border, incorporating a view of Florence, woodcut initials in the text; lower margin of woodcut border cropped, very light browning, only in places; a crisp and clean copy, printed on good paper in eighteenth century English brown calf, gilt double filets on boards, all edges gilt, marbled endpapers, rebacked matching to style; 18<sup>th</sup>-century bibliographic notes and ownership entry 'M: Woodhull', dated 1773 on an initial blank leaf, Guido von Volckamer's armorial bookplate on front paste-down; early 20<sup>th</sup>-century stamp of Frankfurt Municipal Library with three release stamps on title-verso. £3500

FIRST EDITION OF *DE ETRURIAE REGIONIS*, IN WHICH POSTEL SEARCHES FOR THE ORIGIN OF CIVILISATION AND TRIES TO BRIDGE THE HISTORICAL GAP BETWEEN THE OLD TESTAMENT AND CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY. He links the Etruscans to Noah and his sons. 'Postel was probably following the spurious "antiquities" of Annius of Viterbo which was published in Rome in 1498. Annius' work contained a *Pseudo-Berosus*, a legendary account of Noah and his descendants which linked the Japhetites with some of the European nations. (Marion L. Kuntz, *Guillaume Postel, Prophet of the Restitution of All Things*, p. 37 note).

In Tuscany, in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century the theory of an Aramaic origin of the Tuscan 'language' was promulgated by the Accademia Fiorentina and some intellectuals at the Medici court. These circles were aware of, and influenced by, a similar strategy developed in France, and propagated by Postel: the "Aramaic" origin of the Gauls. C.-G. Dubois, in 1972, called this 'a mystical ideology, characterized by

nationalism and imperialism' (*Celtes et Gaulois au XVIe siècle*; quoted from D'Alessandro).

'When Postel published *De Etruria* in Florence in 1551 with a dedication to Cosimo I, the polemical debates were still raging, most eminently at the Accademia Fiorentina, inspired by the "Aramaic" theories expounded in *Gelli* (1546) by Giambullari, who had claimed the superiority of the Florentine language by tracing its roots back to the sacred language of Noah, the repository of original wisdom. The publication of Postel's book was probably supported by Gelli, Pier Francesco Riccio and other colleagues at the Medici court. The "Aramaeans" were not acting in isolation; they were fully aware of participating in a debate that was resonating through Europe, and that the work by the renowned orientalist could provide them with a proof of their theories. These circumstances require investigation into the motives that led Postel to extend his interests towards Etruria and to link, in one single theory, the common origins of Etruscan and Gallic wisdom. *De Etruria* was written and published during a rather critical period of Postel's life, a decisive phase of his religious restlessness; only a short while after his return from a second voyage to the Orient and just before his *immutatio* (December 1551) which confirmed his belief in his own mission ... For the first time Postel achieved such a close link between the myth of origin (going back to the *prisca sapientia*), a chiliastic concept of history (religious and political *restitutio*), and the awareness of his own urgent prophetic mission' (translated from Alessandro d'Alessandro, *La scoperta di un passo di Ateneo nei rapporti tra Guillaume Postel e Pierfrancesco Giambullari*, in: *Postello, Venezia e il suo mondo*, edited by Marion L. Kuntz, pp. 262–64).

*Provenance*: From the library of Michael Woodhull (1740–1816). His library comprised some 3000 books with an emphasis on incunabula and classical authors, works on Large Paper or remarkable for their rarity. Woodhull usually entered the cost and date of acquisition on the flyleaf; in our case he noted that he bought this book at an Evans sale for 14 Shillings. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century this book belonged to the Nuremberg collector Guido von Volckamer.

Adams P2012; Bouwsma 15; Brunet IV 839; not in Caillet.

[POSTEL, Guillaume, *translator*, and Theodor BIBLIANDER, *editor*]. Protevangelion sive de natalibus Iesu Christi, & ipsius matris Virginis Mariae, sermo historicus divi Iacobi minoris, consobrini & fratris Domini Iesu, apostolo primarij, & episcopi Christianorum primi Hierosolymis. Evangelica historia, quam scripsit beatus Marcus, Petri apostolorum principis discipulus & filius, primus episcopus Alexandriae. Vita Ioanni Marci evangelistae, collecta ex probatoribus autoribus, per Theodorum Bibliandrum. Indices rerum ac verborum, quae vicem commentarij implent, concinnati per eundem. *Basle*, [colophon: *Johannes Oporinus, March, 1552*].

8vo, pp. 410, [2], [4, blank]; woodcut initials in the text; occasional staining; a good copy in contemporary vellum over boards; a little spotted, shelfmark-label on spine; early 20<sup>th</sup>-century stamp 'Vicariat de Prouille' (Southern France) on front fly-leaves and in blank lower margin of title; preserved in a cloth box. £8000

FIRST EDITION OF THE *PROTOEVANGELIUM JACOBI*.

When Postel returned from the Near East he brought back, among other important manuscripts, a Greek text hitherto unknown to the West, except for the few hints on this gospel contained in *Origen*. The supposed author is Christ's brother James, the religious leader of the Jerusalem Christian community, whose account of Christ's mother and childhood is more extensive than those of the canonical gospel. This text reflects messianic views held by the radical Judaeo-Christian sects of Ebionites and Essenes. The Greek text, along with Postel's translation, was published twelve years after the present printing in Neander's collection of apocryphal texts.

POSTEL TRANSLATED THE GOSPEL INTO LATIN, AND BIBLIANDER, THE ZURICH PHILOLOGIST AND THEOLOGIAN, RENOWNED FOR HIS LATIN KORAN, EDITED THE TEXT AND EQUIPPED IT WITH AN EXTENSIVE GLOSSARY, NOTES, INDICES, AND WITH A BIOGRAPHY OF MARK THE EVANGELIST.

'Any kind of apocryphal literature fascinated him, no doubt by its freshness and novelty and by the sense it gave him of contact with lost truth ... His favourite apocryphal work was the Ethiopic Book of Enoch, to which he was introduced in Rome by an Ethiopian priest ... He was almost equally interested in a second apocryphal work of a rather different character. This was the pseudo-gospel of James, with which Postel's name will always be connected, and to which he gave the name of *Protevangelion* by which it has ever since been known in the West' (Bouwsma, *Concordia Mundi*, p. 36).

Postel's religious heterodoxy sparked vicious attacks by the Church authorities; Theodor de Beza simply called him 'fanaticus'. The Calvinists, Zwinglians, and Protestants followed swiftly in condemning Postel's attempt to establish an ecumenical truth beyond theological divisions. Oporinus was told not to publish any further works in that vein (see Aldo Stella, *Movimenti eterodossi padovani e veneziani* in: *Postello, Venezia e il suo mondo*, edited by Marion L. Kuntz, p. 129).

Adams B1982; Caillet 8906; not found in NUC; OCLC gives two American locations, at University of Dayton, Ohio, and Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Texas.

POSTEL, Guillaume. *Vinculum mundi, compendio expositum, in quo basis earum rationum exponitur, quibus veritas placitorum primorum sive articulorum fidei christianæ aut probatur aut oppresso quovis adversario defenditur. Parisiis in quadragesima dictabat auditorium suorum humanitati in Babylonis ruinam Guilielmus Postellus. 1552. ad corrupti mundi finem. Paris, [Sébastien Nivelle], 1552.*

[bound with:] BROSSIER, Simon. *Totius philosophiae naturalis epitome, seu enchiridion, ex universis physicis Aristotelis nunc primùm decerptum. Paris, Mauricius' widow, 1552.*

Two works in one volume; 4to, ff. [8]; pp. 59, the first work with one woodcut initial at the beginning; the second work with a fine woodcut emblematic printer's device on title and many woodcut initials in the text; the first work occasionally very lightly spotted, and with one marginal oxidation hole to B2; fine copies in 18<sup>th</sup>-century half

vellum over marbled boards; short slit to front hinge; a little worn but stable; the first work extensively annotated in Latin and occasionally, German by a contemporary hand (see below). £5500

I. AN EXTENSIVELY ANNOTATED COPY OF THE FIRST EDITION OF THE FIRST WORK TO BE WRITTEN BY POSTEL AFTER HIS “IMMUTATION”, *Vinculum mundi* signifying the bond, or copula of the world, the Neoplatonists’ metaphor for love among mankind, and the love of God.

‘After his return [from Italy] to Paris Postel was again writing feverishly. He published more than fifteen books in 1551–1552, and his scholarly reputation continued to be enhanced’ (Marion L. Kuntz, *Guillaume Postel, Prophet of the Restitution of All Things*, pp. 101). *Vinculum mundi* is the first work written after what Postel referred to as his “immutation,” an alchemico-mystical transformation of his body and soul inspired by his encounter [with] the Venetian Virgin. ‘After his profound spiritual experience Postel became frenetic in proclaiming the truth of his restitution and the necessary restitution of all men. His immutation was the final step in Postel’s gradual but steady shift from the life of a scholar to the life of a scholar-activist’ (*ibid.* p. 104).

This text, structured by the twelve points of the Creed, is dedicated to the French King, whom Postel – once again – expected to figure as the patron of the restitution of the universe. It marks ‘a strange alliance between a sort of Apocalypse and an appeal to the use of reason that was already apparent in his earlier works’ (translated from Postel II, p. 57).

II. An extremely rare, beautifully printed work on Aristotelian physics and natural philosophy by a learned French priest who turned Calvinist in the 1540s, first published in 1536.

*Provenance:* From the library of the Congregation of the Oblates of Saint Charles in Bayswater (West London; dissolved in the 1970s), with their bookplate and stamp on title and on the first text-leaf of the Postel; bibliographic notes, in ink, by Geoffrey Barrow (formerly of Quaritch), dated April 29, 1969, on front fly leaf; Postel’s work with extensive contemporary annotations in Latin, and the occasional Greek or German word, in a minute but neat hand to the text. They refer to Osiander, Hermes Trismegistus, Boëtius, and to Postel’s speculative theology.

I. Brunet IV 840; Bouwsma 20; Postel II 1552–3; not in Adams, Caillet; NUC locates only the Harvard copy; OCLC adds one location, at University of Missouri.

II. No edition in Adams; this edition not in OCLC.

POSTEL, Guillaume. *De Foenicum literis, seu de prisco Latine & Grece lingue caractere, eiusque antiquissima origine & usu, ad Carolum Cardinalem & Principem Lotharingium, primarium Galliae Antistitem commentatiuncula ... Paris, Martin le Jeune, 1552.*

8vo, ff. [51], [1], with two large folding tables; occasional staining to the text; the tables with minor tears (repaired); a good copy in early 19<sup>th</sup>-century calf-backed marbled boards; spine lettered in ink; upper corners a little worn; contemporary annotations in Latin to the text (occasionally cropped); two leaves with three pages of French notes in a sixteenth century hand bound in at the beginning (dampstained).  
£6500

FIRST EDITION, COMPLETE WITH THE TABLES THAT ARE FREQUENTLY LACKING, OF POSTEL'S COMPARATIVE STUDIES OF THE LATIN, GREEK, AND PHOENICIAN ALPHABETS, AND ALPHABETS DERIVED FROM ANCIENT HEBREW.

Postel's 'vision of unity and concord appears to have expanded into his language studies so that he came to employ both the terms Hebrew and Phoenician when in fact he was describing either the Samaritan or the coin script. Thus he could be said to have sacrificed some of the objectivity achieved in his earlier observations for the purpose of emphasizing certain aspects of unity in his broader linguistic theory ... When Postel came to publish his *De Foenicum literis* (Parisiis 1552), he seems to have comprehended that the Greek and Latin alphabets were to a certain extent composed of forms that were mirror images of their Phoenician counterparts. His active mind seems to have grasped the symbolism of the unity of alphabetic writing from the more primitive but more recognizable palaeo-Hebrew forms ...

'When Postel published his *De Foenicum literis* in 1552 he reproduced some extracts from the Samaritan work to which he had given the name *De cognitione Dei*. They are to be found in his table which bears the title, *Samaritanae literae, cum arte grammaticae ex literis deducta, ut illam habemus in volumine Arabice exposito, cum exemplis Samaritanis, Hebraeisve aut Foenicibus*. Postel has had them printed in mixed Samaritan and palaeo-Hebrew coin script letter forms. Even so they do represent the first printed quotations from the Samaritan Hebrew Pentateuch and the Samaritan Liturgy in Samaritan script, and as such they mark ... [a] significant contribution made by Guillaume Postel to Samaritan studies' (James G. Fraser, *Guillaume Postel and Samaritan Studies*, in: *Postello, Venezia e il suo mondo*, edited by Marion L. Kuntz, pp. 109–112).

This work is dedicated to Charles de Lorraine, a high-ranking member of the Church, and patron of the arts who shared Postel's vision of a universal monarchy. There is another issue of this work without tables, published by Vivant Gaulterot.

*Provenance:* From the library of the Capuchin Friars of Annecy in Savoy, with the 16<sup>th</sup>-century inscription 'Ad usum capucinorum Annessii'. During the counter-reformation many Catholic congregations were established in Savoy in order to rule out any resurgence of Protestantism.

Adams P2013 (listing 3 copies, two of which are lacking the tables, one additionally lacking the title); Bouwsma 23; Brunet IV 840; Postel II 1552–7; NUC locates copies at Harvard (apparently lacking the tables), Washington University, St. Louis, Newberry Library, Chicago, and at Columbia University, New York; OCLC adds copies at Oxford (no collation), and Emory University (lacking the tables).

POSTEL, Guillaume. *De universitate liber, in quo astronomiae doctrineúe coelestis Compendium terrae aptatum, & secundum coelestis influxus ordinem praecipuarumque originum rationum totus orbis Terrae quatenus innotuit, cum regnorum temporibus exponuntur. Sed ante omnes alias orbis partes Terra Sancta summo, hoc est amplissimo compendio describitur. Cui Gallia ob primarium orbis nomen & ius substituitur, eo quod ambae toti orbi legem sunt daturae ... Paris, Jean Gueullart, 1552.*

4to, ff. 56, [4], with woodcut illustrations and diagrams on the final four leaves; upper outer corner of title renewed; some damp-staining throughout; a few leaves with worming to inner margins (restored); a very large copy with some uncut edges in modern vellum over boards; tiny but neat early annotations in ink to parts of the text.

£8500

FIRST EDITION. After a brief introduction to astronomy, the celestial spheres, the elements, time, etc, Postel continues with his *Syriae descriptio*, originally published separately in 1540, the result of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the late 1530s, followed by chapters on the miracles of Christ. He continues with a description of Gaul or ‘Gomeria’ as, according to Postel, Gomer, the eldest son of Japheth, ‘had settled in the land which was destined to become France some time after the Flood. To the French, his descendants, therefore, Postel argued, belonged now the right of empire over all mankind’ (Bouwisma, *Concordia mundi*, p. 220). At the same time both ‘the Holy Land and Gaul were under the influence of the sign Aries, and hence were respectively destined to religious empire and temporal monarchy ... On the very title-page of his *De universitate* he placed the Holy Land above all other parts of the world, adding that Gaul was substituted for it “because of the primary name of the world and right” and because they were both to give law to the whole world’ (Thorndike VI, pp. 344–345).

The latter part of the volume is on Africa and Asia, and ‘HE RECOGNIZED AN AMERICAN CONTINENT REACHING SOUTH TO THE STRAITS OF MAGELLAN BUT UNKNOWN BEYOND THAT. He also once speaks of an extensive fifth continent about the south pole which is as yet little known ... Against the old view that the polar zones were uninhabitable because of cold and the torrid zone because of heat, however, he asserts that all land everywhere is inhabitable, as there is nothing that men do not become used to, although at the poles a night of six months is followed by a day of the same length. Near the equator, on the other hand, the fact that days and nights are always of equal length makes the heat tolerable ... HE SAW THAT CANALS AT PANAMA AND SUEZ WOULD GREATLY SHORTEN THE CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF THE GLOBE [f. 56]. He speaks of the promontory of Good Hope. He states that the term, Fortunate Islands, is today applied to the West Indies – Isabella and Hispaniola and many others discovered by Columbus’ (*ibid.*, pp. 345–346). The work concludes with woodcuts showing the celestial spheres, the globe with longitudinal and latitudinal divisions, and an armillary sphere.

At the end of the main text (f. 56 verso) our copy shows a typographical curiosity: following the word *FINIS* three lines of an unrelated text passage (repeated from lines 1, 3 and 4 of folio 48 verso) are printed upside down.

Adams P2024; Alden 552/39; Bouwsma 24; Caillet 8914; Houzeau & Lancaster 2564; Lalande p. 74; Postel II 1552–6; NUC locates two copies, at New York Public Library, and Harvard; no additional locations in OCLC; not in the BL.

POSTEL, Guillaume. *De originibus, seu, de varia et potissimum orbi Latino ad hanc diem incognita, aut inconsyderata historia, quorum totius Orientis, tum maximè Tartarorum, Persarum, Turcarum, & omnium Abrahami & Noachi alumnorum origines, & mysteria Brachmanum retegente: Quod ad gentium, literarumque quibus utuntur, rationes attinet. Ex libris Noachi & Hanochi, totiusque avitæ traditionis à Mosis alumnis ad nostra tempora servatæ, & Chaldaicis literis conscriptæ, Guilielmus Postellus posteritati eruit, exposuit & proposuit. Basle, Johannes Oporinus, [1553].*

8vo, pp. 135, woodcut initials in the text; title with lower outer corner renewed, and stamped on verso (see below); the final leaf with blank portion of lower margin renewed, the final leaf with marginal repair; some light marginal dampstaining; a good copy in modern panelled brown calf with raised bands. £6500

FIRST EDITION OF POSTEL'S INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGE AS A MEANS TO REGAIN THE PRIMORDIAL UNITY OF MANKIND.

During the immensely productive years 1552 and 1553 Postel constantly emphasized the need for action in order to unify the world. 'He was explicit about the practicality of his aims. Late in his career he wrote to Masius that his life's work had been a long effort to persuade Christendom to act. If it would only exert itself, how easily the world would pass from its terrible disorders into the eternal peace proclaimed by Christ! His sense of active purpose permeated even his most apparently academic works, such as his treatise *De originibus* of 1553. In this book he offered a profoundly Augustinian statement of purpose: "I have aimed to treat of both the original relationships of things and the methods by which we can reconcile them again in the completest peace; and I have tried to promote that end for which the world was created, universal peace" (Bouwsma, *Concordia Mundi*, p. 214).

'POSTEL BELIEVED THAT LANGUAGE, THAT IS, TO KNOW THE NAMES OF THINGS, WAS GOD'S GREATEST GIFT TO MAN ... In the *De originibus seu de varia et potissimum orbi Latino ad hanc diem incognita aut inconsyderata historia* ... Postel argues according to logic about God's gift of speech to mankind. Man is different from other animals because he can reason and speak. Therefore, the Greeks called man "animal logicum" because λογος indicates speech or conversation no less than reason ... All men take their origin from Adam, who as first parent was taught by God about the names of everything in the universe: "Since there was no man, before the first man, who could speak an exterior voice, he necessarily conceived all the names of things by an interior voice". When Adam was alone in Paradise, God and Adam communicated by the emanation of Idea which was called an inner voice ... Adam divinely received the words from Wisdom or from the agent intellect of which we are all members; however, in order to teach posterity, it was necessary to bring forth all things with an exterior voice ...

'It is clear that Postel's desire to know languages was fuelled by his concept of the divine origin of language ... God gave to Adam the ability to speak and to write in

order to teach mankind God's Law. God's Law was transmitted through the first parent, Adam, through Enoch, through Noah, and through Moses ... The gift of language and God's Law cannot be separated in Postel's thought' (Marion L. Kuntz, *The Original Language as a Paradigm for the restitutio omnium*, in: *The Language of Adam. Die Sprache Adams*, Wolfenbütteler Forschungen vol. 84, pp. 131–132).

*Provenance:* Title-verso with stamp 'Soc. Reg. Lond ex dono Henr. Howard Norfolciensis'. Henry Howard, sixth Duke of Norfolk (1628–1684) became Fellow of the Royal Society in 1666. 'After the fire of London Howard granted the Royal Society the use of rooms at Arundel House in the Strand, and, on 2 Jan. 1667, at Evelyn's suggestion presented it with the greater part of his splendid library ...' (DNB).

Adams P2022; Bouwsma 26; Brunet IV 838; VD16 P4482; not in Caillet; NUC locates copies at New York Public Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Princeton, and Harvard; OCLC adds copies at Oxford, Yale, University of Chicago, University of Pennsylvania, University of Missouri, Columbia, Washington University, St. Louis, and Case Western University.

[NEW TESTAMENT IN SYRIAC.] *Ktābā d-Ewangeliyon qaddīšā d-Māran w-Alāhan Yešu' Mšihā ... Liber Sacrosancti Evangelii de Iesu Christo Domino & Deo nostro. Reliqua hoc codice comprehensa pagina proxima indicabit. [Vienna, Michael Zimmermann, 1555, reissued 1562].*

4to, ff. [27], 129, [3], 38, [2], lxxx, [2], 11, [28]; title printed in red and black, a few other headings printed in red; with 15 full-page emblematic woodcut illustrations, Zimmermann's woodcut arms on verso of title; without the preliminary leaves for parts 2, 3 and 4, as usual (see below); tiny hole in title, not affecting text.

[*bound with:*] [WIDMANSTETTER, Johann Albrecht, and Guillaume POSTEL.] *Syriacae linguae ... Prima elementa. Vienna, 1555 [colophon: Casparo Craphto ingeniosas operas praebente ... in officina Michaëlis Cymbermanni, 1556].*

4to, ff. [28], title printed in red and black, with Widmanstetter's large woodcut coat-of-arms on recto of final leaf.

Two works bound together in one volume, clean, crisp copies in near-contemporary blindstamped pigskin over wooden boards, covers with central stamp of *Justicia* holding sword and scales within a border incorporating profile portraits of Luther, Melancthon, Erasmus and Hus, blindstamped initials 'G W N' and date '1577' on upper cover, two functioning clasps; lightly rubbed and soiled, short split at head of lower joint, later lettering in ink at head of spine, remains of bookplate on rear pastedown. £16,000

FIRST EDITION, SECOND ISSUE, OF THE SYRIAC NEW TESTAMENT IN THE PESHITTA VERSION, A BEAUTIFUL COPY, BOUND HERE WITH WIDMANSTETTER'S SYRIAC PRIMER WHICH WAS PRINTED UNIFORMLY WITH IT AT THE SAME PRESS.

‘A number of motives combined to produce this publication. The Syrian Orthodox priest Moses of Mardin was in Europe trying to find a sponsor for printing the Syriac gospels. Widmanstetter, who was a scholar of Hebrew and Arabic, took up Syriac, supposing that it was the language of Jesus (a common misconception, but one he may have picked up from Teseo [Ambrogio]), and that in some way the publication of the Syriac Bible might be a divinely-favoured action that would renew Christendom. Such an idea would have consequences for the fight against the Turks, and perhaps that was part of the reason that King Ferdinand [I] paid for the publication ... But whatever its ideological background, the book was a great scholarly and typographical achievement. The text was edited by Moses, and his handwriting is evidently the model for the pleasing serto and estrangela types ... Unfortunately, this type was never used again’ (J. F. Coakley, ‘Printing in Syriac, 1539–1985’, in *Middle Eastern languages and the print revolution*, exh. cat., Gutenberg Museum Mainz, 2002, pp. 93–115, p. 96). Guillaume Postel, who had already completed, in Venice, the text of the Gospels in Syriac and was in Vienna from the end of 1553 to May 1554, oversaw the preparation of these types and gave valuable assistance to Widmanstetter (see Marion L. Kuntz, *Guillaume Postel, Prophet of the Restitution of All Things*, pp. 115–116).

‘The compact size of the book is made possible by the admirable small type used for the text – only the second Syriac type ever made – which has the vowel-signs and diacritical points cast onto the letters. (Few Syriac types had this degree of sophistication until the nineteenth century.) Syriac also had a fascination for practitioners of “Christian kabbalah”. In the illustration [f. 101v] the Jewish *sefirot*, or divine emanations, are connected with the wounds of Christ’ (*Middle Eastern languages and the print revolution*, p. 468).

The work was printed in 1555 in an edition of 1,000 copies. Of these, 300 were intended for the Patriarch of Antioch and the Maronite Patriarch and 200 were entrusted to Moses of Mardin to take back with him to Syria. The remaining 500 copies were retained for distribution in Europe. The majority of these 500, including the present copy, was reissued in 1562 with a new title, the verso of which bears the colophon ‘Viennae Austriae excudebat Michaël Zymmerman. Anno MDLXII’. According to Darlow & Moule, who designate these copies variant ‘B’, ‘nearly all copies [of both variants] lack the preliminary leaves in parts 2, 3 and 4, including the dedication addressed to the three sons of Ferdinand I. These three pieces are numbered III, V, and VII in the table of contents. No. III is found in a few copies, but Nos. V and VII are always missing’.

*Provenance*: Seventeenth-century ownership inscription ‘S. Mauritii in Ehingen’ on the verso of the final leaf of the Syriac primer.

I. Adams B1800; Darlow & Moule 8947; *Le livre et le Liban* 55 (‘une des plus belles impressions orientales’); *Philologia Orientalis* 91; VD16 B4584. See also *Le livre et le Liban* pp. 122–134.

II. Adams W138; Smitskamp 92; VD16 W2490.

‘TYPES OF ADMIRABLE DELICACY AND DISTINCTNESS’

[WIDMANSTETTER, Johann Albrecht, and Guillaume POSTEL]. Syriacae linguae. Iesu Christo, eiusque Matri Virgini atque Iudæis omnibus, Christianæ redemptionis Evangelicæque prædicationis tempore, vernaculæ & popularis, ideoque à Novi Testamenti Scriptoribus quibusdam Hebraicæ dictæ. Prima elementa. Quibus adiectæ sunt Christianæ religionibus solennes, quotidianæque preces. *Vienna*, [colophon: *Michael Zimmermann*], *November 21, 1555* [colophon: *February 1556*].

4to, ff [28], title printed in red and black, and with Syriac printing at head, Widmanstetter's large woodcut coat-of-arms on the penultimate page, most of the text printed in four columns in Latin, Hebrew, Syriac and phonetic transcription over two opposite pages; a little stained or dustsoiled in the margins; unbound; preserved in a cloth box; early initials in ink at foot of title. £5500

A REMARKABLE SURVIVAL: POSTEL AND WIDMANSTETTER'S SYRIAC PRIMER, NEVER BOUND, ENTIRELY UN CUT AND LARGELY UNOPENED.

This Syriac primer gives, after an introductory letter by Widmanstetter to his brothers, a glossary in four columns (Latin, phonetic transcription, Hebrew, and Syriac) of addresses to the names of God (*Appellationes literarum divinis nominibus denotate*). After notes on punctuation and pronunciation, an introduction to the alphabet and a syllabary, the main part of the volume contains the texts of the Lord's Prayer and the Magnificat in four columns spread over two opposite pages.

Widmanstetter, of Swabian origin, was a lawyer, diplomat, statesman and scholar. He learned Syriac in Italy from Teseo Ambrogio and Moses of Mardin. The expensive project of the Syriac New Testament was funded by the Emperor Ferdinand, who also supported Postel. 'The Emperor Ferdinand appointed him to a chair in the University of Vienna; and once more Postel was settled in a position which promised not only security but influence and prestige. The emperor seemed genuinely interested in his philological and missionary proposals, and Postel responded by substituting the king of the Romans for the king of the French as the agent of his schemes for Christian world conquest and unity' (Bouwsma, *Concordia mundi*, pp. 20–21).

Adams W138; Smitskamp 92; VD16 W2490.

POSTEL, Guillaume. *De la republique des Turcs: & là ou l'occasion s'offrera, des meurs & loy de tous Muhammedistes [part II: Histoire et consideration de l'origine, loy, et coutumes des Tartares, Persiens, Arabes, Turcs, & tous les autres Ismaelites ... part III: La tierce partie des orientales histoires ...]. Poitiers, Enguibert de Marnef, 1560.*

Three parts in one volume, 4to in eights, pp. [viii], 127; 57, [3, blank]; [vii], 90, [2, blank]; emblematic woodcut printer's device on all three titles; ruled in red throughout; a fine copy in 18<sup>th</sup>-century mottled calf; spine and sides expertly restored; front free end-paper with 18<sup>th</sup>-century shelf mark in ink. £16,000

VERY RARE FIRST EDITION, SECOND PRINTING, OF ‘ONE OF THE MOST COMPETENT CONTEMPORARY ACCOUNTS OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND THE CUSTOMS OF THE TURKS. REMARKABLE IS THE HIGH ESTEEM OF ISLAM THE LEARNED POSTEL REPEATEDLY EXPRESSES’ (translated from Göllner).

‘Guillaume Postel’s two stays in Turkey made him more familiar than most Europeans with Turkish customs. His *De la République de Turcs* was composed, in its final form ... over a period of some thirteen years, between 1538 and 1551. Although not as successful as the work by Nicolay [*Les navigations, peregrinations, et voyages, faicts en la Turquie*, 1576], it was admired and used by Michel Montaigne and was remarkably sympathetic and objective. Despite Postel’s prejudices against the Prophet even the extensive section on Islam is far from hostile, and in it we can detect a theme which was to become increasingly prominent in pro-Islamic approaches of the Enlightenment: the Christians have much to learn from the piety, and above all from the charity, of the Muslims, from their reliability in keeping their word, and from their toleration of different faiths. Postel also discusses the other peoples in the Ottoman empire and attacks the widespread use of the term “Saracen” to describe all Muslims’ (Hamilton, *Europe and the Arab World*, no. 8, referring to the undated 1565 edition).

Postel spent four years, from 1555 to 1559, in Papal prisons in Ravenna and in Rome. ‘He was finally freed when the prisons in Rome were broken open during the mob disorders of August 1559, following the death of Paul IV. Then, for most of the next three years, he seems to have wandered from place to place, fearful of seizure again by his enemies and generally in extreme poverty. From Rome he went back to Basel, no doubt hoping to be received among the sectaries there. But he did not stay, in spite of the patronage of a Fugger agent, Paumgartner, who became interested in him, and before the end of 1559 he stopped briefly in Poitiers. Here he left the manuscript of his *Republique des Turcs* with a printer and then dropped out of sight again’ (Bouwsma, *Concordia mundi*, p. 24).

‘The second issue is a page-for-page reprint, but printed in 8vo format, with different signatures. In addition, the second issue contains extra side-notes, especially in part three, which are not present in the first issue’ (Atabey).

Adams P 2015 (erroneous collation of the second part); Atabey 977 (first printing); Claude Postel, *Les écrits de Guillaume Postel 1560–1*; Desgraves, *Répertoire des livres imprimés en France au seizième siècle – Poitiers* 118; Göllner 1004 (without the final printed leaf); Smitskamp 243 (probably the first printing); see Apponyi 1790, Blackmer 1335, and Caillet 8909 for the undated edition of 1565; NUC locates only copies of our printing, at the Library of Congress, University of Illinois, Urbana, University of Alabama, New York Public Library, and Princeton; OCLC (no distinction between the two printings) adds copies at Georgetown University, Harvard, University of Missouri, and Columbia.

POSTEL, Guillaume. *Cosmographicae disciplinae compendium, in suum finem, hoc est ad divinæ providentiæ certissimam demonstrationem conductum. Addita est rerum toto in orbe gestarum συνοψις. Item, quot, quantæque Christianarum gentium*

nationes, nobis hactenus incognitæ, in universo sint, quæ à nostro orbe lumen Evangelij sibi restitutum iri credunt. *Basel, Johannes Oporinus, 1561.*

Small 4to, pp. [xx], 79; five small geographical woodcuts in the text, woodcut printer's device on title; shaved close at foot without loss, final leaf with old repair to lower corner; modern half morocco, boards covered with late 18<sup>th</sup> century patterned paper; old monastic ownership entry at head of the second leaf, late 18<sup>th</sup>-century bibliographical notes on front fly-leaf; a few contemporary annotations to the text.  
£4500

FIRST EDITION OF POSTEL'S POLITICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL SURVEY.

Preceding the text is Postel's dedicatory letter to Emperor Ferdinand I in which he develops his ideas on universal monarchy. He also urges the Emperor to use the printing press as an instrument for the good, although he is aware that it might be abused and that 'doctrines, opinions, dogmas of every sort, including the worst and the emptiest, are spread through the whole world through the use of printing.'

Postel was well versed in the travel literature of the Renaissance; his reading ranged from Marco Polo to the letters of Francis Xavier from Japan. References to the latter are here contained on the final pages. 'AMONG THE ACCOUNTS OF RECENT EXPLORATION HE WAS FAMILIAR WITH ANTONIO PIGAFETTA, THE CHRONICLER OF MAGELLAN'S VOYAGE, WITH PETER MARTYR AND AMERIGO VESPUCCI, WITH VARTHEMA AND OVIEDO Y VALDÉS. HE HAD ALSO READ, OR HEARD, AT LEAST ONE DESCRIPTION OF CENTRAL ASIA FROM A RUSSIAN SOURCE' (Bouwsma, *Concordia mundi*, p. 130).

Like Postel's other travel writings, *Cosmographicae disciplinae compendium* is intended 'not to feed the idle curiosity of his contemporaries, but to promote the unification of the world into a single community' (*ibid.*).

Alden 561/40; Bouwsma 39; Brunet IV 841; Lalande p. 87; VD16 P4475; not in Adams; NUC locates copies at the Library of Congress, John Carter Brown Library, Indiana University, New York Public Library, and Princeton; OCLC adds copies at Oxford, Yale, and University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

POSTEL, Guillaume. *De universitate liber, in quo astronomiae doctrinae celestis compendium terræ aptatum, & secundum cœlestis influxus ordinem precipuarumque originum rationem totus orbis terræ quatenus innotuit, cum regnorum temporibus exponitur. Sed ante omnes alias orbis partes Terra Sancta summo, hoc est, amplissimo compendio describitur, cui Gallia ob primum orbis nomen & ius substituitur, eo quod ambæ toti orbi legem sunt daturæ ... Multo verò maxima parte auctum, & à mendis repurgatum est ab autore opus. Secunda aeditio. Paris, Martin Le Jeune, [colophon to part I: October 8], 1563.*

Two parts in one volume, 4to, pp. 77, [3], 43, [5]; woodcut printer's device on the title and at the end of the first part; another version thereof on the title of the second part, three full-page woodcuts at the end of part II, woodcut headpieces and initials in the

text; the first title very lightly brown-spotted; a very good and crisp copy in period-style panelled calf; covers and spine ornamented in gilt. £5000

SECOND EDITION, FIRST ISSUE of *De universitate* (first 1552), published soon after the royal authorities ordered Postel's confinement to the Priory of Saint Martin, where he was going to spend the rest of his life "for the conservation of the repose of that city" (Bouwsma, p. 26, quoting from the order to the Parliament of Paris).

Now divided into two parts, the work has undergone some textual changes. Postel explains in the two prefaces, the first being dated 'in Gervasianis scholis, prima Septembris 1563', that he was allowed to teach cosmography at the Ecoles de St. Gervais, and that no copies of the first edition were remaindered. A second issue was published in 1564.

Adams P2025 (part one only); Brunet IV 840 (giving the date as 1564); Caillet 8914; Lalande p. 89 (dated 1564); Houzeau & Lancaster 2564; Postel II 1563–1; Wellcome 5229; NUC locates copies at New York Public Library, Newberry Library, Chicago, Columbia University, New York, Harvard, and Princeton; no additional locations in OCLC.

**SIRLETO. [BIBLIA POLYGLOTTA. Volume VIII]. *Antwerp, Christoph Plantin, 1571-72.***

One vol. (of 8), in 18 parts (see below); large folio; Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Syriac text; intermittent browning, sometimes heavier; contemporary Italian pink morocco, richly gilt, coat-of-arms of Guglielmo Sirleto, critical editor of the Vulgate, Papal cardinal, Bishop of Squillace, and contributor to the work, on upper and lower covers, spine with six raised bands, and lettered in gilt; gilt edges; upper joint with short crack; extremities a little worn, upper outer corner scuffed; preserved in a cloth box. £9000

VOLUME EIGHT OF THE BIBLIA POLYGLOTTA, BEAUTIFULLY BOUND FOR GUGLIELMO SIRLETO, PAPAL LIBRARIAN AND CRITICAL EDITOR OF AND CONTRIBUTOR TO THIS BIBLE.

'Sirleto gained great recognition, first as a member, then as head of the commission in charge of the preparation of a critical edition of the Vulgate. Besides being occupied with studies of the Septuagint ... Sirleto was nominated cardinal-librarian of the Vatican in 1572 by Pope Pius V, having already gained greatest acclaim for the library's organisation and expansion since his arrival in Rome' (translated from Bautz, *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon*).

The volume comprises the last three volumes of Arias Montanus' *Apparatus Sanctus* to Plantin's *Polyglotta*, the second of the great Polyglots, following the famous edition of Alcalá de Henares of 1514–17. PLANTIN'S IS THE FIRST TO CONTAIN A SYRIAC VERSION, WHICH WAS LARGELY BASED ON THE WORK OF GUILLAUME POSTEL. 'PLANTIN'S POLYGLOT BIBLE IN FIVE LANGUAGES (LATIN, GREEK, HEBREW, CHALDAIC [=ARAMAIC], AND SYRIAC) AND EIGHT VOLUMES MAY BE CONSIDERED TO BE THE LARGEST TYPOGRAPHICAL ENTERPRISE OF THE 16<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY' (Voet p. 312).

‘Besides encouraging the study of Arabic scientific texts, Postel was one of the scholars behind the plan to publish a polyglot Bible in Antwerp – an undertaking which would prove to be a further link to the Arab world. The idea of publishing a multilingual edition of the Bible was suggested in 1565 by Plantin, who soon discussed it with Andreas Masius and Postel. It was at first an apparently conservative plan to reprint, with minor corrections, the Complutensian Polyglot, produced in Alcalá de Henares under the aegis of Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros, the founder of the university of Alcalá, between 1514 and 1517, and printed in 1522. In fact the Plantin Bible was to become one of the most courageous statements of the humanist principles of Biblical criticism as practiced by Lorenzo Valla and Erasmus at a time when these principles were threatened by confessional divisions and the objective study of the Scriptures was giving way to religious polemic.

‘By the closure of the Council of Trent in 1563 Roman Catholic orthodoxy had been defined and the theological tenets of the Protestants condemned. One of the first decrees of the Council, issued in April 1546 within four months of the opening of the proceedings, concerned the Bible. It established that any discussion or use of the Scriptures must be based on the Vulgate, the Latin translation attributed to St Jerome in the late fourth and early fifth century. Plans that had still seemed possible in the first decades of the sixteenth century, scholarly projects that aimed at producing a more reliable version of the text of the Bible than what had been transmitted in the frequently defective manuscripts of the Vulgate by comparing it with texts in the original languages, came to be regarded as, at best, suspicious and, at worst, heretical ... As he and his fellow-printers were to do on so many occasions Plantin availed himself of the geographical position of Antwerp on the outer fringes of the Catholic world. The distance of the southern Netherlands from Rome on the one hand and from Spain on the other meant that even a papal foundation such as the university of Louvain enjoyed a certain freedom ... They agreed that the Vulgate should remain the normative text of the Bible, but they also believed that the Council’s decision licensed its improvement, the study of its different manuscripts, some enquiry into the original text, all with a view to the publication of an entirely trustworthy edition ... In March 1568, Philip II made up his mind and signed the orders to have the Bible printed. In May Plantin was joined by one of the most gifted Biblical scholars in Spain, Benito Arias Montano, who was to act as the official supervisor of the project ... It is owing to him that the *Biblia Regia* turned into a far larger and bolder undertaking than its Complutensian predecessor.

‘The Antwerp Polyglot depended for much of its Hebrew text, the Septuagint, much of the Greek New Testament, and the *targum* of the Pentateuch on the Complutensian Polyglot. But the greatest novelty was the addition of the Peshitta, the Syriac version of the New Testament, the printing of which is the subject of an interesting letter from Postel to Plantin [now in the Museum Plantin-Moretus]. It was largely in connection with Syriac that Arabic came to play a part of increasing importance in scholarly and ecclesiastical circles. For this there were two main reasons. In the first place the desire to improve the Vulgate by uncovering early codices of the New Testament which might reflect a version closer to the original than anything that had been available to Jerome furthered the investigation of the languages spoken in Palestine. Syriac owed its popularity to the fact that, of all Semitic languages and dialects, it was probably the closest to what Christ and the Apostles had spoken in the first century. It

was also believed that Arabic versions of the New Testament discovered in the Levant might be based on translations of an early Syriac text. When he was in the East Postel acted on both these convictions. He acquired Syriac manuscripts of the Scriptures which would be invaluable to contemporary Biblical scholars in Europe, and he also obtained an Arabic manuscript of the Epistles and the Acts of the Apostles, copied in Egypt in the second half of the thirteenth century and the taken to Syria ... The second reason for studying Arabic together with Syriac was connected with the survival of Syriac as a spoken language ... While Biblical Hebrew remained the dead language of Jewish antiquity, Syriac could be regarded as a living language of the greatest use for western communication with the Christians of the East' (Alastair Hamilton, *Arab Culture and Ottoman Magnificence in Antwerp's Golden Age*, pp. 61-69).

'Postel through his friend Andreas Masius first suggested to Christophe Plantin in 1565 that the Bible should be published in five languages ... Although Postel's name does not appear in the preface to the Polyglot Bible published by Christophe Plantin in eight volumes in 1571, Postel's contributions to this edition of the Bible in Hebrew, Chaldaic, Greek and Latin were enormous ... All the scholars who contributed to the Polyglot Bible were either disciples, pupils, or friends of Postel; yet Postel's efforts on behalf of this enormous undertaking were deliberately concealed because his past activities as well as those from within the Monastery made him still suspect and dangerous to Catholic orthodoxy ... Guy le Fèvre, in a letter written in July, 1571 to the general editor of the Polyglot, Benito Arias Montano, warns that the name of his mentor must be kept in silence "lest the mention of his name cause the whole Polyglot to be condemned" ... ' (Marion L. Kuntz, *Guillaume Postel, Prophet of the Restitution of All Things*, pp. 162-163).

'It is stated that 960 ordinary copies were printed, 200 of a better quality, 30 fine, 10 superfine, and 13 on vellum ... Very many of the copies, on their way to Spain, were lost at sea' (Darlow & Moule 1422).

In his Plantin bibliography Voet points out that some parts of the critical apparatus (sometimes bound in two, sometimes in three volumes) were printed twice. Those contained in the present volume are all in their first printings: 'The volumes 6, 7, and 8 do not have a general title-page; they form a series of separate treatises and text-editions having each a title-page or introduced by a heading. Frequently, however, it is specified on these title-pages or in these headings that the treatise or text-edition belong to the *Apparatus*. The order followed in the subsequent descriptions is that given in the *Ordo Librorum* in the introductory part of volume I. This order can have been changed when the sheets were gathered or by the binder, and, eventually in some copies a treatise may even have been dropped. In April 1572 Plantin had already finished some parts of the *Apparatus* but a substantial part remained to be printed when the political horizon suddenly clouded. The archtypographer printed only 600 copies (instead of 1200) of these parts. Perhaps some type-compositions (with Oriental or Greek type not frequently used) remained standing, but the type of a great number of treatises was redistributed. When the political climate improved, Plantin had these treatises reset and the 600 remaining copies reprinted. The operation started late in July 1572 and ended in August 1573. This means that a number of treatises of the different volumes of the *Apparatus* are found in two versions' (Voet, *The Plantin Press*, vol. I, pp. 287-88).

*The volume contains:*

- I. ARIAS MONTANUS, Benedictus. Aaron, sive sanctorum vestimentorum ornamentorumque summa descriptio: Ad sacri apparatus instructionem. *Antwerp, Plantin, 1572.* – Pp. 6, with one engraved plate. – Adams M 1628; Voet 644 VIII. 8. A.
- II. ARIAS MONTANUS, Benedictus. Nehemias, sive de antiquitate Ierusalem situ, volumen [*Heading*]. [*Antwerp, Plantin, 1572*]. – Pp. [4], full-page engraved plan on p. [3]. – Adams B 970 (Bible: Polyglott); Voet 644 VIII, 9. A. – These two first printings were combined as one publication in the second printing.
- III. ARIAS MONTANUS, Benedictus. Liber Ioseph, sive de arcano sermone, ad sacri apparatus instructionem. *Antwerp, Plantin, 1571.* – Pp. [viii], 118, [7], [2, blank]; title with repaired tear in blank lower margin, 18<sup>th</sup>-century stamp ‘Ex Bibl. Ios. Ren. Card. Imperialis’, and two further ecclesiastical stamps (one partly erased), p. 71 with marginal tear; p. [iii] with contemporary annotation in red ink in a neat humanist antiqua. – Adams M 1657; Voet 644 VIII. 1. A.
- IV. ARIAS MONTANUS, Benedictus. Liber Ieremiae, sive de actione, ad sacri apparatus instructionem. *Antwerp, Plantin, 1571.* – Pp. 26, [2]. – Adams M 1655; Voet 644 VIII. 2. A.
- V. ARIAS MONTANUS, Benedictus. Thubal-Cain, sive de mensuris sacris liber, tribus voluminibus distinctus. De cubito. De salto. De siclo. *Antwerp, Plantin, 1572.* – Pp. 23 (recte 19), [1]; one engraving on the final page. – Adams M 1664; Voet 644 VIII. 3. A.
- VI. ARIAS MONTANUS, Benedictus. Phaleg, sive de gentium sedibus primis, orbisque terrae situ, liber. *Antwerp, Plantin, 1572.* – Pp. 14, [2], map cut away. – Voet 644 VIII. 4. A; for Adams see VIII.
- VII. ARIAS MONTANUS, Benedictus. In librum Chanaan, sive de duodecim gentibus praefatio [*Heading*]. [*Antwerp, Plantin 1572*]. – Pp. 7, [1], map cut away. – Voet 644 VIII. 5. A-B; for Adams see VIII.
- VIII. ARIAS MONTANUS, Benedictus. In librum Chaleb, sive de terrae promissae partitione, ad Christianos lectores, praefatio. [*Heading*]. [*Antwerp, Plantin 1572*]. – Pp. 10, [2, blank], map cut away. – Voet 644. 6. A; Adams M 1659 (VI, VII, and VIII treated as one publication; one copy without the second part and the second map, the other copy with one map only).
- IX. ARIAS MONTANUS, Benedictus. Exemplar, sive de sacris fabricis liber. *Antwerp, Plantin, 1572.* – Pp. 18, [2], with ten engraved plates (one double-page size). – Adams M 1644 (one copy lacking one leaf of text); Voet 644. VIII. 7. A.
- X. ARIAS MONTANUS, Benedictus. Daniel, sive, de saeculis codex integer. *Antwerp, Plantin, 1572.* – Pp. 11. ). – Adams M 16365; Voet 644. VIII. 10. A.

XI. [ARIAS MONTANUS, Benedictus]. Index Biblicus, qui res eas, de quibus in sacris Bibliis agitur, ad certa capita, alphabeti ordine digesta, revocatas, summa brevitate complectitur [*heading*]. [*Antwerp, Plantin, 1572*]. – Pp. 22, [2]. – Adams M 1650; Voet 644 VIII, 11 A-B.

XII. [ARIAS MONTANUS, Benedictus]. Hebraea, Chaldaea, Graeca et Latina nomina virorum, mulierum, populorum, idolorum, urbium, fluviorum, montium, cæterorumque locorum quæ in Bibliis utriusque Testamenti leguntur ... [*heading*] [*Antwerp, Plantin, 1572*]. – Ff. [30]. – Adams M 1645 (1572 printing); Voet 644 VIII, 12 A-B.

XIII. VARIÆ LECTIONES et annotationunculæ, quibus Thargum, id est, Chaldaica paraphrass infinitis in locis illustratur et emendatur [*heading*]. [*Antwerp, Plantin, 1571*]. Pp. 31. – Adams B 970 (under *Bible: Polyglott*); Voet 644 VIII. 13. A-B. – Hebrew index, printed back to front.

XIV. ARIAS MONTANUS, Benedictus. De varia in Hebraicis libris lectione, ac de Mazzoreth ratione atque usu [*heading*]. [*Antwerp, Plantin, 1572*]. Ff. [4]. – Adams M 1640; Voet 644 VIII. 14. B. (?) – ‘The texts have been set twice. There are, consequently, two versions, but it is impossible to decide with any certainty which is version A and which version B’ (Voet 644 VIII.14. A (?)). As all treatises contained in this volume are in first printing (version A); it seems to be likely that the present version of this work is first printing as well.

XV. CANTERUS, Gulielmus. Variarum in Græcis Bibliis lectionum libellus [*heading*]. [*Antwerp, Plantin, 1571*]. Ff. [7], [1, blank]. – Adams B 970 (under *Bible: Polyglott*); Voet 644 VIII. 15. A.

XVI. SIRLETO, Guglielmo. Annotationes variarum lectionum in Psalmos, ad Sacri Bibliorum apparatus instructionem [*heading*]. [*Antwerp, Plantin, 1571*]. Pp. 11. – Adams B 970 (under *Bible: Polyglott*); Voet 644 VIII. 16. A (no distinction between versions A and B given).

XVII. LE FÈVRE DE LA BODERIE, Guy. Candido lectori Guido Fabr. Bod. in tabulam titulorum totius Novi Testamenti Syriaci [*heading*]. [*Antwerp, Plantin, 1571-72*]. Ff [8]; rather browned. – Adams B 970 (under *Bible: Polyglott*); Voet 644 VIII. 18. A-B.

XVIII. VARIÆ LECTIONES IN LATINIS BIBLIIS EDITIONIS vulgatæ, ex vetustissimis manuscriptis exemplaribus collectæ, et ad textum Hebraicum, Caldaicum, Græcum et Syriacum examinatae, opera & industria aliquot theologorum Academia Lovanensi [*heading*]. [*Antwerp, Plantin, 1572*]. Pp. 33, [3]. – Adams B 970 (under *Bible: Polyglott*); Voet 644 VIII. 17. A-B.

INCLUDING THE FIRST TURKISH GRAMMAR TO BE PUBLISHED IN EUROPE

POSTEL, Guillaume. Des histoires orientales et principalement des Turkes ou Turchikes et Schitiques ou Tartaresques et aultres qui en sont descendues, oeuvre pour la tierce fois augmenté. Et divisé en trois parties, avec l'indice des choses les

plus memorables y contenues. *Paris, Jérôme de Marnef and Guillaume de Cavellat, 1575.*

Small 8vo, pp. [xliv], 374, [86], [2, blank], without the two blanks at the end of the preliminaries given by Adams, with two different woodcut printer's devices on the title and on the last printed leaf, woodcut headpieces and initials in the text; from the beginning up to p. 90 leaves restored along inner margins resulting in the occasional loss of a few letters, the first three leaves with restorations to upper margins; otherwise a clean copy in late 19<sup>th</sup>-century English brown morocco by W. Pratt, spine with raised bands and lettered in gilt, gilt-stamped coat-of-arms on covers, marbled endpapers. £5000

VERY RARE THIRD, ENLARGED EDITION OF THE *REPUBLIQUE DES TURCS*, THE FIRST TO CONTAIN THE FIRST TURKISH GRAMMAR TO BE PUBLISHED IN EUROPE' (Smitskamp).

*Provenance:* The Britwell copy, with gilt-stamped coat-of-arms incorporating the initials of William Henry Miller. William Henry Miller of Craigentenny (1789–1848) assembled a huge collection of important books, both English and Continental, at Britwell Court in Buckinghamshire. 'Britwell passed to Samuel Christy (1810–1889). He took the name of Christie-Miller on coming into the Britwell and Midlothian estates' (*The Britwell Handlist*, vol. I, p. v). The copy then passed into the library of Sefik E. Atabey, whose bookplate is found on the front paste-down.

Adams P2028 (stating that 2\*8 is blank, which is not the case here); Apponyi 1846; Atabey 978 (this copy); Brunet IV 839; Göllner 1652; Postel II 1575–1; Smitskamp 244; NUC locates a single copy, at Yale, OCLC adds one French location, Bibliothèque centrale du Musée nationale d'Histoire Naturelle.

POSTEL, Guillaume. *De universitate libri duo: In quibus astronomiæ, doctrinæve cœlestis compendium ... Editio tertia. Leiden, Jean Maire, 1635.*

[*bound with:*] POSTEL, Guillaume. *De cosmographica disciplina et signorum cœlestium vera configuratione libri II. Ex museo Joan. Ballesdens in principe senatu advocati. Leiden, Jean Maire, 1636.*

[*bound with:*] POSTEL, Guillaume. *De republica, seu magistratibus Atheniensium liber. Ex musæo Joan. Ballesdens, in principe senatu advocati. Leiden, Jean Maire, 1635.*

Three works in one volume (the second in two parts), 16mo in eights; pp. 261, [2, blank]; 172, [18], [2, blank], 72; 232, [6], all titles printed in red and black and with woodcut printer's device, the first and the third work with engraved full-length portrait of the author (within pagination, cropped in the first work), small woodcuts in the text of the second work; very good and clean copies in contemporary vellum with yapp-edges, spine ornamented and lettered ("51 & 52") in gilt; engraved bookplate of William Charles de Meuron, Earl Fitzwilliam, old shelf-marks in ink on front paste-down and fly-leaf. £1500

A FINE *SAMMELBAND* OF THREE WORKS, RE-EDITED IN POCKET FORMAT BY THE FRENCH BIBLIOPHILE AND MANUSCRIPT COLLECTOR JEAN BALLESDENS.

Between 1629 and 1636 Ballesdens published several works based on manuscripts and rare printed book from his own library. In the 1640s he became a member of the upper clergy and the *Académie Française*. Jean Maire is renowned for having been chosen by Descartes as the printer of his *Discours de la Méthode* (1637) in preference to the established publishing house Elzevier.

I. First published in 1552 in Paris, this work expresses Postel's hopes for a universal monarchy, organized around the French monarchy, and supported by astrological theories. Ballesden's edition follows the second, enlarged edition of 1563, the preface of which is retained. Ballesden's own copy of the second edition is now in the Folger Shakespeare Library.

II. Reprint of the first edition of this political and geographical survey of the world as known at the time. Like Postel's other travel writings, it is intended 'not to feed the idle curiosity of his contemporaries, but to promote the unification of the world into a single community' (Bouwsma, *Concordia Mundi*, p. 130). The first edition appeared in Basle in 1561. Appended here is the text of the very rare astrological *De signorum coelestium vera configuratione*, which had first appeared in 1553. This text is on the influence of stellar constellations on the course of history, which will, one day, culminate in a universal French kingdom.

III. Pocket edition of Postel's most successful work, a reprint of the *editio princeps* of 1541.

I. Brunet IV 840; Caillet 8915; Houzeau & Lancaster 2564.

II. Brunet IV 841; Caillet 8891 (bound with *De universitate*; dated 1635); Wellcome 5230.

III. Caillet 8908.

POSTEL, Guillaume. *Absconditorum à constitutione mundi clavis, quâ mens humana tam in divinis, quàm in humanis pertinet ad interiora velaminis aeternae veritatis ... Unà cum appendice pro pace religionis Christianae*. Editore A. Franc. de Monte S. *Amsterdam, Janssonius, 1646*.

Tall 12mo, pp. [xii], 140, woodcut printer's device on title, with one folding table, and a full-page engraving of a symbolic key on p. 125; occasionally a little browned; a very good copy in 18<sup>th</sup>-century marbled sheep, spine ruled in gilt and with lettering-piece, marbled endpapers. £3000

FIRST ILLUSTRATED AND ENLARGED EDITION OF POSTEL'S KABBALISTIC THEOLOGY, originally printed by Oporinus in Basle in 1547 (a virtually unobtainable edition). Caillet describes the present edition 'de beaucoup préférable à celle de 1547 et fort augmentée.'

THIS EDITION WAS PREPARED BY THE HERMETIC PHILOSOPHER, FRIEND AND FOLLOWER OF JAKOB BÖHME, ABRAHAM VON FRANCKENBERG. It contains as an appendix the title, index of chapters, and a summary of Postel's *De nativitate mediatoris ultima* (first, 1547), his epistle to the Council of Trient, *Alia Postelli Epistola ad D.C.S. 1553*, a bibliographical list of 21 printed, and 30 manuscript works, and Abraham von Franckenberg's *Clavis ad clavem authoris* (with the engraving). The final tract is the *Conjectura D.G.S. Comitis de Clará Valle*.

In 1545 Postel was dismissed from the Jesuit order, encountered the Book of Enoch, began to translate the Zohar, and other Hebrew Kabbalistic texts. 'But above all Postel revered and relied upon the Zohar; he once even described the various works in which he had expounded his own doctrines as a mere appendix to it' (Bouwsma p. 43). 'Meanwhile he wrote a series of works which developed his thought further and in new directions. He dedicated *De nativitate mediatoris ultima* to the delegates at Trent in an attempt to win their support for a missionary effort based on reason ... *Absconditorum a constitutione mundi clavis* fitted the rational missionary endeavour into an apocalyptic scheme of history and revealed Postel as a prophet of the millenium' (*ibid.* pp. 14–15).

Following Josias Simmler's description (Zurich, 1574) of Konrad Gesner's library, the list of 'Scripta Postelli' in the present volume is the second attempt to elucidate the bibliographical complexities of Postel.

Brunet IV 840; Caillet 8887; NUC lists two copies, at Cornell University, and Harvard; OCLC gives no additional American locations.

RAYNAUD, Théophile. *Dissertatio de sobria alterius sexus frequentatione per sacros & religiosos homines. In ædificata narrationi deliriorum, queis Puella Veneta, Guilielmum Postellum Celticoimbrum, doctorem maximum, seculo superiore infatuavit. Lyon, Michel Duhan, 1653.*

8vo, pp. [xxiv], 600 (recte 586), 28, [2, blank], title printed in red and black, and with engraved device; engraved cardinal's coat of arms on the second leaf, woodcut initials, head- and tail-pieces; browned in places, one corner of one preliminary leaf torn away, not affecting the printed surface; a good copy in contemporary vellum with yapp-edges, spine lettered in ink; a little dust-soiled; early 19<sup>th</sup>-century engraved bookplate of George Home Drummond (died 1819) on front paste-down. £1750

FIRST EDITION of this treatise on 'The chaste visitation of the other sex by religious and holy men,' exemplified by the case of Postel's transformation under the influence of the 'mater mundi', Mother Joanna, Venetian Virgin, New Eve, or *Puella Veneta*, as she is called here.

'[Mother Joanna] had first impressed him with her piety and her devotion to the poor and sick in the hospital. While others laughed at her, Postel soon became convinced of her supernatural powers; her vision could penetrate solids, and she was able to summon up a vision of Satan bound at the center of the earth. Even more impressive was the ability of this illiterate woman to expound to him all the deepest mysteries of the Zohar. "I know in whom I have believed, and what I have see and heard," he

wrote; and began to refer to her obscurely as “the consummation of the mystery of eternity,” as a woman “in whom dwells the fullness of Divinity,” as the bride of the Apocalypse and as the “image of her spouse our father who is in heaven.” She was, in fact, the Shekinah of his cabalistic reading, and the impression she had left upon him became a permanent feature of his mind. Much later he wrote to the Emperor Ferdinand that everything he had written since 1547 had had one single purpose: to make known to the world, and especially to the Latin church, the unprecedented miracle that had taken place in the Venetian Virgin’ (Bouwsma, *Concordia mundi*, p. 15).

‘Unfortunately we know nothing of this woman from any other source, but reading between the lines of Postel’s description we can perhaps see a pious woman of a kind not uncommon in the Italy of the Catholic Reformation. He attributed to her the most exalted role. His Mother Joanna, the *anima mundi*, was, he claimed, the true bride of Christ, the spouse of the Word in a far more immediate sense than the Church to which Postel still claimed loyalty. Upon her, in this quality, rested, for him, the obligation to initiate a new age and to complete Christ’s work of salvation. Through the marriage of his new Eve with the new Adam, the original perfection of man, destroyed by the old Eve and the old Adam, was to be restored; their spiritual children would enjoy once again the innocence of Eden’ (*ibid.*, p. 156).

Postel’s own account of mother Joanna is found in *Les très merueilleuses victoires des femmes du nouveau-monde* of 1553, and his *Libro della divina ordinatione* of 1555, both extremely rare in their original editions.

Raynaud (1583-1663), of Italian origin, was a lecturer in Lyon and certainly one of the most productive French Jesuits of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. He does not give a one-sided verdict on Postel, who, in 1545, was affiliated with the Jesuit order for a short period, and who saw in the Society of Jesus a powerful instrument for the restitution of all things. ‘Theophilus Raynaudus ... indicates that he considers Postel to be a man of two natures; see his *Dissertatio de sobria alterius sexus frequentatione per sacros & religiosos homines...* p. 2 where he states: “I come across Guillaume Postel, a famous learned man of the last century, represented among these dual images, and mystical centaurs, which portray at the same time man and brute. I shall first produce his edifying attainments but then his aspects which are neither honest nor attractive”’ (Marion L. Kuntz, *Guillaume Postel, Prophet of the Restitution of All Things*, p. 2). Postel was expelled from the Society of Jesus in December 1545 after doubts about his beliefs had been raised, and he was declared insane in 1547.

Postel I p. 94; Sommervogel VI, 1536, 48; NUC locates copies at University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Duke University, Stanford, St. Louis University, St. Louis, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, and Newberry Library, Chicago; no additional locations in OCLC.

PETZSCH, Gottlieb. *Exercitatio historico-theologica de Guilielmo Postello quam auxiliante deo praeside D. Thoma Ittigio ... Leipzig, Immanuel Titius, 1704.*

4to, pp. 58, [2], woodcut head-and tailpiece, one woodcut initial; title cropped at outer margin, touching two letters; lightly browned; a good copy in modern boards. £700

A VERY RARE DISSERTATION ON POSTEL, written at the theological faculty of Leipzig under the presidency of Thomas Ittig, a church historian. Petzsch begins with biographical notes, frequently referring to Théophile Raynaud's *Dissertatio* (see above) and Rémond's *De ortu, progressu et ruina haereseon*, and gathering rare contemporary French sources. Petzsch then discusses a number of Postel's writings. Some of the information appears to stem from library catalogues, or French bibliographies, due to lack of access to the rare originals. The chapter on Postel's manuscript works is based on a *Catalogus cuiusdam Anglicanus* and lists 40 works.

One paragraph discusses Postel as a heretic, his place in the *Index librorum prohibitorum*, and his prosecution by the Catholic Church. Petzsch proceeds with notes on Postel's atheism, deism, naturalism, millenarianism, syncretism and libertinism. The revelations of the Venetian Virgin and Postel's project of the restitution of all things play a central role in Petzsch's refutation.

Postel I p. 100; not in NUC, or OCLC.

POSTEL, Guillame. Les tres-merveilleuses victoires des femmes du nouveau monde, et comment elles doibvent à tout le monde par raison commander, & même à ceulx qui auront la monarchie du monde vieil. A Madame Marguerite de France. A la fin est adjoustée: La doctrine du siècle doré, ou de l'évangélique règne de Jesus Roy des Roys. Paris, Jehan Ruelle, 1553 [Rouen, for Abbé Jean Saas, c. 1750].

Two works in one volume, 8vo, pp. [iv], xx (*avertissement*), 92; 27 (lacking pp. 21–24 of *La doctrine du siècle doré*); occasional spotting; contemporary marbled boards, spine with manuscript lettering-piece; extremities a little worn; 19<sup>th</sup>-century bibliographic notes on front fly-leaf; 19<sup>th</sup>-century blind-stamped bookplate 'Atkinson, Oak House, Pendleton' on front paste-down. £1500

A VERY RARE REPRINT OF POSTEL'S WORK ABOUT MÈRE JEANNE, AND OF LA DOCTRINE DU SIECLE DORE, BOTH FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1553.

'Postel's immutation marked a period of activity even more extreme than the two years he spent in Venice working with the Venetian Virgin at the Ospedaletto in 1547-1549. He began teaching and preaching about his immutation and the imminent restitution of all things in France and Italy. Margaret Valois, sister of Henry II, tried to get Postel reinstated as royal reader, but his positions were too extreme; consequently his only source of income seems to be from his public lectures and perhaps from some printing activities. He attracted large crowds to his lectures, and his books were widely read. Two editions of his *Les très merveilles Victoires des femmes* in which he recounts the prophecies of Mother Joanna and his own immutation were published in 1553. The success of his book about Mother Joanna and the ensuing excitement which was being aroused by those reading it caused Henry II to put a stop to Postel's public teaching' (Marion L. Kuntz, *Guillaume Postel, Prophet of the Restitution of All Things*, pp. 107–8).

Bouwsma calls Postel's *Les tres-merveilleuses victoires* Postel's 'one of his most radical works' (p. 18). 'His explanation for the spiritual superiority of women is a

strange combination of the conventional medieval emphasis on womanly weakness with the theory of a special grace bestowed upon the feminine sex to compensate for its spiritual frailty. He acknowledged that woman is dominated by the inferior world of the senses, and that she possesses a lower order of rationality than man. But he submitted also that “it is certain that where is the greatest darkness, there is needed the greatest light”; therefore, he argued, women will necessarily receive the larger degree of divine illumination ... The special grace given women also explains the fact that, as Postel believed, women are more faithful in religious observances than men “especially in Italy” ... Apparently the presence of the Shekinah had, to his mind, something to do as well with feminine excellence in scholarship; for Postel went on to list examples of feminine learning ... But Postel’s identification of the Shekinah with the Venetian Virgin, the holy woman of Venice whom he called his “Mother Joanna,” is of a quite different character ... When he listened to her, he wrote, he seemed “dead and outside myself, considering that I, who passed as having read so many and such excellent theologians, and who through the benefit of contemplation had (thanks to the infinite goodness) tasted something of divine grace, had never reached such rational or exalted conceptions.” His most coherent discussion of the grounds upon which he based his extraordinary claim, however, appears in his *Victoires des femmes*, where he summarized his earlier descriptions’ (Bouwsma, *Concordia mundi*, pp. 153–5).

This reprint was commissioned by the Rouen literary critique *Abbé Jean Saas*. ‘Edouard Frère [in his *Manuel du Bibliographie Normand* II, p. 404] writes “that there were made two modern printings of this text: a small one in 12mo, based on the Paris [Jean Gueullart] printing of 1553, the other, printed at Rouen around 1750, based on the Ruelle edition. The latter had a limited print-run of a small number of copies only; it was prepared by the *Abbé Saas*”’ (translated from Claude Postel, *Les écrits de Guillaume Postel* II, p. 85). In the preface *Abbé Saas* quotes extensively from Nicéron on Postel and this work. *Saas* explains that, in order to avoid a devaluation of this great rarity only a limited number of copies of this edition were printed.

Brunet IV 837; Postel II pp. 85 and 88; NUC locates one copy, at the Library of Congress; OCLC adds copies at Newcastle University, Bancroft Library, Berkeley, New York Public Library, and Yale (without the 20 pages *Avertissement*).

POSTEL, Guillaume. La Loy Salique, livret de la première humaine verité, là où son en brief les Origines & Auctoritez de la Loy Gallique nommé communement Salique, pour monstrier a quell point faultra necessairement en la Gallique Republique venir: & que de la dicte Republique sortira ung Monarche temporel. *Suivant la Copie de 1552, Paris, chez Lamy, 1780.*

12mo in 4s, pp. [8], 92; a fine copy in 19<sup>th</sup>-century red morocco by Derome le jeune, gilt inner dentelles, silk paste-downs. £3000

POSTEL’S WORK ON SALIC LAW, PRINTED IN A VERY SMALL NUMBER AFTER THE ORIGINAL PARIS EDITION OF 1552.

‘Postel looked ... to the family of Noah, and found the progenitor of the French nation in Japheth, the son of Noah to whom, he believed, had been bequeathed the temporal monarchy of the world. Gomer, the eldest son of Japheth, he thought had settled in the land which was destined to become France some time after the Flood. To the French, his descendants, therefore, Postel argued, belonged now the right of empire over all mankind; for it was clear to him that primogeniture was the means appointed by God to determine all succession to authority. He believed, in addition, that the other nations of Europe had been populated by the offspring of Gomer; hence Italians, Germans, Spaniards, and other Europeans owed to France the respect and obedience due to a father from his children.

‘He bolstered this argument with material from early French history, pointing particularly to the Salic law, an object of general interest among French royalists of the sixteenth century. Seyssel [in his own *La Loy Salique* of 1541) had given it marked attention before Postel, and even the Venetian ambassador Cavalli was persuaded that this ancient prescription had played a considerable role in the growth of French power ... But Postel’s treatment of the subject differed sharply from the legalistic and practical approaches of Seyssel and Cavalli. He argued that because the Salic law protected primogeniture among the French, it must be both the most ancient temporal ordinance, and the basis of political order in the world. He found particularly significant the fact that, although the law had been often in conflict with the interests of French ruling families, kings had nevertheless maintained it. The right proved and protected by the Salic law, Postel insisted, ought now to be enforced through the assumption of effective world rule by France’ (Bouwsma, *Concordia mundi*, pp. 220–221).

Brunet IV 838-839; Postel II p. 61; Quérard VII p. 290; NUC locates two copies of this edition, at the Newberry Library, Chicago, and Harvard; no additional locations in OCLC.

---

#### REFERENCE WORKS CITED

Adams: H. M. Adams, *Catalogue of books printed on the continent of Europe, 1501–1600 in Cambridge libraries*, Cambridge, 1967.

Alden: John Alden *et al.*, eds., *European Americana 1493–1650, 1701–50*, New York, 1980–88.

Apponyi: Alexander Apponyi, *Hungarica. Ungarn betreffende im Auslande gedruckte Bücher und Flugschriften*, Munich, 1903–27.

Atabey: Leonora Navari, *The Ottoman World. The Şefik E. Atabey collection. Books, manuscripts and maps*, London, 1998.

Balagna: Josée Balagna [Coustou], *L'imprimerie arabe en occident (XVIe, XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles)*, Paris, 1984.

Barchas Collection: *The Barchas Collection at Stanford University. A Catalogue of the Samuel I. and Cecile M. Barchas Collection in the History of Science.* Stanford, 1999.

Bautz: Bautz, *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon* at <http://www.bautz.de/bbkl>.

Blackmer: Leonora Navari, *Greece and the Levant. The catalogue of the Henry Myron Blackmer collection of books and manuscripts*, London, 1989.

Bobzin: Hartmut Bobzin, *Der Koran im Zeitalter der Reformation. Studien zur Frühgeschichte der Arabistik und Islamkunde in Europa*, Beirut, 1995.

Bouwsma: William J. Bouwsma, *Concordia mundi: the career and thought of Guillaume Postel (1510–1581)*, Cambridge, MA, 1957.

*Britwell handlist*: The Britwell handlist, or short-title catalogue of the principal volumes from the time of Caxton to the year 1800 formerly in the library of Britwell Court, Buckinghamshire, London, 1933.

Brunet: J. C. Brunet, *Manuel du libraire*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., Paris, 1860–70.

Caillet: Albert L. Caillet, *Manuel bibliographique des sciences psychiques ou occultes*, Nieuwkoop, 1964.

Darlow & Moule: T. H. Darlow and H. F. Moule, compilers, *Historical catalogue of the printed editions of Holy Scripture in the library of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, London, 1903.

Desgraves: Louis Desgraves in *Répertoire des livres imprimés en France au seizième siècle*, Baden-Baden, 1968–1980.

DSB: *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, New York, 1970–80.

Eco: Umberto Eco, *The search for the perfect language*, Oxford and Cambridge, 1995.

Folger: *Catalog of printed books of the Folger Shakespeare Library*, Boston, 1970.

Fück: Johann Fück, *Die arabischen Studien in Europa bis in den Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig, 1955.

*Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft und orientalischen Philologie in Deutschland.*

Göllner: Carl Göllner, *Turcica. Die europäischen Türkendrucke des XVI. Jahrhunderts*, Bucharest and Berlin, 1961–1978.

Hamilton: Alastair Hamilton, *Europe and the Arab world. Five centuries of books by European scholars and travellers from the libraries of the Arcadian Group*, Dublin/London/Oxford, 1994.

Houzeau & Lancaster: J. C. Houzeau and A. Lancaster, *Bibliographie générale de l'astronomie jusqu'en 1880*, Brussels, 1880–89.

İhsanoğlu: İsmet Binark and Halit Eren, compilers, and Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, ed., *World bibliography of translations of the meanings of the Holy Qur'an: printed translations 1515–1980*, Istanbul, 1986.

Jones: [J.] Robert Jones, 'Learning Arabic in Renaissance Europe (1505–1624)', Ph.D. thesis, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1988.

Kuntz: Marion Leathers Kuntz, *Guillaume Postel, prophet of the restitution of all things. His life and thought*, The Hague, 1981.

Kuntz: Marion Leathers Kuntz, 'The original language as a paradigm for the *restitutio omnium* in the thought of Guillaume Postel', in Allison P. Coudert, ed., *The language of Adam. Die Sprache Adams*, Wolfenbütteler Forschungen, vol. 84, Wiesbaden, 1999, pp. 123–149.

Kuntz: Marion Leathers Kuntz, ed., *Postello, Venezia e il suo mondo. Atti del convegno di studi*, Florence, 1988.

Lach: Donald F. Lach, *Asia in the making of Europe*, Chicago, 1965–93.

Lalande: J. Lalande, *Bibliographie astronomique*, Paris, 1803.

Mortimer: Ruth Mortimer, compiler, *Harvard College Library Department of Printing and Graphic Arts catalogue of books and manuscripts. Part II: Italian 16<sup>th</sup> century books*, Cambridge, MA, 1974.

NUC: *National Union Catalog. Pre -1956 Imprints* (microfiche).

Nuovo: Angela Nuovo, 'A lost Arabic Koran rediscovered', *The Library*, Sixth Series, vol. 12, no. 4, pp. 273–292.

OCLC: *Online Computer Library Center* at <http://www.oclc.org>.

Oxford DNB: *H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, eds., Oxford Dictionary of National Biography ... From the earliest times to the year 2000, Oxford, 2004.*

Postel: Claude Postel, *Les écrits de Guillaume Postel publiés en France, et leurs éditeurs, 1538–1579*, Geneva, 1992.

Postel: Guillaume Postel, *Le trésor des prophéties de l'univers*, ed. François Secret, The Hague, 1969.

Quérard: J-M. Quérard, *La France littéraire, ou dictionnaire bibliographique des savants, historiens et gens de lettres de la France*, Paris, 1827–1839.

Sander: Max Sander, *Le livre à figures italien depuis 1467 jusqu'à 1530*, Milan, 1942.

Schnurrer: Christianus F. de Schnurrer, *Bibliotheca Arabica*, repr. Amsterdam, 1968.

Smitskamp: Rijk Smitskamp, *Philologia Orientalis. A description of books illustrating the study and printing of Oriental languages in 16<sup>th</sup>- and 17<sup>th</sup>-century Europe*, Leiden, 1992.

Sommervogel: Carlos Sommervogel and Augustin and Aloys De Backer, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, Brussels and Paris, 1890–1909.

Thorndike: Lynn Thorndike, *A history of magic and experimental science during the first thirteen centuries of our era*, repr. New York, 1958.

VD16: *Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienenen Drucke des XVI. Jahrhunderts*, Stuttgart, 1983–97.

Voet: Leon Voet, *The Plantin press (1555–1589). A bibliography*, Amsterdam, 1980–83.

Wellcome: *A Catalogue of printed Books in the Wellcome Historical Library* (in progress), London, 1962–95.