About us

Imago is an Italian publisher that stands out at an international level, for its high-level of specialisation which has been gained through the modern-day restitution of great manuscripts. Such excellence is achieved through the reproduction of the most lavish codices of the past, using clever and unique techniques to combine the ancient art of miniature painting and the most modern technology available.
The refined codex, which seems intended to satisfy a completely feminine taste due to the accuracy of the long wavy hair of the many saints depicted, was composed for the young Anna Sforza, who in 1491 became the wife of Alfonso I d’Este.

The precious manuscript was painted in miniature by Francesco Binasco, active in Milan at the Sforza court between the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries. In addition, the miniature, through warm and vibrant tones, has echoes of the style of the Lombard Bernardino Zenale and architectural perspective, an expression of the Renaissance, reflects the influence of Leonardo and Bramante, present in Milan at the end of the fifteenth century.

However, echoes of the fourteenth century remain in the miniature painting as well, in particular Flemish qualities, discernible in the buildings and from the late-Gothic spires that stand in the background. The splendor of the Visconti and Sforza courts has given the milanese miniature elegance and an exquisite and refined taste, whose elegance can be seen in the figures.
This beautiful richly illuminated Book of Hours from the 16th-c. with 17 large format miniatures and 328 highly decorated pages was probably executed by a student of the French master Jean Bourdichon. It has the sigla “A.E.I.O.U” “Austria est imperare orbi universo” the motto of the Austrian House introduced by Federico III and the initials “P.K.” which might stand for Philippus Karolus, the monogram of Filippo the Beautiful of Austria united to that of his son Carlo V.

There are 2 full-page miniatures with gold frame introducing the Office of the Virgin and Penitentiary Psalms. The borders show a naturalic vegetation with red and imaginary animals, putti, musical angels and anthropomorphic figures. This fauna, derived from the repertoire of the late-gothic French illuminators, has precise symbolic meanings. The fantastic and monstrous creatures personify the diabolic; butterflies and birds are frequently found, the first one as a symbol of the soul which raises from a terrestrial plane to a celestial one. The crane, like all animals of long neck and beak, is related to malignant creatures. All the other miniatures are in an arch-formed window with gold borders.

The MS was part of the endowment of Barbara d’Austria, Archduchess of Austria, daughter of Emperor Ferdinand I (brother of Carlo V) and Anna of Bohemia and Hungary. In 1565 she married Alfonso II d’Este, Duke of Ferrara. After an earthquake in 1570/1571 Barbara d’Austria dedicated her efforts and personal resources to help the orphans of the “Conservatorio delle orfane di Sto”.

She died of tuberculosis in 1572 at the age of 33.

**Facsimile Edition**
**Limited Edition:** 300 copies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codicology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alternate Titles</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Features</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Origin</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Patron</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Former Owners</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Artists / Schools</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Herbolaire

Est. 28 = a. M. 5. 9

Biblioteca Estense Universitaria, Modena (Italy)

This is the most refined of the two Herbaria written in the 15th Century, and preserved in the Biblioteca Estense Universitaria of Modena (the other one being the Tractatus de Herbis).

Composed in ancient French with a fascinating Gothic script (bastarda or letter bâtarde), the manuscript describes more than 500 plants and animals. It's closely related to the work of Pedanius Dioscorides, active in the 1st century, and to the scientific production of the Schola Medica Salernitana, which worked on the consolidation of the Greek, Latin and Arabic schools of medicine in the 12th century.

The manuscript, produced around 1470, has been a part of the collection of the Biblioteca Estense in Modena since the second half of the 18th century. It's bound with the leather cover typical of the period during which Girolamo Tiraboschi was director of the library.

The author organizes the manuscript in alphabetical order (based on the first letter of the name of the plant) and accompanies each text with the depiction of the plant.

The richness of this Codex is proof that it was made for the most illustrious people of the time. The miniatures, all made by a single artist, are very realistic, especially those depicting the herbs. The medical plants and remedies discussed by the author are more or less 500. The pages are richly illuminated, and are decorated in gold 23ct. There are many images of plants, herbs, flowers, animals, and farm scenes. The manuscript contains 391 images: 355 are of plants, flowers, and roots; 26 are of animals or minerals; and 10 are illuminated scenes of natural life.

In the catalog of the Biblioteca Estense, the manuscript is described as “DE URFE. Dictionarium Gallicum herbarium cum herbs elegantissime expressos, litterisque versicoloribus, auroque ut plurimum intextis. In quo herbarium virtues, atque ut in extreme opera dicitur secret salernitana continentur”. D’Urfé appears among the owners of the book.

The name “Jehan Duboys” appears in first pages of the manuscript: he was probably the copyist, but he also added a number of comments to the text during its replication.

The manuscript is probably derived from the British Library Egerton MS 747 (Otto Pächt).

**Binding description:** Brown leather binding. On the spine, the title “Dictionar gallicum Herbarum” is blind-tooled in gold.

**Facsimile Edition**
**Limited Edition:** 299 + 25 copies

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**Codicology**

**Alternate Titles**
Herbolaire Estense - Grant Herbier - Dictionar Gallicum Herbarum

**Features**
Manuscript on parchment 29,2 × 20,5 cm – 340 pp.

**Origin**
Probably around 1470 (France)

**Theme**
History of Medicine, Science, Treatises, Secular Books

**Style**
Renaissance

**Language**
French

**Former Owners**
Honoré d’Urfé

**Artists / Schools**
Jehan Duboys (scribe)

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**Est. 28 = α. M. 5. 9**

Biblioteca Estense Universitaria, Modena (Italy)

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**www.imagosrl.eu**
Breviario of Ercole I D’Este

ms. Lat. CCCCXXIV=Ms.V.G.11

Biblioteca Estense Universitaria, Modena (Italy)

Between 1502 and 1504, on commission of Ercole, the “Great Breviary of Our Lord” was exemplified and illuminated, a real epicedium of the Ferraran illumination which, at the dawn of the 16th century, at the peak of its maturity, received new life from the stylistic features of the Lombardan and Flemish illumination, blending and harmonising them admirably with the standards already in place in the city of the House of Este, giving rise to a true masterpiece worthy of rivalling the Bible of Borso, and, on some pages, perhaps even being superior.

Matteo da Milano, who, arriving in Ferrara, brought with him the results of his Lombardan training, was the artifex maximus of this feat, assisted by a great team of illuminators made up of Tommaso da Modena and by Cesare and Andrea della Vieze. These artists were responsible for the 491 sheets that make up this precious manuscript, enriched by 45 full-page illuminated sheets, 11 half-page illuminated sheets, 40 scenes illustrating episodes of the text in small rectangular boxes, no less than 17160 initials of which 308 are inhabited, stained or set with scenes or characters from the text of the Breviary, 31 simply decorated initials, 8457 initials in gold on a blue background and 8306 filigreed initials with subtle intertwined spirals, traced by pen with red, blue or green ink. Numbers that would be enough on their own to define Ercole’s Breviary as a genuine monument of Ferrara illumination.

The manuscript, which has reached us in a magnificent state of conservation, is enriched with great abundance by ornamental motifs, Ferrara-style friezes, figures of saints, portraits, images of plants and animals, and emblems and escutcheons concerning Ercole I and his successor Alfonso I who, on the death of his father, using the same artists, wanted to leave in the code also the testimony of his tenure, often inserting or overlaying his achievements and his name. The current binding, crafted in Vienna in the early nineteenth century, in red morocco, is decorated with friezes in gilded silver, cantonals in Renaissance-style silver and clasps, also in Gothic-style gilded silver, probably belonging to the original binding.

The adventurous story of the code, which began in the early 16th century, after remaining for nearly three centuries in the ducal “wardrobe”, continued with the Viennese interlude from 1801 to 1831 which was commissioned by Ercole III to protect the precious relic from French ambitions, then remaining in the ducal library until 1859 and its definitive removal in that year by Francis V, who took it with him along with the Bible of Borso and the Offiziolo Alfonsino. Held by the Duke at the court of Vienna, the Breviary, already deprived of four illuminated sheets removed by a sacrilegious hand - subsequently purchased by Archbishop Strossmayer and now preserved in the gallery that bears his name - after the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was put up for sale in Lausanne by Duchess Zita of Bourbon-Parma, wife of the late Charles I. Recognised in 1929 by the Florentine bibliophile Tammaro De Marinis, it was bought secretly from Italy through a long diplomatic negotiation and finally returned to the Biblioteca Estense in 1939.

Codicology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternate Titles</th>
<th>Breviariun secundum consuetudinem Romanae Curiae</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Features</td>
<td>Manuscript on parchment 38 × 27 cm – 986 pp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Origin</td>
<td>1502 - 1504 Ferrara (Italy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Private Devotion Book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style</td>
<td>Renaissance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patron</td>
<td>Ercole I d’Este, Duke of Ferrara</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Artists / Schools

Matteo da Milano; Tommaso da Modena; Cesare and Andrea della Vieze; influence of Lombard illumination; influence of Flemish illumination

Facsimile Edition

Limited Edition: 599 copies
Petrarch’s Triumphs
Cod. 2581
Vienna, Austrian National Library

The illuminated manuscript of the “Trionfi” preserved in Vienna, created at the beginning of the XVI century, belongs to the artistic production of the School of Rouen. The artists that worked on this manuscript broadened their interests towards the characters, the mythical, legendary or historic stories that Petrarch mentions in the poem. This manuscript is the French translation of the italian text.

The peculiarity of this manuscript consists mainly in the extraordinary number of miniatures: in almost all the other illuminated manuscripts of the “Trionfi” the illustration is limited to 6 miniatures of six triumphal carriages, while this copy has 86 large miniatures and over 1800 gold initial letters. Furthermore the illuminators, taking inspiration from the text, developed a sort of “visual hypertext”: in fact, in each illustration different plains of action in its temporal development are represented.

Facsimile Edition
Limited Edition: 200 copies

Codicology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternate Titles</th>
<th>Trionfi di Francesco Petrarca - Les Triomphes de Petrarque</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Features</td>
<td>Manuscript on parchment 32.5 × 21cm – 590 pp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Origin</td>
<td>Around 1500, Rouen (France)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style</td>
<td>Renaissance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patron</td>
<td>Louis XII, King of France and Cardinal Georges d’Amboise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Owners</td>
<td>René II, Duke of Lorraine; Anthony II Duke of Lorraine; Prince Eugenio of Savoy; Emperor Charles VI; Napoleon Bonaparte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artists / Schools</td>
<td>School of Rouen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Moralized Bible is the most important example of an illuminated bible in the Middle Ages, a very rare type of commentary on the Old and New Testaments, later called Biblia Pauperum. Only seven specimens have come down to us, all dated between the 13th and 14th centuries. Code 2554 preserved in the Austrian National Library, is one of the oldest and most sumptuous examples of Moralized Bible we received. The Bible consists of 131 pages in parchment (260 x 344 mm) all magnificently illuminated to full page for a total of 1032 miniatures. The commission was given by the French royal house in the first half of the 13th century. The manuscript later came into the hands of Prince Eugene of Savoy. In 1738 it was bought by the Emperor Charles VI. In 1809 the manuscript was brought to Paris and starting from 1914 it was back in the Austrian National Library where it still is.
The code, one of only two testimonies of *Apicius* prior to the fifteenth century, produced in the ninth century in the scriptorium of St. Martin of Tours, was certainly in Bologna in 1464, as shown by the Florentine apograph, Riccard. 662. Acquired by the Library of the Dukes of Urbino, in whose old index (1482-1487) it appeared for the first time, it was loaned by Duke Guidobaldo to Angelo Poliziano, who used it for a collation of his *Apicius*, today in Leningrad, which was completed on 2 December 1493. The code reached the Vatican Library with capital of the Dukes of Urbino in 1658. Dated by E.K. Rand as of the second quarter of the ninth century, and by W. Koehler as of the mid-ninth century, it would actually not be much later than the latter date and was intended as a gift from St. Martin to Charles the Bald as suggested by Bernhard Bischoff.

The name of *Apicius* has always been linked to gastronomy, good dishes and succulent dinners. We know three people with this name: an *Apicius* who lived many years before Christ, who inveighs against the Fannia law proposed by Rutilius Rufus to limit the excessive luxury of Roman banquets; a *Marcus Gavius*, nicknamed *Apicius*, named after the famous glutton who lived in the previous century, operating under Tiberius; an *Apicius* who lived under Trajan, specialising in the preservation of oysters. It is the second of these who is responsible for the collection of gourmet recipes that forms the predominant core of the *De re coquinaria* (On the Subject of Cooking).

From the testimony of Cassius Dio (LVII, 19, 5), the Historia Augusta (II, 5, 9), Scolio a Giovenale (IV, 23), Seneca (Dialog. XII, 10, 8) and Tacitus (Ann. IV, 1), we can fix the date of birth of *Apicius* at around 25 B.C. Very rich, he became known for his culinary extravaganzas: manicaretti with a base of camel heels, dips of crests cut from live birds, mullet made to die in garum of the best quality, geese fattened in dried figs and force-fed with mulsum, and tongue of nightingales, peacocks and flamingos. We do not know the exact date of his death, which can be put at the end of the reign of Tiberius.

His culinary research really should not have been so extravagant, but it is certain that many desserts, and above all sauces, took his name. There is no doubt that *Apicius* actually composed a culinary work, even if it seems rather that he composed two: one oft-cited solely on sauces; another on complete dishes. The *De re coquinaria* is a very complex text, consisting of several sections that are not homogeneous among themselves, because they were probably composed in different centuries (from the first century B.C. to the fourth century A.D.). The work consists of recipes for sauces and complete dishes.

The composite collection that we have can be dated according to the language at around 385 A.D., an era in which a compiler who was not very knowledgeable on the subject, to the extent of confusing thistle stems with oysters, but quite experienced in medicine, must have assembled various recipes by *Apicius* and other authors. His Latin was poor from the literary point of view, but suited to the language of cooks of the era. It was a work in current use to which variants and new recipes were added in the margin, thus giving rise gradually, edition after edition, to the corpus we have.

**Facsimile Edition**
**Limited Edition:** 599 copies

**Codicology**

**Alternate Titles**
*Apicio*

**Features**
Manuscript on parchment 23.5 × 19 cm – 124 pp.

**Origin**
9th century, second half, Saint-Martin Abbey, Tours (France)

**Theme**
History of Medicine, Science, Treatises, Secular Books

**Style**
Carolingian

**Language**
Latin

**Former Owners**
Charles the Bald (?); Guidobaldo da Montefeltro; Montefeltro family

**Codex**
**Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Città del Vaticano (Italy)**

www.imagosrl.eu
This primer of extraordinary beauty was certainly written for a rich lady, perhaps named Barbara, wife of a nobleman of the court of Filippo the Good awarded with the Golden Fleece, established by that very sovereign in 1430. Its greatest value, in the opinion of Caterina Limentani Virdis, consists in the undisputed stylistic and decorative unity, which knows no lapses and tiredness: in fact, having removed three papers only (cc. 76, 265v and 272v), work of a less brilliant collaborator, probably belonging to the miniaturist al center of Mons, the codex represents one of the highest creations of the Master of Guillebert of Metz. This name alludes to an illuminator specialized in primers, active around 1410-40 in southern Flanders, identified for the first time with this name by the copyist of the Decameron codex preserved at Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal in Paris (ms. 5070) and that, for the frequent use of the silver leaf, was also called “Master of the silver skies”: by admission of all the scholars of the history of the miniature our primer is undoubtedly one of his most beautiful masterpieces. The decoration, with profusion in every corner of the manuscript, in fact includes twenty-three large miniatures depicting episodes from the life of Christ and the Virgin and also of some saints, among which Barbara stands out, perhaps the same name of the aristocratic client; in the calendar, however, the saints of the diocese of Utrecht prevail. The ornate initials, frames and friezes cannot be counted, from the characteristic acanthus leaves interrupted by ivy leaves and grotesques and scenes with human and animal figures, all rendered with a fresh and luminous use of color, illuminated by flashes of gold and silver.

As we read on a fragment of the original guard sheet, the codex was donated by the Count of Brescia Durante Duranti (1718-1780), poet imitator of Parini, "to the valiant Father Abate Trombelli", who then gave it to the Library of the Convent del of SS. Salvatore, in whose eighteenth-century catalog it appears with the number 780. In the opinion of Frati, the codex was donated to Duranti by King Carlo Emanuele III of Savoy in 1755 to thank him for the dedication of his rhymes. In the Library of SS. Salvatore, the manuscript remained until 1796; poi, the after the Napoleonic adventure and the stay in France, in 1828 it was donated by the Canons to the then Papal Library, together with the Lattanzio codex (see file ms. 701) and ms. 1554 as a reward for the custody of their precious manuscripts.
BIBLE
ms. 3290
Bologna, University Library

Century XVI, cc. 307
Dimensions 116x85 mm

Text on two columns in **Bolorgir type, Armenian miniature.**

Binding in silver with turn-ups and ribbons of metal mesh, anchored on the back plate according to oriental use, provided with a rosette-shaped tip, **Greek cross** in the center of the plates.

The codex, which belongs to the category of small-format *gospels*, according to a hand-written note of the first sheet, was written in 1614 in Edessa (Mesopotamia) and donated by the patriarch of Cecilia of the Armenians to **Benedetto XIV** in 1743.

As far as dating is concerned, however, scholars are inclined, on the basis of stylistic criteria, to lower it to the sixteenth century.

This codex has the extraordinary value of a **very rich ornamentation** executed according to the dictates of the **Armenian miniature school**, consisting of **26 full-page miniatures**.

**It is listed among the most important Bibles of Europe.**
This elegant manuscript, written in **Gothic text** and datable to the second half of the fifteenth century, is one of the few copies of the *Libri d’Ore* which has arrived in the modern era undamaged, intact and in the correct arrangement. The codex was acquired by the Royal Archive Library only in 1764 by Carlo Emanuele III, to which he had procured a canon of the collegiate church of *Saint Joire* in Savoy.

The miniature that decorates all pages is from the second half of the fifteenth century and can be traced back to the **Flemish School** and the master **Willem Vrelant**.

Typical of these miniaturists are the frames which are richly decorated with gold, based on the complex interweaving of branches, leaves and flowers, which are arranged along the edges. The colors are bright and vivid, embellished with gold. The various sized initials are also decorated in this way.

**Facsimile Edition**
**Limited Edition**: 299 copies

**Codicology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternate Titles</th>
<th>Officium Beate Marie Virginis, Libro d'Ore</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Features</td>
<td>Manuscript on parchment 19,5 × 13,5 cm − 238 pp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Origin</td>
<td>Second half of the 15th Century</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Private Devotion Books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style</td>
<td>Flemish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patron</td>
<td>Maria Antonietta of Savoia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Owners</td>
<td>Carlo Emanuele III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artists / Schools</td>
<td>Willem Vrelant; Flemish art</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Museo dell’Archivio di Corte - Archivio di stato, Torino (Italy)
Fra’ Mauro’s World Map
Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venezia (Italy)

Fra’ Mauro’s World Map is generally referred to as one of the most important documents of European cartography, as an expression of that particular mix of grandiose notions, ideas and traditions that characterized the geographical culture of the Western world during the transition from the Middle Ages to the Modern Age.

Fra’ Mauro was a 15th century Venetian Camaldolese monk who kept his cartography workshop in the monastery of San Michel in Isola Murano, in the Venetian Lagoon. He was also a mapmaker, who in 1457 mapped the totality of the Old world with surprising accuracy, including extensive written comments reflecting the geographic knowledge of his time.

Fra Mauro created the map under a commission by King Afonso V of Portugal. Andrea Bianco, a sailor-cartographer, is recorded as having collaborated with Fra’ Mauro in creating the map, as payments made to him between 1448 and 1459 testify.

This large circular planisphere (6 feet 4 inches in diameter), drawn on parchment and mounted on wood in a square frame, is preserved in the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice. Unusual for medieval European maps, it is oriented with South at the top (Indian Ocean, top left; Mediterranean, right center) and so meticulously drawn and full of detail and legends that it has been described as a “medieval cosmography of no small extent, a conspectus of 15th century geographical knowledge cast in medieval form.” Though the coasts are drawn in a style recalling that of the portolan [nautical] charts, loxodromes and compass roses are absent, and the effect is definitely that of a mappamundi, not a nautical chart.

Technical features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digitalization</td>
<td>50 million pixels per frame, 75 frames of 470 Megabyte each were made and subsequently composed in a single file of 35 Gigabytes of data. Resolution of 800 dpi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking Colours</td>
<td>Particular attention was paid to the chromatic fidelity of our reproduction, revealing the color compositions directly from the original by means of a linearized spectrophotometer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chois of paper</td>
<td>Environmentally friendly paper from cotton 220 gr, treated with barium sulfate for coating.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Facsimile Edition

Limited Edition: 99 copies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Printing</td>
<td>Printed with the sophisticated technique Ink Jet Fine Art 12 color and 2400 dpi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decoration</td>
<td>Manually applied Gold leaf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dimensions</td>
<td>246 x 246 cm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The main testimony of Machiavelli's work is made up of miscellaneous manuscripts owned by the National Library containing five autographed fragments of the *De re militari*. The manuscript from the library of the Strozzi family, acquired in 1786 by Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo, was assigned to the Magliabechiana Library and at the end of the nineteenth century was placed in its current location in the Banco Rari. The codex has bequeathed 89 cards that are numbered by hand in contemporary Arabic numerals in the top margin at the center of the sheet. The writing comes from a period when the text was still being processed and has additions and interventions; the writing, initially neat, becomes increasingly hurried, with corrections and marginal additions. There are also several spelling corrections by another hand, which confirm the theory of a language “review”, which the work would have been submitted to by “an appointed editor using Giunti typography”.

The dialogue, probably composed between 1519 and 1520 and completed by Giovanni Gaddi at a later date on September 15th, 1520, is dedicated to Lorenzo di Filippo Strozzi and is set in the circle of friends of the Rucellai family, gathered at the famous Oricellari gardens, which Machiavelli also attended for several years. The protagonist of the dialogue, which is divided into seven books, is the Roman condottiero Fabrizio Colonna. As an expert man-at-arms now advanced in years, he expresses his convictions that the Italian military needs to be reformed, based on the Roman military model, but excluding the use of mercenary troops, who proved unreliable and harmful on several occasions. In the treatise, central themes of Machiavellian thought are recalled, which had already been discussed in previous works (*Cagione dell’Ordinanza*, *The Prince*, *The Discourses*), such as the condemnation of the use of mercenaries and the creation of a well-ordered and disciplined citizen militia, able at any moment to defend the territory from enemy attack. The author then proceeds with a close and detailed analysis of the techniques used by the Romans in the formation of the army (selection, training and armament of the soldiers), the disposition of the troops in battle, housings, fortifications, etc., suggesting precise and detailed rules for an effective defense strategy.

In an appendix to the text Machiavelli drafts diagrams of military deployment, where the battalions are marked with a Greek letter and designs display the ideal arrangement of the army in a “standard battle”.

**Codicology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternate Titles</th>
<th>De re militari - Arte della Guerra</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Features</strong></td>
<td>Manuscript on paper 21.4 × 15 cm – 194 pp.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Origin</strong></td>
<td>Between 1519 and 1520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme</strong></td>
<td>Military art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style</strong></td>
<td>Renaissance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>Italian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Former Owners</strong></td>
<td>Strozzi family, Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Artists / Schools</strong></td>
<td>Niccolò Machiavelli</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Facsimile Edition**

**Limited Edition:** 699 copies

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It is positioned in the second quarter of XIV century, both on the basis of the writing, and of the basis of the illustrations that accompany the text. Considered as the oldest known illuminated Comedy, it contains 37 precious miniatures attributed to the studio of Pacino di Buonaguida, so, according to some critics, it seems there is a superiority of Giotto’s gusto in the illustration of the poem; such hypothesis is supported by the statement by Benvenuto, upon whom Dante would have met Giotto in Padua, when the artist was engrossed in the Scrovegni Chapel and had begun to paint the Last Judgment, in which the depiction of the damned and the Hell have a big dedicated space. Codex Palatino 313, contains a large part of the Commentary by Jacopo, son of Dante, although often his notes are corrupted and altered. Almost each note is marked with the initials Jac (Jacopo).

Both sons of Dante were annotators of the Comedy: Pietro of the whole poem, Jacopo did not go beyond the first Canto. During the period Jacopo lived in Florence, many of them requested him explanations on the most difficult passages of the Comedy.

“It is curious that the owner of an ancient codex, wrote in the margin, where he could not understand: Jacob, facias declarationem (Jacopo’s notes).”

The codex is written in littera textualis (Gothic writing), a spelling born in Northern France in the second half of XII century as evolution of the Carolingian writing.

From an ownership’s note the codex appears to be belonged in the 16th century to the Florentine literatus and politician Piero Del Nero (dead in 1598). It became then property of the Guadagni’s family and finally was bought Gaetano Poggiali who used it for his edition of the Comedy in 1807.
Divine Comedy Angelica
ms. 1102
Rome, Angelica Library

Divine Comedy ms. 1102
XIV Century (second half), cc. 94
Dimensions 340x237 mm

The manuscript 1102 of Angelica Library, is a 14th century codex containing the Divine Comedy by Dante Alighieri and the comments by Jacopo Alighieri and Bosone of Gubbio entitled Chapter About the Comedy, also contains a fragment of the poem on the history of Alexander the Great written by Gualterus de Castellione. Relevant for the originality of iconography that represents Dante’s Hell, the codex is a remarkable example of a fourteenth-century Bolognese miniature. Each canto of Hell is introduced by a miniature that shows the cant’s content. Thirty-four miniatures embellish the manuscript that shows the scenes of Hell in bright colors on a golden background. The first scene is organized on two columns while the rest of the miniatures fill one column only. The manuscript was never completed. The empty spaces were left for the miniatures containing the cantos of Paradise and Purgatory. Delicate white plant motifs, typical of late medieval Italian manuscripts, adorn the whole book. Probably only one scribe is responsible for having written the in elegant Gothic writing (littera textualis).

Usually appointed to a scriptorium of Bologna, the identification of the Divine Comedy illuminator is still subject of debate. Mario Salmi attributes the work to Simone dei Crocefissi, that supposes the codex to be of the first quarter of the fifteenth century. Resuming to the reference proposed at the time by Salmi, Ciardi Duprè has confirmed in recent times the belonging to the Bologna area, while still considering the quality of the decorations higher than the expressive standards by Simone, whose generation range, the researcher suggests, anyway, to bring together the different miniatures to be interpreted, upon her opinion, in close relationship with the second generation of artists active in Mezzaratta, including the Master of Primogeniture by Giuseppe, Cristoforo and the so-called “Jacobus” identified with Jacopo Benintendi named the “Biondo” (Blonde-hair man).
Divine Comedy Codex 9
Century XIV (second half), cc. 164
Dimensions 376x256 mm

The manuscript contains copy of the *Divine Comedy* by Dante Alighieri (cc. 1r-162v), and short texts by Jacopo Alighieri (cc. 163rA-vB) and Bosone of Gubbio (cc. 163vB-164vB). The codex became property of the Library of the Seminary thanks to the purchase in 1720 by the librarian Francesco Canal of the book collection of the Paduan count Alfonso Alvarotti. He left a remark in the codex (c. Ir) in which he claims to have received it as a gift from the count Andrea Cittadella in 1717.

The work is profusely illuminated, and in particular the three title pages corresponding to the beginning of the *three cantos*, which present *historiated initials* and *rich friezes*. The remaining part of decorations embellishes the *initials* of the text with *leafy elements*, not infrequently accompanied by *drollery* of strong vivacity. The decoration and the geographical location of the center of production of the codex has so far led to criticism for a possible *Umbrian provenance*, and for a dating to the second half of XIV century. Actually, part of the *lettering* highlights a derivation from the compositional practices present in the Perugian context, as well as some figures present in the three title pages. However, the Umbrian context does not seem to fully explain the decorative *facies* of the work. There is the possibility that the reason why for the indeterminacy that cloaks the geographical location of the codex is due to the still little knowledge of the *miniature of the Marches*, which could explain a style that is certainly not Tuscan, nor of Emilia-Romagna, and that does not seem traceable in a southern context. There is a possible clue in this sense.

The research in progress contextual to the making of the commentary to the facsimile could succeed in demonstrating the responsibility of the original commissioning of the manuscript in the figure of Michellino of Stacciola, who, in 1372 was forced to surrender his feud of the Marches to Galeazzo Malatesta, and that in 1380 was Podestà of Gubbio, which, a few years later would have been incorporated into the domains of Montefeltro. The work in progress will try to determine if this trail is attainable or not.
Divine Comedy of Obizzi’s Family
Codex 67
Padua, Library of the Episcopal Seminary

Divine Comedy Codex 67
Century XIV (end), cc. 301
Dimensions 340x239 mm

Facsimile Edition
Limited Edition: 300 copies

Comedy with the so-called commentary by Visconti Archbishop, which essentially corresponds to the commentary by Jacopo della Lana, with the exception of the chapter I and of the proem, both taken from the commentary by Andrea della Lancia called the Ottimo. The work contains the Comedy by Dante Alighieri with the rubrics of each and the commentary canto by canto by Jacopo della Lana with the exception of the first canto of Hell and of the proem that come after the commentary named the Ottimo.

Provenance and ancient owners: it was purchased in 1720 after the death of the count Alfonso Alvarotti of Padua by the Bishop Giorgio Corner and became part of the Library of the Seminary together the librarian collection of the late noble. The crest present in the first page Hell, is very deteriorated, but it could be attributed to Obizzi Family that was in touch both with Padua and Ferrara.

The codex was in Ferrara in the middle of the fifteenth century as in 1456 Gaspare di Tommaso of Montone made a copy of it for the praetor of Ferrara which was then illustrated and decorated strictly following the Comedy now in Padua.

The codex is richly illustrated by the same hand and presents an explanatory representation of the text content at the beginning of each canto. Refined ribbon initials decorated with fruit and flowers in each canto and commentary chapter denoting a vast and complex culture firmly based upon the post-Giotteque lesson, but even open to the most modern and sophisticated late-Gothic sensitivity.

Probable miniaturist: Michelino of Besozzo, one of the most successful exponent of the late-Gothic culture in Lombardy, who at the beginning of the fifteenth century worked in Veneto region in Verona, Vicenza and Venice.
The *Divine Comedy* nowadays conserved at Gambalunga Library in Rimini, plays a very particular role and in some ways a rare excellence in the history of illustrations of the Dante's poem in Italy in the fourteenth century, both for the illustrious clientele, and for the exquisite quality of illustration due to high class masters and in particular due to Cristoforo Cortese, the most important venetian late-gothic illuminator.

Large format, made of soft parchment and written in elegant *littera textualis* (Gothic writing), still kept in an ancient if not original binding, the codex contains not only the text of the *Divine Comedy* but also the appropriately re-worked commentary by Iacopo della Lana.

The conception of the work and its exemplary belongs to the late venetian writer and poet, Jacopo Gradenigo so-called Belletto. Jacopo Gradenigo, descending from one of the most ancient and illustrious venetian patrician families, was assiduously involved in the civil life carrying out various prestigious official roles. Gradenigo, wise administrator of his own money did not fail to record the expenses incurred for the execution of the work in a note in a parchment sheet, nowadays glued inside the back plate of the binding, in which are written the payments made for the parchments, for the paragraph signs, for the leather cover and for the silver finishing made by goldsmith Carlo, and finally for the binding made by 'Cerbero bidello' (Cerberus janitor). This last mention is very important because it brings us back to undoubtedly to the university environment and more precisely to the Padua's Study where in 1400 a janitor named is reported.

The masters called to work in the *Divine Comedy* are certainly two; to the Master of Bruxelles, Bolognese illustrator identified as Giovanni di Fra Silvestro, are due the first page (f. 2r) with frame and emblem, a decorated initial (f. 2v) and the first vignette (f. 4r), while to the second one, Cristoforo Cortese, the next twenty-three miniatures, which for their refined and delicate touch and affable emotionality reveal to be exquisitely Venetian works.

Dante's codex, in 1422 was probably conserved by Sanudo's family, as a paper copy in three volumes was made, that one containing the *Paradise* was signed in 1422 by Marin Sanudo, it became property of the *Library of Carlo Malatesta* and finally it became property of Gambalunga Library in 1793 together with the prestigious *library of Cardinal Giuseppe Garampi*.
The Codex contains the Comedy in the sheets 1r-90r, followed by the preface of the Commentary on Paradise by Jacopo della Lana, the chapter of Bosone da Gubbio and the Chapter by Jacopo Alighieri.

To the sheet 92v, a poem, was added on Castel dell’Ovo attributed to Boccaccio.

The copy of the codex, in knightly bastard calligraphy, is assigned to the main copyist of the “Group of the Hundred” and at least three hands have affixed the footnotes in Latin and vernacular.

The decoration consists of figured initials with frieze at the beginning of each cantica. Forty-nine scenes placed in the lower margin of the sheets perform the function of comment and explanation of the text, until the end of Purgatory.

Author of the decoration of the initial papers of the three cantica is Pacino di Buonaguida, painter and illuminator active in Florence between 1302 and 1347, who decorated a conspicuous number of Codices of the “Group of the Hundred” in Florence. Recent studies have confirmed the hypothesis that in the workshop of Pacino many manuscripts of the Comedy were set up between 1330 and 1350.

The Codex shown here presents in the sheet 1r, in the center of the lower margin, the coat of arms, partly abraded, referable to an ancient owner: it has been suggested that it could be the emblem of the Bugliaffi family.

Part of the leather binding with dry impressions, coeval with the text, is still preserved.

The Codex belonged to Senator Carlo Strozzi and arrived at the library in 1785 along with other 182 Codices that were part of his collection.
This astrological treatise completed in Naples in 1478 is one of the most beautiful illuminated manuscripts in the Rylands' collection. Little is known about the author, other than his position as an astronomer at the Neapolitan court of Ferdinand II of Aragon. This is the only known manuscript copy, but the Rylands collection also holds an early printed edition from 1477. The manuscript is dominated by bianchi girari, or 'white vine-stem border' a style typical of fifteenth-century Italian Humanist manuscripts. Adorning the border is a selection of creatures, including the parakeets typically associated with Naples, and butterflies which represent Florence. The proximity of these devices is particularly significant, as the two Italian cities were at war for much of the 1470s, and the manuscript's one-time owner and patron, Cardinal Giovanni of Aragon, played a pivotal role in peace-talks between the two cities.

One of the most prominent and interesting illuminations in MS 53 is the coat of arms on the first page. M. R. James speculated that this may have belonged to Ferdinand II of Aragon. Ferdinand's arms, however, are a mirror image of this found in MS 53, which instead belong to Ferdinand's son, Cardinal of Aragon. James was, perhaps, misled by the golden crown which tops the Aragonese heraldry.

This would usually denote a royal patron and owner. In fact, the arms were probably originally topped by a cardinal's hat, but it is likely that this was painted over when Giovanni predeceased his father, and his library was merged with that of the Aragonese royal household.

May recent research has revealed the previously unknown whereabouts of the manuscript between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries. The manuscript's path can be traced from its Neapolitan origin to England, through the libraries of the French household, the Duchy of La Vallière and the 'Napoleon of booksellers', Bernard Quaritch, after whom the manuscript was owned by William Morris, an avid bibliophile, who had an obvious professional interest in the aesthetics of illumination. It was sold to Morris with a suggestion that it might be the work of renowned German/Italian illuminator Gioacchino de Gigantibus. However, further stylistic investigation may question this attribution.
This small volume contains a series of miniatures depicting scenes from GENESIS and Exodus. It was illuminated in north–eastern France or Flanders early in the thirteenth century. The illustrations are accompanied by brief, essentially descriptive, inscriptions added in one of two hands, each of which postdates the illuminations by at least twenty or thirty years. The Rylands manuscript may originally have opened a prefatory cycle of miniatures for a Psalter, but it is more likely that it is an example of a rare type of illustrated scriptural compilation known as a 'Bible picture book'.

Bible picture books are typically lavishly decorated, exhibiting copious illumination, the finest pigments and a characteristic subordination of text to imagery that is exceptional in medieval codices of any genre. The full-page, single subject miniatures in this example move slowly through the opening books of the Bible and exhibit the extensive use of gold. This page illustrates the construction of the Tower of Babel described in the Book of Genesis. The textual inscriptions did not form the basis of the overall composition; indeed it is likely that the cycle of illuminations was originally intended to function without any textual passages to identify or clarify the events depicted.

This reliance on images instead of text to convey sacred scripture is remarkable on several levels. The process by which this manuscript was created represents an inversion of the typical methods of book construction. Traditionally scribes oversaw the design and layout of a medieval codex; countless examples show that the textbloks were entered on to the page prior to any pictorial decoration. The development of this practice stems in part from practicality, but also in large measure from medieval notions of the Word of God deserving precedence over everything images meant to illustrate the scriptural texts. That inscriptions in Bible picture books were frequently added a later date forces questions as to how they were meant to be read. Was French MS 5 created merely as an extravagant display of the taste and wealth of its original patron? Certainly the added inscriptions indicate that is pictorial cycle, fine as it may be failed to function without at least some verbal framework.
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