



Liberalitati quas aptiores com-  
tes quam humanitatem & cle-  
mentiam derelerm: quoniam  
idem genus laudis expetunt:  
quarum prima inopia: proxia  
occupatione: tertia incipiti for-  
tuna prestatur: cumq; nescias  
qua maxime probes: eius tamen commendatio pure  
re uidetur: cuius nomen ex ipso numine questum e. Ante  
omnia tamen humanissima & clementissima Sena-  
tus adla referam. Qui cum Carthaginensium legati ad  
captiuos redimendos in urbem uenissent: protinus is  
nulla pecunia accepta reddidit: iuuenes numerum  
duum milium & septingentor: quadraginta tuum ex-  
plentes: tantum hostium exercitum dimissum: tantam  
pecuniam contemptam: tot punicis muros ueniam de-  
tam: ipos legatos obstupuisse arbitror: ac secum dore  
se O munificentiam gentis Romano decorum benig-  
tati equandam. O etiam nostram legationem sup uota  
felicem: nam beneficium quod nunquam dedissemus ac-  
cepimus. Illud quoq; non parue humanitatis Senatus  
inditum est. Siphacem enim quondam opulentissi-  
mum Numidie regem captiuum in custodia Tribu-  
ry mortuum publico funere censuit offerendum ut  
uite dono honorem sepulture adyiceret. Consimilis  
clementia in Persa usus e: Nam cum Albe in qua  
custodie causa relegatus erat: decessisset: questores  
misit: qui eum publico funere efferrer: ne reliquas  
regias iacere in honoratis pateretur: hostibus hec d

## 15. Valerius Maximus, *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia*

Northern Italy, ca. 1500

Poole 24

210 leaves; 12.5x18.8cm. (8x13.4cm.); vellum

Humanistic script; nine large decorated initials, numerous smaller decorated initials

Blind-tooled 15th-century brown calf binding

Like Poole 23 (item no.14), this manuscript is also a complete copy of the *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia* by Valerius Maximus. Poole 24 dates about 100 years later, and provides an interesting comparison.

In the overall layout of the book, Poole 24 is quite similar to the earlier copy of Valerius. A table of contents also precedes the first book of this manuscript and the division into books and chapters follows the same format. The only major discrepancy is due to a scribal error in the Poole 24 table of contents where book eight has seventeen chapters instead of the usual sixteen, since the scribe has accidentally inserted a chapter number for the second line of the previous chapter title. However, the two books have numerous differences in their production. Poole 24 is smaller in format, with only one column of 29 lines of text per page in contrast to the two-column layout in Poole 23. Despite its smaller size, the book's high quality is attested to by very fine vellum, generous margins, and regular, clear humanistic script.

The decoration though modest in this copy of Valerius Maximus is nonetheless interesting. Typically, the title page of Poole 24 (which also opens the text) receives the most decoration. Fifteen lines of display lettering in blue, red, gold, and purple are enclosed in a plaque-like frame outlined with blue shading, and adorned at the base with two cornucopias filled with pineapples and a coat of arms. Nine decorated initials plus numerous gold and colored initials set in the margins mark text divisions. Display lettering forms a transition between initial and text in each book.

The text begins with an illuminated initial of delicate green, red, and pink foliage contoured in black and inhabited by a lute-playing putto. Eight of the nine decorated initials are incorporated in a similar format with foliage around the letters. Most of the delicately modeled initials in Poole 24 are set on an intricately pat-

terned square background and are surrounded by finely drawn foliate forms, usually in green, red, and blue, but sometimes featuring other colors. The smaller size and deviation from the normal floral ornamentation of the initials to Books IV and VI (69v and 118v) represent only a slight variance from the overall decorative program, and it is entirely possible that the artist was merely copying from two different models.

Other elements, such as dolphins, cuirasses, daggers, and urns are sometimes included in the design. This type of decoration has no precise symbolism, and the motifs used simply derive from an established (and frequently copied) decorative tradition reflecting the contemporary humanistic milieu of the Renaissance and its classicizing concern with antique references. For example, the initial for Book V (93v) incorporates a dolphin wrapped around the letter "L" which is surrounded by blue, red, and purple vegetation detailed with yellow tracery and enclosed within a green patterned ground. Book VI features only a tilted urn set against a schematic geometric background.

Based on its fine humanistic script and general decorative scheme, Poole 24 appears to date about 1500; but the exact location of its production is less certain. Stylistically, the manuscript appears to be northern Italian. The blue shading and structural framework on the title page, as well as the decorative motifs used throughout, correspond with northern Italian manuscripts, perhaps from the region of Venice or Padua. Comparison can be made with the work of the Master of the Putti, active in Venice in the 1470's and 1480's. He and his workshop illuminated manuscripts and printed books in a classicizing style like that of Poole 24 (Armstrong, figs. 55, 61, etc.). Though the initials in the Lilly manuscript are not the fully-developed *littera mantiniana* type with its illusionistically-modeled letter frames characteristic of the work of the Putti Master, many of the motifs used in Poole 24 are also found in his work. It is possible that the "all'antica" style of the Lilly artist was influenced by that of the Putti Master.

The relative paucity of decoration in this manuscript prevents a precise localization, and the coat of arms on the title page remains unidentified; however, an approximate date of 1500 and a northern Italian origin (perhaps in the region of Venice to Padua) seems most likely.

*PROVENANCE*

Acquired by George A. Poole, Jr. from Laurence Witten, New Haven, 1956; Indiana University, 1958

S.M.H.