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The Corvinian Manuscript of Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*

1. Marcus Fabius Quintilianus was a notable establishment figure under the Flavian emperors: a successful advocat and teacher of rhetoric in Rome. He was the first man in the Western world who, as a professor of rhetoric, had a state salary. His position improved further under Domitian: he was made tutor to the emperor's destined heirs. After 20 years teaching, he retired from practice and devoted his life to write his great work *Institutio Oratoria*, *The Orator's Education* (Russel, 2001: I-V) in which he describes in twelve books the whole education of the perfect orator from infancy to retirement.

1. 1. In the following centuries, Quintilian's work was used rarely in the teaching of rhetoric because of its complexity. In late antiquity, Jerome adapted Quintilian's views on education (*Epist.* 107, 4), and he may also have been known as an orator: Sidonius Apollinaris speaks of his "thunderbolt" and of his pungency (*Carm.* 2, 191; *Epist.* 5, 10). In his rhetorical treatise, Julius Victor copies him extensively (Halm, 1863: 371-448). In the Carolingian and Ottonian age the rhetoric became important again, and Quintilian's work was read and studied, but his text was incomplete: books 6, 7, and large parts of 8, 9, and 10 were missing (Lehmann, 1959: 5-21). The greatest authors of the middle ages knew and appreciated Quintilian's incomplete work, e. g., John of Salusbury quotes it several times in his work *Metalogicon* (Hall, 1991: 198).

1. 2. About the discovery of the complete text of the *Institutio Oratoria*, Donald A. Russel has remarked that "The most famous episode in the history of Quintilian's text is the discovery by Poggio in 1416 of a complete manuscript at St. Gallen. Poggio and some others went over from Constance (where they were attending the Council), looking for books. They found Quintilian, among many others, dirty and dusty - not in the library, but in the basement of a tower, not fit for condemned prisoners. The manuscript he found (T) is a descendant of A; it was with its discovery that a process of restoring Quintilian to fame and favour may be said to have begun" (Russel, 2001: I, 20). The educated world exulted together with Brunni: "O, greatest asset! O, unexpected pleasure!" The complete *Institutio Oratoria* became soon well-known in Italy (Rahn, 1972: XI-XII). Copies were made and circulated from Italy to France, Spain, Germany, and thanks to King Matthias, to Hungary as well.

1. 3. In the famous *Bibliotheca Corviniana* of King Matthias there was to be found also Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* among the classical Greek and Latin authors. The parchment manuscript was written with humanistic minuscule and illuminated in Umbria between 1460 and 1470, and from there it arrived in the *Bibliotheca Corviniana*. It has 278 folios and measures 280 by 200 millimetre. "The coat of arms of Matthias had been erased from the title page, so that only traces of the crown are visible. In the place of the shield the name Quintilianus stands in the handwriting of Brassicanus. The binding is original, gilt Corvinian leather provided with coat of arms which, however, is concealed by superimposition. Chased gilt edges" (Csapodi, 1973: 339).

1. 4. The first *possessor* (owner) was King Matthias; the second one was Johannes Alexander Brassicanus from 6 December 1525 because there is the following note in the manuscript: *Liber est Johannis Alexandri Brassicani philosophi et iurisconsulti, Bude an. 1525 Mensis x-bris die VI*. "It is probably due to Brassicanus that the Corvinian emblems were almost completely erased" – writes Csaba Csapodi (Csapodi, 1973: 339). Perhaps Elemér Varjú was right when he wrote in 1905, "It came out of the Royal Library of Buda illegally" (Varjú, 1905: 316). Johannes Fabri, Bishop of Vienna, has bought the manuscript by 1540, and in his testament he left it to Saint Nicholas College of the University of Vienna. Hence it came to the Hofbibliothek (later: Nationalbibliothek) in Vienna. Finally, in 1932, according to Venetian Convention, it was returned to Hungary, and is currently preserved in the National Széchenyi Library under the title *Codex Latinus 414*.

2. The Corvinian Library of King Matthias had a complete *Institutio oratoria* of Quintilian. The complete manuscripts of the work begin with Quintilian's letter to his editor, Trypho, so does the Corvinian manuscript as well. Trypho presses Quintilian for publishing the work, or as our rhetorician says: "You have been pressing me every day, with great insistence, to start publishing the books on 'the orator's education' which I had written for my friend Marcellus" (Russel, 2001: I, 51). Quintilian wanted to mature them, but finally he agrees to publishing: "But if they are called for as urgently as you allege, let us spread our sails before the wind and pray for a good voyage as we cast off."

2. 1. The Latin text of this letter in the Corvinian manuscript is good, it generally agrees with that of the critical editions. What is strange for contemporary readers is that it contains a lot of abbreviations. Latin scribal practice traditionally employed abbreviations which "consist either of groups of several (usually two) elements – in general the first letters of syllables – or words after which the others are left out (by 'suspension'). In contrast, short or frequent words, final syllables, and also some legal terms are abbreviated by means of various signs or superscript letters. In a few technical terms the final syllables too could be attached. Abbreviation was indicated mostly by a stroke above, in part also by a crossbar" (Bischoff, 1995: 150). A second tradition of Latin abbreviation takes its origin from Christian 'nomina sacra'

(Bischoff, 1995: 152). "In the late middle ages also alphabetical lists of abbreviations and their solutions were compiled" (Bischoff, 1995: 155), and today the handbooks of paleography have such lists (Bischoff, 1995: 156-168; Cappelli, 1987). In Quintilian's letter to Trypho there are to be found the following abbreviations: *q* – *quam*; *tpus* – *tempus*; *inubiles* – *innumerabiles* (1); *precipitet* – *precipitetur*; *q* – *que*; *perpendere* – *perpenderem* (2); *tantope* – *tanto opere*; *flagitant* – *flagitantur*; *precem* – *precemur*; *aut* – *autem*; *quoq* – *quoque*; *man* – *manus* (3).

2. 2. Some traces of the tradition of mediaeval pronunciation and orthography survive in this manuscript; *Oratii* – *Horati*; *precipitet* – *praecipitet*; *hiis* – *iis* (2). The writing of the letter *h* offers difficulty to the scribes because it wasn't pronounced, and in the Middle Ages the vowel *e* and the diphthong *ae* were pronounced and written equally. In dividing words the hyphen wasn't used at this time. The adverb *alioqui* is written *alioquin* (1), which is a normal variant of *alioqui*.

3. After the letter of Trypho, the chapter headings of the first book follow in the manuscript, which are not Quintilian's, neither are the chapter divisions.

3. 1. The chapter headings are as follows:

Quemadmodum prima elementa tradenda sunt. – „How should we teach the elementary skills?“

Utilius domi an in scholis erudiantur. – „Which is better: to educate at home or in schools?“

Qua ratione in parvis ingenia dinoscant ac quae tradenda sint. – „How can we recognize the talent of the little children and what should we teach?“

De grammaticae. De officio grammatici. An oratori futuro necessaria sit plurimum artium scia. – „About the grammar. About the duty of the grammarian. „Whether the to-be orator has to know more arts?“

De musice. De prima pronuntiationis et gest institutione. – „About the music. About the primary delivery and gesture.“

An plura eodem tempore doceri prima etas possit. – „Should several subjects be taught at once?“

3. 2. The best manuscripts contains these chapter headings. In the critical edition of Radermacher they are to be found in the appropriate places of the text of the first book. There are only small differences in the text of the chapter headings of the Corvinian manuscript in comparison with that of Radermacher. The interrogative adverb *quemadmodum* is written in one, with Radermacher it is written as three words. In the chapter heading *Qua ratione in parvis ingenia dinoscantur et quae tractanda sint* there is written *tradenda* instead of *tractanda*. In the chapter heading *An oratori futuro necessaria sit plurimum artium cognitio* instead of *cognitio* there is to be found the abbreviation *scia*, that is *scientia*. The chapter heading *De geometria* is omitted.

3. 3. In the script of the headings there are some abbreviations: *erudiant* instead of *erudiantur*; *dinoscant* instead of *dinoscantur*, *scia* instead of *scientia*, *gest* instead of

gestus.

In the orthography of the headings there are two usual deviations from the rules: *que* instead of *quae* and *etas* instead of *aetas*.

3. 4. Tore Janson summarizes well the origin and the function of the headings in Quintilian's manuscripts: "Even in the earliest Quintilian MSS we find headings in the text, dividing the books into sections. The number of such headings varies greatly from book to book, with a greater number on the whole in the earlier books. Book 2 has in most versions 21 subheadings, Book 11 has 3. These headings are generally considered to date from the Middle Ages. The usage is not consistent, and even the oldest MSS display great variation from one to another, both in the number of headings and in their wording. Nevertheless, these headings have served as the foundation for the numbering of the chapters to be found in editions from 1516 onwards" (Janson, 1964: 56).

4. Quintilian's work, the *Institutio Oratoria* (*The orator's education*) consists of 12 books. All books have a preface except book 2, 9, 10 and 11. The most important of these prefaces is that of the first book, in which the author renders an account of the circumstances of the origin of his work, of its conception and his ethical ideal, and finally of its structure.

4. 1. When Quintilian retired after twenty years teaching, his friends asked him to write something on the theory of oratory. He resisted for a long time, saying that famous authors had left good works relevant to this subject. But they answered that therefore he has to compose a work because it is difficult to choose between the different and contradictory works. So he agreed: "I was moved to comply not so much because I felt confident that I could meet their requirements, but because I was ashamed to refuse" (1 *Pref.* 3). He dedicates his work to Marcus Vitorius because he is his very good friend and he has an enthusiasm for literature.

According to Quintilian, nothing is foreign to the art of oratory which is essential for the making of an orator, and one cannot reach the top without going through the elementary stages, therefore he plans "his studies from his infancy" (1 *Pref.* 5) He proposes to educate the perfect orator, who must be a good man. "We therefore demand of him not only exceptional powers of speech, but all the virtues of character as well" (1 *Pref.* 9).

He summarizes the structure of his work as follows: "Book One will deal with what comes before the rhetor begins his duties. In Book Two, I shall handle the first elements taught by the rhetor, and problems connected with the nature of rhetoric itself. The next five books will be given over to invention (disposition forms an appendix to this), and the following four to elocution, with which are associated Memory and Delivery. There will be one further book, in which the orator himself is to be portrayed" (1 *Pref.* 21-22).

4. 2. Janson explains suitably the relationship between the letter to Trypho and the preface proper: "The real reason for the double preface would seem to be that

the author had two themes that he was unable or did not want to combine in a single preface. We can easily see which these are. The preface contains the dedication to Marcellus, making it unsuitable to include an honourable mention of anyone else. The publisher therefore received his undoubtedly well-deserved thanks in the brief letter that Quintilian allowed to be published. In this way the author could also emphasize that many wanted to read the work, which not only – as mentioned above – gives him an excuse for any formal shortcomings but also naturally raises the reader’s expectations: if it was eagerly awaited by so many, then surely it must contain some truly valuable material” (Janson, 1964: 55).

4. 3. In this preface there are many abbreviations to be found, as well: *quiete – quietem; impendera – impenderam; quida – quidam; ratioe – ratione; coponerem – componerem; q – que; ignoraba – ignorabam (1); ca – causa; accendebant – accendebantur; prior – priorum; quasda – quasdam; int – inter; crias – contrarias; labore – laborem, i – in (2); quauis – quamuis; aut – autem (3); oradi – orandi; ltris – litteris; qi – quasi; omi – omni; gue – genere; sumam – summam; tanq – tamquam; eent – essent; pximum – proximum, u – uero, tn – tamen, ontatioe – ostentatione (4); existime – existimem; oratore – oratorem; no – non; pueniri – perueniri (5); pp – propter; mo – modo; quanq – quamquam; pma – prima, ondit – ostendit, onis – omnis, destinabam – destinabamus (6); ia – iam; ferebant – ferebantur; nq – neque; smone – sermonem; p – per; excepant – exceperant; altum – alterum; plibus – pluribus; potuerat – potuerant (7); pima – plurima; oia – omnia; q – quantum ((8); pfectum – perfectum; n – nisi; pot – potest; ai – animi (9); ei – enim; putauert – putauerunt; phos – philosophos; religadam – relegandam; publicu priuatarq – publicarum priuatarumque; accomodatus – accommodatus; emdare – emendare (10); phio – philosophorum; ee – esse; nri – nostri; pprieq – proprieque; ptinere – pertinere (11); ceterq – ceterisque; tempantia – temperantia; repiri – reperiri; explicada – explicanda; dubitabr – dubitabitur (12); Fuertq – fueruntque; aptissime – apertissime; herentur – haberentur; dein – deinde; pmum – primum; mor – morum (13); in – inde; aios – animos; ptem – partem; nom – nomen; si – sibi; sapte – sapientiae; uocarent – uocarentur; ne – neque; rer maximar – rerum maximarum; rei p. – rei publicae; maluer – maluerunt (14); professor – professorum; ntris – nostris; phihi – philosophi; pra – propria; phie – philosophiae; pessim – pessimus; loquit – loquitur; qs – quis; rusticor – rusticorum; ppetas – proprietas; dtia – differentia; smone – sermonem; hnt – habent; cois – communis (16); aliqn – aliquando; phil – philosophorum; recurre – recurrere; prestim – praesertim; nstm – nostrum; reposce – reposcere (17); igr – igitur; tal – talis; quanq – quanquam; scia – scientia (18); furt – fuerit; qd – quod (19); n – neque; na – natura; alti – altius; nitent – nitentur; q – quam; q – qui; despatione – desperation; proin – protinus (20); officiu – officium; so – secundo; stia – substantia; grut – quaeruntur (21); cui – cuius; pte – partem; ipe – ipse; ub – ubi; rao – ratio; qtu – quantum; ntra – nostra (22); admisceb – admiscebitur; qsq – quisque; eo – eorum; deder – dederunt, ipm – ipsum, interprete – interpretetur (23); astrigi – astringi (24); ptculam – particulam; opis – operis; repietur – reperietur (25); n – nisi; ntra – natura; Qpp – Quapropter; q – quam; aagro – agrorum; sterilib – sterilibus (26); obtiger –*

obtigerunt (27); *no nunq* – *nonnumquam*; *crumpant* – *corrumpant*; *pito* – *perito*; *ptinaci* – *pertinaci*; *n* – *nihil* (27).

5. In the text of the preface there are some deviations from the text of the critical editions of Radermacher (1965), Winterbottom (1970) and Cousin (1975).

5. 1. First I enumerate them: *qua* – *quae*; *pertinent* – *pertinerent* (1); *ego ex causa* – *qua ego ex causa*; *diuisas* – *diuersas* (2); *eloquentie* – *in eloquentia* (4); *nihil existimem* – *existimem nihil*; *oratore non posse* – *non posse oratore*; *ad maiora illa* – *ad minora illa* (5); *M. uictori* – *Marcelle Vitori* (Radermacher), *Marce Vitori* (Winterbottom); *nato tuo* – *Getae tuo*; *iter ad ingenii lumen ostendit* – *iam ingenii lumen ostendit* (6); *quibus praestabatur* – *quibus id praestabatur*; *bini* – *boni* (7); *itaque* – *ideoque* (9); *religandam* – *rationem* ...*relegandam* (10); *non aliqua questio ex his incidat* – *non aliqua ex his incidat quaestio*; *precipuas esse* – *esse praecipuas* (12); *cicero aptissime* – *Cicero apertissime* (13); *soli sapientie studiosi* – *soli studiosi sapientiae*; *vindicare* – *vindicare* (14); *uississe* – *uixisse* (15); *Quis non* – *quis enim non*; *ut uir pessimus* – *et uir pessimus* (16); *ut sciet optime* – *et sciet optime*; *scolis* – *scholis*; *ueluti* – *uelut* (17); *adhuc fortasse nemo* – *fortasse nemo adhuc*; *ad summam* – *ad summa* (19); *ad ea* – *ad eam* (20); *quibus* – *quibus solis*; *facundia* – *facundiam* (23); *unde* – *nudae*; *nimia subtilitate affectione* – *nimiae subtilitatis affectione*; *astringi ueris neruis* – *adstringi neruis* (24); *demonstrando* – *demonstraturi* (25); *ualitudo* – *ualetudo*; *et* – *etiam* (27).

5. 2. Evaluating these deviations we can divide them into groups as follows:

a) omission: *Sed ego ex causa*; correctly: *sed qua ego ex causa* ...*hac*; *quibus praestabatur*; correctly: *quibus id praestabatur*; *recte honestaeque uite* ...*relegandam*; correctly: *rationem rectae honestaeque uitae* ...*ad philosophos relegandam*; *Quis non*; correctly: *quis enim non*; *quibus*; correctly: *quibus solis*. From these omissions *qua*, *rationem*, and *solis* influence the meaning of the sentences, therefore they are significant.

b) addition: *astringi ueris neruis suis*; correctly: *adstringi neruis suis*.

c) transformation of the word order: *nihil existimem*; correctly: *existimem nihil*; *oratore non posse*; correctly: *non posse oratore*; *questio ex his incidat*; correctly: *ex his incidat quaestio*; *precipuas esse*; correctly: *esse praecipuas*; *soli sapientie studiosi*; correctly: *soli studiosi sapientiae*. These faults are insignificant.

d) substitution: *summam eloquentie manum imponent*; correctly: *summam in eloquentia manum imponent*; *ad maiora illa*; correctly: *ad minora illa*; *M. uictori*; correctly: *Marcelle Vitori*; *nato tuo*; correctly: *Getae tuo*; *iter ad ingenii lumen ostendit*; correctly: *iam ingenii lumen ostendit*; *ut uir pessimus*; correctly: *et uir pessimus*; *ut sciet optime*; correctly: *et sciet optime*; *ad summam*; correctly: *ad summa*; *ad ea*; correctly: *ad eam*; *facundia*; correctly: *facundiam*; *unde*; correctly: *nudae*; *nimia subtilitate, affectione*; correctly: *nimiae subtilitatis affectione*; *demonstrando*; correctly: *demonstraturi*.

5. 3. On the basis of these registered deviations, it is possible to determine under what family of manuscripts the *Corvinian Institutio Oratoria* belongs. With the help of Cousin's *apparatus criticus*, we can state that the *Corvinian manuscript* of the *Institutio*

Oratoria belongs to the family of *Codex Turicensis (T)*, which was written in the 11th century (Cousin, 1975: I, 48–56). That is the codex, which was found by Poggio Bracciolini in St. Gallen 1416: “The manuscript he found (*T*) is a descendant of *A*” (Russel, 2001: I, 20) which is described by Michael Winterbottom (1970: 5–7). For example, the greeting *M. Fabius Quintilianus Tryphoni suo salutem* is omitted before the letter to Trypho. In the text of the *1Preface*, instead of the form *pertinerent* (1) of other manuscripts there is *pertinent* in *T* and in the *Corvinian* manuscript, instead of *diuersas* (2) is *diuisas*, instead of *in eloquentiae* is *eloquentiae*, instead of *getae* *A* is *nato* (6), instead of *boni* *P* is *bini* *AHT*, instead of *ex his incidat quaestio* *A* is *quaestio ex his incidat* (12), instead of *studiosi sapientiae* *A* is *sapientiae studiosi* (14), instead of *demonstraturi aHF* is *demonstrando* and so on.

6. To sum up, in my paper I have presented the first elementary description of the *Corvinian manuscript* of Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria*. The manuscript contains the complete text of the work in question; the Greek words and locutions seem to be written by Greek letters. I studied only the preface of the first book of the manuscript, on the basis of which it seems to belong to the family of *T*. It requires further researches to verify these results and to establish the real value of the manuscript.

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