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**Doctoral Diploma of the University of Padua
In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment
Italy, Padua, dated 15 July 1647**

i (marbled paper) + 7 + i (marbled paper) folios on parchment, modern foliation in pencil top outer corner recto (collation, i⁶ [+ one leaf added after 1]), ruled very lightly in pencil and copied every other line (justification 150 x 99-98 mm.), copied in twenty-five long lines in an italic script, with gold capitals and other decorative fonts, five- to four-line gold initials, with delicate pen flourishes, framed in red ink, text pages, ff. 3-6, are framed in red, with an additional outer gray frame and full borders of green vines with blue, orange and yellow flowers and fruits, and a figure, head and shoulders only (in academic dress?) at each corner, TWO FULL-PAGE MINIATURES, ff. 1v-2, with triple frames of red and metallic gray and bold full borders of lush flowers and leaves, in bright orange, acid green, blue, and purple, with touches of gold, framing a heraldic shield on f. 1v, and a miniature of St. Anthony and the Christ Child, f. 2, with a roundel of the Virgin and Child above, f. 2v, FULL-PAGE FRONTISPIECE with Angels, masks, etc., an urn with flowers below, flanked by two putti, and a blackbird, with two putti above, lettered, "Virtus," and "In Christi Nomine Amen," f. 7, FULL-PAGE MINIATURE with large vines and flowers, a snake intertwined around a flower (echoing the caduceus wand), a parrot, and motto, "Virtute virtuti parta." In excellent condition, soiling especially around the edges, f. 1, slight damage, bottom inside corner. Housed (the manuscript is a loose quire, not sewn into the binding) in a VERY FINE, elegant, elaborately gold-tooled Fanfare binding from Padua, c. 1728, of reddish-brown morocco over pasteboard, tooled in blind with a frame of triple fillets, enclosing two narrow borders with delicate gold tooling, the inner border with gem rolls, and a large rectangular center panel with an elaborate fan motif in the center, and arabesque designs with stamps of a winged antique statue at each corner, rounded spine, marbled pastedowns and loose endpapers, the endpapers, joined with a leather spine serve as a folder for the text block, they were never sewn in, but once fastened to the covers with a blue ribbon (extant, but partially detached), in excellent condition, with slight wear on the edges, two holes near the outer border of the front and back covers for ribbon fastenings (now missing), the customary seal is not attached (see the discussion below). Dimension 225 x 166 mm. (binding 240 x 170 mm.)

The earliest known diploma signed by the scribe and illuminator, Iohannes Aloysius Foppa de Rota (his earliest previously known work is dated 1548) is a particularly lavish example of his work, with three full-page miniatures, a decorated frontispiece, decorative borders, and a fine fan binding from the early eighteenth century. Doctoral diplomas from Italian universities such as this one were proud symbols of the new graduate's place in society. The diplomas from Padua are a significant continuation of the Renaissance tradition of manuscript illumination into the early modern period.

PROVENANCE

Copied in Padua in 1647 (date of diploma); housed in an early eighteenth-century leather binding, c. 1728 (discussed below).

Cataloguing notes in French laid in; in pencil, f. 1, 11/65, and "58/09" (and price code? circled).

TEXT

f. 1, blank (traces of glue on recto);

f. 2v, illuminated frontispiece, lettered, "Virtus/ In Christi Nomine, Amen";

ff. 3-6v, "Universis et singulis praesens hoc publicum doctoratus privilegium visuris, lecturis et audituris nos Iacobus Meliorinus Patavinus sancta theologie magister rector parochialis ecclesie sancti Maximi et in episcopatu paduae illustrissimi et reverendissimi domini D. Georgii Cornelii dei et apostolici sedis gratia . . . per illustrem Domium Ferantem Pullium Loreanum Filium . . . actum et datum Paduae in episcopali palatio in loco solito examinum Anno a Christi Nativitate M DC XL VII indictione XV die vero lunae primo mensis Julii . . . in magna et frequenti copia. Testibus omnibus ad premissa vocatis et rogatis. L[aus] D[eo]. O[ptimo] M[aximo]" ;

f. 7v, blank.

ILLUSTRATION

f. 1v, miniature with a full page border, of a roundel enclosing a coat of arms (presumably of Ferrant Pullio): d'azur à un arbre de sinople perché un coq d'or, au renard d'or debout grim pant sur le tronc); small roundel in the lower margin of a castle on black;

f. 2, full-page miniature of St. Anthony of Padua holding the Christ child before an altar, surrounded by a full border, with a roundel of the Virgin and child in the upper margin;

f. 2v, frontispiece, lettered, "Virtus/ In Christi Nomine, Amen";

f. 7, full-page miniature with vines, flowers, a snake and parrot, with and motto, "Virtute virtuti parta";

This illuminated diploma was granted to Ferantem Pullium, son of Loreanum by Giacomo Migliorini, vicar general of Giorgio Corner, the Bishop of Padua, from 1543-1663, for a doctorate in Philosophy and Medicine; Giacomo signed the diploma on f. 6v, "Iacobus Meliorinus," together with "Paulus Pastorius" (Paolo Pastori, the bishop's chancellor). Ferrantem Pullium (Ferrant Pullio) has not been identified at this point in other sources, although it seems likely some record of him might be found in the University of Padua's archives.

As customary, the names of the professors who served as sponsor and co-sponsors for the diploma are listed by name: Ioannes Veslingius Mindanus (Johann Vesling, 1598-1649, the German anatomist and botanist from Minden in Westphalia, who was a professor in Padua from 1632),

Fortunius Licettus Genuense (Fortunio Liceti, 1577-1657, Italian scientist), Benedictus Sylvaticus Patauino (Benedetto Silvatico, 1575-1658), Ioannes Cottunius Veriense (Ioanni Kattounius, 1577-1658, a scholar of Greek descent from Macedonia, taught at Padua from 1633), Hieronymus Colzadius Vincentino, and Antonius Gambarrus Patauino,

The historical importance of the surviving Doctoral diploma's from Italian Universities, in general, and Padua, long neglected in scholarship, is now the subject of considerable academic interest, focusing on a broad range of topics, from their value as historical and institutional sources, to their interest as artifacts, studied for their binding, script and illumination. These diplomas, which survive in impressive numbers in both private collections and archives, have been the subject of two important exhibitions with significant catalogues (Baldissin Molli, et al. 1998, and *Honor et meritis*, 2005), they are discussed in Mariani Canova's 1999 survey of Paduan Illumination, and have been the subject of numerous studies published in *Quaderni per la storia dell'università di Padova* (see Literature, below).

Illuminated diplomas in quarto format, usually illuminated and elaborately bound, appear c. 1580-90 in the Universities of Northern Italy, and continued into the nineteenth century; earlier diplomas were copied as large documents on flat sheets. This format has been compared to the Dogale from Venice (Padua was part of the Republic of Venice from 1495-1797).

This is the earliest known diploma signed by the scribe and illuminator Johannes Aloysius Foppa, or, Giovanni Alvise Foppa; his signature is found in the lower margin of f. 6v, "Ioannes Aloisius Foppa de Rota Venetus. Fecit Paduae Anno 1647." The diploma granted to Giuseppe Vittorio Alberti d'Enno in 1648, has previously been accepted as the earliest known diploma signed by Foppa (described in Cristoforreti, 1997, no. 1, p. 230). Foppa is recorded in University records from 1662, when he was named the scribe for the German nation of arts ("pro scriba inclitae Germanicae artisarum") and he was selected writer of degrees on March 1, 1682, having presented three models, costing respectively 12 lire and 8 soldi, 18 lire and 12 soldi, and 24 lire and 16 soldi, according to the complexity and richness of the writing and painting, "to please the graduates who were looking for more elaborate work" (Baldassin Molli, 1998, cited in Braaksma, Online Resources; his career is discussed in Del Negro, 2003). This is a particularly lavish example of his work. More modest examples include the diploma granted to Giovanni Maria Gavardino in 1688, sold by Christie's, New York, 14 October 1988, Sale 8155, lot 208. It is also signed by Foppa, and is an example of a shorter diploma compressed into four leaves, with two full page miniatures, and a title page. Another diploma signed by Foppa, now in the Wellcome Trust Library Archives, to Hyacinthus Mopianus (Giacinto Mopiano), is also shorter and has no ornamentation other than a gold illuminated initial. The diploma described here deserved closer study to place it in the context of Foppa's other works.

Founded in 1222, the University of Padua is one of the oldest European universities and the second oldest in Italy. It originally taught law and theology, but in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries it became known as well for medicine and astronomy. Its medical school pioneered clinical medicine and observations based on actual autopsies and attracted students from across Europe. Among its famous students and professors are the English physician William Harvey (1578-1657), the scientist Galileo, who held a chair in Physics there from 1592-1610, Nicolas of Cusa (1401-1464),

Pietro Bembo (1470-1547), Nicolas Copernicus (1473-1543), and Andreas Vesalius (1514-1564). Under the protection of the Republic of Venice, the University of Padua was known for its spirit of tolerance and attracted students from all over Europe. Helena Lucretia Cornaro Piscopia (1646 – 1684), the first woman to obtain a doctorate in philosophy, graduated from the University of Padua in 1678.

BINDING

Fan bindings, so called from their use of center-motifs inspired by delicate fans, opened fully and placed back to back to form a circle, and often surrounded by quarter-fans in each corner, are some of the most beautiful examples of gold-tooled bindings from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In Italy, examples are found from Rome, as well as Northern Italy, including Bologna and Padua. This diploma is not sewn into the binding; it is now an independent quire, with traces of glue on the front and back, enclosed in a folder of two marbled paper sheets, joined at the spine with leather. This marbled paper folder matches the marbled pastedowns of the binding, and was once attached to the covers with a ribbon, sewn at the bottom and top of the spine (now detached at the top); it is slightly smaller than the size of the boards, and matches the dimensions of the diploma exactly.

The evidence suggests that this diploma was removed from an earlier binding, and placed in its current very elegant cover early in the eighteenth century; an identical binding is found on a diploma granted to Pietro Paolo di Sebastiani Rotari da Verona in 1728 in Padua (see *Honor et meritis*, 2005, no. 39, reproduced on p. 148). A comparable example of a diploma granted at Pisa in 1629 that was removed from its earlier binding and is now housed in a later fan binding is reproduced *Honor et meritis*, 2005, no. 21.

The use of identical bindings on two different diplomas is not unique. Notre Dame, Hesburgh Library, MS 41, a diploma from Padua dated December 29, 1690 (reproduced in Digital Scriptorium, Online Resources), and Manitoba, University Archives, Dysart Collection Item 7, also a Padua diploma from 31 January 1684 (Braaksma, Online Resources) are examples of two earlier, identical fan bindings on Paduan diplomas. We may note that these two earlier diplomas, which differ in several respects from the binding described here, nonetheless appear to use some of the same tools (the central fan, for example). The earliest use of fan bindings for diplomas seems to be c. 1660 (*Honor et meritis*, 2005, no. 24, Bologna, 1660, no. 25, Pisa, 1662, no. 26, Pavia, 1662, no. 28, Pisa, 1671, etc.) The style continued into the eighteenth century, as noted above (see also no. 36, Padua, 1708).

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<http://1506.uniurb.it/mostre/mostra-honoretmeritus.html>

Harvey's diploma 1602, University of Padua
http://old.rcplondon.ac.uk/heritage/harvey/exhib_harvey_life.htm

Archives of the University of Padua: Archivio generale di Ateneo
<http://www.unipd.it/archivio/progetti.html>

Center for the Study of the University of Padua
<http://www.centrostoria.unipd.it/>

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