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LUCIUS FENESTELLA (ANDREA DOMENICO FIOCCHI), *De Romanorum magistratibus* (On the Magistrates of Rome); VIBIUS SEQUESTER, *De fluminibus, fontibus, lacubus, nemoribus, paludibus, montibus, gentibusque per litteras* (On rivers, springs, lakes, groves, marshes, mountains, and peoples arranged alphabetically); *De urbibus gallicis* (*Brief list of the cities of Gaul*); POLEMIUS SILVIUS, *Laterculus* (List of the provinces of the Roman Empire); NOTITIA GALLIARUM (List of the provinces of Roman Gaul); ISIDORE OF SEVILLE, *De insulis, promontoriis, montibus* (On islands, promontories, mountains); GUIDO OF PISA, *Geographica*, extracts; *Curiosum urbis regionum xiv* (List of localities and structures in the city of Rome); *De omni genere pedum et carminum* (On poetic meters and types of poetry)
In Latin, decorated manuscript on paper Italy (Lucca?), c. 1477

70 folios on paper, two watermarks, a hat with ties similar to Briquet 3370, Florence, 1465-7 (similar marks, Udine, 1469 and Venice 1469) and a roaring dragon or basilisk very similar to Briquet 2651, Lucca 1477, foliated I-VI, 0 [zero], 1-59, plus 2 unnumbered leaves, in modern roman and arabic numerals upper right corner, modern folios 1-30 also foliated I-XXX in a hand contemporary with the text center upper margin (collation is [1 as pastedown] ii-viis viii io ix [4 as pastedown]), vertical catchwords in quires ii-viii lower right corner last verso, lines unruled, single full length bounding lines ruled in lead (justification 140 x 85 mm.), written apparently by one hand, the text in very small upright humanistic cursive, rubrics and notes on pastedowns in small humanistic minuscule, rubrics in red, some continuing from the space provided into the right margin, one-line initials in red or brown mostly in the margins outside the ruling, a few larger initials and paragraph signs in red in the margins at major divisions of the text, one 4-line initial space (f. 1) and two 3-line initial space (f. I, f. 11v), slight discoloration to a few margins and to pastedowns, tear to blank leaf following f. 59, otherwise in excellent condition. EARLY BINDING, possibly contemporary, of reversed leather over wooden boards, blind-tooled with quadruple fillet in a simple geometrical pattern, remains of two sets of leather ties (some staining and fraying, minor worm damage to spine). Dimensions 215 x 145 mm.

How was geographical knowledge preserved and transmitted in the medieval and Renaissance eras? This unusual miscellany, which is a significant witness to the interest of Italian humanists in the geography and topography of the Roman Empire, helps answer that question. The range of texts included speaks to the humanist search for new and neglected sources. Many of these texts are now very rare on the market. Topics include everything from rivers, lakes, streams, islands, and mountains to the sites of Rome, the provinces of its Empire, and the cities of Gaul, and much more.

## **PROVENANCE**

1. The watermark evidence suggests that this was probably copied in Lucca, Italy, c. 1477, by a humanist scholar and student, who was interested in geography. Although the watermarks are difficult to discern completely in this quarto-format manuscript, the dragon, which is found in quires ii-viii, i.e., the textual section of the manuscript, closely resembles a watermark attested in Lucca in 1477 (see above). The hat, similar to a

watermark attested in Florence in 1465, occurs only in quires i and ix, which are treated as endleaves.

- 2. Note on front pastedown: "Fenestella opuscula que alia ista Johannis simonis [?] sunt."
- 3. Private European collection.

## **TEXT**

[Front pastedown], incipit, "Achates sicilie vbi pari nomine lapillos edit unde gemme fiunt ... ex huius ripis polyphemus saxa in ulixen egisse dicitur gala";

An excerpt from the work by Vibius Sequester copied on ff. 30v-36v below.

f. I, Vibii Sequestris De Fluminibus Lacubus nemoribus paludibus montibus gentibus per litteras, incipit, "[V]ibius Sequester Virginiano filio salutem Quanto ingenio ... vocabula & qualitates in litteram dirigens//"; [ends incompletely];

Rubric and a portion of the introduction to the work by Vibius Sequester copied on ff. 30v-36v below.

[ff. I<sup>v</sup>-0, blank]; f. 0v, Table of contents to the following work, listing chapter titles corresponding to the rubrics in the text, and including the roman numeral designation of the folio on which each occurs. Two rubrics were omitted from the sequence but added at the end by the original scribe with the correct folio references;

ff. 1-30, Fenestelle opusculum fragmentatum redactum in volunteri per andream florentinum hoc est, incipit, "[R] everendissimo in christo patri & domino meo et amantissimo domino francisco tituli sancti clementis dei gracia sancta romane ecclesie presbitero Cardinali Andreas de Florentia salutem plura dicit. Ocioso pridem mihi ac monumenta ...", [f. 3v], De lupercis primo ostendit, incipit, "Omnium decorum quos vetus romanorum superstitio excoluit ... in hoc genere abducat non propter me pigebat paucis hec admodum operis vigilisque lucubrasse. Finis etc.," FINIS IGITUR EST FENESTELLE FINIS";

Lucius Fenestella, *De Romanorum magistratibus*, printed in eight incunable editions (ISTC), numerous sixteenth-century editions, and several seventeenth- and eighteenth-century editions. There appears to be no modern edition. The titles of the printed editions vary, the most common alternative form being *De potestatibus Romanorum*. Often the work appeared in compendia with other works, most frequently with a treatise of similar title by the humanist Pomponio Leto (1428-1498). There is no comprehensive census of manuscripts. The Mirabile database is surely incomplete, and lists eight manuscripts in Italian libraries, to which may be added another in Rome and one in Milan. The British Library and the Bodleian Library each have three (online catalogues). Two are recorded in North America, at Harvard University (Houghton Library, MS Typ 486), and the University of Toronto (Mirabile; De Ricci, p. 238).

The name under which the work is known, Fenestella, was adopted from the ancient Roman antiquarian and annalist, Fenestella (52 BCE-19 CE, or 35 BCE-36 CE), who composed a history of Rome, now lost, and a few other works known only from fragments. In the dedicatory letter and author's preface found in manuscript copies (see ff. 1-3v) but not included in the printed editions that could be examined, the author identifies himself as Andreas de Florentia,

who is assumed to be the individual known in Italian as Andrea Domenico Fiocchi or, in Latin, as Andreas Dominicus Floccus. Fiocchi (ca. 1400-1452) was a Florentine humanist who served in the curia of Pope Eugenius IV (reigned 1431-1447), who named him a canon of San Lorenzo in Florence. He apparently compiled *De magistratibus Romanorum* as a young man "admodum adolescens" although the dedication was composed after September 14, 1431, when the dedicatee, Francesco Condulmer (1390-1453), a nephew of Pope Eugenius, was made a cardinal. In the dedicatory letter Fiocchi explains that his objective was to gather and organize what information he could find about the various offices of magistrates and priests in the Roman republic, which he then sets forth in chapters headed by the name of each office. In the printed editions the work is usually divided into two books, here indicated by rubrics in the margins of the table of contents: *Sacerdotia* (ff. 3v-13) and *Potestates et magistratus* (ff. 13-30). The frequency with which the work was reprinted into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries indicates that it was of enduring interest to scholars.

ff. 30v-36v, Vibius Sequester De fluminibus, fontibus, Lacubus, nemoribus, paludibus, montibus, gentibusque per litteras, incipit, "[V]ibius sequester Virgiliano filio salute Quanto ingenio et studi fili carissime apud plurosque poetas fluminum ... Flumnum primo, Achelous etholie primus erupisse terram dicitur hic est origine notus et pugna herculis ... [f. 36v] Thessali macedones europe L[ucanus] vi° preclare. Vlsci italici europe Vir[gilius] vii° G[eorgica] ii°";

Vibius Sequester, *De fluminibus, fontibus, lacubus, nemoribus, paludibus, montibus, gentibusque per litteras,* printed in several modern critical editions (Aste, 2019; Gesomino, 1967; Parroni, 1965).

The author known as Vibius Sequester is thought to have written in the late fourth or early fifth century. Nothing specific is known about his life or place of origin. Even the name may be a pseudonym, derived from a passage in Cicero's oration Pro Cluente: Vibium pro sequestre.... In his brief preface Vibius explains that he has excerpted the names of rivers, springs, lakes, groves, marshes, mountains, and peoples from the works of many poets (plerosque poetas) and arranged them alphabetically, together with brief descriptions or explanations of each, for the convenience of his son Virgilianus, who was presumably a teacher of Latin literature. Each geographical subject gets its own section, under which the place names are grouped by initial letter, but not completely alphabetized in the modern sense. In fact, despite the reference to many poets, the names come primarily from the works of Virgil, supplemented by Silius Italicus, Lucan, and Ovid. That some of the names do not occur in surviving Latin literature suggests that Vibius also consulted commentaries on the works of these writers.

Vibius's work survives in a manuscript of the mid-nineth century, copied in the circle of Heiric of Auxerre and annotated possibly by Heiric himself (now Vat. Lat. 4929), the basis for all modern editions (Barlow, 1938; Billanovich, 1956). By 1335 this manuscript was in Italy, where it was known to Petrarch, who provided further annotations and circulated copies among his friends. Petrarch's copy does not survive but is known in an early fifteenth-century copy (now Biblioteca Ambrosiana H 14 inf.). The work was also known to Boccaccio, who imitated it in his own treatise, *De montibus, sylvis, fontibus, lacubus, stagnis seu paludibus, et de nominibus maris liber*. Its nearly fifty fifteenth-century manuscript copies indicate the popularity of the work among Italian humanists. The three modern editors list the late manuscripts known to them in European libraries. Only one manuscript copy is recorded in North America, at Yale University (Beinecke Library, Marston MS 76), and this is quite rare on the market with the most recent sale in the Schoenberg Database in 1961.

f. 36v, Incipiunt nomina regionum cum provintiis suis xvii° et cxv civitatibus et i° de urbibus gallicis, incipit, "Lugdunum desideratum montem ... hoc est gallici hoc et ebree";

By wording and prominence this rubric refers not only to the text described here but also to the two following texts (ff. 36v-39). The present short text, consisting of only four lines in this manuscript, has been edited most recently by Blom under the title *De verbis Gallicis* (also called, as here, *De urbibus Gallicis*). Blom lists twelve manuscripts, six from the eighth to tenth centuries and six from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. He also edits a longer version of the same text, entitled *De nominibus Gallicis* in the nineth century manuscript that is its sole witness (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS 89, f. 189v); this version was also edited by Toorians (Blom, 2011, pp. 159-168, Toorians, 2008). Although the interest of both editors is primarily linguistic, Blom discusses the manuscript contexts in which the shorter text is found, as well as its early history in print, and Toorians traces the history of the Vienna manuscript, with its bearing on the probable date and origin of the text(s). Previously the work was edited by Theodor Mommsen under the title *De nominibus Gallicis* (Mommsen, 1982, pp. 613-614).

ff. 36v-37, Nomina provintiarum romanarum italia numero xvii°, incipit, "Campania in qua est capua ... [f. 37] Britania ia britania iia. flavia maxima valentina fiunt simul provintie numero cxii° italia gallia africa hispania illiricus tracia asia oriens pontus egiptus britania número xi";

This list of the provinces of the Roman Empire, grouped by regions and naming the principal city of each province, was excerpted from a miscellaneous set of lists compiled in the mid-fifth century by Polemius Silvius, who dedicated the work, usually called Laterculus, to Eucherius, Bishop of Lyons in 448/9. The text has been edited by Mommsen, 1982 (pp. 511-517, 524-551), Seeck, 1876 (pp. 254-260), and Riese, 1878 (pp. 130-132).

ff. 37-39, Nomina provintiarum vel civitatum in provintiis gallicis, incipit, "Metropolis provintia Lugdunensis prima habet civitates numero iii° Civitas Lugdunensium ... [f. 39] Civitas cemelenensium Civitas vintifiensium id est ventio";

This text, known as the *Notitia Galliarum*, lists the seventeen provinces of Roman Gaul and names the principal cities of each. It was probably compiled in the late fourth century to record the divisions of secular administration but appears to have been modified and repurposed at a later date as a list of episcopal sees. It has edited by Mommsen, 1982 (pp. 552-612), Seeck, 1876 (pp. 261-274), Riese, 1878 (pp. 141-144), and Glorie, 1965 (pp. 379-406), each with a list of manuscripts, and published most recently by Harries, 1978, who also discusses the date and the context.

ff. 39-43v, De insulis et promuntoriis, incipit, "Insule dicte quod in salo sint id est in mari ... Continens perpetua terrra nec ullo mari discreta quod Greci pyron vocant,"  $Te\lambda o c$   $\alpha \mu e v$ . FINIS;

Book XIV, chapter 6: *De insulis*, chapter 7: *De promuntoriis*, and chapter 8: *De montibus* from Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae*, edited by W. M. Lindsay (Lindsay, 1911, vol 2, no page numbers). In these chapters Isidore lists the names of the topographical features he includes, together with comments on the derivation of the name and brief references to the location and history of the feature or its role in literature. Isidore (c. 560-636) was Bishop of Seville from c. 600. The *Etymologiae*, or Etymologies, is an encyclopedic account of human knowledge largely compiled by assembling extracts from or digests of works from Late Antiquity. It remained popular throughout the Middle Ages, surviving in more than 1,000 manuscripts, and preserved fragments of classical knowledge that would otherwise have been lost.

ff. 44-46v, Italie fines. Sumpta ex libris cosmographie Guidonis ravennatis, incipit, "Italia habens fines ab occidente montes excelsos quos quidam tytanos dicunt alii alpes ... vices quadragies novies centena sunt. Sequitur de proventiis italicis. Omnis italia quae versus meridiem ... custodia rubriensis piresse paurie patine ignovi," Finis.  $TE\Lambda O\Sigma$ . Finis et AMHN. Guidonis ravennatis feliciter explicit Liber;

Extracts from Guido of Pisa (d. 1169), here called Guido of Ravenna, *Geographica* or *Cosmographia*; Guido compiled this work on the geography of Italy primarily by editing and updating a section of the work known as the Ravenna Cosmography, itself composed by an unknown author in the eighth century. To this he added geographical information taken from the History of the Lombards by Paul the Deacon (d. 799) and other ancient or medieval sources. The work has been edited by Pinder and Parthey, 1860 and by Schnetz, 1940. A version of the text that follows the rubric *Sequitur de proventiis italicis* in this manuscript was published by Glorie, 1965, as *De terminatione provinciarum Italiae*. The Mirabile database lists thirteen manuscripts, all in European libraries, but the text is extremely rare on the market (no records in the Schoenberg Database).

ff. 46v-47, Rome nonnulla minutissima et de montibus per eundem, incipit, "Septem montes urbis rome Tarpeius exquilinus palatinus celius aventinus quirinalis viminalis ... mense oliarie 2900," Finis amen;

The text is a version of the work known as *Curiosum urbis regionum XIV*, compiled in the fourth century as a guide to the topography and monuments of Rome. The description of the fourteen regions of the ancient city has been omitted, and the section naming the hills (*montes*) of Rome pulled to the front. Following that, the text lists and gives the numbers of various kinds of places and structures in the city: libraries, obelisks, bridges, assembly grounds (*campi*), forums, basilicas, baths, aqueducts, roads, and other features. An early version was edited by Jordan, 1871, although the present text differs in many details.

ff. 47v-50v, De omni genere pedum, incipit, "Pes est sylabarum et temporum certa dinumeratio. Sunt autem pedes secundum antiqua poemata xxviii prout ... Epictitus quartus ex quarta brevi et aliis tribus longis ut oratorem." [f. 48], De omni genere versu [cancelled] Carminum, incipit, "Versus dicitur a verto vertis quia tamdiu vertitur quousque recte constituatur ... cui etiam phategentium si subungit," FINIS; [ff. 51-[61v], blank];

Unidentified text on poetic meters and types of poetry; the same incipit occurs in Donatus, *Ars grammatica* I (Keil, 1857-1880, vol. 4, p. 369), but the text that follows is not the same as that in the present manuscript. An anonymous treatise with the same incipit, "Pes est syllabarum et temporum certa dinumeratio" is recorded in three manuscripts: Bayerische Staatsbiblioghek, Clm 17210; Paris, BnF, NAL 909; and Florence, Laur. Plut. 13.6 (Bursill-Hall, 1981, 176.165.5, 208.294.1; Kneepens, pp. 158-159); however, the continuation of those texts is not recorded in

the available catalogues. The section of the present text entitled *De omni genere carminum* cannot be identified as an independent treatise and may be a continuation of the preceding work.

Back pastedown, M. T. Ciceronis Orator ad Brutum Incipit, incipit, "[V]trum difficilius aut maius esset negare tibi sepius idem roganti ... Malo enim cum studio tuo sim obsecutus desiderari a te prudentia tuo. Nolo equid Non aequie Nolo equidem//" [ends incompletely].

Brief excerpt consisting of the opening words of Cicero, *Orator*, followed by other phrases. Pen trials in the margins.

This manuscript bears significant witness to the interest Italian humanists took in the geography and topography of the Roman Empire. However, rather than repeating the frequently copied and cited works of writers such as Pomponius Mela or Solinus, it offers a compendium of lesser-known texts dating from Late Antiquity or the early Middle Ages. All of these are frankly lists, where the individual items are sometimes accompanied by short explanatory texts. Topics include the names of the provinces of Roman Italy and Gaul and their principal cities, the geographical boundaries of Italy, natural features of the landscape, and monuments in the city of Rome. Such lists and digests were frequently produced in Late Antiquity as a means of preserving knowledge and were sometimes repurposed by later writers, as seems to have been the case with the *Notitia Galliarum* and Guido of Pisa's revision of the Ravenna Cosmography.

Within the central, topographical section of the manuscript, the leading text is Vibius Sequester's *De fluminibus, fontibus, lacubus, nemoribus, paludibus, montibus, gentibus per litteras liber,* a work that was of considerable interest in the fifteenth century. Previously it was known to Petrarch, whose now-lost manuscript gave rise to all subsequent copies. Boccaccio too knew the text and imitated it in his own work of similar title. Vibius explains in his preface that he had gathered place names from the works of the Latin poets for the use of his son Virgilianus, who was presumably a teacher of Latin literature.

In fact, we can conclude that our manuscript, like Vibius's text, was evidently meant to serve a pedagogical purpose, given the diversity of its contents, with the topographical works preceded by the treatise on Roman magistrates attributed to Fenestella (actually a Renaissance compilation) and followed by an anonymous and undated treatise on poetical meter and genres of poetry. Seeing this manuscript in this light also helps us to understand the tentative organization of the first quire, which consists largely of blank leaves (some ruled in folio orientation) with two fragments of Vibius, one on the leaf that is now the pastedown and one facing it. It seems likely that the scribe was experimenting with the format of the manuscript, and also with the order of the texts, and reused the discarded pages as front endleaves.

It is not known whether this manuscript was copied from a single exemplar or whether it was compiled from several sources by an unidentified fifteenth-century writer. Judging from what is known of the manuscript traditions of the works found here, the three short texts, *De verbis Gallicis*, Polemius Silvius, and the *Notitia Galliarum*, were copied together from an early date, and were united with Vibius Sequester by the time of Petrarch. Further investigation of the contexts of these and the other topographical texts (ff. 30v-47) in their various known manuscripts should help to elucidate the ways in which geographical knowledge was organized and transmitted, certainly during the Renaissance and possibly earlier, and perhaps also shed light on the origin of this intriguing codex.

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https://briquet-online.at

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