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MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO, *De officiis, Paradoxa stoicorum, De amicitia, fragment of De senectute*

In Latin, manuscript on paper  
[Central Italy (Viterbo?), dated 1446]

112 folios, (collation  $i^{10+1} + ii^{12} + iii^{12} + iv^{12} + v^{12} + vi^{10} + vii^{10} + viii^{10} + ix^{12} + x^{11}$ ), quire 10 lacking final folio, manuscript lacks last quire, paper size (299 x 217 mm), three identified watermarks (Briquet 9127, "Lettre T dans un cercle," Lucca, 1440; Briquet 5133 "Coutelas," Barcelona, 1442; Palermo, 1444; Perugia, 1444-51; Cermona, 1447; Pisa, 1447, Venice, 1448-1449; Briquet 6692, "Fleur (de formes varies) ou fleuron," Naples, 1445), one unidentified watermark "colonne," catchwords throughout, modern foliation in Arabic numerals in pencil only on ff. 36r, 55r, and 77r, written in an very clear gothic-humanist script in light brown ink, double vertical and horizontal justification in pencil, lines pricked for ruling (justification 165 x 90 mm.), 24 lines per page, blank spaces for large initials, contemporary interlinear and marginal notation in a semi-humanistic script in light brown ink by the original scribe and another unidentified hand on ff. 1r-77r, hand nota bene on f. 40v, marginalia severely worn and illegible on f. 1rv, marginalia periodically worn and faded making it at times illegible, ff. 78rv, 87r-89v, and 108v blank, f. 1r has writing in modern pencil ("APP/A"), ff. 21-25 lower fore edge corner creased, ff. 85 and 90 upper fore edge corner creased, small cutting on f. 35 lower corner of fore edge, large tear to f. 1 lower gutter, ff. 91-92 have small tears in outer margins, f. 110 small tear in gutter, severe chipping to all outside edges on ff. 99-112, heavy wear and browning to text on ff. 1t and 112rv, severe water damage to ff. 1-2 and 111-112 effecting legibility, moderate to light water damage to gutters and fore edge corners throughout, moderate worming on ff. 1-2 effecting text, light worming on ff. 3-40 and 109-112. Bound in fifteenth-century cardboard binding, paper pastedown remnants on inside covers, no flyleaves, fungus stains on inside front cover, extremely faded and worn unidentified legal manuscript with remnants of a blue, red and pink initial and blue paragraphs used as original front and rear covers, three double thongs visible through spine, fragments of a fifteenth-century parchment legal charter (see below) used to strengthen spine and quire sewing in gutters, inside rear cover has writing in modern pencil ("3G6ZR"). Dimensions 295 x 220 mm.

A handsomely written and extensively glossed folio edition of Cicero's principal philosophical and ethical works used as a schoolbook for instructing students in grammar and moral in the fifteenth century. The manuscript contains an elaborate commentary on Cicero's *De officiis*, provided by the scribe who prepared the manuscript and the student who used the manuscript, who are both identified in the text. This manuscript provides an important window into the practice of elementary education in Renaissance Italy.

## PROVENANCE

1. This manuscript was prepared by an unknown scribe for Nicolai Renciade in 1446 according to its colophon (f. 77). The colophon states that Renciade was the student of Giovanni de Juvianello, professor of grammar, rhetoric and poetics in Viterbo.

## TEXT

ff. 1r-77r, Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De officiis*, incipit, "[Q]uamquam te marce fili annum jam audientem cratippum..."; explicit, "Vale igitur Mi Cicero tibi que persuade esse te quidem mihi carissimum. Sed multo fore cariorem, si talibus monumentis praeceptis que laetabere. DEO GRATIAS AMEN." colophon; "Iste liber est adoloscantis Nicolai Renciade de uiterbo studio indulgentis. Sub disciplina honorandi magistri Iohannis de Jubianello gramatice Rethorice quam poesis professoris dum legebat uiterbo. M.cccc.46. A natiuitate domini sub Eugenio papa quarto. Amen."

f. 77v, Diagram setting out the relationship between the virtues

ff. 79r-86v, Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Paradoxa stoicorum*, incipit, "[A]nimadverti Marce brute sepe Catonem auunculum tuum cum in senatu sententiam diceret..."; explicit, "non modo non Copiosi ac divites Sed etiam inopes Ac pauperes extimandi [sic] sunt. MARCE TULII CICERONIS DE PARADOXES LIBER EXPLICIT. AMEN."

ff. 90r-108r, Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De amicitia*, incipit, "[Q]UINTUS Mutius agur sceuola multa de gao lelio socero suo narrare memoriter ac iocunde solebat..."; explicit, "Vos autem ortor ut ita virtutem locetis sine qua amicitia esse non potest ut ea excepta nihil amicitia Praestabilis Putetis. Amen. MARCE TULII CICERONIS DE AMICITIA LIBER EXPLICIT. AMEN."

ff. 109r-112v, Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De senectute* (I-VIII.26.3), incipit, "[O] Tite siquid ego aduito curamve leuasso..."; explicit, "sed uidetis ut senectus non modo languida ac iners non sit uerum etiam sit operosa et semper agens aliquid et moliens tale scilicet..."

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 BCE) is perhaps the most renowned name in Roman literature. He was a skilled dialectician, rhetorician, and orator, who enjoyed a long career as a politician in the Roman Senate. He practiced law in Rome and studied philosophy in Greece before becoming Consul in 64 B.C.E. Cicero went into political retirement during the dictatorship of Julius Caesar (c. 48 B.C.E.). When Caesar was assassinated in 44 B.C.E., he returned to public life to support the Roman Republic and to oppose the triumvirate of Marcus Anthony, Octavian, and Marcus Lepidus. Cicero died in 43 B.C.E. Most of our knowledge of Cicero's life comes from his own letters and from Plutarch's *Life of Cicero* composed over a hundred years after his death.

Cicero's *De officiis* was the great orator's last major work of his career. He composed the work in epistolary form to his son Marcus in 44 BCE. Cicero's treatise concentrated on the theme of duty. For Cicero, duty was a relationship between how duties are performed and how they are guided by the final purpose of life. Cicero believed that knowing one's duty depended on the ability to discern the situation and proper course of action, that is what is honorable and not how one judges between two expedient things and what to do if two honorable things seem to be in conflict.

Cicero composed his *Paradoxa stoicorum* as an introduction to Stoicism in 46 B.C.E. In this work, he sets out to explain six basic principals of Stoicism commonly rejected by non-stoics. These are moral value is the only good, virtue is sufficient for happiness, all sins and virtues are equal, every fool is insane, only the wise man is really free, and only the wise man is really rich. Despite Cicero's stated intentions that the treatise was written for self-amusement, the treatise provided him with a forum for attacking his critics and enemies.

Cicero composed his dialogue on friendship, the *Laelius seu de amicitia*, for his friend Titus Pomponius Atticus in 44 BCE. The three interlocutors in the dialogue are Gaius Laelius, Gaius Fannius and Quintus Mucius Scaevola. In this dialogue, Cicero argues that true friendship is political friendship. True friends therefore share the same notions of justice and virtue as if they were of the same party. True friends are different from tyrants, who dictate their own will upon others and as such have no friends.

Cicero composed the *De senectute* in 44 BCE after the death of his daughter. It also coincided with his own increasing lack of hope in the restoration of the Roman Republic. The work is written as a dialogue, with P.Cornelius Scipio Africanus, Gaius Laelius Sapiens, and Marcus Porcius Cato as the main characters. Cicero argued that maturity and morality determines how one responds to growing old and dying. He therefore argued that one's life should be used to cultivate wisdom in order to overcome the miseries of old age, disease, and death.

Hundreds of Cicero's manuscripts survive from throughout the Middle Ages showing the immense popularity of his works. On the one hand, Cicero's exceptional mastery of the Latin language appealed to medieval and renaissance grammar teachers. Teachers also selected his works to instruct students in moral philosophy, since his views on Stoicism fit well with Christian ethics and spiritual self-discipline. On the other hand, the rhetorical structure and themes of Cicero's became models for Christian writers. Writers such as Isidore of Seville used the model of Cicero's *De officiis* to write his own work on the duties of priests, known as *De ecclesiasticis officiis*. Similarly, Ambrose of Milan modeled his own writing on Christian ethics, also known as the *De officiis*, modeled on Cicero's work. The popularity of Cicero's text continued into the thirteenth century, when Guillaume d'Auxerre composed his *Summa de officiis ecclesiasticis*, and Guido de Orchelles completed his *Summa de sacramentis et officiis ecclesiae*.

Most research on Cicero's manuscript tradition concentrates on the numerous early pre-twelfth century copies of his texts (e.g., Powell, 1998). However, there is a growing interest in fifteenth-century manuscripts of Cicero's works because many of the manuscripts are glossed. As in the present copy, a census of glossed copies and a careful study of them would likely reveal much about the appreciation of Cicero in the Renaissance. This is particularly true for the study of Renaissance education, where recent studies (e.g. Gehl and Black) have focused on the manuscripts used by students as opposed to lists of curriculum and treatises on education. Since this manuscript was copied and glossed for a young student, it provides an important window into the practice of elementary education in Renaissance Italy.

Two interesting features characterize the binding of the present manuscript. The first is a cutting from a fifteenth-century legal document used to strengthen the spine and sewing of the quires. The document purports to be a legal grant initiated by Iacobo de Lugo with regard to some lands and houses to be bought or sold (it is unclear in the fragment) by Nicolo de Maderis. The notary's mark appears in the lower left of the charter, which is now found in the gutter of the inside front cover. Secondly, there is a faded and worn unidentified legal manuscript with commentary that served as the original cover of the binding. The manuscript is written in brown ink in Gothic script. There are remnants of a blue, red and pink initial on the front cover, and blue paraphs on the rear cover.

## LITERATURE

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## ONLINE RESOURCES

Biography and introduction to Cicero by The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy  
<http://www.iep.utm.edu/c/cicero.htm>

Introduction to Stoicism by the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy  
<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/stoicism/>

English translation of Plutarch's *Life of Cicero*

<http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/mirror/classics.mit.edu/Plutarch/cicero.html>

Latin version of Plutarch's *Life of Cicero*

<http://www.slu.edu/colleges/AS/languages/classical/latin/tchmat/pedagogy/latinitas/plut/cic/cicvit1.html>

English translation of the *De officiis*

[http://www.constitution.org/rom/de\\_officiis.htm](http://www.constitution.org/rom/de_officiis.htm)

Latin version of the *De officiis*

<http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/cicero/off.shtml>

Latin version of the *Paradoxa stoicorum*

<http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/cicero/paradoxa.shtml>

English translation of the *De Amicitia*

[http://ancienthistory.about.com/library/bl/bl\\_text\\_cic\\_friendship.htm](http://ancienthistory.about.com/library/bl/bl_text_cic_friendship.htm)

Latin version of the *De amicitia*

<http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/cicero/amic.shtml>

English translation of *De senectute*

[http://www.4literature.net/Cicero/Cato\\_or\\_An\\_Essay\\_on\\_Old\\_Age/](http://www.4literature.net/Cicero/Cato_or_An_Essay_on_Old_Age/)

Latin version of the *De senectute*

<http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/cicero/senectute.shtml>