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Readers' Marks in Renaissance Manuscripts

Introduction

Reading is the prelude to literary, philosophical or theological reflection on a text. From the second half of the fourteenth century, the *Glossae* on the Roman and Canon Law, the Bible and the Aristotelian Corpus were no longer copied in the margins. With the disappearance of glosses and marginal commentaries, Renaissance manuscripts adopted a full-page layout derived from eleventh- and twelfth-century models. Meanwhile, the reader would transform the space around the text, and the margins become firstly the site of philological activity, of appropriating the text by understanding it in its entirety.

In this essay, I present the first results of my research on readers' marks in fifteenth-century manuscripts, mainly but not exclusively Florentine. I have divided it into three sections, each devoted to a different type of intervention: textual intervention, index of names and places, and "memory signs". To illustrate reading strategies and different ways of interacting with written texts, I have looked at some of the most famous Renaissance intellectuals, especially Florentines (Salutati, Poggio, Bruni, etc.).

Renaissance scholars produced hundreds of autographs (manuscripts thought to have been written by the author in his own hand), idiographs (manuscripts or editions thought to have been written or arranged under the supervision of the author) and dedicatory copies. A closer analysis of these materials provides a unique perspective on scholarly reading.

Catalogues or descriptions of humanist manuscripts usually mention the presence of *marginalia*. Frequently, however, the entries in the margins have a different origin. While the critical or philological examination of a text is evidenced by notes, commonly called *marginalia*, reading leaves other traces in the margins of Renaissance manuscripts and incunabula.

The distinction I propose in these pages is based on the action from which the marginal intervention arises or its purpose, not on the presence or absence of verbal elements. *Marginalia* are notes, comments, personal reflections on the text transmitted in a manuscript. These notes could be used by the author later on and become "text" themselves. The typology of intervention that I will discuss in these pages does not fall into the category of commentary and does not produce "new texts". The interventions I will examine do not arise from literary intentions, but are instead the outcome of various actions and interactions with the transmitted text. They may be the result of collation, indexing or simple reading. These dif-

ferent actions interact with the text in different ways and, as we shall see in the following pages, leave distinctive marks.[1]

1 Textual Intervention (*Correctio* and *Emendatio*)

Silvia Rizzo distinguishes three different types of textual intervention in Renaissance manuscripts. The first is the revision of a work by the author himself or by others, with the aim of improving the text or correcting errors. The second is the revision of the copy after transcription, by comparing it with its model. The third type is a much broader activity. It is not concerned with checking the accuracy of a particular copy or its fidelity to the model, but with reconstructing as far as possible the author's original text, freeing it from errors and omissions.[2]

There are several distinctive signs that indicate textual intervention in Renaissance manuscripts. The most common, used to indicate an insertion in the text, is the caret (Λ) (or capital lambda, or inverted "v"). Its origin is ancient (it appears in both Latin and Greek manuscripts)[3] and it is still one of the basic signs of typography. Other signs are the triad of dots ∴ (in mathematics: "therefore sign"), the obelus with a superscript dot ÷ ("dot minus") or, more commonly, with a subscript dot.

The choice of one sign over another is often the result of the scribal training of the reader; at the same time, a sign can have different meanings, with the exception of the caret (Λ), the use of which as insertion mark is unambiguous. The symbol of supplementation written in the margin is usually keyed into the text with the same symbol. Their presence indicates that the manuscript has been revised, either by the author himself or by one or more readers.

The work *De fato et fortuna* of the Florentine chancellor Coluccio Salutati (1331–1406) includes a famous passage on *collatio* ('collation'):

> qui libros diligentissima collatione revideant et omnem varietatum discordiam recte diffinitionis iudicio noverint removere (II, 6). (to revise books with the most careful collation and

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1 *Marginalia* have been the subject of my research for many years. The invitation of Mario Meliadò, whom I thank, to the Siegen conference was an opportunity to focus and share the initial results of my research on the reader's marks. I would like to thank Elissa Weaver for reading a version of this text, and Michael D. Reeve for his reading, suggestions, and improvements.
2 Silvia Rizzo, *Il lessico filologico degli umanisti*, Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1984, 243–245.
3 For example, in Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana (hereafter: Laur.), Plut. 59.9 (Demosthenes, tenth century). All the manuscripts preserved in the Plutei are available in digital form.

know how to remove all discord among the variations by the judgement of correct defini-tion).[4]

There are fifteen known witnesses to *De fato et fortuna*, and in two of them there are authorial interventions.[5] Vat. lat. 2928 has been identified with the manuscript that Salutati had made for Tommaso della Spina, *magister registri supplicationum* in the Roman Curia.[6] It contains numerous notes (especially short summaries) by a sixteenth-century hand, probably from Bembo's scholarly circle in Rome, but not many textual interventions. The first, on fol. 1v, is preceded by the obelus with an over-written dot (÷), keyed in to the text with the repetition of the same sign as well as a Λ placed under the line (see Figure 1):
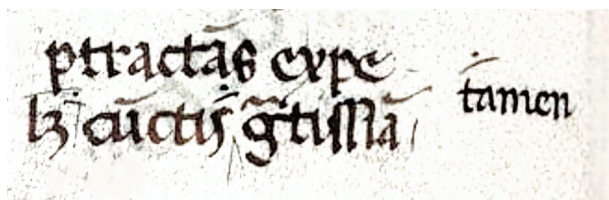

Figure 1: Salutati's interventions in Vat. lat. 2928, fol. 1v.

Text: l(icet) cu(n)ctis [÷ / Λ] g(ra)tissi(m)a   *in the margin*: ÷ tamen

"licet cunctis tamen gratissima"

A long addition at fol. 11r is marked by the same symbols.

By using distinctive signs, the author ensures the visibility of his interventions. Furthermore, the use of a sign or symbol whose meaning is well known to the reader or to the copyist is a guarantee of the authenticity of the intervention.

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4 Coluccio Salutati, *De fato et fortuna*, Concetta Bianca (ed.), Florence: Olschki, 1985.

5 Salutati, *De fato et fortuna*, LXXXI–CXXX.

6 The manuscript is digitised: <https://digi.vatlib.it/search?k_f=0&k_v=vat.lat.2928>, accessed 1 March 2024. On the manuscript, see Michelangiola Marchiaro, Il "De fato et fortuna" con correzioni d'autore, in: *Coluccio Salutati e l'invenzione dell'Umanesimo*, Teresa De Robertis, Giuliano Tanturli, and Stefano Zamponi (eds.), Florence: Mandragora, 2008, 146–147. The second manuscript, Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, lat. VI, 109 (2852), belonged to Pietro da Montagnana (d. 1478), professor of grammar in Padua.

Although Poggio's handwriting is one of the most studied of the Quattrocento, there are still aspects that require further investigation.[7] At least eighteen manuscripts are known to have been written by him, dating from the period between 1400 and 1425.[8] Some are dated or can be dated with reasonable certainty: Laur., Strozzi 96 (1402 or 1403); Berlin, Hamilton 166 (1408); Vat. lat. 11458 (1417); Laur., Plut. 48.22 (1425); Laur., Plut. 50.31 (1425); Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ricc. 499 (c. 1425). Poggio's handwriting is characterised by a remarkable morphological evolution, which is not surprising for the "inventor" of the new script. According to Albinia de la Mare, Laur., San Marco 635 is "one of Poggio's earliest" manuscripts, dated around 1400 "or even earlier".[9] It includes *Contra Academicos* and other works of Saint Augustine. As the space for the title has been left blank, all the texts, except the first one, are anepigraphic. The space intended for decoration is also left blank. The handwriting is "experimental", not in the form of the individual letters, but in its breadth and overall appearance.

In the twelfth-century Vatican manuscript Barb. lat. 65, Marco Cursi discovered a copy of the *Ars poetica* in the hand of Poggio (fols. 86r–92r).[10] In this fragment, some variants are marked by two dots in the text and in the margin. The same sign is also found in other Poggio manuscripts.

Vat. lat. 11458, identified by Augusto Campana in the 1950s, contains the copy of the eight orations of Cicero discovered by Poggio in 1417.[11] The text was written,

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7 For studies of Poggio's handwriting, see Berthold Louis Ullman, *The Origin and Development of Humanistic Script*, Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1960, 21–57; Arthur John Dunston, The Hand of Poggio, *Scriptorium* 19 (1965): 63–70; Albinia Catherine de la Mare and Douglas Ferguson Scott Thomson, Poggio's Earliest Manuscript? *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 16 (1973): 179–195; Albinia Catherine de la Mare, *The Handwriting of Italian Humanists*, vol. 1, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973, 62–84; Albinia Catherine de la Mare, Humanistic Script: The First Ten Years, in: *Das Verhältnis der Humanisten zum Buch*, Fritz Krafft and Dieter Wuttke (eds.), 89–108, Bonn: Boldt, 1977; Teresa De Robertis, I percorsi dell'imitazione: Esperimenti di "littera antiqua" in codici fiorentini del primo Quattrocento, in: *I luoghi dello scrivere da Francesco Petrarca agli albori dell'età moderna*, Caterina Tristano, Marta Calleri, and Leonardo Magionami (eds.), 109–134, Spoleto: Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 2006, 126–127 and 133–134.
8 They are now listed in Giovanna Murano, *Florentine Humanistic Manuscripts: Revised and Enlarged List from Albinia C. de la Mare, "New Research" (1985)*, Florence: Olschki, 2024.
9 De la Mare, *Humanistic Script*, 94; De Robertis, *I percorsi dell'imitazione*, 69, note 33 (1400–1403).
10 Marco Cursi, Un nuovo manoscritto autografo di Poggio Bracciolini, in: *Per Enzo: Studi in memoria di Vincenzo Matera*, Lidia Capo and Antonio Ciaralli (eds.), 77–86, Florence: Firenze University Press, 2015: <https://books.fupress.com/catalogue/per-enzo-studi-in-memoria-di-vincenzo-matera/3087>, accessed 1 March 2024.
11 Augusto Campana, La copia autografa delle otto orazioni ciceroniane scoperte da Poggio nel 1417, *Ciceroniana: Rivista di studi ciceroniani* 1 (1973): 65–68; see also Silvia Rizzo, Per una tipologia delle tradizioni manoscritte di classici latini in età umanistica, in: *Formative Stages of Classical*
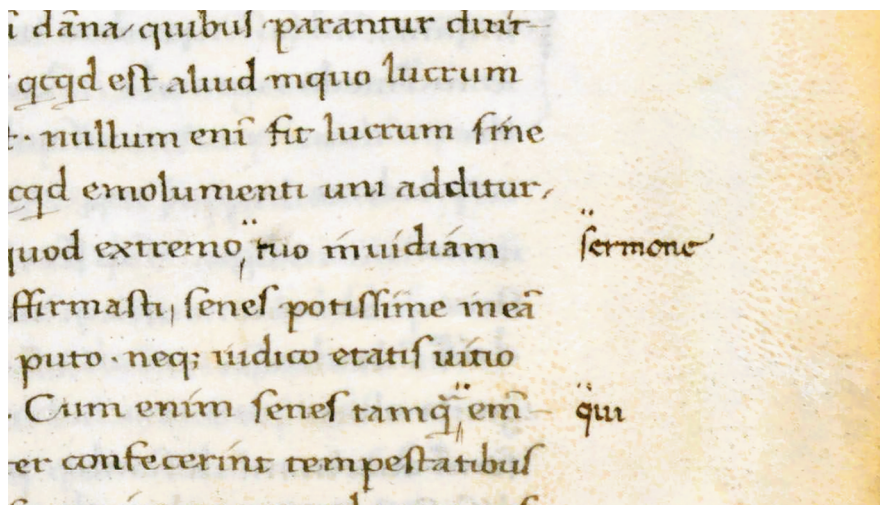
Figure 2: Poggio's interventions in Laur., Plut. 47.19, fol. 14r.

revised and corrected by Poggio, and the margins provide valuable evidence of his philological activity.[12] The first intervention marked by two dots is in the second line of the text (between "constitutas" and "potest") and in the corresponding margin, but it is followed by a textual variant that was later erased.

Laur., Plut. 47.19 contains Poggio's speeches and corresponds to volume no. 85 in the inventory of his possessions drawn up after his death.[13] The manuscript was copied by two scribes in his service, but the corrections were by Poggio himself. Some are only in the text (e.g. "ex" inserted between "agmen" and "infimo", fol. 3v, or "meliores" corrected to "nobiliores", fol. 40r), while others are in the margins, usually marked by Poggio with two dots (see Figure 2).

Urb. lat. 309 is identifiable as no. 26 in the inventory of Poggio's library.[14] The history of this manuscript is intertwined with that of the text it contains. Poggio received a copy of Gellius from Niccoli in October 1428 (Florence, Bibl. Naz., Conv.

Traditions: Latin Texts from Antiquity to the Renaissance: Proceedings of a Conference Held at Erice, 16–22 October 1993, Oronzo Pecere and Michael David Reeve (eds.), 371–407, Spoleto: Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 1995, 380 and 394.

12 The manuscript is digitised: <https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.11458>, accessed 1 March 2024.
13 Ernst Walser, *Poggius Florentinus: Leben und Werke*, Leipzig: Teubner, 1914, 423, note 85: "De avaritia, de nobilitate, de infelicitate principum, an (seni) sit uxor ducenda, Contra ypotricas (!), in uno volumine".
14 Walser, *Poggius Florentinus*, 420: "Agellius in pergameno copertum corio rubeo".
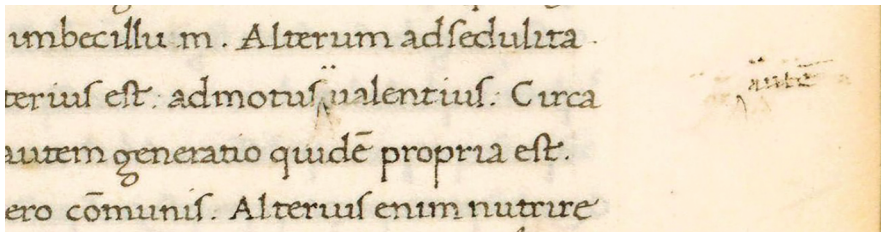
Figure 3: Bruni's interventions in Laur., Plut. 79.19, fol. 5r.

Soppr. J IV 26?), and the transcription was made between December 1428 and 3 April 1429, but by one of Poggio's scribes, unfortunately still anonymous, whom Albinia de la Mare calls his "good French scribe".[15] The manuscript was then carefully corrected by Poggio.[16] The *Graeca* originally omitted from the text were marked by the copyist with the letter "G". Poggio is credited with copying them, and the attribution seems to be confirmed by the presence, in most cases, of the usual two dots noted in the text and before the addition.

The use of two dots is not an innovation of Poggio. It also appears in twelfth-century manuscripts, such as Conv. Soppr. J II 25, which contains treatises by Bernard of Clairvaux and belonged to Niccoli. The correct reading and two dots appear on various pages (fols. 9rb, 19rb, 23rb, etc.). Like other innovations introduced into humanist manuscripts, the recovery of the symbol was probably due to Niccoli and was later adopted by other members of the Florentine literary circle.

In Laur., Plut. 79.19, a dedicatory copy of Ps.-Aristotle's *Economics* written by Antonio di Mario in 1420, James Hankins identified the humanist hand of Leonardo Bruni (1370–1444).[17] In the first correction at fol. 5r Bruni associates the Λ with two

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15 Albinia Catherine de la Mare, A Livy Copied by Giacomo Curlo Dismembered by Otto Ege, in: *Interpreting and Collecting Fragments of Medieval Books*, Linda L. Brownrigg and Margaret M. Smith (eds.), 57–88, Los Altos Hills: Anderson-Lovelace Publishers; London: The Red Gull Press, 2000, 63, note 30. In the same note, De la Mare listed all the manuscripts that could be traced back to the hand of this interesting copyist. The Urb. lat. 309 is digitised: <https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Urb.lat.309>, accessed 1 March 2024.

16 Silvia Rizzo, Gli umanisti, i testi classici e le scritture maiuscole, in: *Il libro e il testo: Urbino, 20–23 settembre 1982*, Cesare Questa and Renato Raffaelli (eds.), 225–241, Urbino: Università degli studi di Urbino, 1984, 239–241.

17 James Hankins, *Plato in the Italian Renaissance*, vol. 1, Leiden: Brill, 1990, 376; James Hankins, *Repertorium Brunianum: A Critical Guide to the Writing of Leonardo Bruni: Handlist of Manuscripts*, vol. 1, Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo, 1997, 44, note 556 (pl. 6). The manuscript is digitised: <https://tecabml.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/plutei/id/959229/rec/1>, accessed 1 March 2024.
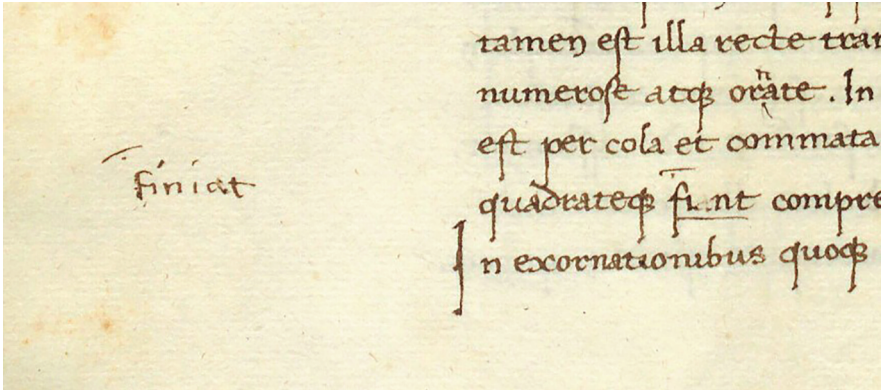
Figure 4: Bruni's interventions in Ricc. 1030, fol. 175v.

overwritten dots and uses the same combination in the text and in the margin (see Figure 3), but in the marginal supplement at fol. 10v he only uses two overwritten dots.

Paolo Viti discovered a copy of Bruni's *De interpretatione recta* (fols. 173r–183r) corrected by the author in Ricc. 1030.[18] The copyist seems to be the notary Niccolò Berti Martini de' Gentiluzzi of San Gimignano (c. 1389–1468). He was one of his collaborators. Bruni's first intervention is the addition to the title of the name of the dedicatee, "ad bertu(m) sene(n)sem". On fol. 175v he intervenes three times. First, he corrects "transfert" to "transferet", emphasising the supplement with the Λ; then he corrects "orate" to "orante", again using a Λ to indicate the added letter. In both cases, Bruni fails to indicate the correction in the margin.[19] Finally, the third correction concerns "fiant", which is corrected to "finiat". In this case, he highlights the intervention in the text and in the margin with an obelus (see Figure 4).

What emerges from Bruni's sporadic textual interventions so far is a general lack of systematicity and coherence. But his handwriting also raises doubts. After various and contradictory hypotheses, the hand of Bruni was identified by Claudio Griggio and Paolo Viti, and its peculiarities shed light on his use of amanuenses and secretaries for writing works of his own and texts related to the offices he held.[20]

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18 Paolo Viti, Un nuovo codice con postille di Leonardo Bruni, *Lettere italiane* 36 (1994): 420–424. The manuscript is digitised.

19 These first two corrections on fol. 175v are not reported by Viti, *Un nuovo codice*, 423.

20 Claudio Griggio, Due lettere inedite del Bruni al Salutati e a Francesco Barbaro, *Rinascimento*, 2nd series, 26 (1986): 27–50; Paolo Viti, Inediti e autografi di Leonardo Bruni: le lettere pubbliche del primo cancellierato fiorentino (1411), *Archivio Storico Italiano* 147 (1989): 3–29; Paolo Viti, Epistola-

The investigation of the hand of Bruni began with an additional subscription in Laur., Strozzi 44, fol. 104v (previously noted by Remigio Sabbadini) and the note of ownership on Paris, BnF, lat. 6798, fol. 182v (previously reported by Berthold Ullman). On 7 October 1407, Bruni from Siena asked Niccoli to copy Cicero's orations against Verres in full.[21] The manuscript is the result of transcription by at least eight copyists.[22] On fol. 104v, at the end of the text, there is an inscription that a later hand, from the second half of the fifteenth century, attributes to the hand of Bruni ("manus Leonardi Arretini"). The subscription raised doubts as to its authorship due to the "obvious uncertainties in the formulation of the period, which are rather surprising if they come from Bruni's pen".[23]

Bruni's handwriting maintains constant characteristics but appears disorganised in its graphic forms and spaces. It lacks fluency and appears insecure, at times even shaky and unstable, often within the same word. The writing in question seems to have been produced by someone with dysgraphia. This disorder may also be indicated by the anomalies previously noted by Griggio in Strozzi 44 and by Paolo Viti.[24] Another possible symptom is the "oversight" identified by Alessandro Daneloni in Laur., Plut. 49.18, fol. 115r, where Bruni mistakenly wrote "actionem" instead of "auctionem".[25] Dysgraphia would also explain why the corrections made to Bruni's own texts, as well as those of others, were severely limited, generally not going beyond a single word or letter.[26]

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rio e grafia di Leonardo Bruni: indagine preliminare, in: *Per il censimento dei codici dell'epistolario di Leonardo Bruni*, Lucia Gualdo Rosa and Paolo Viti (eds.), 169–178, Rome: Nella sede dell'Istituto Palazzo Borromini, 1991; Paolo Viti, Preliminari per uno studio sulla grafia di Leonardo Bruni, in: *Leonardo Bruni e Firenze: Studi sulle lettere pubbliche e private*, Paolo Viti (ed.), 223–253, Rome: Bulzoni Editore, 1992; Paolo Viti, Un'antologia di opere di Leonardo Bruni: il manoscritto Laurenziano 52.5, *Rinascimento*, 2nd series, 33 (1993): 157–162.

21 For a detailed examination of the manuscript and its history, see Michael David Reeve, The Medieval Tradition of Cicero's "Verrines", *Exemplaria classica: Journal of Classical Philology* 20 (2016): 19–90, at 50–52.

22 Griggio, *Due lettere inedite*, 37–38.

23 Griggio, *Due lettere inedite*, 39.

24 Viti, *Preliminari*, 266.

25 Alessandro Daneloni, La seconda raccolta di epistole di Cicerone inviata da Milano nel 1393 (Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Pluteo 49.18), in: *Coluccio Salutati e l'invenzione dell'Umanesimo*, Teresa De Robertis, Giuliano Tanturli, and Stefano Zamponi (eds.), 255–258, Florence: Mandragora, 2008.

26 The examples that have been found are mostly in dedication copies and in manuscripts that Bruni read or owned; see James Hankins, Leonardo Bruni (Arezzo 1370–Firenze 1444), in: *Autografi dei letterati italiani: Il Quattrocento*, vol. 1, Francesco Bausi, Maurizio Campanelli, Sebastiano Gentile, and James Hankins (eds.), 83–99, Rome: Salerno, 2014.

In Strozzi 44 there are sporadic interventions in Bruni's hand, but a second hand predominates in number and extent. This hand, belonging to Ambrogio Traversari, corrects spellings and abbreviations and adds subscriptions at the end of each book. Traversari aimed to correct the text, but according to Bruni, he corrupted it. The relationship between the two was anything but cordial. Traversari is not included in Bruni's list of correspondents, and he attacks Traversari in the *Oratio in hypocritas* (1417) and in two letters. In one, addressed to Poggio, he defines Traversari as "levissimus quidam homo, professione hypocrita, patria sodomites".[27]

Because of arthritis, as Hankins suggests (but arthritis does not explain spelling mistakes), because of motor difficulties, or rather because of dysgraphia, Bruni did not write his own texts and letters but dictated them to amanuenses and secretaries (a practice not unusual even in the fifteenth century).

Before turning to other humanists, I would like to focus briefly on Laur., Plut. 49.18. This manuscript on paper, was copied in Milan in 1393 by seven notaries and collaborators of Pasquino Capelli, who was the chancellor of Gian Galeazzo Visconti. Philologists have called this manuscript M, and it is one of the most important witnesses of the collection of Cicero's *Epistles* that it contains.[28] It was in the hands of a number of fifteenth-century Italian writers and philologists, and the margins bear witness to their assiduous work of emendation, correction, interpretation, and reading. Thanks to the identification of the hands that have intervened in the text and margins, its history is undoubtedly clearer today than it was a few decades ago. It belonged to Coluccio Salutati and was in the hand of Niccoli, who corrected some readings (two dots precede the corrections) and recorded variants indicated by *ał.* or *vel* and two dots. Niccoli also added the current titles, which mark the beginning of the sixteen books of *ad Atticum*. The text contains misspelled quotations in Greek, and Salutati entrusted Manuel Crisolora with the task of correcting and restoring the Greek passages. After Salutati's death, Bruni bought the manuscript. Unlike Niccoli, he did not use a different manuscript for the collation and his interventions are conjectural. Later it passed into the hands of Donato Acciaiuoli (1429–1478). However, his *notabilia* are of a different type from those of Niccoli and Bruni.

Antonio Beccadelli Il Panormita (1394–1471) is the author of the collection of epigrams *The Hermaphrodite*. The work is dedicated to Cosimo de' Medici in Laur., Plut. 34.54 pt. 1 (fols. 1–34). This manuscript was completed in Bologna in 1425 and

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27 Viti, *Bruni e Firenze*, 332–333. On Bruni and Traversari's difficult relationship, see Lucia Gualdo Rosa, Leonardo Bruni: L'"Oratio in hypocritas" e i suoi difficili rapporti con Ambrogio Traversari, *Vita monastica* 41 (1987): 89–111.

28 For an excellent description of the manuscript and its *marginalia*, see Daneloni, *La seconda raccolta di epistole di Cicerone*, 255–259.

was probably sent to Cosimo in either 1426 or 1427, when Panormita was in Florence. Copied in a fine early humanist hand, identifiable as that of Giacomo Curlo of Genoa, it bears no authorial intervention.[29] Vat. lat. 3371 is a copy on paper of three canonical collections of Beccadelli's letters (*Ep. Familiares, Ep. Campanae* and *Quintum epistolarum volumen*).[30] This manuscript is in the author's handwriting, as is also indicated by a note on the inside of the front cover.[31] For his corrections and interventions, Panormita uses different signs. On fol. 2ra he employs two dots (both in the text and in the margin). On fol. 5va two small bars are used. On fol. 23rb, he introduces extensive supplementation in darker ink using a symbol consisting of two vertical bars crossed by a horizontal line, which is repeated in the text. The vine-stem initial on fol. 2r indicates that this copy was probably intended as a gift, but it was never sent and remained on the writer's desk. Finally, it appears to have been used in a printing press, possibly for the *editio princeps*, as evidenced by the traces of ink in the margins.

Francesco Griffolini (ca. 1420–1490) from Arezzo translated numerous works, including the collection of *Epistles* of the Pseudo Phalaris, which had a wide circulation. At the request of the Bishop of Arras, Jean Jouffroy, he also translated the *Homilies* of John Chrysostom on the first letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians. He then wrote in his own hand the dedication copy, which is currently Vat. lat. 392.[32] It bears annotations written by Jean Jouffroy and his coat of arms accompanied by a cartouche with the inscription ".IO FRE".[33] Griffolini's handwriting is not elegant and cannot be compared to that of other Renaissance writers. On the first page, after a few lines, a textual addition, introduced in the space between the lines, is marked by Λ. In the margins there is another sign that requires attention. It is a tiny comma, a curved hyphen; in some cases it is doubled. This sign has ancient origins

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29 Albinia Catherine de la Mare, Cosimo and His Books, in: *Cosimo "il Vecchio" de' Medici, 1389–1464: Essays in Commemoration of the 600th Anniversary of Cosimo de' Medici's Birth*, Francis Ames-Lewis (ed.), 115–156, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992, 145, note 32.

30 The manuscript is digitised: <https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.3371>, accessed 1 March 2024.

31 "Liber Bibliothecae Fulvi Ursini. Scriptus manu Antoni Panhormitae". See also Donatella Coppini, Antonio Panormita (Antonio Beccadelli) (Palermo 1394–Napoli 1471), in: *Autografi dei letterati italiani: Il Quattrocento*, vol. 1, Francesco Bausi, Maurizio Campanelli, Sebastiano Gentile, and James Hankins (eds.), 277–293, Rome: Salerno, 2014, 280, note 3.

32 It is digitised: <https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.392>, accessed 1 March 2024.

33 On the library of Jouffroy, see also Angela Lanconelli, La biblioteca romana di Jean Jouffroy, in: *Scrittura, biblioteche e stampa a Roma nel Quattrocento: Aspetti e problemi: Atti del Seminario 1–2 giugno 1979*, Concetta Bianca, Paola Farenga, Giuseppe Lombardi, Antonio G. Luciani, and Massimo Miglio (eds.), 275–294, Vatican City: Scuola Vaticana di Paleografia, Diplomatica e Archivistica, 1980 and Matthieu Desachy, *Deux bibliophiles humanistes: Bibliothèques et manuscrits de Jean Jouffroy et d'Hélion Jouffroy*, Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2012.

and indicates the presence of a biblical quotation. Originally, it had the shape of a double "s", and it would be revived by the first printers to indicate quotation marks.[34]

Cristoforo Landino (1425–1498) frequently used the lemniscus (a vertical bar between two dots), as evidenced by the manuscript Ricc. 501 (Cicero, *Epistulae ad familiares*), which is entirely in his hand.[35]

Two manuscripts of *Roma instaurata* by Flavio Biondo bear the author's coat of arms and are considered to be his "personal copies".[36] In Reg. lat. 827 there are a few interventions by a hand other than the copyist preceded by Λ and dots (fols. 5r, 6v, 9r, 46r). Given the origin of the manuscript, it is plausible to assume that the interventions were made by the author.

Vat. lat. 5984 is an apograph of the *Commentationes in Ptolomaeum* by Giovanni Pontano (1429–1503).[37] Fol. IIv reads: "Commentationes in Ptolemaum bona manu scriptae, cum emendationibus passim Pontani ipsius manu scriptis" ('Well-written commentaries on Ptolemy, with corrections made in part by Pontano himself'). Despite the content, a full-page layout was used, but the copyist adopted two different scripts, a broad gothic for Ptolemy's text and a humanistic script for the commentary. Not satisfied with this, he added the words "textus" and "commentum" at the beginning of each section. The manuscript was corrected several times before it was used for printing. Some interventions are confined to the text and are not referred to in the margins, e.g. on fol. 1r, l. 3 "possent" has been corrected to "possunt" and the correction is highlighted with two dots below the erroneous letter; on fol. 6v, "consultationes" is inserted between the lines, emphasised by two Λ (see Figure 5). Other, more extensive additions are written in the margins marked

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34 Patrick McGurk, Citation Marks in Early Latin Manuscripts (with a List of Citation Marks in Manuscripts Earlier than A.D. 800 in English and Irish Libraries), *Scriptorium* 15 (1961): 3–13, pl. 1–4; Arrigo Castellani, Le virgolette di Aldo Manuzio, *Studi linguistici italiani* 22 (1996): 106–109; Malcolm Beckwith Parkes, *Pause and Effect: An Introduction to the History of Punctuation in the West*, Aldershot: Routledge, 1992, 57–59; Giordano Castellani, Francesco Filelfo's "Orationes et Opuscula" (1483/1484): The First Example of Quotation Marks in Print? *Gutenberg Jahrbuch* (2008): 52–80.
35 Valerio Sanzotta, Cristoforo Landino (Firenze 1425–Borgo alla Collina [Arezzo] 1498), in: *Autografi dei letterati italiani: Il Quattrocento*, vol. 1, Francesco Bausi, Maurizio Campanelli, Sebastiano Gentile, and James Hankins (eds.), 221–235, Rome: Salerno, 2014, 226, note 16 and pl. 3. Ricc. 501 is available in digital format.
36 Fabio Della Schiava and Marc Laureys, La "Roma instaurata" di Biondo Flavio: Censimento dei manoscritti, *Aevum* 87 (2013): 643–665, at 645.
37 Michele Rinaldi, Giovanni Pontano (Cerreto di Spoleto [Perugia] 1429–Napoli 1503), in: *Autografi dei letterati italiani: Il Quattrocento*, vol. 1, Francesco Bausi, Maurizio Campanelli, Sebastiano Gentile, and James Hankins (eds.), 331–349, Rome: Salerno, 2014, 333, note 13 and pl. 1 (fol. 207v). The manuscript is now digitised: <https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.5984>, accessed 1 March 2024.
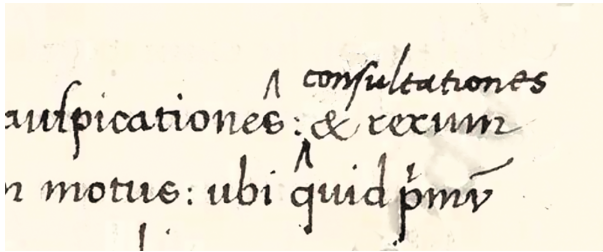
Figure 5: Pontano's interventions in Vat. lat. 5984, fol. 6v.

by various symbols (on fols. 7v, 8r, 15v, etc.) and also by instructions (e.g. "In fine capituli huius addatur").

Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499) used a wide range of symbols. The notebook and *codex unicus* Florence, Bibl. Naz., Magl. XX 58 with the unfinished *Disputatio contra iudicium astrologorum* was copied by Luca Fabiani and Sebastiano Salvini.[38] Ficino's additions are sometimes particularly long. They are preceded by Λ crowned by one or three circles or by an asterisk. Luca Fabiani also uses different symbols. Laur., Plut. 83.11 contains Ficino's *Platonic Theology*. Here Fabiani uses the Λ (fol. 9r) and the Λ with two dots (fol. 15r) and at the same time marks the marginal supplement with some more or less broad attention marks.

Before moving on to the indexes, one last example. Paris, BnF, ital. 823 is a copy of the Commentary of the *Life* of Giannozzo Manetti by Vespasiano da Bisticci.[39] It was written by "Sinibaldus C." (probably Ser Sinibaldo di Ser Sozzo Cacciaconti).[40]

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38 Sebastiano Gentile, Marsilio Ficino (Figline Valdarno [Firenze] 1433–Firenze 1499), in: *Autografi dei letterati italiani: Il Quattrocento*, vol. 1, Francesco Bausi, Maurizio Campanelli, Sebastiano Gentile, and James Hankins (eds.), 139–168, Rome: Salerno, 2014, 147, note 28; Murano, *Florentine Humanistic Manuscript*, 134.

39 On Vespasiano "author", see Riccardo Fubini and Wi-Seon Kim, Giannozzo Manetti nei resoconti biografici di Vespasiano da Bisticci, *Humanistica* 5 (2010): 35–49; Wi-Seon Kim, Vespasiano da Bisticci: un cartolaio dissenziente nella Firenze del Quattrocento, in: *Palaeography, Manuscripts Illumination and Humanism in Renaissance Italy: Studies in Memory of A. C. de la Mare*, Robert Black, Jill Kraye, and Laura Nuvoloni (eds.), 39–52, London: Warburg Institute, 2016; Vespasiano da Bisticci, *Commentario della vita di messere Giannozo Manetti*, Wi-Seon Kim (ed.), Florence: Edifir, 2019.

40 Albinia Catherine de la Mare, New Research on Humanistic Scribes in Florence, in: *Miniatura fiorentina del Rinascimento (1440–1525): Un primo censimento*, vol. 1, Annarosa Garzelli (ed.), 395–600, Scandicci: Giunta regionale Toscana; Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1985, 537, note 17; Murano, *Florentine Humanistic Manuscripts*, 197. De la Mare had no proof of this identification, but Lorenz Böninger found in the Cambini account books a payment from Vespasiano to Ser Sinibaldo di Ser Sozzo "per ischritura de l'abreviazione di Livio", see Lorenz Böninger, I molti mercati del libro: Vespasiano da Bisticci nei registri contabili della compagnia dei Cambini (1447–1480), *Medioevo*
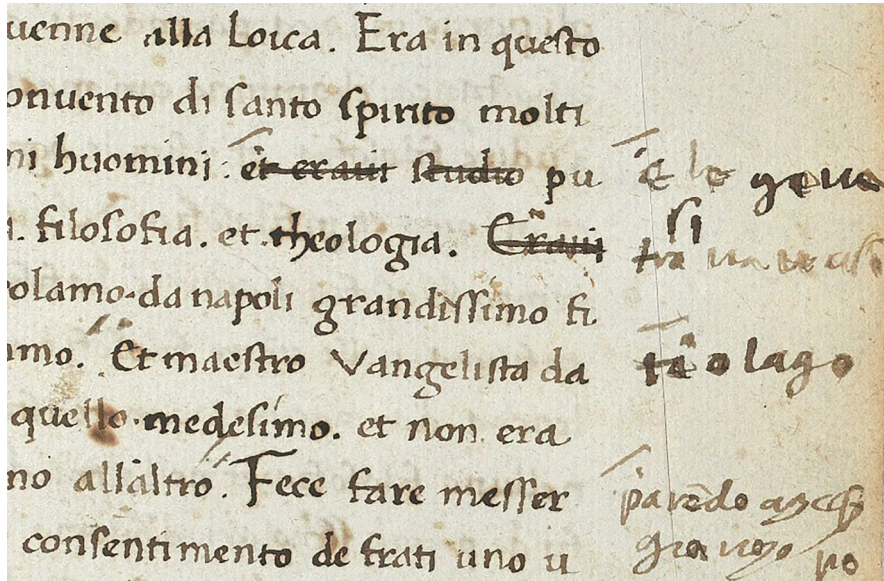
Figure 6: Vespasiano's interventions in Paris BnF, ital. 823, fol. 2r.

At fol. 2r there are insertions in the hand of Vespasiano da Bisticci (1422/23–1498), introduced by the obelus (see Figure 6). Other corrections are introduced by Λ.

In the Paris manuscript, Vespasiano intervenes as an author (not as librarian) and he therefore uses his usual rushed and inelegant handwriting. The copyists who worked for him produced luxury manuscripts for wealthy patrons, using the humanist script as a kind of "trademark". Vespasiano's handwriting would appear as a decidedly discordant note in the refined (and expensive) products of his workshop, which explains why his hand never appears.

2 *Index nominum et locorum* / Index of Names and Places

Humanists had the habit of creating indexes of names, places and noteworthy terms in the margins of manuscripts, and this section is devoted to these marginal notes.

In Laur., Plut. 49.18, which we have already encountered, Cicero's text has been indexed. This means that, while reading, names, places and short summaries were extracted from the text. The index notes written on the verso of the first folio are "Antonius Brutus", "Dolabella", "Plautus in Trinummo", "Senati", "Cesar puer". The index is mainly by the hand of Salutati, to whom the manuscript belonged, but there is also the hand of Donato Acciaiuoli. The purpose of the selection is clear. A proper name read in a text may be forgotten, but extracted and transcribed into the nominative case in the margin, it becomes a "memory image". Indexes are useful not only for memorising, but also for improving language skills. They can also be used to identify authors and works that have not yet come to light. In addition, the index can be used to find the exact "textual place" in the manuscript where a name is found.

Laur., Plut. 48.22 corresponds to no. 4 in the Poggio inventory.[41] It was written by Poggio in Rome in the last two months of 1425. Later, before 5 June 1428, he corrected the text from a ninth-century manuscript, now Basil. S. Petri H 25 (V), discovered in Germany in 1426 by Cardinal Giordano Orsini.[42] According to Silvia Rizzo, Poggio's collation did not aim to record all the differences between the two manuscripts, but only to improve his own copy. Even in Laur., Plut. 48.22 we can observe the reminder signs used by Poggio for the collation, such as two dots above the correct variant in the margin and a tiny Λ in the text, while the incorrect reading is expunged. However, to indicate the more extensive gaps, he uses different symbols. Additionally, an index created by Poggio himself can be found. Proper names are listed at the edge of the margin, while the index of noteworthy terms is placed in the centre. Indexed nouns are often highlighted with a half-height dot placed before and after the word (see Figure 7).[43] Finally, the manuscript contains a third type of attention mark in the margins, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

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41 Walser, *Poggius Florentinus*, 418, note 4: "Liber Filippicarum et orationum contra Catellinam (!) in pergamento copertum coreo rubeo".

42 Ullman, *The Origin*, 33; Rizzo, *Lessico filologico*, 327–338.

43 Giuseppina Magnaldi, Poggio Bracciolini e le Filippiche di Cicerone, *Revue d'Histoire des Textes* 32 (2002): 183–224, at 184.
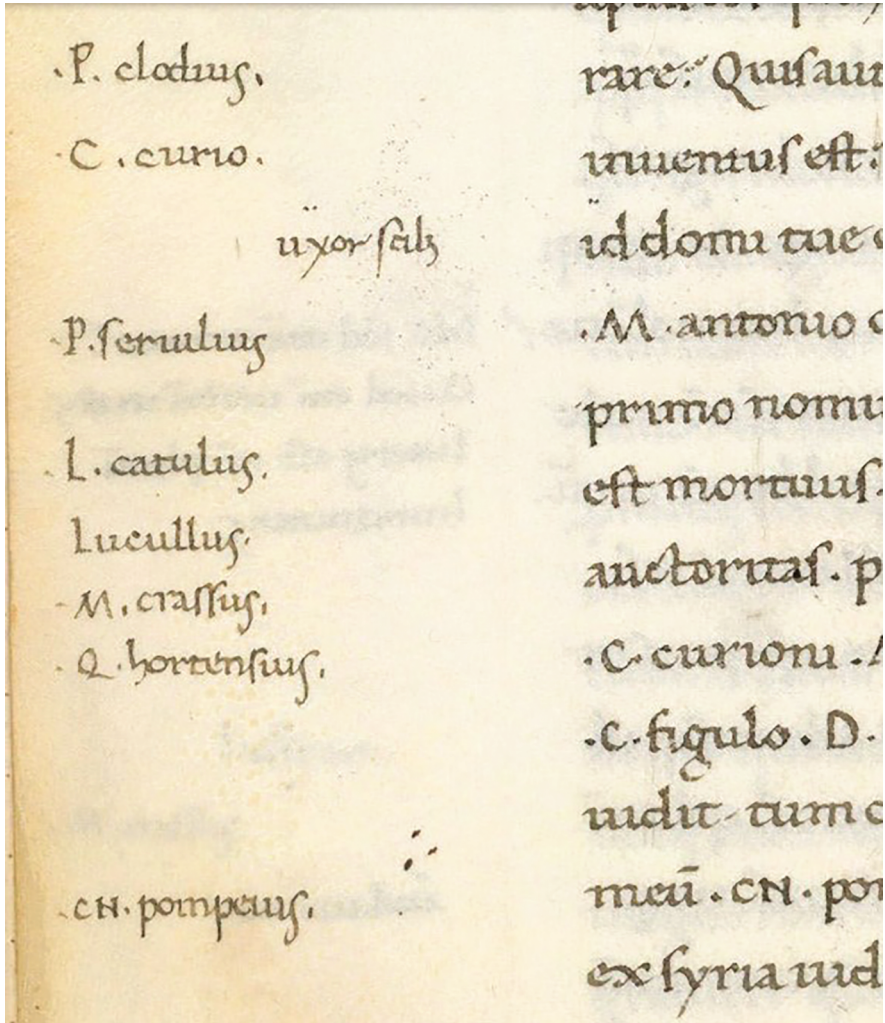
Figure 7: Poggio's marginal index and interventions in Laur., Plut. 48.22, fol. 9v.

Oxford, Bodl. Auct. T 1 27 and Paris, BnF, lat. 6798 are two parts of a manuscript of Pliny, *Natural History*, containing books vi to xv and xvi to xxxvii.[44] It was written in France in the twelfth century and after being partially supplemented in

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[44] Paris, BnF, lat. 6798 is digitised.

the fourteenth century, it was owned by Salutati.[45] After Salutati's death, Leonardo Bruni bought it. During this period, and before they ended their relationship in 1420, Niccoli carefully corrected it and inserted two small leaves (fol. 110bis–ter) to fill a gap in Bk. xxvii 12.[46] We have already seen that Bruni's interventions are rare, but the one on fol. 110v seems to be in his own hand. He writes "impet" in the margin to correct "inpet", but the corrected reading "petit" is recorded between the lines. After the death of Bruni, the manuscript was sold by his son to Panormita, who added a note of ownership and an *ex-libris* ("Nunc vero est Antonii Panhormitae, quem emi a Leonardi filio" and "Antonii Pahnormitae liber" at fol. 182v). The revision by Panormita seems to have been systematic, as evidenced by the numerous and sometimes very extensive interventions. After his death in Naples in 1471, the manuscript was transferred to the Aragonese library. Later it was acquired by Georges d'Amboise, archbishop of Rouen.[47] As in Laur., Plut. 49.18, so also in the margins and text of Paris, BnF, lat. 6798, the owners and other readers carried out a very intensive philological operation, resulting in a complex revision and the elaboration of a marginal index by several hands (see Figure 8).

Pal. lat. 1516, containing philosophical works of Cicero, is dated 10 May 1426 (fol. 114v). The decoration, probably by Bartolomeo Varnucci (b. 1410), includes what may be the earliest appearance of putti in a humanistic book. The *marginalia* that enrich this manuscript were written by the humanist Pietro da Montagnana (d. 1478), a parish priest who taught Latin grammar in Padua from at least 1423.[48] The interventions in Pal. lat. 1516 are of various types. In the text of the *Tusculanae* Montagnana fills in the *lacunae*, corrects erroneous words and adds or corrects punctuation. In the margins he wrote indexes and running headings. To these he adds quotations of parallel passages from Quintilian (fols. 3r, 4r), Virgil (fols. 23r, 154v, 159v), Servius (fols. 32r, 35r, 103r, 110r), Ovid (fol. 34v) and other, and *notabilia* and lexical notes, in which he also uses Greek (fol. 5r).[49]

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45 Berthold Louis Ullman, *The Humanism of Coluccio Salutati*, Padua: Editrice Antenore, 1963, note 100 (on the second); Richard William Hunt, A Manuscript from the Library of Coluccio Salutati, in: *Calligraphy and Palaeography: Essays Presented to Alfred Fairbank on his 70th Birthday*, Arthur Sidney Osley (ed.), 75–79, New York: October House, 1965 proved that the two volumes belonged to one set.

46 De la Mare, *The Handwriting*, 58, note 14.

47 François Lehoux, Un manuscrit des rois aragonais de Naples et des archevêques de Rouen, *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes* 101 (1940): 229–233; Michael David Reeve, *The Transmission of Pliny's "Natural History"*, Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2021, 112–114, 251, 328–329, 331, and 373.

48 De la Mare, *New Research*, 398, note 17; Murano, *Florentine Humanistic Manuscripts*, 35.

49 See, for instance, at fol. 8rb a note on *entelechia* (Gr. ἐντελέχεια).
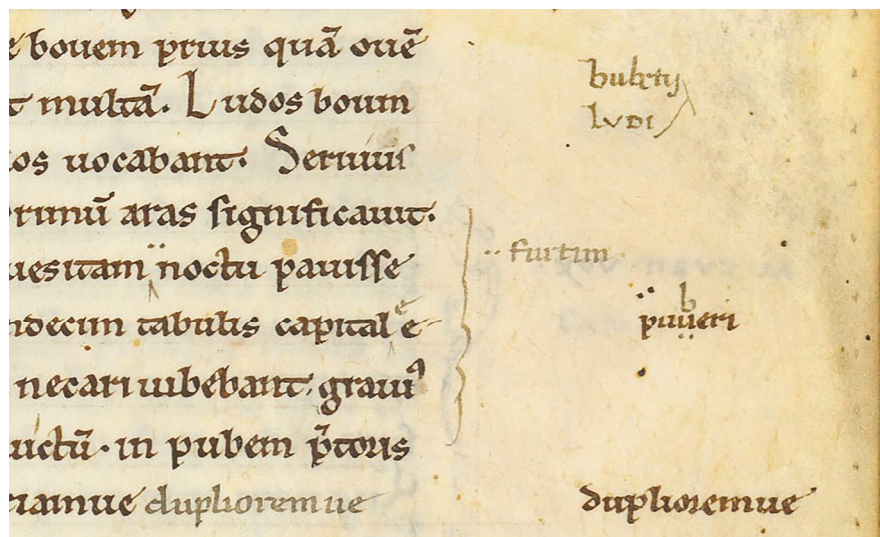
Figure 8: Interventions and marginal index in Paris, BnF, lat. 6798, fol. 23r.

Urb. lat. 508 is a dedicatory copy of the *Disputationes Camaldulenses*, probably in the hand of the scribe Gabriele da Pistoia.[50] This manuscript is known for the frontispiece by Francesco di Antonio del Chierico, which depicts Federico da Montefeltro holding a book and a second man, probably the author of the *Disputationes*, Cristoforo Landino. In this manuscript, not only names but also short summaries, "notable passages", have been transcribed in the margins. Red ink was used as a further aid to memory as these visual memory techniques help readers to retain information.

In some cases, indexes and running headings are included in the work and were therefore copied with it. Vat. lat. 1969 contains the *Chronicon* of Sozomeno, and text, indexes and running headings are in the same hand, that of the copyist Antonio di Mario.[51] To emphasise their presence, headings and abstracts are preceded by the paragraph sign.

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50 De la Mare, *New Research*, 496, note 3; Albinia Catherine de la Mare, Un "Marziale" corretto dal Poliziano, in: *Agnolo Poliziano poeta scrittore filologo: Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi: Montepulciano 3–6 novembre 1994*, Vincenzo Fera and Mario Martelli (eds.), 295–321, Florence: Le Lettere, 1998, 302, note 31; Murano, *Florentine Humanistic Manuscripts*, 50.

51 The manuscript is digitised: <https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.1969>, accessed 1 March 2024. The colophon reads: "Antonius Marii filius transcripsit Florentie IIII Idus Octoris [*sic*] MCCCCLVI [*12 October 1456*]. Valeas qui legis" (fol. 622v). Some corrections are by Sozomeno himself.

Budapest, University Library, Cod. Lat. 13 (Suetonius, *Vitae Caesarum*) was written by Ser Piero di Bernardo Cennini. It also includes a comprehensive index of names and summaries in red ink in the margins. Some variants, preceded by a triad of dots, are written in dark ink by the same scribe.[52]

Vat. lat. 3335 is an elegant manuscript of Suetonius from the library of Niccolò Perotti (1429/30–1480), curial official and secretary of Cardinal Bessarion.[53] In addition to the corrections and collations discussed in detail by Campanelli,[54] it bears a dense apparatus of marginal notes written in different inks (green, red, violet). These notes have been described as "marginal glosses",[55] but taken as a whole they are an index of names and contents, a kind of textual map of Suetonius' work.

Renaissance writers did not limit themselves to working on humanistic manuscripts. Occasionally, their handwriting can be found on much older manuscripts. Laur., Plut. 45.3, dating from the late tenth to early eleventh century, contains Servius's *Commentarii in Vergilium*. To distinguish Virgil's text from Servius's commentary, the scribe had used a symbol we have already seen: the double "s", the ancestor of the modern inverted comma. Salutati intervened in this manuscript at various times (as the variations in ink colour suggest). His entries are mainly indexes (names of persons, authors, places), but he also highlights and underlines Virgil's text. The underlining of the text changes the appearance of the manuscript and may have occurred before the index was created.

Laur., San Marco 554, from the eleventh century, contains the *Letters* of Sidonius. Before being used as a model, the manuscript was read and annotated by Giovanni Pico della Mirandola. Pico's interventions mainly consist of indices.[56]

Bartolomeo Fonzio's hand is found in the corrections of volumes written by others. According to Albinia de la Mare, he intervened in three different series of volumes of Livy, written by Giovanfrancesco Marzi for Francesco Sassetti (Laur., Plut. 63.7–9), by the same Marzi for Domenico de' Domenichi (Bologna, Bibl. Universitaria, 2233, 2241, and 2245) and by Pietro Strozzi for Janoz Vitéz (Munich, BSB,

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52 On the philological activity of this copyist and scholar, see Giovanna Murano, Ser Piero Cennini, copista ed editore, *La Bibliofilia* 123 (2021): 209–236.

53 The manuscript is digitised: <https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.3335>, accessed 1 March 2024.

54 Maurizio Campanelli, Nota sulle correzioni di Perotti a Suetonio nel Vat. lat. 3335, *Roma nel Rinascimento* (1996): 25–35.

55 Elisabeth Pellegrin, François Dolbeau, Jeannine Fohlen, Yves-François Riou, and Jean-Yves Tilliette, *Les manuscrits classiques latins de la Bibliothèque Vaticane: Fonds Vatican latin, 2901–14740*, vol. 3.2, Vatican City: Bibliothèque apostolique vaticane; Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2010, 271.

56 Michaelangiola Marchiaro, Un manoscritto di Sidonio Apollinaire postillato da Giovanni Pico della Mirandola e da Pietro Crinito, *Medioevo e Rinascimento*, new series, 20 (2009): 279–290.
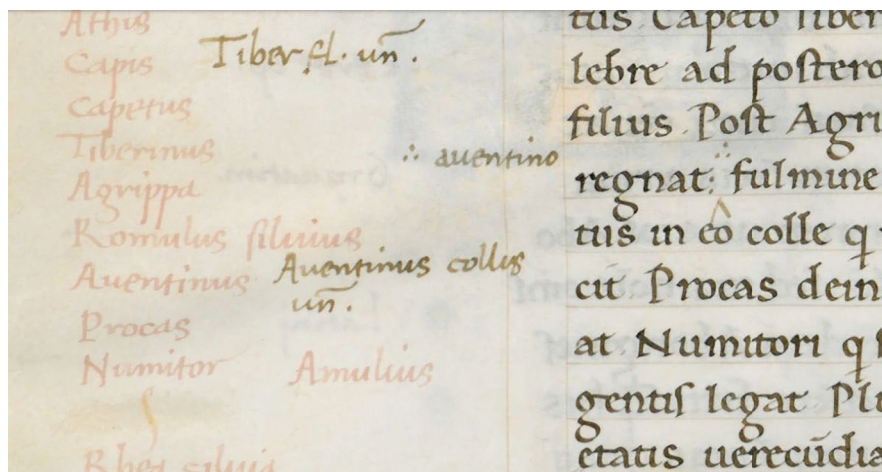
Figure 9: Marginal index and interventions in Laur., Plut. 63.7, fol. 2v.

Clm 15731–3).[57] The *notabilia*, in red ink, are essentially an index extrapolated from Livy's text, while the corrections, in dark ink close to that of the text, are preceded by the triad of dots with Λ. Subsequent interventions in different colours show the particular attention paid to the index (see Figure 9).

A printed edition sometimes reproduces an index already present in the autograph or idiograph. Urb. lat. 301 is the only manuscript, probably made between 1477 and 1480, in which Perotti's *Cornu copiae*, an edition of Martial accompanied by a commentary, has survived.[58] Written by a still anonymous copyist, it contains corrections and additions in Perotti's hand.[59]

The *editio princeps* of Perotti's *Cornu copiae* appeared in 1489, after the author died.[60] The entire content of the work was made accessible by two indexes: a five-column alphabetical index, inserted between the preface and the beginning of the text (a2ʳ–b8ᵛ) and a second one in the margins. To facilitate searching, the

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57 De la Mare, *New Research*, 488.

58 Marianne Pade, The Urbinas Latinus 301 and the Early Editions of Niccolò Perotti's "Cornu copiae", in: *Dal libro manoscritto al libro stampato*, Outi Merisalo and Caterina Tristano (eds.), 91–108 and pl. I–II, Spoleto: Fondazione CISAM, 2011. The manuscript is digitised: <https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Urb.lat.301>, accessed 1 March 2024.

59 To indicate an insertion, Perotti uses a symbol consisting of two vertical dots followed by two slashes, or a slash with a line on the top.

60 Nicolaus Perottus, *Cornucopiae linguae latinae*, Pyrrhus Perottus and Ludovicus Odaxius (eds.), Venetiae: Paganinus de Paganinis, 14 May 1489 (ISTC ip00288000).

volume is paginated in Arabic numerals in the centre of the upper margin. The marginal index reproduces that of Urb. lat. 301.

The *editio princeps* of Giovanni Pico's *Heptaplus* has large margins to accommodate an index of authors and works cited in the text, as well as brief summaries of the contents, e.g. "In Moseos genesi totius naturae esse mysteria"; "Doctissimus Moses omnium testimonio" (a2r).[61] In the witnesses that I have examined, there are corrections probably due to the editor, Roberto Salviati, or another member of Pico's circle. Corrections appear both in the text and in the marginal index, which means that the latter was considered to be an integral part of the work.[62] Eugenio Garin's edition omits indexes and abstracts.[63]

3 Memory Signs

In 1990, Regula Meyenberg and Gilbert Ouy coined the definition "notes signalétiques" to refer to signs that "ont en commun d'attirer l'attention en faisant ressortir un passage ou un vers précis par un signal. Celui-ci, placé en marge du texte, prend la forme d'un signe graphique non-verbal, d'un sigle ou d'un mot".[64] The use of the word "note" suggests a verbal form rather than a graphic sign, and in order to define non-verbal graphic signs made by an annotator while reading a text, I have adopted the definition "memory signs".

This category includes signs and drawings of various kinds such as *maniculae* (pointing hands), faces, notabene, curly brackets, etc. However, *maniculae* and faces are uncommon in humanist manuscripts, perhaps because they are considered a medieval legacy. Renaissance readers, on the other hand, sometimes used a sign resembling a stylised flower: a short wavy line representing the stem and two or three dots representing the petals. Meyenberg and Ouy called this sign

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61 Iohannes Picus de Mirandula, *Heptaplus de septiformi sex dierum Geneseos enarratione*, Robertus Salviati (ed.) [Florentiae: Bartolommeo de' Libri, not after 27 August 1489] (ISTC ip00641000). In a letter to Lorenzo de' Medici dated 27 August 1489, Pico mentions his work.
62 Giovanna Murano, Copisti e collaboratori di Giovanni Pico della Mirandola: prime indagini, *Miscellanea Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae* 28 (2023): 333–415, at 373.
63 Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *De hominis dignitate, Heptaplus, De ente et uno e scritti vari*, Eugenio Garin (ed.), Florentiae: Vallecchi, 1942.
64 Regula Meyenberg and Gilbert Ouy, Alain Chartier lecteur d'Ovide (Ms. Paris, B.N. lat. 8009), *Scrittura e civiltà* 14 (1990): 75–103, at 83. This definition has also been adopted by Adolfo Tura, Essai sur les "marginalia" en tant que pratique et documents, in: *Scientia in margine: Études sur les marginalia dans les manuscrits scientifiques du Moyen Âge à la Renaissance*, Danielle Jacquart and Charles S. F. Burnett (eds.), 261–380, Geneva: Droz, 2005.
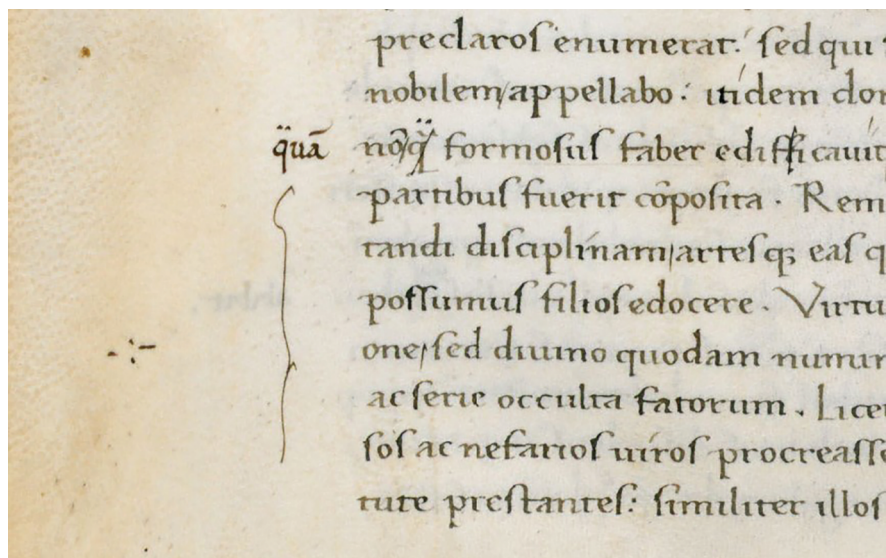
Figure 10: Poggio's memory signs and interventions in Plut. 47.19, fol. 37v.

"trèfle" ('trefoil') and they correctly pointed out that "l'usage et la diffusion de ce signe mériteraient une petite étude".[65] The memory sign is usually placed near the text that is considered particularly interesting. Occasionally it will be found by a passage quoted in one of the annotator's works, but it is also used to draw attention to a note or a brief comment.

Poggio's memory sign appears in many of his manuscripts. The text is highlighted by a thin, curved frieze with no distinctive features. In the margins, a stylised flower (or trefoil if we prefer the definition given by Meyenberg and Ouy) is drawn with a horizontal stem (see Figure 10).

On the first leaf of the aforementioned Laur., Plut. 49.18, in addition to indexes and textual interventions, two memory marks are visible. In the inner margin, there is a tiny, stylised trefoil; the second is a bracket with four small mountains (see Figure 11). These marks could have been made by the readers mentioned above, or by other Florentine humanists who have not yet been identified. Also in Paris, lat. 6798, there are memory marks, especially wavy brackets with small bumps and stylised flowers.

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65 Meyenberg and Ouy, *Alain Chartier lecteur d'Ovide,* 84 and note 11.
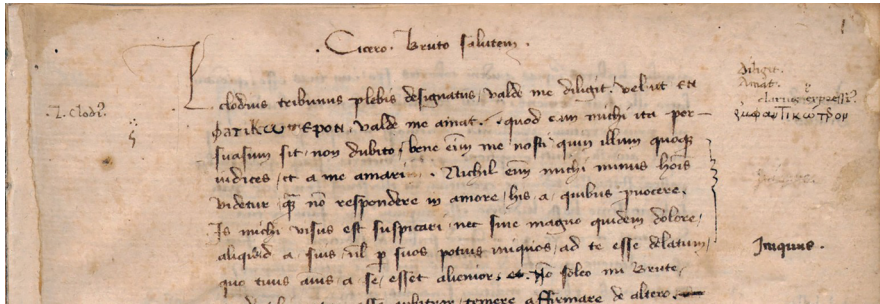
Figure 11: Memory signs in Laur., Plut. 49.18, fol. 1r.

The presence of notes next to the sign could be crucial, as it is the basis for identifying the annotator, but where more or less text is missing only the shape and graphics of the signs itself can help to identify the hand. Albinia de la Mare has described the signs used by the authors she studied, from Petrarch to Giorgio Antonio Vespucci.[66] Recently, these marks have been included in the analysis of Pietro Bembo's graphic profile,[67] however this element of the paragraphematic system has received little attention.

Isotta Nogarola (ca. 1418–1466) was one of the leading scholars of the European Renaissance. The first modern edition of her work was published in 1886, and much of this two-volume edition was translated into English and printed in 2004.[68] The first letter in her collection is addressed to Ermolao Barbaro and has a mention of Petronius at the beginning. Vat. Barb. lat. 4, an imperfect copy of the *Excerpta uulgaria* (or O-text), probably belonged to Isotta.[69] In the lower margin of the first folio there is her coat of arms, and in the Ferrarese style vine-stem border there

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66 De la Mare, *The Handwriting*.

67 See Fabio Massimo Bertolo, Marco Cursi, and Carlo Pulsoni, *Bembo ritrovato: Il postillato auto-grafo delle Prose*, Rome: Viella, 2018, 159–176.

68 Isotta Nogarola, *Opera quae supersunt omnia; accedunt Angelae et Zeneverae Nogarolae episto-lae et carmina, collegit Alexander Comes Apponyi*, vol. 2, Eugenius Abel (ed.), Vindobonae: Gerold et Socios, 1886. This edition is partly translated; see Isotta Nogarola, *Complete Writings: Letterbook, Dialogue on Adam and Eve, Orations*, Margaret L. King and Diana Robin (eds. and trans.), Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004.

69 Adriana Marucchi, Stemmi di possessori di manoscritti conservati nella Biblioteca Vaticana, in: *Mélanges Eugène Tisserant*, vol. 7, 29–95, Vatican City: Bibliothèque Vaticane, 1964, 30, note 1, pl. 2, note 7; Elisabeth Pellegrin, Jeannine Fohlen, Colette Jeudy, and Yves-François Riou, *Les manuscrits classiques latins de la Bibliothèque Vaticane: Fonds Archivio San Pietro à Ottoboni*, vol 1, Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1975, 61; Albinia Catherine de la Mare, The Return of Petronius to Italy, in: *Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays presented to Richard William Hunt,* Jonathan James Graham Alexander

is a sketch of what appears to be a woman's profile. According to De la Mare, the decoration dates from the third quarter of the fifteenth century, and the text seems to me to have been written at the same time. In her two letters of 1434 and 1438 to 1439, Isotta quotes part of *Sat.* 118.1, a passage included in the *Florilegium gallicum*, and she "may not have known the 'complete' Petronius at this time".[70] If the Vatican manuscript belonged to her, she may have acquired it in the last years of her life. It contains various notes and signs, such as *maniculae* (fols. 6r, 14v), and long brackets in red ink (fols. 6v, 7r, 15r) and in dark ink (fols. 20v, 21r), which suggest that Petronius' work was read with great attention. Attributing some of these entries to Isotta is difficult because of the lack of clear evidence for her hand. However, some additions are noteworthy. On folios 4v and 5r, different hands filled in some *lacunae*. One of the missing passages, added later, was the salacious encounter between Pannychis and Giton (*Sat.* 25). If the copy was specially made for Isotta, the omission may have been intentional rather than derived from the model.

Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494) did not usually mark his books with *ex-libris* or other owner's notes, and it was also for this reason that his library was long said to be lost. However, some of the manuscripts and printed books that he owned or read can be identified thanks to the memory or attention marks he left in the margins, his *postille*, or the shelf marks and *ex-libris* of the Venetian Cardinal Domenico Grimani, who bought his library in 1498.[71]

Pico began collecting books at a very young age. He read pen in hand and, like many other humanists, left written notes (*postille*) in the margins and a special sign, which he had used since his youth, to highlight relevant words, passages or names. A vertical wavy line, topped by two or often three dots, is the commonest of his marks. Pico received the magnificent parchment copy of the *Expositio in Somnium Scipionis* and of Macrobius' *Saturnalia*, printed in Venice in 1472, now in Trinity College Library, Cambridge, around 1473 when he became Apostolic Protonotary, and his coat of arms, depicted in the lower margin of the first folio, is wearing a clerical hat.[72] His mother, Giulia Boiardo, who wanted her youngest son

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and Margaret Templeton Gibson (eds.), 220–254, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976, 225. The manuscript is digitised: <https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Barb.lat.4>, accessed 1 March 2024.

70 De la Mare, *The Return of Petronius*, 225.

71 Giovanna Murano, Inspecting Inventories: Miscellanies and Composite Volumes in Pico's Library, in: *Collecting, Organizing and Transmitting Knowledge: Miscellanies in Late Medieval Europe*, Sabrina Corbellini, Giovanna Murano, and Giacomo Signore (eds.), 163–176, Turnhout: Brepols, 2018; Giovanna Murano, La biblioteca di Giovanni Pico della Mirandola: Un primo censimento, *Scriptorium* 72 (2018): 213–250.

72 Cambridge, Trinity College Library, Trin. VI.18.52: Macrobius, In Somnium Scipionis expositio [a4r]: Saturnalia [f5r], Venetiae: Nicolaus Jenson, 1472 (ISTC im00008000). The volume is digitised.
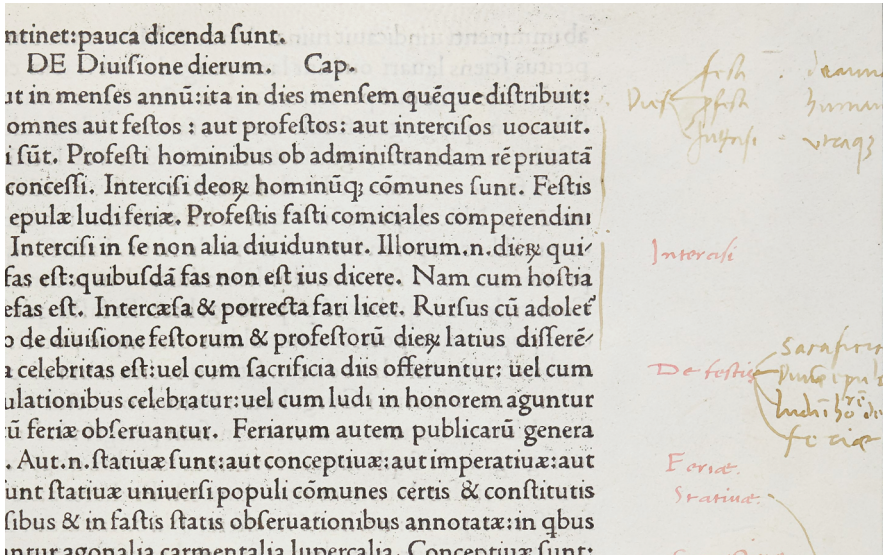
Figure 12: Pico's memory signs, index (in red) and *marginalia* in Cambridge, Trinity College, VI.18.52, fol. 68r.

to have an ecclesiastical career, had it illuminated by an artist known as the Master of the Pico Pliny.[73]

Pico must have been particularly attached to this book, as he returned to it time and again, as evidenced by the variations in the colour of the ink and his handwriting. In addition to some corrections (also in Greek), the volume has an index, in red ink, and some later memory marks (see Figure 12).

In 1600, the Macrobius was still kept in the library of Sant'Antonio di Castello in Venice. There is also a folio and vellum volume of Macrobius' work in the 1650 catalogue, but there is no indication whether or not this is the printed edition. Grimani's *ex-libris* on the front flyleaf of the Cambridge incunable has been erased but is still visible. Giovanni Pico must have read the volume as soon as he received it, as the firm but youthful hand of the notabilia shows. Apart from the notes in the Macrobius, there are very few examples of Pico's humanistic cursive. In Kassel, Universitätsbibliothek, 2° Ms. theol. 67, a copy of Maimonides' *Guide to the Perplexed*, Pico

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Giovanna Murano, Per la biblioteca di Giovanni Pico della Mirandola: Ricerche sugli incunaboli, *La Bibliofilia* 121 (2019): 5–45, at 8–11 and pl. 2–4.

73 Lilian Armstrong, *Studies of Renaissance Miniaturists in Venice*, vol. 1, London: Pindar Press, 2003, 214 and 317–318, note 15.
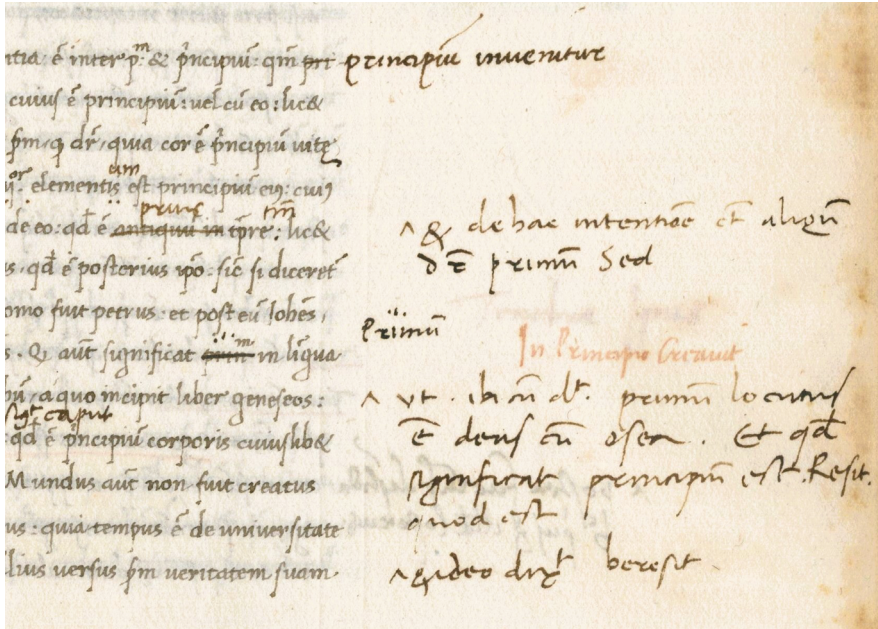
Figure 13: Pico's interventions in Kassel, Universitätsbibliothek, 2° Ms. theol. 67, fol. 140r.

personally revised the Latin translation, using both his elegant humanistic script and a minute cursive script (Figure 13).[74]

Although the Neapolitan *Destructio destructionum* by Averroes does not contain any mention of ownership, this manuscript certainly belonged to Pico, as evidenced by the numerous notes in his own hand and the memory marks placed in the margins. Its provenance from Pico's library cannot be doubted, since this rare work is listed in his inventories.[75]

74 Diana Di Segni, Note autografe di Giovanni Pico della Mirandola a un esemplare della "Guida dei perplessi", *Noctua* 7 (2020): 133–157; Diana Di Segni, Pico della Mirandola, Maimonides, and Magic, *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie médiévales* 87 (2020): 193–209; Giovanna Murano, La "Guida dei perplessi" di Maimonide nella biblioteca di Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale* 63, 2021 (2022): 365–382; Giovanna Murano, *La biblioteca arabo-ebraica di Giovanni Pico della Mirandola*, Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2022, 57 and 59–62.
75 Giovanna Murano, Il manoscritto della "Destructio destructionum" di Averroè appartenuto a Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (Napoli, Biblioteca Nazionale, VIII E 31), *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale* 60 (2018): 67–80.

Some manuscripts that certainly belonged to Pico's library bear no trace of his hand, such as the extraordinary Pliny Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, lat. VI, 245 (2976), written by "Nicolaus de Mascharinis de Ferraria ad instantiam M.ci Comitis Ioannis de la Mirandula Anno incarnationis domini nostri Iesu Christi M°CCCC°LXXXI die xvii Augusti" and illuminated by the same artist as the Macrobius.[76] Others that did not belong to him bear his annotation or *marginalia.* Paris, BnF, lat. 2598, owned by Pierleone da Spoleto, shows memory marks in Pico's hand in the margins of Pietro d'Abano's *Lucidator dubitabilium astronomiae.*[77] According to the poet Giovanni Antonio Flaminio (1464–1536), Pico owned a "vetusto" ('old') copy of Virgil.[78] This manuscript is not included in the two inventories. Instead of checking the verses as Flaminio requested, Pico may have lent him his Virgil and he may have kept it, "forgetting" to return it. If Pico's manuscript has survived, the memory marks and the postille he left in the margins could help to identify it.

In the Florentine literary context of the late fifteenth century, Girolamo Benivieni, Pierleone da Spoleto, Marsilio Ficino and others used the same sign as Pico, but some morphological differences indicate different hands.

In the 1481 edition of the Psalms by Johannes Crastonus, the text is presented in two columns, on the left the Septuagint version and, according to Cornelia Linde "on the right Crastonus's revision of the Latin text, based on a translation obviously made from the Septuagint".[79] In the Vatican incunable Stamp. Ross. 2103, these two versions are joined in the lower margin by a third: the Hebrew version.[80] There is also a dense apparatus of glosses, with references to Latin authors (Nicolaus de Lyra, for example) and to the Hebrew translation. It was tempting to attribute these notes to Pico, but the hand is certainly not his. However, I do not think I am wrong in attributing the work on the Vatican incunable to the Florentine circle of San

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76 Paul Oskar Kristeller, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and His Sources, in: *L'opera e il pensiero di Giovanni Pico della Mirandola nella storia dell'Umanesimo: Convegno internazionale (Mirandola, 15–18 settembre 1963)*, vol. 1: *Relazioni*, 35–133, Florence: Nella sede dell'Istituto, 1965, 46; Sara Blake McHam, Erudition on Display: The "Scientific" Illustration in Pico della Mirandola's Manuscript of Pliny the Elder's "Natural History", in: *Visualizing Medieval Medicine and Natural History, 1200–1550*, Jean A. Givens, Karen Meier Reeds, and Alain Touwaide (eds.), 83–114, New York: Ashgate, 2006; Murano, *Un primo censimento*, 236; Murano, *Copisti e collaboratori di Pico*, 352–353.
77 Giovanna Murano, Tra scienza, astrologia e magia: Un nuovo manoscritto di Pierleone da Spoleto, *Archivum mentis* 8 (2019): 249–273.
78 Giovanni Antonio Flaminio, *Epistolae familiares nunc primum editae*, Bononiae: Ex Typographia Sancti Thomae Aquinatis, 1744, 135 (ep. III. 16).
79 Cornelia Linde, Johannes Crastonus's 1481 Edition of the Psalms, *The Library*, 7th series, 13 (2012): 147–161, at 154.
80 The incunable is digitised: <https://digi.vatlib.it/view/Stamp.Ross.2103>, accessed 1 March 2024.

Marco. A clue to the Florentine origin of the notes is provided by the sign of attention: a stylised flower with a slanting stem.

4 Conclusion

Codicological preparation, copying and writing manuscripts have changed over time. The way in which readers approached the written text also changed over the centuries. In these pages, I have presented the first results of my research into fifteenth-century manuscripts, mainly but not exclusively Florentine. The theme was the traces of reading left in the margins by some humanists (Poggio, Bruni, Pico della Mirandola, etc.). The essay is divided into three sections, each devoted to a different type of intervention: textual intervention, index and "memory signs".

Reading is the prelude to literary, philosophical or theological reflection on a text. Renaissance readers transformed the space around the text, and the margins became firstly the site of philological activity, of appropriating the text by understanding it in its entirety. While the analysis and study of a text is evidenced by notes, commonly referred to as *marginalia*, reading leaves other traces in the margins of Renaissance manuscripts and incunabula. Careful reading reveals errors and textual corruptions, but it also leads to the recovery of classical authors, characters and places, which the Renaissance reader highlighted by means of marginal indices. Following the traces left by Renaissance readers, we have seen how both the manuscripts produced in their own time and some ancient witnesses have been transformed into veritable philological laboratories.

The last typology I have considered is that of "memory signs". I used this syntagm to define non-verbal graphic marks made by an annotator while reading a text. The category includes many signs and drawings, notably one that resembles a stylised flower (or trefoil, according to Meyenberg and Ouy), with the stem represented by a short wavy line and the petals by dots (two or three).

As we have seen, these interventions, which often go unreported, can be crucial to identifying the readers who held the manuscript under study in their hands.

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