

# LES ENLUMINURES

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*CICERO, De officiis (On Duties), Paradoxa stoicorum (Stoic Paradoxes), and De amicitia (On Friendship), with Versus duodecim sapientium (Verses of the Twelve Wisemen); and MARTIN OF BRAGA, Formula vitae honestae (Rules for an Honest Life)*

In Latin, decorated manuscript on paper  
Italy (Northeastern or Central), c. 1430-1450

ii + 162 + ii folios on paper, two foliations in pencil top outer recto corner, one modern beginning at current folio 1, another older start at modern folio 8, folios 1-7 were likely a later addition to the manuscript, complete, watermark, scissors, similar to Briquet 3659 (Rotterdam 1426, Montpellier 1427, Brunswick 1432, Fabriano 1430, Serbia 1428, Novgorod 1431) and Briquet 3660 (Prato 1427, Nuremburg 1430, Provence 1430, Naples 1435), collation (i<sup>8</sup> [-8, cancelled blank] ii-xiii<sup>12</sup> xiv<sup>12</sup> [-12, cancelled blank]), catchwords at the end of gatherings (ff. 8-162), frame ruled in lead (justification 120 x 70 mm), pricking visible ff. 1-7 outer margin, writing starting above top line, ff. 1-2v written in an early humanist hand with some lingering gothic elements, 24 lines per folio, ff. 3-7v written in a hasty gothic semi-hybrida, 30-32 lines per folio, ff. 8-160v written in a measured and spacious gothico-antiqua script, ff. 8-21v, 38-42 contain extensive interlinear and marginal annotations written in a very small, contemporary gothic semi-hybrida, occasional glosses and corrections occur throughout ff. 8-155v, 7-line decorated initial in red and blue ink on f. 8 with flourishes in left and top margins, 6-line decorated initial in red and blue ink on f. 54v, 10-line decorated initial in red and blue ink on f. 79 with flourishes in left margin, 6-line decorated initial in red and blue ink on f. 113 with flourishes in left and top margins, 7-line decorated initial in red and blue ink on f. 126, 3-line decorated initials in red and blue ink at chapter headings on ff. 113v, 116, 117, 119, 120, 122v, 127, 131v, 133v, 138, 141v, 145, 147v, 154, red paraph marks and red overlining of sentence initials on ff. 8-78, small paper repairs visible on ff. 1, 2, 8, mild staining in the margins throughout, worm holes in ff. 146-62, nineteenth-century brown morocco binding, edges and spine scuffed, spine gilt stamped (CICERO DE OFFICIIS DE PARADOFSIS (sic) ET DE AMICITIA M.S. IN CHART.), edge gilt. Dimensions 219 x 145 mm.

Famous in antiquity as an orator, philosopher, and statesman, Cicero was widely admired in the Renaissance, as the existence of hundreds of manuscripts of his writings confirms. This one, a neatly written and soberly decorated handbook of moral philosophy, combines four of his works for private study. The selection of these specific works reflects Petrarch's grouping of Cicero's writings, which replaced older understandings of the ancient author. Its dense marginal and interlinear glosses to portions of *De officiis* (On Duties) illustrate its use in the fifteenth century.

## PROVENANCE

1. Evidence of the script and watermarks present in the manuscript tell us that it was copied before the middle of the fifteenth century, c. 1430-1450 in Italy. Briquet notes that the scissors watermark is exclusively Italian and that all paper containing the watermark prior to 1433 probably came from the Fabriano region in Central Italy, but here the style of the penwork initials suggest an origin in Northeastern Italy, perhaps in Venice (compare for example the generally similar penwork initials in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Auct. F. 1. 14, Seneca, *Tragedies*, copied in Venice c. 1420-30)

ff. 1-7 are written on the same paper but must have been added to the manuscript at a later date because the Table of Contents (ff. 156-160v) lists the *De officiis* starting on f. 1 (now f. 8).

2. Belonged to Walter Sneyd (1809-1888), Oxford, bibliophile, antiquarian, minister, and amateur caricaturist. His armorial bookplate is on the inside upper cover; his sale, Sotheby's on December 16, 1903, lot 191.
3. Belonged to "R. Ranshaw" (pencil inscription on the verso of the first flyleaf), who can be identified as Robert Ranshaw (1836-1924) of Louth, master draper, Captain in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Lincolnshire Artillery Volunteer Corps and later art collector (he owned Rembrandt's *Entombment of Christ*).
4. Belonged to his daughter, Edith Mary Ranshaw (1871-1942); her sale, Sotheby's February 9, 1943 ("The Property of Miss E.M. Ranshaw"), lot 31.
5. Owned by Marvin Colker, (1927-2020), Professor of Classics at the University of Virginia, and renowned paleographer, who catalogued the manuscripts of Trinity College Library, Dublin, and who assembled an impressive collection of medieval material. Colker's shelfmark "MLC 13" can be seen on f. 1. He acquired the manuscript in 1944 from Maggs Bros. See Bond and Faye, 1962, p. 517, no. 13.

## TEXT

ff. 1-2v, *Versus duodecim sapientium hoc est Basilii Asmenii Liomani Euforbii Euliani Hylasii Palladii Asclepiadis Eusteni Pompelliani Maximiani Vitalis*, incipit, "Hic iacet arpinas manibus tumulatus amici... Servitio pressam destituit patriam";

The *Versus* or *Carmina duodecim sapientium* form part of the *Anthologia Latina* and contain a series of epigrams on moral maxims, natural elements, seasons, summaries of Vergil's works, and an epitaph for Cicero. The medieval tradition of the *Carmina duodecim sapientium* is vast, including nearly 400 manuscripts that transmit the work in whole or in part (Rossellini, 1994, p. 346). This manuscript contains only the epitaph for Cicero, written in elegiac couplets, and probably appended to the philosophical treatises as a kind of introduction to the person and character of Cicero.

ff. 3-7, *Quattuor uirtutum species multorum sapientium sententiis diffinite sunt quibus humanus animus contentus ad honestatem uite possit accedere. Harum prima est prudentia, secunda magnanimitas, tertia continentia, quarta iustitia. Singule harum igitur hiis officiis quae subtile abnexa sunt honestum ac bonum morigeratum virum efficiunt*, incipit, "Quisquis igitur prudentiam sequi desiderans tunc per rationem... ipse devitet insaniam aut deficientem contemnat ignaviam," *Explicit formula honeste vite Seneca de quattuor virtutibus cardinalibus*; [f. 7v, blank];

Martin of Braga, *Formula honestae vitae*; Martin of Braga (d. 579) composed his *Formula honestae vitae* in the sixth century; the text also circulated as *De quattuor virtutibus cardinalibus*. Modern editions include Barlow (1950), Sabbah (2018), and Riestra (2021). By the tenth century, the treatise

was attributed to Seneca, which added greatly to the work's authority and popularity in the Middle Ages. Nearly one-hundred fifty manuscripts from the fifteenth century list Seneca as the author, including our manuscript (Barlow, 1950, p. 204). As is not uncommon, the prefatory letter that identifies Martin as the author was not included in this manuscript, and the introductory sentence is presented as the title. A recent census of manuscripts lists a total of 670 surviving witnesses prior to the sixteenth century (Riestra, 2021, pp. 25-115). First printed in Venice in 1470.

ff. 8-112, incipit, "Quanquam te Marce fili annum iam audientem Cratippum idque Athenis habundare oportet...praeceptisque letabere," *Marci Tullii Ciceronis. Liber de Officiis explicat. Amen*, [colophon], "Precellunt cuntos (sic) pene libros philosophorum / Isti quos fecit tres Tullius officiorum";

Cicero, *De Officiis*, the last of Cicero's philosophical works, the *De officiis* survives in over 700 manuscripts from the Middle Ages (Winterbottom, 1993, p. 215). The *De officiis* and *Paradoxa stoicorum* also have the distinction of being the first works of ancient literature to be printed by Johannes Fust and Peter Schoeffer in 1465 (Ronnick, 1991, p. 72). This manuscript likely belongs to Winterbottom's ξ branch (Winterbottom, 1993, p. 228-9). The later tradition of manuscripts of the *De officiis* are usually contaminated, however, so it is difficult to place the text definitively. The standard edition is Winterbottom (1994).

ff. 8-21v, 38-42 [Interlinear and marginal glosses to *De officiis*, I.1-45 and I.101-114 (ed. Winterbottom, 1994)], incipit, "In preceptis, preceptum est aliquid auctorizabile dictum...contra Anibalem quas ponit Titus Liuius";

When the moral and philosophical works of Cicero re-entered the grammar school curriculum in the fifteenth century, the number of manuscripts with interlinear and marginal glosses greatly increased. Robert Black has catalogued twenty-six manuscripts of Cicero from Italy that display signs of use in schools in the form of glosses, colophons, and *probationes penae* (Black, 2001, pp. 262-79). The glosses in TM 1294 contain elementary material such as the glosses to *Quaestio communis* on f. 10. An interlinear gloss reads *appetitio generalis* ("a universal seeking"), while the marginal comment distinguishes two senses of *quaestio*, one belonging to logicians (*loici*) and dealing with propositions in doubt (*dubitabilis propositio*) and another more general sense of seeking knowledge, the end of which is *inventio* ("discovery"). Other glosses deal with historical and philological material, like the gloss on *Pictagoram* (i.e. Pythagoras). The glossator remarks that Pythagoras came from the isle of Samos and was the first to call himself a *philosophus* ("philosopher"). He then adds a citation to Isidore's *Etymologiarum libri XX* and gives some historical context on the Greeks, who called themselves wisemen (*sophistae*) and knowers of wisdom (*doctores sapientiae*) but were confused by the name philosopher (i.e. a lover of wisdom). Further study of the glosses and their contents will most likely yield interesting connections with other school texts of Cicero from the fifteenth century and perhaps help localize, date, and attribute the manuscript to a known scholar or school from Quattrocento Italy.

f. 113-125v, incipit, "Animadverti, Brute sepe Catonem auunculum tuum cum in senatu sententiam diceret .... Hic finem habent paradoxa stoycorum," *Explicit de paradossis*; Cicero, *Paradoxa stoicorum*; this short text also survives in over four hundred manuscripts (Ronnick, 1991, p. 70). As noted above, it was the first text from Roman antiquity to be

printed. Given the date of this manuscript, it is possible that it descends from L (= Florence, Laur. S. Marco 257, s. ix<sup>3/4</sup>), brought to Italy in 1417 by Coluccio Salutati becoming the source for many *Italici* (Reynolds, 1983, pp. 125-6). Recent editions include Ronnick (1991) and Galli (2019).

f. 126-155v, incipit, "Quintus Mutius Augur Scevola multa narrare de Celio Lelio socero suo memoriter et iocunde solebat ... nichil amicitia prestabilis putetis," *De Amicitia Tullii liber explicit*; Cicero, *Laelius de amicitia*; the *Laelius de amicitia* likewise survives in many manuscripts but has not yet been the subject of a complete census. Over 100 manuscripts of the work are listed on the *Mirabile* database (<https://www.mirabileweb.it/title/de-amicitia-title/16516>). The first printing of the *Laelius* was part of Alexander Minutianus's 1498 *Opera omnia* of Cicero at Milan (Powell, 2006, p. lix). The *De officiis*, *Cato Maior*, and *Laelius* were edited by Erasmus in 1524 at Basel. Powell notes that manuscripts of the *Laelius* later than the twelfth century are frequently contaminated and corrupt, so it is difficult, if not impossible to locate them within the textual tradition of the work (Powell, 1998, pp. 516-17). The standard edition is Powell (2006).

ff. 156-160v, [Table of Contents to *De officiis*], *Tabula libri Officiorum Tulli. Primus liber Continet in se*, incipit, "Prologus primi libri, fol. 1 ... Restat quarta pars." [ff. 161-162v, blank but ruled]. The table of contents only indexes the *De officiis* in this manuscript, although the *Paradoxa stoicorum* and *De amicitia* both seem to be by the same hand (perhaps the table is incomplete). The introductory section of this manuscript, ff. 1-7, added after the completion of the Ciceronian treatises, provides a brief introduction to the life and death of Cicero in the *Versus duodecim sapientium* and a short précis of moral philosophy centered on the four cardinal virtues (wisdom, temperance, justice, and fortitude). These two works are a programmatic addition, an overture to Cicero and moral philosophy.

Cicero (106-43 BC) is the best-known author of classical Latin. A statesman, orator, and philosopher, his voluminous output is unmatched by any other author of the Classical Latin period. His influence on later Latin literature and especially the Italian Renaissance cannot be overstated. In fact, the start of the Italian Renaissance is often attributed to the rediscovery of Cicero's epistolary corpus by Petrarch in the fourteenth century.

The collection of three of Cicero's philosophical works in this manuscript represents a later medieval grouping which can trace its roots back to Petrarch, who listed Cicero's *De amicitia*, *De officiis*, *De senectute*, and *Paradoxa Stoicorum* among his favorite works (Ronnick, 1991, pp. 66-8). Petrarch's grouping came to replace the older Leiden corpus of Cicero's philosophical works containing eight texts. For a brief overview of the diverse ways that Cicero's philosophical works were grouped together in medieval manuscripts and early print sources, see Ronnick's lists (1991, pp. 153-199).

In his last work, *De officiis* (*On Duties*), Cicero frames his philosophy of appropriate action within a letter to his son Marcus, who is studying philosophy in Athens. The effective end of republican government in Rome following the assassination of Julius Caesar looms large over the work. In the first book, Cicero considers what is honorable (*honestum*). The second book investigates what is expedient (*utilitas*). The third book argues that the honorable and expedient are not in conflict, despite his Greek Stoic source Panaetius claiming the opposite. Since Panaetius did not finish his work on appropriate action and elaborate his arguments, Cicero was

free to argue his own position. The intensive glossing in portions of the *De officiis* demonstrates deep, scholarly engagement from a contemporary reader.

The *Paradoxa stoicorum* (Stoic Paradoxes) contains six rhetorical exercises, in which Cicero attempts to explain difficult and obscure Stoic tenets in a convincing and easy style. Cicero remarks that Cato the Younger would frequently harangue the members of the Senate with Stoic doctrine, but in just such an easily understandable style. The third paradox, which states that all faults and all virtues are equal, drew the condemnation and commentary of several medieval thinkers including Peter Abelard. The highly rhetorical style and relative shortness of the text also made the *Paradoxa* an ideal teaching text.

Cicero's *Laelius de amicitia* is a fictional dialogue set in 129 BC between Gaius Laelius, a Roman general and orator, and his sons-in-law, Gaius Fannius and Quintus Mucius Scaevola. Laelius's friend, Scipio Africanus, had recently died and his sons-in-law ask him to discourse on what makes a true friend. Laelius offers several definitions including that a friend must be a morally good person and that true friendship can be distinguished from friendships of convenience. This manuscript, therefore, represents a handbook on moral instruction destined for personal study. The addition of poetry and prose at the beginning of the manuscript shows how a later user of the manuscript enhanced the moral and didactic bent of the manuscript. The selection of Ciceronian texts partake in a broad network of manuscripts that group different sets of Cicero's philosophical works. Copious glossing in parts of the *De officiis* attests to the care and study that fifteenth-century readers gave to Cicero's works and also deserves further study as a record of how moral philosophy was interpreted in the fifteenth century. The glossing could also help situate this manuscript within the networks of schools that reintroduced Cicero's moral philosophy to the grammar classroom in the fifteenth century.

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## ONLINE RESOURCES

Biography and introduction to Cicero by The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy  
<http://www.iep.utm.edu/c/cicero.htm>

The British Library, "Walter Sneyd,"  
<https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG46680>

Introduction to Stoicism by the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy  
<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/stoicism/>

Suffolk Artists, "Robert Ranshaw,"  
<https://suffolkartists.co.uk/index.cgi?choice=painter&pid=1659>

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