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**GUIDO FABBA, *Summa dictaminis* and *Dictamina rhetorica* (part)
In Latin, decorated manuscript on parchment
Northern France (Paris?), c. 1240-1260**

iii (paper) + 86 + iii (paper) folios on parchment, modern foliation in pencil, top, outer corner recto, text is now bound out of order (see Text description below), with a loose singleton, f. 1*, followed by ff. 1-85, traces of earlier foliation in pen, f. 35: "4-," and f. 38: "4 < 7? >," text begins and ends imperfectly, (collation, single leaf, now f. 1*, i-ii¹² iii¹⁴ iv⁸ [-1, before f. 39, structure uncertain, but 8, f. 45, is single, and misbound from another quire] v¹² [beginning f. 46] vi¹² vii⁶), quires one and two signed by the modern binder with letters in pencil, ruled in lead with the top and bottom ruled lines full across, full-length vertical bounding lines (justification, 106 x 73-70 mm.), written below the top line in an upright gothic bookhand with decorative ascenders in the top line, majuscules within the text outlined in red, red rubrics beginning with blue paragraph marks, two-line alternately red and blue pen initials, placed outside text space, with pen flourishes in the contrasting color, three skillfully-executed painted initials, ff. 3, 48 and 76v, five- to six-lines, within the text space, initials are pink on dark blue grounds infilled with vine spirals ending in animal heads, initial, f. 77, enclosed in an bar border in the outer margin, extending into the bottom margin, with similar vine motifs and colors, border is smudged and may have been retouched, overall in good condition, f. 25 is detached, f. 1, worn, with some loss of text. Bound in modern limp vellum in pristine condition. Dimensions 160 x 114 mm.

The manuscripts of the thirteenth-century rhetorician Guido Fabba on the art of letter writing have yet to be investigated by modern scholars, and the two works preserved here, printed only in rudimentary nineteenth-century editions, deserve modern critical study. Although not complete, this attractive manuscript is an early copy of these texts, dating close to the author's lifetime. The Schoenberg Database records the sale of only one manuscript by Guido Fabba, and that was a single leaf.

PROVENANCE

1. The script and the decoration in this manuscript all point to an origin in northern France, and most likely Paris, around the middle of the thirteenth century, placing the manuscript around the time of or just after the death of the author (died 1242). The quality of the parchment, script, and decoration all seem characteristic of a manuscript made in a professional workshop. The study of rhetoric was a route to professional careers in royal and ecclesiastical chanceries, and the quality of the manuscript suggests it was made for someone of some wealth.

TEXT

The text has been bound out of order; the text begins imperfectly, ff. 39-44v, continues on the loose singleton, f. 1* rv, then continues, with no break, ff. 1-24v; ff. 25-38v, follow, and then ff. 45-85v, ending imperfectly. Reconstructed order is followed here:

ff. 39-44v, incipit, "///et faciat inspirante domino que sunt iustu. Ad modum serentis qui certam spinis ... *De uicio euitando in p̄cipiō dictionis*, In primis quidem breuiter est sciendum ... *Quomodo scribunt legati*. Si fuerit delegatus ... Si archiepiscopi uel alterius episcopi uicarius dicit///" [continuing, with no break];

f. 1*rv, [loose, single leaf], incipit, "///ita, Talis Episcopo sedis apostolice delegatus ... *Differentia exordii et arengi*, Exordium in tercia persona fit et primam non recipit uel secundam. Exemplum Magister Guido uirique diligenter///" [continuing, with no break];

ff. 1-24v, incipit, "///quia sua dictamina comprobantur. Arenga uero primam <?> recipit et secundam exemplum in decretalibus ... [f. 1] *Quid sit <?text expunged>*, "Beniuolentie captatio ... [f. 1v], *Quid sit clausula*, Clausula est quedam cuiuslibet tractatis particula que ad minus duas et ad plus vii distinctiones continent ... [f. 3], *Incipiunt littere stili secularis facere comparatiuum ponitiuum et superlatiuium ita quod de qualibet materia sunt tres epistole diuerse*, Viris prouidis et discretis multa laude et honore dignis karissimus socius et amicis spiritualibus Vniuersis scolaribus et honorabilibus uiris notum bononie commorantibus floribus eloquentie purputatis. Presbiter Guido ecclesie sancti michaelis fori medii capellanus ... [f. 24v], *Rogo et moneo te ut possum que tuo sudio///*

ff. 25-38v, incipit, "///per censuram ecclesiastici firmiter obseruari ... *Prima citatio iudicis delegati*, ... *De Episcopo ad papae*, Sanctissimo patro et domino ... in tali loco in mense augusti proxime nunc///"

ff. 45-85v, [f. 45rv], incipit, "///elapso a domino archiepiscopo munera quedam ...; *De episcopo ad episcopum* ... *De amico ad amicum pro morte filii*, Materia lacrimabilis ... et celestia moderatur///"; [continuing, with no break, ff. 46-85v], "noster filius. I. de uite huius ... [f. 48], *Incipiunt dictamina rhetorica que celesti quasi oraculo edita odoris suauitatem exhibent literatis quia de paradisis fonte diuina gratia porcesserunt. Hec littera fuit littera* ... *Responsiua*, Reuerendo in christo patri et domino I dei gratia Archiepiscopo Ravenatis Henricus//"

This first section of the manuscript includes parts of Guido Faba's *Summa dictaminis*, here beginning imperfectly in the first chapter (lacking the prologue) on f. 39; edited by Augusto Gaudenzi in *Il Propugnatore*, N.S. 3 (1890), i, pp. 287-338 and ii, pp. 345-393, here beginning p. 288. The text in this manuscript often differs from that printed by Gaudenzi.

The second section of the manuscript consists of parts of Guido Faba's *Dictamina rhetorica*, here beginning on f. 86; edited by Augusto Gaudenzi in *Il Propugnatore* N.S. 5 (1892), i, pp. 86-129 and ii, pp. 58-109. Again, the text here differs substantially from that printed by Gaudenzi, although some of the model letters are the same. The beginning rubric on f. 48 agrees with the beginning of the edition, p. 86. The first letter in the manuscript, however, is not included in the edition. Examples of letters included in both the manuscript and the edition include f. 49v, "de filio ad

parentem," ed. p. 86; f. 50, "de fratre..." ed. p. 88; f. 50v, ed. p. 91, f. 56, p. 101, etc.

Guido of Faba was born in Bologna around 1190 and had completed the arts course at the University by 1210. Although he spent a few years studying law, most of his career was devoted to the study of Rhetoric. He served as a notary and then as the professor of "dictamen" at the chapel of San Michele de Mercato di Mezzo in Bologna, and died c. 1242. He was the author of at least eight important rhetorical treatises.

This manuscript appears to include parts of his *Summa dictaminis*, written c. 1228-9, which included some theoretical discussion of the art of letter writing, but, like all of Guido's works, focused on practical information. Guido also wrote two collections of model letters: the *Dictamina rhetorica*, written c. 1226-7, included more than 220 different letters; and the *Epistole*, a similar, although shorter collection, written c. 1239-41. The model letters included here from the *Dictamina rhetorica* and the *Summa dictaminis* cover a wide variety of topics. Many are reflections of the urban nature of Italian life, for example letters between leaders of cities, a letter expelling an undesirable citizen, a letter from a city to a Count, a letter from a city to the knights of Florence. Many of the letters concern matters related to Church administration. Other letters are directly relevant to the life of the student, including letters from students to their parents, and letters between brothers. Other letters cover personal occasions, such as letters from a husband to a wife, or a letter between lovers. Overall, the text, which was designed for medieval students, is also quite accessible to the modern student of the Middle Ages, and full of intrinsic interest.

The surviving manuscripts of Guido's works have yet to be carefully analyzed, and although the *Dictamina rhetorica* and the *Summa dictaminis* were edited in the late nineteenth century, it is unlikely that the editions adequately reflect the complexity of the transmission of these works; cf. Charles Faulhaber, "The *Summa Dictaminis* of Guido Fabo," in *Medieval Eloquence: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Medieval Rhetoric*, ed. James J. Murphy, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1978, p. 86, note 2, suggesting that Guido's work survives in about forty manuscripts, but emphasizing the lack of a complete census or modern editions. The manuscript described here, for example, includes portions of the both texts, but deviates a great deal from the printed editions. As Martin Camargo has observed, the transmission of dictaminal texts, especially model letter collections, was always complicated, as additional letters were often added to an existing text (see *Ars dicatmina*, cited below, p. 48).

The study of Rhetoric as a formal educational discipline goes back to Classical Times, when it focused on the art of oral persuasion. In the Middle Ages in contrast, the art of letter writing became a central part of the medieval study of Rhetoric, reflecting a culture where official letters were an integral part of government, whether by secular monarchs or by the Church. Beginning in the eleventh century, a formal genre developed of theoretical works dealing with the composition of official letters, the *ars dictaminis*, or "art of letter writing." Rhetoric, including letter writing, was taught in the eleventh-century schools in centers such as Pavia, Orleans, and Tours, as well as in German cities, and it continued to be an important part of the medieval curriculum. By the thirteenth century, Bologna was the most important center for the teaching of Rhetoric. It was a practical art; students trained in letter writing were prepared for careers in both the Royal and Papal chanceries.

DECORATION

The three elegant and restrained initials are executed in the style characteristic of Parisian illumination from around the middle of the thirteenth century; initials, ff. 3 and 76v, are muted pink on white-patterned rectangular grounds, infilled with vine spirals ending in animal heads, in blue, dull pink, small touches of orange and acid green; initial, f. 48, is blue on a muted pink ground. The initial on f. 76v is framed by an L-shaped bar border in the outer and bottom margin, with similar vines on a blue ground; now rubbed and retouched. The red and blue initials, with pen decoration in the opposite color, usually extending the full length of the text column, are also in a style found in Paris around the middle of the century (cf. Patricia Stirnemann, "Fils de la vierge. L'initiale à filigranes parisienne: 1140-1314," *Revue de l'Art* 90 [1990], p. 68 and cat. 31).

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TM 365