

Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. Lat.218

Sallust, Cicero & humanist orations

England, s.xv²

I Fairly thick parchment (skin–skin, hair–hair). 180 × 126mm. i + 178 + i fol. Flyleaves are from a thirteenth century manuscript of Biblical text and commentary. Intermittent modern pencil foliation noting the first folio of each piece but from item [4], it is one less than is accurate. **NB: in this description, correct foliation used.**

II i–vii⁸ viii¹² ix–xxii⁸ xxiii⁸ wants 7 and 8. Horizontal catchwords placed within a drawing of a scroll. Twice (fol.68^v, 164^v), a large hand in light brown ink adds catchwords; in the second instance, the catchword – *gaudio plurimum* – does not correspond with the first words of the following recto. Signs of quire signatures very rare (eg. fol.112 = ‘o 4’).

III 121 × 77mm. 28 long lines, fully ruled and double bordered. No signs of pricking.

IV Written throughout in one gothic bookhand, with a rather pointed aspect; the scribe identifies himself at fol.164^v as John Rybow.

V One simple gold–leaf initial on blue and red at fol.1. Apart from that, each chapter opens with simple red and blue pen initials.

VI Marginalia are concentrated in the articles [1] & [3]. At least three early hands correct the text at the beginning of [1], while two fifteenth century hands repeatedly note the subject–matter in [3].

VII Late fifteenth century Oxford binding, rebaked. Remains of two clasps.

2° fo.: ducit. Sed...

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[1] fol.1–28^v: **Gaius Sallustius Crispus, *bellum Catilinae***
sine tit.
hist.: Omnes homines qui sese studeant ... atque gaudia agitabantur

[2] fol.29–68^v: **Gaius Sallustius Crispus, *bellum Iugurthinum***
sine tit.
hist.: Falso queritur de natura sua genus ... loca eorum promultuaria. Sic salustius de sardinia in horrentem quam occidentem lacior pro

[3] fol.69–147: **Marcus Tullius Cicero, *de officiis***
sine tit.
text.: Quamquam te marce fili annum iam ... letabere marce fili. / Marci Tulij Ciceronis de officijs liber explicit.

Books divide: I: fol.69–101; II: fol.101^v–121; III: fol.121^v–146.

fol.147^v–148^v: blank

[4] fol.149–150^v: **Guarino da Verona, oration on the marriage of Leonello d’Este to Maria of Aragon (25 April 1444)**

sine tit.

orat.: Plurima et varia illustrissime marchio principes excellentissimi ... pace ac perpetua felicitate sospitet.

Printed by G.Pardi, *Leonello d’Este* (Bologna, 1904) p.57. A short list of other manuscripts in Bertalot, *Studien*, ii, p.250.

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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From this item to item [11], this manuscript closely resembles *Zagreb: Sveucilisna Knjiznica, MS. MR.107, fol.203–214^v [on which see *Iter*, v, pp.454b–455b].

[5] fol.150^v–155: **Guarino da Verona**, university oration (October 1447)

sine tit.

orat.: Licet partes observandi & doctores excellentissimi ... ac laudi esse possitis.

Unprinted: Bertalot ii/1, no.10766, citing only *Bern: Burgerbibliothek, MS.211, fol.11–14.

There are breaks in text at fol.152^v, 153^v.

In the margin of fol.150^v, a sixteenth century reader has added: [g]uarini verronesis / oratio acuta. At the top of fol.151, the same hand has written a note which is now cropped but which stated that this speech was given in *Academia Ferrarensi*.

[6] fol.155–156^v: **Giordano Orsini**, funeral oration on Giovanni Pontano (March 1448)

sine tit.

orat.: Doleo equidem rectores magnifici nosque ... memoria perpetuo conservetis. 1448.

Unprinted: Bertalot ii/1, no.5188 (with differences) & J.McManamon, *Funeral Oratory* (London, 1989) p.283 cite only one manuscript but this actually seems to have been a popular oration; see *Iter*, *sub indice*.

[7] fol.157–161: **Guarino da Verona**, consolatory letter to Leonello d'Este on the death of his wife, Margherita Gonzaga

sine tit.

orat.: Florentis ingenij vatem et studiorum parentem ... domino placuit ita factum est sit nomen domini benedictum. vale.

Unprinted: Bertalot ii/1, no.7631, citing only two manuscripts; McManamon, *Funeral Oratory*, p.275 adds a third. Neither note this manuscript.

[8] fol.161^{r-v}: **Battista Guarini**, marriage oration

sine tit.

orat.: Cum de conjugij horumque sponsorum laudibus ... et rector benedicat olimpi.

Not in Bertalot.

A note at the bottom of fol.160 mentions the name Guarino.

[9] fol.161^v–162: **Battista Guarini**, marriage oration to Tadeo Cagnone and Bartholomea Canale

sine tit.

orat.: Sepius at sepius princeps illustrissime ac viri prestantissimi ... referant moresque paternos.

The only copy cited in *Iter* is the Zagreb manuscript.

[10] fol.162^v–163^v: **anon.**, marriage oration for Giovanni and Constancia(?)

sine tit.

orat.: Si ullo michi tempore datum est P. ill. ... perducere nestoris annos. Finis. Adolescens Iodovici Podochatarii Cyprii in albertum bassum et margaritam portam.

The final colophon here, according to the Zagreb MS., actually refers to the following article.

The text mentions, as well as the bride and groom's christian names, the names *Jacobus Novellus* and *Franciscus Carpensus*.

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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[11] fol.163^v–164^v: **Ludovico Podocataro**, marriage oration to Alberto Basso and Margherita Porta

sine tit.

orat.: Nonnullos illis Marchio ac viri prestantissimi me ... te prole parentem.

Explicit. Quod Johannes Rybow Anglicus.

The only copy cited in *Iter* is the Zagreb manuscript.

[12] fol.165–178: declamation on the 1310 Querini–Tiepolo conspiracy

sine tit.

narrat.: Baiamontes quirinus nobilis et potentissimus civium venetorum ... vestro iudicio decernatis.

This anonymous and apparently unique work divides into four parts: first, a brief précis of the conspiracy, explaining that the leading conspirator, Baiamonte Tiepolo was killed by his own son, Iacopo; then, a list of the charges brought against Iacopo Tiepolo [fol.165–6^v], followed by a brief discussion of *de officiis oratoris* [fol.166^v–7]; the rest of the work is taken up by a speech against Iacopo Tiepolo.

For a discussion of this piece, see c.vii pp.262-3 above.

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Nothing is known about John Rybow beyond his writing of this manuscript.

However, some light is thrown on the manuscript's genesis by its close connection to the Zagreb ms. That codex, which belonged to the Hungarian book-collector, Janos Vitéz, is thought to have reached him via Janus Pannonius, who spent the years 1447–51 at Guarino's school.

It would appear that a manuscript very close in contents was brought back to England where this copy was made. Another conceivable - but less probable - scenario was that Rybow was himself in Italy with a large supply of English-prepared parchment.

This raises the question of the origin of the last item. The Zagreb ms. does not include this piece and Rybow signs his name at the close of the previous item; this might suggest that he went on to copy this work from a different exemplar. On the other hand, the rarity of this piece would suggest that extreme serendipity brought this work to Rybow's attention at the time he was copying the other items, or that he

was also supplied with this by whomever owned the manuscript containing items [4] – [11]. In other words, even if item [12] was not produced in the circle of Guarino's school, it is likely that it was circulating in Ferrara and came back to England at the same time.

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H.Coxe, *Catalogus Codicum MSS qui in Collegiis Aulisque Oxoniensibus hodie adservantur* (Oxford, 1852) ii, p.95; Alexander & Temple, no.474.

This manuscript is the only record of Rybow in *Colophons*, no.11,195. A search through *CPL*, *CPatL*, *CCloseR* reveals only a John Ryby, monk of the monastery of the Holy Trinity, York [*CPatL*, 1467-77, p.377].

On the Zagreb ms., see K.Csapodi-Gárdonyi, *Die Bibliothek des Johannes Vitéz* (Budapest, 1984) pp.119–20 & pl.54.