

Manchester: John Rylands University Library, MS.Lat.211

humanist translations by Giustiniani, Guarino and Bruni

Italy, 1445

I Thin, crisp, Italian parchment (skin–skin), 214 × 144mm. iii + 39 + iii fol., with first and last two fly–leaves paper. Modern pencil foliation: 1–42, including parchment fly–leaves. **NB: foliation excluding all fly–leaves used here - ie two less than present foliation.**

II i¹⁰ (second quire removed) iii¹⁰ (fourth quire removed) v¹⁰ wanting 3 (after fol.22), vi¹⁰. Two whole quires and one folio have been lost from the original codex; first folios damaged by damp. Vertical catchwords in capitals in bottom right–hand corner.

III 136 × 89mm. 22 long lines. Ruled with double margins, occasional signs of one prickhole at bottom outside edge.

IV One *lettera antica* throughout, identified in final colophon as by Theoderic Werken. He writes in brown ink, with the titles (and, in the last article, the capitals) rubricated. Werken employs two forms of **g**, one with a closed descending loop, the other with only a semi–circle breaking the straight descender; he marks the **ae** diphthong by a back stroke on the side of **e**. Though these features suggest a mastery of the humanist fashion, the unevenness of the minims could be taken as a sign that the scribe was not yet fully confident in this script. The hand also changes over the length of the manuscript with, for example, more elision later on; the differences might suggest an extended period for the composition.

V *Bianchi girari* initials (fol.1, 2, 11, 12; another cut out at fol.23^v) of green, pink and blue with a gold initial.

VI Werken adds some marginalia, mainly in the Plutarch (fol.11^v, 12^v, 14, 16, 20); he also adds in the bottom margin fol.28 certain *versus hesiodi ac virtutis natura*. A couple of early readers correct the text (eg. fol.11, 12, 15, 16 etc). Two fifteenth or early sixteenth century readers drew hands in the margin of item [1].

VII The binding is nineteenth century, but the fifteenth century boards are preserved. Both boards the same, including tools of a bear under a tree, a bee, a winged monster, two birds with between a fleur–de–lys and 'ihu maria'. This last tool is Gibson no.11, found in Oxford bindings [S.Gibson, *Early Oxford Bindings* (Oxford, 1903) pl.xxxiii].

2^o fo.: eius summis...

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[1] fol.1–10^v: **Isocrates Latinus, ad Nicoclem (Bernardo Giustiniani, with preface) {incomplete}**

tit. pref.: ORACIO YSOCRATIS QUOMODO REX / SE HABEBIT PENES
SUBDITOS EX GRECO / IN LATINUM TRADUCTA LEGE FELICITER /
AEPISTOLA

pref.: CUM ISOCRAtem nuper lo{dovvice} ... [fol2] tantopere
respondeam{mus}.

tit.: INCIPIT ORATIO YSOCRATIS AD NICOCLEM DE / REGE

orat.: CONSuevere plerum {o nicocles } aurum ... [fol.10^v] assuetus eadem &
animo|| [sapere...]

Printed in *Bernardi Iustiniani Clarissimi Orationes...* (Venice: Bernardinus Benalius, [1492]) {Hain 9639} sig. h vi^v–i iv^v.

[2] fol.11–22^v: **Ps.-Plutarchus Latinus, De Liberis Educandis (Guarino, with preface) {incomplete}**

tit. pref.: GUARINI VERONENSIS AD ANGELUM / CORBINELLUM
CIVEM FLORETNINUM / IN PLUTARCHUM DE LIBERIS EDUCANDIS
PROHEMIUM INCIPIT FOE/LICITER

pref.: MAiores nostros Angele mi suavissime ... [fol.12] Plutarchum ipsum
audiamus.

tit.: PROEMIUM VIRI DOCTISSIMI GUA/RINI VERONENSIS FINIT.
PLUTAR/CHUS DE LIBERIS EDUCANDIS AB E/ODEM E GRAECO IN
LATI/NUM VERSUS INCIPIT / FOELICITER

tract.: Quid {dum} \nam/ est quid de ingenuorum ... [fol.20^v] inconsiderate
praeterissem|| [nec vero...] [fol.21] ac impraesentiarum rursus dictito... [fol.22^v]
in eodem illabatur aer|| [reres...]

Preface alone edited in R.Sabbadini, *ed.*, *Epistolario di Guarino Veronese* (Venice, 1915) i, pp.15-6,
reprinted in E..Garin, *Il Pensiero Pedagogico dello Umanesimo* (Florence, 1958) pp.306-8.

[3] fol.23–38^v: **S.Basilus Magnus Latinus, *De Liberalibus Studiis* (Bruni,**
with preface) {incomplete}

sine tit. pref.

pref.: ||tiffacere posse. Sed ut...[fol.23^v]quanta gravitas sit.

tit.: {Magni basilii quo p}acto gentilium libros m/{...}nos adolescentes / ..
{inc}ipit feliciter.

tract.: {Multi s}unt filij que...[fol.38^v] recta consilia aspernantes. FINIS / Per me
theodericum nicolai Werken de / abbenbroec scriptum Anno domini 1445.

Edited, without reference to this copy, in S.Basil, *Discorsi ai giovani*, *ed.*M.Naldini (Florence, 1984)
pp.229–248.

fol.39: blank

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The career of this manuscript's scribe, Theoderic Werken has been well-studied. He joined William Gray's entourage when he was in Cologne and travelled with him to Italy in 1445; this manuscript is the first one written in his *lettera antica*. Werken did not remain with Gray in Italy; instead, he came to England with Gray's companion, Richard Bole. Among the works he transcribed for Bole, there was a copy of Bruni's letters (copied in 1449) and a set of humanist dialogues (Oxford: Balliol College, MS.127 copied in 1450) which he probably transcribed in London, where Bole was then based. By the 1470s, he was working for Christ Church, Canterbury.

This manuscript's interest lies in the set of texts it brings together and introduced to England. These translations neatly encapsulate several of the central interests of the

humanists. Item [1] demonstrates that concern to provide general political advice which has been the main theme of this thesis. Item [2] reflects the narrower pedagogical interests of the humanists, which are also apparent in item [3]; this last, however, also provides a manifesto for the interest in secular antiquity which the *studia humanitatis* made their watchword. The three texts enjoyed markedly different *fortunae* in England. Item [3] was certainly popular, often being copied with Bruni's partner-translation, Xenophon's *Hiero* [see **Cambridge: Corpus, MS.472; Bod., MS.Auct F.5.26**]. Item [2], on the other hand, seems not to have gained a wide circulation in England: this might be a comment which stands for a wider range of pedagogical tracts [see **Florence: Bib. Riccardiana, MS.952**]. There is another English copy of this work (Oxford: Lincoln College, MS.84), which belonged to Robert Flemyng and which followed this work with a copy of item [3]; the manuscript does not, however, appear to be related to this one (it divides the Guarino text into sections with separate headings). The Isocratean work of item [1], meanwhile, had an early reception in England but not in the form it appears here; the *Ad Nicoclem* was translated by Lapo da Castiglionchio who sent his version to Humfrey. This version circulated in the 'Virtue and Vice' manuscripts [see **Bod., MS.Auct. F.5.26**]. Werken's copy is the first evidence of what proved, across Europe, the more popular version of the tract, being prepared for an English audience. However, by 1459, Bernardo Giustiniani's version was copied twice (perhaps from different copies) at Christ Church, Canterbury (in BL, MS.Royal 10.B.ix). It is unclear whether the monks of Canterbury had access to this copy or whether other manuscripts were already circulating in England.

Indeed, it is unclear when this manuscript returned from Italy but the binding and the later provenance demonstrate that it must have been in England by the last decades of

the fifteenth century. It may well have returned with Werken and Bole at the end of the 1440s. The binding shows that it was in Oxford in the late fifteenth century, although there is no sign that it entered the library of Balliol College (as did other manuscripts from both Gray and Bole). There is a partially legible inscription at the bottom of fol.40, reading *T. Aleyn / habile [?] servito*. It has been suggested that this may be the name of the bookbinder [DH&EH] but it could also be the identity of an early owner [Ker, unpublished catalogue; for possible identifications, see BRUO].

However that may be, this manuscript soon left Oxford. At the front of the volume (fol.iii^v) a note reads: *Liber Willelmi Cantuariensis ex dono / domini Roberti Merienensis*. This records the gift from Robert Sherborn, *soi-disant* Bishop of St.David's to William Warham; perhaps in his bid to have his title recognised, he turned to the well-tried method of book-giving, hoping to gain Warham's support (he also gave the Archbishop BL, MS.Harl. 2471 [DH&EH, no.58]).

The manuscript's history after the first decade of the sixteenth century is unclear until it eventually entered the library of George Dunn of Woolley Hall, whose books were sold in February 1913; the manuscript was bought by the John Rylands.

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M.Tyson, *Handlist of Additions to the Collection of Latin Manuscripts in the John Rylands Library, 1908–28* (Manchester, 1928), p.5; DH&EH, no.42; *Iter*, iv, p.239b; Neil Ker's unprinted catalogue of John Rylands Library, MSS.184 and following [copy available on persistent request in the library].

On Werken, see R.A.B.Mynors, "A fifteenth century scribe: T.Werken", *TCBS*, i (1949-53) pp.97–104 (this manuscript discussed at p.100); DH&EH, no.43, 51–2; A.C.de la Mare, "A fragment of Augustine in the hand of Theoderic Werken", *TCBS*, vi (1972-6) pp.285-90; P.Robinson, *Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts in Cambridge Libraries* (Cambridge, 1988) *sub* no.16.

On Gray's time in Italy, see Mynors, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Balliol College, Oxford* (Oxford, 1963) pp.xxiv-xlv, esp. pp.xxxi-xxxvi.

On Flemmyng generally, see R.Weiss, "The earliest catalogues of the library of Lincoln College", *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, viii (1935-8) pp.345–59 [Lincoln MS.84 is not Extract from D. Rundle, 'Of Republics and Tyrants: aspects of quattrocento humanist writings and their reception in England, c. 1400 – c. 1460' (unpublished DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 1997)

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recorded in these lists; it does however include Flemmyng's autograph]; Weiss, pp.96–104; *BRUO*.

On Sherborn generally, see *BRUO*; *DH&EH*, no.23, 96.

On Warham, see *BRUO*.