

AELIANUS TACTICUS, translated from the Greek into Latin by FRANCESCO ROBOTTELLO and THEODORUS GAZA, *Περὶ Στρατηγικῶν Τάξεων Ἑλληνικῶν* [Latin translation: *De militaribus ordinibus instituendis more græcorum* and *De instruendis aciebus*], with a manuscript fragment of SIGEBERT OF GEMBLoux [SIGEBERT GEMBLACENSIS], *Chronica*, and manuscript fragments from a Glossary and a Grammar In Latin (with some Greek), imprint on paper, with three manuscript fragments in Latin (with some Low German in one fragment)

Venice, Andreas and Jacobus Spinellus, 1552 (imprint); Western Germany(?), c. 1140-60; Northwestern Germany(?), c. 1300-1350; Northwestern Germany(?), c. 1400-1450

In-4o format, preceded by one manuscript flyleaf (medieval fragment) and followed one paper flyleaf and two small manuscript flyleaves (both medieval fragments), printed [8 pp.], pp. 1-64, 73-77, [78], [24 pp.], incomplete (collation, sig. \*4, A-G4, H4? [sig. H on outer sheet and sig. I ii on inner sheet, but with no disruption to pagination; a quire does appear to be lacking following this one, with loss of text], K3 [last leaf cancelled], A-C4), printed in Roman and Italic type, printer's device on sig. K3 verso (U104 in EDIT16, see Online Resources), two engraved ornamental initials, numerous printed diagrams and tables, some of which incorporate woodcuts of soldiers alone or in formation, slight staining in the margins, some small losses to the outer edges of individual leaves, sig. K1 (pp. 73-74) is loose. Bound in sixteenth-century leather, blind-tooled with four concentric rectangular triple-fillet frames, with diagonal triple fillets connecting the corners of the second and third and with the spaces between the first and second and the third and fourth blind-stamped with a repeating pattern of foliage and a face in profile, over pasteboards, with five raised bands, with wear to the outer corners and upper spine and a crack in the lower spine, with three medieval manuscript fragments on parchment (possibly raised pastedowns?) serving as flyleaves and binding reinforcements for the outer paper quires (described in detail below). Dimensions 246 x 176 mm.

The impressive codex vividly evokes the meeting of Renaissance and medieval cultures in the sixteenth century. The imprints, one densely illustrated with woodcuts, speak to the interest Italian humanists had in translations of Greek texts. Once printed, the sheets must have been sent to Germany, where the book received its handsome stamped leather binding with flyleaves tipped in from three different medieval manuscripts, an exceptionally rare Latin chronicle, a glossary, and a grammar. Cut up manuscripts, "binder's waste," tell us much about what was no longer read or valued in the age of commerce that witnessed the growth of the Frankfurt book fairs.

## PROVENANCE

1. This Latin translation of Aelianus's Greek treatise on the military tactics of the Greeks, *De militaribus ordinibus instituendis more græcorum*, was printed in Venice in July of 1552 by Andreas and Jacobus Spinellus (Andrea and Giacomo Spinelli): "Impressum Venetijs apud Andream, et Iacobum Spinellos. M. D. LII. Mense iulij. CVM PRIVILEGIO" (sig. K3 verso). Andrea and Giacomo Spinelli were originally from Padua and were active from 1551 to 1558 in Venice, where they also worked as engravers for the Mint of Venice (see "Spinelli, Andrea & Spinelli, Giacomo," in EDIT16 in Online Resources). This imprint is notable for having been printed with numerous woodcut diagrams representing different types of infantry and cavalry in various tactical formations, and for having been issued concurrently with Francesco Robortello's edition of the treatise in

the original Greek, also printed by Andrea and Giacomo Spinelli (for further discussion, see the Text section below).

The presence of three manuscript binding fragments that appear on the basis of script and decoration – and, in the case of C, its Low German glosses – to have originated in western Germany in the twelfth (fragment A), fourteenth (fragment B), and fifteenth centuries (fragment C) suggest that this imprint was bound in that region. Though the Einbanddatenbank contains no matches for the stamps used in the present binding, they resemble a style of stamp prevalent in sixteenth-century Germany. It seems likely, then, that this imprint was bound in Germany, possibly not long after it was produced.

It is not surprising that manuscript parchment would have been repurposed to shore up the binding of a printed book; this practice was relatively common in manuscript bindings and with the advent of print, manuscripts were even more likely to be dismembered reused as binding supports. What is particularly interesting in this binding, however, is the use of fragments from disparate manuscript sources. Fragments like these are, as Erik Kwakkel has written, “travelers in time, stowaways in leather cases with great and important stories to tell” (see 2012), and, as such, these warrant closer examination individually and as companions within this binding.

2. In the upper recto of the front parchment flyleaf, a modern inscription, possibly that of a later owner of the book, reads, “A K v Daal.”

#### **Manuscript fragment A:**

*1 folio on parchment, written in dark brown ink in a twelfth-century minuscule with twenty-five long lines remaining, with text cropped away at the top and obscured on the inner edge, one small hole with no loss of text, some transfer from adjacent flyleaf obscuring the text of the upper recto. Bound upright as lower rear flyleaf. Dimensions 169 x 145 mm.*

#### **TEXT**

recto, beginning imperfectly, “///mulante papa [inter eos non] conuenirent romani et multi italię episcopi a [papa d]esciscunt ... Tunc demum misit predictum confessorem suum ad imperatorem et ad totam ęcclesiam ut optaret///”

Passage from the *Chronicon* of Sigebert of Gembloux, beginning imperfectly with events of the year 1083 and ending imperfectly with events of the year 1085.

verso, beginning imperfectly, “/// magnis annis a passione domini reuo[lutis omnia qu]ę ad cursum [solis et lunę spectant anno domini]cę passionis concordant ... amicis addit fortitudinem et multos qui ex desperatione rerum a se defecerant ///”

Passage from the *Chronicon* of Sigebert of Gembloux, beginning imperfectly with the events of the year 1076 and ending imperfectly with the events of the year 1078.

This fragment contains two passages from the *Chronicon* of Sigebert of Gembloux, covering the complete history written for the years 1077 and 1084 and part of the history written for the years 1076, 1078, 1083, and 1085. Because the fragment was reversed when bound into this volume, the text on the present recto actually follows that on the present verso.

The *Chronicon* of Sigebert of Gembloux was completed in 1111. This fragment may be the sole survival of a manuscript that was subsequently lost, though it also warrants investigation alongside a manuscript copy, now incomplete, that lacks the passages contained here. The text here adheres closely to that of the Bethman edition (1844). The *Chronicon* has also been printed in the *Patrologia Latina* 160.57-240. A variant on the present verso (see Bethman, 1844, p. 363 c and d) suggests that this manuscript belonged to Bethman's "Codices familiae Atrebatensis" (see 1844, pp. 290-292). It is possible that this fragment represents a remnant of Bethman's "Codex S. Iudoci supra mare," which has been lost, with its text surviving only in a fifteenth-century copy (see 1844, p. 291). Another manuscript of this family, Bethman's "Codex S. Vincentii" (Codex Laudunensis 446/ Laon, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms. 446, copied c. 1136), is now incomplete, ending in the year 596 (see 1844, p. 291). Comparison with this manuscript might reveal whether this fragment could have come from the same manuscript.

The Benedictine hagiographer and chronicler Sigebert of Gembloux was born around 1030 and was educated at the Benedictine Abbey of Gembloux, where he himself became a monk. Around 1050 he left to teach at the Abbey of St. Vincent at Metz, and then returned to Gembloux around 1070, where he taught in the abbey school until his death in 1112. He was a prolific author, writing several biographies, a history of the abbots of Gembloux, poems and polemical treatises. He is best known for the present work, a universal chronicle, or chronicle of world history, in the tradition of Eusebius of Caesarea and Jerome. Beginning with the year 381, Sigebert's chronicle picks up where Jerome's *Chronicon* ends and offers a brief chronological survey of events from that year to 1111, alongside a tabulation of simultaneous reigns. For example, the three Roman numerals preceding each entry in this fragment track the duration of the reigns of the current German, French, and English monarchs for each year. The chronicle enjoyed immense popularity during the Middle Ages.

These fragments of Sigebert's chronicle mention events within his own lifetime, related to the confrontations between the Emperor Henry IV (1050-1105) and Pope Gregory VII (*sedes* 1073-1085). Among these are the Synod of Worms (1076), at which Henry demanded that Gregory abdicate and was subsequently excommunicated by Gregory, and the Walk of Canossa (1076-1077), Henry's penitential journey to obtain pardon from Gregory. This journey, undertaken in the middle of the winter, from Speyer across the Alps to Canossa Castle, in Emilia Romagna, culminated in Henry's humiliation outside the gates of the castle, where he was forced to wait in the snow for three days before Gregory granted him entry and pardon. Later events included in this fragment include Gregory's deposition and the appointment of Wibert of Ravenna as antipope Clement III (*sedes* 1080-1100), the coronation of Henry as Holy Roman Emperor (1084), and the death of Gregory (1085).

#### **Manuscript fragment B:**

*1 folio on parchment, ruled faintly in plummet with at least one full-length horizontal bounding line, prickings visible where inner edge wraps around the final leaf of the first paper quire, written in dark brown ink in a Gothic bookhand in two columns with forty-four lines remaining, one-line red paraphs, with text cropped away from the top (now the bottom), some staining on what is now the recto, some underlining in light brown ink, modern inscription at the top of what is now the recto in red pencil. Bound upside down as front flyleaf. Dimensions 240 x 174.*

#### **TEXT**

recto, column a, beginning imperfectly, “//or[...] siue autores et siue magistrum bene est quod de bisso est id est de lino ... hic calamus mi //”; column b, beginning imperfectly, “// calami usualis uocatur similans gustu casiam ... Hic cultus . tus . tui . ponitur hic pro //”;

verso, column a, beginning imperfectly, “// sillabam . di . sed dico . cis ... filauerat . neo . nes . neu . //”; column b, beginning imperfectly, “// et uniuersus quasi pro eodem ponuntur dedicauerunt ... ut uiderent sacerdotes maculas in uestibus uel in seipsis et amouerent ad //”;

These passages offer the forms of Latin words and discuss their meaning. This is most likely a fragment of a Glossary.

### Manuscript fragment C:

*1 folio on parchment, prickings visible along what is now the upper edge, written in brown and blue ink in a Gothic hybrida script, red rubrics, capitals touched in red, one-line red paraphs, one-line red initials, with text cropped away from the top (now the outer edge), faded along the lower verso. Bound with the bottom of the page rotated towards the gutter as the upper rear flyleaf. Dimensions 70 x 44-48 mm.*

### TEXT

recto, beginning imperfectly, “Ordior orsum ... Gerundia essendi essendo essendum //”;

verso, beginning imperfectly, “Gerundia iendi iendo iendum ... Eundi . do . dum //”

These passages from a Latin Grammar detail the forms of Latin words. The presence of small interlinear glosses in Low German add further interest to this fragment and may indicate that the manuscript to which this fragment once belonged was used by a student in northwestern Germany.

### Imprint:

#### TEXT

sig. \*1 recto, [Title-page] *AELIANI DE MILITARIBVS ordinibus instituendis more græcorum liber à FRANCISCO ROBOTELLO Vtinensi IN LATINVM SERmonem uersus, et ab eodem picturis quamplurimis illustratus. CVM PRIVILEGIO. VENETIIS. M D LII.*

sig. \*2 recto-sig. \*4 recto, [Robortello’s dedication to Antonio Sergio, an Istrian cavalry captain] *NOBILISSIMO, MAGNANIMOQVE VIRO ANTONIO SERGIO POLAE EQUITVM ductori fortissimo apud Insubrum Præsidentem. Franciscus Robortellus Vtinensis. S. D., incipit, “PVto me tibi non parum admirationis allaturum ... consociata uoluntate aduersus se instruxerint. Vale. Venetiis, Nonis Iulii. M D LII”;*

sig \*4 verso, [Note to the reader] *LECTORI*, incipit, “Ubi ascriptum uides Francisci Robortelli nomen, eas scito imagines ... vbi de acieinstruta, et ordinibus militaribus loquuntur”;

pp. 1-77 (sig. A1 recto-sig. K3 recto), *AELIANI DE INSTRVENDIS Copijs more græcorum ad Adrianum Augustum, Liber in Latinum sermonem uersus à FRANCISCO ROBOTELLO VTINENSI*, incipit, “SCientia illa, quæ ad instruendam aciem spectat ... Pugna verò, quæ in vno loco, et tempore opportuno fit ex corporum consertione”;

sig. K3 verso, Register and printer's device

sig. A1 recto-sig. C4 verso, *AELIANI DE INSTRVENDIS ACIEBVS OPVS AD DIVVM HADRIANVM: A Theodoro Thessalonicensi latinum factum, et Antonio Panormiteꝛ Alphonsi Regis præceptori dicatum, PREFATIO*, incipit, "SCIENTIAM Gręcis acierum instruendarum solitam diue Hadriane ... et quę placuerit legere facile sine vlla iactura temporis inuenires"; sig. A1 verso, incipit, "Primum omnium, quos nouerimus, poeta Homerus acierum instruendarum scientiam tenuisse ... Imperator tibi victoriam, hostibus profligatione allatura. FINIS."

This handsome and carefully produced imprint contains two Latin translations of a treatise by Aelianus Tacticus on the military tactics of the Greeks, thought to have been written around 106 AD. The first of these translations by Francesco Robortello was produced in conjunction with a Greek edition of the text; this 1552 imprint represents its earliest edition. The second of these translations, that of the fifteenth-century Greek humanist and translator Theodorus Gaza, had first been printed in 1487 in Rome and was included in this imprint by Robortello. As noted above, Robortello distinguished this edition of his translation from earlier printed translations by his inclusion of numerous woodcuts, offering careful diagrammatic illustrations of troop formations. Earlier Latin editions, including Gaza's, had been printed with non-figurative diagrams, in which letters of type were used to represent soldiers (see digitization of *Aeliani de instruendis aciebus*, 1487 in Online Resources). It is possible that Robortello's edition may have been the first to employ woodcut figures in place of these non-figurative diagrams. Notably, many of the diagrams are accompanied by Robortello's name, indicating that he was their originator (as he himself indicates in his note to the reader on sig. \*4 verso). A census of imprints held in Italian libraries identifies 39 copies of this edition (see EDIT16 in Online Resources).

Renaissance humanist Francesco Robortello was born in Udine in 1516 and studied at Bologna. He subsequently taught philosophy, rhetoric, and classical languages at Lucca, Pisa, Venice, Bologna, and Padua, where he died in 1567. His scholarly works include an influential commentary on Aristotle's *Poetics*, published in Florence in 1548, and he also published foundational work on approaches to textual emendation. His edition and translation of Aelianus's military treatise no doubt reflect these methodologies at work. Writing in his prefatory dedication of the value of this particular text, Robortello stresses its practical utility, specifically the value of understanding, and even adopting, the military practices of the ancients.

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## ONLINE RESOURCES

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