

Contemporaries of
ERASMUS

A Biographical Register
of the Renaissance and Reformation
Volumes 1-3



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RENAISSANCE AND REFORMATION

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A-Z

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363 / Clemente Pizzi *Un amico di Erasmo, l'umanista Andrea Ammonio* (Florence 1956) / Andrea Ammonio *Carmina omnia* ed Clemente Pizzi (Florence 1958) / Denys Hay *Polydore Vergil: Renaissance Historian and Man of Letters* (Oxford 1952) 7, 10–13, and *passim* / William E. Wilkie *The Cardinal Protectors of England: Rome and the Tudors before the Reformation* (Cambridge 1974) 15, 40, and *passim*

TBD

Pietro AMMONIO See *Pietro VANNES*

Johannes AMMONIUS of Ghent, documented 1500–after 1534

Johannes Ammonius (de Arena, Harenaceus) was a son of Jacob van den Zande, who when widowed joined the canons of St Austin in Courtrai. Like his brother, Levinus *Ammonius, Johannes became a Carthusian; in about 1500 he joined the convent of La Chapelle (domus Capellae) at Héringnes, north of Enghien, which had been richly endowed by his father. He was instructed in his youth by Joost van der Cleyen (Argillanus). He wrote poems, biographies of some members of his order, and a description of the baptism of the future *Charles v. In 1517 he wrote to Erasmus (Ep 570), attempting to bring about a connection. Subsequently he favoured the cause of Martin *Luther and as a result was forbidden to leave his cell and was finally imprisoned. His brother broke off all contact with him 1531. In the same year Johannes addressed from La Chapelle a letter of introduction to Johannes *Dantiscus, the Polish ambassador, who was then in Brussels. He also wrote a continuation (covering 1490–1534) to the chronicle of La Chapelle by Arnold Beeltsens.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: CWE Ep 570 / de Vocht *Dantiscus* 95–6 / BNB XIV 83–4 / Arnold Beeltsens and Johannes Ammonius *Chronique de la Chartreuse de la Chapelle à Héringnes-les-Enghien* ed E. Lamalle (Louvain 1932)

FGB

Levinus AMMONIUS of Ghent, 13 April 1488–19 March 1557

Levinus Ammonius (Lieven van den Zande, de Harena) of Ghent joined the Carthusian order, making his profession on 18 August 1506 in the

monastery of St Maartensbos near Geraardsbergen, 30 kilometres west of Brussels. He remained in St Maartensbos until the advent of a new prior who was opposed to humanistic studies drove him away. In 1533 he was transferred to the monastery of Koningdal outside Ghent (Ep 2817) and subsequently to Arnhem and to Scheut, near Brussels, before returning to Ghent, where he eventually died. He was the brother of Johannes *Ammonius, another Carthusian.

Levinus was a good scholar and an eager student of Greek and Latin authors. Although firmly opposed to the reformers, he was an outspoken critic of such traditional theologians as Noël *Béda (Ep 1763) and Pierre *Cousturier (Ep 2016). In 1524 he sent Erasmus a carefully composed letter of admiration (Ep 1463), but the ongoing correspondence he had hoped for did not develop until four years later, when Erasmus replied amicably to a second letter from Ammonius (Epp 2016, 2062). The subsequent exchanges have survived only partially (Epp 2082, 2197, 2258, 2483, 2817). Levinus' letters were long and erudite. In the loneliness of his cell he was much given to letter-writing, although on occasion it aroused the suspicions of his fellow-monks (Ep 2570; cf Ep 2016). His correspondence helped him develop and sustain friendly relations with other Belgian humanists, including Erasmus' friends Karel *Uutenhove, Johannes de *Molendino, a kinsman of Ammonius (Ep 2016), Frans van *Massemen, Omaar van *Edingen, and Jakob *Jespersen. In 1529, when the triumph of the reformers drove Erasmus away from Basel, Levinus seconded Edingen, who invited him to Flanders (Ep 2209). Erasmus in turn invited Ammonius to join the team of translators for his edition of Chrysostom, but the manuscript he was expected to translate never reached him (Ep 2258). In 1531 he and Simon *Grynaeus were dinner guests at the house of Marcus *Laurinus at Bruges (Ep 2499), and in his last surviving letter to Erasmus (Ep 2817) he pleaded with him not to waste his efforts on apologiae.

An autograph letter-book by Ammonius is preserved in the Bibliothèque municipale of Besançon. Other letters are printed in the correspondence of Nicolaus *Olahus and elsewhere. Ammonius also composed some

poems and a biography of Willem Bibaut, the general of his order. He published a commentary on the parable of the Prodigal Son, *Tractatus in parabolam* (Brussels: P. Paulus 1542).

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PGB

Gervasius AMOENUS of Dreux, documented 1506-29(?)

Argonautica (Paris: J. Bade and J. Petit 7 February 1512/13). The prefatory letter addressed to Robert de *Keysere refers to seven years spent by Amoenus in England, apparently as a protégé of William *Blount. The same epistle praises the Paris humanists and printers for their contribution to the renaissance of letters. Amoenus may be identical with the Norman schoolmaster Erasmus accuses of being an accomplice of Pierre *Cousturier in a letter of 1528 (Ep 2062). At any rate the recipient of that letter, Levinus *Ammonius, seems to have thought of Amoenus at once (Ep 2082).

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