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MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE MANUSCRIPTS

MS 1060

Northern Italy (Brescia?), c.1470-1475

Antonio Cornazzano, *Della vera nobilità*

I thank Patrick Waldron for the information he provided about this manuscript.

ff. 1r-27v [Prologue:] *Ad magnificum ac potent******. Perch'io veggio negli anim'Italiani / Una altereça indegna e poco intesa, / Tal che per lei si vien spesso alle mani, / Pigliandosi hor l'assalto, hor la difesa ... Al thesaurier che siede ad Acheronte, / Ma colle prove hor vengho a quel ch'io scrivo. [ff. 4v-27v: Text] *Questio ** Scythas et Egyptas *** gener** excellent*** [doubtful reading]. Son generation' di gente al mondo, / Le qua' non conoscendo un primo padre, / Com'io premetto nostra fe sicondo / Creser col sol la terra esserci madre ... Quel che colmo ti do non ti sia raso / S'io t'amo, t'honoro a tal prova tu'l sai.

Antonio Cornazzano (c. 1430-1483/1484), attributed, *Della vera nobilità*, poem in terzine in honour of the condottiere Antonio Martinengo, who died in Brescia in 1473. About the author, see *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, v. 29 (1983), pp. 123-132. See ff. 1v: "Antonio Martinengho amplo patricio (...) esser l'honor della città di Bressa"; 25r: "Qui tutto a te mi volgho, archa e theatro d'ogni virtute, Martinengho Antonio".

Parchment (goatskin), ff. 27, 200 x 135 mm.

I-II¹⁰ (ff. 1-20), III⁸ (-8, ff. 21-27). Vertical catchwords.

Rake ruling for one column of 21 lines (7 terzine) below top line, the bounding lines traced in lead, the horizontal lines in light brown ink, 138 x 78 mm; the number of lines differs on the pages where a new chapter starts, due to the presence of headings interrupting the normal succession of terzine. Ruling type.

Copied by one hand in Humanistica Textualis, the first majuscule of each terzine placed between the double bounding lines at left of the text.

The Latin headings in front of each of the seven sections of the poem are so pale that they are partly or totally illegible; they seem to have been deleted. Each section ("capitulum") opens with a 2-line gold initial on a square coloured background heightened with white, yellow or gold penwork, in the margin accompanied by three gold balls in black penwork flourishes. On f. 1r, at the opening of the Prologue, a 4-line white vinestem initial ending in the margin in two similar decorative scrolls. Marginal annotations in pale red ink.

Original parchment covers and spine pasted onto new boards; the covers are gold-tooled with a fillet and four flowerets in the corners.

On f. 27v five lines of Latin text hard to decipher, and at the bottom a pen-and-ink drawing of the profile of a bearded man crowned in laurel and more text hard to read.

This is probably the presentation copy of the poem, written at Brescia and presented to Martinengo before his death in 1473. Purchased on the Edwin J. Beinecke Fund.

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