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GAIUS SALLUSTIUS CRISPUS, *De coniuratione Catilinae, Bellum Iugurthinum*
In Latin, decorated manuscript on paper
Northern Italy, Veneto (Venice? Vicenza?), ca. 1440-1450

94 ff., preceded and ending with a paper flyleaf, complete, in regular quires of 10 (collation: i-ix¹⁰, x⁴), on paper [with three different watermarks close to Briquet no. 6306, "Fleur à trois pétales": a number of Italian cities including Vicenza, 1450 (watermark found on ff. 14-15); Briquet no. 5131, "Coutelas": again, a number of Italian cities, including Venice, 1448-1449, Udine, 1451 (watermark found on f. 24), close to Briquet no. 11899, "Trois monts": Venice, 1447 (most frequent watermark)], ruled in drypoint, written in a fine Italian humanistic cursive bookhand in dark brown to black ink on up to 26 lines per page (justification 145 x 90 mm.), some rubrics in red, decorated catchwords, a few initials stroked in red with some words underlined in red, a few painted initials in red, one 4-line high painted initial in blue with red penwork extending into the margin (f. 31), frontispiece page decorated with one 4-line high opening initial in pale red on a liquid gold ground, with first three words of text traced in capitals highlighted in red, and string of red and liquid gold discs in the margin (f. 1), contemporary foliation in upper right-hand corner, a few marginal or interlinear corrections, a few annotations and inscriptions. Bound in a later 19th-century binding of pasteboards covered with speckled paper, back wanting (Some wormholes, never affecting text; quire stitching weak; covers worn). Dimensions 220 x 147 mm.

This handy volume of the complete extant works of Sallust, transcribed before the editio princeps of 1470, survives as evidence of the rich manuscript tradition. The over 500 extant manuscripts attest to Sallust's popularity in the Middle Ages, continuing in the Renaissance, a popularity due to his didactic combination of historical, ethical, and rhetorical features, which suited the needs of "ars grammatical" in the schools.

PROVENANCE

1. Watermarks and script suggest this manuscript was copied in Northern Italy, likely in the Veneto region granted the three different watermarks point to that region.

2. A near-contemporary hand to that of the scribe has written in the margin the following names: "Bartolamei Francisci [tantum] (?) Jacobi Johannis Phipi (or Phi[li]pi?) [Of (belonging to) Bartholomeus Franciscus and Jacobus Johannes Phipi]. The same hand copied some of the inscriptions or proverbs found on f. 94: "Tanta ne tam patiens nullo certamine tolli"; "Extra fortuna est quidquid donatur amicis / Quas dederis solas semper [...] opes."

3. There is an unidentified English sale's catalogue description pasted in on upper pastedown, no. 254. Beneath the catalogue entry, one reads in modern pencil: "MSS. 1109."

TEXT

ff. 1-30v, Sallustius, *De coniuratione Catilinae*, incipit, "Omnis homines qui sese student prestare ceteris animalibus summa ope niti decet....."; explicit, "[...] luctus atque gaudium agitabantur"; rubric, Explicit feliciter catalinarius deo gratias amen. Incipit liber iugurtini [ed. Ernout, 1999, pp. 54-124; ed. Kurfess, 1991, pp. 2-52];

ff. 31-94, Sallustius, *Bellum Iugurthinum*, rubric, Incipit iugurthinum bellum prologus; incipit prologue, "Falso queritur de natura sua..."; rubric, Explicit prologus et incipit bellum; incipit, "Bellum scripturus sum quod populus..." ; explicit, "[...] spes atque opes civitatis in illo site sunt. Explicit iugurtinus"; rubric, Explicit liber iugurthini belli deo gratias amen [ed. Ernout, 1999, pp. 130-267; ed. Kurfess, 1991, pp. 53-147];

Tacitus called Sallust (86-34 B.C.) "the most brilliant Roman historian." After having retired from public affairs (he gained quaestorship and was admitted to the Senate), Sallust composed two historical monographs both found in the present manuscript: an account of the Catiline conspiracy (*De coniuratione Catilinae* or *Bellum Catilinae*), containing the history of the year 63; and an account of the Jugurthine War (*Bellum Iugurthinum*), recording the war in Numidia waged against Jugurtha. Both historical monographs have come down to us complete. Also preserved are important fragments of his larger work (*Historiae*), a history of Rome retracing the events from 78-67 BC, intended as a continuation of Cornelius Sisenna's work. Sallust's priority in the "Jugurthine War," as with the "Catiline Conspiracy," is to use history as a vehicle for his judgment on the slow destruction of Roman morality and politics. Sallust treated history as a branch of ethics, which in turn was a branch of rhetoric.

Sallust was one of the most popular prose writers in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, widely used for teaching in arts courses, notably for the study of rhetoric. Medieval and Renaissance writers would incorporate quotations, proverbs, and tricks of style from Sallust into their texts. To quote L. Reynolds: "The manuscript tradition is vast; I know of more than 500 manuscripts, and there must be many more" (1983, p. 345, note 24). The scholarly editions to which one normally has recourse are those of R. Dietsch (Leipzig, 1874), and more recently A. Ernout (Paris, 1958, revised in 1999) and A. Kurfess (Leipzig, 1957, with reprint 1991) with a survey of the earlier manuscript tradition. A very large number of extant manuscripts date from fifteenth-century Italy; some are richly illuminated presentation copies that must have circulated in humanist circles, and others, like the present copy, are more modest versions doubtless for didactic use in the schools.

The value of Sallust for the study of rhetoric made him more widely read than any other classical historian. Much appreciated for his mastery of the Latin language, with a style quite unlike that of Caesar and Cicero, Sallust took as his model in the writing of history Herodotus, whose brevity of expression he also imitated and, according to Seneca Rhetor, even surpassed. The orations included in Sallust's works were greatly admired in Antiquity, and collections of them were made for use in the schools of rhetoric in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. It is quite probable the present copy was used for didactic purposes: "Sallust was commonly listed in the section classified as *ars*

grammatica. Boys learned their history, in ancient and medieval classrooms alike, in the margin of grammar and rhetoric: history and mythology guided them to understand the allusions in literary texts and supplied a quarry of exempla for the orator to draw upon" (Smalley, 1971, p. 168).

In addition to its textual importance, attesting to the transmission of Latin classics in Renaissance Italy, the present manuscript is interesting because it provides a copy of the only two complete historical monographs by Sallust that survive (the other works attributed to Sallust are either fragmentary or spurious), copied just a few decades before the incunable edition. Also originating in the region of Venice, Sallust's works were first printed under the title *Opera*, in Venice, Vindelinius de Spira, 1470 (Goff S 51; HC 14197*), for which only 19 copies survive (as recorded in British Library, ISTC [Incunabula Short Title Catalogue]). The study of manuscript copies of Latin classics--even later copies such as the present codex--provides perspectives on the history of classical scholarship in the later Middle Ages and Renaissance prior to the incunable tradition.

LITERATURE

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Reynolds, L. (ed.). *Texts and Transmission. A Survey of the Latin Classics*, Oxford, 1983.

Sanford, Eva M. "The Study of Ancient History during the Middle Ages," in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 5 (1944), pp. 21-43.

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Syme, R. *Sallust*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2002 [first published in 1964].

ONLINE RESOURCES

Sallust, Conspiracy of Catiline

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text.jsp?doc=Perseus:text:1999.02.0123>

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text.jsp?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0124%3Asection%3D1>

Sallust, The Jugurthine War

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text.jsp?doc=Perseus:text:1999.02.0125>

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text.jsp?doc=Perseus:text:1999.02.0126>

On Catiline

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catiline>

British Library, ISTC

<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/istc/index.html>