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[Medieval Grammar Manual]. Miscellany including PSEUDO-DONATUS, *Ianua*; PHILIPPUS DE NADDO, *Grammatica latina [Regulae grammaticales]*; [ANONYMOUS], *Liber faceti or Facetus*; MARTINUS DUMIENSIS (Pseudo-Seneca or Martin of Braga), *Formula honestae vitae or Tractatus de quatuor virtutibus*; [PSEUDO-CATO], *Disticha* (Anonymous Italian Translation)

In Latin and Italian, decorated manuscript on parchment and paper

Northern Italy, likely Umbria or Tuscany (Perugia? Florence? Pisa?), c. 1250-1300; c. 1375; c. 1425-1450

103 ff., followed by a single paper flyleaf, manuscript of composite nature on parchment and paper, missing an undetermined number of leaves (collation: heterogeneous quires, respectively section A [i8, ii6 (of 8, missing i-ii), iii10], section B [i25 (of 26?)], section C [i10], section D [i6], section E [i14], section F [i16, ii9 (or 10? or 8+1, with last leaf a blank flyleaf?)]), all sections but the first written on paper, with a variety of watermarks reflecting the composite nature of the manuscript (Fol. 29: Briquet, "Huchet," no. 7726: Perugia, Bologna 1380, Fol. 50: Briquet, "Lettre A," no. 7943, Perugia: 1370, Fol. 55: "Huchet," no. 7654: Pisa, 1367-1376, Siena, 1378-1379, Perugia, 1380 or no. 7655: Pisa, 1367, Fol. 68: "Ciseaux," no. 3663: Florence, 1447-1448 or no. 3685: Florence, 1459/1460, Fol. 98: "Huchet," no. 7686: Florence, 1427-1435, Pisa, 1430), written in a variety of hands spanning from a gothic bookhand (ff. 1-24v) to a cursive mercantesca script for the part composed in the vernacular (e.g. ff. 80-103v), numerous plain initials in red in the first portion of the manuscript, large opening 5-line high initial "P" in red with a long descender (13th c.), decorated initial in brown ink and highlighted in yellow wash, with winged bird (14th c.), drawing with profile bust of a man (fol. 27v), 4-line high initial in plain red decorated with two faces, one facing and the other profile (fol. 66). Bound in limp vellum, wallet-style Italian binding of the 15th c. (or early 16th c.?) (Manuscript well worn and amply used, affecting text at times, a few inscriptions in Latin on the back cover, the words "scholas" and a few first names faintly legible [Petrus] [Franciscus], early shelfmarks "78" on spine and "no. IV" on inner turn-down). Dimensions 225 x 150 mm.

Grammar manuals are of the utmost rarity. This compilation witnesses how teachers and students respected a normative tradition of medieval grammar, to which they added to form a grammar manual or teacher's reader. Vernacular insertions such as *Ianua*, but also syntactical works such as that of Philippus of Naddo, attest to the shift from medieval to Renaissance pedagogy and the progressive affirmation of the vernacular. Early Renaissance educators shared the monastic ideal that grammar education was above all concerned with the moral and spiritual life, thus the presence of Cato's *Distichs*, here in an unrecorded Italian translation.

PROVENANCE

1. Composite manuscript put together as a grammar manual for use as a schoolbook. An early original binding of limp vellum suggests the manuscript was assembled in the 15th century in Italy, as confirmed by script and passages redacted in Italian. This composite manuscript opens with an earlier text copied on parchment, with script and decoration suggesting a date of c. 1250-1300 (ff. 1-24v). The rest of the manuscript comprises texts copied in a variety of hands on paper, copied in the 14th and 15th centuries. Watermarks in paper suggest an Umbrian or Tuscan origin for this manuscript, perhaps Perugia or Florence (as per above). Identification of the dialect used in the translation of Cato's Distichs might allow for a better origin for this manual.
2. A number of annotations pepper the manuscript, mostly notes and marginalia. A name is found as a pen trial of some sort: *Lodovicho de Messer Piero* (repeated twice, f. 25). Also, the final text seems to have been copied (or translated?) by someone with the name "antonio" as a first name or surname. The name appears on the verso of the last written leaf, very frayed, not allowing for proper identification.
3. Continental Private Collection.

TEXT

ff. 1-24v [13th c.], Pseudo-Donatus [Anonymous], *Ianua*, incipit, "Ianua sum rudibus primam cupientibus aitem..."; "Poeta que pars est nomen est..."; explicit, "[...] Septem sunt liberales artes....Grammatica est scientia recte [loquendi] recteque scribere...(f. 23)"; ff. 23v-24v, "Indicativo modo tempus presenti. *Io dimostrativo modo temporale presente...*" with the last two leaves intermixing Latin and Italian verb conjugations [leaves wanting between ff. 8-9; ends incomplete];

This is an early and partial copy of the celebrated *Ianua*, a syntax manual that was to be memorized by schoolchildren, often confused with the similar *Ars Minor* of Donatus and that often circulated under Donatus's name. Although the work found in this manuscript begins just like the traditional *Ianua* text, there are apparently considerable differences with the published text (see Schmitt, 1969, discussed below), and the presence of passages in the Italian vernacular toward the last leaves should be properly studied for linguistic particularities and perhaps better identification of the version of the text.

Students reading the *Ianua* first learned the text syllable by syllable, repeating after the teacher and memorizing the text. Being a book of morphology, *Ianua* defined, listed and explained inflections of the Latin language by means of a question and answer form: "Poet is what part of speech. A noun. What is a noun? That which signifies proper or common substance or quality by means of case..." (Opening of *Ianua*). The presence of this early copy of *Ianua* can be justified in a later composite manual in that pedagogues always valued tradition, especially at the elementary level. To quote P. Grendler: "They seldom change methods and textbooks, because they feel comfortable with the tried and true, and because education includes passing on tradition" (Grendler, 1989, p. 181). *Ianua* and other classical grammar manuals were maintained because humanists never denounced their intrinsic pedagogical value and presented the same declensions and conjugations

that students had been learning for hundreds of years and that they would be learn for hundreds more (Grendler, 1989, pp. 181-182).

Grammar teachers used what they referred to as *Donato*, *Donado*, *Donadello*, *Donao*, as manuals and teaching aids, which in the Italian Renaissance meant either the *Ars minor* of Aelius Donatus or an “elementary grammar manual” in general. But in Italy, the text that circulated under the name of Donatus or Donadello was, more often than not, not the historical *Ars minor*, but rather a medieval text of Italian origin known as *Ianua*. This pseudo-Donatus carried the title *Aelii Donati grammatici pro impetrando ad republicam litteriam aditu: novitiis adolescentibus grammatices rudimenta quae aptissime dedicata* [The rudiments of grammar of Aelius Donatus the grammarian, the approach to entering the republic of letters for beginners to whom it is most fittingly dedicated]. Manuscripts and printed versions of the pseudo-Donatus (*Ianua*) always prefaced the grammatical material with an 8-line verse beginning “*Ianua sum rudibus primam cupientibus artem...*” [I am the door for the ignorant desiring the first art...]. This preface was addressed directly to the new learner and promises to teach him the ways of the world through the study of the language of learning. Renaissance Italians, even in the late sixteenth century, believed this book to have been the authentic Donatus. However the historical Donatus and the Pseudo-Donatus (*Ianua*) bear little resemblance to each other. It was Sabbadini in 1896 who recognized the dissemblance between the two works, and adopting the medieval custom of naming a textbook by its first word, he named it *Ianua*, to which it is referred to by historians of grammar ever since.

Generally speaking, the Italian Renaissance learned from *Ianua*; the rest of Europe used Donatus (i.e. the *Ars minor*). There are at least 38 incunabular printings of *Ianua* in Italy, as opposed to only 10 printings of the historical Donatus. By contrast, more than 300 incunable printings of Donatus or close variants, but only 6 printings of *Ianua*, were published in the rest of Europe. The origins of the *Ianua* are unknown and, for now, one can only speculate on how Italy came to prefer *Ianua* to Donatus. At some point when most medieval school texts were written, an Italian grammarian composed *Ianua*. The earliest manuscript of *Ianua* appended the *Disticha Catonis* (Florence, Bibl. Naz., cod. Magliabechianus I 45, ff. 1-21). Scholars do not agree on the date of this manuscript, with conjectures ranging from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries (Gehl, 1993, Census I 15, p. 254, dates the codex 13th and 14th c.). Another manuscript of *Ianua* has been ascribed to the thirteenth century and several from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (for a list of some of the manuscripts, see Schmitt, 1969, pp. 50-51). Hence it appears the present thirteenth century copy of *Ianua* would rank amongst the earliest preserved copies of the work. The earliest printed *Ianua* is GW 8987 (Rome, Sweynheim and Pannartz, 1470). As is always true with elementary grammars, the surviving manuscripts and printed editions are undoubtedly only a small fraction of the number produced. Within the list of surviving *Ianua* texts, this particular copy is quite early, and its highly abbreviated and tight script suggest that it might have been a teacher’s copy, a sort of classroom prompt that could be read only by someone who already had the text by memory.

Another particularity is the very early presence of some vernacular in the latter portion of the present *Ianua* (albeit fragmentary). One finds exclusively Latin explanations and forms until f. 23, and then quite suddenly on ff. 23v-24 there are Italian vernacular equivalents of the Latin conjugated verbal forms: “*Indicativo modo tempus presentis. Io dimostrativo modo temporale presente. Ego amo, io amo; tu amas, tu ame; ille amat, quelli ama...nos amamus, noi amiamo...*” (f. 23v). Exactly when the

first scribes introduced a handful of Italian words into the standard *Ianua* is unknown (see Grendler, 1989, pp. 182-183). It is clear that ff. 23v-24v of this manuscript were copied by a different hand than the preceding *Ianua* text, perhaps added at a later date. There is a text known as *Donatus melior*, apparently by Antonio Manicelli (1452-1503), which was the text of *Ianua* which incorporated some vernacular translation of Latin phrases (Grendler, 1989, p. 184). The *Donatus al senno* [Donatus to wisdom] would eventually develop into a fully bilingual *Ianua*. It is worth stating that the *Ianua* was an extremely “fluid” text, with versions varying considerably from one manuscript to another. The mapping out of these different versions based on the extant codices and the evolution of the text over centuries would be a fascinating research topic.

For a discussion of the text, see W. Schmitt, 1969, pp. 43-80, with the published text based on the Pavia, 1481 imprint (GKW 8998) [partial text published in Schmitt, 1969, pp. 74-80: “Der lateinische Text der Ianua nach der Inkunabel GW 8998”]. See also Bursill-Hall, 1981, p. 319.

ff. 25-26v [15th c.], Excerpt from an unidentified grammatical text (*Tractatus preteritorum et suppinorum*), incipit, “Ver in mic si fut cum ce ...”; explicit, “[...] preter de ste bi tu fi sa. Explicit tractatus preteritorum et suppinorum. Deo gratias Amen”;

ff. 27-49 [14th c.], Philippus de Naddo Florentinus, *Grammatica latina* [or *Regulae grammaticales*], incipit, “Constructio est unio et constructibilium costrutibilia [sic] vero sunt partes orationis...”; explicit, “[...] vel substantia (?) diuise acidentur...”;

Filippo or Filippo de Naddo was a Florentine grammar teacher during the years 1320-1327 (see S. Debenedetti, “Sui piu antichi ‘doctores puerorum’ a Firenze,” in *Studi medievali*, 2 (1906-1907), p. 341, n. 2 and p. 347, n. 4). This work would be classified amongst the intermediate grammar treatises, of the type called “Liber de constructione” and that focused on syntax. An important feature of this copy is the inclusion of vernacular lexicographical equivalents: “Orior, ris, tus, sum – per nascere...Loquor, ris, tus sum – per parlare...” (f. 30v). See Bursill-Hall, 1981, p. 306 who lists only 9 manuscripts for this work. This work is unpublished: critical editions of intermediate grammars of this sort might better reveal how these grammars were actually used in classrooms.

ff. 50-59v [late 14th c.], Bilingual (Latin and Italian) Vocabulary drillbook, incipit, “Hec ruta [ruta]te la ruta; Hic atripex atripeis la triplice...”; heading, *De fructibus ciboribus; De silva...*; explicit, “[...] hic mucro [mucro]ne lo spuntone”;

ff. 60-65v [late 14th c.], Another Bilingual (Latin and Italian) Vocabulary drillbook, incipit, “Nobilium lector servorum strata ferarutti...hec lectica [lectica]ce la lectiera; hoc fulcrum [ful]cri la colcitra...”; explicit, “[...] Hic lacus [la]cus/cui el laco”;

ff. 66-75v [15th c.], [Anonymous], *Liber faceti* or *Facetus*, heading, *Incipit Liber Faceti*, incipit, “Moribus et vita quisquis vult esse facetus / Me legat e discat que mea musa docet...”; explicit, “[...] Nam nigena doctus vate facetus erit. Explicit liber faceti deo gratias amen. Finito libro isto frangamus ossa magistro” [this last sentence translates: “This book’s done, now let’s break the teacher’s bones!” (also found in a Poetic and epistolary miscellany compiled by a 14th c. student, in Cortona, Bibl. Comunale, MS 82);

The *Facetus* is a short poem in distichs. There are two versions of the *Facetus*, with different incipits (version A: "Cum nihil utilius" and version B: "Moribus et vita". This manuscript contains a copy of the version B, composed of 255 distichs (510 verses), not as common as version A. The work is often found in grammar manuals and is in fact a medieval "courtesy book" that provides the rules of etiquette and social behavior (table manners, rules of conduct whilst traveling, etc.). It is addressed to all members of society, clerics, laymen, lovers (there are 300 verses related to the Art of Love, inspired by Ovid), men of law and soldiers. This verse manual of good manners was also sometimes attributed to John of Garland or Reinerius Alemanus.

Ed. by C. Schroeder, *Der deutsche Facetus*, Berlin, 1911, who studies the German vernacular tradition but also gives an edition of the Latin versions; for a discussion of the Latin originals, see also, J. Morawski, *Le Facet en françois, édition critique des cinq traductions, des deux Facetus latins avec introduction, notes et glossaire*, Poznań, 1923.

ff. 76-79v [15th c.], Martinus Dumiensis, episcopus Bracarensis (Pseudo-Seneca or Martin of Braga), *Formula honestae vitae* or *Tractatus de quatuor virtutibus*, incipit, "Quatuor virtutum spesies multorum sapientium...[...] Quisquis ergo prudentiam sequi desiderat"; explicit, "[...] humane amobilitatis amictat..." [ends incomplete, missing only last paragraph];

This treatise on the four cardinal virtues was often misattributed to Seneca. The work discusses the four virtues (*prudentia*, *magnanimitas*, *continentia* and *iustitia*) as well as moderation in each of these virtues. There was an almost universal belief in the later Middle Ages in the Senecan origin of this text. Petrarch appears to have been one of the first to doubt Seneca's authorship. The *Formula* was translated into a number of vernacular languages and remained a favorite drill book for elementary schools well into the sixteenth century. It was one of the textbooks used for Gargantua's training in Latin. The work is recorded in Bloomfield, 1979, pp. 376-377, no. 4457 and printed by C. W. Barlow, *Martini episcopi Bracarensis Opera omnia*, New Haven, 1950, pp. 236-250.

ff. 80-103v [15th c.], Cato, *Distichs* [Anonymous Italian translation], heading, "[Q]ui si comincia el cato che de vulgarizato dilectea...se volete ascoltare el vero incontro fu messer Catenaccio questo fu di campagna...Et incomincero / Al presente diro"; incipit, "[F]igliolo se vuoi venire costumato serva li amaestramenti che di cato [...] scientie fructuose trovi io teledispongho per respecti nuovi..."; Cato, *Distich* in Latin: "[C]um ego cato animam..."; incipit Italian strophe: "Conciosa cosa che fra me pensasse / Veddi molti homini che gravemente errasse..."; explicit, "[...] Non tenere tua scientia nascosa / Che siradoppia (?) achi lasegna et usa." (f. 103); the final ff. 102-103 are considerably damaged and frayed, causing lacunae to the last two leaves, in particular the end of the text, with presumably the colophon unfortunately fragmentary, the name "Antonio" probably referring to the translator or the scribe.

This section of the present grammar manual and reader contains a copy of an Italian translation of Cato's *Distichs* as stated in the heading. In this translation, the anonymous translator was apparently indebted to Catenaccio of Anagni (see his translation of the *Distichs* into a dialect from Campania, ed. Paradisi, 2005), whom he quotes in the introductory heading as his inspiration (fol. 80). The author of the present translation even adopts the form of Catenaccio's version: each original Latin couplet (or distich) is expanded into a hexastichal strophe, consisting of a quatrain of

monorhyme alexandrines, closed by two hendecasyllables rhyming in pairs. The hendecasyllables express a sort of final thought which exemplifies the moral content of the preceding quatrain.

There have been a number of separate "volgarizzamenti" of Cato's famous Distichs, amply used to teach young Italian schoolchildren. The textual history of these "volgarizzamenti" is quite complex and has been partially studied by Roos, 1984, pp. 232-241, who details the local variants, with Venetian, Campanian, Lombard and Tuscan versions, all with their particular manuscript tradition. If the present vernacular version of Cato's Distichs is indeed Umbrian or Tuscan, it apparently is not one already published and studied by Vannucci, in his *Libro di Cato o Tre volgarizzamenti...* (1827) or Fontana (1979). For linguistic reasons alone the present unrecorded "volgarizzamento" of Cato's Distichs is rare and important.

After intense drill in the fundamentals, students began to read Latin with the *Disticha* of Cato or Pseudo-Cato. Cato's Distichs were a collection of moral sayings and practical wisdom compiled in late Antiquity with additions in the early Middle Ages, attributed to Cato the Censor (Marcus Porcius Cato). The Distichs became a favorite medieval and Renaissance schoolbook from the 10th century onwards. For reasons that are unknown, but perhaps simple common sense (linguistic rules and forms followed by simple literary application of the newly learned tools), Cato's Distichs often joined *Ianua*: a large majority of surviving manuscripts of Italian provenance include both the *Ianua* and the Distichs. The main body of the text consisted of four short books, here represented. The systematic inclusion of Cato's Distichs in grammar manuals, here interestingly in the vernacular, shows that learning Latin and learning to read and write was just as much about morals as it was about language. Teachers choose Latin and vernacular texts of moral merit and taught good behavior along with good language skills.

Commentary

Grammar manuals and Latin readers are of the utmost rarity and the present manuscript offers interesting views on the study of Latin and grammar in Trecento and Quattrocento Italy. This compilation witnesses how teachers or advanced students respected and recognized a normative tradition of medieval grammar, to which they added according to their needs, to form a grammar manual or teacher's reader. The present textbook witnesses the introduction of vernacular insertions at an early stage in morphology works such as *Ianua* but also in syntactical works such as that of Philippus of Naddo, attesting the shift from medieval to Renaissance pedagogy and the progressive affirmation of the "volgare." Such a composite manual shows that Humanistic education did not operate a clean or radical break from medieval pedagogy and that many texts from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were still deemed useful well into the fifteenth century when this manual was assembled. Educators of the early Italian Renaissance shared the monastic ideal that grammar education was first and foremost an education to the moral and spiritual life, which accounts for the presence of Cato's Distichs, here in an unrecorded Italian translation.

This manuscript is a most interesting composite Grammar manual and Latin and Vernacular Reader, with texts copied from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries, most likely assembled in the fifteenth century in Umbria or Tuscany. Grammar and Latin were considered the recognized route to mastery of the power to read, speak and write. Such a codex provides insights into how Latin and Grammar were taught on the elementary and intermediary level by elementary grammar

masters, who “had an even more fundamental social mission, that of passing on classical and Christian Latin traditions to the lay elites of rapidly urbanizing Italy” (Gehl, 1993, p. 3). Such teachers of Latin “adapted a medieval tradition of grammatical teaching that emphasized the ethical preparation of the student to enter a textual community” (Gehl, 1993, p. 4).

The medieval child commonly began his schooling between the ages of five and seven, and as soon as he had learned to recognize letters and to form syllables, he was set to committing to memory Latin words. After learning to read, Italian schoolboys (and some girls) studied either *abbaco* (schools that trained in practical arithmetic for merchants) or *grammatica*. Those trained in the grammar schools, before tackling Virgil, Horace, Lucan and Ovid in the “auctores” course, were expected to learn and analyze grammatically and to study important lessons of Christian moral philosophy on the basis of school texts appropriate for new Latinists. Gehl formulates the interesting question: “What kind of book did Florentine boys carry to class once the Latin course was well begun?” (Gehl, 1993, p. 43). The census of manuscripts provided in his study as well as the types of favored texts attempts to answer his query. The present manuscript offers a type of composite Latin and vernacular manual that might have served either a teacher or a student already at an advanced intermediate level, in need of vernacular equivalents, but still attached to the tradition of the “Donadello” (little Donatus) none other than the famous *Ianua* text, here found in a very early copy.

The presence of vernacular texts in this miscellany seems to suggest that teaching material was no longer construed as exclusively in the Latin language, with the presence of vernacular teaching aids in grammar manuals, appended here as early as the fourteenth century. By the fifteenth century, instruction must have been part in Latin, part in the *volgare*. To wit, the present textbook has appended a vernacular translation of the *Disticha Catonis*, here written in a *mercantesca* hand.

The survival of grammar schoolbooks is a rarity in itself due to general wear and tear since they were amply used by teachers and pupils: “Schoolbooks get used up. Designed as they are for repeated readings by inexpert and often unwilling readers, they are frequently abused...” (Gehl, 1993, p. 45). Heavy and continuous use across decades and even centuries was the fate of the Latin reader who possessed “a broadly useful but rarely pretentious book” (Gehl, 1993, p. 47).

On the teaching of Grammar in Italy and schooling in general, one should refer to Grendler, 1989, in particular the chapter devoted to Grammar, pp. 162-202; see also P. Gehl, *A Moral Art*, 1993, in which the author provides an interesting Census of elementary and intermediate Latin reading books written in Tuscany in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, to which the present manual should no doubt be added and further studied.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

On Grammar Schools

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grammar_school

R. Black, "Ecole et société à Florence aux XIVe et XV e siècles," *Annales*, 2004

<http://www.cairn.info/revue-Annales-2004-4-page-827.htm>

Filippo di Naddo, Digital Scriptorium

<http://app.cul.columbia.edu:8080/exist/SCRIPTORIUM/ds.xq?>

[querytype=advanced&stringtype1=phrase&field1=author_key&term1=author_196&queryecho=Filippo%20di](http://app.cul.columbia.edu:8080/exist/SCRIPTORIUM/ds.xq?querytype=advanced&stringtype1=phrase&field1=author_key&term1=author_196&queryecho=Filippo%20di)

[%20Naddo&order=lo&operator1=and&field2=any&term2=&stringtype2=all&operator2=and&fie](http://app.cul.columbia.edu:8080/exist/SCRIPTORIUM/ds.xq?querytype=advanced&stringtype1=phrase&field1=author_key&term1=author_196&queryecho=Filippo%20di%20Naddo&order=lo&operator1=and&field2=any&term2=&stringtype2=all&operator2=and&fie)

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On the Liber Factus

<http://www.arlima.net/eh/factus.html>